

## It's not all doom and gloom



### Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay



The setting sun prompted the columnist to reflect on altitude and its relationship to the outdoors. (Special to the Montrose Daily Press/Mark Rackay)

Occasionally I receive an email from a reader who accuses me of being a “doom and gloom, end of the world” type of person. They will go on about how I am the type of person just waiting for a disaster. Some of them accuse me of ruining their outdoor adventure because I leave them in fear of what will happen to them.

While it is true I have a constant and rather intimate relationship with Mr. Murphy of Murphy's Law fame, it does not consume my time outdoors. Ol' Murph will do his best to challenge, not only my preparedness, but also my actual physical well being on occasion. There have even been a few occasions where I thought I would survive only to the extent I could at least be identified by my dental records.

Years ago, I had a friend who owned a bulk dehydrated food business. He would travel the country, giving presentations to large groups of people. His presentation painted a world of despair after a nuclear attack from the Russians, the collapse of the San Andreas Fault, and the promised return of an ice age. He would continue sharing the fear by describing thousands of starving people roaming the streets in search of food.

By the end of his spiel, the listener was ready to give the family finances a double hernia in order to prevent such a fate. My friend offered a year's supply of food for a family of four, delivered for a price I no longer recall. The man was a true naysayer in a time during the cold war when everyone was afraid, and he made a fortune in the process.

There are several names attached to people in the preparedness mode. People usually fall into the prepper category or the survivalist category. I think there is a third category but will get to that in a little bit.

A prepper is a person who believes that the end is near. They prepare for every known catastrophe, famine, weather event, act

of war, pestilence or disease outbreak. The prepper will stockpile food, medicine, ammunition, building supplies, water and everything else they can think of. The word stockpile seems to describe them well.

True preppers walk around expecting an invasion of the walking dead, or a zombie apocalypse and can be rather disappointed if one such calamity does not occur. Conversation among preppers is usually limited to where they can get more supplies. Preppers are the people who have bomb shelters in their basement.

I exaggerate some on my description of preppers but am not that far off. Preppers are very family oriented folks who want to care for their loved ones throughout any future calamity and will sacrifice luxury now in order to be prepared for a later disaster.

A survivalist, on the other hand, is an entirely different animal. Survivalists typically spend their time learning primitive and other woodcraft skills, and very little time stockpiling supplies. Survivalists want to be able to provide for themselves. A survivalist wants a mountain cabin, surrounded with concertina wire and a moat.

Instead of hoarding tons of canned vegetables, a survivalist will have seeds, tools and gardening equipment so they can grow their own. A true survivalist wants to live off the grid and be able to live off the land. Rather than use a cell phone as an

emergency tool, a survivalist can tell you 39 different things the phone, case and battery can be used for.

I don't think I fall into either category. Yes, I write about bad things happening while recreating in the outdoors but I do not await the zombie apocalypse. Admittedly, I probably was a prepper at one time. I would like to introduce a third category; one that I would just call “ready.”

During my years in the Florida Keys, we were trounced with half a dozen direct hits by hurricanes. After Andrew, we lost power and water Aug. 24. Our roads were completely blocked by debris and travel was impossible. Basically, we were shut-ins in what was left of our home.

The power and water did not return until after the Saturday following Thanksgiving. The roads were not opened up for six weeks. If you did not have food or water, best hope your affairs were in order. Red Cross and National Guard or FEMA support did not ever show up in our neighborhood. We could not get out and they could not get in.

It is very possible Montrose could see a disaster of some type. We came very close to a pandemic with the bird flu scare. A drought, similar to the one we had last year could cause wildfires to seal off our community from the outside world. Any of these things we can, and should, be prepared for without becoming consumed in a prepper state of mind.

play out as many scenarios I can think up that would put a dent in the trip. Weather, injury, lost, breakdowns are all considered and a plan of action played out in my mind as to how I would respond.

With all of the potential problems I may encounter, I pack accordingly. I carry communications for when I need to call for help, extra clothes and rain gear for the weather, and medical supplies in case I damage my landscape. Properly prepared and packed accordingly, I hit the road less travelled.

Once on the trip, I seldom think about any of the bad things because I have confidence in my ability to deal with the problem. Ready is a mindset, put into play with a little advance planning. That my friends, is all there is to being ready. And, if Murph should show up, I can offer him a sandwich. I made an extra for him, because I was expecting him.

Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press and avid hunter who travels across North and South America in search of adventure and serves as a director for the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse. For information about the posse, call 970-252-4033 (leave a message) or email [info@mcspi.org](mailto:info@mcspi.org)

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The last place you ever want to find yourself, is kicked out of your home and sitting in a relief shelter. During hurricane Katrina, FEMA finally got their marbles together and set up a refugee camp at the Superdome. The shelter, with thousands of people there, quickly became dangerous, even deadly. The government insisted, and in some cases used force, to make people go there. There are people who actually “escaped” from the Superdome.

The federal government suggests that every person have a 72-hour kit, containing food, water, medicines and important papers, for every member of

the family. This kit, called a bug-out bag, should be ready in case you and the family need to evacuate. Further, the government suggests that everyone have at least a 14-day supply of food, water and medicine for every family member as a stockpile at home in case you have to shelter in place as in a pandemic.

I like to be “ready” by having a 30-day supply of food, water and all the necessities. I also keep at least that much around for my furry kids because they will want to eat too, and I am the one they look to.

In ready mode, I carry the mindset afield with me. Before any trip, I

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## Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission to meet in Denver

SPECIAL TO THE MDP

The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission meets Jan. 15 and 16 in Denver for its regular meeting.

The commission will discuss “Passes, Permits, and Registrations” regulations, annual review of “General Provisions” regulations (including creating a senior small game and fishing combination license), annual review of “Big Game” regulations, annual review of waterfowl and migratory bird hunting seasons and

regulations, annual review of “Wildlife Properties” regulations, consideration of “Parks and Wildlife Procedural Rules” and the Species Conservation Trust Fund.

The commission will also discuss non-wildlife related use of state wildlife areas, wildlife contest status in the U.S., Colorado the Beautiful grant funding, herd management plan overview, as well as herd management plans for: Brush Creek Deer, Basalt Deer, Northern San Luis Valley Pronghorn, Southern San Luis Valley

Pronghorn, Collegiate Range Pronghorn, and Collegiate Range Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m. and adjourn at 5 p.m. on Jan. 15 at CPW's Hunter Education Building, 6060 Broadway, in Denver. The meeting will resume at 9 a.m. at the same location on Jan. 16 and adjourn at 11:45 a.m.

A complete agenda for this meeting can be found at [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us).

The next commission meeting will take place March 18 - 19 in Aurora.

## News tip or story idea?

Contact the Daily Press: 249-3444 or email [editor@montrosepress.com](mailto:editor@montrosepress.com)

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