

Front Porch

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

DENVER, COLORADO

STAPLETON

FEBRUARY 2011

Parking Garage Gives Way to New Stapleton Neighborhood



In the demolition of the parking garage from the old Stapleton airport, 100,000 tons of concrete are being taken to the northern edge of Stapleton where it is being recycled—and much of it is likely to be re-used in upcoming construction at Stapleton. That's 5,000 truckloads that

By Carol Roberts

Divers passing the old parking garage on Martin Luther King just west of Central Park Blvd. can see that the structure is gradually disappearing—but few would guess the efficiency of the recycling efforts going on there or stop to think about

travel only a short distance to deposit their loads, which reduces the amount of gas used and limits the wear and tear of 20-ton trucks on public roadways. The concrete is being separated from the steel, which is sent to a scrap yard. Ninety-eight percent of what's torn down will be recycled.

the technical requirements of safely tearing down 100,000 tons of concrete in a populated area. First the project had to be abated, says Rick Givan, Senior Executive Vice President of Recycled Materials Co., Inc. "You have a national abatement firm in there going over every single inch of the garage making sure there's nothing left prior to its demolition. It was (continued on page 12)

A Closer Look at the Job of the Denver Mayor



City Attorney David Fine stands at the door of the mayor's office.

Denver's City Attorney shares his insights.

By Jon Meredith

With the election of a new Denver mayor coming up in May, the Front Porch will be covering the issues that will likely be discussed during the campaign. This article takes a close look at what the mayor's duties and responsibilities are, tapping the expertise of City Attorney David Fine to find out just what the mayor really can control.

Fine has been the City Attorney since October 2007. Prior to that he worked in two different downtown firms practicing civil litigation, election law and employment law. He is a fourth generation Coloradoan, lives in Park Hill, and has a daughter who graduated from East High School and a son who attends Denver School of the Arts.

The Denver City Attorney's Office provides legal support to the Mayor, the Auditor, the Clerk and Recorder, City Council, and all city agencies, departments, boards and commissions. Fine described what the job of mayor of Denver is all about and answered (continued on page 4)

Recent Grads Look Back on High School... and How They've Changed

By Madeline Schroeder

Who will be my date to prom? Will I get into a good college?

Do my peers like me? Why don't my parents trust me? These are all questions that the typical high school student thinks about. In the moment, these can feel like life changing questions but when reconsidered a few years later, they may appear to be trivial concerns. As five 2009 East High School graduates look back on their days in the hallways, it is easy for them to see what they would've done differently. From academics to popularity to the relationship (continued on page 10)



Chris Hayes is studying theatre at CU.



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

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CALENDAR

Nearby events that are FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC or are nonprofit events.
(See pages 16 - 19 for more events.)

FEBRUARY

Through March 25

Open House at The Collaboratory
"Working Art" Gallery in the former
Stapleton/Park Hill Firehouse
7045 E. 38th Ave. Thur. 3-8pm Fri. 5-9pm
www.thecollaboratory.com (see p. 26)

Saturday, February 5

Volunteer Cleanup on first Saturdays, meet at
26th & Beeler at 9am to get work location.
9am-11am (Cancelled if snowing or temp.
below freezing) Lucia 720-207-5091. Email
Lcorrell@dotnet.net to get event emails

Saturday, February 5

2040 Neighborhood Health Summit,
8:30am-3pm. US Surgeon General speaking.
Johnson & Wales Univ., Jared Polis Auditorium.
RSVP required (see page 19)

Thursday, February 10

Active Minds Seminar 7-8pm
"The Future of Education in America"
MCA Community Room*
Events@stapletoncommunity.com

Thursday, February 10

"Race to Nowhere" 6:30pm at Bill Roberts
K-8 School, 2100 Akron Way, Denver.
\$10 in advance/\$15 at the door.
Purchase tickets online at:
http://www.racetonowhere.com/screenings

Friday, February 11

Final Day for voting in the
pool naming contest 5pm
Please visit the MCA website
www.stapletoncommunity.com

FEBRUARY

Thursday, February 24

Stapleton Activities, Inc. Potluck 6:30-8pm
MCA Community Room*
Events@stapletoncommunity.com

MARCH

Sunday, March 6

Denver School of Rock Benefit Concert for
Brent's Place. 4pm, at The Twisted Olive in
Northfield. Ticket price: \$8 per person at door,
Kids 5 & under are Free
For more information contact Amy Anderson
berkanderson@hotmail.com

Thursday, March 10

Stapleton Activities, Inc. Potluck 6-7pm
MCA Community Room*
Events@stapletoncommunity.com

Thursday, March 10

Active Minds Seminar 7-8pm
MCA Community Room*
Events@stapletoncommunity.com

Tuesday, March 15

Aquatics Registration Begins 10am
Please visit the MCA website
www.stapletoncommunity.com

*MCA Community Room:
2823 Roslyn St., Denver, 80238
(See page 16 for recurring monthly events &
meetings)

The Front Porch
welcomes submissions of upcoming
local events (see format on p.17)
and story ideas for future issues.
Email FrontPorchStapleton@gmail.com



What Is Your Community DNA?

We received several great comments about this new section we added to the community information page. If you missed last month's issue, this is a little piece to check in with yourself and how you are contributing, or affecting, your community. We are calling this the Denver Neighborhood Attitude (DNA). Last month the topic was shoveling the snow. How did you do?

This month we would like to focus our community's attention to opening or holding a door for someone. We all enjoy someone opening a door for us. Let's see how often we can do it. If you see someone walking with a bundle in their arms, ask if you can help them and open the door for them. If someone opens the door for you, make sure to look them in the eye and thank them. What a great community spirit we will create!

If you have an idea you would like to have featured, please send it to StapletonDNA@stapletoncommunity.com. This is meant to provide a monthly topic and action for our community, so feel free to let us hear from you.

Active Minds Seminar

The Active Minds Seminar this month is on Thursday, February 10, from 7-8pm in the Stapleton MCA Community Room*. The doors will open at 6:30pm and the seminar will begin at 7pm. This program is free and open to the public. The topic for February is "The Future of Education in America."

Stapleton Activities, Inc.

Please join us for our monthly potluck in the newly remodeled Stapleton MCA Community Room*. If you are new to Stapleton, this is a great way to meet other adults in the community. This month the potluck is February 24, at 6:30pm. Please bring a dish to share with the group. The beverages, plates and utensils will be provided by the MCA.

Beginning in March, the date for the potluck will coincide with our monthly Active Minds Seminar on the second Thursday of the month, March 10. Plan to join us at 6pm for this meet-and-greet potluck and then stay for the seminar at 7pm.

Kid's Triathlon

We are looking for adults to help us plan, organize and implement our first triathlon for kids. The first meeting will be Wed., February 23, from 6-7:30pm in the Stapleton MCA Community Room*. Dinner will be provided. Please email us at events@stapleton-

community.com if you are interested in participating on our steering committee and plan to attend the first meeting.



Aquatics Registration

The Aquatics Guide will be available March 1. This guide will be mailed directly to all Stapleton residents. If you do not receive one, you may go online to www.stapletoncommunity.com and access the information or stop by the Stapleton MCA* and pick up a copy. Resident registration for all aquatics programming will begin on Tuesday, March 15. This includes lessons, classes and swim team. Nonresident registration will begin April 1. If you have any questions, please contact pools@stapletoncommunity.com.

Altogether Outdoors Summer Camps

Altogether Outdoors Summer Camps is excited to have Stapleton MCA as its partner! AO Camps is offering two programs to families in Stapleton and the surrounding areas:

For children ages 5 and 6, AO Junior has a half-day afternoon camp each week from noon-4:15pm. AO college-age staff will lead campers in classic camp programming including camp songs, hiking, climbing on our 26' rock wall, environmental education and more! For children in swim lessons during the summer, they can coordinate with the MCA to pick up your child from swim lessons and take them to camp.

For children ages 7-11, AO Explorers has one- and two-week offerings that provide campers with authentic nature-based experiences including hiking, team building, climbing, environmental education and more. They provide daily transportation from Lowry and Stapleton to some great natural spaces in the area. Please visit aocamps.com for more details.

Can Do with Color

You already know that a change in color is the most cost-effective way to bring some punch into your décor, or spruce your house up for sale. Join us for a morning of color consultation with Denver's premier professionals. Kim Kouba, Realtor with Perry and Co. and owner of the Sweet William Market, will be hosting the color consultants from Belcaro Paint & Decorating Center for a dip into the world of color choice, and you're invited!

Join us, Saturday February 26 from 10am-12pm in Stapleton's MCA Community Room*. These folks will share their tips and tricks of the trade and teach us how lighting, surrounding furniture and fabrics impact color perception. Bring in that drapery or bedding fabric, carpet samples, or even a favorite piece of art or a toy. They all can be used to find a complementary color just for you. Let us know you're coming. Give us a shout at kkouba@perryandco.com.

If you have any questions or comments about the information above, please feel free to contact events@stapleton-community.com or call the MCA office at 303.388.0724. *2823 Roslyn Street.

Diane Deeter
Director of
Programming and Events

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EDITORS and PUBLISHERS:

Carol Roberts and Steve Larson
303-526-1969

FrontPorchStapleton@gmail.com

AD SALES: Karissa McGlynn 303-333-0257

KarissaMcGlynn@gmail.com

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www.FrontPorchStapleton.com

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Presented by Marissa Ross



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A common misperception is that the mayor has control over the schools. In reality decisions about the schools are made entirely by the school board—though mayors can express their opinions. Mayor Hickenlooper showed his support for education by visiting schools during his time in office. Above, Hickenlooper at Westerly Creek school in January, 2004.

(continued from page 1) questions about how the city really works, who makes decisions and what challenges a new administration will likely face.

The Mayor's Authority

The Mayor's duties, responsibilities and powers come from the original City Charter, which dates back to 1861. This document is analogous to the Colorado Constitution and the US Constitution, as it provides a framework within which the city is run. The City Charter can only be amended by a vote of Denver citizens as proposed by the mayor or the city council. Often when voters go to the polls they are asked to delete obscure portions of the City Charter. The last time the charter was really scrutinized and updated by Denver citizens was in 1959. By and large, Denver is still organized and run by the original City Charter.

The mayor's job, while sometimes ceremonial, is a critically important position as the mayor is the city's chief administrator. The mayor manages the city budget, oversees almost 9000 city employees and appoints members of important boards such as Denver Water and Denver Health. Denver is known as a "strong mayor" government, which means that the mayor has more authority than most mayors of similar-sized cities.

Areas in Which the Mayor Has Little Hands-on Authority

Following are some areas in which many people assume the mayor holds a vast amount of authority when, in actuality, he has little—though he may have important influence.

- **Water**—The mayor appoints the six Denver Water Commissioners, each to a six-year term. Every two years two different commissioners are appointed. Denver Water is completely independent from the city financially and administratively.
- **Schools**—DPS is entirely autonomous from the city government. Denver citizens elect the school board and the board selects the superintendent. The budget for schools is managed entirely by the DPS Board and is completely separate from the city budget. The mayor can have input on DPS issues but any action is taken solely at the discretion of the Board.
- **Wastewater**—The storm sewer system operates under its own budget that is outside the city budget. The Metro Wastewater Reclamation District was established in 1961 and serves most of the Denver Metro area. Chief executive officers for each town appoint one board member for every 75,000 residents.
- **Health Care**—With very little fanfare, Denver Health has become a national model for efficiency in delivering quality health care. They are the health care safety net, providing clinics for the city's low income residents and they provide ambulances and EMTs. Following the LEAN system (a program used by businesses

The Mayor's Powers (continued)

to cut costs and increase efficiency without compromising quality), Denver Health saved \$54 million last year. The mayor appoints Denver Health board members, but their budget is outside the mayor's purview. According to the 2009 Denver Health Annual Report, only \$45 million in Denver Health revenues came from the city, which is 7% of Denver Health's \$645 million budget. The \$45 million figure represents less than 4% of the overall city budget.

Issues the New Mayor Will Need to Address

City Attorney David Fine believes the next mayor will have to address the following issues:

- **Budget**—How to cut the budget will likely be a major issue in the mayor's race. Stagnant or decreasing real estate values and much lower sales tax revenues have resulted in decreased tax revenues to the city. The mayor is responsible for submitting a budget to City Council for approval—and traditionally the mayor has worked closely with City Council on the budget. If there are substantive differences between the mayor and City Council it takes the vote of 9 of the 13 council members to override a mayoral veto.

Fifty eight percent of the city's budget goes to safety, human services, public works and parks and recreation, so presumably those areas will play a large part in the discussion on balancing the budget. By far the largest budget item for the city is safety, which includes fire, police and sheriff, and totals \$443 million or 35% of the city budget. Another large budget item is human services, which is \$142 million or 11% of the budget. Human services provides child protection, assistance to the

disabled, job training, senior and veterans assistance. Other major areas are public works, \$82 million, and parks and rec, \$77 million, or about 6% each. All other budget areas are less than 5% of the entire budget.

- **Public Safety Contract Negotiations**—The mayor hires the Manager of Safety who oversees the police, firefighters and sheriffs. A huge issue the mayor will face in 2012 will be renegotiating the police, firefighters' and sheriffs' union contracts. As safety is the largest budget item, the renegotiation process will undoubtedly be long and arduous. It is an opportunity for the mayor to make significant strides in helping the city budget. On the other hand, prolonged negotiations can exacerbate an already tenuous relationship between the mayor and "our city's finest."
- **Implementing Denver's New Zoning**—The prior administration implemented a new citywide zoning initiative last year called form-based zoning. As use issues come up it will be interesting to observe how the new mayor handles challenges to the new zoning.
- **Parks**—The mayor has direct authority



The mayor hires the Manager of Safety who oversees the police, firefighters and sheriffs. The next mayor will be required to renegotiate these unions' contracts in 2012. Above, Mayor Hickenlooper attended the opening of the Stapleton fire station in February 2007.

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over the Department of Parks and Recreation. The recent decision that our parks can be closed and rented out for private functions has many Denverites concerned. Is the revenue from these events really worth the inconvenience of closing the parks? The new mayor could choose to revisit this issue.

- **Other**—Many other issues are likely to be discussed by the candidates in the coming months including city streets and traffic issues, Business Improvement Districts (BIDS), homelessness, environmental challenges, DIA and medical marijuana are some of the notable issues.

The Mayor's Vision for the City

Particularly in a time of high unemployment, there may be no function more essential for a mayor than making a city conducive to jobs and growth opportunities. This is the culmination of running all the other parts of government well. If the city is run well, has reasonable tax rates, good schools and a decent quality of life, it is expected that jobs and growth will follow. How to manage growth in good times and bad is the paramount job of a mayor.

Denverites have chosen recent mayors



The mayor has direct authority over the Department of Parks and Recreation. Above, Mayor Hickenlooper attended the opening of Central Park in Stapleton in September 2007.

well. The last four have all been re-elected at least once and have left notable legacies in specific areas they embraced. The city has not had a major scandal since the police burglaries in the 60's. Our taxes are low compared with other major cities. The electorate is well educated and passionate about the city. While there are some current difficulties in the city that the next mayor will inherit, the candidate who wins will likely be the one who best articulates his or her vision of the city and the legacy they intend to leave.

Mayor Candidate Forum and Survey

The Front Porch invites you to participate in our survey, the results of which will be used to plan the upcoming Mayoral Candidates' Forum on April 14 (see box at right).

Denver Mayor CANDIDATE FORUM

April 14 — 6:30-8pm — Central Park Rec Center

Sponsored by:

League of Women Voters • The Front Porch • Engaged Public



Help shape the questions at the forum!

Link to the survey at www.FrontPorchStapleton.com

Summer Camp Guide Coming in March Front Porch

Every year in March the Front Porch compiles a list of nearby summer camps. The wide range of camps offers kids of all ages the opportunity to do more of what they already love or to try something new. Camps in last year's guide included: sports, arts, music, dance, theatre, nature, animals, foreign language, science, horseback riding, and more.

The Front Porch will update all camps that ran last year and we welcome new suggestions for the 2011 guide. To recommend a camp, email FrontPorch2@gmail.com by February 10, 2011.

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Premium Fishwrap* by Jon Meredith

The Lowdown on Valentine's Day

Many of us think that Valentine's Day is a "Hallmark Holiday", in order to go on the cheap with our loved ones on February 14th. We forget the roses and chocolates, not to mention a card, because we mistakenly believe the day was originally fabricated by the corporate eggheads at card companies. We then embarrass ourselves by saying something inane like "I'm charming, witty and nice to you everyday, so there is no need for me to re-acknowledge you on Valentine's Day".

This assumption could not be any further from the truth. Hallmark may have exploited Valentine's Day but they certainly didn't invent it. The day of love dates back as far as 200 A.D. and has always meant about the same thing. It is a day to choose or acknowledge loved ones.

St. Valentine was a Catholic Bishop who lived in Rome in the mid 200's AD. At the time, near the end of the Roman Empire, Claudius II declared that soldiers could not marry, as he believed marriage was too distracting to the troops. Valentine felt empathy for young lovers and countered the Monarch's orders in secrecy. It was not long before Claudius knew of

this "friend of young lovers" and Valentine was arrested.

While in jail, Valentine supposedly cured the jailer's daughter of blindness, a miracle which, after his death made him eligible for Sainthood in the Catholic Church. Claudius required Valentine to renounce his Catholic faith and declare his allegiance to the Roman Gods. When Valentine refused, Claudius ordered him to be executed and the future Saint was put to death on February 14th, 270 A.D.

The day turned into a special day during Medieval times when lovers often left notes to each other in secret places or had them delivered by messenger. Chaucer wrote in the "Parlement of Foules" in 1382, which roughly

translates to "For this was Saint Valentine's Day, when every bird cometh there to choose his mate." Shakespeare referred to bringing lover roses on Valentine's Day in Hamlet.

Around the turn of the 19th century in Britain is when Valentine's Day became mainstream and companies began to sell pre-printed cards and hand-dipped chocolates in shops everywhere. Today, with mass-produced Valentine cards and home-made cards, roughly one billion are exchanged each year in the United States. The group that receives the most? Teachers of course!

According to USA Today US lovebirds spent \$14.7 billion on Valentine's Day in 2010. This contrasts with \$584.3 billion spent on Christmas last year.

There are indeed many ways of taking care of the "what to do for Valentine's Day"

dilemma and luckily there are no Lexus commercials encouraging us to buy a new car like there are at Christmas. For the average couple, chocolate, roses and a card will easily suffice—and for that, the effort versus reward meter is exceptionally high. However, if you are one of those curmudgeons, like me, who just cannot seem to get it together to go into a store or card shop or fold a piece of paper in half and write "to my Valentine" on the outside and "I love you" on the inside, then make your partner a breakfast or dinner that can't be beat and clean up afterwards. This will at least give you an "A" for effort without spending a dime with Hallmark.

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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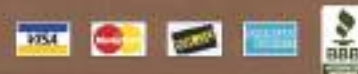
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Stapleton's Newest Neighborhood: Central Park West

By Carol Roberts

Central Park West, one of the last two neighborhoods to be developed on the south side of I-70, will start opening model homes this spring and continue opening models through the summer. The first buyers are expected to move in late summer or early fall.

The neighborhood lies between the 29th Ave Town Center and Quebec Square, with the western edge along Syracuse, which connects the Town Center and Quebec Square. The northwest corner of the neighborhood is the site of the new Swigert-McAuliffe International School that will open in the fall of 2011 and is expected to have students in grades K-8 as the school fills in the coming years.

A number of the homes in Central Park West are designed to front on semi-public open spaces called mews (see below) that create a common area where neighbors can interact. The neighborhood will have approximately 375 homes, with 150 of those being attached homes. Income qualified affordable homes will be available from the mid \$100's, attached and green court homes will be available in the \$200s, and the remaining single family homes will be available from the \$300s to the \$700s. Sizes range from approximately 1160 square feet to over 3500 square feet.



A number of the homes in Central Park West will face "mews," a semi-public open space where neighbors can meet and interact.

New I-70 Overpass Is on Schedule



The bridge shown above is on the south side of I-70, part of the on and off ramp system being built at the new I-70/Central Park Boulevard interchange.

By Jon Meredith

The new interchange project at Interstate 70 and Central Park Boulevard is proceeding according to schedule and at this time looks as if it will be ready to open in November, according to Steve Coggins, the project director. The earthmoving and the bridgework associated with the on and off ramps are complete—the bridge over I-70 remains to be built.

This spring and summer the current bridge over I-70, which was a cargo bridge at Stapleton Airport, will be demolished. The new bridge will be just a few feet east of the current bridge. According to Coggins, during the demolition and construction, traffic on I-70 will be diverted up and down the new on and off ramps and not through the Stapleton neighborhood. The detours will take place during the middle of the night. The new bridge will have 12-foot-wide sidewalks with a concrete barrier separating the sidewalk from the traffic lanes so pedestrians and bicycles will be able to get from south Stapleton to Northfield easily.

When the new interchange opens, Central Park Boulevard will connect to Northfield Boulevard and motorists will be able to exit at Central Park when traveling either direction on I-70 and from eastbound I-270. On-ramps from Central Park Boulevard will go east and west on I-70 and west on I-270.

The project is funded by city, state and federal funds. City funding of \$29 million came from Better Denver Bonds and \$9 million in state funds came from Colorado Department of Transportation. However, it was the \$12 million in federal stimulus funds that enabled the project to be completed at this time. Without the stimulus funds the proj-

ect would have been put on hold until additional city or state monies became available.

The I-70 interchange project is the first time the City and County of Denver has entered into a design/build road construction project. The City did this in order to fast track the project so that stimulus funds could be utilized. The idea of design/build is to have a single project manager in charge of the design and construction phases of the project, bringing it to fruition faster because there is a single point of responsibility for the entire project. The project director for the city, Steve Coggins, is a construction consultant employed by Civil Technology Inc., a construction management company.

A bridge over Sand Creek and the Union Pacific railroad tracks and the paving of Central Park Boulevard between 35th Avenue and Northfield Boulevard are a separate \$19 million project, managed by Forest City and paid for with a variety of funds provided by Forest City. That part of the project will move into high gear in March when the weather is more conducive to construction. Mortenson Construction, which built the infrastructure at Stapleton, is the General Contractor.

Once the interchange is complete there will be more traffic on Central Park Boulevard and less congestion on Quebec north of MLK and on Havana south of I-70, according to the I-70/Central Park Boulevard Interchange Environmental Assessment (EA) that was completed by the City and County of Denver (CCD) in June 2009. The EA concluded the project would have a positive environmental impact on the surrounding area.






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February – Black History Month – Elizabeth Piper Ensley A Tireless Worker for Women’s Right to Vote in Colorado

Elizabeth Piper Ensley was born in the Caribbean in 1848, moved to Boston in the 1870s, helped create a library there and became a teacher. She later moved to Washington, D.C., and finally to Denver where she worked tirelessly for women’s suffrage and equality. The rallying cry of “Let the women vote! They can’t do any worse than the men have!” was heard from Denver to Durango by disgruntled, unemployed male voters: miners, farmers, ranchers, factory workers and 100 businessmen, with extra help from the unionists in the Knights of Labor and the People’s Party. The women’s suffrage referendum passed by an overwhelming majority on November 7, 1893, and Elizabeth Ensley played an active role in helping to lead the “charge.”

Equal suffrage in Colorado did not “just happen.” It required decades of work by patient, persistent women. Their first referendum in 1877 was a disappointing failure. Susan B. Anthony herself made a whirlwind tour of the state to rally support; however, she was booed out of mining-town saloons by unsympathetic gold seekers whose only goal was to get rich quick.

Activist Elizabeth Ensley rallied African-American male support in the cities while Grange women organized farmers on the eastern plains. They all argued that working people’s needs, especially those of women and children, were being ignored by mainstream politicians. Women voters, they felt, might clean up Colorado’s dirty politics and fix inadequate schools, squalid housing conditions and unhealthy working conditions.

By 1893, suffragists had built a formidable network of support for women’s right to vote. Colorado



Elizabeth Piper Ensley

was the second state behind Wyoming to grant women that right and Elizabeth Piper Ensley played an active role.

After that success, she founded the Colored Women’s Republican Club, which had as one of its priorities to educate black women on why and how to vote. Her impressive ability to organize and lead served as an example to many.

Ensley later joined the Colorado Federation of Women’s Clubs—one of only a few black women in the club. As an active member, she helped break the color barrier that existed for many African-Americans. Her impressive ability to organize and lead served as an example for many. Today, she would probably be considered a radical for challenging the status quo. She represented the Colored Women’s Club as secretary to the Equal Suffrage coalition that won the right for women to vote in Colorado in 1893.

The 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution granting suffrage to women was approved by Congress in 1920 and Elizabeth Ensley was one of the people who contributed to its passage.

Wallace Yvonne Tollette researched and wrote this article about Elizabeth Piper Ensley in honor of Black History Month. Tollette, a resident of NE Denver, is the author of Colorado Black Leadership Profiles. She can be reached at westernimages@juno.com or at 303.830.1691.

Sources: Elizabeth Jane Piper Ensley : one of Denver’s pioneer women, suffragette, and Black voting rights activist : 29 January 1847 - 23 February 1919 by Iris Agard Hawkins. <http://www.Coloradohistory.org/kids/Elizabeth%20Ensley.pdf> http://theautry.org/explore/exhibits/suffrage/ensley_full.html http://theautry.org/explore/exhibits/suffrage/suffrage_co.html A Brief History of African American Women in Denver, compiled by Chaer Robert, Feb. 16, 2006, <http://www.denvergov.org/Portals/353/documents/Black%20Women%20in%20Denver.doc>



Maurizio Negrini, a third-generation Italian baker and one of the top bread bakers in America, shares his knowledge of baking with one of the staff at Udi’s Artisan Bakery in Louisville. Negrini got rid of the bread machines and insists the bread be made by hand.


By Larissa Babiak

What started as a small strip mall sandwich shop in Northglenn has quickly grown and distinguished itself in our local culinary circles. Udi’s Food was founded by Stapleton residents Udi and Fern Baron in 1994. It is a privately held business that today boasts four family-run businesses: artisan bread and pastry baking, cafes, catering, and granola and gluten-free baked goods. Udi’s daughter, Robin is executive chef for the restaurants, while his son Etai, also from Stapleton, is the Co-CEO with his father. In 2010, revenues exceeded \$10 million.

Udi’s early gastronomic success can be attributed to their use of high quality ingredients and plenty of dough making. Bread dough, that is. When their bread supplier, Daily Bread in Boulder was bought by Whole Foods, the supply of sandwich breads stopped. This forced Udi, the “Sandwich Man,” to start baking his own breads. He soon learned that this was no easy assignment. But one of Daily Breads’ bakers, Maurizio Negrini, a third



generation Italian baker from Bologna, did not fit in with Whole Foods’ corporate culture. Fortuitous for him and Udi, they met and clicked. This was about the time Udi’s made a commitment to grow their business around the distribution of artisan breads. Unknowingly, Udi had just hired one of the top bread bakers in America.

Negrini brought the “magic touch” of an artisan to the bakery. Jokingly, he said, “When I came, the bread was okay, but not that good.....you see, the master baker was American.” For Maurizio Negrini, making breads that remind him of what he enjoyed as a young boy in Italy is important. With childhood memories of the flavors of ciabattas and filones on his palate, he hoped to recreate these flavors at Udi’s. And that he has, handcrafting nearly 10,000 loaves every day. At 2 am each morning, trucks depart from the bakery to deliver his



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uncover the genius

for Thought—Breaking Bread at Udi's

batards, boules, challas and baguettes as far north as Fort Collins, south to Colorado Springs and even to Aspen—as well as to the Stapleton and East High School farmer's markets.

At the same time, this modest baker is still learning. While making his personal favorite and signature bread, Rustico, he said, "I look at each bread loaf and get new ideas. Shapes, sizes, new ingredients, you name it." Chances are if he thinks of it, it will eventually be tested out on the large wood bench where he and his bakers transform rising dough into loaves, and ready them by hand to be baked in enormous stone-lined French and Italian made ovens.

Occasionally, Negrini accommodates special requests from local restaurant chefs. Andrew Lubbatt, the executive chef from Denver's Avenue Grill requested a San Francisco-style sourdough bread for his restaurant. The master baker obliged and today we too can enjoy this dense bread which is sold at many grocery stores. Udi and Negrini often travel together to research a bread to create a new product. When Udi wanted authentic Israeli pita for his cafes and catering businesses, the pair traveled to Israel to learn firsthand the baking methods used to make this unique pita.

Negrini's bakery teammate is Rick Scarpello. The expressive Scarpello watches over bakery op-

erations. He considers his relationship with Negrini "like a couple: husband and wife. I don't think that I could do Maurizio's job, but I don't think he could do mine either. It turns out to be a good marriage." The success of the company has grown skyward since Negrini became head baker and Scarpello the operations director. If Negrini is the heart-beat of the bakery then Scarpello is the brain.

Quality ingredients are especially important to Udi's. The bakery prides itself on never using dough conditioners, additives or preservatives. High quality butter is used in all of the pastries from croissants to cookies, King Arthur's Sir Galahad Flour, milled to Udi's specifications in Commerce City is used in bread making, as is pure sea salt. And a 14-year-old starter culture underwrites a wealth of flavors in many of the breads.

These standards, combined with simplicity, make Udi's breads distinct. Three ingredients—water, salt, flour—plus a passionate family—are all it takes to make a crusty and delicious loaf. It is that simple. That's food for thought.

Larissa Babiak is a Stapleton resident. She attends Hamilton Middle School and aspires to become a professional food journalist.



A baker pulls fresh loaves out of the oven.

Udi's Challah Bread

Ingredients

2 1/2 cups warm water 110 degrees F
1 tablespoon active dry yeast
1/2 cup organic honey
4 tablespoons canola oil
3 large organic eggs
1 tablespoon fine sea salt
8 cups King Arthur's white wheat flour

Challah Dough:

In a large bowl, sprinkle yeast over barely warm water. Whisk in honey, oil, 2 beaten eggs, and salt. Add the flour one cup at a time, beating after each addition, graduating to kneading with hands as dough thickens.

Knead dough ball on floured board until smooth, elastic and no

longer sticky. Add small amounts of flour as needed. Cover with a damp clean cloth and let rise for 1 1/2 hours or until dough has doubled in size.

Gently punch down the risen dough and turn out onto a lightly floured board. Divide in half and knead each half for five minutes. Add small amounts of flour as needed to keep from getting sticky.

Divide each half into thirds and roll into three, 10 inch long 'snakes' about 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Let rest for 5 minutes.

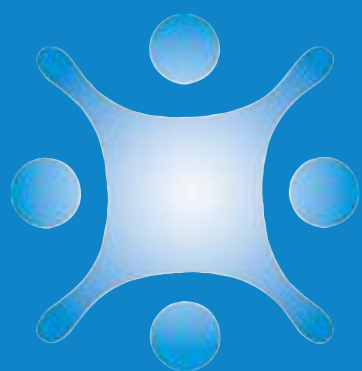
Shaping 3-Braid Challah

Pinch the ends of the snakes together firmly and braid from middle. Either leave as braid or form into a round braided loaf by bringing ends

together, curving braid into a circle, pinch ends together. Line two baking trays with parchment paper and place finished braid or round on each. Cover with towel and let rise about one hour.

Baking Challah

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Beat the remaining egg and brush a generous amount over each braid. Bake at 375 degrees F (190 degrees C) for about 40 minutes. Bread should have a nice hollow sound when thumped on the bottom. Cool completely on a rack for at least one hour before slicing. (Recipe provided by Rick Scarpello, Udi's Bakery)



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7 Year Old Local Gymnast Takes Championship

By Nancy Burkhart

Seven-year-old Sophie Konieczny, daughter of Stapleton residents Jeff and Jennifer Konieczny, has achieved high marks as a gymnast. She placed first overall, with a score of 38.525, in the Colorado U.S. Junior Olympic Level 4 State Championships held last month at the University of Denver.

The Westerly Creek second grader started gymnastics when she was two years old. She attended mom-tot classes focused on gross motor skills with her mother, who has a gymnastics history of her own. “She was just a monkey, and we knew she needed some kind of outlet,” Jennifer said. “Gymnastics just fit her well. She was always climbing and flipping off of stuff. It just fit her personality.”

Sophie does beams, bars, vault and floor exercise competitions. She trains four days a week for a total of 12 hours at the



Sophie Konieczny

Colorado Gymnastics Institute. At least four hours of this time is spent on strength training. “The goal is just to have a good time,” Jennifer explained. “There is the physical element—she gets exercise and is physically fit. She really enjoys it and loves the strength training. We rarely watch TV. She has a very active lifestyle.

“It’s a choice for her,” Sophie’s mother continued. “If she isn’t enjoying herself, we would stop. It is totally not driven by me. It’s a very social thing, too. Her best friends are with her in gymnastics. The team is very, very close.”

“I really like doing it,” Sophie said. “I like tumbling and doing the vault. It just really suits me. If I have a bad day, or my coach yells at me—then I don’t like it. But I really like doing it.”

Young gymnasts start competing at Level 4 and go up to Level 10. Sophie now is training to compete at Level 5 next year.

Reflections on High School

(continued from p.1) with their parents, these students have a clearer vision of what was good and what was bad about their high school experience, and how that affected the person they have become in their two years of college.

Drew Cohen is a sophomore at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, California. He has a love for the outdoors and is in the perfect location for just that. He strongly believes that location is just as important as academics to make a college the right fit. “I researched the location to make sure that I would be happy,” he says, “San Luis Obispo was ranked the happiest place to live in America. The community is great and there is quick access to the outdoors.” When he’s not studying he spends his time rock climbing, backpacking, and going to the beach. He is in a great engineering program and an environment that suits his interests. He is happier than ever and to some of his fellow East High graduates, he may now seem like a different person.

In high school, Drew blended in. He was the nice shy guy who played lacrosse and partied on the weekends. “I usually followed the crowd, hoping to fit in but I feel like I missed out on things because of it,” he says. He wishes he would’ve taken



Drew Cohen went to Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, a location he chose, in part, for its quick access to the outdoors.

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February 2011

10

Stapleton Front Porch

and College

more risks—so that’s what he’s doing now. He believes he has reinvented himself. “I have tried to be more honest with myself in college. The decisions I make now are a lot more consistent with the way I feel and less with how I appear to others.”

Popularity seems to dissolve in college. People like Drew who were aware of and often concerned about popularity in high school quickly find in college that it really doesn’t matter.

Rosa Perlman, a sophomore at the University of Redlands in California, wishes she would have spent less time worrying about what other people thought. As a well-liked person, no one would have guessed she felt that way—showing that popularity is a concern of almost everyone in high school. She now says, “In college people are not so concerned with trying to fit in a certain category or social group, they just do what they want and hang out with people who they are compatible with. Popularity and impressing people are not important.”

Trying to always be someone else is exhausting, so students like Drew and Rosa quickly become more comfortable with themselves and associate with people who accept them as they are. Erin Bates, a sophomore at the University of Colorado at Boulder, says, “In high school, socializing occurred primarily during the school day and through extracurricular activities.” These activities usually consist of the same people, which is why she wishes she would have made more of an effort to get to know people from different groups of friends. One of her favorite parts of college is the variety of people she has met. “On an average day in college I meet a new person, whether it’s out to eat or at the library,” she says.

It is a common misconception that drinking is the only way to socialize in college. Whether or not someone drinks in high school is often seen as a big deal, but in college alcohol is so much more accessible that people really don’t care whether or not someone drinks. Drew says, “Socializing in college has become a lot more about spending time with a small group of close friends and finding fun things to do together...In high school my social life was more about spending time with a larger group of friends and going to parties.” However, Erin points out that partying in high school is good preparation for the social situations that are faced in college. Going into college with absolutely no experience can be dangerous.

Parents play a big role in how much freedom their kids have in high school. Students agree that it is extremely important to have a certain level of independence from their parents. There is a way for parents to give guidance while still letting the student make their own choices. This makes the transition to college much easier. Erin says, “I would’ve liked my parents to give me a little more freedom outside of school as moving to college proved to be completely different than anything I had ever experienced.”

Marley Pierce, a sophomore at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island believes her parents did exactly the right thing. Marley got good grades and participated in a number of extracurricular activities—she had a full schedule. She says, “My parent’s mentality has always been, ‘You’re already way too hard on yourself, we’re not going to do anything more.’” They were supportive and calmed her down when the load got stressful. She believes parents can still have a big influence on their student’s academic life without hovering over their day-to-day work. “It always feels good to make your parents proud. And plus I guess they didn’t have to say it but they have always taught me since I was little that doing well in school and working hard in everything you do is important,” Marley says.

For Chris Hayes, a sophomore at the University of Col-

orado at Boulder, his mom was one of his main inspirations in high school. He says, “She always talked about what school I was going to pick, and how excited she was that I was going to college. I knew there was no way I could fail to meet her expectations.” It was her excitement that got Chris motivated to work hard. One thing he says he learned is that, “It is not about how smart you are, but how much time you put into your work.”

High school is the perfect time to make academic mistakes and learn from them while there is still support from parents and teachers. College students advise to take advantage of this time. They encourage building relationships with teachers. It is good practice for college where it can be very difficult in a large lecture class. Many students go into college expecting it to be extremely hard. “I was super concerned I was going to be an idiot,” Marley says. But oftentimes students find that the class is not as hard as expected, but the work and time management outside of class is much more difficult. Chris says, “College has taught me to value my time and not let others waste it.” Many high

school students focus primarily on the grade, but in college to get a grade requires much more understanding of the material. Drew says, “In high school I was far more interested in achieving a presentable transcript than I was in learning.” And so by senior year, Drew loaded his schedule with almost all Advanced Placement (AP) courses. This is a common trend among high school seniors because they feel like they need those courses to form a good resume. There is a general consent among East High graduates that AP courses often fail to mimic a real college course and therefore are usually not any more beneficial than non-AP courses. Marley thinks that a student should only take AP if they’re interested in the subject. “You’re told in high school that a college wants to see you take a lot of AP courses,



Rosa Perlman holds a poster she made to advertise an event held by an organization she joined, Students for Environmental Action, at the University of Redlands in California.



Erin Bates (right) with friends at a CU football game.



Marley Pierce attends Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

but I think it also says something to take a class that you really want to take and do well in it.” These college students strongly encourage high school students to do what interests you. Chris advises to, “Follow that inner voice. It won’t lead you astray. Trust me. Some days I feel so happy my head could burst.” Chris was a part of Speech and Debate in high school. Now he is majoring in theater, where he is receiving professional training, getting the chance to perform, and loving what he’s doing. He says, “Sometimes I literally have to remind myself that this type of experience is not something most get to see, especially from my neighborhood. I try to take in as much in as I can. College is short. I want to squeeze every single drop out of this orange that I can.”

College requires you to reassert your interests in many ways, from choosing classes to finding a group of friends. If you’ve developed a strong sense of yourself in high school, this transition does not have to be a shock. “I asked my family if I’ve gotten weirder in college,” Marley says laughing. “And my sister said YES. But they said it’s not that I’ve gotten weird, it’s just that I’ve become

more potently Marley.”

Madeline Schroeder was an intern at the Front Porch last summer. She attended East High School and is a journalism student at the University of Missouri.



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Parking Garage Demolition

(continued from p. 1) tested and cleaned up prior to the demolition. In an older structure like that there could be asbestos wrapped pipes, there could be lead in the paint.”

Because it’s a populated area, explosives or a 5,000 pound wrecking ball were not considered as viable due to the possibility that a piece of concrete could end up out in the street. Givan describes the equipment they use as looking like the jaw and teeth of a Tyrannosaurus Rex that grabs “mouthfuls” of concrete. “You open it hydraulically and it has ridges of triangular pointed steel and we close it on the concrete and then you turn the hydraulic on and close the jaw and it actually pulverizes the concrete,” he explains.

Givan went on to describe how they use a pointed hammer-like piece of equipment to collapse the columns, which causes the deck to drop. Then they pull the concrete off the structure with the dinosaur-like piece of equipment and put it on the ground.

“Everything is going according to plan,” he says. “There was an awful lot of time and effort that went into planning this job. We anticipate having the project to the ground by the end of March. Then we will have to remove the below-ground pieces—that will take another 4 – 6 weeks. Thick concrete posts called caissons that supported the structure are 20 feet into the ground.”

When the runways were removed from the old airport, 6.5 million tons of concrete were carried to Recycled Materials’ satellite recycling site on 56th Avenue at the north end of Stapleton. Today less than half a million tons remain and most of it is spoken for, says Givan. Some of it is used for the 6” to 1 foot of base material that goes beneath roads and some is put into the concrete used for curbs and sidewalks.

“Make sure that credit is given where credit is due,” Givan points out. “It’s the City, in partnership with Forest City, who really put the recycle priorities on these projects. They’ve been very conscientious about it and it’s really been a successful venture for the recycling industry as a result.”

Homes in the new Central Park West neighborhood will be built where the parking structure is being removed (see story on page 7).



Heather Adler-Pollock cleans the windows of the gorilla cage.

By Carol Roberts

Nathan Parks, a teen volunteer at the zoo, knows he’s definitely interested in a zoo career. “I want to work with lemurs. That’s my dream job. When I apply for the (second year) ‘Volunteer’ job, I’m hoping for Primate Panorama so I can get a lot more experience there and have something on a resume.” When Parks works at the anteater station, he says, “We tell kids how the anteaters get their food from the termite mounds. In Primate Panorama we get to wash all the windows in the first year, and occasionally we get to chop some fruit, if you’re lucky. I only got to do that once because I had some extra time.”

What teen volunteer Heather Adler-Pollock from Stapleton would really like to do is observe animals in the wild—but for now the zoo is the closest she can get—and she thinks that by working at the zoo she might learn about other possible jobs with animals. At this point, she says, “I’m into marine animals. I’d like to do a scientific study of marine life.”

As a teen volunteer in “Junior Crew” at the zoo last summer Adler-Pollock, like all the first year volunteers, had her share of cleaning-type jobs. But, she says, when they finished cleaning and still had time, the teen volunteers could give the macaws a bath. “That’s the fun part. We use a very fine mister. If they want the bath they’ll come flap their wings. If they don’t they’ll walk away.”



Ana Petersen, the Teen Programs Assis-

Nathan Parks of Park Hill teaches a zoo visitor, Morrhyssey Benz, 8, about anteaters.

Teen Volunteers at the Zoo

tant who was, herself, a teen volunteer says, “When teens first start volunteering they’re called ‘Junior Crew.’ In their first year they work primarily for Summer Safari day camp and they also assist with cleaning tasks and animal enrichment.

“We’re looking for people who really are interested and committed to learning more about animal careers and also people who are interested in working with kids because they work with Summer Safari and at our interpretative stations where we do activities with kids. We want volunteers who are well rounded and interested in animals, and we want to give them the opportunity to explore.”

After teens have volunteered for one summer they can apply for the “Volunteer” position in a specific area of their interest. “The more advanced position, Volunteer, is more hands on and the keepers really rely on them more than the Junior Crew positions. Junior Crew is the entry level position. In Volunteers they very much get a keeper experience. They do everything alongside the keeper, says Petersen.

“In primates we have a lot of teens who chop food and do enrichment. Enrichment is our broad term for anything that stimulates the animal to get them to interact with their environment to keep them from a mundane existence. For example, elephants love smells. Sometimes they’ll go out and spray a smell... and then the elephants all come out and discover it. It’s interesting and it’s new and it keeps their minds active. One of the enrichment projects volunteers have done for the primates is oatmeal applesauce. The monkeys have to work at getting the oatmeal applesauce out of these cups that have a small opening, so we aren’t just giving them their food—they have to work to get it the way they would in the wild. The teens help with putting the food into the containers. They also help with ideas for enrichment... we have some very creative teens.

Applications for Junior Crew are online and are due March 1. The teens need to make a commitment to work a minimum of 25 hours a month in June, July and August. They must be at least 13 years old no older than a junior in high school at the time of application.

The application process is very competitive and includes written essays, an interview and letters of recommendation. The zoo is looking for young people who are passionate about animals, animal conservation and animal careers.

Detailed information about the teen volunteer program and the application process can be found at www.denver-zoo.org/involved/teenVolunteer.asp or call 303-376-4891



Lorenzo Francis and Mattie Toll of Park Hill clean up in the bird kitchen.

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Candidate Announcements

The Front Porch will print a 150-word announcement of candidacy and biographical information from individuals running for public office who specifically represent our distribution area. Statements from citywide candidates will be run as space allows, with priority given to residents of our distribution area. Announcements, along with a close-up print-quality photo, should be emailed to FrontPorchStapleton@gmail.com no later than the 15th of the month for the following month's issue. (A map of city council districts can be found at www.denvergov.org/Portals/639/documents/Maps/2008_Council_Districts_Precincts_Map.pdf).

City Council Dist. 5 Michele Fry



I am a candidate because I love this community, and am greatly concerned with recent curtailed progression of the area. I want to maintain and ensure, the community I love, and I know you love, continues on a forward path of revitalization. Parts of our community are lagging behind the rest of the city in progressive growth. This community is rich in diversity; ethnically, culturally and socioeconomically. I'll ensure through my strong leadership, and courage of conviction, city government continues to foster and maintain the support we need in order to sustain the quality of life, and safety, that originally drew each of us to this area, and that we each enjoy daily in this District. I will be devoted in my service to this community, and the City of Denver. This is Your Home, My Home, OUR Community. The election is May 3, 2011, be sure to vote. www.fryfor5.com

Clerk and Recorder Tom Downey

I initially filed to run for Denver City Council at-large, but after Stephanie O'Malley's announcement that she is not seeking re-election, I have decided to run for Clerk and Recorder instead. I believe that I can serve Denver as Clerk and Recorder with direct appli-



cability of my executive experience and skills. As the current Director of Business and Licensing in the Secretary of State's Office, I have been doing substantially the same job as the Clerk and Recorder. Under my direction, the turnaround at the Children's Museum (a 61% increase in

revenues, a 41% increase in attendance) was focused on customer service, which is what Denverites deserve from their Clerk. Finally, as an attorney for 18 years, including as an election lawyer, I know all of the legal aspects of the office. I live in Stapleton with my wife and three daughters, and I am committed to making Denver the best possible community for all of its residents. www.tomdowneyfordenver.com

The approximate boundaries of District 5 are 23rd, Havana, Leetsdale and Colorado Blvd.

Mary Beth Susman



I am running for City Council to guarantee Denver is a city where business flourishes and our public planning is a model for the rest of the country. As chair of the original Lowry planning committee, and as a member of the Denver Planning Board, I worked with city leaders and neighbors to develop some of the best projects in Denver: Lowry, Stapleton, Platte Valley, and the revitalization of downtown. As a city council member I will engage our community in smart development and careful budgeting that will keep Denver healthy and beautiful for future generations. Our district has important areas to develop at 9th & Colorado Blvd, Lowry and Colfax districts. With your help we will make Denver the #1 city for small business growth, healthy schools, and neighborhood vibrancy. I recently earned the support of former Mayor Wellington Webb and hope to have yours too. Please visit SusmanForCityCouncil.com to join us!

City Council Dist.11 Chris Herndon



Stapleton and Park Hill from Holly to Quebec and 23rd to MLK Blvd.
I am running for Denver City Council in District 11 because I want to continue my passion for public service. I am a West Point graduate and combat veteran. I manage hundreds of employees and multi-million dollar budgets. I also serve on the Stapleton United Neighbors Board of Directors. I have the experience to deliver for District 11 and Denver. I have learned to maximize human and economic resources and I can apply those tough lessons to how Denver conducts business. I have supporters like former City Councilwoman at-Large Susan Barnes-Gelt who will tell you they believe in me. What I ask is for an opportunity to win your vote. Every candidate is stressing jobs. I plan to show you through my hard work that I am the candidate most up to the job of serving you on City Council. www.HerndonforDenver.com, Chris@HerndonforDenver.com.

City Council At-Large Robin Kniech



I am running for Denver City Council At-Large. Since 2004, I have worked for a local non-profit focused on making Denver a better place for middle class families and those struggling to make ends meet. In 2008, I joined the Board of the Denver Union Station Project Authority, which governs the \$477 million public-private partnership that is the hub of the FasTracks system. Our great city of Denver has been blessed with growth in recent times, but now it's time to focus on preserving basic city services that will keep our families and seniors in Denver, and developing strategies to expand middle-income jobs as the economy recovers. I am running because I have the firmly rooted values and city policy experience to achieve these goals. I am prepared and excited for the opportunity of making the transition to public service as a Councilmember At-Large. www.robinforcouncil.com

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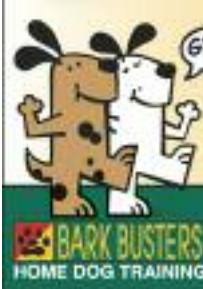


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Take a Hike by Marko and John Babiak

The American Kestrel. Denver's Royal Falcon

By mid-winter, Marko and I start to show symptoms of cabin fever. To remedy our behavioral ailment, the doctor of our house prescribes that we get outside as often as possible. Taking her advice, we pull up our new wool socks, zip our down-filled parkas and cover our heads with our favorite Colorado Rapids skull caps. With camera and binoculars in hand, we head out the front door for a long walks around wild Denver.

You may think that our urban wildlife would be all but out of sight in February, but we see plenty during our therapeutic father-son outings. We take inventory of the visible tree nests constructed by songbirds, woodpeckers and hawks during the previous spring. On trash day, Monday, we spy on Park Hill's Blackbirds who thoroughly enjoy recycling the neighborhood's gourmet leftovers. We cross paths with bushy-tailed foxes prowling the streets of Montclair, and study Canada geese methodically grooming the 9th hole green at the City Park's golf course.

My sidekick and I are always on the lookout for our favorite falcon, the American kestrel. These pint-sized, year-round raptors make their home in the riparian area along Westerly Creek in Lowry and Stapleton. Kestrels are the most abundant falcon found in North America.

As is characteristic with all falcons, their wings are pointed and tails elongated. Kestrels possess a regal look, especially when they perched on top of a tall tree staring down at bystanders. Their plumage is colorful and stands out against the

dull winter sky. The males have blue-grey wings and a terra cotta-colored back, while the female's wings and back are colored cinnamon-brown. Darks spots dot their chests. Once a year, they molt completely and grow new feathers. Both sexes sport double black side-burns on their snow-white faces. The bridge of their pointed beak is painted yellow.

It is said that the easiest way for a women to win a man's heart is through his stomach. Kestrels use this tactic, however in reverse. During courtship, it is the male who delivers food to his mate. When the dapper male approaches the nest with prey in his sharp talons, he will sound out several calls, then flutter above until the female flies out to him. She will follow him to a perch where he transfers the catch to his fair lady. The pair exchange several head bobs and body bows, then fly off. He will return to his hunting territory and she to her tree cavity nest. It is accurate to say that the pair happily coexists this way, in their own respective solitude.

Kestrels have exceptional eyesight. It is far superior to humans'. They can see very small details at far distances and have great depth perception. They like to consume large insects including crickets and grasshoppers, lizards, mice and even small birds. The hunt is filled with high drama. Kestrels will first scan their territory from an elevated vantage point. Then, they will move off of their perch and hover, like an air show stunt helicopter, over their killing field. They rely on



The aristocratic kestrel is one of the smallest birds of prey. Their average length is 11 inches. Wingtip to wingtip, they measure 24 inches. And with their hollow bones, an adult kestrel weighs just four ounces.

Photo by Marko Babiak

forceful, rapid wing beats to remain in a steady-state position. When the kestrel has its prey in sight, it will dive down with legs extended and talons open to make the lethal catch. Kestrels can reach speeds in excess of 40 miles per hour during these short swoops. Finally, using its scissors-like beak, the kestrel swiftly severs the neck of its prey and then flies off in a flash to devour the meal.

American kestrels can be found in many of our open spaces and greenways. They can best be seen mid morning and in the late afternoon. Start by scanning tree tops. And like most royalty, they won't let you get to close before they fly off. So show respect, and give them ample

space. In turn, they may deliver you one spectacular show.

Marko and John Babiak are Stapleton residents. Marko, 10, is an avid wildlife photographer. John is an enrichment teacher. Weekly he teaches his popular Nature Rangers ecology classes to students at Steck, Roberts, Westerly Creek and Odyssey. He also leads a summer-long nature day camp at the nearby Rocky Mt. Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. He can be reached at NatureRangerJohn@aol.com

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Charitable Giving Not Just for Adults

By Nancy Burkhart

In today's economy, there are families throughout Denver who are having a rough time and who were unable to give their children the kind of Christmas that made other children happy.

It isn't unusual for adults to donate to charities that help families, but this year, 8- and 9-year-old third-graders at Westerly Creek Elementary School became wrapped up in a selfless-giving project of their own.

Mary FaJohn and Amy Dickson have 43 students. FaJohn teaches the group math, science and social studies, while Dickson teaches reading and writing. This fall, FaJohn learned about a positive behavior system called Kid Cash.

"We use it as an incentive for good behaviors that go beyond what is expected," FaJohn explained. "I think it's important to reward the kids when they're doing well. It gives them positive attention."

The third-graders receive Kid Cash, or fake money, for positive actions such as doing homework, doing something nice for a peer, and cleaning up the classroom.

"It's for doing things they weren't asked to do," FaJohn said. "They receive Kid Cash for things they do that are above the normal expectations of the day."

There are \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 denominations. A banker handles shoppers at the Kid Cash store where they are allowed to "shop" once a month for items donated by parents, such as pencils, puzzles, stuffed animals, bouncy balls and containers for their possessions.

But, before Christmas a parent of one of the third-graders, who wishes to remain anonymous, called FaJohn to make an offer

to facilitate a charitable use for Kid Cash.

"The family offered to help us teach the kids about donations," FaJohn said. "If the kids donated their Kid Cash, the family would make a cash equivalent donation to Denver's Mount Saint Vincent Home.

"We got the kids together and talked about sharing and what kids need at the holiday season," she said. "Some of these kids have worked at soup kitchens and they know that it's hard if you don't get what you want for Christmas. A lot of the kids end up buying things for their brothers and sisters with their Kid Cash. And they decided they would love to make somebody's holidays as bright as theirs."

The Westerly Creek third-graders stockpiled \$1,073 in Kid Cash to ultimately be donated to the Mount Saint Vincent Home.

"Some of them are savers," FaJohn said. "Kid Cash comes around and they don't spend it. Some of the kids had \$100. For the remainder of the week when they knew we were leaving for the break, any Kid Cash they got would go straight to the donations. They are so proud of themselves."

The lesson proved to be a sound one.

"I think it builds the idea of community—that we're part of a larger community," FaJohn said. "Some people are doing better than others, and we need to figure out ways to help. I think the kids are pretty understanding. They definitely know that there are some people who struggle more than others. I think that's instilled from their parents."

Since the students have returned to class following their holiday break, they have maintained their charitable interest and want to continue to donate their Kid Cash,



according to FaJohn. However, a new angel intermediary to transfer Kid Cash into a monetary donation is needed.

To participate, email Mary FaJohn at mary_faJohn@dpsk12.org.

Third grade classes at Westerly Creek Elementary School turned their 'Kid Cash' into a \$1,073 donation to the Mount Saint Vincent Home for Children thanks to an anonymous donor. Kay McDowell of Mount Saint Vincent receives the check from students Hogan Hickman, Aodham Roche, Nicholas Green and Trisha Iyer.

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DENVER EVENTS

Art Walks:

2/4 Friday- Santa Fe Arts District. Santa Fe Drive between 10th and 6th. www.artdistricton-satafe.com

2/4 Friday- North Denver's Tennyson Art Walk. Tennyson St. and 44th Ave. www.denver-artwalk.squarespace.com

2/4 Friday- Cherry Creek Arts District. www.cherrycreeknorth.com

2/11 Friday- Aurora's East End Second Friday Art Walk. Gallery openings, music, theater, food and more. 5–8pm. Start at Fletcher Plaza/MLK Library (E Colfax at Elmira) for map to all venues.

2/17 Thursday- Highlands Square Third Thursday. 5pm to close. 32nd and Lowell, North Denver. www.highlands-square.com

2/5 Saturday- Victorian Tea. 12:30pm and 2:45pm. Bosworth Mansion, 1400 Josephine St. \$25/ticket. Charlotte Weinberger, 303.338.1014, Weinberger@yahoo.com or Carla Helling, 303.807.0619, carla53159@comcast.net. Proceeds benefit Denver Assistance League.

2/5 Saturday- The Jewish Experience Wine & Cheese 2011. 8pm. European street festival electric evening of theatrical mystique and Italian motorcycles in support of community work done all year. \$100/person. Erico Motorsports, 2855 Walnut St., LoDo. 303.316.6412 or www.thejewishexperience.com

2/7 Monday- Meatless (Mostly) Mondays: Cooking and Eating Meat-Free 101.

Learn delicious range of meat-free dining options. 6–9pm. \$61/\$49/CFU members; \$20 materials fee paid in class. www.freeu.com, 303.399.009

2/9 Wednesday- Clicks and Tricks Training Class for Cats. Denver Dumb Friends League cat behavior training class runs 4 Wednesdays. \$40. Register: 303.757.5772 ext 7629 or ddfl.org

2/12 Saturday and 2/13 Sunday- Bourbon Street Brass: Carnival! Bask in rhythmic magic of Cajun and Latin, Blues to Dixieland, Calypso and Mambo with Denver Brass. Newman Center for Performing Arts, Univ. of Denver. Tickets: \$43–\$22. 303.832.HORN or www.denverbrass.org

2/12 Saturday to 2/20 Sunday- Colorado Garden and Home Show. Colorado Convention Center, Downtown Denver. Expo with flowering gardens and 1,300 booths; spring landscaping, patio and outdoor projects. www.gardeningcolorado.com or 303.932.8100

2/13 Sunday- Beads, Beads, Beads! Create beads with polymer clay. 2–5pm. \$51/\$39/CFU members; \$10.50 materials fee paid in class. www.freeu.com, 303.399.0093

2/18 Friday- Overdue Love Club, Singles Night for Intelligent People. Chat with other singles; indulge in wine and coffee. Michelangelo's Wine and Coffee Bar, every 3rd Fri., 6:30–8pm. 1 S Broadway. Register: 720.865.1206

2/19 Saturday to 3/4 Friday- Denver Restaurant Week 2011. 200 restaurants offer multi-

course meals for mile-high price \$52.80 for 2; tax/tip not included. www.denverrestaurantweek.com

2/21 Monday- Guided Olive Oil Tasting. Learn to incorporate, select, pair, store and enjoy classic/infused extra virgin olive oils and balsamic vinegars. Mediterranean wines, appetizers, desserts included. \$30. 6:30–8pm. EVOO Marketplace, 1338 15th St. Spaces limited. Register: www.viamediterranea.com

Single Volunteers of Greater Denver. Visit www.svgd.org for volunteer opportunities for singles: local projects, charitable social events and working vacations abroad.

Tuesdays in February- Andy Warhol 4+1. Denver Film Society weekly film on important figures from Warhol's life. Denver Film Center. Tickets: www.denverfilm.org

Adopt a Sophisticated Cat. Denver Dumb Friends League offers FREE adoptions of cats 6 years and older. www.ddfl.org or 303.771.5772

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

2/5 Saturday- Multi Cultural Conference on Breast Health. Susan G. Komen Foundation FREE 1-day workshop to give under and uninsured men and women access to lifesaving info on breast health/breast cancer. Workshops, info sessions, food, entertainment. Renaissance Hotel, 3801 Quebec St. Reservations required: 303.744.2088 ext 309

2/8 Tuesday- Estrogen Fights Cancer and

Alzheimer's. Have your menopausal cake and eat it too! Find out FREE. Carrie Louise Daenell, ND, at LiveWell Center, 255 Detroit St. 303.399.8050

LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS

Active Minds – Info on all sessions, www.ActiveMindsForLife.com. FREE.

2/1 Tuesday- Japan. 10–11am. Jewish Community Center, 350 S. Dahlia St. RSVP: Lil Shaw: 303.316.6359

2/10 Thursday- Chocolate. 10am–noon (10/reception, 10:30/program). 1375 High St. RSVP: 303.399.5555 (limited seating)

2/10 Thursday- The Future of Education in America. 7–8pm. Stapleton Master Community Assoc., 2823 Roslyn St.

2/14 Monday- Abraham Lincoln. 2:30–3:30pm. Springbrooke, 6800 Leetsdale Dr. RSVP: 303.331.9963

2/14 Monday- Chocolate. 10–11am. Alzheimer's Association, 455 Sherman, Ste 500. RSVP: 303.813.1669

2/15 Tuesday- Afghanistan. 11am–noon (10:45/refreshments). Temple Emanuel, 51 Grape St. RSVP: Jodi: 303.388.4013 x307

2/22 Tuesday- Saudi Arabia. 5:30–6:30 Tattered Cover, 2526 E Colfax Ave.

LIBRARIES

For info on library programs, check events calendar at denverlibrary.org.

RECURRING EVENTS

4th Monday
SUN Board Mtg. 7:30pm,
MCA, 2823 Roslyn St.
stapletonunitedneighbors@gmail.com

Every Tuesday
Stapleton Rotary Club – 7:30am
Stapleton Community Room
2823 Roslyn St.
www.denverstapletonrotary.org

Every Tuesday
AA Open Discussion Mtg. 7:30pm
MCA, 2823 Roslyn St. 303-912-7075

1st Tuesday
Breast Cancer Support Group
5–6:30pm AF Williams Family

Medicine Clinic, Conf Rm.
(west entrance) 3055 Roslyn
(at MLK) 720-848-9000

3rd Tuesday
Greater Stapleton Business Assoc.
8am MCA, 2823 Roslyn St
303-393-7700

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

1st Wednesday
“1st Wednesdays” Home-based businesses. Alternates between Lunch & Happy Hour
tbrislina@gmail.com
www.stapletonhomebusiness.co

2nd Wed. (Odd-numbered mos.)
SUN Transportation Committee
6:30pm MCA 2823 Roslyn St.
stapletonneighbors@msn.com

3rd Thursday
Stapleton Citizens Advisory Board Mtg, 7350 E. 29th Ave.
7:30–9am 303-393-7700

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

2nd Sunday
Collaborative Kite Fly & Walk, (free) Stapleton Central Park, 2:30–5pm. Please RSVP at Meetup.com/RockyMtnKite or Meetup.com/TTWalks

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Stapleton Wine Appreciation Group. meighanm@aim.com

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All Denver Public Library locations closed on Monday, 2/21 in observance of Presidents' Day.

Blair Caldwell African American Research Library, 2401 Welton St, 720.865.2401. Blair Caldwell Library is closed on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays.

Black History Month Events-

2/4 Friday to 2/28 Monday- Coors Heritage Calendar Series Art on Display. Works by Robert Evans, local artist and Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library's signature artist.

2/12 Saturday- Crayons on the Canvas. Kids, come get creative with Holly-Kai Hurd! 2pm.

2/14 Monday- Live on the Canvas in Charles R. & Dorothy E. Cousins Gallery. Special guest on the canvas TBA, but will be an Art Blaque creative, fun love fest. 6pm. After the talk, enjoy reception and sounds of DJ SD. Children's activities during LIVE! for ages 9 and under. (Please RSVP for children.) Mix, mingle, network with other artists, writers, intellectuals. FREE. Open to public but donations welcome. artblaque@gmail.com or 720.364.4492

2/19 Saturday- Black History Live with Chautauquan Hasan Davis. 2pm. Colorado Humanities honors Black History Month by sponsoring Black History Live with Hasan Davis portraying boxing great and American War hero Joe Louis. Davis will interact with audience as Louis. A unique way to explore history.

2/26 Saturday- Book Discussion and Signing. 2pm. Local journalist, sports writer, author Denny Dressman will discuss and sign his book *Eddie Robinson* about Robinson's extraordinary college football career in Deep South's Jim Crow segregation era.

Films: Mondays at 6pm

2/7, *The Journey of the African American Athlete*

2/14, *Joe Louis: America's Hero Betrayed*

2/28, *The Express: The Ernie Davis Story*

Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. 720.865.0250. Closed Mondays, Wednesdays and Sundays.

Thursdays- Storytime with a Craft. For kids who can sit and listen to short stories, participate in songs and simple craft. 10:30am. Craft limited to first 30 kids.

Thursdays and Fridays- Book Babies. For babies 6-23 months with parent/caregiver. Share books, songs, finger plays. 11:15am.

Fridays- Tales for Twos. Storytime for 2-year-olds and caregivers. Stories, songs, movement activities. 10:30am.

Schlessman Family Library, 100 Poplar St (1st and Quebec). 720.865.0000. Closed Wednesdays and Fridays.

Tuesdays- All ages storytime. 10:30am

Thursdays- Bookbabies. 10:30am

2/13 Sunday- Tai Chi and Qi Gong. 2pm. Kristina A. Naldjian will help you explore these ancient transformative energy exercises.

2/13 Sunday- Herbal Love Potions. Join MoonDance Botanicals to create potions sure to start some fire in your body or soul. 1:30pm. By registration only: 720.865.0000 or at reference desk

2/26 Saturday- Colorado Authors Series: Jewell Parker Rhodes. 2pm. Author of Parent's Choice Gold Award Winner and *Today Show* AI Roker Book Club selection *Ninth Ward*, children's book set in New Orleans before, during, after Hurricane Katrina. Story of resilience, family, love and transformation for whole family to read/discuss together.

2/27 Sunday- Colorado Authors Series: Michael Madigan. 2pm. Journalist and fiction/nonfiction author Madigan is 2010 winner of Colorado Author's League Award and Colorado Book Award finalist. His latest books: *Heroes, Villains, Dames and Disasters: 150 Years of Front Page Stories from the Rocky Mountain News and Historic Photos of Denver from the 50s, 60s and 70s.*

KIDS AND FAMILIES

2/2 Wednesday- Hansel and Gretel with Opera Colorado at Children's Museum. 5-6pm. Free with museum adm. Performances: 1pm and 2pm. www.mychildsmuseum.org

2/5 Saturday- Jewish Children's Activities. First Sat. every month little ones dance, sing, hear a story, craft and play at monthly Shabbat experience, Me'at Shabbat. 9-10am. FREE. Temple Micah, 2600 Leyden St, Park Hill. 303.388.4239, www.micahdenver.org

2/9 Wednesday- "Create Playdates" at Denver Art Museum. Kids 3-5 can roar, bang, stomp 2nd Wed. of every month. Drop in, meet other tots for art making, story times, scavenger hunts. Included in museum adm.; 5 and under free. Denver Art Museum, 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. www.denverartmuseum.org or 720.865.5000

2/15 Saturday- Falconry and Colorado Raptors. 10am. Explore history and modern-day falconry practices. FREE; ages 10 and up. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E Smith Rd at Laredo, Aurora. RSVP: 303.739.2428 or auroragov.org/nature

To submit information for the Front Porch "Local Event" Listings

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.

Visit denver.org/events to find more events. Check out the Denver 2 for 1 Tix special offers.

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

2/18 Friday- Nature at Night. "Night Sky." FREE. 6:30pm. All ages. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E Smith Rd, Aurora. RSVP: 303.739.2428 or auroragov.org/nature

2/26 Saturday- Read and Romp. Ages 2-8. Arts, crafts and Clifford the Big Red Dog. \$10, benefits Reach Out and Read. 10am-2pm. LoDo Tattered Cover, 1628 16th St. www.tatteredcover.com

Beginning 3/5- Vintage Theatre Youth Program. Ages 9-17. Classes held Saturdays from 12:30-3:30pm at Vintage Theatre. Register: www.vintage theatre reproductions.com

Tiny Tots Love Music, Denver Brass. Special concert for tiny tots and parents; introduction to joy and magic of live music. Various dates/locations. Tickets: www.denverbrass.org

Tiny Tots, Inside the Orchestra. 45-minute concerts by Colorado Symphony in intimate setting for children 6 and under. Kids sit near musicians and hear classical music they may recognize! Various venues/dates through mid-February. Concerts at 9:30 and 10:30am. \$5; children under 2 free. Tickets: www.jrsg.org

Through 3/11- Louisville Winterskate. Outdoor ice skating with Friday night carriage rides. Call for hours: 303.449.3137. 824 Front St, Louisville. www.bceproductions.com

Through 3/11- Flatiron Crossing Winterskate. Outdoor rink outside the mall. Call for hours: 303.449.3137, www.bceproductions.com

Art Students League of Denver- Registering programs for kids and teens. 303.778.6990 or www.ASLD.org

Small Hands Art Studio- Registering for spring classes. Located in Stapleton! www.smallhandsart.com

The Art Garage- Registering for workshops/classes ages 4 and up. 6100 E 23rd Ave, Park Hill. www.artgaragedenver.com

Aurora Fox Theater- Registering for drama classes. Ages 4 and up. Lisa Mumpton at 303.739.1573 or www.aurorafox.org

(continued on page 18)

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- To apply, obtain a Scholarship Application at www.westerracu.com.
- Applications are due Friday, March 11, 2011.
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(continued from page 15)

MUSEUMS

Denver Art Museum

Now open—newly installed American Indian-floor. Native American objects are presented as art rather than artifacts with artworks ranging from prehistoric to contemporary. Galleries are divided into nine regional areas that focus on specific artists and art forms. www.denverartmuseum.org. Free on the first Saturday of each month.

Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Montview and Colorado Blvd. www.dmns.org

2/17 Thursday- Science Lounge. Cocktails and entertainment every 3rd Thurs. of month. 6:30–9:30pm. \$8/members; \$10/nonmembers

Planetarium- Journey to the Stars. \$6/ages 3–18; \$8/adult

IMAX- Hubble in 3D narrated by Leonardo DeCaprio. **Under the Sea in 3D** narrated by Jim Carrey. Various times. Tickets: \$8/3–18; \$10/adult

NORTHFIELD EVENTS

Bass Pro Events – Call 720.385.3600 for details, www.BassPro.com

2/2, Wed.- The Basics of Shotgun Ice Fishing for Trout and Lake Trout (Every Wed. in Feb.)

Using Underwater Cameras and Fish Finding for Ice Fishing (Every Wed. in Feb.)

Ice Fishing Tips & Techniques (Every Thurs. in Feb.)

Learning to Use GPS (Every Thurs. in Feb.)

2/6, Sun.- Basic Handgun Safety

2/8, 2/15, 2/22 Tuesdays- Get Hooked on FlyTy-

ing for Beginners

2/10, Thurs.- Hunter's Education 2011

2/13, Sun.- GPS, Map and Compass Clinic

Harkins Theatres 18 – 720.374.3118, www.HarkinsTheatres.com

2/4, Friday – *The Roommate, Sanctum*

2/11, Friday – *Just Go With It, The Eagle, Justin Bieber: Never Say Never*

2/18, Friday – *Big Momma's: Like Father Like Son, I Am Number Four, Unknown*

2/25, Friday – *Drive Angry, The Grace Card, Hall Pass, Shelter*

Improv Comedy Club and Dinner Theatre – Tickets: 303.307.1777, www.ImprovDenver.com

2/2–2/5, Wednesday–Saturday – Steve-O

2/10–2/13, Thursday–Sunday – John Henton

2/17–2/20, Thursday–Sunday – Pete Correale

2/25–2/27, Friday–Sunday – Lavell Crawford

The Twisted Olive – 303.373.8100, www.TwistedOlive.com

Spoken Word/Poetry – 9pm Every Wednesday

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Reservations required for these popular programs. 303.289.0930. To get to refuge, take I-70, exit north on Havana St, enter at 56th and Havana. Free unless noted. Refuge Hours: Tuesdays to Sundays, 7am–5pm. Visitor Center Hours: Tuesdays to Sundays, 9am–4pm.

Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays- Wild Rides. 9:30–11:30am. Experience Refuge sights and sounds on this two-hour guided viewing tour.

2/1 and 2/22 Tuesdays- Tuesday Tots: Grow As We Go. 10–11am. Like us, animals change as they grow up. Explore amazing life cycles of Refuge wildlife from egg to bird, tadpole to frog, caterpillar to butterfly. For young naturalists ages 2–5. Parent/guardian must accompany all children.

2/10 Thursday- Birding Basics. 9am–noon. Flight patterns, calls and wing markings are techniques used to identify birds. Program covers all basics to begin the popular hobby of birding. Binoculars recommended!

2/12 and 2/26 Saturdays- Seasonal Photo Tour. 3–5pm. As seasons change, so does Refuge's landscape and wildlife. Capture wondrous moments in your camera lens.

2/13 Sunday- Eyes on Eagles. 3–5pm. People are not the only ones who travel to warmer places when winter comes. Learn about the bald eagle, their migration and visit their winter Refuge residence.

2/19 Saturday- Sky Tigers. 3–5pm. Even skunks aren't safe from this voracious predator! Great horned owls catch prey 2 to 3 times heavier than themselves. Explore this owl's softer side as it prepares for its baby sky tigers. Binoculars recommended.

STAPLETON/PARK HILL/LOWRY EVENTS

2/5 Saturday- Park Hill School Auction, The Bid Easy. 6–10pm. Park Hill Golf Course. Tickets: www.Parkhill.dpsk.12.org

2/23 Wednesday- Colorado Legislative Reapportionment & Denver Redistricting presented by the League of Women Voters. Recent Colorado reapportioning history has involved the courts for final ruling on representative district boundaries. Learn how 2010 US Census will affect CO and Denver voting districts. 5:45–7pm. FREE. Montview Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St. www.lwvdenver.org, 303.321.7571

3/3 Thursday to 3/5 Saturday- Solid Gold, an '80s Retrospective. 2011 Pop Show/Silent Auction. Showtime 7pm, Silent Auction 5:30pm on Fri. and Sat. Tickets: \$10/\$12 students/seniors; \$14/\$18/adults at 720.424.1713 or www.dsa.dpsk12.org/performances. DSA box office open MWF 7:30am–3:30pm. Denver School of the Arts, 7111 Montview Blvd.

3/6 Sunday- Denver School of Rock Benefit Concert for Brent's Place. Twisted Olive in Northfield. Tickets: \$8; kids 5 and under free. Amy Anderson at berkanderson@hotmail.com, www.brentsplace.org, www.schoolofrock.com

Live Music at The Soiled Dove. One of Denver's best live music venues is located at 7401 E 1st Ave in Lowry. Tickets: www.soileddove.com

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

2/1 Tuesday- Christ the King School Open House. 6:30–9:30pm. Christ the King Roman Catholic School, 860 Elm St. Questions/personal tour: 303.321.2123

2/4 Friday- Application Deadline for Montview Community Preschool 2011-12 School Year. Application materials or schedule a tour: 303.322.7296. www.montviewpreschool.org

2/10 Thursday- Race To Nowhere. 60-minute documentary on how best to prepare our youth to become healthy adults. (see page 19)

2/14 Monday to 2/17 Thursday- St. James Catholic School Open House. 9am–noon. 1250 Newport St. Tours and registration info: 303.333.8275. www.StJamesDenver.org

Denver Scholarship Foundation Financial Aid Workshops. One-on-one assistance to complete free application for Federal Student Aid. Denver School of the Arts on 2/9 from 6–8pm and Manual High School on 2/10 and 2/22 from 6–8pm. Attendees must bring correct financial documents. For document info and other locations: www.denverscholarship.org/FAFSA

THEATER

Through 2/6- Bedroom Farce. Vintage Theatre, 2119 E 17th Ave. 303.839.1361, www.vintagetheatre.com

2/18 Friday to 3/20 Sunday- Equus. Vintage Theatre, 2119 E 17th Ave. 303.839.1361, www.vintagetheatre.com

Through 2/12- Art. John Hand Theater, 7653 E 1st Pl, Lowry. 720.880.8727, www.johnhandtheater.com

Through 2/26- Eve Ensler and The Good Body. Avenue Theater, 417 E 17th Ave. 303.321.5925, www.avenuetheater.com

Opening 2/24- In Search of Eckstine, A Love Story. Shadow Theatre, 1468 Dayton St, Aurora. 720.857.8000, www.shadowtheatre.com

2/11 Friday to 3/6 Sunday- The Wedding Singer. Auora Fox Theatre, 9900 E Colfax, Aurora. 303.739.1970, www.aurorafoxartscenter.org

DENVER ZOO

2/1 Tuesday- Registration for Summer Safari 2011 (Zoo Camp) Opens. 6:30am. Register: www.denverzoo.org and click on Education

2/5 Sunday- Denver Zoo's Lunar New Year Celebration. 1–4pm. Entertainment and activities celebrating Year of the Rabbit. www.denverzoo.org

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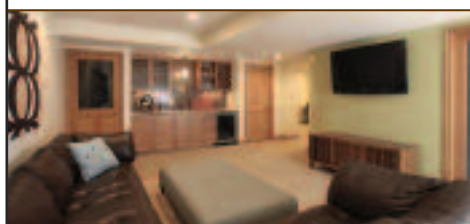
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More Events...

Free Neighborhood Health Summit Feb. 5 with U.S. Surgeon General to Speak

Join neighbors at a free event Saturday, Feb. 5 from 8:30am to 3pm at Johnson and Wales to learn how to improve health and healthcare in Stapleton, NW Aurora, East Montclair, Park Hill and NE Park Hill.

Find out what 2040 Partners for Health knows about childhood obesity in our neighborhoods and how to make our kids grow up healthy. U.S. Surgeon General Regina M. Benjamin will discuss how national health priorities matter at the neighborhood level, and Lorez Meinhold, Director of Health Reform Implementation, will discuss Health Reform, how to influence it and what it means to you.

2040 Partners for Health facilitates/assesses community-based research/health-related programs in partnership with NE Denver communities, the Univ. of Colorado and the Stapleton Foundation.

The Summit will be held at Johnson and Wales University. Open to the public, but RSVPs required. Call 303.468.3241 or email summit@2040health.org; provide name, your neighborhood, organization (if any), phone and email. Limited childcare for ages 5 and up. Include number/ages of children when you RSVP. A free networking lunch will be provided, but space is limited.

Feb. 10 Race to Nowhere Movie and Panel: How Can Youth Become Great Adults?

The public is invited to attend *Race to Nowhere*, a 60-minute documentary and call

to families and educators to challenge current assumptions and raise questions on how best to prepare our youth to become healthy, bright, contributing adults. The film will be shown Thursday, Feb.10 at 6:30pm at Bill Roberts K-8 School, 2100 Akron Way. A discussion will follow the film with panelists: State Sen. Michael Johnston; Mary Seawell, DPS Board Member; Diana Howard, former principal of Polaris at Ebert, current principal at Kunsmiller; Dr. Michael Brink, child psychologist; and others.

The film is intended to promote dialogue—with your child, your child’s teacher, school administrator, others in your community, school board reps, your elected officials. Appropriate for middle-school students and older. Tickets: \$10 in advance/\$15 at door and at www.racetonowhere.com/screenings.

Feb. 11—Denver’s Old House Society’s Old House Fair

The fair offers information, resources and workshops specific to homes over 50 years old. The event will be held Feb. 11 from 9am – 5 pm at the Tivoli Turnhalle, the only building of its kind west of the Mississippi River, located at 900 Auraria Parkway. Tickets are \$12 at King Soopers stores, or on-line at <http://ticketswest.rdn.com> or \$15 at the door. For more info visit <http://denversoldhousesociety.org>.

Montview Community Plan—Community Meeting Feb. 24

The City of Aurora is inviting the Northwest Aurora Community and its Stapleton neighbors to participate in the first community meeting (a visioning exercise) that will result in a community-based plan that will revitalize the Montview Area. The meeting will be held from 6-8pm on Thursday, February

24th at Aurora’s MLK Library (9898 E. Colfax Ave.). For more details go to www.montviewcommunityplan.org or call at Chad or Mindy at 303.739-7250.

Have Fun at Read and Romp Feb. 26 and Get Books to Kids

Read and Romp is an innovative family event to be held Saturday, Feb. 26 from 10am to 2pm that benefits Reach Out and Read Colorado. Children ages 2 to 8 will enjoy games, activities, and arts and crafts based on such family favorites as *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs*.

Clifford will greet the kids who will grab a passport and travel through the pages of their favorite storybooks. They’ll make cookies with Mouse, play a game with Frog & Toad, dress up like Fancy Nancy, create their own bookmarks, try some yoga poses, and more!

Reach Out and Read Colorado is a non-profit working to make literacy a standard part of pediatric primary care, encouraging a household where parents read to their children. This year, Reach Out and Read doctors and nurses are distributing 125,000 free books to children aged 6 months to 5 years statewide. More than 78,000 children living at or near poverty receive new, age appropriate books at every well-child visit.

The event will be held at the PPA Event

Center (www.dppa.com/EventCenter, by Invesco Field). Tickets are \$10 per person. Call 303.623.3800 or visit www.reachoutandreadco.org.

“The Sky’s the Limit” at Bill Roberts 2011 Auction, March 11

The fifth annual Bill Roberts school silent and live auction will be Friday, March 11 at Wings Over the Rockies Museum in Lowry. Highlights include food from several local restaurants, more than 100 items up for bid including an 8-week-old, pure-bred, golden retriever puppy; a custom electric guitar; dozens of restaurant and spa gift certificates; sports tickets; a vacation in Mexico; and a stay at a luxurious condo in Winter Park.

This is an excellent opportunity for the community, parents and school supporters to become involved and make a difference for the children of Bill Roberts. The Bill Roberts PTA and auction committee plan to exceed the \$100,000 raised last year.

Many parents are surprised to learn that money from the auction goes directly back to support school services not paid for by Denver Public Schools, including staffing of paraprofessionals in every classroom. Funds raised are critical to help the children thrive.

Tickets at the Bill Roberts front office or at www.billrobertspta.com. \$20/person in advance or \$30 at the door. Urban Mattress is the event sponsor.

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2688 Dexter St
\$294,950 New Price
Pottery Barn Cute Bungalow with 3 bd * 2 bth. Renovated Kitchen * Updated and move in ready * Hi Ceiling. Finished Basement



2348 Ivanhoe St
\$415,000 New Price
Spacious Remodeled Bungalow * 5 bd * 2 bth * 3 Main floor bedrooms * Large Kitchen w/ slab granite- exposed brick + Fin basement w/ egress,



5821 E 9th Ave
\$299,950 New Price
Charming 3 story town-home * Finished basement * Slab granite in kitchen * 3 bed 4 bath * Oak floors * 2 car garage * Mayfair Park around the corner * Close to Lowry



2665 Central Park
\$269,950
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State Representatives Meet Their Constituents



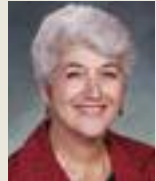
Angela Williams (above), newly elected State Representative from House District 7, held her first town hall meeting at Martin Luther King recreation center on January 15, 2011. Left, Harriet Glenn questions Rep.Williams about traffic problems on 56th in Montbello.

District 7 Representative Williams, at her January 15 town hall meeting, announced she will hold town hall meetings the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be Saturday, Feb. 12 from 10 – 11am at William Roberts Elementary School, 2100 Akron Way in Stapleton. The

topic will be “The Redistricting Process: How Redrawing Legislative Lines Will Affect HD7 Residents.” Rep. Williams will also hold a “Coffee with Angela” at a local business the last Friday of each month. To learn the location of future community events call 303-866-2909 or

email angela.williams.house@state.co.us. *District 7 includes Stapleton, the eastern part of Park Hill, and Montclair and Mayfair. The western boundary of District 7 is Niagara to the north of 26th and Hudson to the south of 26th.*

House District 6 – Lois Court



Rep. Court meets constituents at neighborhood meetings. Upcoming meetings can be viewed by selecting the “events” link at www.LoisCourt.com or call 303-866-2967.

District 6 includes Lowry.

House District 8 – Beth McCann



Rep. McCann will hold a Small Business Town Hall meeting Tuesday Feb. 8 from 7 – 8:30pm at East High School. The event will feature presenters who will address constituent questions regarding the development and finance of small businesses in House District 8. In the

coming year Rep. McCann will be holding topical town hall meetings designed to address specific issues affecting constituents, with Small Business being the first topic. Rep. McCann can be reached at 303-358-9247.

District 8 includes Park Hill west of District 7 (listed at left).

Constituents can follow legislation on the General Assembly website at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/>. District maps can be found at www.comaps.org/cobhouse.html. District descriptions above refer to the Front Porch distribution area within each district (not the full district).

Mathnasium Exercises

By Nancy Burkhardt

Many people have an affinity for a specific activity: reading books, playing sports, creating art projects or rebuilding engines. But children in school can’t specialize; they have to deal with both right brain and left brain learning. They have math classes as well as English classes and sometimes a weakness in math spills over into the rest of the classes.

This is where the Mathnasium of Cherry Creek, a math-only learning center, comes in. There, trained instructors teach math to children from the second through the 12th grades. “The Mathnasium method is to make math easy and take the fear and anxiety out of the kids who have struggled with it,” said Stapleton resident Bernard Douthit who is the owner/center director of the Mathnasium of Cherry Creek.

“For children who struggle academically, math seems to be the weakest link in the chain,” he said. “You need to repair that weakest link that spills over into other areas, such as reading and writing. We teach math in a way that makes sense to kids. The curriculum is put in the language of children so they can understand the key concepts.”

At the Mathnasium, children first have an oral evaluation to determine their needs. Then they have about half an hour of written assessment. “We don’t want to overwhelm them,” Douthit said. “We want this to be a positive experience. Our system generates a learning plan for them from their assessment tests.”

Children go to the Mathnasium twice a week for a three-month period. At the end of this time, they are given another assessment to determine their progress. “We try not to over-test them,” Douthit said. “We evaluate the progress they’ve made. It’s lasting. It’s not a temporary improvement.” The math tutoring will give the child confidence in the area where they are weak. However, it is possible that they may find another area of math that gives them problems later in their education, Douthit said.

“There are people who say that math comes easy to them and there are people who struggle with it,” he noted. “It might be left brain vs. right brain. Not everybody’s going to be an electrical engineer or a physicist. But I think everybody can learn math. Math is key to the foundation of problem-solving. Our goal is to make math make sense, especially to those children who



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Denver Montclair International School offers summer day camps for children ages 3–12. DMIS offers language camps in French, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese. Sports camps in tae kwon do, basketball, soccer, tennis, and, lacrosse. Fine arts camps in arts and crafts, music, dance, and drama.

Register online at www.dmischool.com
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Children’s Brains



Jessica Lammers, lead instructor, and Bernard Douthit, owner of the Mathnasium math learning center, show their materials to a group of local youngsters as they prepare for the business’ February 5th opening. At the table are Jessica Douthit, Ana Kucera and Aman Sihgn. Prizes, shown on shelf at left, offer an inducement to kids to reach their goals.

might be right-brained so that they, too, can be good at reasoning and be more engaged so they’re not intimidated and fearful.”

Instruction at the Mathnasium is one-on-one in a group environment, Douthit said. “We use the teach-and-move-on methodology,” he said. The student-teacher ratio is three to one. Children need help, but if a math instructor is watching them all the time, a teacher will give them clues about how to solve problems. But they need to solve it on their own. The instructor is never more than a few feet away.”

The Mathnasium of Cherry Creek will have a grand opening from 10am to 4pm on Saturday, February 5. Guests will meet instructors and learn about the math curriculum. Children can take a math assessment at that time.

For Mathnasium information, go to www.mathnasium.com or email cherrycreek@mathnasium.com. The Mathnasium is located at 2500 E. 6th Ave. at Columbine Street. Call 303.333.MATH.

The Bald Eagles Have Arrived at the Refuge

By Sherry James, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The arrival of our gorgeous national symbol, the American bald eagle, is a sure sign that winter has settled in at Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. Bald eagles migrate to the Refuge when the weather north of Colorado turns colder, freezing the water and making it difficult for the eagles to catch fish and find food.

As part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s commitment to biomonitoring at the Refuge, biologists conduct regular roost counts. As of the beginning of January, the roost count had reached just over 40 eagles, and several more are expected.

Refuge visitors can view these magnificent birds by joining Refuge Rangers on the Wild Rides tour every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 9:30 to 11:30am. Sightings have also been reported along the hiking trails or during other nature programs offered throughout the winter months.

With diets consisting mainly of fish and small mammals, bald eagles enjoy the healthy food supply provided by the lakes and natural prairie habitat of the Refuge. For the past decade, eagles have returned each winter to the large cottonwood trees along the eastern

shore of one of the lakes. Over the past seven winters, a resident pair has fledged eight eaglets at the Refuge.

When adult bald eagles are perched in their roost, their white heads look like small snowballs scattered throughout the trees, making it easy to spot them. They get their name from the English word “balde,” meaning

Photo by Rich Keen, DPRA



white. In the eagle’s juvenile stage, their beaks, feet and eyes are dark and their feathers are mottled, which makes them look more like golden eagles. Their features change at 5 years of age when they get their characteristic white head and tail feathers, and their beaks, feet and eyes turn a bright yellow.

Bald eagles can be seen at the Refuge through early March, so don’t let the winter weather keep you inside.

Bundle up, enjoy the great outdoors and catch a glimpse of our wintering raptors as they soar in the skies on their daylight hunts.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service offers nature programs about these cold-weather stars of the Refuge, and you can find a complete program listing by calling the Visitor Center at 303.289.0930, online at <http://fws.gov/rockymountainarsenal>, or at our Facebook page www.facebook.com/RMANationalWildlifeRefuge.



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February 2011

Where Do Dental Cavities Really Come From?

By Dr. Alfayez Ibrahim

If you ask most people what they can do to prevent cavities, the standard answer would be to lay off the sugary snacks and keep their teeth clean. While this may be true, it doesn't strike at the real heart of the problem. People who have great diets and pristine oral hygiene still develop cavities. Ever wonder why?

To answer this question, we first need to know a little more about the disease process itself. Yes: disease. Dental caries ("caries" is the actual disease—a "cavity" is the end result) is actually an infectious disease. In fact, caries is five times more common in children than asthma! The process starts when the teeth first appear in the mouth and bacteria colonize the newly exposed tooth surfaces. Most of these bacteria are benign, but a species called *Streptococcus mutans* can also find its way into the mouth. Unfortunately, *S. mutans* is the bug responsible for dental caries. These bacteria stick to the teeth, feeding off starches and sugars and producing acid. The acid weakens the teeth, and eventually holes form that we call cavities.

The best way to prevent dental caries is to stop *S. mutans* from ever taking hold in the mouth. It is important that parents do not share cups, utensils or any other objects with their children, as the bacteria are usually transferred through saliva. The longer you can avoid the bad bacteria, the better the odds are that benign competing bacteria can take hold, essentially "crowding out" the bad ones. It is also very important for parents themselves to see a dentist regularly, in order to maintain their own oral health and minimize those bad bacteria.

Finally, children should start seeing a dentist by 12 months of age. Early dental visits allow children to acclimate to the dental office so they grow up without dental fear. They also give parents a chance to learn everything they can to allow their children to grow up with healthy smiles.

But what if it's too late and you have already acquired *S. mutans*? Traditionally, a three-pronged attack has been used to prevent cavities: diet, hygiene and fluoride. Diet

modification removes the fuel upon which the bacteria feed. Brushing and flossing help mechanically remove the large bacterial colonies (dental plaque). Fluoride use helps to strengthen the teeth, replacing minerals that have been dissolved by bacterial acid attacks. However, none of this permanently removes the bacteria on a microscopic level, which is why some people with great diets and good hygiene still get cavities.

So, what to do? Recently, the trend has headed toward stopping the caries process on the microscopic level. Saliva tests can be used to determine if the pH level in the mouth helps neutralize the cavity-causing acids. Similarly, flow tests can determine saliva levels in the mouth—dentists have long known that patients with less saliva (due to medications or underlying medical conditions) tend to get lots of cavities.

Perhaps the most exciting development in the small-scale battle against *S. mutans* is xylitol. Xylitol is a naturally occurring sugar that is found in many berries, mushrooms and other fruits and vegetables. Studies have shown that xylitol can actually disable the acid-producing properties of *S. mutans*, or eliminate it from the mouth entirely! There is a catch, though: xylitol needs to be consumed every day at a threshold dose (5–8 grams, depending on whom you ask) for several months to really win the war. The good news is that it is perfectly safe to use and can be found in many products, including gums, mints, rinses, toothpastes, and even sugar crystals that can be used instead of sucrose. Xylitol products can be found in health food stores as well as in many dental offices.

As the science behind oral health continues to evolve, there will no doubt be more advanced methods of preventing dental caries. For now, though, having a good understanding of the actual process can help keep those cavities at bay.

Dr. Alfayaz Ibrahim is a board-certified pediatric dentist and the owner of Stapleton Children's Dentistry. He can be contacted at stapletonkids.com or by calling 303.399.KIDS (5437).

Getting Organized for Taxes

By Deanna Gusman

Every family is unique with specific needs, but there are some basics that most people can put in place to be more organized when tax season rolls around.

Assess the Situation

Are you usually on time filing your taxes?

Are you often missing documents you can't locate?

Do you have a system for holding papers as they trickle in during the year?

1. Pull out a notepad and make a list of what's working and what's not. Jot down the items you know you need to have every year; for example, everyone's social security numbers, receipts for charitable donations, W-2s—the obvious stuff.

2. Decide if you'll be doing the taxes or choosing an accountant, tax service or online software program. Call or research new tax laws that might affect your return. Check with your financial advisor; there are always new changes and/or laws that you may not be aware of (and that you might benefit from). Look over last year's tax planner to make sure you're not forgetting anything.

Create Some Systems

1. Create a place to keep the tax documents as they come in over the course of the year. Either add to your existing files or simply designate a large envelope for holding tax-related documents. You can do some of the work now by using an accordion file and choosing tax categories now such as Income, Real Estate, Medical, Childcare, Interest Statements, Charitable Donations and Tax Correspondence, for instance. When March/April rolls around, the task won't be so daunting.

2. Check with your tax advisors or visit the IRS's online record retention guidelines at <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=98513,00.html> on how long to keep records. Most agree that six to seven years back is sufficient barring any unusual circumstances.

3. Create a six-year system. Use a banker's box and six wide-bottom hanging files. Label the hanging files Year's 1–6. Keep last year's documents and returns in Year 1, the previous years in Year 2, etc. When you get your returns from this year's filings, move all of the files back one file (you will knock the files in Year 6 out of the box), place the records from the latest returns in the first file (Year 1) and then shred the last set (Year 6). With this method you create a safe home for your important documents that follows the retention recommendations and you don't have to re-label each year.

4. If you're someone who feels more comfortable keeping records past the recommended limits or have unusual financial circumstances, investing in both a scanner and a shredder can help keep paper clutter at bay.

Remember that being organized with your taxes is an ongoing yearlong process. Putting these systems in place now can save you time, money and stress and you may get your tax refund a lot earlier.

Deanna Gusman can be reached at deannagusman@yahoo.com. Her business is HOME, Simplified LLC, Organizing with Deanna.

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There’s still a way to reduce your 2011 taxes.

By Jessika Aerni

Even if your retirement seems well into the future, saving money for your retirement can offer some instant gratification. By opening an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) before April 18, 2011, you may be able to take advantage of some tax benefits on your 2010 tax return.

If you are not an active participant in an employer-sponsored retirement plan, contributions to a traditional IRA may be deductible from your income, lowering the federal income tax for which you are responsible. Federal income tax on your IRA will be deferred until you begin taking withdrawals, usually when you have retired and may be in a lower tax bracket. You must begin taking minimum annual withdrawals from your traditional IRA by April 1 of the year after the year you reach age 70 ½. Taxable withdrawals will be subject to ordinary income tax rates.

For active participants in a retirement plan, contributions are reduced (and then phased out) for a married couple with income over \$89,000 or an individual with income over \$56,000.

For the 2011 tax year, individuals can make annual contributions to a traditional IRA of up to \$5,000 or 100% of earned income, whichever is less. Married couples filing jointly can contribute up to \$10,000 (\$5,000 per IRA) provided either spouse has earned income of at least that amount. As an added benefit, individuals age 50 or older are eligible to take advantage of a catch-up provision and contribute an additional \$1,000 to an IRA. (Contributions can also be made to a Roth IRA. You won’t get the federal tax deduction now, but qualified withdrawals can be made free of federal income tax during your retirement years.)

Even an IRA that starts with a minimal initial amount, with additional contributions on a monthly basis or when finances allow, grows on a tax-deferred basis and has the potential to contribute to a more comfortable retirement. The sooner you begin, the more time you have to take advantage of the benefits an IRA provides.

Jessika Aerni is a State Farm Agent who has an office in Quebec Square. She can be reached at 303-377-5433 or jessika.aerni.sq98@statefarm.com.

New Volunteer Opportunities at Sand Creek Greenway

By Caroline Fry

The Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership is seeking volunteers to participate in two new outreach programs that kick off this spring.

Our Partners Team seeks 25–40 families who live in neighborhoods along the Greenway to volunteer for a few hours once a month, removing invasive species, picking up trash, planting native trees and shrubs, removing graffiti and repairing the trail. The program offers an opportunity for the Neighborhood Partners to meet new people in their community while giving back to their neighborhood. We hope to provide special prizes to the families, which may include T-shirts, gift certificates to local restaurants and grocery stores, or other special perks. We will also hold an annual end-of-season thank-you picnic on the Greenway to celebrate our volunteers’ hard work.

The Sand Creek Regional Greenway’s Next Generation Partners Team seeks 50–100 middle- and high-school-aged students who live or go to school near the Greenway to learn about and volunteer on the Greenway. Participating schools and after-school programs will commit to bringing students to the Greenway once a month for several months out of the year. Our hope is that the program will combine volunteer participation, environmental education and outdoor recreation into a two- to three-hour session. We hope to provide T-shirts, hats, water bottles, or possibly gift certificates to children as rewards for their volunteer work.

The Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership is a nonprofit organization responsible for managing the development, operation and use of the nearly 14-mile public greenway along Sand Creek. The Greenway links the South Platte River Greenway in Commerce City to the High Line Canal Trail in Aurora, completing a 50-mile loop of off-street urban trails around Denver. The Greenway was named one of the Top Ten Fitness Trails in the United States by the American Hiking Society in the spring of 2005, and is a popular destination for runners, bicyclists, equestrians and nature lovers.

Caroline Fry is the Sand Creek Greenway’s volunteer outreach coordinator. For more information about volunteer opportunities or to register for the Neighborhood Partners or Next Generation Partners teams, she can be reached at cfry@sandcreekgreenway.org or 303.468.3262.

Letters to the Editor

The Front Porch received the following letter on traffic flow in Stapleton and solicited a response to it from Forest City to provide readers with both perspectives in the February issue.

Creating a Safer and More Sustainable Stapleton

By Wesley Marshall, PhD, PE, assistant professor of civil engineering at the University of Colorado Denver, co-director of the Active Communities /Transportation (ACT) Research Group, and a Stapleton resident

The heartbreaking crash at the intersection of Central Park Boulevard and 29th Ave. has many people worried about pedestrian safety, and with good reason. However, focusing on the nontraditional design of one intersection overlooks what should really be our prime concern in keeping people safe: the mindset that cars need to be able to get through Stapleton at high speeds. A pedestrian hit by a car traveling 20 mph has a 5% chance of resulting in a fatality, 45% at 30 mph, and 85% at just 40 mph. While Central Park Boulevard and MLK stipulate 30 and 35 mph respectively, the speed studies conducted by the Stapleton MCA that are available on www.stapletoncommunity.com attest to cars going as fast as 60 mph. A pedestrian hit at that speed has almost no chance of survival.

One reason for this recent Stapleton tragedy—beyond the issue of an overly careless driver—is the fact that Central Park Blvd. and MLK are inherently designed for high speeds. Moreover, we have a number of problematic roads such as Syracuse Street, 35th Avenue, Fulton Street, and 26th Ave in Eastbridge. According to the speed studies, it would not be uncommon to find cars going faster than 50 mph on those roads each and every day. And unless the Denver police have the financial (continued on p.24)

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SUN Transportation Forum

By Andrew Schurjer, SUN board vice president

On Tuesday, January 25th, SUN held it's most recent Transportation Forum at Westerly Creek Elementary School. Councilman Michael Hancock was on hand for the meeting to hear concerns. Brian Mitchell from Denver Traffic and Brian Conover from Denver Police Department answered questions and gave updates on ongoing projects and investigations.

Central Park Blvd and 29th Ave

The intersection at Central Park Blvd and 29th Ave was one of the most discussed issues of the evening. Since the tragic hit and run this past December, the 30-inch stop signs located at the intersection have been replaced with 36-inch signs, stop ahead warning signs have been installed and all new signage has better reflectivity than those it replaced. Mitchell said he understood that these were small steps in a much larger project that they hope will make the intersection a much safer place.

The traffic on Central Park has doubled over the past 5 years to 13,000 cars a day. In order to deal with this increased flow plans are in place to rebuild the intersection with a traffic signal. This would involve removing the center square and installing traffic lights. Denver Traffic hopes to have this project completed by November prior to the opening of the interchange to Northfield in late 2011/2012. Mitchell did acknowledge that this was an aggressive schedule as many things had to fall into place in order for it to be completed on that time-frame.

Denver Police Department updated the group with what information they have so far in the hit and run investigation. Currently they do have a vehicle in custody from which they were able to retrieve evidence. Unfortunately, it is a long process and it could be several months before it is positively identified as the truck that was involved in the accident. One item of note, all eyewitnesses reported that the truck did stop at the stop sign and then proceeded through the intersection, which was poorly lit due to a burned out streetlight.

Other Items

With the arrival of the Central Park Recreation Center, a traffic signal warrant study will take place to determine whether there is a need for a stop light at the entrance to the rec center.

A School Safety Zone is planned for the stretch of Central Park near Bill Roberts. This will include flashing lights, signage and a speed limit of 25 mph. The hope is to have this done by the start of next school year.

There have been several complaints of burned out streetlights. Xcel Energy is responsible for these. They can be reached directly at 1-800-895-4999 to report outages.

For complete minutes of the Transportation Forum visit SUN's website at StapletonUnitedNeighbors.org or contact Melissa Thompson, the Transportation Committee Chair at MelissakayThompson@msn.com

Letters to the editor

(continued from p. 23) resources to continuously enforce speed limits on all of these roads, these trends will undoubtedly continue. In reality, police enforcement can only do so much, which is why the best streets include features intended to self-regulate speeds.

So how do we fix this? To begin with, extending the traditional urban street grid is exactly what we should continue to strive for throughout Stapleton. However, a traffic signal at Central Park Boulevard and 29th Ave does not serve this objective at all; rather, a signal would promote even higher vehicle speeds, transform these streets into barriers in themselves, and result in less safe conditions for everyone. On the other hand, there are many ways to successfully build a complete street network without falling into the traps of conventional traffic engineering. For instance, one potential solution is called the 'road diet.' Road diets take relatively major roads, like Central Park Boulevard, and reduce them to one lane in each direction while adding design elements that keep vehicle speeds in check. One of the best things about the road diet concept is that these smaller roads, with appropriate turning lanes, are able to move just as much traffic as conventional roads with 2-lanes in each direction. And in one of my own recently published research papers specifically on how street network design affects road safety, street networks with 4-lane major roads as compared to those with 2-lanes had 65% more total crashes, 34% more severe injuries, and 34% more fatalities.

Another potential remedy could involve roundabouts at intersections such as Central Park Boulevard and MLK. The smaller modern roundabouts have also proven to be much safer—especially in terms of severe injuries and fatalities—than conventional signalized intersections and are actually more efficient in terms of moving cars. If designed well, a roundabout would also reduce vehicle speeds prior to cars reaching intersections such as the one at Central Park Boulevard and 29th Avenue.

These ideas do not represent an exhaustive list of potential solutions but rather a sample of the type of ideas we should be clamoring for before it is too late. The bigger point is that the way we go about trying to resolve these issues will be a defining moment for the future of Stapleton. Taking the more difficult path today would acknowledge that we, as a community, desire a complete and well-integrated street network that is convenient, safe, and comfortable for all road users. If we can focus on the set of community goals set forth in the original Stapleton vision rather than helping cars get through Stapleton at 50+ mph, we will also help rid ourselves of unsafe streets that are quickly becoming barriers in our community and truly curb the chances of another tragedy—not just at a single intersection—but throughout Stapleton.

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Traffic
By Tom Gleason, Vice President of Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

If one were to ask a resident of almost any neighborhood in the Metropolitan Denver area to list his or her top concerns, more than likely one of those issues would be "traffic," which is certainly a concern of Stapleton residents as well in spite of the fact that special efforts have been made to make Stapleton a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood with a range of alternative transportation options .

Extended urban street grid
When the citizens of Aurora, Denver and Commerce City created the Stapleton Development Plan (commonly referred to as "The Green Book"), they envisioned Stapleton would become not a "gated community" typical of some suburban developments, but an extension of the traditional urban neighborhoods adjacent to it. One of the means of achieving that goal was to extend the street grid from the surrounding neighborhoods on to the former airport property. That street grid, a combination of neighborhood streets (with on-street parking and other measures designed to "calm" traffic), "collector" streets and major arterials, is designed to move traffic safely and efficiently within and across our neighborhood at appropriate speeds established by the City and County of Denver to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike.

Ticketing Speeders
The Denver Police Department has been responsive to requests to ticket motorists

speeding in our neighborhoods, whether they are Stapleton residents or visitors. Speed limits are posted at 20 mph in school zones, 25 mph for neighborhood and connector streets (including 29th Avenue Parkway and 26th Avenue), and either 30 mph (Central Park Boulevard) or 35 mph (Martin Luther King Blvd) for arterials. Those arterials may also have lower speed limits, such as where MLK is reduced to 30 mph in the area of the planned Eastbridge Town Center. And, when the new Swigert McCauliffe International School opens several blocks west of 35th and Central Park Boulevard later this year, it is likely the Central Park Boulevard arterial will have the flashing lights and a lower speed limit adjacent to that intersection typically utilized throughout the City in other school zones. 35th and Central Park Boulevard is already a fully signalized intersection with a pedestrian-activated crossing signal.

Public Transit
With the extension of the street grid from the urban neighborhoods adjacent to Stapleton, our neighborhood also enjoys local and regional bus service, links to on-street bicycle trails and pedestrian connections to a network of sidewalks. Another connection will arrive at Stapleton no later than January 2016 with the completion of the FasTracks rail service to Downtown and DIA. That rail service will be part of a new multi-modal transit center on Smith Road, which is very much in the "heart of Stapleton" given that our community extends two miles to the north and south of Interstate 70.

Mitzvah Mania
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Scam Warning & Safety Precautions

By DPD Technician Reyes Trujillo

Recently we have experienced several seniors in the area who have fallen victim to a confidence trick (an attempt to defraud a person by gaining their confidence). Seemingly innocent people say they are new to Denver, lost and in need of help. The con artists offer money in return for help cashing checks or retrieving money owed to them. Often the con person will ask the victim to give them a ride to a place they will meet with another person. They behave in a very convincing way and the unsuspecting victim often doesn't realize that they are at the mercy of a con person when they let them into their car or home.

NEVER, allow people that you do not know into your car, home or other place not intended for public access, unless you know and trust them.

If you are approached by someone needing direction, do not engage them but rather offer to call police, who will give them help or guidance as needed.

Keep the minimum amount of cash or credit cards on your person when you are out and keep your social security cards and other important documents in a secure place when not using them to prevent identity fraud.

If you are contacted in a public place and asked to help by a suspected con artist, please report this to police right away and be prepared to give a description.

Technician Reyes Trujillo is the District Two Community Resource Office. He can be reached at 720-913-1094.

Police Ask Citizens To Be Vigilant and Not Walk Alone at Night

By DPD Technician A.L. Esten

Following a January robbery near 28th and Elmira in Stapleton, we want to remind people of precautions they should be taking.

In the January 13 robbery, the victim was walking home when a white sedan with a loud muffler pulled up and told her to get into the vehicle. The victim replied "no" and the car drove off. The victim then noticed, as she continued walking, that the driver, a white male in his 20's, was approaching her on foot. The victim attempted to get away but was caught by the suspect, who threw her down and took her purse. The suspect then fled.

We want to make sure that residents are keeping an eye out to help their neighbors and remember that if it is dark out, you should not walk alone. If you have any further information regarding this incident please contact Technician A.L. Esten 01055, District Two Community Resource Officer, 3921 Holly St., 720-913-1095.



Upstairs, Khabir (kuh-bir) and Ceri (keri) relax in the former bunkroom of the firehouse which the couple have turned into their living/bedroom area. The white circular railings surround the openings where the firemen used to slide down poles to get to the trucks quickly.

Old Firehouse Finds New Life in Art

By Nancy Burkhardt

The old Fire Station No. 26, located at 7045 E. 38th Ave., once led an active life, but it fell into idleness when the new Station No. 26 was opened on Martin Luther King Parkway. Today, the old Station No. 26 has a new life filled with creativity and activity under the ownership and direction of artists Ceri Jones Salahadyn and Khabir Salahadyn.

The Salahadyns create artworks from the size of table ornaments to huge outdoor obelisks. They work in everything from fabrics to different metals. "We needed somewhere like the firehouse because of the variety of materials we work with," Ceri explained. "We use a lot of equipment and tools. And, we needed the right ventilation. We needed

something industrial, but also livable. We were looking for a large space so that we can work on large projects.

"The firehouse served the community for over 50 years," she said. "We are into repurposing the building. Not only is it an industrial space where we can make industrial-sized items, but we can also open it up to the public. The building has allowed us to make industrial applications as well as have a space for clients. The space allows the firehouse to be an inspiration while we're talking to clients."



The tower for practicing rescues is visible at the back of old firehouse. The tornado siren on top of the building is still in use and the basement was built as a tornado shelter.

The firehouse required some work. The Salahadyns started working on the building in September of 2009, but it took a year to get a live/work occupancy permit. A sprinkler system was required to be installed throughout the building, including inside the numerous closets where the firemen once kept their gear.



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Take a video tour of the old firehouse at www.FrontPorchStapleton.com

Ceri Jones and her husband Khabir Salahadyn stand in the garage of the old Park Hill Fire Station that they have turned into a studio they call The Collaboratory. The high ceilings and

huge open space are perfect for the large custom architectural art they produce. Some of their boutique items are visible on the table in the foreground.

"We've done nothing structural to the firehouse," Ceri said. "We had a number of code requirements for us to be able to have this rezoned as live/work space. We had the sprinkler system put in, put up new doors and drywall and made access changes. And, we brought the electricity and plumbing up to code. But, we didn't want to get a firehouse and then change it. We wanted to live in a firehouse."

The firehouse now houses a cooperative art studio known as The Collaboratory. Khabir is a journeyman metalworker. He is a certified structural welder and mechanical inspector. He says he has been working in art since he was born. Ceri has a corporate background in business management and moved here from the United Kingdom. She came to the United States on an international assignment as CEO of a business here and stayed.

Her area of expertise is fabric, which she uses with metals in her artworks.

"We like to call it working art," Ceri explained. "It's a collaborative effort. We have quite a lot of acquaintances who come here to get their ideas out. Everybody lends ideas to one piece." The Collaboratory offers a boutique with smaller pieces of art created by Ceri and Khabir. But they also meet with clients to produce custom pieces such as staircases, railings, pieces of furniture or large

outdoor objects.

Industrial design students from Metropolitan State College spend one day a week for four semesters at The Collaboratory as apprentices under Khabir's guidance. "They'll usually get involved with projects we're working on at the time or we'll design projects that will exercise areas they are

looking for," Ceri said.

The Collaboratory also offers classes to the public in working with metal sculpture, either in small groups or one-on-one. "We cover basic fundamentals first," Khabir explained. "We help people who want to take structural exams, too."

The "Origin" art show is open at The Collaboratory through March 25 on Thursdays from 3 to 8pm, Fridays from 5 to 9pm, and by appointment. During these times, the boutique will offer artwork that ranges from \$75 to \$8,000, including jewelry as well as larger items. "The great thing about the show is that people will see the product and be in the space where we dreamed those products and made them," Ceri said.

To see samples of Ceri and Khabir's work and to learn more about The Collaboratory, go to www.thecollaboratory.com or email the Salahadyns at contacts@thecollaboratory.com. The Collaboratory can be reached at 303.994.0649.



Ceri shows off what she calls "every woman's dream" — 25 closets and, as a bonus, four sinks. The individual firemen's name tags are still posted above the closets, which have a ventilation system since smoky uniforms were stored inside.



Ceri and Khabir collaborate at the drawing board. They carry out the entire design and build process which means they can keep their projects true to their original design.



Under art made "just for fun" with fabric and the top of an old table are examples of commissioned pieces including, from left to right, a band shell, a staircase in a climbing gym and gates for a book store.

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www.denverjds.org

Denver Montclair International
School
206 Red Cross Way
Denver, CO 80230
303-340-3647
www.dmschool.com

Denver Pharmacy School, LLC
855 Lawrence St
Denver, CO 80209
303-750-3095
www.herddenver.com

Denver Waldorf School
940 Filmore St
Denver, CO 80206
303-777-0531
www.denverwaldorf.org

Foothills Academy
4725 Miller St
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033
303-431-0920
www.foothills-academy.org

Monarch Montessori of Denver
11200 E 45th Ave
Denver, CO 80239
303-565-4165
www.monarchm.com

The Montessori Academy of
Colorado
2500 Curtis St
Denver, CO 80205
303-623-2609 ext. 114
www.montessoriacademyofcol-
orado.org

Montessori Children's House
of Denver
1467 Birch Street
Denver, CO 80220
303-322-8324
www.mchdenver.org

St. Elizabeth's School
3605 Martin Luther King Blvd
Denver, CO 80205
303-322-4209
www.stelizabethsdenver.org

St.Anne's Episcopal School
2701 S York St
Denver, CO 80210
303-756-9481
www.st-annes.org

Stanley British Primary School
350 Quebec St
Denver, CO 80230
303-360-0803
www.stanleybps.org