

## Pleiades, the seven daughters of Titan Atlas

Pleiades, also known as “The Seven Sisters” and M 45, is an open star cluster located in the Taurus constellation at a distance of 460 light years from Earth.

There are two types of star clusters: open star clusters and globular star clusters. Open star clusters are made of groups of a few 10’s to a few 100 young stars loosely bound by gravity, made from the same molecular cloud and roughly of the same age.

They are located in the spiral arms of a galaxy. The Milky Way has about a 1,000 of such star clusters.

In contrast, globular star clusters are made of thousands to millions of stars bound tightly by gravity and

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they lie outside of the galactic disk. The Milky Way has about 200 hundred globular star clusters. Pleiades cluster contains more than a 1,000 stars, of which only a few can be seen with the naked eye between October and April. It contains clouds of dust and gas illuminated by the stars as they pass through the nebulae. Pleiades is about 100 million years old and it is expected to last another 250 million years before the stars disperse. In the Greek language, Pleiades

means to sail. Ancient Greeks believed that the first appearance of Pleiades in the sky, before sunrise, proclaimed the start of the navigation season.

Pleiades, in Greek mythology, refers to the seven daughters of Titan Atlas and the sea Nymph Pleione.

Their names were Maia, Electra, Taygete, Alcyone, Celaeno, Sterope and Merope. There are several stories involving the “Seven Sisters.” I prefer the one in which Titan Atlas rebelled against Zeus, the king of the gods, who sentence him to hold up the heavens on his shoulders for eternity.

The sisters were so sad that Zeus



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Pleiades is located 460 light years away from Earth in the Taurus constellation.

See STARS, 3C



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI / AP

Lane Belone poses with Pikes Peak in the background on an overlook in Palmer Park on Dec. 19 in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

## New year with a blind dog

I brought in the new year with a blind dog. She was seated beside me, wagging her butt. I think she could feel the energy in the air.

Everyone else in my house was asleep because they are – in the literary sense – massive party poopers. Thus, I was alone in the den except for Marigold, the blind coonhound.

Marigold had one eye removed. The other eye is dead. She lives in darkness. She moves by rote. When I turned on the TV, I could see her stepping carefully through the room, looking for me. Using her nose to feel the edge of the wall.

“Here I am,” I said.

I’m used to alerting Marigold to where I am. We’re all used to acting as her Seeing Eye Humans.

Marigold crawled upon the sofa beside me as I watched the TV-people with weird hairdos perform a countdown. Times Square was littered with thousands of giddy people who you could have blindfolded with strips of dental floss.

And when the ball dropped, everyone on the screen cheered. My phone started blowing up with texts from loved ones. But in that moment, it was just me and Mary.

“Happy New Year,” I whispered her.

Her tail began smacking the sofa, making a gentle “Thwat!” noise.

Then, she used her nose to trace the contours of my face.

Marigold will use her muzzle to feel the shape of your mouth, to see what your lips are doing. At first we didn’t know why she did this. Then we realized that Marigold was feeling our faces to see whether we were smiling.

The way we figured this out was, whenever she felt us smiling, her tail would wag. Whereas, if our mouths were slack, if we were not smiling,

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See DOG, 3C

## UNCHARTED WATERS

### Psychedelic therapy begins in Colorado, causing tension between conservatives, veterans

By JESSE BEDAYN  
Associated Press/  
Report for America

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — As Colorado becomes the second state to legalize psychedelic therapy this week, a clash is playing out in Colorado Springs, where conservative leaders are restricting the treatment over objections from some of the city’s 90,000 veterans, who’ve become flagbearers for psychedelic therapy to treat post-traumatic stress disorder.

Colorado residents voted to legalize the therapeutic use of

psilocybin, the chemical compound found in psychedelic mushrooms, in a 2022 ballot measure, launching two years of rulemaking before it could be used to treat conditions such as depression and PTSD.

This week, companies and people will be able to apply for licenses to administer the mind-altering drug, though treatment will likely not be available for some months as applications are processed.

Colorado joined Oregon in legalizing psilocybin therapy, though the drug remains illegal in most other states and federal-

ly. Over the last year, a growing number of Oregon cities have voted to ban psilocybin. While Colorado metros cannot ban the treatment under state law, several conservative cities have worked to preemptively restrict what are known as “healing centers.”

At a City Council meeting in Colorado Springs this month, members were set to vote on extending the state prohibition on healing centers from 1,000 feet to 1 mile from certain locations, such as schools. From the lectern, veterans implored them not to.

“We have an opportunity to

support veterans, and it’s a really easy one to say ‘Yes’ to,” said Lane Belone, a special forces veteran who said he’s benefited from his own psychedelic experiences. Belone argued that the restrictions effectively limit the number of centers and would mean longer waiting lists for the treatment.

Veterans have pulled in some conservative support for psychedelic therapy – managing to set it apart from other politically charged drug policies such as legalizing marijuana.

See THERAPY, 3C

## Killing of 18-year-old woman solved with DNA technology after 43 years

By JULIE CARR SMYTH  
The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — A man who was shot dead last month as authorities attempted to serve him an indictment on federal gun charges has been identified as the killer of an 18-year-old Ohio woman in a case that had gone unsolved for 43 years, police announced Monday.

Mansfield Police Chief Jason Bammann said the cold case of Debra Lee Miller, a local waitress beaten to death with an oven grate in her apartment on April 29, 1981, was reopened in 2021 to account for advances in DNA technology and forensic investigative techniques.

“They examined the case as if it had happened yesterday, through an entirely new lens,” Bammann said at a news conference. “Their findings were staggering.”

The chief said a “firm DNA profile” of James Vanest, at the time Miller’s 26-year-old upstairs neighbor, emerged from evidence left from the room. Vanest had been questioned but never identified as a suspect during the initial investigation, which became mired in allegations of potential police misconduct.

Miller was one of several people from the Mansfield area whose suspicious deaths in the 1980s were examined for possible links to Mansfield police officers.

A special investigation ordered by the mayor concluded in 1989 that there was no evidence linking any officers with the deaths, but the report raised questions about sexual involvement between police officers and homicide victim Miller and about the way police investigated some homicides. The report noted that Miller wrote in



MANSFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT VIA AP

The apartment building where Debra Lee Miller, a local waitress who was beaten to death is shown on April 29, 1981 in Mansfield, Ohio.

her diary that she was sexually involved with several Mansfield police officers.

The local police chief retired in

January 1990, after subsequent complaints arose over alleged irregularities in the investigation of the death of the ex-wife of



DEBRA LEE MILLER

a Mansfield patrolman.

Miller’s case was reopened several times during the ensuing years. This time, Richland County Prosecutor Jodie Schumacher

said the DNA evidence against Vanest was strong enough that her office was preparing a case against him for the killing to take to a grand jury.

But the case was never able to be presented.

Police had found Vanest living in Canton, about 100 miles east of Mansfield, in November 2021 and re-interviewed him about Miller’s killing. He had admitted to lying

See CASE, 3C