

Front Porch

A publication of Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

STAPLETON

DENVER, COLORADO

FEBRUARY 2005

Special Issue on Education at Stapleton

DPS Science and Technology School Opens at Stapleton

Governor Bill Owens recently joined students, parents, faculty and administrators from the Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) in a ribbon cutting ceremony for the first new high school to open at Stapleton.

The Denver Public Schools charter school opened its doors to 125 ninth-graders in fall of last year at a temporary location west of Stapleton. On January 4th, exactly 11 months after Governor Owens and Mayor John W. Hickenlooper presided at the groundbreaking for the permanent school, students returned from their holiday break to begin classes at the brand new state-of-the-art facility located on a ten-acre parcel of land donated by Stapleton's master developer, Forest City.

DSST is dedicated to providing an outstanding liberal arts high school education with a science and technology focus to a diverse student body. Of the students enrolled in the initial freshman class, 22% are Hispanic, 42% are African American, and 29% are Anglo. Students from (continued on page 16)



Governor Owens greets students on the opening day of the new Denver School of Science and Technology.

Leading Childcare Program Coming to Stapleton

Primrose School To Open Late Fall '05

Beth and Bill Letzsch will bring the nationally renowned Primrose program in educational childcare to Stapleton in the late fall of this year. The school will be located on Syracuse Street, across from Fred Thomas Park. As owners and operators of Primrose School at Stapleton, the parents of twin one-year-olds



Beth and Bill Letzsch at the future site of the Primrose School at Stapleton, which will be near Fred Thomas Park.

they were expecting twins, they decided to build a preschool in the Denver area. They continuously

heard from business and community leaders that Primrose was the most respected preschool provider in Colorado. After investigating other providers in the area and learning more about the Primrose philosophy of providing premier early childhood education, they agreed that Primrose was their choice, and decided to open Primrose School at Stapleton.

"The greatest wish we can have for children is

that they become adults who love who they are and what they do," said Beth Letzsch. "Such self-knowledge, such passion for life, requires a delicate balance that becomes one of the keys to lifelong happiness. We look forward to bringing that philosophy to Primrose School at Stapleton," she added.

The term "balance" (continued on page 3)

Westerly Creek Students Raise More Than \$1,000 for Tsunami Relief

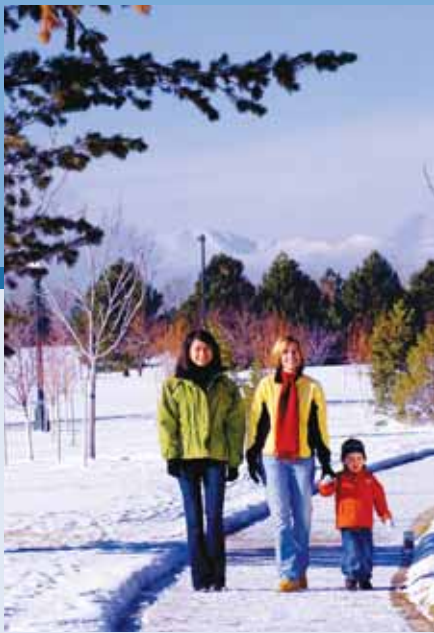


Westerly Creek Elementary School fifth graders who raised money for the Red Cross at a bake sale are (left to right): Nandi Scherbl, Amanda Hargreaves, Dominic del Haeirro and Emma Gale.

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3 Bill Kurtz of DSST | Stapleton Teachers 5 | RK Mechanical, Inc. Training Program 9 | New Home Choices 14



Greenway Park on a snowy day.

Mark Your CALENDAR

2005 STAPLETON EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 5th
First Annual Stapleton
Rotary Club Fundraiser
Radisson Stapleton Plaza
5:30pm

APRIL

Saturday, April 30th
May Day Preparations
Westerly Creek
Elementary School

JUNE

Friday, June 24th
Happy Hour at Aviator Pool
6:30 - 8:30pm

JULY

Monday, July 4th
4th of July Parade
Begins at Founders' Green
10am

Monday, July 4th
4th of July Ice Cream Social
Aviator Pool
1 - 4pm

Thursday, July 28th
Happy Hour
Aviator Pool
6:30 - 8:30pm

AUGUST

Saturday, August 20th
Happy Hour
Aviator Pool
6:30 - 8:30pm

Saturday, August 27th
Stapleton Stampede Run



2004 Stapleton Stampede
kids' race

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 24th
Wine Festival
Founders' Green

OCTOBER

Saturday, October 15th
Fall Festival
Founders' Green
11am - 1pm

*Watch www.StapletonDenver.com
for more information

EVERY MONTH

First Tuesday of each month
Stapleton Residents' Social
Events Committee
Stapleton Visitor Center
6 - 7:30pm

First Wednesday of each month
Westerly Creek PTA
Childcare \$3.00/head donation
6:30pm

First Saturday of each month
Bluff Lake Birders
Bluff Lake Nature Center
7 - 9am

Third Tuesday of each month
Stapleton Business Assoc.
Call 303-393-770 for location
8am

Third Thursday of each month
Stapleton Development Corporation
Citizens Advisory Board
7350 E. 29th Ave., Suite 300
7:30am

Every Tuesday
Stapleton Strollers
29th and Valentia
9:30am

Every Tuesday
Preschool and Parent Support Group
Westerly Creek Elementary School
1-3:30pm

Every Wednesday
Music Together
Westerly Creek Elementary School
9:30 - 10:30am

Every Friday
Story Time for Tots
Westerly Creek Elementary School
9:30am

Every Sunday
June - September
*Stapleton Farmers' Market



Westerly Creek Principal Trich Lea reads at the Story Time for Tots.

Friday, February 11th
Westerly Creek Silent Auction
and Valentine's Dance
Westerly Creek Elementary School

MARCH

Wednesday, March 2nd
S.U.N Community Policing
Meeting
7350 E. 29th Ave. (3rd floor)
6:30pm

Saturday, March 5th
Baby/Kid Stuff Sale
Westerly Creek Elementary School
9am - noon

Thursday, March 10th
Family Game Night
to Benefit Tsunami Relief
The Odyssey School
RSVP at 303-316-3944
6pm

Saturday, March 19th
Spring Fling
Founders' Green
10am - Noon

MAY

Saturday, May 28th
Aviator Pool Opens

Saturday, May 28th
Happy Hour
Aviator Pool
6:30 - 8:30pm

JUNE



Summer concert on the Green

*Stapleton Under the Stars
movies & concerts begin

Saturday, June 11th
Founders' Day

Saturday, June 11th
Stapleton Charity Chase

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A Conversation with DSST Head of School Bill Kurtz

Editor's Note: Brian Weber of the Stapleton Foundation interviewed Bill Kurtz, Head of School for the Denver School of Science and Technology at Stapleton, to learn more about the school and the philosophy behind its programs.

First, tell a little about yourself, your education and other background.

When I was in college I was interested in working in the non-profit, social service field. My mentors made it clear to me if I had a chance to go into the financial world for a few years I should do it. Financial knowledge is involved in everything in life. Regardless of what one does in life unfortunately it does come back to money in the end.

I spent four and half years on Wall Street and enjoyed it tremendously. I knew it was not going to be long term. I ended up going to a school in the South Bronx (Holy Cross School, a grammar school serving 540 children in grades pre-kindergarten through eighth) for three and half years. I was doing all sorts of things. I was assistant principal, I helped fundraise, I coached, I taught. I chose that because we have a lot of people in education who have never been in the trenches, in poor rural or urban areas where schools are not working and understand why that is.

It became very clear to me that there was a huge leadership gap in education particularly in low-income communities. I went back to get a masters at Teachers College at Columbia University at night. (Mr. Kurtz then went to work in Newark, N.J., at the Link Community School, an independent middle school serving 125 low-income African-American seventh and eighth graders.) It was the right fit, the right time. It took kids from Newark public schools, a struggling system. We placed 100 percent of our graduates in top high schools for five consecutive years.

What attracted you to the DSST job?

I came here for family reasons. We wanted see what life was like on the other side of the Mississippi. We wanted to explore new places, see what they had to offer. Denver seemed like one of those wonderful places to try. On a professional level this just seemed like the right opportunity largely because I am committed to continue to create opportunities for underserved children, to have what they deserve, which is a top education. Our country seems to struggle with serving children who come from poor communities. There's no reason why it can't be done. This school has a commitment to serve children from all income levels and all races effectively. We're not going to create two or three programs within the school. We're going to create a school that has one track. And that's to go to college. And all students are on that track.

I think the school had a vision of excellence since the beginning: what we hope to do as a school for Denver and Colorado, and hopefully nationally, is to be a model. That really attracted me and allows me to help create a high performing school, particularly for underserved youths.

Tell me about the DSST program. What does a science and technology focus mean?

The best way to understand it is that we are a liberal arts high school with a focus on science, math and technology. We are not a science, math and technology program that exclusively focuses on those areas. For example, the school is divided into two academies. The prep academy and the senior academy. Prep academy is by and large a liberal arts program - freshman and sophomore year. We do have science and math in that program but we have an outstanding humanities program. It will get (students) ready for college. Senior academy has a strong liberal arts bent but they will start to branch off into a focus area, taking two sciences, biology as a core subject and maybe taking an elective such as bio chemistry or bio technology, focus on other elective areas and a project and an internship in that area.

Elaborate on the other elements of the program and how the school functions, the core values.

You have to build a powerful learning community to be successful. It's creating a culture. There is going to be a culture in place that is clear, defined and, we feel, will do two things: one, that it cares for the people, the employees, the students, in a way those folks have never been cared for before; and at the same time hold them accountable to expectations of excellence like they've never been held accountable before.

The more intensely we can care and individualize our focus for students, and at the same time the more intensely we can hold them accountable with integrity to our expectations, the more success we will have. That plays out in all the elements of the school. We have six core values we expect: integrity, respect, responsibility, curiosity, courage and doing your best. You hear about them all the time.



We have the highest expectations for character as well as academics. We feel there is a real timidity in our public institutions that you can't say values are important. We feel like the values we have are what are our society supports and reflects and our society depends on. Our young people have to grow up with an understanding of what democratic values mean both individually and in living within a civic structure. They have to be defined. Every organization communicates values. It's just a matter of whether you intentionally communicate them or not.

What aspects of the DSST would seem very different to someone accustomed to the traditional high school?

It comes down to the tangible impacts of what we talk about. One is that when a person walks in here they feel a culture that's defined by those values. For one thing, our students get along. We have one of the most diverse student bodies (continued on page 14)

Primrose School (continued from page 1)

pops up often in talking to Beth and Bill Letzsch about Primrose and the plans they have for Stapleton. They describe a "balanced learning" in which children are inspired to think for themselves and explore their own abilities, while being guided by teachers who instill in children a love of learning and the resources they need to prepare for success in life.

The Primrose School at Stapleton will enable children to thrive in a safe and secure environment under the care of a professional, highly trained and experienced teaching staff that is 100% certified in CPR and First Aid. The balanced learning programs of Primrose are enhanced by the inclusion of music, character development and other essential components of a daily curriculum. Serving children from 6 weeks to 12 years, preschool, pre- Kindergarten and private full-day Kindergarten classes will be available, as will 'educational play dates' that prepare children from age 2 1/2 to 4 for preschool. After school programs providing individualized homework assistance

and summer camps are also planned.

In addition to their established success in the field of early childhood education, Beth and Bill Letzsch bring a wide variety of business skills to their new school at Stapleton. Beth, an Army veteran, has more than 10 years' experience in business operations, including large childcare center operations, legal compliance and real estate development.

Bill also has an extensive business and legal background, having worked in the real estate development, computer, high-tech and telecommunications industries both as a lawyer and a businessperson.

To obtain more information about Primrose School at Stapleton, contact Beth Letzsch at primrorestapleton@comcast.net or visit www.myprimroseschool.com/stapleton where parents can fill out an online request form and provide detailed information in regard to the care and educational needs of their children.

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Denver Children’s Home Teacher A Problem Solver

By Latrice Norwood

When the employees of Forest City Stapleton, Inc. worked side by side with the children and staff of Denver Children’s Home (DCH) last year as part of the company’s “Community Day,” they were impressed by the 127-year-old program where dedicated teachers and staff provide a safe, therapeutic place for emotionally distressed children, adolescents and their families.

One of those special instructors is Christopher Richie, who teaches science as well as an elective called Strategy for Creative Problem Solving to 9th and 10th graders. Christopher has been in Colorado since 1996 working with emotionally distressed children and teens in the Denver Metro area. About three years ago, he heard about the Denver Children’s Home and decided to check it out. He has been with DCH ever since.

Christopher believes that creative problem solving is a very important life tool that will carry his students well into their adult lives. The class he teaches revolves around using chess as a tool for teaching problem solving. Christopher finds it to be a real advantage to utilize the freedom of a non-traditional high school to make learning fun and more interesting through unconventional and more diverse methods of teaching. Although he finds it challenging not to have the same students in his class through an entire semester, he says it is rewarding when a student who has not had the greatest success in a traditional school begins to feel good about attending class and wanting to learn. As a teacher, he prides himself on making sure that every day he steps into his classroom, he exudes only positive energy while interacting with his students. Christopher’s positive attitude, dedication and commitment to DCH are clearly exhibited in the children’s lives he touches.

Fifteen-year-old Jodon Simms, a 10th grader, is one of Christopher’s students and one of many success stories. Although this is her first year attending class at DCH, Jodon says she feels very comfortable and welcome. She loves attending school there because the teachers are kind and nurturing – and they care. Jodon is so excited about learning now that she says one of her favorite things to do after school is completing her homework.

Jodon now has aspirations of being a singer,



Christopher Richie working with Jodon Simms at Denver Children’s Home.

a lawyer, a nurse, a doctor or a teacher because she is comfortable with the positive strides she has made while attending school at DCH. She is inspired to dream big because she now has gained confidence in herself through her education that she did not have before. She advises other teens to be responsible in decision-making, respectful, focused, and not feed into negativity.

Thanks to Christopher Richie of Denver Children’s Home, those are lessons well learned.

Latrice Norwood is a Forest City Stapleton, Inc. employee who joined her coworkers in volunteering at Denver Children’s Home in 2004. For more information about Denver Children’s Home, visit www.denverchildrenshome.org.

Bluff Lake: A Natural Place to Learn

The Education Program of The Bluff Lake Nature Center at Stapleton was recently awarded the K-12 Award for Excellence in Environmental Education from the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE).

The Bluff Lake Nature Center occupies 123 acres adjacent to Sand Creek on the eastern portion of Stapleton. It offers a variety of native habitats including a seasonal lake, wetlands, short-grass prairie, a riparian zone and forest. Bluff Lake has become an urban wildlife refuge for waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, songbirds, deer, fox, reptiles, amphibians and other types of wildlife that visit or live at the site.

The Bluff Lake environmental education programs were developed to benefit urban students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The programs emphasize a variety of natural science topics including wildlife habitats, food webs, plant communities, wetland ecology, non-point source pollution, land-use history and environmental stewardship.

The Bluff Lake Nature Center has worked to ensure that all students, regardless of financial circumstances, have the opportunity to learn about nature. All public schools receive free programs. Schools rated at 50% or higher enrollment in the “Free and Reduced Lunch” program will also be offered reimbursement of school bus expenses for field trips made to Bluff Lake.

The Bluff Lake Nature Center is open free to the public daily from sunrise to sunset. To obtain directions to Bluff Lake or learn more about the special restrictions visitors must observe to protect the wildlife while visiting this sensitive natural area, visit www.blufflakenaturecenter.org.

Smiley School Celebrates Black History Month


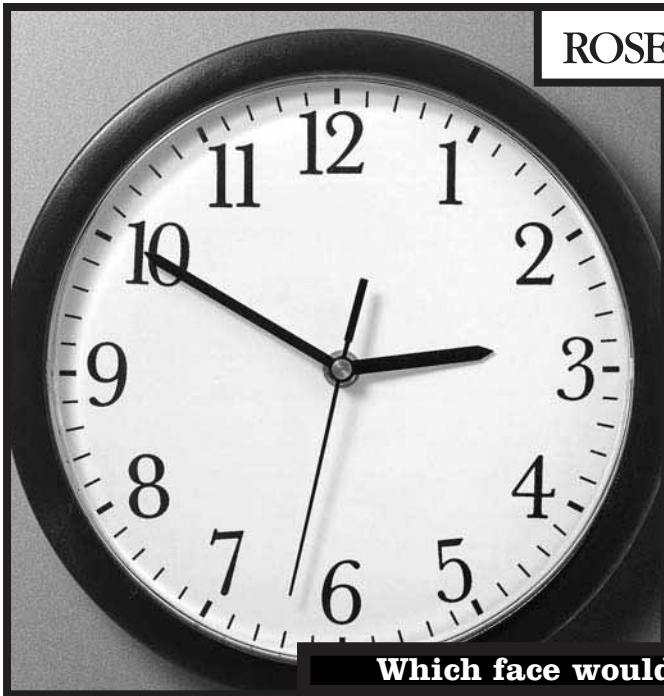
The third annual *Smiley Celebrates Black History Month* will be held on February 17, 2005 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Smiley Middle School, located at 26th and Holly in Park Hill, in walking distance west of Stapleton. This fun filled evening celebrates Black History Month as well as other cultures that contribute to Denver’s rich diversity. Student works of art, music, drama, and dance performances will fill the halls with color and entertainment. The whole school family and neighborhood is invited to see the effort put forth by Smiley students in these

creative endeavors that explore culture and particularly the contributions of African-Americans.

Smiley’s Artists in residence have been working with students to develop creative works such as two-dimensional art, dance and drama. The Smiley Cougar Band will be performing as well. Dinner will be served for a small charge in the cafeteria. The entertaining and informative event is funded, in part, by the Colorado Council on the Arts and the Smiley Parents-Teachers-Students Association. For further information contact Trine Bumiller at 303-322-8244.



Nate Howard, principal of Smiley Middle School. (Photo taken at a Stapleton “Education Night” in the spring of 2003.)






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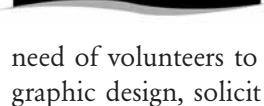

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ALPS Volunteers Needed

The Active Living Partnership at greater Stapleton (ALPS) is looking for a few volunteers to help us with its projects. Many of you participated in our Passport to Active Living program in August and September of 2004. We are in the process of putting together the 2005 Passport and are in need of volunteers to assist with the website and graphic design, solicit Passport sponsorships and donations, and coordinate events and activities that are listed in the Passport. We are also in need of neighborhood/block representatives to promote and distribute the Passports and people to help with the marketing of the program. Volunteers are asked to contact Tina Pihl, ALPS Project Coordinator at 303-315-9047 or tina.pihl@uchsc.edu.



Westerly Creek Teacher Creates Enthusiasm

By Alaina Brandenburger

As one of two kindergarten teachers at Westerly Creek Elementary School, Romi Hovey brings creativity and enthusiasm into her classroom.

Ms. Hovey is a Denver native who has been teaching within the Denver Public Schools for 19 years. She started her teaching career teaching bilingual education (Spanish and English) for 3rd graders. After that, she taught first grade for five



Romi Hovey, kindergarten teacher at Westerly Creek School.

years, and has been teaching kindergarten for the past five years. An administrator from Denver Public Schools approached Romi about interviewing for a position at Stapleton when Westerly Creek opened two years ago. She came on board when the school opened, and although she is not a Stapleton resident, she enjoys teaching at Stapleton. Romi says, “It is close to everything, which is nice. The parent participation is incredible.”

Romi admits that working for a new school in a young community does have its challenges. “It was a struggle in the first year trying to get everything going. This is a young community, and we did not have a lot of neighborhood kids our first year. This year is better. The school almost doubled in size this year. I am looking forward to the community growing into the school,” she adds.

After earning a Bachelor’s Degree in Graphic Design, Ms. Hovey decided that the field was not for her. She says that teaching is “in her blood.” Her mother is a middle school teacher for Aurora Public Schools, and her sister teaches kindergarten for the St. Vrain School District in Longmont. Romi earned a Master’s Degree from Lesley College, and her program of study involved the integration of the arts into public schools.

Romi Hovey’s favorite subject is Social Studies because she loved it in school and enjoys teaching children about the world and current events. She finds teaching kindergarten gratifying because there is a huge amount of growth from the beginning of the year until the end of the year. “Every day the kids show you things you didn’t think they could do,” Ms. Hovey says.

Alaina Brandenburger is a member of the staff of Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

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Odyssey Teacher Explores History

Alison Morgan doesn’t merely *teach* history, she helps her students *explore* history.

Ali has been an instructor at The Odyssey School of Stapleton for four years. While she also serves on the charter school’s Board of Directors, her most important contribution is made both in and outside the classroom, where she is currently helping her 5th and 6th grade students explore the history of the Lewis and Clark expedition. The learning project is an example of a philosophy that lies at the core of the school’s curriculum. A visit to The Odyssey School’s website (www.odysseydenver.org) reveals an in-depth description of the “learning expeditions” Odyssey describes as “rigorous” and “purposeful.” Unlike the traditional classroom field trips in many schools that are more casual, of a shorter duration and superficial, learning expeditions at schools such as Odyssey can last anywhere from 4 to 9 weeks, enabling students and their teachers to engage in a more in-depth study of a single subject, topic or theme. Each learning expedition has a clear set of goals that are consistent with those established by the school and its district. A plan for an expedition typically describes specific activities, definite final products, specific performance standards, and how students and teachers will measure success in the expedition.

The Odyssey School is chartered by the Denver Public School system, making attendance free for any student in that system. For more information, visit www.odysseydenver.org.



Alison Morgan, history teacher at The Odyssey School.

Building a Great Environment for Business

By Brad Phillips

Do you have a business based in the Stapleton area? Then we’ve got the organization for you! The Greater Stapleton Business Association encompasses the areas of the E. 29th Avenue Town Center, Quebec Square, and “Hotel Row” along Quebec Street and the east



Left to right: Enrique Mendez, General Manager, Sam’s Club (at large); Jessica Vininsky, Catering Manager, Radisson Hotel (secretary); Lynne Archuleta, Executive Banking Officer, Vectra Bank, (treasurer); Shane Mahoney, Vice President, US Bank (vice president); and Brad Phillips, Allstate (president).

corridor of Interstate 70. Our group is designed to help foster a healthy business environment for companies based in the area, as well as provide an outlet for networking and the sharing of ideas across a broad spectrum of topics related to business growth. We meet the 3rd Tuesday morning of every month in the boardroom of the Stapleton Development Corporation offices at 7350 E 29th Avenue. For more information, contact me at 303.377.4767, or call Angie Malpiede of the Stapleton Foundation at 303.468.3231.

Brad Phillips of Allstate is president of The Greater Stapleton Business Association.

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MISC. RETAIL (continued)

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Thomas Bros. Coffee & Chai

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on ANY beverage

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Offer: 10% off any combo meal.

Sand Creek Greenway Offers Outdoors Learning



Students gather at Star K Ranch located
just minutes east of Stapleton.

By Kate Kramer

The Sand Creek Regional Greenway, which traverses Stapleton, is a wonderful outdoors laboratory for learning that has a number of attractions. In addition to the activities offered at The Bluff Lake Natural Area on the eastern edge of Stapleton, another great place to find organized educational programs along the fourteen mile Greenway is at the Morrison Nature Center at Star K Ranch, a 200-acre natural area and outdoors learning center that is just minutes east of Stapleton.

Set in a historic and refurbished ranch house, The Morrison Nature Center offers a variety of programs for children, both free and for a small fee. For 3 to 5 year olds, the center offers programs called "Star K Kids" and "Little Naturalists." Junior Rangers (ages 6 to 10) can learn about nature, and Nature Explorers can also earn badges for participation. Many schools hold wonderful field trips to Star K Ranch, which also offers programs for adults and teens on a weekly basis on such topics as "Winter Tracks" and "Deer of Aurora."

Directions: To get to Star K Ranch from Stapleton, take I-70 east to the Chambers Road exit. Go south on Chambers Rd, to Smith Rd. Travel east on Smith Rd. to Laredo St. Turn south on Laredo St. and look for the green tile roof at the bottom of the hill.

Kate Kramer is the executive director of The Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership, Inc. She may be reached at 303-468-3263 or www.sandcreekgreenway.org.

February Events at Park Hill Library

Saturday, February 12 at 10:30 am

Mervyn's Super Saturdays: African drumming
with Bataki Cambrelen

Saturday, February 26, 10:30am

African-American stories with Cassandra Sewell

For more information on these and other activities
at The Park Hill Denver Public Library, please call
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The Urban Farm at Stapleton

By Christy Landwehr

Tucked away in the Sand Creek Regional Greenway on the eastern edge of Stapleton is a 23-acre community farm and environmental education facility known as The Urban Farm at Stapleton. One of the “jewels” of the unique educational resources at Stapleton, The Urban Farm offers a wide array of



A young rider at the Urban Farm.

programs in horsemanship, animal husbandry, gardening, conservation, stream reclamation and land cultivation to young people. There are also goats, sheep, cows, chickens, donkeys and even a sow and a llama to meet!

Perhaps most importantly, the programs offered by the Urban Farm build character and self-confidence in boys and girls who learn how to ride and care for horses. Several of the students in the Urban Farm programs have excelled in competition in The National Western Stock Show. The Urban Farm at Stapleton is currently offering information about riding classes for the spring session. Group lessons are a good

way to maintain riding skills, ride different horses and meet “horse-crazy” friends. There is an indoor arena for year-round lessons.

To learn more about this non-profit organization that brings youth and horses together and serves as a great asset to the Denver community, please visit www.theurbanfarm.org or call 303-307-9332. Registration forms for Urban Farm programs are available at www.theurbanfarm.org/currentschedule.pdf.

Christy Landwehr is a member of the staff of The Urban Farm at Stapleton.

Denver Officials Visit Arsenal Wildlife Refuge

Mayor John Hickenlooper and Denver Councilman Michael Hancock, along with Adams County, Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Forest City Stapleton, Inc. representatives, met at Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge in January to discuss and tour the imminent East 56th Avenue Corridor construction enhancements.

“I am delighted to see, first hand, the transformation of the Arsenal from a Superfund site to one of the largest, wildlife refuges in a major metropolitan area in the entire world.”

John Hickenlooper

Being situated amidst a bustling metropolitan area, and so close to the ever-growing Stapleton Development, the Refuge provides a variety of opportunities and resources for its Denver metro neighbors to participate in educational and recreational programs and provided the ideal location to host this event.

The changes and plans for this area, including the establishment of Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and the building of its new Visitor Center and environmental education center, the expansion of the Stapleton Development, the building of Commerce City’s Prairie Gateway and the construction of the new Colorado Rapids Soccer

Stadium are examples of how the area surrounding the East 56th Avenue Corridor is evolving to benefit the surrounding areas.

“I am delighted to see, first hand, the transformation of the Arsenal from a Superfund site to one of the largest, wildlife refuges in a major metropolitan area in the entire world,” said Mayor Hickenlooper. “The catalytic effect of bringing retail, commercial and residential development to the area is beyond what anyone ever dreamed,” said Mayor Hickenlooper at the event.

“There is a new frontier and a tremendous amount of potential that lies outside the doors of this jewel of a Refuge that can benefit all the communities involved. We all just need to embrace the opportunities and do what we can to move the process forward,” added Denver Councilman Michael Hancock.

All guests concluded the event by taking a tour to showcase the Quebec St. and 56th Ave. development areas, followed by a tour, which included sightings of deer, coyote, hawks and even a bald eagle.

For more information on how you can participate in a free weekend Refuge tour or some environmental educational opportunities, visit <http://rockymountainarsenal.fws.gov> or call 303.289.0930.

First Annual Westerly Creek PTA

BABY/KID STUFF SALE

Saturday, March 5th 9am – noon

Start now bringing your “gently used” kids’ stuff to the school between 9am and 3:45pm. We’ll provide tags - you need to indicate whether you wish to split the proceeds 50/50 with the PTA or donate 100% to the PTA. You may set the price or let the PTA set the price. For more information, contact Meg Yoder at 303-394-1975 or email: meg@familyyoder.com.

March 10 – Games for Good: Tsunami Relief Game Night at Odyssey School

The first and second grade students at The Odyssey School who are studying world games will be hosting a community wide Family Game Night to raise money for the children hurt by the December 2004 tsunami.

We invite all fun loving folks to come meet a neighbor, play a board game or four, have some food and donate money for the children. All the money raised will be used to help children in Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and India. The Family Game Night will be held on Thursday, March 10 at 6 p.m. at The Odyssey School, 8750 E. 28th Ave. Donations will be accepted at the door and pizza, drinks and desserts will be sold.

As it would help our planning for food and space, please call the school at 303-316-3944 if you plan to attend.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Upcoming Nature Programs

Reservations are required for these **FREE** programs. Space is limited. Call 303.289.0930 to register.

FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 5, 1-3pm
Winter Exploration

Sunday, February 6, 10am – noon
Where Eagles Soar

Sunday, February 13, 9-11am
Sky Tigers

Sunday, February 20, 1-5:pm
Wildlife Watch Workshop

Saturday, February 26, 1-3pm
Birding Basics

Editor’s note: To reach the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge from Stapleton, take Quebec Street north to 56th Avenue. Travel east on 56th Avenue to Havana Street and turn left to enter the Refuge.

MARCH

Saturday March 5, 1-3pm
Tracks & Scat

Saturday March 12, 10am-noon
Refuge Manger Tour

Saturday March 19, 9-11am
Friends of a Feather

Sunday March 20, 10am-noon
Kids in the Wild

Saturday March 26, 1-3pm
Scouting for Wildlife

Sunday, March 27, 9-11am
Shutterbug Tour

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Westerly Creek Valentine's Dance and Auction

"Be mine" at the Westerly Creek Valentine's Day Sock Hop and Auction! Don't forget your dancing shoes . . . or your checkbook! On Friday, February 11 at 6pm, Westerly Creek Elementary School will hold its first Valentine's Day Sock Hop & Auction. Students, parents, friends, family and community members are all invited to join the fun. Parents can drop off their kids in the cafetorium where children can practice their dance moves, eat and drink under the supervision of chaperones. Adults can then stroll down to the gym to place bids on valuable items and services in a silent auction that will benefit the Westerly Creek PTA. Cast a bid for Nuggets or Rockies tickets, ski packages, goods and services from merchants in Stapleton's Town Center, wooden furniture hand-painted by Westerly Creek students, and much more. Tickets for the Sock Hop are just \$2, and can be purchased at the door. For more details, contact Sarah Rogers at 720-480-5578 or sdenio2@aol.com.

Westerly Creek Preschool and Parent Support Group

Come join the fun at the Preschool & Parent Support Group at Westerly Creek Elementary School (8800 E. 28th Ave.) Offered through the Emily Griffith Opportunity School, this terrific program for parents and their children (ages 2-5) meets on Tuesdays from 1:00 to 3:30pm. The children will enjoy an afternoon of art, music, and creative play activities under the supervision of qualified, caring instructors. Parents meet in a separate room and discuss topics chosen by the group. This is a great opportunity to meet neighbors, make friends, and share ideas for managing home & family. Adult curriculum & activities may include discussion groups, guest speakers, projects and field trips.

For further information, please call Arlene Neff @ 303-756-3611 or just come to the class.

Baby Power



Thomas Cobb plays at Baby Power/Forever-Kids play program for parents and children, which recently opened its doors in the Quebec Square Regional Retail Center at Stapleton. For information, call 303-377-8855.

Another DPS School Coming to Stapleton



An aerial view of the site plan for the future school at Central Park Blvd. and Montview.

By Brian Weber

Site work will begin soon on the next Denver Public School (DPS) planned for Stapleton, with an opening scheduled for August 2006. The school, located at Montview and Central Park boulevards, is planned as a kindergarten through eighth grade school with early childhood classes for four-year-olds. The school will be able to accommodate up to 750 students and will be the Denver Public Schools middle school of assignment for Stapleton.

The education program for the school will be determined over the next year. In the first half of 2005, focus groups and a community meeting will be held to gather ideas from residents about possible programs. A principal will likely be hired by summer. In the fall, the principal and a representative group of residents, teachers, community members and DPS administrators will form a program committee that will analyze various options. That committee will then recommend a program to the DPS Board of Education. DPS will make the final decision on the program.

DPS, the Stapleton Foundation and Forest City Stapleton, Inc. will coordinate the program process. For information contact Brian Weber at Stapleton Foundation; 303-468-3224; bweber@stapletoncorp.com.

Brian Weber is Vice Pres. Education/Workforce Initiatives for The Stapleton Foundation.

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RK Mechanical is also dedicated to growing and training the next generation of trades people. RK Mechanical has an established, accredited, in-house apprenticeship program. We are committed to our employees and foster an environment where they can stay on the cutting edge of new technologies, tools and techniques.

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Our apprenticeship program consists of 8,000 hours of on-the-job training and 776 hours of

Left: Employees of RK Mechanical, Inc. fabricating HVAC and plumbing systems.



classroom, lab and shop training. RK Mechanical's bilingual, accredited programs help hundreds of apprentices receive certification in the Bureau of Apprenticeship Training (BAT) program, a recognized accreditation from the Department of Labor. Additionally, apprentices receive college credits from the Emily Griffith Opportunity School.

We are very proud of our industry-leading training program, and overall commitment to training. Our Training Manager, Jim Kennel, leads our in-house apprenticeship program, all management training conducted on a continuing basis, and all specialty training. Tom Menzies, our Corporate Safety Director, assists with training by providing CPR/First Aid, OSHA 10-hour, confined space, forklift, trenching and excavating, supervisor safety training and lock-out/tag-out training.

RK Mechanical, Inc. is an aggressive and diverse company with continued profitable growth as a primary goal but feels education is an important part of our future. We consistently rank in the top three for mechanical contractors in Colorado, and in the top twenty nationally. We are Colorado's largest privately held mechanical contractor.



UROK

Cameron Dick, a UROK salesperson, displays some of the items in the store that recently opened in the East 29th Avenue Town Center at Stapleton. The store is located between Einstein Bros. Cafe and Starbucks.

Quebec Square Family Dentistry

After Dr. Preet K. Clair graduated from Marquette University School of Dentistry and completed her residency, she decided to move to Colorado to "escape the Milwaukee cold." A native of Nova Scotia, Canada, Dr. Clair practiced for six years before opening Quebec Square Family Dentistry at Stapleton nearly two months ago.

It has been a busy two months. Dr. Clair says her practice is thriving and attracting new patients every day from Stapleton, Greater Park Hill and the other surrounding neighborhoods. Many of those new patients have learned about her practice from her ads in The Front Porch, where she advertises the latest dental technology and a gentle, personal approach to educating her patients how to take an active role in developing good oral health. Dr. Clair's office hours are 7am to 4pm Mon./Tues./Wed., Thursdays from 8am to 5pm and Fridays from 8am to noon. Dr. Clair also schedules Saturday appointments twice a month from 9a.m to noon.

Call 303.322.2081 to schedule an appointment or obtain more information.



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Master Community Association News

by Diane Deeter
Stapleton Community Manager



Holiday Sponsors

The January edition of The Front Porch inadvertently failed to acknowledge two of our sponsors from the Holiday Activities at Stapleton. We would like to thank Talty Insurance (door prizes) and Commercial Federal (cookie table) for their generous support of our celebration!

2005 Master Community Association Delegate Election and Annual Meeting

Are you interested in serving as a delegate for The Master Community Association? The Master Community Association invites you to get involved in your community. The delegate election and annual meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 23, 2005 at 6:30 pm in the cafetorium at Westerly Creek Elementary School. A quorum is required to vote on delegates.

Two delegate positions are open for one-year terms: District #2 and District #3. (Please refer to the Delegate Map in the Stapleton Homebuyer Guide available at the Stapleton Visitor Center to confirm your district). If you are interested in becoming a delegate, please submit a "Delegate Questionnaire" (available at www.stapletononline.com no later than February 15, 2005).

Please encourage your neighbors to attend the annual meeting along with you! A great community starts with YOU!

2005 Pool Season

Can you believe the 2005 pool season is right around the corner? It is time to start thinking about getting your pool ID, registering for swim lessons and swim team, and finding your swimsuit. Okay, you could probably wait another month or two on the swimsuit, but don't let registering for summer programs be an afterthought. To register, please call 720.529.9911.

The Stapleton Stingrays need strong swimmers. If you are interested in joining this swim team, be sure to attend either registration date listed below to sign up for the team and be sized for your swimsuit.

If you need a 2005 ID or update sticker or to register for summer swim programs and swim team please attend one of the following sessions at the Stapleton Visitor Center:

Saturday, March 12 (12:00 - 2:00 p.m.)

Monday, March 14 (6:00 - 8:00 p.m.)

Additional ID dates are scheduled for April and May. However, program registration is on a "first come, first served" basis so register EARLY! Please check for updates at www.stapletononline.com.

Contacting the Community Manager

Diane Deeter, Community Manager, Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

7480 East 29th Avenue, Denver, CO 80238

Email: communitymanager@StapletonDenver.com

Phone: 720-249-5110

*Recently opened retail in the
East 29th Avenue Town Center...*

The Grape Leaf



Henry Platter, Manager of The Grape Leaf, examines the label on a bottle of wine in his store in the East 29th Avenue Town Center. For information about store hours call 720-941-7117.

Anthony's Pizza



Jason Priddy, a co-owner of Anthony's Pizza with Stephen Hunter, serves take-out customers during a busy lunch hour in his restaurant in the East 29th Avenue Town Center. For more information call 303-398-2800.

Odyssey School students march in MLK "Marade"



Photo by Wendi Schneider

A Wild Smile Celebrates Dental Health Month on a Safari

February is Dental Health Month, a month dedicated to helping people understand the importance of dental hygiene and a healthy smile from the very young to the very old. Dr. Jesse Witkoff and his staff have decided to turn Dental Health Month into an event to be remembered. On Saturday, February 19th from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. A Wild Smile-Pediatric Dentistry will be hosting a FREE Safari Family Carnival. On this date the first two floors of 7350 E. 29th Avenue in the East 29th Avenue Town Center will become a jungle of fun. Children will be welcomed with clowns, face painting, puppet shows, games, crafts and a journey that ends with great prizes for all. Parents will be welcomed with food demonstrations and samples, dental educational materials, safety identifications cards for the children and a chance to win a number of great door prizes, including an I-pod, sporting event tickets, zoo memberships and more.

A Wild Smile's office is already a magical place that instead of transporting a child to the dentist chair, embraces a child's imagination and takes the child on a journey through the jungle of Dr. Witkoff's office. It is a journey where the teeth brushing area becomes an animal watering hole and x-rays are now simply getting a picture taken with the friendly stuffed gorilla.

For more information call 720-945-1234. RSVPs are appreciated, but not necessary, to drjessewitkoff@aol.com.

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4 Paws News

by Michele Smith, D.V.M.
29th Ave Animal Hospital

A Living Education: Five Things Pets Can Teach Children

Poet William Blake once wrote, “Everyone that lives, lives not alone nor for itself.” This is especially true when it comes to our pets. And, according to researchers and counselors, it may be one of the most important lessons pets teach children.

Parents often bring a pet into the family to teach kids a sense of responsibility, or perhaps to provide an only child with a playmate. But children often learn something more fundamental about themselves and the world: how to empathize with others, how to understand subtle feelings and how to look at the world from a vastly different perspective.

Because animals stimulate curiosity and build empathy, pets can play a vital role in helping a child learn how the world and living things are interconnected. On the emotional level, pets can teach children many things:

Communication: Children learn the subtle cues their pets give them to indicate their feelings. They can later apply this lesson to human interaction because they are more attuned to watching for body posture.

Empathy: Children often become curious about the emotions their pets feel. This curiosity will extend itself to others. Animals offer an avenue for children to explore their curiosity. For a child, curiosity can lead to hope and to greater engagement with the world around them.

Nurturing skills: If properly supervised by adults, a child learns how to take care of another living being, and take pleasure in keeping the pet healthy and happy.

Confidence: Children go through life under constant evaluation. They are rated by their behavior, grades and athletic performance. This is especially true of middle school children. Pets have no such expectations; they’re delighted that the child is with them. Pets give children the sense of unconditional acceptance, no judging or rating is involved.

Resilience to change: Children who undergo traumatic experiences, such as a divorce or loss of a family member, often cope better when they have a pet to confide in. Loneliness is very dangerous to children, having an animal companion can make them feel a part of something.

A study published in 2000 explored the relationship between pets and children. Specifically, the study, conducted by a child psychologist in New Mexico, looked at the effect dog ownership had on 10- to 12-year-old children. The researcher, Robert E. Bierer, Ph.D., was surprised at the difference in empathy and self-esteem between preadolescents who owned a dog and those who did not.

Bierer’s conclusions support the growing body of evidence that shows pet ownership has a “statistically significant” impact on self-esteem and sensitivity toward others. He noted that teachers, parents and other children have expectations for a child to fulfill. A pet has no such measures of success or failure; acceptance is total, which provides a sense of self worth.

Pets also teach children about the importance of taking care of themselves. For instance, you can teach your children why it is important to take care of a pet, brush his teeth and keep him clean. When they understand the importance, a parent can turn the focus on the children themselves. If brushing a dog’s teeth is important for his health, then naturally it is important for the child’s well being.

This doesn’t necessarily mean that all children are ready for pet ownership. Parents should first make sure their child desires a pet before rushing out to get one. Together, they should decide what type of pet is best. Moreover, don’t assume your child will take care of the pet. The ultimate responsibility usually falls on the parent, not the child, to make sure the pet is healthy.

Dr. Smith’s clinic is located in the East 29th Avenue Town Center. For more information, call 303.394.3937.



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Sustainability at Stapleton

by Melissa Knott
Director of Sustainability, Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

Stapleton’s Sustainable School Buildings

You probably already know that Stapleton’s residential builders do a terrific job in delivering housing that leads the Colorado market in green and energy efficient construction practices. At Stapleton, we also work with Denver Public Schools and The Stapleton Foundation to integrate sustainability principles into the design and construction of school buildings.

Denver School of Science and Technology

The Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST), which just opened in January on a 10-acre site along Montview Boulevard donated by Forest City Stapleton, Inc., was designed through a collaborative effort between David Stephen, the architect of High Tech High, the Denver-based *klipp* architectural firm and the contractor, M.A. Mortenson. DSST has many sustainable building features:

- The building is oriented longitudinally on an east west axis. This maximizes the building’s southern exposure to increase heat gain from the sun during the winter.
- Lighting strategies were used extensively:
 - An effort to maximize daylight reduced the need for artificial lighting, which in turn reduced the heat load generated by the lights.
 - The use of courtyards allows more light into the classrooms. In fact, you can go into many spaces during the day and the lights do not need to be turned on.
 - The majority of the lighting installed is indirect lighting, which is optimum for learning environments.
- High efficiency glass and thermally broken windows reduce temperature transfer along the walls.
- R-19 insulation in the walls and R-30 insulation at the roof was used.
- Recycled carpet was used throughout the building.
- White roofs were used on the flat areas to reduce the heat island effect.
- The wood arcade at the south entrance is made from spare wood shavings from mills.

Early test results on the Denver School of Science and Technology building indicate a **42% reduction in energy consumption!**

Second DPS Elementary School at Stapleton

The second Denver Public Schools’ Elementary School at Stapleton is in the final planning stage and will be under construction soon near the corner of Montview Boulevard and Central Park Boulevard. Designed by M+O+A Architectural Partnership, the current plan for this school also includes many sustainable design elements. The building is expected to include:

- Geothermal mechanical HVAC system;
- Daylighting through increased quantity and performance of glazing on windows;
- Sun control devices to block direct sunlight but also project natural light deep into classrooms;
- Commissioning of mechanical and electrical systems;
- Connection to future gray water utility for irrigation;
- Rain sensors to shut off irrigation during rainstorms; and
- Separate irrigation systems for trees/shrubs and sod so that the trees and shrubs can be irrigated during drought restrictions.

Learn more about the Denver School of Science and Technology elsewhere in this edition of the Front Porch. And be sure to watch as the second DPS elementary school comes out of the ground later this year!

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Join us now for our weekly Bible fellowship on Tuesday evenings. The time and place of our first Sunday worship, teaching, and fellowship time will also be posted on our website soon. Please let us know of your interest and we will contact you personally with more info. You can email us at contact@northfieldchurch.com, visit us on the web, northfieldchurch.com, or call us at **720-985-6810**.

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Pastor Matt, Amy, and baby Madison.

Stapleton United Neighbors Editorial

New Urbanism, Old Problem: Crime at Stapleton

By Mike King

Shortly after moving into our beautiful new homes, many of us quickly learned the hard way that “new urbanism” at Stapleton has not escaped an age-old problem: crime. Over the past summer, in addition to two sexual assaults, which occurred in open spaces at 25th & Spruce and 28th between Roslyn and Syracuse, a wide array of other crimes were reported at Stapleton. For example, during the month of September, an average of seven to nine crimes per week were reported, including burglaries, larcenies, auto theft, and drug related crimes; about half of these crimes occurred at Quebec Square, and the other half occurred in the residential portion of Stapleton. Several disturbing trends emerged, including teenage males on bicycles scouting alleys for open garages and other targets of opportunity (and typically “reporting” back to a vehicle, often parked at Fred Thomas Park), vandalism of cars and attempted car thefts, “drag racing” of cars side by side down 29th Avenue, vandalism of homes, both occupied and not yet occupied, including broken windows, and theft from homes still under construction. Sadly, even children’s toys, bicycles, lawn furniture and lawn decorations have been stolen right off of front porches. Finally, neighbors have expressed concern about the dangers posed by rampant speeding in our pedestrian-friendly neighborhood. Crime statistics compiled by the DPD can be reviewed at the SUN location under the Stapleton Intranet.

Numerous crimes, particularly theft of items from garages and porches, have gone unreported. Reporting crimes or attempted crimes immediately is crucial for at least three reasons: (1) you give the DPD the chance to arrive on the scene – even if they do not catch the perpetrators, their arrival will deter future crime, (2) crime statistics compiled from your reports allow the DPD to spot trends and direct police resources accordingly, and (3) complete reporting of all crimes is necessary for DPD District 2 to obtain necessary resources from the City in an extremely challenging budgetary environment. SUN continues to work with Forest City, Councilman Doug Linkhart, Councilman Michael Hancock and the Mayor’s office for creative ways to rapidly increase the resources dedicated to DPD District 2 given the burgeoning Stapleton population. Happy Haynes, Denver’s Director of Legislative Affairs, noted that the Stapleton’s concerns about the increase in certain types of crimes are similar to concerns in neighborhoods throughout the city.

Community Policing: Low Cost, High Yield

Even with unlimited resources, the most effective policing programs are those in which neighbors take an active and collaborative approach, working with their local officers in a model known as “community policing.” SUN has aggressively implemented such a program with the DPD, holding its second training seminar on November 18 at the newly dedicated District 2 Police Station. “This is the first neighborhood-wide training program in the city of Denver, and SUN is light years ahead of the curve in getting organized,” noted DPD Neighborhood Liaison Officer Mike Rappe. Because neighbors knowing and looking out for their fellow neighbors drives any successful community policing program, residents attending the session were organized on a block-by-block basis. As part of the program, Officer Rappe and fellow Neighborhood Liaison Officer Reyes Trujillo provided training on personal safety and crime prevention, and each household receives a copy of the Denver Police Department’s Crime Prevention Manual, which contains valuable tips on self defense, protecting your home, preventing auto theft, child safety, discouraging burglars, and reporting crime.

Blocks that achieve substantial participation in the community policing training and registration will become part of the Denver Neighborhood Watch program. Among other benefits, the program includes the posting of Neighborhood Watch signs, which have had a proven effect in deterring crime. While over 150 homes have participated in the program and at least nine Stapleton blocks have achieved “Neighborhood Watch” status, Stapleton now has over 52 city blocks and will need more participation to maximize safety. SUN and the DPD will run this program again on Wednesday, March 2 at 6:30 in the Stapleton Development Corporation Conference Room at 7350 E. 29th Avenue (3rd Floor), with light refreshments and door prizes included. SUN is also organizing residents for training in the DPD’s “speed check” program in which residents will learn how to operate radar and mail drivers with warning notices for speed limit violations to help build traffic safety awareness and reduce speeding.

What can I do to help?

The SUN/DPD Community Policing seminars and handout materials provide extensive crime prevention help, including detailed information on self defense, weak points in your home or car’s security and how to remedy them, and alarm systems. Here are a few highlights:

- Know your neighbors, and keep an eye out for suspicious persons/activities.
- In the event that you witness ANY suspicious activity, please call the appropriate DPD phone number below and report what you have seen.
- Consider parking in your garage if possible.
- Keep garage doors closed whenever you are not in your garage.

Views on the Street

Who was your favorite teacher and why?



Tara Grant

Secretary to the Principal
Westerly Creek
Elementary School

“I have two. Mrs. Barbara Batey who was at Smiley Junior High School and Mrs. Braverman who was at East High School. Mrs. Batey always told me I could do it. She never let me give up. She was my English teacher. She instilled a love of reading. Mrs. Braverman also. She just deepened that love of reading and of books that have stuck with me all the way until today. I think it’s helped me all through the years – it opened up a whole new world for me. They both retired recently from Denver Public Schools.”

Shere Dayney

Office Manager
The Odyssey School

“My favorite teacher’s name was Mr. Corman. I had him for two years – in 11th and 12th grades. He would force us to read Time and Newsweek every Friday. And we had to read it from cover to cover – that was our job for an hour. It’s part of my ritual every week now, and I’ve learned so much from just that one little thing he made us do.”



S.U.N. Editorial (continued)

- Always turn on outside lighting in the front and back of your home after dark – this is the cheapest crime prevention device and you already own it! These lights are crucial in Stapleton alleys, as they have no other lighting. Inexpensive photo-electric cells can do this for you!
- To prevent speeding, become the “pace car” by strictly holding to the speed limit. If interested in the DPD speed check program, express interest at the Stapleton Intranet’s Grapevine under the “Community Policing” discussion heading.
- Organize your block: create a phone/email chain for your block and attend the next Community Policing Seminar.
- Several Stapleton residents are independently organizing a self defense class and have obtained a professional instructor – again, express interest at the Grapevine under “Community Policing”.

Additional information and periodic updates can be found on the Grapevine under “Community Policing.” Keep everyone informed by posting there!

Mike King is a S.U.N. board member. Email: mking@bhf-law.com



Mary Spicer

Office Manager
Denver School of
Science and Technology

"My favorite teacher was Mr. Arterberry, George Washington High School. Tough, caring and supportive. He was a history teacher – and that was during the first year the Denver Public Schools allowed ethnic history (around 1979). He was really tough. If you didn't do the work he had no problem giving you a big fat F."



Sam Hanes

Math Teacher
Denver School of
Science and Technology

"My favorite teacher was my 12th grade physics teacher named Mrs. Westfall. I really liked the subject but the way she presented it really got everyone interested in it and she had an interesting way of introducing just about every concept that we came to. As a result I ended up studying physics in college and now I'm a teacher too. She had a great effect on me. She used a lot of hands on stuff... a lot of labs

where we would get to see the way things worked rather than hear about the way things worked. A lot of getting up and moving around the classroom – but also she had very high standards when it came to written work and lab work, so she really had us prepared for college level science and math.

I try to bring some of her methods into my classes. Especially in math class there is a tendency to have the students sit still and write equations on their paper, whereas there are a lot of ways we can do the same kind of hands on things as you do in science."

How Do you Define “Local Retail”?



East 29th Avenue Town Center

By Bryan Penny

Many residents have questioned why there is not more “local” retail in the E. 29th Ave. Town Center. In keeping with SUN’s mission, we met recently with representatives from Forest City to address this issue.

In the meeting, we learned that currently there is approximately 900,000 square feet of retail space in Stapleton, with planned growth to over 2.2 million. Quebec Square contains the largest part of the retail space at Stapleton and houses many locally owned businesses. In the 29th Ave. Town Center, 13 of the 23 businesses are locally owned. Remember that just because a business carries a national name does not mean that it is corporate owned. Several of the businesses in the Town Center and Quebec Square are franchises that are owned by Denver residents and in some cases Stapleton residents.

NorthField Center will be the next retail development in Stapleton. It will be north of I-70 and, according to reliable sources, it appears this development might just be right on Target. Plan to attend the February 15th (6:30 pm) neighborhood meeting at Westerly Creek Elementary School to hear representatives from Forest City talk about retail and answer your questions.

Bryan Penny is a S.U.N. board member. Email: stlbearfun@aol.com.

To Send Letters to the Editor

The Front Porch will publish Letters to the Editor, as space allows. We reserve the right to edit length. Please mail your letters to Tom Gleason, editor, The Front Porch, Forest City Stapleton, Inc., 7351 E. 29th Avenue Denver, CO 80238 or email: tggleason@stapletondenver.com

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Stapleton Carriage Homes Arrive at Stapleton

By Janet Abresch

Homebuyers looking to become part of Denver's next great community will soon have a new choice from McStain Neighborhoods. Available early next year, the Carriage Homes at Stapleton will reflect a welcome alternative to modern living: low maintenance, ADA adaptability, open floor plan, impressive energy efficiency and an affordable price.

The Carriage Homes were designed especially for Stapleton and provide character unlike any other home in the neighborhood. Homeowners will enjoy a virtual single-family experience in the stacked flat design, with ample living space and windows that are not bordered by others.

Standing in front of McStain's Carriage Homes, one notices the exterior of a home that yields a charming streetscape scene of diverse homes. The Carriage Homes will provide easy access to the enjoyment of outdoor space and all the amenities within close proximity of the community. With five different floor plans, you'll be able to choose a Carriage Home style that's perfect for you. The homes range from 850 to 1,150 square feet.

The Carriage Homes are not only affordable up front, but can save you money in the long run as well. Like all McStain homes, the Carriage Homes will be built in compliance with Energy Star and Colorado's Built Green program guidelines, incorporating recycled materials and numerous energy-efficient building practices. This means that in addition to being better for the environment, they will help lower your monthly energy bills.

McStain understands that potential homeowners view their home as an investment. These charming



Artist's rendering of McStain Carriage Homes

homes are part of a community that is leading the way for smart growth. As one of Colorado's pioneer Green Builders, McStain finds new sustainable uses for previously developed land, and Stapleton mirrors that philosophy.

Okay, so let's talk about the affordability. Priced from the high \$100s, the Carriage Homes are the perfect financial fit for an individual buying for the first time or a young couple settling into a lifestyle together. You won't be able to find a better value at Stapleton. So now that McStain has your interest - you better hurry to find out more about these charming new additions in Stapleton. Pre-sales begin in early 2005 and construction will begin by February 2005. McStain expects the first closings in summer 2005.

Janet Abresch is a Stapleton single-family sales consultant for McStain Neighborhoods. For more information visit www.mcstain.com.

Bill Kurtz *(continued from page 3)*

that are on the same track in the city of Denver. We have kids from all income levels. We have not had a single student conflict this year, verbal or physical. I'm not naive, it will happen. But if you ask the kids "Why?" they say, "We all get along." And everyone knows each other. They probably have 10 to 12 contacts with their advisor every week compared to typical comprehensive high schools where the guidance counselor to student ratios are one to 300.

That personalization makes a big difference. And there's a support network that plays out in how students act. We try to live what we say. If we give homework, we expect it to be done. For example, we have a period after school called "College Prep" for kids who don't do their homework. We have 125 kids and we have four classes that generally give homework. That's five hundred assignments a day. We had two kids in there for multiple assignments, so that's four assignments that were not done yesterday out of 500 assignments. And to be clear on that, it's not that it's just done; it's done to our standards. If it is not done to our standards, they still go to College Prep.

In the morning meeting the entire school gathers together. What is its purpose?

The morning meeting serves a couple of purposes. It creates a sense of community. It's a reminder we are in this together. It also serves as a bridge from home to school. It gets their mindset ready to go. It includes open discussions and outside presentations. It includes excellence of the week awards for students who have shown outstanding efforts in the past week.

Anybody can make an announcement. Some days we do "shout outs" which features anyone who has done something of value for the community. And we also have something called the long walk where a student or teacher will go around and name everyone in the school by their first and last name to show the value of names and the individuals.

And we have accountability time, which closes every morning meeting. If a student is late they apologize to the whole school. If they've committed an offense to the community, usually on a suspension level, they have to make a public apology for that and make a commitment to the whole school to live our values. The value of that apology is the fear of whether the community will accept it or not.

Talk about the admissions process and standards; how it is a public school but there are certain expectations beyond just showing up on the first day of school?

We are a public school and anyone is eligible to apply. There is a lottery. By law you fill out the application and you are admitted to the lottery. We *(continued on next page)*

Wonderland Homes Introduces Artisan Plazas

Artisan Plazas, located at the southeast corner of Martin Luther King Boulevard and Clinton Street, approximately 1.5 miles east of Quebec, is the newest Wonderland neighborhood to be built at Stapleton.

Artisan Plazas is comprised of artfully defined town homes reminiscent of the simple but stylish artisan enclaves found along the Mediterranean. These distinctive urban living environments are the epitome of sophistication - perfect for the buyer seeking artistic character and function.

Exciting 1, 2 and 3-bedroom, 2-story town homes range in size from 885 to 1132 square feet with attached garages for security providing direct entry into the home. Pricing is from the upper \$100s to the low \$200s. This is the perfect home and location for first time buyers, for singles, empty nesters and professionals. There are a limited number of special needs homes featuring wider doorways, lower counter tops and single-level living, and this neighborhood is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.



Artist's rendering of Wonderland's Artisan Plazas

The colorful Mediterranean and Spanish Colonial designs offer charming interior elements, and sculpture-accented courtyards serve as a delightful extension of indoor living spaces, allowing residents unique opportunities to express themselves. During the design process, special attention was given to providing good natural light inside the homes.

Vaulted, coffered and raised ceilings provide drama, and other special touches are available such as wrought iron stair rails and under-stair storage. Shaped openings, niches, stairwells and studio spaces offer interest and theme continuity.

Just imagine walking out your front door into a beautifully landscaped courtyard showcasing art from local designers throughout the year. At least three new sculptors will display their work at Artisan Plazas when it opens - Reno Carollo, Kevin Robb and Will Clift. More talent will be participating as the community progresses.

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Pre-sales start in early 2005 with residents able to move into their new homes around June. As with any of our new communities that do not yet have sales offices, our Priority Reservations List allows members the first shot at getting the home/homesite they want. To become a Wonderland Priority Member go to www.artisanplazas.com and click on "Our Priority Reservations List" or call 303-320-8665.

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Bill Kurtz (continued from page 14)



Bill Kurtz, DSST Head of School

are unique in a couple ways. One is we have commitment to serve low-income students. At least 40 percent of our students will be low income and we have two separate lotteries for low income and the general population. And we are here to serve the Stapleton community. Stapleton residents do have preference to get in. They are excluded from the lottery.

Why do you think this model will be effective and get kids to graduate who would not be expected to do that well in a traditional high school?

I think this model works for everybody. It only doesn't work if the student doesn't want to engage in the kind of commitment we expect of them. What is different for low-income students is giving them the opportunity to be in a college track program. And we personalize what we are doing. If student is low in their skill development, in

math or English particularly, we have an extra support class. They're getting an extra 155 minutes of support a week on top of the 350 they're already getting in class. That's almost two and half times of what a typical high school would give. At a large comprehensive high school, the structure dictates how well teachers can do their jobs as opposed to doing the job and building the structure around it.

Can DSST be replicated and do you think it will be by you and your supporters?

We by no means have achieved anything yet. We have created a school that seems to have a solid community to it and we're trying to do the right thing but we have not accomplished anything yet. Can it be replicated if we do what we hope we can do? Absolutely. One of the things that's really important for people to understand is that what makes this place different and special has nothing to do with the building or the technology or all the things that sets this school apart on a monetary level. With the core of our program, the values we spoke about, the community and expectations, we could open up this school in a warehouse tomorrow and have the same culture and have the same success. The building is a spectacular asset. But the replication depends not on that but the program itself.

As you have noted there are few models or examples for you to follow of a high performing high school with a diverse student population. How are you going to adjust as you go to make sure you are doing it right?


One of the things I commit to as the Head of School and I've asked the faculty to commit to is that we are chief learners of the school. The day we become not the chief learners of the school is the day the school starts to head downhill. We meet everyday as a staff. We are constantly evaluating what's working. We make changes on the fly. That process is ongoing throughout the year. That should lead to our success, that we are able to change and adapt. The other thing is that at the end of this year everything is on the table. Nothing is sacred.

The length of the school's name lends itself to a shorthand version. What name is emerging: DSST, Science and Tech, Sci-Tech?

DSST is emerging. I don't know if that's what we want. It's kind of like DSA (Denver School of the Arts). You can't prescribe that. It just sort of happens.

HealthTALK 05

FREE community events for discussing different health-related topics.



- Female Urinary Incontinence**
Presented by Brian J. Flynn, M.D., Director of Female Urology, Reconstructive Urology and Urodynamic and Karlotta Davis, M.D., Obstetrics and Gynecology
Tuesday, March 8, from 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Incontinence, or sudden urine loss, affects women of all ages and lifestyles. Problems with bladder control can occur at any time – when you cough, sneeze or even during exercise. Though it may often be embarrassing, it's not a condition you have to live with. Come and learn about the minimally invasive, out-patient procedures that can help you or a loved one overcome this condition.
- Overcoming Hip and Knee Arthritis**
Presented by Michael Dayton, M.D., Orthopaedic Specialist
Wednesday, March 9, from 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Arthritis is one of our nation's most common chronic health problems, affecting people of all ages including children. Arthritis causes pain, stiffness, and/or swelling of the joints and can significantly impair a person's ability to do normal everyday activities. Come and learn about different options to manage and overcome arthritis pain.

Join us at the University of Colorado Hospital, Fitzsimons campus in Aurora, 1635 N. Ursula St. in Room 2005 of the Anschutz Outpatient Pavilion To RSVP, please call 303-724-5397 by Monday, March 7. Seating is limited. Refreshments will be served. www.uch.edu

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Mark Your Calendar

STAPLETON TODAY

An update of Stapleton's evolution from a former airport to a new urban community.



Artist's rendering of The TownLofts at Stapleton

HOMES

The TownLofts at Stapleton, one of the many diverse home styles offered at Stapleton, are now for sale. These unique lofts feature 2 bedrooms and are priced from the low \$200s. Stapleton now offers more than 30 home models by 19 different homebuilders to tour, offering homes in almost every price range. Models are open Tuesday – Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Monday noon – 5:00 p.m.



Nannies play with their young charges at Baby Power.

SHOPS

Baby Power has opened its doors in Quebec Square, offering a unique place with fun, creative and education activities for kids. The East 29th Avenue Town Center has welcomed the sassy but trendy clothing store, UROK. Residents and employees alike are enjoying Anthony's Pizza and Pasta in the East 29th Avenue Town Center. Be sure to watch as the work continues on NorthField at Stapleton, an open outdoor retail center located at I-70 and Quebec Street.

Gov. Owens speaks at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Denver School of Science and Technology.



SCHOOLS

The Denver School of Science and Technology welcomed Governor Owens to tour the brand new facility at Stapleton on January 4th.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE

Planning is underway for four special parks that will be located between Westerly Creek and Sand Creek. These four parks will be designed after the four seasons: Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. Portions of Westerly Creek Open Space are now open and provide ponds and wetlands necessary for water surface drainage.



STAPLETON'S

First High School



A laboratory in the new Denver School of Science and Technology.



Above: A computer class at the Denver School of Science and Technology.
Left: An all-student morning meeting.

DSST Opening *(continued from page 1)*

low-income backgrounds comprise 46% of that class.

The innovative DSST charter high school is located on the southern edge of Stapleton along Montview Boulevard at Valentia Street. Any student who lives in Denver is eligible for admission. DSST will be fully enrolled with a total student body of 425 students in grades 9-12 by fall 2007.

For more information about DSST, see the conversation with Bill Kurtz on page 3 in this edition of *The Front Porch* or visit the school's website at www.scienceandtech.org.



Justin Ross, Owner, is excited about the opportunity to offer Mortgage Loan Services to the residents of Stapleton and the Metro Denver area. With twelve years of mortgage experience, Stapleton Mortgage was established in September of 2002.

The Ross's were one of the 1st families to move to Stapleton in June 2002. Justin's older daughter Jericka will be entering the 6th grade this fall and he and his wife Marissa welcomed their first child in September.

Justin and Marissa are quite anxious to experience the growth along the Stapleton corridor and look forward to serving your mortgage loan needs. Stapleton Mortgage may be reached at 303-810-0782, or email jusross@stapletonmortgage.net.



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