

# Front Porch

Distributed to the Stapleton, Park Hill, Lowry, Montclair, and Mayfair neighborhoods

Celebrating  
Black History

STAPLETON

DENVER, COLORADO

FEBRUARY 2008

## Five Points Glory Days



Charles Burrell, legendary jazz bassist, now 87, (left) and Purnell Steen, pianist, pose in Five Points at the Rossonian Hotel and Club, which was the epicenter of jazz in Five Points during its glory days. Mr. Burrell, who performed as the house bass player at the Rossonian, is Mr. Steen's cousin and was his role model as a child. To honor

Black History Month, this issue of the Front Porch features information on jazz in Five Points during its heyday and a history of the Five Points neighborhood (page 3), as well as an overview of the Blair-Caldwell Black History Museum and Library and events celebrating Black History Month (page 11).

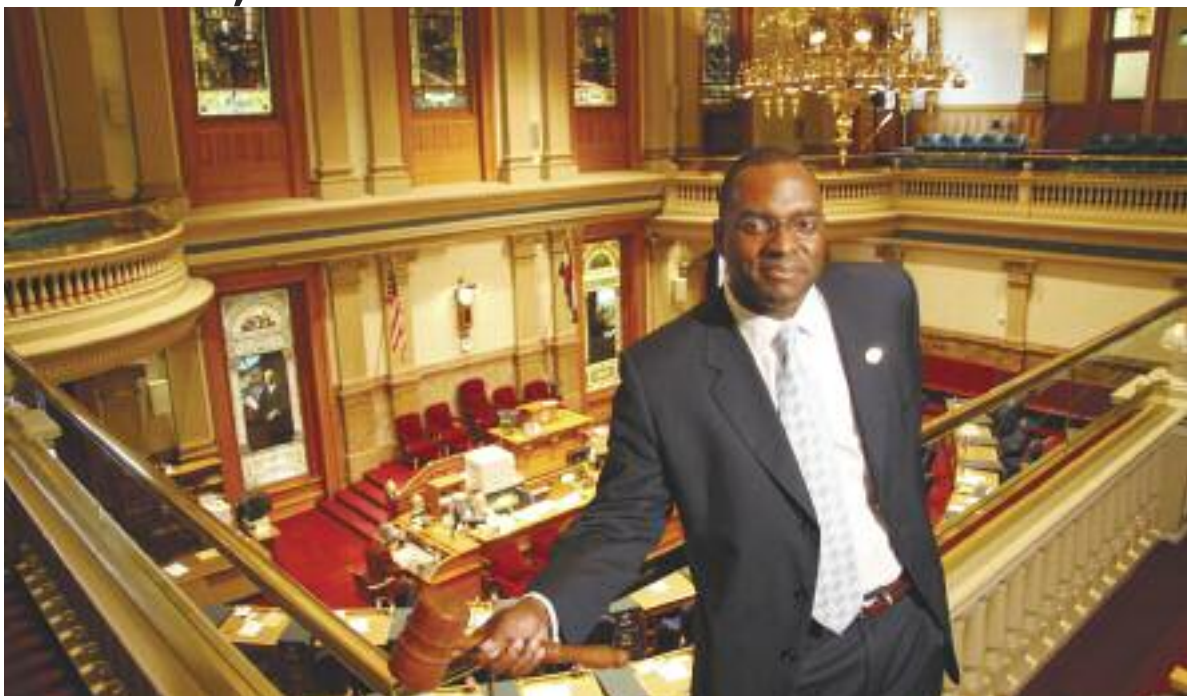


### Valentine's Day Readers Share Their Love Stories

Above: Grant Nesbitt and Kaia Histan stand side by side at their kindergarten Halloween party in Ft. Collins. In second grade Grant moved to a different school. Twenty years later their paths crossed again.

In honor of Valentine's Day, the Front Porch asked couples to reminisce about how they met. On page 22 we share the fortuitous events that brought them together.

### Peter Groff, State Senate's First African American President



Peter Groff, the newly elected President of the Colorado State Senate stands in the gallery that overlooks the Senate chamber. Senator Groff represents Senate District 33, which includes Park Hill and Stapleton as well as other portions of Denver and Adams County.

Senator Peter Charles Groff was elected the first African American President of the Colorado State Senate in November of 2007.

Prior to his election as the President of the Colorado State Senate, Mr. Groff had served as the first (continued on page 22)

Printed with soy-based ink. Paper contains 40% postconsumer waste.





## Stapleton's Town Center



# CALENDAR

## FEBRUARY

### Tuesday, February 5

7pm Democratic & Republican Political Caucuses [www.cologop.org and www.coloradodems.org – see page 20 for locations]

### Thursday, February 14

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Zoo [SCFD.org]

### Monday, February 18

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Denver Botanic Gardens [SCFD.org]

### Wednesday, February 20

Chocolate and Herbs: What Your Body Craves (Free) 6:30 - 8pm Stapleton Community Room 2823 Roslyn St (see page 10)

## MARCH

### Saturday, March 1

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Denver Art Museum [SCFD.org]

### Thursday, March 13

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Denver Center for Performing Arts  
Gee's Band – 6:30pm  
Space Theatre [for more information visit SCFD.org and click on Free Days]

### Monday, March 17

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Denver Botanic Gardens [SCFD.org]

### Wednesday, March 19

Longevity Made Simple – How to Add 20 Years to Your Life (Free) 6:30 - 8pm Stapleton Community Room 2823 Roslyn St [303-403-6333]

### Thursday, March 20

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Denver Center for Performing Arts  
The Merry Wives of Windsor – 6:30pm  
Stage Theatre [for more information visit SCFD.org and click on Free Days]

## APRIL

### Thursday, April 3

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Denver Center for Performing Arts  
Doubt – 6:30pm  
Rickertson Theatre [for more info, visit SCFD.org and click on Free Days]

### Saturday, April 5

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Denver Art Museum [SCFD.org]

## APRIL

### Wednesday, April 16

Perfect Your Golf Swing and Joint Health (Free) 6:30 - 8pm Stapleton Community Room 2823 Roslyn St [303-403-6333]

### Sunday, April 20

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science [SCFD.org]

### Tuesday, April 22

SCFD-sponsored Free Day at the Denver Botanic Gardens (Earth Day) [SCFD.org]

## EVERY MONTH

### Monthly

New Resident Orientation Meeting [Call 303.388.0724 for date & location]

### Every Tuesday

Stapleton Rotary Club – Noon  
Stapleton Radisson Plaza Hotel  
3333 Quebec Street  
[Michael@KearnsTeam.com]

### Every Tuesday

AA Open Discussion Meeting – 7:30pm  
MCA Community Room  
2823 Roslyn Street  
[Joe Mc at 303.912.7075]

### Every Wednesday

Weekly Weeders, Bluff Lake Nature Center 9-12am [303.945.6717]

### 3rd Tuesday

Stapleton Business Assoc. 8am  
Call for location [303.393.7700]

### 1st Wednesday

"1st Wednesdays" Home-based businesses [Check StapletonLife.com for time & place—most meetings 11:30am - 1pm]

### 3rd Thursday

Stapleton Citizens Advisory Board Mtg  
Stapleton Development Corp (SDC)  
7350 East 29th Ave. – 7:30 - 9am  
[SDC 303.393.7700]

### 4th Thursday

SUN Board Meeting – 6:30pm  
MCA Community Room  
2823 Roslyn Street  
[stapletonneighbors@msn.com]

### 1st Saturday

Bluff Lake Birders, Nature Center – 7-9am [BluffLakeNatureCenter.org]

### 2nd Saturday

NE Denver/Park Hill MS Self-Help & Support Group, Pauline Robinson Library 10:15-11:45am – 5575 E 33rd Avenue [Paula Sussman 303.813.6691]

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EDITOR: Tom Gleason, Forest City 303-382-1800  
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303-526-1969 FrontPorch@fineprintco.com  
MANAGING EDITOR: Carol Roberts  
PHOTO EDITOR & PHOTOGRAPHER: Steve Larson  
FEATURES EDITOR: Kathy Epperson  
AD SALES: Karissa McGlynn 303-333-0257

# Front Porch

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# Jazz in Five Points

*Editors Note: In honor of Black History Month, the Front Porch asked Wallace Yvonne Tollette, a resident of northeast Denver and author of "Colorado Black Leadership Profiles," to give our readers a short history of Five Points during its heyday as a destination for jazz musicians and music lovers.*

By Wallace Yvonne Tollette

For this article, I chose to interview two jazz icons from my book, *Colorado Black Leadership Profiles* – bassist Charles Burrell and pianist Purnell Steen. Both are among the few remaining Black musicians in Denver who either had ties to the Five Points area, the center of jazz in Denver, or who remembers that era. Each shared vivid memories of “back in the day” stories when “The Points” had a thriving, vibrant, finger popping, hip swinging “all that jazz” culture.

From about the 1920s to the 1950s, Five Points in northeast Denver was the center of the African American community and African American culture. A stand-out and much-written-about cultural piece was jazz music. Called the only art form to have originated in the United States, historians say jazz began in the late 1800s from many influences, not the least of which are Black American music and African rhythms. Two key elements are improvisation and syncopation performed by Black Americans who had little or no musical training.

Both Charles Burrell and Purnell Steen recalled the Rossonian Hotel at 26th and Welton Street as being the “entertainment central” venue. Built in 1912 as the Baxter Hotel, it was purchased in about 1929 by H.W. Ross, a Pullman porter and renamed the Rossonian. After extensive renovation, it featured many top musicians from around the country during its heyday as a jazz venue. Classically trained bassist Charles Burrell stated, “I was the ‘house bassist’ there for several years. If a group or a singer had no bass player, I played

bass for them.” Currently the Rossonian is undergoing yet another major renovation that will feature jazz and a restaurant.

People from all walks of life went there to enjoy the music, including a large White clientele. Both men agreed that more often than not, even though there were long lines of predominantly Black people waiting to enter, Whites were given what they perceived to be preferential treatment because they had more money and spent it freely. Mr. Steen recalled the manager at the time was Quentin Harrington. “Mr. Harrington could relate to the Whites because he was very fair-skinned – he resembled Cab Calloway with the wavy hair and smooth, brown skin.”

According to Mr. Burrell, in addition to the highly gifted and talented musicians themselves, three main local forces were behind the enormous success of jazz in Five Points: Charles Cousins, Shelly Rhym, and Leroy Smith. According to Mr. Burrell, “Mr. Cousins, who had extensive property holdings in Five Points (continued on page 18)



Charlie Burrell's music floats through the air like the smoke from his cigar. Circa 1960.

the east by Walnut and Downing Streets; on the south by Park Avenue West and East 20th Avenue; and on the west by Broadway and Twentieth Street. The area derived its name from the shape formed by the intersection of Welton Street, Washington Street, Twenty-seventh Street, and East Twenty-sixth Avenue.

In early Denver, Black housing was dispersed throughout various parts of the community. In 1871, the Denver Horse Railroad Company opened its first one-track line from the downtown area to the Five Points neighborhood. The trolley's arrival in Five Points triggered a flurry of new residential development. However, when the Herdic Coach Line began a route to Five Points, its “masthead” could not

# History of Five Points

By Wallace Yvonne Tollette

Five Points, one of Denver's earliest and largest residential neighborhoods, was platted in 1868 by Francis Case and Frederick Ebert, and was part of the original Congressional Land Grant that eventually became part of Denver. It is roughly a triangular area of 1,133 acres which lay immediately northeast of downtown Denver. It is bounded on the north by the South Platte River and Thirty-Eighth Street; on

accommodate the names of all the streets, prompting them to shorten it to Five Points. At first the residents objected because Five Points was also the name of a notorious New York slum; however, over time, the name stuck.

Following the 1864 flood, anyone who could afford to move from the flood plain of Cherry Creek did so. Blacks, however, continued to live in the area because it offered the cheapest housing. With the arrival of the railroads in the 1870s, one social impact caused by the railroads was the creation of a segregated housing area for African American laborers. When large numbers of Black workers, mostly freed slaves from Georgia, were imported by the railroads to lay track, most Whites would not rent to them and they lacked funds to purchase homes, so Five Points became an attractive and relatively inexpensive area to call home.

Forbes Parkhill, author of a biography of Black businessman and political leader, Barney Ford, states that the railroads created a “segregated district of their own at the foot of Twenty-Second Street, commonly known as the Deep South.”

By 1893, more African Americans lived in the Five Points Neighborhood than in any other parts of the city. Because many residents back then had large families, many of the houses were huge, palatial structures that not only had a basement, first floor, 2nd floor and sometimes a third floor, with a front and back staircase, some might even have a carriage house in the back. Whereas the carriage house could possibly be rented to help mitigate some of the expenses of houses so large, with over 2,000 – 3,000 sq. ft. of living space, the high cost of maintaining those homes became problematic for a single family.

In 1954, after passage of the Colorado Fair Housing Law, (continued on page 18)

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## Public Art at New Community Pool

The new Community swimming pool at 28th and Geneva Court is scheduled to open at the end of May. The unique facade of the bathhouse at this pool is a Stapleton public art commission awarded to Jeanine Centuori and Russell Rock of UrbanRock Design in Los Angeles, CA. The “design images” shown feature three large laminated glass panels depicting the three stages of water: vapor, liquid and solid.

The rendering (above) shows the public art to be installed at the new community pool in Stapleton. The photo below shows the current status of the construction.

## Stapleton Public Art Committees Seek Representatives from Neighboring Communities

Stapleton’s Public Art Program invites representatives from neighboring communities to help choose artists to create public art for outdoor sites in various locations in Stapleton. The Project Selection Committee for each public art project includes artists, residents of Stapleton and adjacent communities. The criteria for community representative include: Interest in community improvement, interest in visual art or design and commitment to the best interests of the Stapleton and the greater community.

Each Committee usually meets three times to develop criteria for the site, review applications and interview artist finalists. The meetings, scheduled on weekdays, are interesting and produce lively discussions.

For more information about Stapleton’s Public Art Program, check out the Stapleton Public Art Master Plan on the web at [www.stapletondenver.com](http://www.stapletondenver.com). Click on Explore Stapleton and then the link to Public Art. If you would like to be part of a Project Selection Committee, please contact Barbara Neal the Public Art Consultant for Stapleton at [barbneal@mindspring.com](mailto:barbneal@mindspring.com).

## New Kettlebell Fitness Program

Stapleton resident Nicolas “Nico” Rithner has begun offering conditioning and strength training classes at Dardano’s School of Gymnastics at 2250 Kearney that include Kettlebell lifting, a traditional Russian exercise utilizing a weighted ball with a handle that is designed to enhance overall mobility, health and fitness.

According to Wikipedia, the kettlebell or “girya” is a traditional Russian cast-iron weight that has the appearance of a “cannonball with a handle.” Kettlebells come in a variety of sizes, and modern versions of the kettlebell feature adjustable weights.

An Argentinean by birth, Mr. Rithner holds a certification from NSCA-CPT (National Strength and Conditioning Association - Certified Personal Trainer). He also has coaching certifications with the American Kettlebell Club (AKC) and USA power lifting. He and his wife Terri came to Stapleton looking for a “children friendly environment” to raise their daughters.

“In creating ‘Colorado Kettlebell Club,’ I wanted to put a special emphasis on preparedness for real life situations or, in other words, the development of functional strength that takes advantage of the unique benefits of kettlebell lifting and combines them with a variety of bodyweight exercises designed to target your muscles from every angle,” the former USA “power lifting” coach says.

Nico Rithner helps Megan Kelly perfect her Kettlebell technique to improve strength and stamina.

“Improve your strength and stamina, while increasing your flexibility and joint mobility.”

Mr. Rithner will be offering classes at Dardano’s on Mondays; Wednesdays and Fridays at 7 pm. In the springtime, he hopes to offer outdoor group lessons in a Stapleton park. The self-described “stay-at-home dad” is also available as a personal trainer.

For more information, call 303.333.4247 or email [cs@coloradokettlebellclub.com](mailto:cs@coloradokettlebellclub.com).



# Stapleton Area TMA Announces New RTD Bus Pass Outlets

The Stapleton Area Transportation Management Association (TMA) announced that beginning January 1, 2008 bus riders can purchase their monthly bus passes at the following stores: King Soopers, 2810 Quebec Street; A Day Spa, 7505 E. 35th Ave Ste 390, Quebec Square; Mike Giles Karate, 7506 E 36th Avenue, Ste 480, Quebec Square; and Fantastic Sam's, 7341 E. 29th Avenue. For more information contact Angie Malpiede, Stapleton Area TMA, 303 468-3231.

# New Hours at Stapleton Visitor Center

The Stapleton Visitor Center is now open 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays. It is closed Mondays and Tuesdays but tours are available by appointment at 303.478.0196. The Visitor Center offers a comprehensive overview of Stapleton's past, present and future redevelopment.

"Come experience our newest neighborhoods on the center's popular topographical map," said Visitor Center manager Collette Shaughnessy. "Locate retail stores, restaurants, neighborhood schools, parks and homes and offices with distinct options to custom-grow your business. Stop by for your complementary editions of the Stapleton magazine, the *Front Porch* newspaper or maps of trails, transportation routes or retail stores in our 29th Ave Town Center, in Quebec Square and at the Shops at Northfield."

The Stapleton Visitor Center is located at 7480 E. 29th Ave in Stapleton's first town center. For more information, call 303.355.9600, email [info@stapletondenver.com](mailto:info@stapletondenver.com) or visit [www.StapletonDenver.com](http://www.StapletonDenver.com).

# Restaurant Reviews From A Budding Chef on a Budget



*Editor's Note*  
*The Front Porch asked Johnson and Wales student Monika Reitmeyer to find and review local restaurants where readers can get a delicious meal for two for under \$30. This review is the first in our series.*

## A Taste of Home

*By Monika Reitmeyer*

Sandwiched in a brick-laden building noticeable only by its hand-painted, A-frame "Soul Food" sign, sits CoraFaye's, a delightful restaurant that provides four generations worth of authentic, down-home southern recipes, and an absolutely unforgettable experience.

From the very moment you walk in, a wave of warm, almost thick air blasts through the door bringing savory wafts of fried chicken, and sweet hints of freshly baked pies. The dining room itself is a sight to behold, and not unlike your grandmother's living room. It's lavishly

decorated with country-style paintings set against dark mahogany-hued walls. A small table boasts glass-encased cakes with moist fillings and creamy frostings just beckoning to be eaten. A brief glimpse into the open kitchen reveals pots simmering on the stove and a tray of golden cornbread muffins.

"The meat, it just falls off the bone!" mumbled my dining companion, who, with a mouth full of crispy, deep-fried frogs legs, managed to stop midsentence to thoroughly inspect the specimen resting in his hands. However, the fried chicken is a favorite here and with its salty-crunchy skin and juicy dark meat, you'll find yourself savoring every last piece on the bone. Other honorable mentions are the superbly fresh catfish and the fried pork chops.

But, don't forget about the sides. Creamy mac'n cheese and tender collards are must-haves. Potato salad arrives fresh, and with specks of paprika, hints of mustard and crunchy celery, it'll surely bring back memo-

ries. Cornbread, served with every dish, is spectacular when lathered with sweet cream butter and crumbles with each delectable bite. Hoppin' Johns (black-eyed peas served over rice), still considered to bring good luck if eaten on New Year's Day, arrive steaming hot, and the candied yams are beautifully sweet and buttery.

Enjoy a perfectly prepared sweet tea, or perhaps a Kool-Aid, but one thing's for sure: save plenty of room for dessert.

With choices of peach cobbler, coconut cream cheese cake and apple pie (among many others of course), I urge you to try a slice of the caramel cake. After the first gooey bite, you'll be hooked on every caramel-infused morsel.

CoraFaye's Café and Catering is located at 2861 Colorado Boulevard, Denver. It is open Wednesday-Thursday: 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Friday & Saturday: 11 a.m.-8 p.m., Sunday: 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Visa and Mastercard. 303.333.5551.

CoraFaye's, owned by Priscilla Smith, serves "Soul Food" in an atmosphere that looks like your grandmothers living room. The restaurant is named after Priscilla's mother.



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## New Photo Studio at Northfield



Karen Rubin in her new photo studio at Northfield.

Karen Rubin took an unusual path to her new photographic studios above the Main Street retail in The Shops at Northfield Stapleton.

More than twenty years ago, when Karen was working as a registered nurse, her friends and coworkers raved about the quality of the photographs she routinely took of her children, and many people urged her to use her talents professionally. Today, after twenty four years as a successful photographer, the Chicago native owns Karen Rubin Photogra-

phy with studios located on the east side of Northfield's Main Street above Regis Hair Salon.

"I shopped for a studio location for a long time and I loved the energy of Stapleton where I have a great indoor and outdoor studio," Karen says of her new location after a move from southeast Denver. "When I began 20 years ago," she recalls, "having your child's photo taken meant visiting a department store. I knew, intuitively, that if I wanted something more for my children, others would, as well. To know I have helped families create their legacy story through photos gives me great satisfaction."

Working with Kristen Adams, her creative director of four years, Karen takes pride in having an eye for "the fleeting expression and the unexpected interaction," which she says plays a role in giving proud parents and grandparents "a way to hold childhood forever." She adds that a growing number of her clients are young couples who appreciate the distinctive approach and aesthetic value of her work.

"One of my clients told me recently, she and her husband were finishing their basement and considering art but decided to create a gallery of photos of their daughters instead. They started with a small collection and plan to add more images over the years," Karen says.

Karen Rubin Photography will have an open house in its Northfield Main Street studios on Tuesday, February 12th from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, call 303.755.5501. Selections of Karen Rubin's work may be viewed at [www.karenrubin.com](http://www.karenrubin.com).



By Nancy Burkhardt

Big-time comedy has a new home in Northfield Stapleton. The Improv Comedy Club and Dinner Theatre, located across from Bass Pro Outdoor World, opened in November to feature nationally known headliner comics and give local comics-in-training a venue.

Improv General Manager Stacey Hart explained that the Improv is popular with star-quality comics because the Denver club with 425 seats has 27 sister clubs, thus giving headliners an opportunity to book several stints on a tour. The Denver Improv has been host to David Atell and Rickey Smiley, with Tommy Chong coming soon and Christopher Titus on-stage February 8-10.

Tom Wilson, best known as Biff in the movie, "Back to the Future," will take the mike Valentine's Day week.

## Comedy Comes to



Dan Wiley (below) produces "Future Legends of Comedy" for rising Vicky Edgar (above), Dan McGowan and Bo Galvan (below) perform

"He plays the guitar and sings songs. He's really appropriate for date night," Hart said.

On Wednesday nights, the club features "Future Legends of Comedy Shows," Hart said. "You just call in and sign up. There are no auditions. You just have to sign up and then go up and be funny. We want the "TV queen" – NBC not HBO. We don't want it to be too raunchy," she said.

"Future Legends" host Dan Wiley acts as

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# Northfield



comedians on Wednesday nights. in the future legends show.

a mentor to aspiring comics. He appears on-stage himself, but gives advice about presentation and stage presence, according to Hart. “Everybody starts open-mike. It is the way to get to be a star. Maybe somebody from L.A. or N.Y. sees you and says, ‘Come with me,’” Hart said. There is someone from L.A. or N.Y. searching for a comic to make a star in the club every

week, she said.

Hart, herself got into the comedy club business eight years ago at the Funnybone in Omaha. She started out as a telemarketer, became a waitress and moved into the office.

“I’m a ‘behind-the-scenes’ girl,” Hart said. “I do not get onstage. I think you have to have that in your DNA. I got accounting instead.” There is a lovely bar area with chairs and a

fireplace to linger in before dinner and the show, and Happy Hour specials are featured in the bar after the show. Bartenders, who Hart calls funny “wanabe comics,” serve a full bar with a commendable wine selection.

A full dinner menu offers everything from steak and salmon to pizza, hamburgers and club sandwiches. Guests have the option of having dinner or just seeing the show. Companies looking for an alternative to hotel banquet rooms for their conventions might check out the Improv Club. “The food is amazing,” Hart said. “We do breakfast, lunch or off-night dinner. We have a full, high-tech production screen that can be used for your computer presentations.”

Hart advises everyone to “come in and check it out. It’s big and inviting. We’ve got some killer acts coming up. It’s a great night out.” She’ll will be there to welcome you. You will recognize her as the lady with “out-of-control” red hair.

The Improv Comedy Club and Dinner Theatre is located at 8246 East 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Northfield at I-70 and Quebec. The Bar is open 5:30 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. Wednesday through Sunday. Comedy shows are: 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday 7:30 p.m. and 9:45 p.m. Friday and Saturday. The Ticket Office opens at 10:00 a.m. daily (303) 307-1777.



Dan Wiley, emcee



Dan McGowan



Bo Galvan

## MommyMixer Matching Parents with Sitters



Babysitters introduce themselves to parents at a local MommyMixer gathering.

By Kathy Epperson

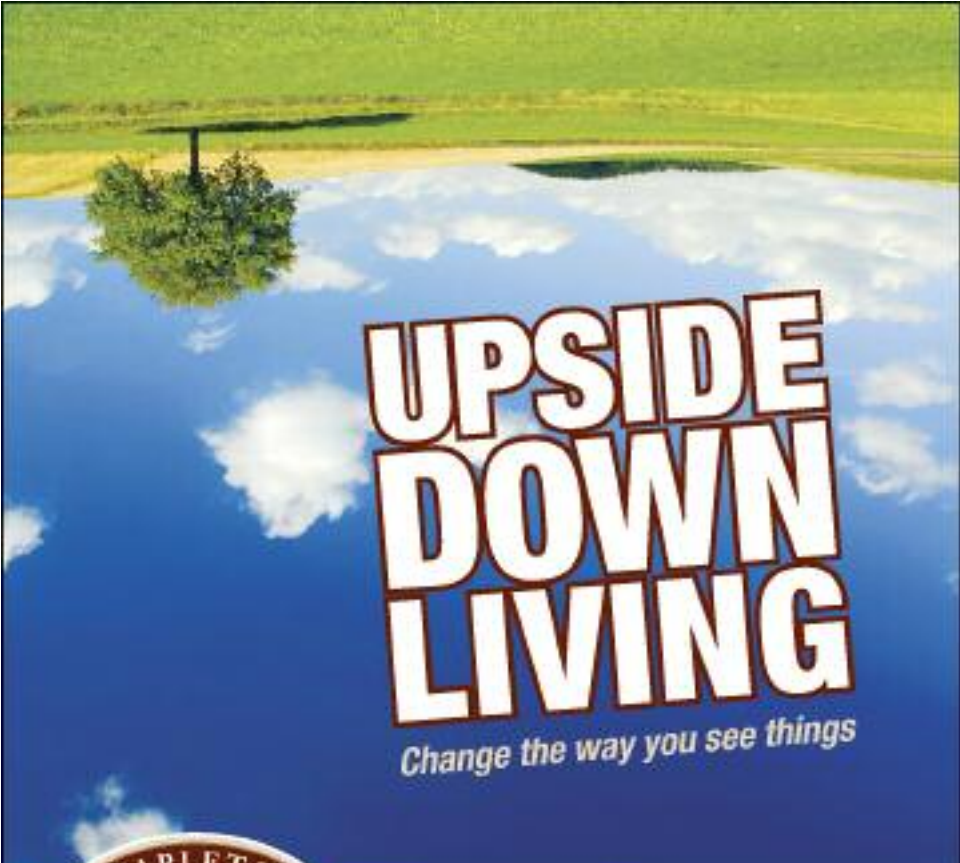
Stapleton mom Meredith Coors is the new city manager for a nationwide service called MommyMixer, which gives college-age babysitters and parents a chance to meet. MommyMixer was originally founded by Mary Sullivan Cooper out of her own experience during college. “I was inspired to create MommyMixer because of my experience as a babysitter in college at the University of Texas,” Mary says. “All through college I was babysitting 30 hours a week, and I constantly found that moms and dads that were strangers would approach me asking if I could help them with childcare or if I had friends that could help. I recognized that if this was so in Austin, it was probably true in many other cities.”

“MommyMixer is a unique service in that it provides an opportunity for families to meet educated, fun, experienced babysitters face-to-face,” says Meredith. “Nothing beats the feeling moms and dads have after attending one of our mixers! Parents no longer need to scurry to piece together help, because they have met tremendous individuals in person and can take home *The Babysitter Book* filled with college sitter resumes that will give them the support and infrastructure they need. At the same time,

students are thrilled to discover valuable connections with great families in the community where they become a very important part of the children’s lives and development. It’s a winning combination!”


MommyMixer, based in Austin, hires local City Managers and Campus Representatives to be the face of MommyMixer in 22 cities.

Meredith, who formerly worked in marketing and is the mother to 3 children (Peter, age 4; Caroline, age 2; and Maggie, age 10 months) decided to become a city manager for MommyMixer because of her own struggles finding qualified babysitters for occasional help. “I think it’s a great way for moms to meet sitters in person and interview them,” she says, “rather than depend on a service that will take a cut of the sitter’s money and send a stranger.” Meredith works with a campus representative at University of Denver that helps with babysitting recruiting, and she is currently looking for a campus representative from Johnson and Wales. Families and college students wanting to stay up to date on upcoming Denver Mixers should sign-up to receive emails on the Join Us page of the website at [www.mommymixer.com](http://www.mommymixer.com). Families must register and pay before attending a Mixer. The next Denver mixer is scheduled for February 26.



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## Jim 'N Nicks BBQ

Jim and Nick's BBQ Restaurant Founder, Nick Pihikas, Jennifer Shaw, owner, and Craig Knapp, general manager, watch as a member of their wait staff serves their signature Bar-B-Q.

By Nancy Burkhart

Stapleton's community atmosphere and the knowledge that Denver is "a great place to raise a family" inspired Jennifer Shaw to bring Jim 'n Nick's Bar-B-Q to Northfield Stapleton.

Jennifer and her husband, Dennis, moved to Denver with their 4-year-old daughter, Courtney, last August. Jennifer was born and raised in Kansas City and, despite having spent the last 13 years in Phoenix, she and Dennis chose Denver for their home.

"We love the mountains and the outdoors, and it gets warm (in the summer) like Phoenix," Shaw said.

"We look for people for Jim 'n Nick's... and then let them choose the market to call home," said Sam Burns, Jim 'n Nick's "Commissioner of Culture" who was in town to help Jennifer get the restaurant in top-notch order for the January 22 opening.

Jim 'n Nick's is not franchised, but has local restaurants with local owners such as Jennifer Shaw, Burns said.

"Our mission is to connect with the community," Shaw said. "We expect families and businessmen for lunch. We expect people to become regulars once they taste the menu.... It's a comfortable place for people watching sports to congregate."

Jim 'n Nick's can accommodate 250 people in a dining area and a bar area that features high-definition TVs for sports-watching. Bar features include Fat Tire, a red ale style beer from New Belgium Brewing Inc. in Fort Collins, Colorado, ales from the Breckenridge Brewery, and hand-brewed English style ales from the Odell Brewing Company in Fort Collins. There is a complete

fresh and never frozen. Meat is slow-cooked over authentic hickory wood. French fries are made from potatoes, not poured out of bags, and pies are made with real rolling pins, Burns said.

"Our hospitality is friendly and genuine," Burns said. "We want people to feel that they are part of the family."

At Jim 'n Nick's Bar-B-Q, it is perfectly acceptable to call in an order to be picked up to take home. Shaw believes that families will appreciate Jim 'n Nick's fresh food policy. "I foresee carryout to be a large part of our business," Shaw said. "We are a 'scratch' (cooking) kitchen. When I'm feeding Courtney, I want to use the best quality."

Shaw's menu favorite is the beef brisket, and she proudly touts the barbecued ribs. "The mac(aroni) and cheese is a staple in my diet," she laughed.

The menu also features "Carl's catfish," hand-breaded catfish named after a friend of the restaurant's founder. And, "Mabel's homemade pies" are named after Mabel Washington, who worked for Jim 'n Nick's, along with numerous other family members.

"It's important for us that we are connected to the community," Shaw said. The restaurant is located in Northfield Stapleton across the parking lot from Bass Pro Outdoor World. Owner Jennifer Shaw and General Manager Craig Knapp will be there to meet you. Hours are Monday - Thursday 11am - 8pm; Friday - Saturday 10am - 8pm; Sunday 12pm - 6pm.

wine selection that includes wines specially chosen to enhance the barbeque experience, and the usual selection of liquor.

"Southern goodness" is the key to the restaurant's ambience and food, according to Burns. Eating at Jim 'n Nick's "is defined by a genuine Southern experience," he said. Everything is "old-fashioned," made from scratch, always

## Mario N Wongs

By Kathy Epperson

The new Mario N Wongs restaurant on East Colfax is an enticing hybrid of Asian and Italian cuisines and cooking styles. Co-owner Jeff Castardi combined his heritage and knowledge of Italian cuisine with techniques and ingredients from Chinese cooking. Jeff knew that many Chinese restaurants in New York City were able to serve fresh, high-quality, healthy ingredients quickly when using a wok," says wife and co-owner Dawn Wolf. The intense heat that woks are able to hold allows for this. Why couldn't he use the same idea with Italian classics that his family had passed down to him?"

Jeff and Dawn, along with third partner John Gaborek, opened Mario N Wongs in September 2007 and consider the restaurant to be in their test market phase still. "We are testing dishes, ingredients, packaging, and more right now," says Dawn. "In March of 2008 we will have our grand opening with the debut of our official menu. The feedback of our customers is extremely important right now in determining many of the ideas that will stay and go."

Some of the current dishes on the menu include Meatballs and Spaghetti, Rigatoni a la Vodka, Mario's Orzo (the Italian version of fried rice), Wong's Lo Mein (the Italian version of Lo Mein). This summer they will also be debuting a full line of gelatos and a new concept in frozen yogurt for the health-conscious consumer who doesn't want all the additives that are in traditional frozen yogurt.

Despite having just launched, business has already been strong. "The reaction has been amazing," Dawn says. "People are intrigued by the concept. A lot of people come in to see exactly what Mario N Wongs is about. They see Egg Rolls with Sausage and Peppers, and they have to try them. By the time they leave, they're already thinking about what they'll be ordering next time."

They have created Mario N Wongs to be very family friendly and plan summer activities to attract families with young children. "We have a large outdoor patio area that we are looking for-



Mario N Wong's Wolf, Owner;

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staff, left to right, Jeremy McMinn, Executive Chef; Dawn Doug Lewden and John Gaborek, Managing Partners

ward to utilizing,” Dawn says. “Our goal is to become a part of the communities we are in, and we picked the location on Colfax because we wanted to be part of the revitalization of this community. We moved to Lowry nearly ten years ago, and it has been so exciting to see all the new and locally-owned restaurants and businesses that are popping up all over Colfax and the surrounding areas. It’s so wonderful to see how many people are supporting us — they want to see us succeed.”

Mario N Wongs delivers to Lowry, Stapleton, Park Hill, Hilltop, Montclair and the surrounding areas; they also cater parties and occasions of all sizes. Future plans include expansion and possible franchising opportunities. Mario N Wongs is located at 6110 E Colfax Ave #4. Call 303-393-1888. Open Monday-Saturday from 11am-9pm, closed on Sunday. Visit online at [www.mariowongs.com](http://www.mariowongs.com).

# Steve’s Snappin’ Dogs

By Kathy Epperson

“Ever since relocating from Connecticut, we heard over and over again that you can’t get a great hot dog in Denver. We changed that,” says Steve Ballas of Steve’s Snappin’ Dogs on Colfax. Steve and his wife Linda took inspiration from Steve’s childhood growing up on the east coast and, after connecting with hot dog supplier Thumann’s of New Jersey, reinterpreted various regional hot dogs from around the country.

Steve and Linda started their business with a truck at the Stapleton and Cherry Creek Farmers Markets as well as at special events and say they still have a great following from Stapleton friends at the restaurant on Colfax they opened in February 2007. With advice and assistance from Denver’s Business Assistance Center and Office of Economic Development, they were able to open in an Enterprise Zone on East Colfax and receive extra help from the city.

“Our hot dogs have a fantastic taste unlike other hot dogs in Colorado, combining a natural casing with a flavorful blend of beef and pork with a smokey flavoring that ‘snaps’ when you bite into it,” says Steve. (Customers may substitute an all beef “Kosher Style” or Bratwurst.) “We recently won the Westword honor of “Best New Store on Colfax 2006”, an honorable mention in “America’s Best Hot Dogs Across America” for AOL City Guide, and Best New Restaurant in 2006 from 5280 Magazine.

Some favorite regional interpretations on the menu include the Chicago Style dog with spicy mustard, green relish, red onions, sliced tomato, dill pickle, sport peppers and celery salt; the Jersey dog with bacon, relish, onions, spicy mustard and caraway sauerkraut; the Atlanta Slaw dog with coleslaw, cheddar jack cheese, red onions, and chili con



Steve Ballas and his wife Linda share one of Steve’s Snappin’ Dogs.

carne; the Dallas dog with chili; and the California dog with lettuce, tomato, fried red and green peppers and cheddar jack cheese. Steve also invented the Denver Burrito dog with chili con carne, jalapenos, bacon, lettuce, tomatoes, cheddar jack cheese and wrapped in a flour tortilla. “Linda kidded me and said nobody would buy that,” says Steve, “but it’s a #1 seller!”

Rounding out the menu are fresh-squeezed lemonade and limeade, shakes, ice cream and various desserts, deep-fried skin-on French fries, beer-battered onion rings, old-fashioned chili-cheese fries, as well as deep fried carrot sticks and green beans with a touch of salt and pepper. A full vegetarian and kids menu is also available.

“I must confess that now I like my dog NAKED!” Steve says. “Just spicy mustard and a toasted bun. That’s how Jason Sheehan, food critic for Westword, likes our dog too. The fantastic combination of the Thumann’s beef and pork dog in the natural casing, with that slight tang of spicy horseradish mustard is truly MMMGOOD!”

Steve and Linda recently created an enclosed and heated patio to accommodate customers throughout the winter. Seating up to 85 people, it also allows them to provide cost-effective birthday parties. Customers are coming from all over the region, and Steve credits their success not only to the quality of their hot dogs but also to their commitment to customer service and focus on creating a fun environment working side by side with their employees. With their Colfax restaurant off to a great start, they plan additional locations in the Denver area in the future.

Residents of Denver since 1996, Steve and Linda have been married for 27 years and have been working side by side for over 20. “I don’t think that either of us could work separately — we wouldn’t know what to do!” says Steve. “We are best friends and equal business partners, and have a unique relationship that most folks wish they had.”

Visit Steve’s Snappin’ Dogs at 3525 E. Colfax Avenue. Call 303-333-SNAP or visit online at [www.stevessnappindogs.com](http://www.stevessnappindogs.com).

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## Coming Soon

### Front Porch Summer Camp Resource Guide

Our annual summer camp guide will be coming soon, but we've been told some camps, particularly the Denver Zoo's Summer Safari camps, fill early. Visit [www.denverzoo.org/education/summerSafari.asp](http://www.denverzoo.org/education/summerSafari.asp) to check on the zoo's summer camps that run between June 2 and Aug 8 and accommodate ages 4 years through grade 5.

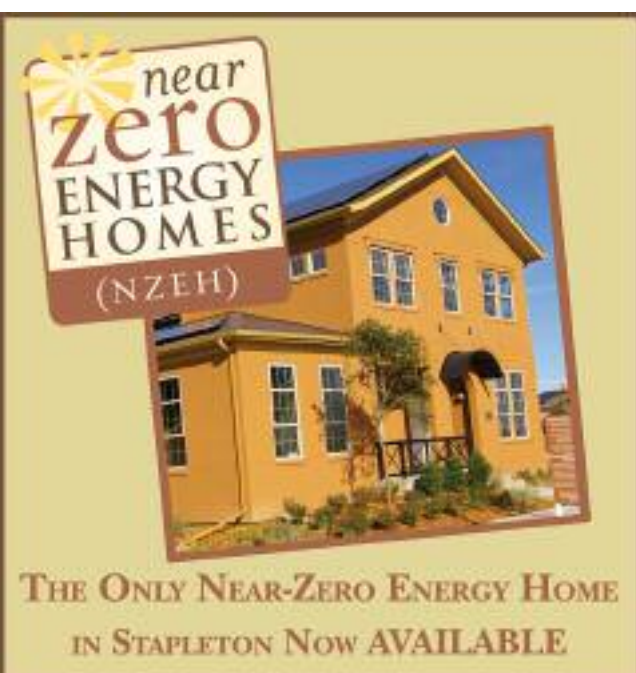
## Spring Break Camp

### Dramatic Adventures Super Hero Academy March 24 - 29 from 9am - 12pm, ages 4-8

Participants practice the dramatic powers every hero needs. Practical problem solving skills are used to battle every day challenges and overcome extraordinary obstacles. Montview Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St. Cost: \$160. Call 303-377-0785 or visit [www.dramaticadventures.com](http://www.dramaticadventures.com).

### Physically Handicapped Actors & Musical Artists League, Inc. Announces Audition for "Side Show" Production

Physically and/or developmentally challenged men, women and children of all ages are invited to prepare one short musical number and one contemporary monologue. Resume and headshot are requested. Call the PHAMALy Hotline for more information or to schedule an audition time, 303-575-0005. Side Show is based on the true story of Siamese twins who became stars during the Depression.



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## Free Program every 3rd Wednesday in '08 Health Staples at Stapleton

Denver Health Staples is a series of FREE health/life classes to help people stay healthy. It also incorporates everyday life topics, such as decorating, home improvements and cooking! The Health Staples series will take place every 3rd Wednesday of the month in 2008, from 6:30-8pm in the Stapleton Community Room at 2823 Roslyn St. For more information on this free health series, please email [stapletonobgyn@exempla.org](mailto:stapletonobgyn@exempla.org) or contact Cindy Aspromonte at 303-403-6333. The series is sponsored by the the Stapleton Master Community Association and Exempla Healthcare.

**February 20, 6:30-8pm**

### Chocolate and Herbs: What Your Body Craves

Presentation by Cindy Aspromonte, Nurse Practitioner from Stapleton OB-GYN. In addition, clinical herbalists from Apothecary Tinctura will discuss and offer samples of herbal medicines to help you stay healthy during cold and flu season and samples of tasty chocolates as antioxidants.

## Active Minds – Free Adult Seminars

All Active Minds presentations are free and are held from 7:00-8:00 pm at the Denver School of Science and Technology, 2000 Valentia St., Denver, CO 80238. RSVP to Stapleton Foundation, 303-468-3223.

### The Mormon Faith – Mon, Feb. 4

This presentation will examine the origins, teachings and practices of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, including the teachings of founder Joseph Smith, Jr. as well as those of Brigham Young. The sessions will also examine some of the controversial elements of the faith and clarify the current position of the church regarding these practices.

### Venezuela – Mon., Feb. 18

Under the leadership of democratically elected President Hugo Chavez, Venezuela has become increasingly at odds with the United States. While both countries share a mutual interest in Venezuela's oil reserves, Chavez opposes U.S. foreign policy efforts, a point underscored by his efforts to strengthen relations with Iran. The presentation will explore the origins of this escalating conflict.

### Government & The Media – Mon., Mar. 3

Over 35 years after Watergate, this presentation will explore the often stormy relationship between the government and the media. The role of the media as a watchdog in society will be examined, and how journalistic standards have changed over time regarding what should and should not be exposed to the public.



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## Celebrate Black History Month

*Colorado History Museum, Feb. 16th*

### Cookin' & Jazz - Celebrating Black Heritage in Food & Song

Cookin' & Jazz blends sumptuous ethnic flavors, live jazz, and dancing into a one-of-a-kind Black History Month Celebration. Guests will be treated to a live tribute to jazz legends and delectable food from the Black Diaspora including African, Cajun, American Soul, and Caribbean cuisine. This year's theme is "Celebrating Our Roots." Sponsored by American Family Insurance, DocuPlus, Kendall Jackson, and Anheuser Busch.

The event will be held from 6 - 11 p.m. on Saturday, February 16, 2008, at the Colorado History Museum (1300 Broadway, Downtown Denver). Tickets are \$60. Call 303-400-5928 or visit [www.denverblackpages.com](http://www.denverblackpages.com) (click on Cookin' & Jazz at the top of the page).

## Historic Walking Tours

Take a walking tour with local historian, author and lecturer, Wallace Yvonne Tollette. Tour the historic Five Points neighborhood, or hear presentations on Dr. Justina Ford, Colorado's first black female licensed physician, abolitionist Sojourner Truth, and former slave and washer woman Aunt Clara Brown, and others by request. She can be reached at 303-830-1691 or by email at [westernimages@juno.com](mailto:westernimages@juno.com).

## Black American West Museum & Heritage Center

This museum preserves the history of Blacks in the western United States. Located at 3091 California Street, 303- 292-2566.

## The Stiles African-American Heritage Center

The mission of the Heritage Center is to help all people become aware of the significant contributions African Americans have made toward the development and progress of America. Located at 2607 Glenarm Place, 303-294-0597.

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Denver Public Library - Blair Caldwell Branch  
Black History Month Film Series

The African-Americans in Politics Film Series of Fresh City Life is free and open to the public. It is hosted by Denver's Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library, located in Five Points at 2401 Welton St., 720-865-2401.

**Feb. 5, 6:30pm – “Politics, The New Black Power”**  
Writer and reporter Juan Williams narrates an inspiring and intelligent documentary of what he calls the “crossover politicians,” politicians that manage to secure the support of white voters. Williams analyzes the suspicions and pressures that surround black politicians who are making it in the mainstream. He presents a historical account of black politicians from the Reconstruction period to the Civil Rights Movement and their sacrifices that paved the way for future politicians.

**Feb. 12, 6:30pm – “Street Fight”**  
Examining the 21st century political arena, Street Fight is a hard-hitting, thought-provoking documentary of the 2002 Mayoral race between two New Jersey African-American politicians, Cory Booker and four-term incumbent, Mayor Sharpe James, who had heavyweight political machines Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton supporting him. Nominated to receive an Oscar for Best Documentary at the 2005 Academy Awards, this film highlights how the electoral politics between candidates of the same race can turn into a battle over authenticity.

**Feb. 19, 2008, 6:30pm – “Chisholm 72”**  
A powerful message rings forth as Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman to run for president, announces her candidacy in 1972. This film documents the political atmosphere that pre-



Above: A portrait with some of Denver's African American leaders, held by “Daddy” Bruce Randolph, is part of a mural at the entrance to the Blair Caldwell Museum and Library.

vailed during Chisholm's campaign, one of bigotry and disenchantment. Chisholm first appeared on the political scene in 1968 when she became the first African-American woman elected to Congress representing New York.

**Feb. 26, 6:30pm – “Bling”**  
This independent film brings together the two worlds of Hip Hop and the diamond trade (Blood Diamonds) associated with the civil war in Sierra Leone. This is a PG13 movie.

To register to receive online program announcements, visit [www.denverlibrary.org/fresh](http://www.denverlibrary.org/fresh) or call 720-865-1205 for details.

History of African Americans in Colorado and the West  
Blair Caldwell Library and Museum

By Wallace Yvonne Tollette

There is a jewel at 2401 Welton Street in Denver. Appropriately located at the gateway to the historic Five Points Welton Street corridor, it's the 40,000 square-foot, three-story Blair-Caldwell African-American Research Library of the Denver Public Library. Dedicated in 2003, its mission and goals are to serve as an educational and cultural resource for the people of Denver, Colorado and the world, focusing on the history, literature, art, music, religion and politics of African-Americans in Colorado and throughout the Rocky Mountain West.

Former mayor Wellington E. Webb was elected Denver's 41st mayor in 1991. He was Denver's first African American mayor. Re-elected in 1995 and 1999 Mayor Webb, together with former First Lady Wilma J. Webb, felt that there wasn't enough effort put forth in the preservation of Black history and they determined that they would help

correct that omission. In 1999, during his third term as Mayor, they saw the urgent need to collect this legacy in one place before it was lost forever.

“There's so much history, and we need to capture that for young people,” he said. “So much of it is in boxes, in basements or in our heads.” And, some of it had also been lost to history. But with true grit and tenacity, the task of planning, collecting, cataloguing and preserving was begun. Focus groups were formed to help determine what an African American (continued on page 22)



Below: Blair Caldwell museum display of a late 1800's barber shop in Five Points. Barber shops were a popular gathering place for men who lived in the neighborhood.

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**Friday, Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.** a special lecture by Dr. Ann Graham Brock entitled, "Sent to be Apostles—Peter, Paul and Mary Magdalene" touching on early Christians's approach to issues such as gender in religion. (Cost (\$10, Seniors over 60 free) Refreshments afterwards.)

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# Making 100 Look Easy

Dora Hayes was born on a farm outside of Jackson, Tennessee on January 16, 1908. A resident of the Clyburn Apartments for seniors in Stapleton, Dora shared with the Front Porch some memories about her hundred years. When asked what was the most significant change she observed over that time, she didn't talk about the change from horse drawn wagons to jet planes; she didn't talk about computers and cell phones; she talked with sadness about the violence in today's society and how, as a child growing up on a farm, she never even heard of a person being killed until she was in her 20's. "People didn't have much money but they were happier. You didn't have to worry or be afraid," she says.



Dora Hayes, who turned 100 on Jan. 16, 2008, holds a coal oil lamp that was in her childhood home, which didn't have electricity until she was in her twenties.

Dora was the third of eight children, and her mother died when she was seven years old. She recalls that her father built a platform for her to stand on, so she could help with cooking over the wood stove after her mother died. She and her siblings and neighbor kids walked almost an hour to get to and from school each day. She remembers the whole class doing exercises together at the beginning of the school day. Schools were segregated and there was no high school for her to attend, so after 8th grade she worked on her family's farm. They raised cotton, corn, watermelons, potatoes, tomatoes and strawberries, among other crops. They had cows, and she helped churn the butter, recalling that she had to push the dasher up and down through the cream.

She married in her early 20's and, together with her husband, continued to live and work on her family's farm. The farm didn't get electricity until after she was married, and it was about that time when she took her first ride in a car. She and her husband later moved into Jackson, then to St. Louis where

during the war she welded shells, which were then sent to another plant to be filled with ammunition. She recalls that with the announcement that the war was over, her job ended just as suddenly. Dora's first plane ride was from St. Louis to Denver in the 60's to



Five generations of Dora Hayes' family: clockwise from left, Dora's daughter Gladys, granddaughter Cassandra, Dora, great-great granddaughter Nevaeh (heaven spelled backwards), and great-granddaughter Geneva.

want them to treat you." She lives by her words — she has gone into people's homes and cooked and cleaned for them when they were sick and needed help.

visit her son, and it was after her husband died in 1975 that she came to Denver to live.

Dora Hayes makes it look easy to live to be 100 — her hearing and eyesight are good, her mind is sharp and she walks regularly, including taking a cart to the grocery store. Her diet? "No pork, sweets, or rich food, and not much salt." Dora's philosophy of life is, "Try to help if you can. Treat people like you'd

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# Eating For Health

By Elizabeth Yarnell



# 4 Paws News

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

## It's All In The Bones

My five-year old is obsessed with bones lately. He has assembled scale model skeletons, can name all the major joints, and yesterday announced that there are 206 bones in the human body. "Really?" I wondered. Perhaps we ought to give a little more thought to our bones.

Our bones build up during our youth and then begin breaking down as early as our twenties. They are helped along by soda pop (phosphorus leaches minerals from bones), pregnancy and nursing (your body will steal missing nutrients from your bones to give to the baby), sedentary lifestyles and poor nutrition. Both men and women can suffer from poor bone density.

Luckily, you can continually help your bones regain lost mass. Weight-bearing exercises can help a lot, but you also need to practice good nutrition. Everyone knows that calcium is essential for building bones, but without vitamin D calcium is useless. The best source of vitamin D is one that is free: sunlight. Even just a few minutes outside each day can make a difference.

While dairy foods can be good sources of calcium, they are not the only ones. Tofu and other soy products, nuts and beans are all high in calcium. Sesame seeds and products such as sesame paste (tahini), often used in middle eastern dishes, have almost five times the amount of calcium as milk products. Greens such as kale, arugula and seaweed all have significant amounts of calcium as well.

Here's a recipe to try that has made many a convert out of non-tofu eaters. It's seductively spicy and creamy with an addictive blend of flavors. Happy cooking!

### Hot & Spicy Thai Curry with Tofu and Rice (Serves 2)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 cup white rice                                     | 14 oz can coconut milk, reg. or light                     |
| 6-8 oz. tofu, extra firm                             | 1 Tbsp. Thai curry paste                                  |
| 1/2 medium zucchini,<br>cut into 1" sticks 1/2" wide | 1 1/2 Tbsp. Thai fish sauce<br>(can substitute soy sauce) |
| 8 oz. can bamboo shoots, drained and rinsed          | 2 tsp. sugar  |
| 1/2 red bell pepper, cut in 1" sticks                | 1/4 tsp. paprika  |
| 1/2 yellow bell pepper, cut in 1" sticks             | 1 Tbsp. lime juice  |

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Spray inside of 2-quart cast iron Dutch oven and lid with canola oil. Rinse rice in strainer under cold water until water runs clear. Place into pot and smooth into an even layer. Do not add water to the pot. Drain tofu and place on bed of paper towels. Cover with folded paper towels and press firmly to squeeze as much liquid out as possible. Cut into 1" cubes and place on top of rice. Top with layers of zucchini, bamboo shoots and bell peppers.

In a separate bowl, whisk coconut milk, curry paste, fish sauce, sugar, paprika and lime juice. Be aware that coconut milk separates into liquid and solids when stored; be sure to use all the contents of the can. Whisk until all ingredients are dissolved. Pour mixture over top. Cover and bake for 45 minutes or until rice is tender. You'll smell the full-bodied aroma wafting from the oven when it is ready—3 minutes after first whiff.

### Notes

My cousin Julie learned this recipe when her sister, Abi, worked in Thailand. Julie throws in whatever vegetables she happens to have on hand and the results are always yummy.

Notice that this recipe does not call for water to hydrate the rice. The coconut milk provides enough liquid to cook the rice and make a wonderful curry sauce that oozes with flavor.

### Tips

- Thai curry paste comes in yellow, red, and green—any of which work beautifully in this dish. Try the Mae Ploy brand found at Asian markets. Use more or less as your taste buds demand; what is presented here is mild to medium heat.
- Dead set against tofu? Consider substituting 1/2-3/4 lb. raw, cleaned shrimp or scallops, chicken breasts or fish fillets in place of the tofu.
- It doesn't seem to make any difference if you use regular coconut milk or reduced fat.
- To make this for 4 people, simply double the recipe, use a 3 1/2- or 4-quart Dutch oven, and bake for 53 minutes.

Elizabeth Yarnell is a Certified Nutritional Consultant, inventor and author of the award-winning *Glorious One-Pot Meals: A new quick & healthy approach to Dutch oven cooking*. The *Glorious One-Pot Meals* cooking process holds US patent number 6,846,504. Hundreds of students in her cooking classes have tasted and loved this recipe! Front Porch readers receive a 10% discount on products at [www.GloriousOnePotMeals.com](http://www.GloriousOnePotMeals.com). Find more healthy eating tips from Elizabeth at <http://www.EffortlessEating.com>.

## Unexpected Pet Bills Lead to New Ways to Pay

Between the United States and Canada, pet owners will spend more than \$45 billion on toys, foods, accessories and healthcare for their four-legged family members. But, despite this love for our pets, a single traumatic event or serious disease can devastate personal finances or potentially lead to heart-wrenching decisions. Fortunately, the availability of pet insurance, pet health savings plans and even credit for pets may help some pet owners keep their pets around longer.

Pet insurance is not a brand new idea and actually has been around for more than 25 years. In almost every case, pet insurance works as a reimbursement insurance. This means that you, the pet owner, pay the veterinarian for the services and then submit a claim to the company. After deductibles are applied, the insurance company will send out a check based on the type of plan you purchased for your pet. Although you won't get 100% of your money back, it can help to ease the financial burden in the event of serious disease or injury. But be careful as many diseases considered inherited will not be covered.

Another option for helping pet owners plan for unexpected events is a pet savings plan. Financial institutions can set up an account with automatic deposits. If you don't see the money, you don't miss it. Saving just \$30 per month (a typical premium for pet insurance) in an account that generates 5% interest will create \$6,000 over the lifetime of the pet.

Most veterinarians cannot offer any sort of billing plan and many owners have their cash and credit cards tied up with other purchases. Fortunately, for some pet owners, CareCredit may be a solution. CareCredit offers several flexible payment options that allow clients to make payments over a period of several months. But, like other lines of credit, interest rates can skyrocket if the balance is not paid within a specified time frame.

The advances in veterinary medicine over the past few decades have been absolutely amazing. If your pet suffers a traumatic injury or serious illness, make sure that you understand the costs as well as the procedures. Talk with your veterinarian about the options that are available to you and, above all, be proactive in planning for your pet's healthcare.

Dr. Smith's clinic, The 29th Ave. Animal Hospital, is located in the East 29th Ave. Town Center at Stapleton in the courtyard next to Fantastic Sams. Call 303.394.3937 for more information.

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## Chinese New Year

By Eugenie Chen

February 7, 2008 is the first day of Chinese Year 4706. It's the year of the Rat, a Yang (positive) year. Rat people are said to be clever, ambitious, creative, hard-working, fastidious, charming and sociable, but can be a bit stingy when it comes to sharing their wealth or possessions.

In Chinese astrology, every year is represented by an animal. The cycle is twelve years, with a different animal each year. The year of rat is the first in the 12 animal signs. The date of Chinese New Year changes every year. It is a 15-day celebration, and on the 15th day the celebration is called the Lantern Festival.

A rat year is a time of hard work, activity and renewal. It's a good year to begin a new job, get married, launch a product or make a fresh start.

Chinese New years or Spring Festival is the biggest holiday in Chinese culture. It is celebrated with festivities, fireworks, brightly colored lights, special meals with family and gift giving. Like Christmas in the western world, most Chinese travel home to be with family for the New Year celebration.

On the days before the New Year celebration, Chinese families give their home a thorough cleaning. It is believed the cleaning sweeps away the bad luck of the preceding year and makes their homes ready for good luck. Brooms and dust pans are put away on the first day so that luck can-



not be swept away.

The biggest event of any Chinese New Year's Eve is the reunion dinner every family will have usually held in or near the home of the most senior member of the family. The New Year's Eve dinner is very sumptuous and traditionally includes chicken and fish.

The first day is for the welcoming of the deities of the heavens and earth. Many people, especially Buddhists, abstain from meat consumption on the first day because it is believed that this will ensure longevity for them. Some consider lighting fires on New Year's Day to be bad luck, so all food to be consumed is cooked the day before.

Some families may invite a lion dance troupe as a symbolic ritual to usher in the Lunar New Year as well as to evict bad spirits from the premises. People also give red packets containing cash to junior members of the family, mostly children.

Clothing mainly featuring the color red is commonly worn throughout the Chinese New Year because it is believed that red will scare away evil spirits and bad fortune. In addition, people typically wear new clothes from head to toe to symbolize a new beginning in the New Year.

*Eugenie Chen moved to Denver from Guangzhou, China in 1992. She is the owner of the Taste of Asia Restaurant in Quebec Square, which will have red envelopes and New Year's crafts for kids from February 7th to the 9th. She can be reached at 303-388-8983.*

## Wal-Mart Donates 5,000 CFLs to Denver Residents

City Council President Michael Hancock and Greenprint Denver Director Michele Weingarden joined representatives from Wal-Mart at Stapleton's Quebec Square to announce the company's giveaway of 5,000 energy efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs free to Denver residents. Residents should check their Council district website to see how they can receive a free light bulb. Go to [www.denvergov.org](http://www.denvergov.org) and search Elected Officials for Council district websites. Greenprint Denver is a sustainability initiative of the City of Denver.



## Tips for Opening a New Business in Denver

By Dori Hennecken

There is so much to do when you start a small business. Did you know there are some wonderful websites to help you? Following is a list of some important web sites that you may need.

Contact the Colorado Secretary of State at [www.sos.state.co.us](http://www.sos.state.co.us) to search/register trade name Form a new LLC or S Corp

Contact Colorado Department of Revenue at [www.revenue.state.co.us](http://www.revenue.state.co.us) for Employment Taxes and Sales and Use Taxes

Contact the IRS at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for a Form SS-4 - Application for Employer Identification Number. Use form 1040-ES for estimated tax payments

Contact [www.eftps.gov](http://www.eftps.gov) to enroll in the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS) and to make estimated tax payments electronically

Contact City and County of Denver at [www.denvergov.org](http://www.denvergov.org) for Sales, Use, Lodger's and Occupational Tax Registration

Contact State of Colorado at [www.state.co.us](http://www.state.co.us) for a variety of resources available for new and existing business owners through the Office of Economic Development.

*Dori Hennecken, CPA, MBA and a Certified QuickBooks Pro Advisor lives and works in Stapleton. She specializes in nonprofits and small businesses and can be reached at [DoriCPA@comcast.net](mailto:DoriCPA@comcast.net).*

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# Sustainability at Stapleton


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



# Green Your Valentine's Day

*Be sweet to the planet this Valentine's Day  
by following the environmentally friendly tips below:*



 Buy Valentine's cards that are printed on recycled paper stock. Check the back of the card for the recycled logo. You can also send e-mail cards or make your own with items you have around the house. And remember to recycle your envelopes and paper valentines when you are done with them!



♥ Give organic flowers or live bushes, shrubs, or trees that can be planted in the spring.



♥ If a diamond purchase is part of your plan, ask your jeweler to provide information on where their diamonds come from so that you buy a conflict-free diamond.




♥ Give certified fair-trade chocolate, which pays a living wage to workers on plantations that do not use forced child labor. Premium chocolates are often both organic and fair trade. Just look for the certification on the wrapper on chocolates at your local health food or specialty grocery store.



♥ Instead of driving to a restaurant for Valentine's Day dinner, walk to one of the eateries in the 29th Avenue Town Center or cook a romantic dinner at home.



 Bake cookies or other goodies for your valentine and package them in reusable and/or recyclable containers.



♥ Don't buy anything at all—stay home and snuggle by the fire.

# Become a Denver Master Composter and Recycler!

Denver Recycles and Denver Urban gardens are accepting applications until February 20th for their 2008 Master Composter Training and Outreach Program. This is a great opportunity to learn all about composting and recycling in Denver while giving something back to your community.

Applicants selected for the program receive 40 hours of instruction in compost science, bin construction, worm composting, recycling and solid waste management, urban gardening and community outreach. In exchange for your training you'll be required to return 40 hours of community service teaching composting and recycling to Denver residents. You'll have a year to complete your community service requirement.

To apply you need not be an experienced composter or gardener, but you must be able to commit the time necessary to attend the classes, tours and demonstration site sessions. A materials fee is requested but not required. Classes will be held about once a week for 10 weeks on a combination of Monday evenings, Saturday mornings and one Thursday field trip. Approximately 30 enthusiastic and committed participants will be selected.

To apply or express interest call Denver Urban Gardens at 303-292-9900 or send an e-mail to [DenverRecycles@ci.denver.co.us](mailto:DenverRecycles@ci.denver.co.us). Applicants will be invited to a short interview to learn more about the program.

For more information, including the 2008 Class Schedule, visit  
[www.DenverGov.org/DenverRecycles](http://www.DenverGov.org/DenverRecycles)

## Greener Office Supplies

**D**o you order office supplies for a business or your home? If so, you have probably noticed how much easier it is to find “green” office supplies – paper products with recycled content, refillable pens and ink cartridges and non-toxic cleaning materials – than it used to be. Office Depot organizes all of their environmentally preferable products together online at [www.officedepot.com/buygreen](http://www.officedepot.com/buygreen). They even have a Buying Green Guide that tells you what to look for in various product categories and defines some of the terms that are used to describe green office products.

If you represent a business that orders supplies through Office Depot you can request a copy of their "Green Book" which contains almost 3,000 products featuring a wide range of environmental attributes and guidance on creating an environmentally-preferable office. To order, go to <http://www.community.officedepot.com/gb.asp>

# New Green Roof at Botanic Gardens

The Denver Botanic Gardens has opened the city's first publicly accessible green roof, on top of the Gardens' Gift Shop. The Gardens' green roof is the first on a city-owned building in Denver, and will be a highly visible demonstration of the many benefits of green roofs for communities and building owners. The Gardens is also using the roof to research the most effective green roof plant material for the Rocky Mountain region.

This new green roof will not only help the Gardens to save money on heating and cooling the Gift Shop, but will also educate the public on the value green roofs bring to our environment. In addition to the environmental benefits, green roofs increase property value, reduce heating and cooling costs, and can more than double the lifespan of a roofing membrane by protecting it from sunlight and temperature variations. With the loss of natural areas to development, adding green space on top of buildings will provide habitat for birds, insects and other wildlife. Other benefits of green roofs include reduction in storm water, pollution reduction and noise reduction.

The green roof is open to the public during regular admission hours. The Denver Botanic Gardens will be open for free to Colorado residents on the following days in 2008: February 18th; March 17th; April 22nd; July 21st; September 27th; October 18th. For information on hours and admission, visit [www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org).



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## ECE Deadline Is Feb. 22

Applications for Early Childhood Education 3 and ECE4 are available at the Bill Roberts K-8 front office. Please complete and return application with required documentation\* to Bill Roberts K-8 by Feb. 22. Call 720-424-2640 for more information.

\*Kindergarten/ECE required documentation:

- Original birth certificate (a copy will be made)
- Immunization records
- Proof of residency - mortgage statement/document or notarized lease agreement

## Don't Let Market Plunge Derail Your Investment Strategy

By Natalie Robbins

If you're an investor, you've probably had happier times - the drop on Tuesday, Jan. 22, shook up a lot of people. You're probably wondering, "What's causing this market decline?"

Looming recession - Leading economic indicators suggest a significant slowdown in growth. For example, the unemployment rate has risen to 5 percent, up from 4.4 percent last March. Since 1949, we haven't seen such a big rise in unemployment without a recession.

Subprime loan crisis - The subprime crisis may have spread to the extent that consumers are being forced to pull back from spending.

Decline in international stocks - Because the U.S. is a huge part of the global economy, international markets have been affected by our markets' 15% drop (prior to Jan. 22). Many of these markets are down between 20 and 30 percent over the past several months.

The Federal Reserve cut short-term interest rates by three-fourths of a point - the Fed's biggest rate cut since October 1984. By making borrowing cheaper, the Fed hopes to

jump-start the economy. Furthermore, the President and Congress are working to pass a stimulus package. And inflation and interest rates are still relatively low, which is typically positive news for the financial markets.

You're probably wondering, "How should I respond?" Many stocks have already fallen 25 or 30 percent - which means they may now be good values. In fact, recessions and their accompanying market declines can be great opportunities for long-term investors.

Consider this quote from Warren Buffett: "Most people get interested in stocks when everyone else is. The time to get interested is when no one else is. You can't buy what is popular and do well. The dumbest reason in the world to buy a stock is because it's going up." So, if you have room in your portfolio to add appropriate investments, look for those opportunities now.

If you've created a long-term strategy - one that is suitable for your needs, goals, risk tolerance and time horizon - stick with it. Bad times don't last - but smart investors do.

Natalie Robbins is a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones. She may be reached at 303-320-7752.

# Choosing the Best

*In this era of school choice, many parents visit several schools to find the best fit for their child. To give parents more information about local schools, the Front Porch will, over coming months, print local principals' answers to the following four questions. Featured this month are Westerly Creek Elementary and Bill Roberts Elementary and Middle School.*

1. If a new parent visited your school and asked, "Why should I pick your school?" what would you reply?
2. What, if any, specialized programs have you seen in other schools that you would like to institute, in some form, at your school?
3. What have been your biggest challenges in this school year?
4. What are your main priorities for the upcoming '08-'09 school year?

**Westerly Creek Elementary School,  
Jill Corcoran, Principal**



parents to think about three "non-negotiables" that they want in a school for their family. Once that is determined, ask what school will best meet those needs. It needs to be the right fit for your child and family. WCE is a small intimate neighborhood school. We implement the

1. I believe that all the Schools in Stapleton community will offer any student a top notch education. I would ask

Denver Public Schools curriculum for literacy and math while differentiating to meet the needs of all our learners.

2. As a new principal, I am working to create a strong professional learning community, and in this first year, our focus was to develop our school improvement plan and to understand the needs of the school and the community. The Westerly Creek Community believes that love of learning, high academic achievement and parental involvement are keys to a lifelong education. Our number one focus at this time is to be an excellent neighborhood school.

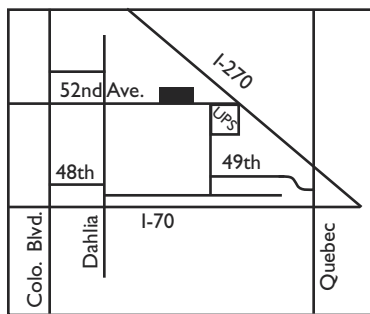
3. Being a principal is an adventure. Each day is new and full of surprises. My biggest challenge this school year is learning and understanding all of the district policies and procedures that all principals need to know while meeting the needs of the school as well as the community. I feel as if I am the luckiest principal!

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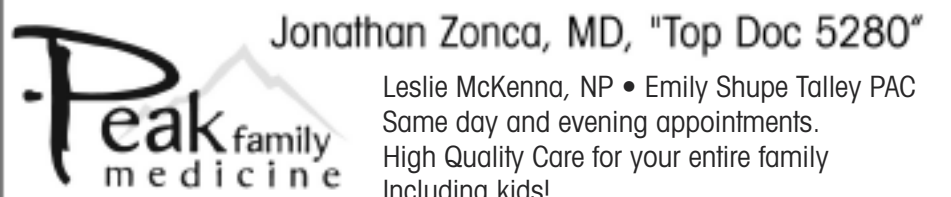
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# School For Your Child

I am surrounded by an exceptional community of excellent teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, involved parents, and most of all, the greatest kids around!

4. My main priorities for the upcoming school year would be to secure more excellent teachers for the new positions that we will have open as we build out the school. Provide ongoing professional learning opportunities to all staff members to enhance our effectiveness as professionals so our students reap the benefits. Continue to be the very best at all that we do to ensure a quality education for all of our students. Use all the work we have done this year as a professional learning community to continue toward our goal of being an excellent school.

**Bill Roberts Elementary and Middle School,  
Trich Lea, Principal**



1. A parent should pick a school because it is a good match for their child-that should be the most important reason; not because it is convenient or easier to get to; or because of a start and end time or because it is on the way to work. William Roberts ECE-8 is a community of learners from age 3 all the way up to the eighth grade. If a family is here for eleven years, that would create a sense of loyalty between the school family and the home. The chance that our school community would have to watch, to assist and be a part of a child growing up for that length of time will be so beneficial. At this school, you will see middle aged children helping younger students read, you'll see them assisting in classrooms as peer assistants. You may see them helping the younger grade children in the computer lab or in Physical Education Class. The connection between the older and

younger children has been so wonderful. Anyone visiting William Roberts would see a community that identifies and creates opportunities for growth and for challenge for children through a rigorous and differentiated curriculum.

2. I am aware of specialized programs throughout the area. Many areas have been considered including:
- a Gifted Program or a highly challenging program;
  - a Second Language Program;
  - an Arts Focused Program;
  - a Dual Language Program; and
  - a Whole Child Program.

Despite the focus you give a school, it must be differentiated and customized to meet the needs of all children. It is about knowing the children and how they learn. Every program has its strengths and challenges, but I believe the most important factor of any particular program is the expertise of the teacher. That in itself will allow a child to grow and succeed more than anything regardless of the label of a particular program.

3. Our biggest challenge this year has been to find, fund and create extra-curricular activities for our middle school population. Electives and sports are just two things that we have to develop and enhance for our middle school students so we can continue to create a competitive environment right now for those children. We don't have time to be complacent. The competition is tough. I believe we can become a stellar ECE-8 school and we are on our way. Money and resources have to be aligned with that too! That seems to be the unfortunate truth to it all.

4. The main priorities for the 08/09 school year include:
- Increase and expand our electives for Middle School
  - The start and continued growth and success of an Advanced Kindergarten class with the possibility of allowing it to grow through the grades
  - An environment that allows children to flex in and out of classes based on their strengths
  - Staff offerings of their own professional development expertise throughout the school to their colleagues
  - Continued success through our Early Release

- The continued expansion of our enrichment programs for every child at every age
- Peer coaching and the possibility of lab classrooms
- Continued collaboration of teachers across grade level and vertically
- Content area teaching
- Platooning
- Small class sizes - especially at the primary level

- Increased use of technology
- Foreign Language
- Friday Early Release and the continuation of our Professional Learning Communities
- Enhanced sport programs
- Parent Involvement
- Increased mental health staff



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# Jazz in Five Points

(continued from page 3) and was a very successful businessman, helped to finance the musicians. Jazz drummer Shelly Rhym helped find housing for them because they could not stay in downtown hotels due to strict segregation laws. Mr. Rhym also held jam sessions for the musicians in the basement of the Ex-Servicemen's Club across the street from the Rossonian. And Leroy Smith, jazz impresario/businessman, and radio show host, heavily promoted jazz and also coined the phrase, 'cool, crazy, hot' jazz. He also helped draw up contracts for the musicians and was the go-between for the promoters and the musicians. In addition to the contributions of these three, jazz violinist George Morrison founded the Black musicians union."

A play list might announce: Illinois Jacquet, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Jordan, Billy Eckstine, or Billie Holiday, to name a few. Mr. Burrell chuckled when reminiscing about Nellie Lutcher who played here four years. With a twinkle in his eye, Mr. Burrell stated, "A true lady to be sure; however, she popularized a song with the lyrics, *Come on down to my house, baby, ain't nobody home but me*. That was highly risqué for the times."

Mr. Steen added that Five Points was a destination point for visitors to the city and also it was a self-contained neighborhood for Black people. "Everything was right here," he stated. "We didn't have to travel outside the Five Points area for goods and services. There were grocery stores, drugstores, churches, barber/beauty shops, a hardware store, restaurants – Kenny's Minute Spot Diner had the absolute best hamburgers and lemon pie. Five Points was like the Harlem of the West."

However, with integration creeping in during the 1960's, entertainment began to move downtown, according to both Mr. Burrell and Mr. Steen. One of the first clubs to integrate was the Band Box, which opened in about 1957. Nancy Wilson played there. Following that were the Melody Lounge, the Senate Lounge and the Emerson Street East lounge. The glory days of Five Points jazz steadily declined. Empty buildings now stand where great sounds once emanated and jazz lovers from many ethnic groups

crowded the venues.

Since 2004, in observance of Jazz Appreciation Month in April, the Denver Musicians Association and The Denver Office of Cultural Affairs in association with the Historic Five Points Arts and Culture District, has been sponsoring the Five Points Jazz Festival which features many jazz musicians in live performances at various venues along the Welton Street strip. This year, however, the committee has decided that because most of the venues are too small, the festival will be moved outdoors and held on May 17th. The month of April will be set aside for jazz education classes. The entire event is free and open to the public. Information may be obtained by calling Gina Rubano at the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs at 720 865-4325.

Wallace Yvonne Tollette, a resident of northeast Denver, is the author of *Colorado Black Leadership Profiles*, which tells the stories of over 700 notable Afro-Americans from Colorado. She can be reached at [westernimages@juno.com](mailto:westernimages@juno.com) or by phone 303-830-1691.

## History of 5 Points

(continued from page 3) many residents moved from the Five Points area and relocated to other neighborhoods. This precipitated a major decline in population as well as in goods and services, leaving behind not only boarded up commercial spaces but also some dilapidated housing. However, by 2007, the neighborhood had begun to rebound, and new housing was developed with prices ranging from the high \$200,000s to \$750,000. The proximity of Five Points to downtown and the convenience of Light Rail service now make it an attractive place to live. I believe that within a few years, if not already, Blacks will be in the minority, and ownership of large chunks of property by Blacks will be a thing of the past in Five Points.

Sources: -Denver Neighborhood History Project, 1993-94.  
-Five Points Business Association brochure, circa 1994  
-Wallace Yvonne Tollette, Independent Historian

## Real Estate Corner

Information of interest from local real estate professionals

### I Would Love to Buy – But What About the Home I Am in Now?

Have you heard the news about the local real estate market? Most builders in Stapleton are giving generous incentives and sellers are motivated. If you have been thinking about taking that next step but are held back by concerns for your current situation and home, this article is for you.

The market in Stapleton is in much better shape than many other neighborhoods. You may have seen articles in the local papers which discuss higher demand areas – Stapleton is one of those areas. Stapleton's average price is \$466,290 (much higher than the rest of Denver which is in the low \$200s for Northeast Denver), and the average time on the market is around 90-120 days. Re-sale homes in Stapleton are also selling quite close to the original prices - generally 97-99% of list price. (Source: DenverPost.com and Metrolist.) Many areas are seeing dropping property values; Stapleton is not.

Realtors will stress that the spring market is a great time to sell, but the Spring Market now begins in January/February. Buyers get through the holiday season, and are ready to start looking for their new home. If you are ready for them, you will be ahead of the curve. This doesn't mean that it's a "Seller's" market. You will still have to have your home absolutely ready to show, and you will have to have your home priced fairly and appropriately for current market conditions. You will, however, be facing much less competition than later in the spring—a big advantage for you.

Another secret in the industry is that you make money when you buy. Smart buys and smart investments are what bring you money, and this market has plenty of room for smart investors. In this market, you may be able to write an offer contingent on the sale of your current home, an option that can sometimes be less stressful. Or perhaps you can negotiate a later close date, one that more readily accommodates your need for time.

If you want to move into your new home first, and not have to worry about all the showings, it may be possible to use some of the equity out of your first home to purchase the new one. Or per-

haps you can carry both mortgages at the same time. This is a great option for those who have small kids and dread the thought of having to keep the house clean for showings. There is also the possibility of renting out your current home. The redevelopment of Fitzsimons will produce a

ready clientele for housing, including rental housing. In some neighborhoods, including Stapleton, the rental market has remained strong and can be used to your advantage.

If you are dreaming of taking that next step, the time is now. Start looking for that home and get your current home ready now for buyers or renters. Make the market work for you.

Tammy Morran is a realtor with Metro Brokers – Dardano & Associates in Stapleton's E. 29th Avenue Town Center. She may be reached at [TMorran@DardanoRealty.com](mailto:TMorran@DardanoRealty.com) or 303.507.7110.



Tammy Morran

### Dental Health Month

In observance of National Children's Dental Health Month, Lowry Family Dentistry is giving away free brushing calendars to record each day a child brushes in the morning and at night. If a parent returns a completed calendar directly to the office, their child gets a prize; if the school submits all calendars on behalf of their classes, the school returning the largest percentage will be awarded \$250 for their scholarship programs. Any child may also enter art and essay contests on "What A Healthy Smile Means to Me." They may use any medium to create anything that represents a happy, healthy smile. Artwork is due by February 15th and must be returned directly to the office. Art will be displayed at the office as well as at Community Banks of Colorado. Prizes are being offered by local merchants. For more information contact Lowry Family Dentistry at 303-366-3000 or visit [www.lowryfamilydentistry.com](http://www.lowryfamilydentistry.com). The office is at 8158 East 5th Ave, Suite 150.

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# Healthy Relationships – Healthy Communication



Elizabeth Taeubert

By Elizabeth Taeubert LCSW

One of the most important aspects of a healthy, successful relationship is effective communication between both parties. This is true of all relationships, including life partners, parents, children, siblings, friends or co-workers. In almost all areas of our lives we want to have relationships in which we feel truly heard and understood by the other person and at the same time able to listen and understand what the other wants us to know. When communication is healthy we feel more connected, collaborative, and cooperative.

**What is Communication?** Communication is defined as a process by which we assign and convey meaning in an attempt to create shared understanding. Communication is made up of 7% words, 38% how those words are spoken (paraverbal messages) and 55% non-verbal cues. To communicate well with another person we need to account for 100% — everything that is going on. Not only should we focus on the person's words, we should also be attentive to their non-verbal behavior. Furthermore, communication is a two-way process, so we need to be aware of how our own words and body language influence communication.

**The words we use matter!** Our language has a huge impact. Words that are critical, blaming, or accusatory create a resistant and defensive reaction. Marshall Rosenberg author of "Nonviolent Communication" recommends using language that describes observations, feelings, needs and requests.

**Paraverbal messages** are transmitted through the tone, pitch, and pacing of our voices. It's *how we say something*, not *what we say*. A statement can convey entirely different meanings depending on the emphasis on words and the tone of voice.

When we are angry or excited, our speech tends to become more rapid and higher pitched

When we are bored or feeling down, our speech tends to slow and take on a monotone quality.

When we are feeling defensive, our speech is often abrupt.

**Nonverbal messages** are the primary way that we communicate emotions. The face is an important way we convey emotional information. A face can light up with enthusiasm, energy and approval, express confusion or boredom, and scowl with displeasure. The eyes are particularly expressive in relating joy, sadness, anger, or confusion. Body postures also communicate emotional content as well as intention. A posture of arms open gives a different mes-

sage than arms closed across the chest. Facing the person when we speak communicates something different than looking away as we speak.

**Healthy communication** is essential for healthy relationships. When relationships are going along just fine we don't tend to notice how we are communicating. However, when conflict arises or misinterpretations occur it is important to examine how we are communicating. Become active in creating healthy patterns again. Choose words that are nonblaming. Listen to the tone that you use when you speak and be aware of your nonverbal messages. Ask yourself "Do I want to be heard and understood?" The answer most often is yes. How you choose to communicate will make a difference!

*Elizabeth Taeubert LCSW is a psychotherapist at Natural Balance Wellness in Stapleton. She teaches Non-Violent Communication and specializes in working with couples. She can be reached at 720-949-1194.*

## Stapleton Resident to Chair Colorado Chapter, National Multiple Sclerosis Society Board of Trustees



Mike King

Michael W. King, partner, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP, has been elected chair of the board of trustees of the Colorado Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. King works with the firm's Corporate and Business, Finance and Real Estate groups and leads the firm's trainings and professional development efforts for its transactional groups.

King has served on the Colorado Chapter of the National MS Society's board for three years and most recently chaired the Bike MS steering committee and was captain of his company's team, which raised nearly \$30,000 for the 2007 Bike MS event. He is an active member of the community serving on the board of trustees of the Denver Public Library Friends Foundation and as a foundation trustee of the Boys State Government and Leadership Program. King has been a pro bono mediator for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission since 1999.

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of every month at the MCA Stapleton Community  
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## Colorado's Presidential Caucuses: February 5th, 2008

By Mark Mehringer

In the hope of being part of the action, Colorado has moved up its Presidential caucus date to February 5, 2008. As only a handful of states hold their primaries or caucuses earlier than this date, and about 22 states will vote on this date, February 5th will likely be a decisive day in determining who will appear on the November 2008 ballot. If you are registered with a political party, you can participate that night in the caucus. Unlike in other states like Iowa, you cannot register or affiliate with a party at the caucuses and then participate.

To participate, voters must show up at their precinct caucus location on February 5th at 7pm. Democrats from Stapleton will

caucus at Westerly Creek Elementary School. The Republican Party of Denver has set Montbello Recreation Center (15555 E. 53rd Avenue) as the location for all of House District 7, which includes Stapleton.

## SUN Elections Once Again on the Horizon

By Mark Mehringer

It's a new year, and that means it's only a few more months until the Stapleton United Neighbors Board has its annual meeting and elections. This meeting takes place in May, but the process of recruiting and lining up candidates begins much earlier. In the next few weeks, SUN will form a recruitment committee to manage the election process, and find a slate of interested candidates. To find out more about running for the SUN Board of Directors, visit [www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.org](http://www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.org) or email us at [StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com](mailto:StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com).

## Time to Start Thinking about Block Party Day!

By Mark Mehringer and Tracy Perez

Stapleton's Fourth Annual Block Party Day is coming up in just a few, and it's never too early to start planning. (Well, maybe more than a year in advance is too early). This event is sponsored by SUN, but organized by each individual block. Therefore, you can tailor the party to meet the specific needs and desires of your block. It can be a celebration to welcome spring and reconnect with old friends, or a way to draw people out and bring all the new neighbors on your block together. The goal of this event is to build community and tradition - and continue to make our neighborhood a true community.

Even if you don't have a designated "block captain" it just takes one person to get the party started! If you don't know who your block captain is, let us know by emailing [StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com](mailto:StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com) and we'll put you in touch with them, if you have one.

Each year, SUN tries to coordinate fire department visits (please keep in mind that emergencies and time may preclude the fire department from making an appearance at all parties). Just in case, you may want to keep the fire department visit "under wraps" for the little ones and have it be a great surprise if they are able to come to your party.

In some of the newer parts of the neighborhood, it may be a good idea to join together with a few other blocks, since space is relatively limited. If you choose to have your party on a street instead of in someone's yard or a pocket park, you must purchase a permit from the city (the cost of that permit has yet to be determined, and we'll pass along the amount once we know it). Please let us know if you want to close your block, as SUN tries to get all of the permits approved as a group, rather than one block at a time, saying neighbors time & effort.

Here are a few more suggestions as you plan your party:

**Assemble a planning committee** Spread out the work load, and you'll find organizing a block party is much easier than trying to organize everything yourself.

**Create invitations** Hard copy invitations are easier for some people to track (especially if collecting money for permits) but some prefer Evites, which of course only work if you have everyone's e-mail address.

**Decide on food/beverages** Will it be a potluck, or will you have everyone pitch in and buy food and/or beverages? Remember, the simpler, the better (and the less organizing for the Block Captain to do!).

**Don't forget things like paper products, cups, etc** Name tags and markers are a great idea for newer blocks where not everyone knows each other yet.

**See if anyone on your block owns a business** Maybe they would be interested in sponsoring part of your block party (cost of the permit, beverages, paid entertainment) in exchange for advertising their business.

**Have a back-up plan for weather** We all know how unpredictable the weather can be in Colorado. One idea is to open up garages on an alley and have people "party hop" between garages.

For more information on Block Party Day, including a "Block Party Toolkit," please visit the SUN website at [www.stapletonunitedneighbors.org](http://www.stapletonunitedneighbors.org) and click on Outreach. A new toolkit for 2008 should be up soon, but in the meantime you can take a look at the 2007 toolkit.

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Stapleton MCA

There continues to be much discussion throughout the community in regards to the operational priorities of the pool facilities here at Stapleton. The Stapleton Board of Directors and Community Delegates extensively review and discuss community concerns raised over pool operations. All Stapleton Residents will receive in the mail "Stapleton Area Recreation Guide" by the end of February. This annual guide outlines all the swim programs that will be offered at the pools plus facility hours and dedicated swim times. Modifications to the operational schedules are based on historical use patterns that best reflect the most efficient allocation of staff time.

Stapleton has identified four main community recreational facilities, not all of which must be pools. Currently, the community has two pool facilities in operation (Aviator & Puddle Jumper) and a third pool (F-15) which is under construction and will be in operation beginning Memorial Day weekend this season. With three pools operational our capacity will be increased to approximately 900 people at any one time.

Funds used to construct these facilities come from public funding sources (Park Creek Metropolitan District) and not from private sources (Forest City Stapleton). For this reason, Stapleton pools must be open to anyone paying the daily fee and access cannot be restricted. The pool ID system was designed so Stapleton residents could be identified as a separate population from the general public and the resident

ID would be accepted in lieu of the daily fee. New resident pool ID cards will be available at the MCA office located at 2823 Roslyn St. beginning February 1. Please call our office to confirm times.

Stapleton pools balance the community needs programming with the community needs for general use of the facilities. The Aviator pool provides the greatest amount of programming of both swim lessons and structured swim programs. The participants in these programs and lessons are almost exclusively Stapleton residents. The Puddle Jumper pool provides only open swimming and does not accommodate any programming. The F-15 pool will blend the operational components of the first two pools. It will be kid friendly with low depths and fountains on one side, but will have lap swimming and be able to accommodate swim programming on the other side.

The public nature of our pools also means that we are required to operate all the pool facilities under the Denver public pools guidelines. This means that we must have sufficient numbers of lifeguards on duty at all times we are open. Currently, the pool season is limited to Memorial Day through Labor Day weekends. Furthermore, Stapleton pools, like other metro area public pools, lose a significant number of the life guarding staff with the re-opening of schools. This impacts our ability to have all pools open during the weekdays after mid-August.

Please email all comments to: pools@stapletoncommunity.com.

Keven A. Burnett, Executive Director



Keven A. Burnett, Executive Director



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Letters to the Editor

The Front Porch will publish letters to the editor as space allows. Please mail your letters to: Tom Gleason, editor, The Front Porch, Forest City Stapleton, Inc., 7351 E. 29th Ave., Denver, CO 80238. Or email: TGleason@StapletonDenver.com

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Richard Wisniewski



# Blair Caldwell Library



Reproduction of Mayor Wellington Webb's office in the Blair Caldwell Museum

(continued from page 11) library should look like. Consultants were engaged and public meetings were held with neighborhoods that would use the facility to seek their input. Older members of the community were sought out to solicit their family history, their input and donations of old photographs, stories and documents. Ground

breaking took place in 2002.

The first floor houses a full-service branch library with an entry gallery with exhibition and coffee bar areas; conference and meeting rooms with seating for as many as 100 and as few as 20; study rooms, areas for children, teens and adults; an audiovisual system providing information on programs,

special events and exhibits; a collection of more than 35,000 books, magazines and audiovisual materials in both English and Spanish and public computers with Internet access.

The second floor is the collection archives and research library. Materials are not available for check out; however, the public does have access to personal and professional papers, artifacts, photos and scrapbooks of great African-Americans who shaped the West.

The third floor showcases a western legacies museum and exhibits from early pioneers to present-day heroes through interactive and engaging exhibits. Among those featured are Esteban, a Moroccan slave who survived a shipwreck and came to "New Spain" in the 1500s. It also features early Black settlements in Colorado and the West; historic Five Points and Welton Street; an African-American Leadership Gallery and a display on Mayor Webb's career. There is also changing exhibit space that is open to worthy community-based organizations and includes space for opening receptions.

Information courtesy of Blair-Caldwell African-American Research Library of the Denver Public Library; edited by Wallace Yvonne Tollette, Independent Historian, 303-830-1691.

# Readers' Love

Grant & Kaia Nesbitt

As two kindergarteners in Ft. Collins, Colorado, Grant and Kaia would have never guessed that some day they would marry. Kaia fondly remembers Grant as her first crush in elementary school. But on the first day of 2nd grade, she discovered that he had moved to a different school. She was devastated and cried over him on the swings at recess.

Twenty years later, their paths crossed again. Although they were living on opposite coasts at the time, both had flown home to visit family in Colorado for Christmas.

"We met fortuitously one night while out with friends and recognized each other immediately. The sparks of attraction were strong enough to survive a multi-year long distance relationship, which wouldn't have been possible without lengthy e-mails, letters, and phone calls. Finally we decided to settle in Denver, Colorado, the state we both love and missed. A few months later, Grant

## Peter Groff (continued from page 1)

African American President Pro Tem of the Colorado State Senate.

A native of Chicago, Illinois, Peter Groff is the son of another prominent elected official, the former Colorado State Senator Regis Groff, who previously served in the Colorado State House of Representatives (1975-1979) and the Colorado State Senate (1980-1994). Prior to being sworn in to replace Senator Penfield Tate in 2003 who had resigned his seat to run for Mayor of Denver, Senator Peter Groff had served in the Colorado House of Representatives in 2001-2003. The forty-four year old Democrat is an attorney and educator who represents State Senate District 33 which covers portions of Denver (including Park Hill and Stapleton) and Adams County. He has served on a number of committees in the Senate, including the Finance and Judiciary committees.

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# Stories

surprised me with a full day’s walk down memory lane, beginning with champagne and strawberries in our kindergarten classroom and ending that evening with a stunning marriage proposal under the stars outside our favorite mountain cabin.

“A decade later, we still treasure the proof of our childhood connection: a photograph showing us both dressed up for a kindergarten Halloween costume contest, standing side by side as a princess and a super hero.”

## Brendan & Lindsay Falvey

After college, Lindsay’s best friend, Bree, wanted to fix her up with one of her co-workers, but Lindsay was dating her college boyfriend – and a couple years later moved across the country with him. Two years went by, and Lindsay moved back to New York, single again. Shortly after getting back to New York, Bree invited her to a birthday party for her boyfriend in Washington DC, where she was then living. The plan was for Lindsay to take the train to Washington with another friend, but mysteriously that friend didn’t show up at Penn Station, so Lindsay went alone.

She arrived in the afternoon, before the



Kaia and Grant Nesbitt

party started, and when Lindsay walked into Bree’s apartment Brendan was sitting there on the sofa. Bree kept running out, leaving them alone in the apartment. Over the years Bree and her mother had told Lindsay and Brendan that they needed to meet, but at that moment in the apartment, they didn’t realize who they were talking to – nor that they’d been fixed up.

“We spent the day together, and by the time we got to the party Brendan and I were definitely intrigued with one another. We ended up sitting by ourselves talking through the entire party. At 2 am Brendan called Continental Airlines and cancelled his flight back to Hartford, where he was in his third year of law school. He rode the train back to New York with me so we could spend more time together and we never spent another weekend apart after that.”

## John & Kate Devlin

John and Kate went to work for the same management consulting firm straight out of college. John was based in Minneapolis, Lindsay in San Francisco. An opportunity arose for both to work on a company project in Lyon, France for a year. As single young people with the ability to pick up and leave on short notice, both jumped at what they considered the opportunity of a lifetime. Kate recalls the day her manager in Lyon, who sat in the next office, tapped on the glass and motioned her in. To Kate’s surprise her manager said, "Kate, there is a cute, cute new analyst

on the tech team. Go meet him right now."

“Being the good employee that I was, I promptly marched over to the tech room and quickly thought of some (very lame) excuse to go interrupt the team. It went something like, ‘Hi guys, I just wanted to remind everyone that there is a team meeting tonight and ... oh, I don’t think we’ve met!’

“Thankfully John thought my introduction was somewhat charming. For our first date we took the TGV (fast train) to Paris, and the rest is history.”

## Eric & Kristin Kaplan

Kristin Kaplan was in Vail skiing with her friends at the same time Eric was there snowboarding with his friends. Kristin and her friends decided at the last minute to go out and hit the town one evening. They went to a bar called "The Club." Kristen saw an empty chair and sat down to talk to her friend. Unbeknownst to her it was Eric’s chair and he had just stood up for a moment. His back was toward her – so when he sat back down he landed in her lap.

“He said, ‘Oh, I’m so sorry,’ and I said, ‘That’s o.k., you can still sit here.’ He said, ‘How about if you sit on my lap.’

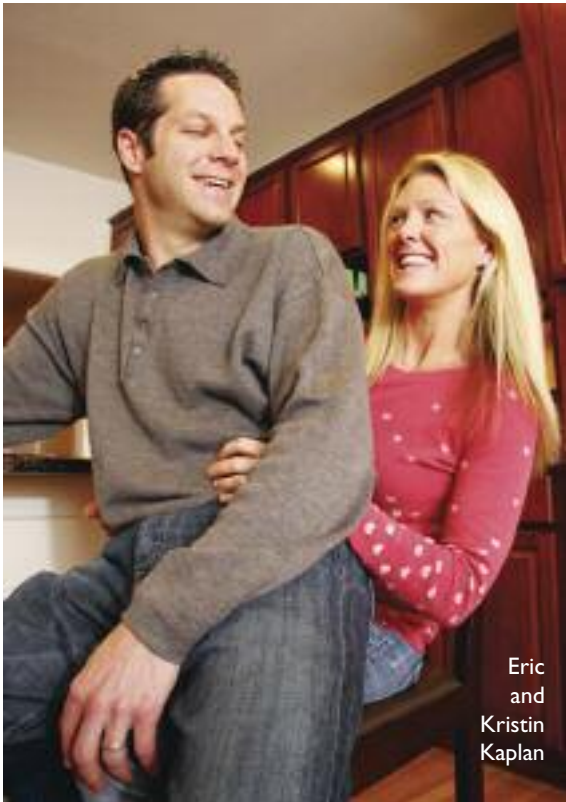
“I sat on his lap and continued to talk to my friend for about 30 minutes and then looked at Eric and said, ‘You are really cute,’ and he said, ‘No one ever says that when they meet someone for the first time.’ I said, ‘Well I think you’re cute.’ We continued talking and learned that we lived about six



Kate and John Devlin

blocks away from each other in Denver. Eric and I both had no more than one drink each so this was a ‘real’ meeting of the souls.

“The following weekend I told my dad that I was going to marry Eric. On our first year anniversary we got our rings engraved on the inside. Mine says, ‘He sat on my lap,’ and his says, "I sat on her lap."



Eric and Kristin Kaplan



Lindsay and Brendan Falvey






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America's #1 Warranty  
10-Year/100,000-Mile Powertrain Protection



Way of Life!

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\*Dealer retains all rebates, must qualify for military, college grad & owner loyalty rebates. \*\*\$3995 cash down + taxes & fees, 30 mo. lease, 12k mpy, WVC

Need Credit Help?

Call 888-994-2266 or log on to **FixMyCarCredit.com**

Home of the 3-Year, 100,000 Mile Used Car Warranty\*\*

98 Honda Civic LX Sedan	\$5,988
95 Chevy Suburban 4wd	\$5,988
03 Chevy Cavalier Coupe	\$5,988
99 Ford Mustang GT Conv	\$6,488
99 Buick Lesabre Limited	\$6,988
97 Honda Accord EX V6	\$7,988

98 Honda Accord LX	\$7,988
04 Dodge Neon SXT Sedan	\$7,988
01 Hyundai XG300 Sedan	\$7,988
00 Ford Windstar SE	\$8,988
03 Hyundai Accent GL Sedan	\$8,988
04 Kia Spectra EX Sedan	\$8,988

02 Saab 9-3 SE Sedan	\$9,488
04 Kia Sedona EX	\$9,988
05 Ford Focus Z14 SES Sedan	\$10,988
03 Honda Odyssey EX-L	\$10,988
00 VW Passat GLS Wagon	\$10,988
04 Subaru Legacy 3.0R Sedan	\$14,488

07 Hyundai Entourage GLS	\$16,988
04 Jaguar X-Type 3.0 AWD	\$16,988
05 Cadillac CTS 3.6L V6	\$18,488
05 Chrysler 300 Limited	\$18,488
07 Hyundai Azera Limited	\$20,988
07 Ford Edge SE AWD	\$20,988
04 Lexus LS430 Sedan	\$28,488

## Service Coupon

Free oil and filter change for first-time visitors to our service department with this page.\*

\*Subaru, Suzuki, Hyundai and KIA owners only.

Let's get acquainted.

\*\*3 year, 100,000 mile warranty available on pre-owned cars under 80k miles, see dealer for details. \*GPS and XM photos for illustration only. Customer may not request cash or discount price on vehicle in lieu of GPS unit, XM unit or window tint.