

Front Porch

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

DENVER, COLORADO

STAPLETON

JANUARY 2010

Fresh Start for Prisoners, Patients and Pets



Allison Winn (right) got a trained dog from the prison K-9 program when she was ill, and it was so important to her that she and her sister Emily (in green vest) started a fundraiser to help other children get trained dogs. Debi Stevens (left), is the head of the dog training program for Colorado Correctional Industries. Inmates Sonia Anderson (back) and Suzette Salyer are dog trainers and "Little Monster," a St. Bernard, is being trained as an assistive dog for an injured veteran.

By Carol Roberts

Getting a new dog is exciting, but then the work of training begins in order to have a happy life with your dog. What if you could start with a trained

dog? And find it right in the neighborhood?

The Denver Women's Correctional Facility at 3600 Havana St. rescues dogs from shelters and assigns them, 24 hours a day, to inmates who have had intensive training to

work with dogs on obedience and socialization skills. When the dogs "graduate" from the program they are available for adoption. The cost is \$450 and that fee supports the program (it is not taxpayer funded). Shelter (continued on page 4)

Local DPS Board Members Talk About the Job that Lies Ahead



New DPS Board members Mary Seawell and Nate Easley

The Front Porch interviewed two new school board members, Nate Easley and Mary Seawell, who are Stapleton residents.

Front Porch: Will this board be functional?

Nate Easley: You have seven very passionate people who care very dearly about improving the system, who are all heading in the same direction but may have different road maps on how to get there. You've (continued on page 8)



Stapleton Struggles with Unregulated Marijuana

A popular Stapleton business, Perk and Play, has closed and that space (in the building shown above) has been leased to a medical marijuana dispensary. Many neighbors are concerned about its proximity to local schools, the closest of which is the Denver School of Science and Technology, the gold building shown in the background. (Note: The focal length of the zoom lens was set at 41mm, which is approximately the same as the human eye, so there is no telephoto effect in this photo.)

A brief history of how distribution of medical marijuana has evolved since the voters legalized it in 2000 is on page 25.

By Carol Roberts

Almost a decade after the voters of Colorado amended the state constitution so cancer and chronic pain patients wouldn't be prosecuted for medical marijuana use, many communities

are coming to the conclusion that they don't want it dispensed in their own backyard.

Stapleton's City Councilman Michael Hancock says he has received dozens of emails opposing the dispensary that has leased a space in the building at 2373 Central Park Boulevard, the former Perk and Play location. Many people in the neighborhood are concerned that the city will not require the dispensary to be at (continued on page 26)



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

6 Stapleton Library Planning Meeting

Students Buy Art

6

"Choice" Time in DPS

21

Teacher Goes to Sea

23

This photo of a bald eagle along the Sand Creek Regional Greenway, east of Bluff Lake was taken by Kate Kramer, Executive Director Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership.



CALENDAR

Events in or near Stapleton that are free and open to the public or are nonprofit events.

JANUARY

Throughout January

The Shops at Northfield Stapleton
Free coupon book at Guest Services
(behind Claire's Boutique) 303-375-5475
Offers good thru Dec 31, 2010.

Tuesday, January 5

Children's Museum, Target Tuesday Night
Free Play 4 pm - 8 pm
2121 Children's Museum Drive
www.mychildsmuseum.org

Wed. & Thur. Jan 6-7 & 27-28

Red Cross CPR/FA/AED
6-10:30pm
pools@stapletoncommunity.com

Wednesday, January 6

1st Wednesdays—Home Based Businesses
Lunch and networking. 12:00pm-1:00pm
The Berkshire on 29th Ave.
Location changes monthly.
tbrislina@gmail.com

Saturday, January 9

Free women's self defense course at
Mike Giles Family Karate, 1-2pm
7506 E. 36th Ave. #480 (Quebec Square).
303-377-KICK (5425)

Saturday, January 9 & 18

SCFD Free Day, Denver Zoo
<http://www.denverzoo.org/>

Monday, January 11

SCFD Free Day, Museum of Nature & Science
<http://www.dmns.org/>

Tuesday, January 12

Cowboys: Stories & Legends, 12:30-1:30 pm
Active Minds, Tattered Cover, 2526 E Colfax
ActiveMindsForLife.com

JANUARY

Wednesday, January 13

New residents reception 6:30pm
MCA Community Room
2823 Roslyn Street

Thursday, January 14

Community meeting about new Stapleton library
Bill Roberts School, 6:30pm
2100 Akron Way. More info. page 6
720-865-2048

Saturday, January 16 & 23

Red Cross Babysitter's Training 8 - 3pm
pools@stapletoncommunity.com

Saturday, January 16

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge
Visitor Center 7 - 8pm
Guest Lecture Series, Raptors in Action
More info page 22 recommended for adults
Reservations required 303-289-0930

Monday, January 18

SCFD Free Day, Botanic Gardens
<http://www.botanicgardens.org/>

Thurs. - Sat., Jan. 28-30

Aquatic Facility Operator Certification
pools@stapletoncommunity.com

Sunday, January 31

Free Skating at Big Bear Ice 2-3pm
First 200 who register 303-343-1111
www.bigbearice.com -> Public Skate

FEBRUARY

Tuesday, February 2

Children's Museum, Target Tuesday Night
Free Play 4 pm - 8 pm
2121 Children's Museum Drive
www.mychildsmuseum.org

Saturday, February 6

SCFD Free Day, Denver Art Museum
<http://www.denverartmuseum.org/>



Happy New Year!

We hope everyone enjoyed a happy holiday and is making plans for a terrific 2010! We thought we would start out by introducing ourselves to those of you who are not familiar with who we are and what we do.

The Stapleton Master Community Association (MCA) is a 501(c)(4) Nonprofit Community Development Organization whose mission it is to create and sustain a sense of community at Stapleton through comprehensive parks and recreation management, community events and programming and support of community cultural facilities. The MCA office is located at 2823 Roslyn Street, directly behind King Soopers.

2009 Member Annual Meeting

The MCA Annual Members meeting was held on December 10 at the MCA Community Room. The members who returned ballots as well as those present elected a slate of delegates for 2010. Your community representatives to the MCA Executive Board are: District 1: Amanda Allshouse - resident Filing 21, District 2: Justin Silverstein - resident Filing 2, District 3: Dana Elkind - resident Filing 9, District 4: Bethany Smith - resident Filing, District 5: Tim Wilson - resident Filing 11, District 6: Katie Garces - resident Filing 18, District 7: Denise Gammon - Forest City/MCA Board. Delegates vote to ratify the MCA annual budget and elect all resident and commercial directors. Delegates serve as the primary advisory committee to the Executive Board, as well as serve as the Design Review Committee for remodeling and renovations. Residents may send comments to their delegate via email at: delegates@stapletoncommunity.com

The MCA Delegates and Executive Board held their annual meeting on December 11 at the Stapleton Community room. During the meeting the 2010 budget was presented, ratified and passed. 2010 assessments will remain \$36/month for residential and \$8.80 for commercial. For a complete copy of the 2010 budget as well as minutes of previous meetings, please log onto www.StapletonCommunity.com.

MCA Event Calendar

The MCA is planning a full schedule of activities for 2010. All of the

events are open to the public and typically they are held in The Green located between Roslyn Street and Syracuse Street on 29th Avenue. We have concerts, movies and markets. We are planning several additional events this year that should be a lot of fun for everyone.

We will keep our events listed in the calendar adjacent to this article. Event dates are listed in the "Dogs of Stapleton" calendar. If you have not picked up your calendar, you can do so by stopping into our office located at 2823 Roslyn Street. Stay tuned for details in *The Front Porch*, online at www.stapletoncommunity.com or feel free to email at events@stapletoncommunity.com.

Resident Reception

The MCA will begin hosting a monthly reception designed for all new residents in the community beginning this month. This will be an evening designed to provide new residents an opportunity to meet others in the community, ask questions they may have, and obtain their pool ID ahead of the summer rush. Refreshments will be provided. Even if you have lived here for a year or more, please feel free to stop in. The receptions will take place the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm in the MCA Community Room located at 2823 Roslyn St. The first one is scheduled for Wednesday, January 13 at 6:30pm.

Aquatics & American Red Cross Classes

The Stapleton MCA is hosting a variety of Aquatic courses and American Red Cross classes during the month of January.

Aquatic Facility Operator (AFO):

January 28-30, 2010: Emerging as the new industry standard, AFO offers all the technical information with greater emphasis on design, risk management, leadership and repair. This program is backed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Professional Pool Operators of America (PPOA) and the National Certification Board (NCB). AFO certification is valid for three years upon completion. Fees: Course- \$315, Challenge- \$119

American Red Cross Classes:

Jan 6&7: Adult CPR/FA/AED, 6-10:30pm
Jan 16: Babysitter's Training, 8am-3pm
Jan 23: Babysitter's Training, 8am-3pm
Jan 27&28: Adult CPR/FA/AED, 6-10:30pm

Check for registration information and additional class postings at www.stapletoncommunity.com or contact Paula Deorio at pools@stapletoncommunity.com

Diane Deeter
Director of
Programming and Events



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The Front Porch welcomes submissions of upcoming local events (deadline is the 15th) and story ideas for future issues.
Email FrontPorch@FinePrintCo.com

(See page 18 for recurring monthly events and meetings)

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Prison Trained K-9 Program

(continued from page 1) costs are reduced, dogs with behavior problems are trained to be good pets, inmates learn skills and find satisfaction, and the adoptive family gets a well-behaved pet. It's a win-win-win-win proposition.

And for those who need to "jump start" the training of an existing pet, the program boards and trains dogs for a 4-week period. All dogs who have gone through the training can attend free "alumni" classes in the evening whenever needed (along with family members and other family dogs). Finally, dogs who have been trained there can return for two-week "refresher" sessions when the family goes on vacation or the dog needs additional help with training.

Debi Stevens started The Prison Trained K-9 Companion Program (PTKCP) in 2002. Stevens was a private dog trainer who happened to have a prison employee as a student. That person recommended her when he learned the prison was considering such a program. Stevens had previously heard an NPR pro-

gram about a prison in Washington that trained service dogs and had gone to visit it. When she heard the prisons here wanted to start a dog training program, she jumped on it. Two weeks after she first talked to the prison, she "showed up with dogs" and got to work. She wrote the textbook (printed in the prison's print shop) that inmates use during their training.

Stevens' own dog, a yellow Lab, has competed nationally in obedience trials and has been ranked sixth in the country. Inmate Suzette Salyer, 28, is passionate about the dog



Sonia Anderson, 44, a mother of four and a grandmother, wants to run a kennel when she gets out of prison.



Suzette Salyer, 28, uses her prison pay to take online correspondence courses in order to get certification from the Pet Care Services Association.

training program. She firmly but lovingly makes sure 11-month-old Little Monster (a St. Bernard) sits calmly the entire time she talks about the training program. "Working with the dogs has changed my life. It gives me something to live for and trained me for something when I get out." By saving her prison pay, she has been able to take correspondence courses and get certification through Pet Care Services Association, additional training that will help her get a job. She has been training dogs for four years.

Sonia Anderson, 44, a mother of four and a grandmother, grew up on a farm where she never gave a thought to dog training. "We just put out a bowl of food and that was it. Now, this is my passion. I want to run a kennel and donate trained dogs to disabled vets to give something back to the community."

The women talk openly about the bad decisions they made that landed them in jail. Both used drugs and hung out with peers who were committing crimes. Suzette has served 8 years of a 13-year sentence and Sonia has served 4 of 10 years.

"The prison has about 1000 inmates and only 22 are dog trainers. It is an honor to be in the program. If you get



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written up even once for anything, including showing disrespect for a supervisor, you're out of the program," says Salyer, "and you have to be free of any write-ups for six months just to be eligible for the program."

The dogs are with their trainers 24 hours a day, in the cafeteria, in their classes, in the library, and playing with other dogs, which offers many opportunities to work on socialization with lots of different people and dogs all day. One hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon are spent in group obedience classes. The dogs spend three hours a day in a kennel and sleep in a kennel in their trainer's cell. Salyer and Anderson are cellmates and sometimes they work with two dogs each, so "it gets pretty crowded with four dogs and their kennels in a 12 x 12 room," they say laughing. But it's clear they love having them.

Suzette and Sonia talk about their sadness when the dogs leave, but how that's balanced by knowing they have improved the dog's and the family's lives, and the fun of getting emails with reports about the animals they have worked with. The trainers spend about an hour with the owner when dogs are picked up, explaining their training techniques so the family can continue to reinforce the desired behaviors.

The cost for four weeks of boarding and training is \$450, and a two-week refresher (for alumni dogs only) is \$250. Information about the program, photos and descriptions of dogs available for adoption can be found at www.coloradoci.com/?puppy or



Left: Allison Winn (right) and her younger sister Emily sell their Stinkbug biscuits at the Young Entrepreneurs Marketplace in Lakewood to support the Prison Trained K-9 Companion Program.

By Nancy Burkhardt

Two years ago, when Stapleton resident Allison Winn was seven years old, she went through the very adult challenge of six weeks of radiation and nine chemotherapy treatments designed to kill her brain tumor, a malignant medullablastoma.

Allison has a family and friends who gave her support and love, but she felt the loneliness that often confronts cancer patients.

Then about three months after Allison's grueling treatments, along came Coco.

Coco is a Bichon Frise that had been rescued and trained by the Colorado Correctional Industries Prison Trained K-9 Companion

Program. Women in the correctional facility near Stapleton had worked with Coco.

"During the treatment, the last thing I wanted to do was adopt a dog," said Allison's mother, Dianna Litvak. "But, after her treatment we realized that it would have been really nice to have this dog. The prison does such a nice job."

"It really makes me feel good," Allison said of her friendship with Coco. "I don't really feel like talking to anyone. Coco lets me talk to her. She was my friend. She loves it."

"She is more calm when she's around the dog," Litvak said. "She interacts with the dog. Sometimes Allison was really

quiet, but when she was with Coco, she would chat happily with the dog. Dogs have that power to open up people when people can't do it. The dog was an amazing source of comfort for her. Coco wasn't meant to be a therapy dog, but I would say that's what she is."

Allison's prognosis is excellent, according to Litvak. Her last MRI was clear.

When Allison started to feel better, she realized that not all children besieged by cancer would be able to have a dog in their lives. So, she came up with an idea to help them afford to have a dog—Stinkbug dog biscuits.

As a cancer patient, Allison had drawn a picture of cancer, a bug that she named "Stinkbug." Allison attended a summer camp at Denver Dumb Friends League where she obtained a recipe for dog biscuits. She decided to call them the Stink Bug Project. Since then, her nanny has helped her and her sister, seven-year-old Emily Winn, bake the dog biscuits. They sold them with lemonade at a stand in front of their house, earning enough money to give a dog to a two-year-old cancer patient living in Wyoming.

"Now the goal is to find groups to take on the fundraiser, baking, bagging and selling the dog biscuits to contribute money to the project," Litvak said.

"We'd like to see one group a month do the project for the first year," she said. "We would provide recipes, tags and bags. We also want more places to sell the biscuits."

The Stinkbug Project offers dog biscuits at the 29th Avenue Animal Hospital, 7305 E. 29th Ave., and U-Shampooch, 7474 E. 29th Ave.

To learn more about the Stink Bug Project, go to: www.stinkbugproject.org or e-mail stinkbug@stinkbugproject.org. Call the Morgan Adams Foundation at 303-758-2130.



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First of four meetings to be held January 14

"Collaborative Visioning Session" for Stapleton Library

By Diane Lapierre

The community is invited to help shape the plan for the new Stapleton Library at a "visioning" meeting to be held on Thursday, January 14, at 6:30 p.m. at Bill Roberts K-8 School, 2100 Akron Way. Meeting participants will be introduced to the Better Denver Bond Program's and the Denver Public Library's goals for this project. An overview of the

site, budget, schedule and project team will be presented. A short slide show of current library trends will lead into an open forum for the community to provide feedback on what they believe is critical to their new library's success, both now and in the future. For more information, call 720-865-2048.

Diane Lapierre is the Director of Community Relations at the Denver Public Library.

By Nancy Burkhart

Of course, you have to like the piece of art you choose to adorn your space. But, often there are other considerations that have to be contemplated.

Amy Marsh, a visual arts teacher at Bill Roberts Elementary School, gives her students an exposure to art that allows them to incorporate more thought into an acquisition.

"All of my lessons have art history lessons in them," Marsh explained. "There also is cultural context. We study African art, etc. They have had exposure to different types of art in my classroom. I also expose them to each type of media. We do weaving, tooling, ceramics, drawing, sketching and print making. When I say to them, let's look for some prints, they know what I'm talking about."



Above: Max Speyer, Julie Davis and Julian Smith, sixth graders at Bill Roberts K-8 School, hold the art works they selected for the school at this year's Cherry Creek Arts Festival. Below: Artist Michael McKee talks about his work to students who are selecting art for their schools at the Cherry Creek Arts Festival. One of McKee's paintings was chosen for purchase by Bill Roberts students.





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Learn to Appreciate Art by Buying It

With this background, Marsh felt her students were ready for a challenge, so she applied for the Janus Student Art Buying Program, in conjunction with the Cherry Creek Arts Festival. Marsh's application was accepted. It allowed three of her current sixth graders—Julie Davis, Max Speyer and Julian Davis—to use a \$500 grant to purchase pieces of art for their school that would best represent it. The purchases were made at the summer Cherry Creek Arts Festival.

“It gives children an opportunity to engage or explore the different facets of art, like art as a cultural aspect,” Marsh explained. “They learn to critique art. They learn that art is a business. We do all this research on artists that are going to be displayed at the Cherry Creek Arts Festival.”

The team had to decide what type of media to choose, which artists' work was best for their purpose, and they were encouraged to negotiate price with the artists.

“It wasn't like work to the children,” Marsh said. “They were running from booth to booth. They had a really good time with it. The other kids were watching to see about how they did their choices.”

The team also was part of a public-speaking venture in which they had to reveal the process they used and explain why they chose the artwork they chose to the teams from other schools who were involved in the program.

The Bill Roberts School now has two new pieces of art: a metal sculpture by Fred Conlon called “Snowboarder,” and a pastel drawing by Michael McKee titled “Highland Study.” The metal sculpture is made out of World War II scraps, with heads made out of bells that were used

in the war, screws and wire. Originally, they couldn't afford the price, but a little haggling brought the price down within their reach, Marsh said.

The project's purpose is “to expose them to more art, any kind of public art, especially if it's in their own school because they're going to have ownership,” Marsh explained. “Each year, I'm going to try to get diverse forms of art and get them to appreciate it. They're going to feel a sense of community because it wasn't me choosing it, but it was their fellow students. It will get them excited.”

For more information about the Janus Student Art Buying Program, visit www.cherryarts.org.

A student art buyer makes a close-up appraisal of a piece at the Cherry Creek Arts Festival.



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100% of DSST's Third Graduating Class Admitted to a Four-year College

By Sarah Skeen

For the third consecutive year, 100% of the senior class attending the Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) have been accepted into a four-year college or university. All 80 students of the Class of 2010 have been admitted to at least one public institution of higher learning, duplicating the achievement of the students enrolled in DSST's first and second graduating classes in 2008 and 2009.

DSST has a college planning and advisory program that begins in the 6th grade. All DSST seniors were required to apply to four-year colleges and universities by November 2, 2009. While many DSST students also apply to colleges and universities across the country, nearly all of DSST seniors apply to one or more of the school's four in-state college partners: University of Colorado-Boulder, University of Northern Colorado, Mesa State and Metro State.

"We greatly appreciate the support of our in-state college partners. Our collaborative work is a great example of how higher education and K-12 public schools can work together for the benefit of Colorado students. This partnership continues to demonstrate that all students from diverse backgrounds can go onto four-year college," said Bill Kurtz, CEO, DSST Public Schools.

The diversity of the senior class makes the 100% acceptance rating especially significant. The Class of 2010 includes 65% minority and 41% low-income students. Forty-nine percent of this year's graduating class will be first-generation college students.

The Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) is an open-enrollment charter school dedicated to providing a diverse student body with an outstanding science and technology-focused liberal arts education. Founded in 2004, DSST is widely considered to be one of the leading open-enrollment STEM schools (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) in the nation and has become a destination for educators nationwide.

DSST has been approved to open four additional secondary schools (grades 6-12) with its second campus at Green Valley Ranch scheduled to open in August 2010. At full enrollment, DSST will serve 4,000 students, doubling the number of four-year-college-ready DPS graduates by 2020. DSST has consistently been the highest-performing secondary school in DPS and in Colorado, based on growth and absolute performance.

Additional information about DSST and the admission process is available on the school's website at www.scienceandtech.org.

Sarah Skeen is the development and communications coordinator at DSST. She can be reached at skeen.sarah@scienceandtech.org.



You're talking to the middle ground right now.
—Mary Seawell

New DPS

can't also see gains. We're seeing schools that are able to catch kids up in that form too. As a school board member, I want to do everything I can to make those schools succeed.

FPorch: What can the school board do to promote successful schools?

Seawell: First of all, I think we can have a really high bar for the schools that we are going to approve. So if they are going to be autonomous from the district, do they have the pieces in place to be academically successful? If we keep that bar really high in approving schools, then we're

(continued from page 1) witnessed arguments over which map is more accurate, but given that we're all headed in the same direction, we're very functional. We're not congress, for example. They're headed in two different directions, some want more government, some want less government and that's where the tension lies. We're not like that.

FPorch: The Board has been classified as having "reform" and "neighborhood" proponents. What is the difference between the two positions and what is the area of agreement?

Mary Seawell: You're talking to the middle ground right now.

Easley: I don't see a distinction. We all agree that there need to be quality options in every neighborhood. That could be a charter school, it could be a traditional school, it could be an autonomous school, it could be an innovative school. There are lots of different ways to provide quality schools.

Seawell: I think it was probably an artificial construct for the campaign to have this fight between neighborhood and charter schools. Personally I believe, and we're seeing now, that successes are coming in all forms of schools. There are some good reasons why some schools are able to succeed with more autonomy, especially if they are working with kids who are so far behind that they need a longer school day or a longer school year. That doesn't mean that a traditional district school

going to have better and better quality of charters.

We have to be doing what we can to support success, but also to be sure that the schools we're supporting represent our values as a city so that they're economically diverse, they're serving a wide range of kids, and they really can meet the needs of every child that comes into the school.

Easley: I don't think there's any one solution. I think what you've got to do is figure out what works well and how to replicate that in other places.

In Stapleton we don't want to build a fence around our neighborhood and have segregated schools. I didn't move to this neighborhood to send my kids to segregated schools, but I do think there's some value for them growing up with kids from different socio-economic backgrounds and different ethnicities. So I don't see it as, we're closing this failing school (Phillips) so they'll have an opportunity to go to school with my kids. I see it as my kids have an opportunity to go to school with those kids, which is going to make them better students. The challenge for the district is how do you make that work?

Seawell: As Phillips kids come to Westerly Creek and Bill Roberts, existing families at those schools need to understand that they have to make room for these families to have input to the culture of those schools. As a Board member I think we can really educate people about what challenges will be there for current families and new families coming in. So that's something we can hopefully help shape.





That's Dog for "thank you."

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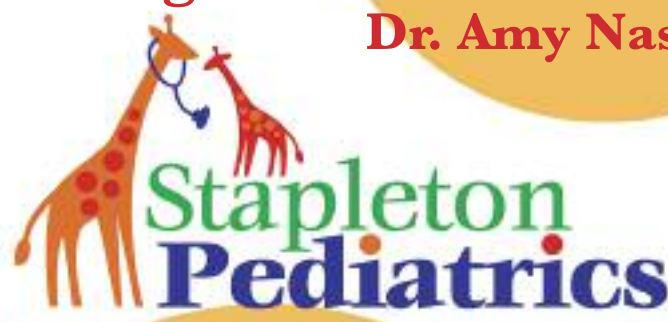
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Board Members Talk About the Challenges Ahead

Easley: A criticism I would have of our current efforts to improve the schools is that we haven't done a really good job of reaching out to parents. People expect my approach is going to be academic, but my whole career I've worked with low-income kids, so it's really a practical one as well.

There needs to be some kind of a "needs assessment" to ask parents, what can we do to accommodate your needs because we can't do this without you? And we know most parents want what's best for their kids. I think parents will meet us halfway if we ask.

When we talk about our Stapleton schools, we have to understand what the barriers are and bring them down so that every family can really be involved in the schools.

FPorch: What kinds of barriers?

Seawell: The schools have cultures, they are predominately white, upper class.

FPorch: So it's off-putting to parents of color?

Seawell: It doesn't have to be offputting, but we have to acknowledge that it's going to take some work and not just assume that it's going to fit really easily together. Also we have some great examples. There are schools, like DSST, that are economically integrated and ethnically integrated and they're doing a great job. The challenge for new schools is to implement some of these models.

FPorch: Teachers in low-income schools say they can't get parents to come to the school.

Easley: That's where I think the district needs to step up. There are opportunities we have to engage parents. What if you had a situation where a corporation were to sponsor workshops on how you get a job and give it at a local school. Then you invite the neighborhood. As part of the experience you offer an opportunity for teachers to interact with those parents.

People have brilliant ideas but they never ask the community what they need. We have experts in our community, parents who speak primarily Spanish, whose kids have gone through Berkeley, Harvard, Col-

orado College, and the University of Colorado. How come we haven't asked them how they did that?

A needs assessment is a critical piece. Then I can pull out the research in a community and say, "This is why people say they're not involved."

Antonio Esquibal at Lincoln has an amazing way of attracting the kind of parents that most people say are not willing to be engaged in their kids' education. We need to talk to him about how he does that and see how to replicate it.

Seawell: His school is busting at the seams. Their enrollment is at 110 or 115%. He has built a community based on parent involvement with the students.

Easley: A strategy should involve how you help kids to stay with their cohorts, as opposed to helping them actually get behind by remediating. If I'm running a race and I get behind, I'm not going to get ahead by going slower. I need to go faster and work harder.

We have a wonderful superintendent in Tom Boasberg, he's done some pretty amazing things. He has a great team of people working with him. I am not the expert on this district. Tom's the expert. As a board member my role is to make sure he's held accountable for moving the needle on graduation rates, but it's also to make sure that he has the resources to do his job.

Seawell: This is why we need a "needs assessment." I hear from so many parents that they try and do something, they try to create a program in a school or just be in the classroom with their kids, and they get the feeling "We'd rather you not be here." Changing that culture and figuring out how we can welcome parents and utilize their time and skills is really important.

Easley: We're not going to get anywhere if we don't diagnose what the problem is.

FPorch: What can principals do for teachers that don't measure up?

Easley: If I ask what you remember about your education, it's going to be a teacher. If you put a great teacher in a horrible environment, how long can that person be a great teacher?

Seawell: And that's why I think it gets into principals and leadership. We're going to be talking a lot about teacher effectiveness and how do we evaluate what's happening in the classroom. If you don't have a dynamic and empowering leader at the top who's really helping teachers identify what their professional development needs are, helping them to be more effective in the classroom, really just helping them stay connected to why they loved teaching in the first place, you're not going to have a successful school. I don't think, at a leadership level, we've done enough to create those environments.

Easley: It's an obligation on the District's part to make sure the teachers have the resources they need. Principals need to understand how to be a leader. And those principals who show it, the district needs to do everything they can to support them so they can continue to shine and we don't lose them.

School Performance

Seawell: There's a new way to look at school performance that the Colorado Department of Education has just posted online. You can actually break down academic growth by ethnicity, by free lunch status, by gender and you can go look at good schools like East and see where there is high growth, but students of color not being in the same place. Now we have the information to start a conversation about using resources in a different way. When people say, "Don't be so data driven," the answer is, "You know what? That actually explains what's happening in the school." We now know the problems. (Website link is https://cdeapps.cde.state.co.us/growth_model_public/)

Early Childhood Education

Easley: Stapleton will have ECE 4, not ECE 3, in the immediate future. I think ECE is very important for all neighborhoods.

Seawell: What's interesting, along with some of the other benefits of ECE, and what we're seeing in Stapleton, is that these families are now incredibly committed to these schools.



With 3-year-old ECE, I think there are only a few other schools in the district that have that. And I think having kids coming in at ECE has created people staying in DPS schools who, in other neighborhoods, may have choiced out. Financially, we need to have as many families as possible stay, and we need, financially, to have people from outlying areas to start sending their kids to Denver schools.

Stapleton Middle School and High School

Seawell: It's a really great opportunity we have to create some really great schools, especially with a high school. High schools are big enough that it won't just be Stapleton high school. It will be pulling from many different communities. My kids will go to that school. Nate's kids will go to that school. You couldn't have people who are more invested in having some really strong middle and high school options.

Easley: We came onto a train that's moving full speed. It didn't slow down for us. In a situation like that, no one wants to slow down and say, "Let kids continue to fail while we figure it out." We have a long way to go in this District and that's why, as board chair, I can say that I won't tolerate a situation where we're at each other's throats and we're not moving forward. I will be part of moving the district forward. I will encourage it, which means that I have to respect my colleagues and make sure they have the information they need and they feel like they are properly representing their district.

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January 2010



Premium Fishwrap* by Jon Meredith

Stapletonians Need to Support Stapleton Businesses

The front page of Colorado's largest newspaper had an article recently on the controversy surrounding a medical marijuana dispensary coming to Stapleton. The back story in this case is much more interesting and noteworthy to me. The proposed dispensary location used to be a coffee shop that appealed to families with young children hence its name Perk and Play. I noticed when I went into the shop that many patrons would bring their own food for their children and purchase a coffee drink for themselves. I don't think the same people would go into Udi's, buy breakfast for

themselves and bring in a box of Cheerios for the kids. However at Perk and Play, Stapletonians were slowly putting the shop out of business. Other local business owners have told me many stories of overbearing or disgruntled customers. A customer, angry at a local nail salon, went on the Internet and lambasted the business, alleging many things that were absolutely false. The internet article may have been read by many but the owner had no way of rebutting the story excepting expensive legal action. A Stapleton resident came into a business demanding a discount from the

person minding the front desk. The customer stated that she had spoken with the owner and "he" had approved discounted services. The woman minding the front desk just happened to be the one and only owner of the business. When a person decides to open a small business there is inherently a high risk of failure involved. They have lots of money invested; they put in hours and hours of time and for the most part make relatively meager incomes. They deal with employees, taxes, workman's comp, the city, the state, maybe the health department, and a myriad of other regulatory agencies. They do not need their fellow community members helping to put them out of business. Why? Because locally owned businesses in Stapleton are good for everyone who lives in Stapleton. The primary reason is that the money they make stays here in the community and

doesn't go to a headquarters in Seattle, Bentonville, or Columbus, and then off to stockholders around the world. They are unique, quirky, not absolutely perfectly run, and not found anywhere else. They are and should be flexible. If you have a beef with a Stapleton business go in and see the owner and get it worked out. Feel free to make polite suggestions because owners will be all ears. Try going in to see the owner of Wal-Mart with a problem. Local businesses are much greener than national chains can possibly be. More than anything, treat them with respect because they are your neighbors and friends, they are good for our community and they work really, really hard to try to make their business successful. Jon Meredith lives in Stapleton. He can be reached at jon.meredith@q.com. *Fishwrap is a slang term that started in the '30s and refers to the transient value of yesterday's newspaper.

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By Nancy Burkhart

When Stapleton resident Kate Briggs was looking for a positive learning environment for her then 18-month-old son, Jackson, she felt that his first experience might be best acquired through a small group.

Lowry resident Sarah West already had given her son Jack the experience of parent-tot classes and a mother's-day-out group, but when she was approached about an intimate setting for child learning in a friend's home with one teacher for five children, she saw the benefits.

Both Briggs and West have enrolled their children in Productive Playgroup, where four to six children meet at one of the children's homes for an hour and a half once a week with a teacher. The children are no more than six months apart in age.

They learn reading, phonics, arts and crafts and basic science, according to Productive Playgroup owner Krista Brown.

"It's a small setting for kids to learn in a safe environment," she explained. "I try to make it very comfortable for kids who are scared to be separated from their moms or parents. That's why we do it in homes, a safe environment. They get hands-on learning that they might not get in a pre-school. They build confidence to go into kindergarten. Because it is a small setting, we get to do so much more than preschool."

Briggs has been pleased with Jackson's progress in Productive Playgroup. "He's done wonderfully," she said. "When I drop him off, he's excited. The first time he was very comfortable. Even when I go to pick him up, he's not really ready to go home."

"I would hope that he learns to interact and share with other kids his age," Briggs added. "Right now, there are colors. Every time I pick him up

Small In-home Playgroups Teach Kids Age-appropriate Skills



Productive Playgroup teacher Jenny Duske (black vest), works with two-year-olds Anna Venak and Logan and Ian Rasmussen in the basement playroom of Sarah Vanek's Lowry home.

he's done some craft. He can be social with other kids and learn how to act with the teacher as well because he'll be going to pre-school and needs to learn to listen and obey the teacher."

West was pleased to find an environment for first Jack, 3 1/2 and now George, 2, without throwing them into a classroom setting with 15 to 20 kids and a couple of teachers.

"It has five children with one teacher, a little table, little chairs and it's an intimate setting in someone's home," she said. "Right when George turned 18 months, I got together with five other parents with kids right around the same age. This fall, George isn't old enough to start school, so we go two times a week. Some might do preschool two times a week. It gives him the same benefit. It's a nice transition into a preschool. It's the first time of being away from Mom."

George's older brother, Jack, seems to be getting more out of the playgroup than out of the play-based preschool he attends, according to West.

"In this playgroup, he's learning how to write. He's showing all the work he's doing—writing his name, tracing. It's keeping their attention, focusing around the table. They're starting to mature a little

bit," West said. "George is just starting to learn that," she said. "There are five 18-month-olds sitting around a table, learning to sit for a time, taking turns, sharing. They take turns going to the potty, so if they aren't potty-trained, it's encouraging them to get to that point. The skills are very age-appropriate for each of my kids. I think it's just getting along with other kids and learning how to respond and behave in a small group setting."

Briggs said she and her husband, Tom, plan to keep Jackson in Productive Playgroup even after he starts pre-school.

West agreed that she and her husband, Corbin, would keep their children in Productive Playgroup until it's time for them to attend kindergarten.

For information about Productive Playgroup, contact Krista Brown at 720.379.8231, Krista@productiveplaygroup.com or go to www.productiveplaygroup.com.

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Could Exercise Help Teens Fight Off Depression?

By Nancy Burkhart

Dr. Phillippe Weintraub, an associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine, believes that exercise might have an effect on fighting depression in adolescents. And so, he is conducting a study that might provide proof.

Everyone laughingly states that teenagers fail to exhibit communication skills, especially with their parents. However, parents should take time to recognize symptoms that might indicate a real problem, Weintraub said.

An adolescent has a depression problem “if he/she reports feeling depressed or bored, losing interest in things they normally like to do,” Weintraub explained. “They are developmentally less likely to communicate with words, but do with behavior. Adolescents are more irritable, defiant, their grades are slipping, they start using drugs, get in trouble with the law, and they are listening to dark music.”

Other depression signs include: a decreased or increased appetite, weight change, sleep disturbance, social withdrawal, the avoidance of family members and friends, decreased energy, and decreased concentration, he said.

“They often feel extremely guilty about what they’ve done and are hard on themselves. They are indecisive and may be more slow with their movements or speech—or the



Psychiatrist Phil Weintraub, M.D., is studying the effect of exercise on adolescents through a grant from the National Institutes of Mental Health. He is shown at the Montclair Recreation Center, one of eight recreation centers in Denver where he will meet with participants.

opposite. They may be agitated,” Weintraub added.

Some adolescents may say that life isn’t worth living, while others may withdraw by spending more time on the Internet.

“The most important thing to do is first talk with their child,” Weintraub advised parents. “Express concern that they have noticed a change recently in their behavior and mood and want to make sure they’re doing OK.”

Depressed adolescents may be suffering from other problems, such as attention deficit disorder.

“There is some evidence that some of the time young people might become depressed as a result of the other condition,” Weintraub

noted. “A parent needs to consider that there might be another problem. We don’t know for sure what causes depression. It might be genetic and environmental factors.”

Adolescent depression can escalate to suicide, he warned.

“Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people,” he said.

Weintraub’s study, “Depression Outcomes Study of Exercise,” puts adolescents who are aged 12 to 17 years and suffering from major depressive disorder in a 12-week exercise program to determine the effects of exercise. It is funded by a National Institutes of Mental Health grant.

“It’s a pilot study to look at new treatments for illnesses that pose a tremendous health burden,” Weintraub said. “We’re looking at exercise as possible alternative treatment for major depression disorder. We want to determine if exercise makes a difference. My guess is that there will be a role for all of them—exercise, drugs and therapy.”

Weintraub is recruiting adolescents to be part of his study. If you have concerns that your adolescent may be depressed and want to see if your child may be eligible for the study, call the number below. Participants must be Denver residents because the exercise program will take place at eight different Denver Parks and Recreation centers, whichever one is closest to the subjects. They will be provided with bus passes and a one-year membership to the rec center so that they will be able to continue exercising there after the study is completed.

Parents need to request their child’s participation and must participate in two evaluation visits. Weintraub or one of his team members will supervise each exercise session.

If the study shows that exercise makes a difference in adolescent depression, the next step will be to apply for a grant to conduct a larger study, Weintraub said. However, he believes that a positive showing for exercise in this study could reinforce a physician’s desire to recommend exercise to patients.

For information about enrolling in this study, call Jennifer at 303-565-4321, ext. 3673 or visit www.doseforteens.org. Any additional questions may be directed to Phil Weintraub, M.D. at 303-724-4952.

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Stapleton Front Porch

A Budget-Conscious Young Chef Reviews Local Restaurants
Grandma Makes a Mean Barbeque

kim-chee: Korean. a mixture of spicy, pickled vegetables, salted, seasoned vegetables stored in jars to undergo fermentation. accompaniment to Korean dishes. steeped, soaked



Monika Reitmeyer

By Monika Reitmeyer
“Every region in Korea has its own, distinct kimchee,” explained Song, co-owner of Grandma’s Korean Grill on Montview Boulevard, just east of Havana. “Some are spicy,

some are sour; there are many variations.” Regardless of the style, kimchee is certainly not for the weak at heart (or stomach), but once one learns to savor the delicacy, Korean food will never be the same.

Three types of kimchee arrive with entrées at Grandma’s. One version, slightly spicy (from jalapenos), a touch sweet and a little vinegary, is made with chayote squash. The second variation is the most well-known: napa cabbage seasoned with red peppers and left to ferment for about a month. Lastly, the spiciest kimchee served is a mixture of daikon radish steeped with red peppers—this one really heats things up.

Kimchee is best enjoyed along with Korean soups and entrees. We ordered bi-bim-bob (\$8), a common folk dish with lettuce, bean sprouts, mushrooms, beef, rice, a fried egg and some spicy, peppery paste with hints of fish sauce. As



Hi Byun, owner of Grandma’s Korean Barbeque, and her husband Song Park serve up heaping hot skillet of Korean barbeque and other traditional Korean dishes at their restaurant.

Song states, “This is the only dish on the menu that has instructions on how to eat—always mix it up, eat everything together.” Grandma also makes a mean barbeque (\$8–9): garlic, soy sauce, perhaps a little sugar, onions and sesame seeds smothered over tender pork shoulder strips and served on a (literally) sizzling cast-iron pan. Meant to accompany the main items, the cool and pungent kimchee adds far-reaching, old-world flavors that complement the entrée’s components.

But, before we get ahead of ourselves, be sure to check out appetizers as choices are plentiful. The seafood pancake (\$8) is one of the most popular and really sets the stage for a phenomenal meal. The golden cakes are ethereal, light and fluffy. Plump and juicy shrimp, crab and calamari

are incredibly fresh. Goon-man-du, or beef and vegetable dumplings (\$4/\$6), are sautéed until the dough is crisp; the soy-based dipping sauce cool and soothing, cre-

ates a perfect balance of flavor.

Incredibly talented and friendly, Chef Hijung Byun, or Grandma, used to own and operate Seoul Food of Korea (still located in Capitol Hill). After 17 years of satisfying thousands of hungry diners, she sold the restaurant, but was still driven to satisfy the need for authentic and affordable Korean fare. To this day, Grandma cooks every meal and never fails to please. For a simple, soulful meal served with love, Grandma surely knows best.

Grandma’s Korean Grill is located at 11650 Montview Blvd, Aurora 80010. Streetside parking available. Hours: Monday–Saturday: 11am–9pm; closed Sunday. Phone: 303.344.0603. Most major credit cards accepted. Check out the website, tactfully named www.kimchee.com.

Monika Reitmeyer is a recent graduate of Johnson & Wales University. She is currently studying for her MBA.

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DPS Language School Gears Up

By Brian Weber

The Denver Language School has received good news on two fronts: it has a building and a major grant.

DLS will open in fall 2010 in the former Whiteman Elementary, 451 Newport St., with 200 students in K-2. The Denver Public Schools board agreed to lease the facility to the new charter on Nov. 20.

The school—the district's first total language immersion program, which will teach both Spanish and Mandarin Chinese—also received a \$220,000 start-up grant from the Walton Family Foundation, a national leader in supporting promising new urban charter schools.

"We're thrilled to have such a great partnership with DPS and such strong support from Walton, which is a leader in improving public education," Head of School Danielle Carrigo said.

DLS is now accepting applications, which can be obtained through its website, www.denverlanguageschool.org; by contacting Carrigo at Danielle@denverlanguageschool.org or 303.468.3228; or Project Director Brian Weber at Brian@denverlanguageschool.org, or 303.468.3224.

The charter school's primary goal is to reach the highest levels of student achievement through comprehensive language immersion. DLS will open with 100 students in K with two classes each of Mandarin and Spanish; 50 in first and second—one Mandarin, one Spanish class in each grade.

DLS will grow a grade a year to K-8 and will serve students from all socioeconomic backgrounds. It will teach the core curriculum in a second language from kindergarten through second grade. Students will be taught English arts; progress on those skills will be a priority.

Language immersion public schools have existed in the United States since the 1970s. Research shows that students learning a second language from a young age perform better academically than their non-language learning peers, exhibit greater cultural appreciation and are able to learn additional languages with greater ease.

Brian Weber is vice president of the Stapleton Foundation.

Kindergarteners' Fundraiser Changes the Lives of Those Around the World

by Kathy Epperson

Kindergarten teachers at Bill Roberts came together in December to raise money with their kids for Heifer International, and the campaign was a resounding success. "We met and talked about what we could do this year, and I remembered the fun our kids had two years ago raising money to buy a goat through Heifer," says teacher Romi Hovey. "Six out of the seven classes did it this year—one was doing its own fundraiser—and together we raised over \$1300."

The teachers talked with the kids about the difference an animal could make in the lives of people around the world, showing them on a map where Heifer operated, and reading a book called Beatrice's Goat to help ignite their interest in giving back this holiday season. "There's a need for animals all over the world, and not just in Africa," Romi says. "So looking at this map gave the kids a better idea of the larger world, when normally their world is just Stapleton!"

To help their kindergarteners understand the full impact of their effort, the teachers also showed the students a CD provided by Heifer with stories of real children whose lives were changed by their new animal. "The story that really hit home was of a girl in Africa getting a goat, her excitement taking care of it, and earning enough money from selling the goat's milk that she could afford a uniform and be able to go to school."

The fundraiser only ran for about two weeks, but every day the teachers would share their excitement with each other about how much more money had come in that day. When the final sum was in, the teachers put up posters of the different animals they could buy and let the kids vote. "I think we ended up with a cow, five goats, and a bunch of chickens," Romi says. "The kids didn't really understand how much \$1,300 was, but they were very excited about what they could buy!"

For more information about Heifer International, go to www.heifer.org.

PTA/McDonald's Partnership Nets Over \$1,600 for Bill Roberts School



Photo courtesy of Bill Roberts school

Bill Roberts Principal Trich Lea (right), and Kristin Geoly, school receptionist, pause for a photo during a successful evening of work at McDonald's where the school got 15% of the proceeds.

Principals, teachers, parents and administrators from 86 Colorado schools became McDonald's employees for an evening to earn a minimum of 15% of sales for their local school programs. On November 18, the Stapleton community showed up to see Principal Trich Lea, teachers and parents work behind the counter at McDonald's. William Roberts K-8 in Stapleton was one of the three top schools with \$620.96 donated—and because they were one of the top three, McDonald's donated an additional \$1,000 bonus.

Colorado school officials often choose which programs must be taken out of the curriculum throughout the year because of budget cuts. The McDonald's partnership with the Colorado PTA enables schools to earn money to fill these voids and maximize their current educational programs. The McDonald's Teachers Challenge is an annual regional program that enables school administrators, principals and teachers to rally their students and parents around McTeacher's Nights that guarantees them at least 15% of sales.

Colorado PTA has partnered with McDonald's for the Teachers Challenge for four years. Beginning three years ago with 26 schools, this year 86 schools participated.

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NCUA

Denver Montclair International School Presents
The World Tea Fair
2:00–5:00pm,
Sunday, January 31

Join us at DMIS' 8th annual celebration of tea. Learn more about other cultures from tea experts. Sample an array of teas and teatime treats in a vibrant and educational setting.
Cost: \$10, adults.
\$5, ages 3-17.

Join us for an Open House from 1–2pm and gain FREE admission to the Tea Fair!

DMIS' Gymnasium, 206 Red Cross Way in Lowry
Tickets: Reserve yours at 303-340-DMIS (3647) or info@dmischool.com

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Stop by on Sunday, Jan. 17
11am - 2pm for a free, car seat safety check.

By Nancy Burkhardt

Malia has displayed her talents in 4-H

For information about the Urban Farm, call Donna Garnett at 720-810-5475.

A collage of eight images showing various interior design elements: a kitchen faucet, a dining area, a bathroom sink, a living room, a close-up of a faucet, a close-up of a faucet, a balcony, and a potted plant.

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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

1/17 Sunday- Free Car Seat Safety Checks. Did you know that 4 out of 5 car seats are installed incorrectly? Stop by the Stapleton Women's Center to have your car seat checked by nationally certified child passenger safety technicians. 11am–2pm. FREE. 2975 Roslyn St, Ste 140. 303.320.2992

1/23 Saturday- Herbal and Aromatherapy Healing for Children. Learn to use herbs and essential oils to soothe and strengthen your children as well as help relieve symptoms such as colds, flu, fever and more. 10am–12pm. Denver Botanic Gardens, 1005 York St, Central Denver. \$29 member; \$34 nonmember. www.denverbotanicgardens.org for more info and to register.

1/25 Monday- Understanding Infertility: Diagnosis to Treatment. Have you been trying to have a baby without success? Most couples will achieve their dream of parenthood and the majority will need relatively “low-tech” options. Join Dr. Diane Woodford to learn about fertility testing and treatments. 1:30–2pm. FREE. Stapleton Women's Center, 2975 Roslyn St, Ste 140. RSVP at 303.321.7115.

DENVER EVENTS

1/07 Thursday through Sunday 1/10- Denver International Sportsman's Expo. Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th, Downtown Denver. Thursday and Friday noon to 9:00pm; Saturday 10am to 8pm; Sunday 10am–5pm. Tickets: \$15 for adults; 15 years and under, free with paid adult. www.sportsexpos.com for ticketing and more info.

1/09 Saturday through 1/24 Sunday- National Western Stock Show and Rodeo. National Western Complex at I-70 and Brighton Blvd. www.nationalwestern.com for complete listing of events, schedules and ticketing info.

1/09 Saturday and 1/10 Sunday- Mexican Rodeo Extravaganza. This popular event at the National Western Stock Show features bull riders, bareback riders, trick roping and mariachi bands. National Western Complex, I-70 and Brighton Blvd. 7:30pm Saturday and 2:30pm Sunday. Tickets \$20 and include admission to National Western Grounds. www.nationalwestern.com for tickets and more info.

1/12 Tuesday- National Western Stock Show Parade. Begins at Union Station in Downtown Denver and heads down 17th St. 12 noon. FREE. www.nationalwestern.com for more info.

1/15 Friday through 1/17 Sunday- The Denver Boat Show. Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th St, Downtown Denver. \$7.25 adults; \$4.25 students 12–17. Under 12 free. Friday 12–10pm, Saturday 10am–10pm, Sunday 10am–5pm. www.denverboatshow.com for tickets and more info.

1/16 Saturday and 1/17 Sunday- Wild West Show. See how the West was won with Buffalo Bill, Annie Oakley and Calamity Jane in this popular Stock Show event patterned after Buffalo Bill shows of yesteryear. Tickets \$14 and include admission to the National Western Grounds. Show times: 5pm Saturday and 4pm Sunday. National Western Events Center, I-70 and Brighton Blvd. www.nationalwestern.com for tickets and more info.

1/18 Monday- Martin Luther King Jr. Parade. Celebrate the largest Martin Luther King Jr. march and rally in the U.S. Participants gather at City Park and march to Civic Center Park. 9am. www.drmartinlutherkingjr.org for more info.

1/20 Wednesday and 1/21 Thursday- An Evening of Dancing Horses. This National Western event includes freestyle reining, drill elements, formal dressage and more choreographed to music of the Denver Brass. 7:30pm both nights. Tickets \$18 and include admission to National Western Grounds. www.nationalwestern.com for tickets and more info.

1/22 Friday through Sunday January 24- 29th Annual Colorado Indian Market and Southwest Showcase. Denver Merchandise Mart. Friday 1–8pm, Saturday 10am–7pm and Sunday 10am–5pm. Admission \$10; under 13 free. Admission good for entire weekend, includes all shows, performances and demonstrations. www.indianmarket.net for more info.

ADULT CLASSES AND SEMINARS

1/21 Thursday- Getting Your Garden Ready for Spring. This class covers undoing mulch and compost, amending soil, garden clean-up, pruning and much more. 6:30–8:30pm. Denver Botanic Gardens, 1005 York, Central Denver. \$24 member; \$29 nonmember. www.botanicgardens.org for more info and to register.

1/30 Saturday- Dreaming of Spring: Resources for Garden Planning. Get tips for a low-maintenance garden, container gardening; learn about local and mail order seed companies and more. 9–11:30am. Denver Botanic Gardens, 1005 York, Central Denver. \$15 member; \$18 nonmember. www.botanicgardens.org for more info and to register.

The following classes and workshops are available through Colorado Free University. You can get detailed info on these and other classes at www.freeu.com or by calling 303.399.0093. These classes will be held near 1st and Quebec in East Denver.

1/09 Saturday and 1/10 Sunday- How to Start an Import Business: Intensive Workshop. Learn all the ins and outs of the importing business from a seasoned pro. 10am–4 pm. \$179 nonmember; \$159 member; \$15 materials fee payable in class.

1/13 Wednesday- Green Collar Careers: How to Find or Create Your Green Job. Discover options for taking advantage of the new investment in going green. 6:30–8:30pm. \$51 nonmember; \$39 member; \$5 materials fee payable in class.

1/14 Thursday- Wine 101: How to Taste and Appreciate Wine. Wine columnist Ben Weinberg teaches you to understand wine. 6:30–8:30pm. \$61 nonmember; \$49 member.

1/29 Friday- Writing Workshop with award-winning author Mark David Gerson. From Memory to Memoir; Writing the Stories of Your Life. 6–9pm. \$56 nonmember; \$44 member.

1/30 Saturday- Writing Workshop with award-winning author Mark David Gerson. Write in the Flow: Answer the Call to Write. 9:30am–4:30pm, \$101 nonmember; \$89 member; \$17–\$25 optional materials fee payable in class.

1/31 Sunday- CFU Singers. Learn to sing in an ensemble and find your community of singers. Group meets for 12 Sundays from 3–5pm; skips 2/14 and 4/4. \$140 nonmembers; \$125 members; \$15 materials fee payable in class.

LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS

1/11 Monday- The Life and Legacy of Ronald Reagan. From “supply side” economics to the end of the Cold War, Ronald Reagan presided over some of the most significant changes of the 20th century. Join Active Minds as we examine the life of this bold and controversial president. FREE. Springbrooke, 6800 Leetsdale Dr, Denver 80224. RSVP at 303.331.9963. www.ActiveMindsForLife.com for more info.

1/12 Tuesday- Cowboys and Legends. Join Active Minds as we seek to understand the culture and contribution of this most American phenomenon, the Cowboy. FREE. Tattered Cover, 2526 E Colfax (2 blocks east of York). 12:30–1:30pm. www.ActiveMindsForLife.com for more info.

1/19 Tuesday- The History of Colorado. Come learn the stories of Colorado history. Refreshments served at 10:45am. Sponsored by Holly Creek Retirement Community. Temple Emanuel, 51 Grape, Denver 80220. FREE. RSVP at 303.388.4013 x307. www.ActiveMindsForLife.com for more info.

1/26 Tuesday- The Challenges of Mexico. Join Active Minds for an in-depth look at Mexico from their perspective. Tattered Cover, 2526 E Colfax, (2 blocks east of York) FREE. www.ActiveMindsForLife.com for more info.

KIDS AND FAMILIES

1/02 Saturday- Jewish Children's Activities. First Saturday of every month, little ones can dance, sing, hear a story, do a craft and play at a monthly Shabbat experience, Me'at Shabbat. 9–10am. FREE. Temple Micah, 2600 Leyden St, Park Hill. 303.388.4239. www.micahdenver.org.

01/05 to 03/09, Tuesdays- Stapleton All Sports Winter Basketball. 5:45–6:45 pm. Skill development program focusing on dribbling, passing and shooting for ages 4–10. \$145/child, limited to the first 60 signed up due to court space. Bladium. Gabe Hurley, stapletonallsports@gmail.com. 720.985.6642

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1/08 Friday- Tales from the Jungle. Monthly storytime at the JCC with professional storytellers and entertainers for children 1–5. FREE. Reservations requested. 303.316.6336 to reserve a spot, www.jccdenver.org for more info. 350 S Dahlia St, Denver 80246.

1/13 Wednesday- “Create Playdates” at the Denver Art Museum. Kids 3–5 are invited to roar, bang and stomp the second Wednesday of every month. Drop in and meet with other tots for artmaking, story times and scavenger hunts. Included in museum admission; 5 and younger are free. Denver Art Museum, 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy, Denver. www.denverartmuseum.org or 720.865.5000 for more info.

01/13 to 03/17 Wednesdays- Guitar Together. This beginning class is for parents who want to learn how to play guitar with their elementary-school-age son or daughter. 6–6:50pm (50-minute class). \$160. Location in Stapleton. Contact Natasha Olson at StapletonGuitar@gmail.com or 303.318.9542.

1/16 Saturday- Tiny Tots Love Music, Denver Brass. A special concert for tiny tots and their parents; an opportunity to introduce your little ones to the joy and magic of live music. Various dates and locations. www.denverbrass.org for tickets and more info.

1/25 Monday- Tiny Tots, Inside the Orchestra. 45-minute concerts performed by the Colorado Symphony in an intimate setting geared for children 6 and under. Kids will be able to sit next to the musicians and hear classical music they may recognize! Various venues and dates through mid February. Concerts at 9:30 and 10:30am. 1/25 concert held at Temple Sinai, 3509 Glencoe St, Denver 80237. Sponsored by the Junior Symphony Guild and the Colorado Symphony. \$5, children under 2 are free. www.jrsg.org for tickets and more info.

1/31 Sunday- Denver Montclair International School World Tea Fair. Sample exotic teas and treats from around the globe at this annual event. Kids’ table with crafts and other international activities. 2–5pm. 206 Red Cross Way in Lowry. \$10 adults; \$5 children. www.dmischool.com or email karenprinzz@hotmail.com for more info.

Through 2/15- Louisville Winterskate. Old-fashioned outdoor ice-skating with traditional holiday music and free Friday night carriage rides. \$3–\$5; skate rental \$3. Call for hours: 303.449.3137. 824 Front St, Louisville. www.bceproductions.com

Through 2/15- Flatiron Crossing Winterskate. Outdoor rink outside the mall with holiday music. \$3–\$5; skate rental \$3. Call for hours, 303.449.3137. www.bceproductions.com

Through March 2010- Tropical Odyssey at the Butterfly Pavilion. Experience a journey in conservation while following the life of a butterfly. 12 interactive exhibits including a zip line. Regular admission applies: \$4.95–\$7.95. 6252 104th Ave, Westminster. www.butterflies.org for more info.

LIBRARIES

For more information on these and other programs at all libraries, check the events calendar at denverlibrary.org.

Libraries: Blair Caldwell African American Research Library, 2401 Welton St, 80205, 720.865.2401

Through 2/12 Friday- Lincoln, The Constitution and the Civil War. The Denver library is one of only 25 host sites on the national tour of this compelling exhibition about Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War. <http://history.denverlibrary.org/news/lincoln> for more info and exhibit programs.

1 /04 Monday- Crafts for Kids, Lincoln’s Hat. Enjoy a sneak preview of the Denver Public Library’s Lincoln Exhibition; learn about the former president and make a miniature stovepipe hat in the style of Lincoln’s. 5:30–6:30pm.

1/11Monday- Crafts for Kids, Lincoln Penny Pendant. Make a penny pendant to wear on Lincoln’s birthday or to demonstrate patriotism any time. 5:30–6:30pm.

1/16 Saturday- The 4th U.S. Artillery Regimental Brass Band. This group of musicians/historians performs 19th century music with period instruments and uniforms. 2pm.

2/01 Monday- Black History Month Film Series: Glory. *Glory* is the Oscar-winning 1989 film based on the letters of Robert Gould Shaw during the American Civil War. 6pm.

Libraries: Schlessman Family Library, 100 Poplar St, 80220 (1st and Quebec), 720.865.0000

1/09 and 1/30, Saturdays- Rocky Mountain Letter Press Society. Members of the Letterpress Society will demonstrate the art of hand setting type on an 1875 machine. Members of the public will be able to print their own name and a Martin Luther King, Jr. quotation on a keepsake bookmark. 10am–4pm.

1/13 Wednesday- Dearly Departed Architects. Learn about Denver’s late, great architects and the design

legacy they left with this virtual tour by Fairmount Cemetery. 6:30–7:30pm.

1/23 Saturday- Colorado Authors Series Presents: Jeanne Stein. Ms. Stein is the best-selling author of the urban fantasy Anna Strong, Vampire series including *The Becoming*, *Blood Drive*, *The Watcher* and *Retribution*. 2–3pm.

1/24 Sunday- Latitudes Book Club. Celebrate the New Year with a notable new book for adults. Get your copy of selected titles at the Schlessman reference desk.

1/30 Saturday- Energy Efficiency. Join Excel Energy and learn some easy ways to conserve energy and save money in the process. 11am–12pm.

MUSEUMS

Through 1/10- Western Art Perspective. Featuring more than 60 works in oil and bronze by Western artist Charles M. Russell. \$3–\$10. Denver Art Museum, 100 W 14th Ave. Pkwy, Denver. www.denverartmuseum.org or 720.913.0049 for more info.

Through February 18- IMAX movies *Sea Monster* and *Wild Ocean*. Denver Museum of Nature and Science. www.dmns.org for ticket info and movie times.

Through February 7- Genghis Khan. Tickets \$20/\$11, includes museum admission. Denver Museum of Nature and Science. www.dmns.org for more info.

(continued on page 18)

To submit information for the Front Porch “Local Events” section...

Email information in the following format by the 15th of the month to frontporchevents@gmail.com. Events will be run subject to space available.

Date in numerical format (mm/dd), day of week- Name of Event. A one- or two-sentence description. Time. List cost or if free. Location. Contact information.

Press releases for suggested stories should be sent separately to frontporch@fineprintco.com.

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THEATER

1/13 Wednesday through 1/17 Sunday- *Cats*. The Broadway classic returns. Tickets start at \$15. Buell Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, 14th and Speer in Downtown Denver. www.denver-center.org for tickets and more info

1/15 Friday through 2/27 Saturday- *Secrets of a Soccer Mom*. Avenue Theater, 417 E 17th Ave, Denver 80203. Tickets \$17 and \$20. 303.321.5925 or www.avenuetheater.com for tickets and more info.

1/22 Friday through 2/13 Saturday- *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. John Hand Theater, 7653 E 1st Place in Lowry. 720.880.8727 for tickets; Info at www.johnhandtheater

2/02 Tuesday through 2/14 Sunday- *Legally Blonde the Musical*. Tickets start at \$20. Buell Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, 14th and Speer, Denver. www.denvercenter.org for tickets and more info.



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Reminder – Pedestrians Need to Stay Out of Construction Areas



Some areas between Smith Road and the Sand Creek Greenway trail are under construction by the City and County of Denver's Department of Aviation. Pedestrians and cyclists are asked to stay on the authorized trails to avoid placing themselves in danger.

Since You've Asked...

Q: What is the work going on in the Westerly Creek open space near the eastern end of 35th Avenue?

A. The Park Creek Metro District was removing debris and excavating dirt to grade (smooth out) and seed the area for an extension of the bike and pedestrian path that currently dead-ends at 33rd Avenue. The new path was extended to the area of 35th Avenue and eventually will connect to the Sand Creek Regional Greenway on the north. (Response provided by Tom Gleason, vice president, Forest City Stapleton, Inc.)

RECURRING EVENTS

4th Monday

SUN Board Mtg. 7:30pm, MCA Comm. Rm., 2823 Roslyn St. stapletonunitedneighbors@gmail.com

Every Tuesday

Stapleton Rotary Club – 12pm
Stapleton Radisson Plaza Hotel
3333 Quebec St.
Michael@KearnsTeam.com

Every Tuesday

AA Open Discussion Mtg. 7:30pm
SUN Transportation Committee
MCA Community Room, 2823 Roslyn Street 303-912-7075

1st Tuesday

Breast Cancer Support Group
5-6:30pm AF Williams Family Medicine Clinic, Conference Rm. (west entrance) 3055 Roslyn (at MLK) 720-848-9000

3rd Tuesday

Greater Stapleton Business Assoc.
8am MCA Comm. Rm., 2823 Roslyn Street 303-393-7700

Every Wednesday

Weekly Weeders, Bluff Lake Nature Center 9am-12pm, 303-945-6717

1st Wednesday

"1st Wednesdays" Home-based businesses. 11:30am-1pm tbrislina@gmail.com, www.StapletonLife.com

2nd Wed. (Odd-numbered mos.)

SUN Transportation Committee
6:30pm MCA 2823 Roslyn St. stapletonneighbors@msn.com

Every Thursday

(when school's in session)
Bill Roberts Elementary School Tour, 10am, 2100 Akron Way, 720-424-2640

First Thursday

Bill Roberts Middle School Tour, 10am
2100 Akron Way, 720-424-2640

3rd Thursday

Stapleton Citizens Advisory Board Mtg, Stapleton Development Corp (SDC) 7350 E. 29th Ave. 7:30-9am 303-393-7700

2nd Friday

Story time & craft for young children & caregiver, Westerly Creek Elementary library 9:15-9:45am. 303-322-5877

1st Saturday

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

2nd Saturday

NE Denver/Park Hill MS Self-Help & Support Group, Dist. 2 Police Station, 10:15-11:45am 3821 Holly St. 303-329-0619

Periodically

Stapleton Wine Appreciation Group
e-mail meighanm@aim.com



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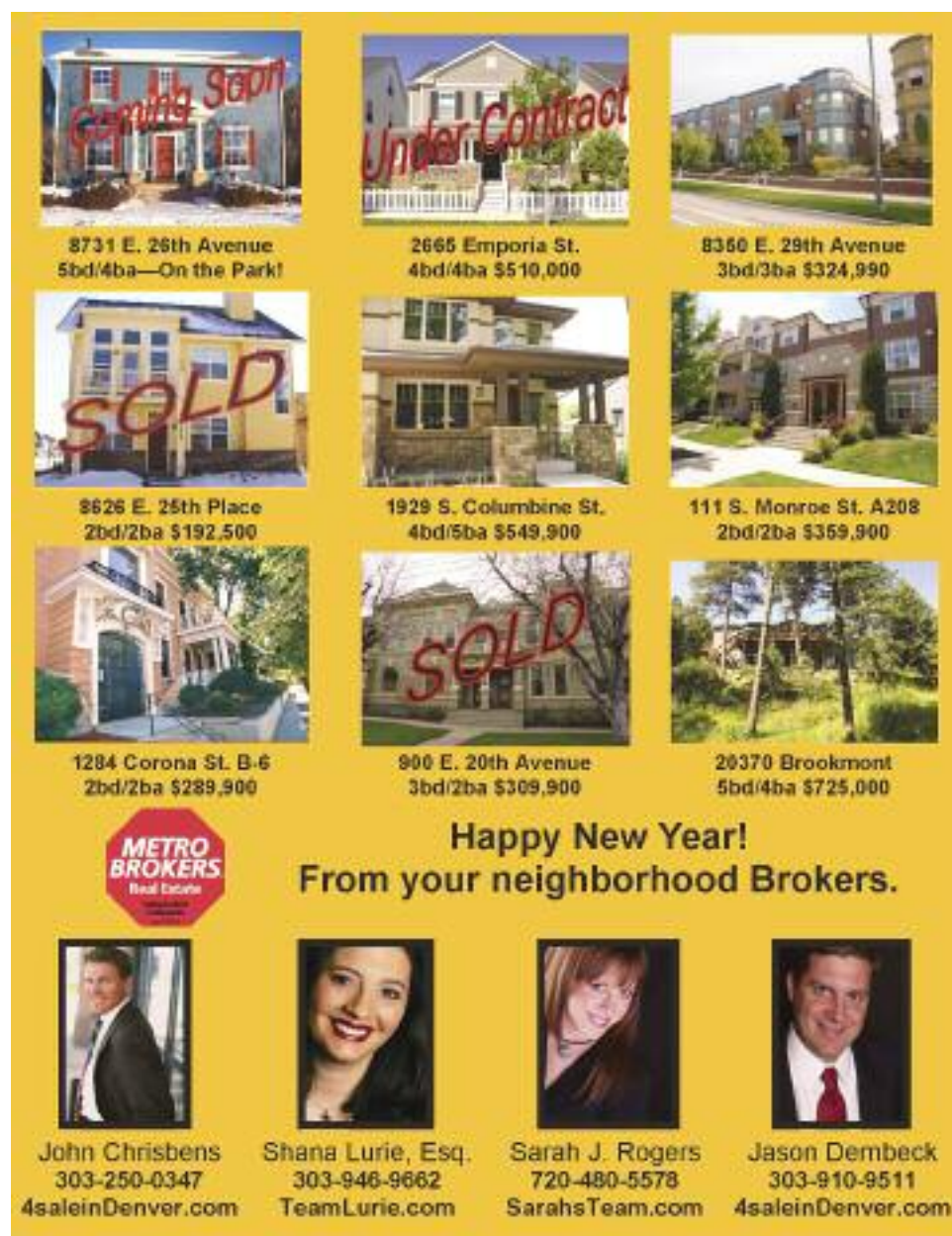
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1284 Corona St. B-6
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Colorado

By Angela Williams
Car crashes are the No. 1 killer of American teens, with nearly 5,000 teens killed annually—and the holiday season is one of the deadliest times for teen drivers. On November 30th, one day before texting while driving became illegal in Colorado, Angela Williams Allstate Insurance Agency joined approximately 400 students from Montbello High School in making a public pledge not to text while driving. Participants stamped their thumbprint on a banner that is traveling the country.

Texting is one of the most dangerous distractions facing teens today. According to a recent Allstate Foundation study, 82% of driving teens claim to use cell phones while driving, and 49% admit to being extremely distracted by texting and instant messaging while driving. Recent research conducted by Virginia Tech's Transportation Institute reveals that texting while driving can increase the risk of an accident by 23 times.

The study also shows parents can have a profound effect on their teen's driving behavior. 81% of teens admit their parents have the most influence on how they drive, and 79% say they are most likely to take driving safety advice from their parents. To join this cause and pledge not to text and drive, families are encouraged to visit www.facebook.com/thumbsuppledge.

Angela Williams is the owner of the Allstate Insurance Company in Northfield. She can be reached at 303.779.8819.

Stapleton Business Knows Africa Travel Inside and Out

By Nancy Burkhart
Stapleton resident Sarah Fazendin fell in love with Africa when she got a job managing Kenya's tourism board. “That's when I was spending eight to 10 weeks a year in Kenya and just fell in love with it,” Fazendin said.

She started her business, The Fazendin Portfolio, in 2006 to do marketing and sales for upscale tour groups, camps and lodges in Africa. She is the connection, or the “middle man” between travel agencies and posh tours and destinations in Africa.

“These are luxury products, and are truly some of the most sustainable wildlife experiences. It's a delicate cultural tapestry. We have always aligned ourselves with people who are mindful of that.

“The travel agency is booking the trip,” she explained. “A lot of times, travel agents tap into our knowledge. We are spending quite a bit of time with our finger on the pulse of what's going on over there. We help to educate travel agents how to work with a destination like Africa.”

As the economy turns around, people are focusing on travel again, Fazendin said.

“I think for a historic, “Out of Africa” experience, you can't beat Kenya and Tanzania with the wildebeest migration,” she advised. “For an amazing, intimate, cultural experience, go to Ethiopia. And, for a private, exclusive experience, see Botswana.

“People who want to spend a few days in the city should fly into Cape Town, South Africa. It's crazy cheap with amazing galleries. Honeymooners, especially, like to go there. Then they can go elsewhere. Nairobi also is a fabulous city. It has an interesting history. The British colonial influence is there. The Indian Ocean is amazing. A lot of people will do Zanzibar.”



This photo, taken in July 2009, shows Sarah Fazendin with an old female elephant, one of the matriarchs of the herd, who died of natural causes in the northwest area of the Okavango Delta in Botswana.

Photo courtesy of Sarah Fazendin

Travelers who trek solo need not worry about experiencing Africa, Fazendin said. “I've spent my whole adult life traveling around Africa alone and never have felt threatened in any way,” she said.

Although many think that a luxury field like upscale African travel would be best worked in New York City, Fazendin says that Denver has one of the highest concentrations of safari operators in the United States.

That is why Fazendin and her husband, Eric, relocated to Stapleton. Now they have a 2 1/2-year-old daughter, Jossilyn, who may soon visit Africa, according to her mother.

Fazendin and her associate, Mal-lory Corbett, work out of Fazendin's home office.

“We're just like the typical Stapleton business. Several days a week we do yoga, and we do lunch in Stapleton,” Fazendin said.

The Fazendin Portfolio will not book a trip to Africa for you, but Sarah Fazendin will give advice, if asked, she said. E-mail her at contact@fazendinportfolio.com or go to www.fazendinportfolio.com.

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Top left: James Dixon and Armand Guerrero lift a white-hot cauldron containing molten metal from the furnace.

Top right: Dixon and Guerrero begin pouring while foundry owner Ray Fedde guides the molten metal into the “lost wax” negative molds that create the finished sculpture.

Bottom left: Hot metal cools in the molds in the foreground as Dixon and Guerrero pour the leftover metal into ingot molds in the background.

Bottom right: Ray Fedde proposes a champagne toast as the last pour is successfully completed.

By Nancy Burkhart

At the age of five, Ray Fedde fell in love with a bronze grizzly bear and her baby bear at what was then the Denver Museum of Natural History.

In the last 37 years, Fedde Bronze Works at 5105 E. 38th Ave. has created bronze statues as small as a penny and as large as 15 feet and weighing 3,000 pounds, including a piece of public art called “The Dogs’ Picnic,” which has been installed for children to enjoy at Stapleton. And, there is a grizzly bear with her cub at a local shopping mall.

“I thought I was going to be a sculptor, but then I thought it would be difficult to make money,” Fedde said. “Selling my own sculpture looked like it was going to be hard to sell. I was a very good craftsman and artist, so I could cast for other people and make a living doing that.”

Fedde has a number of his own commissions, including bronze church doors in Boulder at the Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church and church furniture at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Capitol Hill. But, sculptures that he casted reside all over the world, including Hong Kong, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Atlantic City, San Francisco and Sioux Falls, S.D.

“I really like public bronzes because of their durability and their flexibility to display a huge variety of subjects,” he said.

Over the years, Fedde and his team, which has varied from one to 10 people, have worked with between 1,000 and 2,000 artists. Some artists have been using his services for more than 20 years.

Unfortunately, Fedde Bronze Works’ history of supplying the public with beautiful artwork to fill their memories has come to an end. On Thursday, Dec. 17, Fedde made his last pour to create a bronze piece of art, a victim of the economy and his age.

“My artists are typically not wealthy,” Fedde explained. “Bronzes sold only to municipalities or very wealthy people. This economic downturn is a little bit different. Business has gotten kind of slow. Competition is stiff because casting is romantic. It’s the history of Rodin and Boticelli and all those guys who did their bronzes. People out of art school go into it and don’t stick with it.

“Working for myself has been 12-hour days and six- or seven-day weeks. It’s been difficult to take vacations. I’m 74 years old, so it’s time to retire and take a vacation.”

Fedde’s last pour was a bottle of champagne to celebrate the 37 years of success and history behind Fedde Bronze Works.

January Is “Choice” Time in Denver Public Schools

First Round School of Choice for 2010-2011: January 4 – January 29, 2010

If you are interested in a school other than your neighborhood school, First Round School of Choice allows you to apply to attend another DPS school. First Round choice applications are available at all DPS schools as well as online for parents to print. Forms must be returned to a school for central processing, and application deadlines are firm. Up to two schools may be indicated on a First Round choice application. Please note, the DPS central office does not accept applications. A lottery will be conducted if there are more applicants than space available in a school. Families will receive acceptance letters or waiting list notification following the close of First Round choice.

Second Round School of Choice for 2010-2011: School Year: March 1 – August 31, 2010

Due to limited capacity in some schools, your student may not secure a spot in the school(s) to which you applied during First Round choice. You will have the opportunity to complete an applica-

tion to any additional school(s) during the Second Round choice period. You will need to return Second Round choice applications to the specific school or schools that interest you. Students are accepted during this Second Round of the choice process on a first-come, first-served basis after the First Round applicants have been placed. Decisions are made prior to the start of the school year. Waiting lists are maintained for schools with more applicants than space available.

Magnet Schools

December 11, 2009 – Secondary magnet program application deadline

January 29, 2010 – Elementary magnet application deadline

Charter Schools

Contact your school of interest for an application and transportation information.

To learn more, contact the School of Choice Office at <http://soco.dpsk12.org> or 720-423-3493.

(Information provided by Denver Public Schools)

DPS Schools in NE Denver

Ashley Elementary School – ECE-5
1914 Syracuse St.
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(303) 322-1853
<http://ashley.dpsk12.org/>

Barrett Elementary School – ECE-5
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(303) 388-5841
<http://barrett.dpsk12.org/>

Carson Elementary School – ECE-5
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Denver, CO 80220
(303) 355-7316
<http://carson.dpsk12.org/>

Columbine – ECE-6
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<http://columbine.dpsk12.org/>

Denver Language School — K-2
451 Newport St Denver, CO
www.denverlanguageschool.org
Danielle@denverlanguage
school.org
303.468.3228

Harrington – ECE-6
2401 E. 37th Ave.
Denver, CO 80205
(303) 333-4293
<http://harrington.dpsk12.org/>

Knight Fundamental Academy at Hallett – ECE-5
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<http://knight.dpsk12.org/>

Montclair School of Academics & Enrichment – ECE-5
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(303) 333-5497
<http://montclair.dpsk12.org/>

Palmer Elementary School – ECE-5
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(303) 388-5929
<http://palmer.dpsk12.org/>

Park Hill Elementary School – ECE-5
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Denver, CO 80220
(303) 322-1811
<http://parkhill.dpsk12.org/>

Smith Renaissance School of the Arts – ECE-5
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(303) 388-1658
<http://smith.dpsk12.org/>

Stedman Elementary School – ECE-5
2940 Dexter St.
Denver, CO 80207
(303) 322-7781
<http://stedman.dpsk12.org/>

Swansea – ECE-6
4650 Columbine St.
Denver, CO 80216
(303) 296-8429

Teller Elementary School – ECE-5
1150 Garfield St.
Denver, CO 80206
(303) 333-4285
<http://teller.dpsk12.org>

The Odyssey School – K-8 Charter
8750 E. 28th Ave.
Denver, CO 80238
(303) 316-3944
<http://www.odysseydenver.org>

Pioneer Charter School – ECE-6 Charter
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<http://www.pioneercharter.com>

Westerly Creek – ECE-3
8800 E. 28th Ave.
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(303) 322-5877

William (Bill) Roberts – ECE-8
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(720) 424-2640
<http://billroberts.dpsk12.org>

Smiley Middle School – 6-8
2540 Holly St.
Denver, CO 80207

(720) 424-1540
<http://smileymiddleschool.com>

Denver School of Science and Technology – 6-8 & 9-12 Charter
2000 Valentia St.
Denver, CO 80238
(303) 320-5570
<http://www.science-andtech.org>

Bruce Randolph School – 6-12
3955 Steele St.
Denver, CO 80205
(720) 424-1080
<http://randolph.dpsk12.org>

Envision Leadership Prep – 6-12 Charter
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(303) 893-0805
<http://www.envision-schoolscolorado.org>

East High School – 9-12
1600 City Park Esplanade
Denver, CO 80206
(720) 423-8300
<http://eastangels.org>

Manual High School – 9-10
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Real Estate Corner

Information of interest from local real estate professionals

Walkable Urbanism

Submitted by Samantha Dardano with permission from Metrolist, Inc.

Picture losing weight each time you walk to the grocery store. You spend less money on your car—or you don't own a car. When you shop, you support your local economy. You talk to your neighbors.

Stapleton scored a 69 out of a possible 100 points for its walkability. The planning of Stapleton was clearly a long and deliberate decision to make our community connected and accessible. Walk Score helps people find walkable places to live. Walk Score calculates the walkability of an address by locating nearby stores, restaurants, schools, parks, etc. Walk scores measure how easy it is to live a car-lite lifestyle.

The guidelines for interpreting a walk score are:

- 90-100: Walker's Paradise: Most errands can be accomplished on foot and many people get by without owning a car.
- 70-89: Very Walkable: It's impossible to get by without owning a car.
- 50-69: Somewhat Walkable: Some stores and amenities are within walking distance, but many everyday trips still require a bike, public transportation, or car.
- 25-49: Car-Dependent: Only a few destinations are within easy walking range. For most errands, driving or public transportation is a must.
- 0-24: Car-Dependent (Driving only): Virtually no neighborhood destinations within walking distance. You can walk from your house to your car!

Why Walking Matters?

Walkable neighborhoods offer surprising

benefits to our health, the environment and our communities.

Better health: A study in Washington State found that the average resident of a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood weighs 7 pounds less than someone who lives in a sprawling neighborhood. Residents of walkable neighborhoods drive less and suffer fewer car accidents, a leading cause of death between the ages of 15-45.

Reduction in greenhouse gas: Cars are a leading cause of global warming. Your feet are zero-pollution transportation machines.

More transportation options: Compact neighborhoods tend to have higher population density, which leads to more public transportation options and bicycle infrastructure. Not only is taking the bus cheaper than driving, but riding a bus is 10 times safer than driving a car!

Increased social capital: Walking increases social capital by promoting face-to-face interaction with your neighbors. Studies have shown that for every 10 minutes a person spends in a daily car commute, time spent in community activities falls by 10%.

Strong local businesses: Dense, walkable neighborhoods provide local businesses with the foot traffic they need to thrive. It's easier for pedestrians to shop at many stores on one trip, since they don't need to drive between destinations.

Homes listed for sale in our local Multiple Listing Service are assigned a Walkability Score.

Samantha Dardano is a real estate broker with Dardano Properties. She can be reached at 303-523-0833.

Walk Score information provided by Metrolist, Inc. Reprint permission granted by Metrolist, Inc. © 2009



Samantha Dardano

Refuge Expands Hours, Offers Snowshoeing in 2010 New Educational Programs Begin in January

By Melissa Van Dreese

To kick off the new decade, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge will be welcoming 2010 with new programs and expanded hours.

Along with new programs, one of the biggest changes for 2010 is that the Refuge will now be open for drop-in visitation on Thursdays as well as Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Visitors will also be welcome to bring their snowshoes and hike over eight miles of trails when freshly covered with snow. Bringing a camera and binoculars is a good idea as well, as a snowy backdrop makes winter one of the best times of year to view wildlife.

"The Refuge is a living outdoor lab, and we've been hard at work developing new nature programs for children and adults alike, which we're thrilled to debut. The coming year will be an exciting time for the Refuge," said Visitor Services Manager Sherry James.

In addition to its well-known children's nature programs, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is offering a new Guest Lecture Series to appeal to adults. Every third Saturday from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., wildlife experts will share their knowledge about various wildlife-related topics, in-



Wildlife photos taken at the Arsenal: bison and a buck.

Photos by Rich Keen, DPRA

cluding raptors, black-footed ferrets and American bison.

Remember, all programs are free at the Refuge but may require reservations. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Melissa Van Dreese is an education specialist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Guest Lecture Series

Join us every third Saturday of the month at the Visitor Center, 7 - 8 pm. Lectures are recommended for adults. Reservations are required, 303-289-0930.

Saturday, Jan 16 – Raptors in Action

Special guest, Kin Quitugua from Hawk Quest, along with four LIVE native raptors and one free-flying hawk will share the importance of these creatures. View their specifically adapted tools and learn their roles in the prairie ecosystem.

Saturday, Feb 20 – Ghosts of the Prairie

The black-footed ferret is one of the most endangered mammals in the world. Multiple partners have worked since 1981 to conserve this masked weasel. Staff from the Black Footed Ferret Center will provide an informational presentation on their recovery efforts and let you know how you can help!

Saturday, Mar 20 – Home Again: The American Bison

In the 1800s, the American bison was nearly extinct on the Great Plains where they once roamed by the millions. Refuge biologist Tom Ronning will discuss the current bison management program, future round-ups, expansion of the herd, and their role in prairie conservation.

To get to the Refuge, take I-70 and exit north on Havana St. The public entrance to the Refuge is at 56th and Havana. For more information or to make reservations, call the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at 303-289-0930 or visit online at <http://www.fws.gov/rockymountainarsenal/>.

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Teacher Shows Students How to Be Scientists

By Nancy Burkhardt

Fourth- through sixth-graders at the Montessori School of Denver are learning more about the earth's marine world and what it means to be a scientist, thanks to their teacher, Chris Imhof.

The Stapleton resident recently returned from a cruise as one of 25 teachers in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Teacher at Sea Program.

The Teacher at Sea Program is designed to give kindergarten through college-level teachers an opportunity to work with scientists and crews aboard ships so that they can learn more about maritime work and studies. NOAA pays teachers' expenses.

Imhof served aboard the Pisces for two weeks on its first cruise that started in Gulfport, Mississippi and sailed around the keys to North Carolina.

"Every day we got to listen to whales and dolphins because they were testing equipment," Imhof said. "The real mission of NOAA is to bring ocean literacy to the classroom by having teachers work with scientists using state-of-the-art equipment. We did a lot of interviewing of the scientists."

Although Imhof teaches science, history, geography and math to fourth- through sixth-graders, teachers don't have to have a scientific background in order to be selected for the program. "I think it helps to be a science teacher, but you could be any kind of teacher. I think ocean literacy expands across any program," he said.

The lessons taught on board the ship that carries about 40 people are not strictly science-related.

"You learn about communication skills and team skills," Imhof said. "We went up the coast to North Carolina, looking at marine-protected areas. We looked at areas closed off to fishing. Studies had to do with the grouper fish. We were using a remotely operated vehicle, a robot run by somebody on the ship with monitors. We had fish and mammal specialists on board. They were looking at comparisons of grouper fish and lionfish that originally came from the Indian Ocean and were spilled out by Hurricane Andrew. The lionfish is an invasive



Montessori School of Denver teacher Christopher Imhof talks to some of his students about his recent trip on a NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) research ship as was part of their Teacher at Sea Program. In his hand is a working model of a remote operated vehicle (ROV) the students plan to place on the bottom of a local creek to emulate, on a small scale, the workings of a NOAA ROV.

species of fish competing against the commercially fished grouper fish."

The scientific studies being made would go to Congress where decisions would be made dealing with fishing and the environment. Besides the scientific studies, Imhof said his students will benefit from his knowledge about the individual scientists.

"A lot of these scientists have diverse backgrounds," he said. "Some have computer backgrounds. It makes them stronger scientists. If you're going to love doing this as-



Lionfish



Above: Chris Imhof drives the Remote Operated Vehicle. Right: The crew recovers the ROV.

pect of science, you have to do other things, too. You have to write well, have a computer background and be well-rounded. "Imhof also is pulling the marine knowledge he attained on the Pisces into Colorado's history.

"Kids going to the mountains are looking at sandstone and limestone and are looking at dinosaur footprints," he said. "A lot of the fossils we have are marine fossils. It gives them a different appreciation of that stuff. "Discussion in Imhof's classes also includes protected areas and certain

View a 5-minute video of Chris Imhof talking about his time aboard the Pisces. FrontPorchStapleton.com

species, he said. "A lot of nets got hung up on rocks. A lot of that becomes home to new species, wreck areas become habitats. If you see an absence of a species, it throws off the whole habitat. You can apply that in Colorado," he said. "We talk about when something becomes invasive and when something just becomes part of the existing habitat.

"I feel like this was a way of getting our students to get closer to the oceans and see how science is done, not just here but there," Imhof said. "I think they're getting an idea of what it takes to be a scientist. They might read more and become a scientist. I have kids who are real mathematicians. A lot of what these scientists are doing is math. This gives the kids ideas for what they can become in their lives. It's expanding their ideas of what they can do to apply it. They are seeing what this can be in the real world."

For information about NOAA's Teacher at Sea Program, gvisit: www.teacheratsea.noaa.gov.


For more information about Chris Imhof's experiences in the Teacher at Sea Program, e-mail him at: cimhof@msd-co.org.



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The SUN Spot

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SUN Meetings are held on the 4th Monday of every month at 7:30pm in the Stapleton Community Room, 2823 Roslyn Street. For information about SUN, visit www.stapletonunitedneighbors.com. To contact SUN or confirm meeting time, email stapletonunitedneighbors@gmail.com or call 720-840-8492.



Sustainability, Clean Environment, and Food Drive Go Hand in Hand?

By Caroline Batorowicz

Howdy neighbors! I'd like to introduce you to, if you have not already heard of these fine young men, our very own Stapleton Cub Scout Pack 34. Give it up for the boys, yeah! This year our pack is three years old. It consists of first-, second-, and third-grade dens. I'm very pleased to say that half of the boys in the third grade have been with the pack from the very beginning. We have boys from Stapleton and surrounding neighborhoods. But what exactly do these boys have to do with Sustainability, Clean Environment and Food Drive? Well, the month of November marked the National Good Turn for America. "Since the Boy Scouts of America's (BSA) inception in 1910, members have learned



Stapleton Cub Scout Pack 34 collects 26 bags of garbage during the Westerly Creek Cleanup Service Project.

to live the principles of the Scout Oath and Law through community services and 'helping other people at all times.' With that history in mind, the BSA has developed a service initiative—Good Turn for America." Cited from <http://goodturnforamerica.org/index.html>

On an early Saturday morning of November 21, the pack met at Westerly Creek to clean up our cherished green space. The weather was beautiful and we had over 35 participants. We were even joined by some residents from nearby the creek. The boys, their parents, and even four-legged companions waded through mud and wetlands to collect trash of all sorts. Among some of the treasures were steel reinforcing bars and an old sofa cushion. Of course, the volunteers also received a wonderful exposure to our local wildlife, such as a headless snake carcass and perfectly pointy pieces of wood, compliments of our beaver residents. Believe it or not, the pack collected over 26 bags of trash. Way to go, scouts. Thank you for making our neighborhood that much cleaner!

Oh, but that is not all, not for some of our scouts. They were eager to do much more. "Good Turn for America is a national call to service by the Boy Scouts of America to address the issues of hunger, homelessness, and poor health in our nation." Cited from <http://goodturnforamerica.org/index.html>

Just a couple of hours after the cleanup, a group of boys set up their tables in front of Wal-Mart in order to help collect canned food for Bill Roberts School. The food drive was part of a bigger event called CANstruction. This was the first time that our students participated in this event. Not only is it a food drive for the needy but it is also a competition organized by the Salvation Army and the Society for Design Administration. Before the food is distributed to the needy, the students participate in a building project and compete against other schools, during which they perform miracles with cans and transform them into wonderful structures. The Cub Scouts helped the school to raise more can donations by spending their Saturday afternoon in front of a grocery store and asking wonderful people to donate cans as they left the store. The boys did a great job and as a result were able to add 170 cans and other dry food to the cause. I can't say enough to praise these great individuals.



Above: Cubs, parents and siblings clean up along Westerly Creek. Top: Cooper Francone, Marcel Batorowicz and Thomas Francone attract food donors with their wonderful smiles.

The Scout Law states that among other values the scout is THRIFTY, that to me says sustainable; the scout is CLEAN, as in environment; the scout is HELPFUL, as in food drive. I guess the answer to my question is clear, in the small but strong palms of Cub Scouts, Sustainability, Clean Environment and Food Drive do go hand in hand. Thank you to all the Cub Scouts for being a part of our community and I look forward to seeing you turn into amazing Eagle Scouts. I salute you. "DO YOUR BEST" (Cub Scout motto).

For more information, contact Cubmaster Dane Vierow at dane@dvierow.com.

Caroline Batorowicz is a SUN Board member and sits on the Sustainability Committee.

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Unregulated Medical Marijuana Dispensaries

How did we get here?

The amendment to the Colorado Constitution allowing medical use of marijuana was passed nine years ago. What are the events that led to the recent proliferation of marijuana dispensaries? And what is being done to regulate all the dispensaries that are popping up?

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) was tasked with implementing and administering the Medical Marijuana Registry program. In March of 2001, the State of Colorado Board of Health approved the Rules and Regulations pertaining to the administration of the program, and on June 1, 2001, the Registry began accepting and processing applications for Registry Identification cards. The Colorado medical marijuana amendment, statutes and regulations are silent on the issue of dispensaries. The Registry does not license dispensaries. There are no regulations regarding dispensaries. (<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/hs/medicalmarijuana/index.htm>)

However, marijuana remained illegal under federal law, leaving medical marijuana users at risk of federal marijuana raids. But now, though the laws haven't technically changed, ending medical marijuana raids "is now American policy," (as stated by Attorney General Eric Holder at a press conference on February 25, 2009). On March 18, speaking with reporters at the Justice Department, Holder said federal agents will target marijuana distributors only when they violate both federal and state law.

On July 20, 2009 the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) (which manages the registry of certified medical marijuana users) rejected a proposed rule that "caregivers" could supply only five patients at a time, and they did not specify that "caregivers" had to provide other services such as helping patients with daily activities.

At that point, there was no law or ruling in Colorado that prevented dispensaries from serving large numbers of patients, and dispensary owners appear to have interpreted the CDPHE ruling to mean that they could qualify as a "caregiver" by simply selling medical marijuana to a patient.

On October 19, 2009, U.S. Department of Justice Deputy Attorney General David W. Ogden wrote a memorandum to United States Attorneys in states with laws legalizing marijuana stating: "As a general matter, pursuit of these priorities should not focus federal resources in your States on individuals whose actions are in clear and unambiguous compliance with existing state laws providing for the medical use of marijuana. On the other hand, prosecution of commercial enterprises that unlawfully market and sell marijuana for profit continues to be an enforcement priority of the Department."

On October 29, 2009, the Colorado Court of Appeals ruled that, to qualify as a primary caregiver, "a person must do more than merely supply a patient who has a debilitating medical condition with marijuana," overturning the July 20 ruling of the CDPHE.

On November 3, 2009, the Board of Health deleted their prior definition of a caretaker (leaving no definition at all) and plans to address the definition at a future meeting.

On Nov. 18, 2009, Denver City Councilman Charlie Brown presented a proposal to City Council for regulating medical marijuana dispensaries in the City of Denver.

On December 16, 2009, Denver City Council's Safety Committee discussed and voted on modifications to the ordinance that will go before City Council for a First Reading on January 4th and a vote on January 11th. A summary of the proposed ordinance is on page 27.

If the Denver Medical Marijuana Dispensary Licensing Ordinance is passed as proposed, all dispensaries must meet the licensing regulations and be licensed by March 1, 2010, or they will be terminated. Any dispensaries that obtained a sales tax license by a designated date (Dec. 1, Dec. 15 and Jan. 1 are being considered) will be grandfathered in regarding the 1000-foot spacing requirement (to schools and other dispensaries), but will have to meet all other licensing requirements.

The State Legislature is expected to pass state regulations in their upcoming session and all dispensaries in Denver will have to meet state requirements as well as local requirements.

According to the Denver 8 TV Denver Update page at [DenverGov.org](http://denvergov.org), there were nearly 200 applications for dispensaries in Denver as of December 11.

Information gathered by the Stapleton Front Porch.

Letter to the Editor—Stapleton’s Third School

As a concerned resident of the Stapleton community I have watched and participated in some of the process of reaching a solution for the overcrowded schools in Stapleton. It has been a long and difficult road to understand the obstacles, reach out to the community for support and propose creative ways of funding an additional third school for the Stapleton neighborhood. It is evidence of what a determined and hard-working group of individuals can achieve.

Decisions that we make now will not only impact the residents of Stapleton but the future of the city of Denver and its nationally recognized urban redevelopment plan. As a nationally recognized model community for "green," sustainable, environmentally responsible practices in urban renewal, we have a responsibility to continue our efforts to achieve these goals and not allow the current turn of events of overcrowding schools to change the direction of the development plan in a way that could delay these efforts for many years. Placing the third school at the proposed 35th and Syracuse location could do just that.

The current development was halted on the east and north ends of Stapleton due to the economy and remediation issues surrounding contaminated soils. Now that Forest City is planning to begin development of additional Stapleton land and remediation of land on the east side is projected to resume soon, we should focus our attention on the continued development of Stapleton as a model community and take more time to ask the question, "Are we making decisions now that will allow Stapleton to reach its full potential?" Please call DPS Board President Nate Easley, COO David Suppes, Superintendent Tom Boasburg, Forest City, Senator Mike Johnston and Councilman Michael Hancock and start asking questions regarding ALL the possible solutions to the overcrowded schools in Stapleton.

Penny Villacres, Stapleton Resident

Editors Note: The Front Porch asked DPS officials for a response and they said they will provide an update on the development process for the third school in the February Front Porch.

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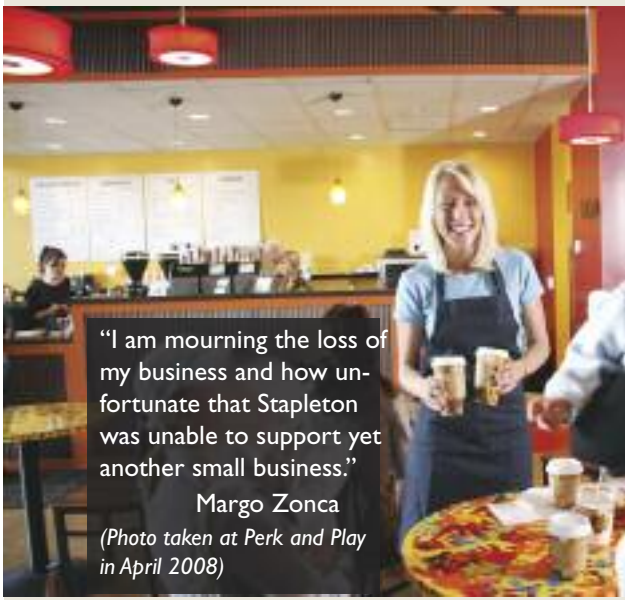
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(continued from page 1) least 1000 feet from a school since the business obtained a sales tax license before the date stipulated in the city's new ordinance (expected to be Jan. 1 or Dec. 15). "They were approved for a sales tax license December 1. They will be grandfathered," says Hancock.

The grandfather clause applies only to the distance requirement from schools and other dispensaries. Businesses must meet all other requirements—see sidebar p. 27.

Councilman Hancock continues, "If they meet all the requirements, there is nothing legally the city can do to stop them from operating. I want the people of Stapleton to know that we've looked very seriously at how we might deal with the dispensary location. It's not in a good location. It's too close to schools and the Bladium. But simply put, we didn't have the votes on council to look at an earlier date. In the words of our city attorney it would have been 'legally challenging to implement.' So we may not stop this dispensary but we can stop future ones, at least we can guide and provide structure around future dispensaries that might look at Stapleton or any other neighborhood for that matter.

"Obviously you can always go straight to the source, whoever the landlord is, whoever the tenant is and make it known that the community has no interest in having a dispensary in the area. But it would still be that business' prerogative to decide if they want to establish there."

According to at-large Councilman Doug Linkhart, "Most people don't care, broadly across the city, until one locates near you. Then they care. The press cares a lot. It's sensational news. But until something comes in nearby, we don't get much input.

"We're being cautious protecting neighborhoods and schools and childcare agencies. I think people need to know we've severely limited the effects of these by making it illegal to have consumption on site, which means no one is going to be walking in and out of these stoned, by requiring all kinds of security measures, which will make these not as much of a target for any kind of crime, and with the spacing requirements. So I don't think they're going to have as much effect as people worry that they will.

"Having said that if you really want to keep one from coming in, you're welcome to call all of us during this process, but once all of this is done, then if they meet those requirements they can locate someplace. And from then it becomes a matter of enforcement. If people see that they are doing something that is illegal or if they are having negative effects they can always call the city, starting with city council members to say, 'Hey, there's too much loitering here, or there's too much noise, or there are too many smells,' or whatever it might be. Once something is established we always have the ability to go and enforce against a place for causing problems. We get the police to make sure that they are checking the place on a regular basis. But, again, I just don't think that these are going to have the effects that people are concerned about. The other thing people can do is press for changes to the law as we go. They may want to say, for example, that they have to be a certain number of feet from residential areas, which we require for other things."

State Senator Michael Johnston believes that once the legislative



The dispensary will be located in the lighted ground floor unit near the entrance to the building at 2373 Central Park Blvd.

More Questions than Answers



At-large Councilman Doug Linkhart (right), on December 16, chairs a Safety Committee meeting on the proposed ordinance to regulate medical marijuana dispensaries. From left are Michael Hancock, District 11, Charlie Brown,

regulations are in place they "will begin to comfort people that these places that are growing and prescribing and dispensing marijuana really are legitimate and really are meeting real medical needs and aren't shams for under the table sales.

"The intentional goal (of the state legislature) will be to stay away from the actual local zoning regulations. We're going to leave that to the city councils as their rightful purview. Ours is more about the regulation of the clinics and the growers and the caregivers than the dispensaries."

Johnston goes on to say, "It's still up for debate who might be grandfathered in under state requirements. It is fair to say that if people got in under existing regulations and have invested money and time, they have some vested interest, but also there are some real concerns about places that are going to be within 500 feet or 1000 feet of a school. That concern may turn out to trump the grandfather clause. For the zoning regulations, these are going to be tough questions because they are going to be regulating whether you can stay in that location or not.

"The voters decided there ought to be relief for people who have cancer and chronic pain, and we created a system to help them without a real sense of how to regulate it. Now it's grown beyond what people think are medicinal users. I think we didn't anticipate how quickly this might spread to less than obvious medical purposes. There has been talk of registering doctors and patients so we can begin to track more appropriately who the doctors are that

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about Marijuana Dispensaries



District 6, and Marcia Johnson, District 5. Councilman Brown originally introduced the bill to City Council on Nov. 8. An overview of the proposed ordinance is at right.

are issuing large numbers of licenses. Then through the registry we can track that they're not just shams for drug sales. I think there are some reasonable regulations we can put in place."

Lisa Davidson, MD, is a Stapleton resident and has her practice, Lowry Family Medicine, in Lowry. She says, "The medical marijuana issue has raised some interesting thoughts for me as a primary care physician. Of my patients requesting to use it legally, none of them have met the chronic medical conditions required to warrant its use. I believe that marijuana can have a place in medical treatment of certain diseases; however, I have decided not to be involved with that decision for my patients."

Lisa W Corbin, MD, FACP, Medical Director of Integrative Medicine at University of Colorado Hospital has also decided not to authorize it. "I'm not authorizing medical marijuana, and although there isn't a formal CU policy prohibiting this, the UC Denver legal office has informed us that while the Constitutional Amendment decriminalizes it under state law, it is still an illegal drug under federal law."

Concerned members of the community have put together an informal group that is actively trying to prevent medical marijuana dispensaries that obtained a retail sales tax license before City Council's specified date from being allowed to have a location closer than 1000 feet to a school. One of the participants in that group, Kendra Martellaro, a DSST parent says, "It was sad when Perk and Play went out of business. It is a reflection of the hard economic times many people, including my family, are facing. I am surprised that someone who chose Stapleton for a family-oriented business would turn around and sell to a business that will potentially harm families, children, and the community Stapleton has achieved."

Caroline Batorowicz, a Stapleton resident says, "I'm afraid that this business model may bring unwanted clientele to the area. Some of the customers might have other intentions such as selling the drugs back on the street. Students from DSST, who frequent An's Lemongrass Grill for lunch and after school, might become targets, as well as kids from Bill Roberts School. If a business such as this needs to be in Stapleton, it

should adhere to the proposed regulation of being located at least 1,000 feet from schools."

Kathie Kramer Ryan, Director of Advancement at Denver School of Science and Technology confirmed that the school has received a significant number of phone calls and emails from parents concerned about the location of the medical marijuana dispensary. Bill Kurtz, CEO of DSST Public Schools stated, "We are concerned about having a marijuana dispensary within sight and walking distance of our school. This type of operation does not belong in our neighborhood as the risks to our students inherent in this business are too great and it sends the wrong messages to our kids."

Margo Toms Zonca is the owner of the retail property where her former business, Perk and Play, was located and where the marijuana dispensary will be located. Zonca emailed the following statement to the Front Porch. "The only comment I have is that I am mourning the loss of my business and how unfortunate that Stapleton was unable to support yet another small business. As I was closing, people wondered why are you going out of business when 'you were always so busy.' For the last 2 years I have

been 'paying' for people to relax and enjoy coffee at Perk and Play. Unfortunately my money has run out and I have 3 children to feed. At this point I am making the best decisions for my family and my obligation to mortgage holders."

The building where the marijuana dispensary has leased space is a business condominium complex. The condo association

verified that, "The entire building is 20 units, 4 of them are owned by Central Park Partners, 7 are individually owned, and 9 units were expected to go into foreclosure Dec.17, 2009. We have not heard yet regarding that action. The Board's position is that the new lease for Unit 103, owner Margo Toms Zonca, is in violation of our original By-laws and Covenants," and litigation is pending.

City Council Hearing and Vote on the Marijuana Ordinance

The Denver City Council will have a public hearing on this ordinance on Jan. 11 starting at 5:30pm. The community can share their opinions by signing up to speak. For more information or for a copy of the ordinance visit Denver Gov.org -> City Government tab -> City Council. Meeting agenda links are posted on the calendar at bottom of page.

The "First Reading" of the ordinance is scheduled for the Jan. 4 council meeting,

Proposed Ordinance Regarding Denver Medical Marijuana Dispensary Licensing

Denver City Council will vote January 11 on a proposed ordinance regarding Denver Medical Marijuana Dispensary Licensing. If passed as currently written, all medical marijuana dispensaries will be required to have a license by March 1 in order to continue operating in the City of Denver. Some of the requirements are:

- Dispensaries may not be located within 1000 feet of a school or childcare establishment or another medical marijuana dispensary. Businesses that obtained a retail sales tax license by Jan.1 (or Dec. 1 or 15—to be determined) will be exempt from these spacing requirements, but must meet all other licensing requirements.
- No consumption on the premises.
- No one under 18 shall be permitted on the licensed premises.
- The name and contact information for the owner and any manager of the dispensary shall be conspicuously posted.
- Cultivation, processing, storage, display, sales or other distribution of marijuana shall not be visible from the exterior of the building.
- The premises can not be managed by any person other than the owner or the manager listed on the application.
- The dispensary must be closed between 9pm and 7am.
- The licensed premises shall be monitored and secured 24 hours per day including:
 - Security cameras to monitor all areas where persons may attempt to gain access to marijuana or cash. Videos shall be maintained for a minimum of seventy-two hours in a secure off-site location.
 - Use of a safe for overnight storage of cash and any processed marijuana.
 - Installation of a monitored user alarm system.
- Criminal background checks will be performed on each applicant or manager.
- If the state adopts stricter regulations in the future, those regulations will control the operation of medical marijuana dispensaries in the city.

Note: Dates and other details of the proposed ordinance are subject to change until voted on by City Council on January 11.

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