

Front Porch

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

DENVER, COLORADO

STAPLETON

APRIL 2013

DPS Board's Newest Member Starts Work



Judge Edward Bronfin congratulates Stapleton resident Landri Taylor after being sworn in to fill the District 4 vacancy on the Board of Education for Denver Public Schools. Taylor's wife Gloria and

daughter Kristol, along with board members, share a round of applause. Visible behind Gloria (left to right) are board members Jeanne Kaplan, Happy Haynes and Mary Seawell.

Longtime Denver resident Landri Taylor selected to fill vacant board seat

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

On Landri Taylor's desk sits a quote Walt Disney made while standing on the barren plot that would become Disneyland. When asked by reporters why he was will-

ing to take on such a big dream, Disney replied, "It's kind of fun to do the impossible." Taylor says he lives by those words, willingly taking on the impossible because (that is) what excites you, gets you up in the morning." Taylor has a seemingly impossible (or at least very challenging) task ahead of him as the new Denver Public Schools board member in the position vacated by Nate Easley—he says his goal is to eliminate DPS's

achievement gap.

Taylor's selection to the DPS Board of Education came with some dissension when Taylor, seen as the front runner during the selection process, was ultimately chosen by Board President Mary Sewall after the board failed to reach a majority in the decision. Taylor isn't letting issues from the selection process take his focus away from the tasks at (continued on page 30)



Event at Northfield Focuses on Child Abuse Prevention

In a ceremony on March 18 at the Shops at Northfield, Mayor Hancock recognizes the programs and volunteers who work with abused and neglected children. Story on page 31.

Why Is School Finance Reform So Critical Now?

Colorado's current funding for education is not adequate, not equitable and not sustainable. Find out why and what State Senator Michael Johnston (right) is proposing to do about it. Story on page 24.

Right: State Senator Michael Johnston presents his School Finance Reform bill before the Senate Education Committee. Beside him is his co-sponsor Rollie Heath.



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

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Like us at Front Porch Newspaper for updates on local news and events.



A brightly colored bird house awaits a family when the weather warms up.

CALENDAR

Events listed below are FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC or support nonprofits.
(Additional events are listed on pages 16-20. Recurring events are listed on page 18.)

APRIL

Monday, April 1
Nonresident Swim Lesson Registration Opens 12pm. MCA Community Room*
signup@stapletoncommunity.com

Tuesday, April 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30
Yoga at the MCA. 5:45–6:45pm. MCA Community Room* events@stapletoncommunity.com

Saturday, April 6
The Great Denver Cleanup, 9am–2pm. Fred Thomas Park, (26th & Quebec St.) and East High School (16th & Josephine St.). Drop off unwanted items. For accepted items call 3-1-1 or visit www.denvergov.org/kdb

Saturday, April 6
Denver Art Museum—SCFD Free Day
720-865-5000 www.denverartmuseum.org

Saturday, April 6
Museum of Contemporary Art Denver
With new art-making space for children, “The Bubble Garden” 1¢ admission on first Saturdays
1485 Delgany St., MCADenver.org

Thursday, April 11
Active Minds Seminar “The Evolution of Libya” 7–8pm. MCA Community Room*
events@stapletoncommunity.com

Saturday, April 13
SNL Kids' Night Out. 6–9pm. Central Park Rec Center* events@stapletoncommunity.com

Tuesday, April 16
DPS Community Outreach meeting about two new middle schools for Stapleton/Park Hill students. Refreshments-5:30pm. Meeting 6–8pm. Central Park Rec Center (see page 4)

APRIL

Wednesday, April 17
WOW: Wine on Wednesday, 6:30–8:30pm. MCA Community Room*
events@stapletoncommunity.com

Saturday, April 20
Race for Open Space—5K Walk/Run, 9am; Earth Day Fest at Bluff Lake, co-sponsored by Sand Creek Greenway, 10am-2pm, \$5 donation
See page 27 for registration info

Sunday, April 21 (Earth Day)
Denver Museum of Nature and Science
SCFD Free Day 303-322-7009 www.dmn.org

Monday, April 22
SUN/MCA collaboration Earth night movie and dinner, 6-8:30pm. “Genetic Roulette- The Gamble of our Lives”. Movie is free. Food will be for sale for \$8-10/food by the Garden in Park Hill. Door Prizes. MCA Community Room*

Monday, April 22
Denver Botanic Gardens - SCFD Free Day
720-865-3500 www.botanicgardens.org

Thursday, April 25
Active Minds Seminar “The Emancipation Proclamation” 7–8pm. MCA Community Room* events@stapletoncommunity.com

*More information at Events@stapletoncommunity.com
Stapleton MCA Community Room, 2823 Roslyn St.
Central Park Rec Center, 9651 MLK Jr. Blvd.
The Green, E. 29th Ave. and Roslyn St.

*The Front Porch welcomes submissions of upcoming local events and story ideas (see information on p.17).
Deadline is the 15th for the next issue.*



APRIL

Summer Employment Opportunities
The MCA is currently looking to fill several seasonal positions at the pools: lifeguards, swim team and dive coaches, head guards, pool managers, front desk staff, front desk managers and swim lesson instructors. Applications are available online at www.stapletoncommunity.com under “About Us” and at the MCA office. For more information or to submit an application, email jobs@stapletoncommunity.com.

Pool Party Reservations
Schedule your next party at the pool! Reservations will open on April 1 to Stapleton residents. The MCA offers a variety of packages, including party pads and after-hour reservations. Party pads accommodate up to 20 guests and include deck space, shade and seating for 20 people and are available during open swim hours. After-hour reservations accommodate up to 200 guests and feature exclusive use of the facility, automatic deck/pool lights and charcoal barbecues. The MCA will also staff all after-hour reservations with certified lifeguards. Payment is due in full at the time of the reservation. After-hour reservations are available from June 1–Aug. 3. To make a reservation, access your ActiveNet account at www.stapletoncommunity.com.

WOW: Wine on Wednesday
Wednesday, April 17
Experience and explore the exciting world of wine! Wine on Wednesday (WOW) is an educational experience, which focuses on pairing artisanal cheeses to wines from specific regions. All wine samples will be provided by the Wine Cellars at Stapleton. Artisanal cheese plates will be provided by Whole Foods Market–Cherry Creek. Tickets are \$10 each; space is limited! The next WOW event will be held from 6:30–8:30pm on April 17 in the MCA Community Room. To register, visit www.stapletoncommunity.com. All patrons must be 21 years of age or older to participate in this event.

Kids' Night Out
Kids' Night Out will be held from 6–9pm at the Central Park Recreation Center on Sat., April 13. Due to the nature of the event and safety of our participants, all participants must be 7–12 years old on the day of the event. Registration is now open and pre-registration is only \$10 per child (cash and credit cards accepted). Enrollment will be capped at 200 participants per event. Register your child today at www.stapletoncommunity.com. Pre-registration will end at 4pm on Thurs., April 11. Participants interested in registering for the event after the pre-registration date

must visit the Central Park Rec to sign up (if space is available; cash only).

Active Minds
The Evolution of Libya
Gaining its independence in the aftermath of World War II, Libya struggled for 42 years under the totalitarian regime of Muammar Qaddafi. Vast oil reserves created enormous wealth, much of which Qaddafi spent on paramilitary and terrorist groups throughout the world. Declared a “state supporter of terrorism” at one point by the U.S., Libya is now at a pivotal moment. The civil war that resulted in Qaddafi’s death has positioned the country to write a new chapter in its history. Join Active Minds as we review the story of Libya and where it may head from here. This event will be held in the MCA Community Rm. (2823 Roslyn St.) from 7–8pm on Thurs., April 11.
The Emancipation Proclamation
The Emancipation Proclamation, which took effect 150 years ago, changed the course of the U.S. while it was embroiled in the Civil War. In it, Pres. Abraham Lincoln exercised his constitutional authority as commander in chief of the armed forces to proclaim all slaves in Confederate territory to be forever free. Join Active Minds as we explore what this historic proclamation did and did not do. We will examine its impact, both immediate and longer term, from the perspective of slaves, slave owners, Northerners, Southerners, and the country as a whole. This program, sponsored by Juniper Village at Aurora, will be held in the MCA Community Rm. from 7–8pm on Thurs., April 25.
Active Minds events are free to attend and open to everyone. For more, visit www.activeminds.com.

Join us on Facebook
Stay up-to-date with community events, pools and programming with the NEW Facebook page. All alerts and notifications will be posted on the Stapleton MCA Facebook page. Make sure you “like” our page to receive the latest information!

Dani Mead
Communications Coordinator

Sponsored by Stapleton MCA

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Community Survey on Marijuana Dispensaries in Denver

Stapleton responses are in green.
Park Hill responses are in blue.
Contact your councilperson with your response.

City Council representatives Chris Herndon and Mary Beth Susman held community meetings to get feedback from their constituents before City Council votes on recreational marijuana regulations in Denver.

1. There are a little over 200 licensed medical marijuana stores in Denver. Do you think that number is...

Too many	62%	88%
Too few	0%	0%
Just about right	18%	6%
No opinion	21%	6%
Total responses	34	17



2. Amendment 64 allows Denver to decide whether or not to allow stores to sell marijuana to any adult 21 or older. Do you believe Denver should allow retail marijuana businesses?

Yes	43%	36%
No	51%	63%
No opinion	6%	0%
Total responses	35	16

3. Do you think Denver should allow other marijuana businesses in Denver, e.g. cultivation, production, testing labs, wholesale?

Yes	53%	24%
No	38%	47%
No opinion	9%	29%
Total responses	34	17

4. Do you think it should be required that marijuana business owners be Colorado residents? (multiple choice)

Yes	71%	94%
No	14%	6%
No opinion	14%	0%
Total responses	35	17

5. Do you think it should be required that customers of marijuana businesses be Colorado residents?

Yes	40%	35%
No	54%	53%
No opinion	6%	12%
Total responses	35	17

Survey conducted by Bill Fulton, Civic Canopy

6. Do you think it should be required that customers of marijuana businesses be Denver residents?

Yes	36%	(no results from Park Hill)
No	61%	
No opinion	3%	
Total responses	33	

7. If an existing medical marijuana business seeks to convert to a retail/recreational store, they should:

Convert quickly and easily	40%	24%
Be treated as a new business	60%	76%
Total responses	35	17

8. Would you mind if a retail/recreational marijuana business located in your neighborhood?

Yes	69%	72%
No	26%	17%
No opinion	6%	11%
Total responses	35	18

9. Would you mind if a marijuana business other than retail—e.g. cultivation, manufacturing, wholesale—located in your neighborhood?

Yes	58%	76%
No	39%	12%
No opinion	3%	72%
Total responses	36	17

10. If Denver decides to license and approve new marijuana businesses under Amendment 64, do you believe a public hearing should be required prior to the issuance of each license to assess the needs and desires of the neighborhood for the following:

Marijuana retail stores	8%	11%
Marijuana cultivation facilities	0%	6%
Marijuana product mfg. facilities	0%	0%
All marijuana businesses	72%	83%
No marijuana businesses	7%	0%
Total responses	36	18

Note: Questions allowed multiple answers. Percentages are rounded.
Councilperson emails: christopher.herndon@denvergov.org, marybeth.susman@denvergov.org

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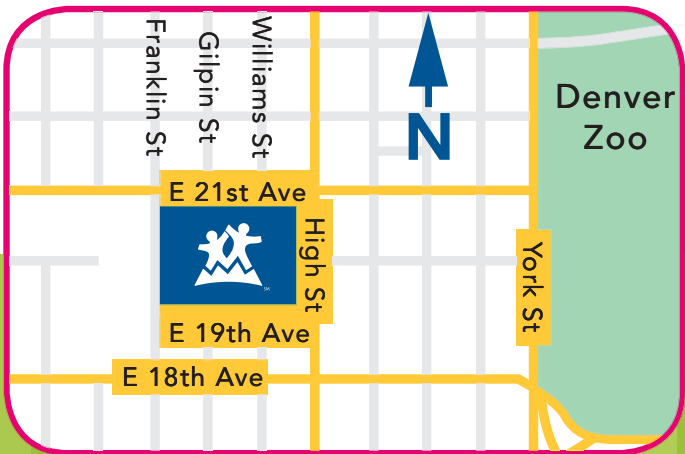


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Guide to Our Advertisers

Auto	Amina Auto Repair & Services	26	More Medical Doctors	Exempla Physician Network	32	
	Autowash @ Stapleton (Autowash, LLLP)	30		Little Women Pediatric & Adolescent Gynecology	27	
	DART Auto	28		Med-Fit, PLLC- Weight Loss Specialist	17	
Child Entertainment	Bladium Sports and Fitness Center	3		Mile High Plastic Surgery	18	
	Altogether Outdoors Summer Camps	32		Partners in Women's Health	11	
	Baby Power & Forever Kids / Creative Learning Preschool	14		Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children	3	
Children's Services	Bladium Sports and Fitness Center	4		Sapphire Pediatrics	31	
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	Stapleton Master Community Assoc	2		Happy Dog Daycare	31	
Community Organization	Lowry Family Dentistry	20	Pets	Blue Sky Plumbing & Heating	22	
	Quebec Square Family Dentistry	19		Plumbers	neuroAgility, PC- Attention and Performance Psychology	30
	Stapleton Children's Dentistry	22			Psychologists	Kearns Team
	Stapleton Dental	27	Real Estate			Kim Davis @ Re/Max of Cherry Creek Inc
	Steele Dentistry of Stapleton	15		Kim Kouba, Perry & Co.		18
	Williams Family Dentistry	5		Neir Team-Kentwood City Properties	23	
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	Aurora Fox, The	24		Best Builders	26	
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	Joi of Kosher	7		Quebec Liquors	28	
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	Restor Medical Spa	21		The Logan School	24	
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	Karen B Best, Family Law Attorney and Mediator	30		Rocky Mountain Shutters	10	
	Hillary Lipton, Attorney	22		Front Porch Classified	29	
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	Ascent Family Medicine	28				
	Colorado Institute for Maternal & Fetal Health	25				
	Denver Dermatology	17				
	Exempla Healthcare - St Joseph Hospital	8				

The directory is updated monthly at www.FrontPorchStapleton.com -> Business Directory

KID'S FEST:

Saturday, April 13th, 12-3pm, FREE event



Jumpy Castles • Face Painting

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DPS “Takes a Pulse” on Smiley’s Future



By Carol Roberts

Amidst much doubt and anxiety about having enough seats and having quality schools for the upcoming middle school population in NE Denver, Denver Public Schools (DPS) has analyzed the numbers, suggested new ideas, asked for comments and answered the questions.

They met with approximately 530 community members at three large meetings in February and March, and approximately 120 people in living room conversations and small gatherings. At the last meeting, on March 19 at Hiawatha Davis Rec Center, after the data had been presented, the program explained, and the questions answered, DPS “took the pulse of the community” on the question of moving the McAuliffe IB middle school program to Smiley. The response was overwhelming support for the idea.

Participants then divided into groups to give feedback on what they want to see in middle schools and shared that with the larger group.

School culture, technology math, and specials were mentioned, and diversity was a common theme. One woman said she supports closing the achievement gap, commenting, “It makes me feel bad to see Hispanic and Latino kids, who look like me, are at the bottom.”

At the end of the meeting Superintendent Tom Boasberg announced that DPS staff will, on April 15, will present its recommendation to the Board of Education (BOE) to approve the placement of the McAuliffe International School program in the Smiley building for the 2014-2015 school year. The Board will hear public comment regarding this recommendation on Thursday, April 18. The vote on this recommendation is scheduled for Thursday, May 16, with additional public comments occurring prior to



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Right: William Lee-Ashley presents NE Denver middle school student projections to about 130 people who attended DPS' third community outreach meeting held at Hiawatha Davis rec center on March 19.

Left: After presenting middle school information and answering questions, DPS asked participants to indicate their level of support for moving the McAuliffe IB program to Smiley Middle School by the number of fingers raised. The hand signals showed overwhelming support for the move.

Below left: Cecilia Mandujano, representing a group of parents from Smith Elementary, reads a statement in Spanish, while Jack Mudry, hired by DPS, translates into English.

Below: Devonn Turner, holding daughter Shepsira, 2, asks a question during the meeting.



the vote that evening.

DPS staff is also proposing to the Board a shared middle school boundary for the Greater Park Hill and Stapleton communities. That BOE decision is scheduled for Thursday, June 20. The Board will hold a special public comment meeting regarding this and other city-wide recommendations on Thursday, June 13.

Recommendations for other middle school options in the region (the Swigert McAuliffe building and a new middle school in North Stapleton) will also be voted on during the June 20 Board meeting. These middle schools will also be recommended to be a part of the proposed shared boundary.

To sign up for public comments, members of the public may contact the Board office at 720-423-3210 or email Tiffany_Lambalot@dpsk12.org by 5pm on the day prior to scheduled public comments. Updated information on the Board of Education meeting schedule is available online at www.board-docs.com/co/dpsk12/Board.nsf/Public.

Another community meeting will be held Tuesday, April 16, at Central Park Rec Center to discuss the two new middle schools that will open in 2014—one in the McAuliffe building and one in Northfield. Refreshments will be served at 5:30pm and the meeting will be held from 6-8pm.



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If You Have Never Heard of Scott Sampson, Ask Your Kids

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Don't be surprised if the next time you are at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (DMNS), your kids rush up to a familiar-looking man yelling, "Dr. Scott, Dr. Scott" and start rattling off names of dinosaurs. Kids will recognize Scott Sampson, PhD, from his popular PBS KIDS show, *Dinosaur Train*. Adults may also know his book, *Dinosaur Odyssey: Fossil Threads in the Web of Life*, or his Discovery Channel series *Dinosaur Planet*. Sampson now works at our very own museum with a mission that goes way beyond dinosaurs.

The renowned paleontologist's enthusiasm for his work is contagious. Despite his fame (the show is seen in more than 150 countries and in millions of U.S. households), Sampson is warm, accessible and happy to talk in detail about his vision for the museum and the planet.

In his new position as vice president of research and collections and chief curator, Sampson helps lead the museum forward and thinking big. He is also the chief scientist, working with the staff to help them succeed not only as researchers but to also spread the word about the extensive research being done by the museum. "People don't realize we house over a million objects here with original, scientific research going on," he says.

Sampson sees the museum as having a grand role in the future. "We're at a critical moment in history where we have about a generation to change course culturally and become more sustainable—and I think that natural history museums have a major role to play in where we fit with the natural world," he says. He feels that the DMNS is one of the few museums willing to take on that



role. "This museum is one of the largest natural history museums in the country and is big enough to really make a difference yet small enough to be flexible and rethink what natural history museums really do. I think this museum has the opportunity to literally transform the role of natural history museums in the 21st century."

Despite the fact that his focus on paleontology involves working on animals that have been dead a long time, Sampson sees a direct correlation to current world concerns. "Dinosaurs lived here and co-evolved with plants and animals for millions of years, so by understanding the story of dinosaurs, we're actually learning the story of us, which has relevance to us today."

Part of that relevance is coping with what Sampson feels is the greatest challenge facing humans today—the need to reconnect with the natural world. "That's the crux of the sustainability crisis: the dysfunctional relationship between humans and nature," says Sampson. He feels getting the DMNS involved and helping people connect with the natural world both inside and outside the museum is crucial.

Inside the museum, Sampson wants to help create more interactive opportunities to connect with nature, giving kids opportunities to "experience it firsthand whether it's looking at genes, preparing a fossil, looking at bird feathers...so that if kids have

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Northeast: Havana Nursery (main site)

10450 Smith Rd., just south of I-70 on Havana St.

Dig-your-own mulch, pre-bagged compost, and loader service for mulch and compost into trucks and trailers at this site.

Dig-your-own compost is no longer available.

Compost Prices are \$3.50 per 1.25 cubic ft. bag (9 gal.) or \$30 per cubic yd. (includes tax). Limit of 3 cubic yards of compost per vehicle.

Reminders:

- Please bring your own pitchfork or shovel, and bags or containers for loading mulch.
- Bring a tarp to cover your truck or trailer.
- Due to limited quantities, Denver residents only.
- Commercial vehicles are prohibited from taking or selling the City's mulch or compost.

Dig-Your-Own
FREE Mulch Sites

Southeast: Veterans Park

Iowa St. & Vine St.

Southwest: Bear Creek Park

South of Dartmouth Ave. on Raleigh St.

Northwest: Sloan's Lake Park

Sheridan Blvd. & 17th Ave.

Northeast: Fred Thomas Park

Quebec St. & 26th Ave.



Compost is a nutrient-rich soil amendment made from decomposed organic material that can be:

- mixed into soil to help reduce water and fertilizer needs
- spread thinly over lawns to help grass roots retain moisture

Mulch is ground wood chips that can be used to:

- control weeds
- help soil retain moisture
- protect shallow-rooted plants from weather extremes

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Paleontologist Scott Sampson, the new vice president of research and collections and chief curator at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, is well known to kids for his appearances on the PBS program *Dinosaur Train*.

to it early and are shown the wonder of this place,” Sampson says. Sampson feels a strong responsibility to help communicate a passion for science and nature. He thinks about his 10-year-old daughter and says, “Future generations have the right to be in a world that is just as wondrous as the world we live in today, if not more. And if that’s to happen, we need to change course culturally, here in Colorado and globally. I want to do my part to make that happen.”

an interest in science, we can accommodate that and help fuel it.” Sampson also emphasizes the need to get kids outside, running around, using their imaginations and all of their senses. That’s why it was important to him to close his *Dinosaur Train* episodes by saying “get outside, get into nature and make your own discoveries.” “That’s sort of my tagline for everything I do now,” he says. Sampson can pinpoint exactly when he began to build a bond with nature. At age four his mother took him to a local frog pond. “I waded into the pond and was picking up tadpoles with my hands,” he recalls. “I remember a moment where I felt connected to that place in a way I’d never been connected to anything.” Soon after, he began learning about dinosaurs, recognized them as being part of the natural world and was immediately excited by them. “I am still doing what I loved as a kid,” Sampson says. When asked what he thinks the appeal is with dinosaurs, Sampson lists, with the enthusiasm of his former 4-year-old self: “They are giant, they are bizarre, they are monstrous (actually monsters) and they are dead. You don’t have to worry about them coming out from under the bed!” As a new resident of Colorado (his wife and daughter will join him from their home in California in the summer), Sampson remarks on how fortunate Coloradans are to have a bounty of dinosaur fossils in our own backyards (sometimes, literally). Other parts of the country don’t have such opportunities because they don’t have the geologic activity to bring fossils to the surface. “They can’t drive 20 minutes to see dinosaur tracks the way people in Denver can. I think that having that history so close by is a treasure that often locals might overlook unless they are exposed



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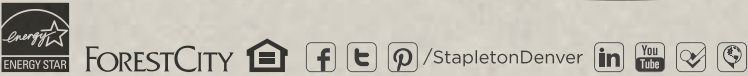
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Pilot Program for
Flashing Yellow
Left-Turn Arrows

Seven new traffic signals with a flashing yellow arrow are being installed in Denver. The flashing yellow arrow is part of a new signal display system that can be customized based on traffic volume to maximize the number of turns allowed in each cycle and help alleviate congestion, especially during rush hour.

Tom Jividen, signal tech for Denver Public Works, is shown working on the control box at Central Park Blvd. and I-70, the first to be installed in Denver.

The new signals have four lenses: solid red arrow, flashing yellow arrow, solid yellow arrow and a solid green arrow. The meanings of the signals are:



- Green arrow—Drivers have right of way to turn left.
- Yellow flashing arrow—Drivers enter intersection but yield to approaching vehicles, pedestrians or bicycles
- Yellow solid arrow—Drivers should not enter the intersection if they can safely stop
- Red Arrow—Drivers are required by law to stop

Free and Low-cost Health Screenings at 9Health Fairs

April 13—Montview Presbyterian Church in Park Hill

April 13—Colorado Convention Center (free parking)

April 19—Downtown YMCA

April 20—Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center

April 21—Community SDA Church, Clayton neighborhood

By Carol Roberts

Since 1980, 9Health Fair has offered free and low-cost health screenings to encourage people to take responsibility for their own health. All locations listed above will be open from 7am to noon. Medical professional screeners are on-site for consultations and 9Health Fair follows up with phone calls and referrals for those whose tests show a need for further evaluation.

Health screenings are offered for ages 18 and over, with no ID required. Many screenings are free. For those unable to pay for the full panel blood draw, assistance can, in many cases, be provided.

In addition to the blood test, many sites offer more than 25 free screenings, including blood pressure, bone health, breast exams, Pap smears, hearing, lung function, mental health, memory, oral exams, vision/eye health, prostate/testicular exams and more. Low-cost screenings (from \$15 to \$40) include PSA for men, blood cell count, a colon cancer screening kit, vitamin D, rheumatoid arthritis, and gluten

sensitivity. Visit 9HealthFair.org to find sites offering these optional screenings.

In the 34 years of 9Health Fair, more than 1.8 million people have been served throughout Colorado. Donations of both money and time are needed to make the health fairs a success, including the work of 19,000 volunteers. To volunteer or contribute, visit www.9HealthFair.org or call 303.698.4455.

Park Hill resident Nancy Wiseman has been a volunteer district coordinator for 9Health Fair for 12 years. "I enjoy my work organizing and coordinating many local fairs," says Wiseman. "Participants are often surprised to learn that setting up the 9Health fairs takes months of time and the skills and knowledge of numerous medical and nonmedical people—



Nancy Wiseman

plus a full-time staff. Year after year, I hear the stories where a 9Health Fair had made a difference in someone's life. For instance, I have met many women who could not afford a life-saving Pap smear if it wasn't for 9Health Fair. But just as important is the long-term benefit of learning about our bodies and practicing good health habits.

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U9-U14 Skills Camp	June 17-20 or July 22-25
Development Camp 3	July 8-11
Boys Elite Preseason Camp	July 22-25
Boys High School Preseason Camp	Aug. 5-8
Goal Keeper Camp	6/13, 6/27, 7/11, 7/25, 8/1
Girls Elite Preseason Camp	July 22-25

To register
visit rapidsyouthsoccer.org/camps
or call 303.399.5858



The Commander

Denver District 2 Police Commander Mike Calo encourages his officers to build relationships with citizens in the community so the officers' presence can be proactive and not always reactive. When officers question suspects, it's not unusual for them to find they already know that person's friends, family and neighbors. Calo, who has particular expertise in gang issues, brings skills and knowledge from his previous assignment as head of the Denver Gang Task Force.

He believes that successful police work and making Denver safer is not only his responsibility but yours and mine as well. His efforts to encourage community involvement include giving citizens access to crime statistics with online crime mapping tools, holding monthly community meetings and offering a Citizens Police Academy.

Commander Calo grew up in Boston and was stationed at Lowry when he was in the Air Force. He has remained in Denver ever since. He decided, as a child, to become a policeman after an officer saved the life of a family member. He is still a dyed-in-the-wool Boston Red Sox fan—and District 2 employees rib him by wearing New York Yankee hats around the station.

Jon Meredith: As a police officer, you could be in a life-threatening situation every day when you go to work. How do you balance that danger with your personal life
Cmdr. Calo: Situations do pop up. I was commander here when Officer Hollis was

shot and killed last summer in City Park. I held Detective Young when he died 8 years ago on Mother's Day, because I was across the street when he got shot. I don't know if you can balance that with your own life. Due to the recent wars there are a number of books out on the effects of PTSD, many of which I have read. The Denver Police Department has a very robust relationship with Dr. John Nicoletti,* who offers excellent counseling for officers. We do our best to help those who are experiencing some kind of stress and we do have ongoing training programs.

JM: The city has been in budget crisis mode for the last few years. How has that affected the department?
Calo: We have experienced some necessary constraints because of the budget. The chief has allowed us to try and be a little bit innovative with our resources. We have looked at the new team policing concept; we have some grants available to put more officers on the streets when we need them. The sergeants and the lieutenants do a great job of complying with the mandated training that is necessary and making sure there are enough officers on the street. Things are getting better, we have new cars coming on and we are hiring for a new academy class next month, the first in four years.



Commander Mike Calo stands in front of the District Two police station at 3921 Holly Street.

JM: Social media?
Calo: You can pull these different groups up on social media and look at it yourself. New York City has a unit that monitors social media and they have been very successful at preventing violence. We are looking at bringing that program here.

JM: Have the East Denver neighborhoods become safer?
Calo: Violent crime is down significantly and the perception that the neighborhood is safer is

accurate. Many officers and different police units and other organizations have done tremendous work to make this area safer. We are really strengthening the bonds with the community these days, which is a collaborative effort that makes the area safer. The District 2 Community Advisory Board meets the last Thursday of every month at District 2 at 6pm. We bring in special guests based on what interests the group has such as graffiti experts, and recently we had dispatchers come and talk about what a citizen should say when they call 911 and explain how calls are dispatched.

Notes: The District 2 Police Academy runs from April 23 through June 11. Space is limited.

The District 2 Community Board meets at District 2, 3921 Holly St., the last Thursday of every month. Everyone is welcome.

Denver crime statistics and crime maps are available online at the Denver Police Department website.

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Each month, the Indie Prof reviews a current film in the theater and a second film that is available on DVD or an instant-streaming service.

Follow "Indie Prof" on Facebook for updates about film events.

War Witch (2012)

A 12-year old sub-Saharan African girl is captured by a rebel army and forced into the service of the rebels—a service that mandates unspeakable acts from the very beginning. She and the other group of very young conscripts are told that their guns are their new mothers and fathers, and they should never lose them. "The life of a soldier is hard," the leader tells them, and they will fight the government. As the Canadian-produced *War Witch*, directed by Kim Nguyen, begins, we feel we've seen this story before. Yet the film, for the most part, eschews the larger political subtext and focuses on the story of young Komona. And what a fascinating story it is.

It moves quickly: early in the film and directly after Komona is captured, her rebel faction is attacked by government troops; Komona is the only one from her village to survive the onslaught. She has the ability to see ghosts who guide her, and she is rewarded with mythic status in the group and branded the War Witch.

One of the most notable aspects of the film is its cinematography, striking for its complementary nature to the thematic aspects: we do not get sweeping African vistas of jungles or deserts. The camera focuses on one or two characters for the most part, and the close-up is the shot of choice. This choice makes the film a psychological



War Witch was nominated for a Best Foreign Film Oscar, but lost to *Amour*.

study of the personal horrors rather than some overblown political statement. The film assumes an intelligent audience, one that knows or is at least aware of the many African conflicts, but it chooses to focus on the effects of the conflicts rather than the causes. The human toll is immeasurable.

Many reviews have noted the serene tone of the film even though the subject is so violent, and I see a fairy-tale aspect to it. It is also nonjudgmental in its portrayals and consistent in its characterizations. The acting is excellent—Rachel Mwanza (a barely literate, nonprofessional actor from the Democratic Republic of the Congo) is stunning as Komona, and the supporting cast is mostly sound and believable. Nguyen, the director of only four feature films, displays a steady hand and a promising future.

It was nominated for a Best Foreign Film Oscar this year, but it lost to Michael Haneke's *Amour*, and rightly so. *Amour* was the powerful, touching story of an elderly couple and the physical and mental decline of one of them. *War Witch* was a worthy competitor, however, and it deserved the nomination. Now it deserves to be seen.

Begins April 5 at the Sie Film Center.

You will like this film if you enjoyed: *Blood Diamond*, *City of God*, *Cry Freedom*.

Take Shelter (2011)

Trees blow in the wind. A man looks up at (strange?) cloud formations. Yellow rain falls into his hands. Cut inside to the man eating breakfast with his family. He walks outside to his truck and the clouds are gone.

So begins *Take Shelter* (2011), directed by Jeff Nichols and starring Michael Shannon and Jessica Chastain. The independent film was released to rave critical reviews but received little box office play. And it's too bad—this is a film very much of its time and very much part of a national discourse about weighty issues surrounding the American middle class.

It is a film that demands examination.

The story is simple, however: Curtis (Shannon) is an oil-rig worker and father of a deaf daughter who needs surgery to

repair her hearing; Jessica Chastain plays his wife, Samantha. Curtis has increasingly disturbing visions during the course of the film that lead him to irrational acts and eventually, to him losing his job. He seeks mental help

and after an initial reticence, tells his story to the counselor. A new counselor awaits at his next appointment, however, and he leaves, frus-



A scene from *Take Shelter*, starring Michael Martin and Jessica Chastain.

trated, when asked to tell his story again.

In the hands of a lesser director and lesser cast, the film could have been an empty treatise on a struggling man/family or even trite political commentary. But the steadiness of Jeff Nichols and the searing, subdued acting of Shannon and Chastain make this a disturbing, thrilling, unpredictable metaphor for the current state of our world. We are constantly challenged about the reliability of our protagonist, and because of Chastain's strength, we are not sure what we believe.

The film speaks to mental health issues, the health insurance quagmire, degradation of the environment, and most of all the uncertainty of the modern American way of life. Short scenes take on contextual depth: a meeting with an insurance rep, the gas station meter running ever higher, or the weekend job at a local market. The American Dream has turned into the Sword of Damocles, and that feeling takes physical shape in the film. The setting is ambiguous—Anywhere, America—and the sparse music is particularly effective. The ending is sheer brilliance. This is the type of film that sticks with you long after you've seen it.

You will like this film if you enjoyed: *Martha Marcy May Marlene*, *Moon*, *Looper*.

Available on DVD, at the library, or on iTunes. And check out the "Staff Picks" kiosk at the Sam Gary Library for The Indie Prof section of films previously reviewed.

Vincent Piturro, PhD, teaches Cinema Studies at Metropolitan State University of Denver. He can be reached at vpiturro@msudenver.edu.

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Celebrating the opening of new B-cycle stations at the Denver Zoo, the Museum of Nature and Science (and 28 others around the city) are (from left): City Councilman Albus Brooks, City Councilwoman Mark Beth Susman, Marketing Director for Denver Bike Sharing Sue Baldwin, sponsor representatives Daniel Shurz, Frontier Airlines and Dale Flanders, Kaiser Permanente, and Mayor Michael Hancock. The 2013 B-cycle season opened March 18.

Right: Mayor Michael Hancock and Sue Baldwin of Denver Bike Sharing dock their bikes at the Museum of Nature and Science after a ceremonial ride from the zoo with the group listed above.



B-Cycle Expands to City Park

By Carol Roberts

Denver B-cycle is expanding this year from 53 to 83 stations, including the Denver Zoo and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and their fleet is growing to over 700 bicycles.

Denver B-cycle also announced a new national collaboration called "B-Connected" that will allow Denver B-cycle's annual members to check out bicycles at no extra charge in 14 cities around the country.

The shared bike systems in all 14 cities use

the same software, making the benefit possible. The cities include Madison, Wisconsin; San Antonio; Houston; Charlotte, N.C.; Nashville; Spartanburg, Tennessee, Broward County, Florida; Honolulu; Des Moines; Kansas City; Omaha and Boulder. Also due to open this spring and eligible for reciprocity are Fort Worth and Salt Lake City.

To learn more about Denver Bike Sharing, the owner and operator of Denver B-cycle, visit denver.bcycle.com or call 303-825-3325.

Mandatory Water Restrictions

Notice From Denver Water:

Despite recent snows in parts of Colorado, most of the state is in the second year of a severe drought that's not getting better. The drought has led to low snowpack, above-average temperatures and low reservoir levels across the state.

Mandatory watering restrictions mean Denver Water customers may only water two days a week and must follow this schedule:

- Single-family residential properties with even-numbered addresses: Sunday, Thursday
- Single-family residential properties with odd-numbered addresses: Saturday, Wednesday
- All other properties (multi-family, HOA, commercial, industrial, government): Tuesday, Friday



In addition, customers must follow these annual watering rules:

- Do not water lawns between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Do not waste water by allowing it to pool in gutters, streets and alleys.
- Do not waste water by letting it spray on concrete and asphalt.
- Repair leaking sprinkler systems within 10 days.
- Do not water while it is raining or during high winds.

The utility asks customers to be cautious with water use this spring. While April is a good time to get irrigation systems set-up and examined, they don't need to be used yet. Instead, postpone turning on sprinkler systems and hand-water sloped areas of the lawn or sections that are receiving full sunlight. April is typically a cool month with some precipitation, so it may not be necessary to water lawns two days a week, which will help save water.

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By Carol Roberts

As of January 1, Baby Power and Forever Kids has a new owner, Marguerite Brodt, whose programs complement the new business next door, Creative Learning Preschool.

“Baby Power and Forever Kids is a developmental learning and play program for moms and their kids,” Brodt explained. “We have Mommy and Me programs (for kids 6 months to age 3), Parents Night Out, Open Gym and Birthday Parties. Starting June 1, we will have Moms Morning Out, which will be a drop-off program for babies 12 to 24 months old. That will run Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

“I’m going to bring the focus back to the younger group,” she said. “But I’m also going to have an after-school enrichment program for kids three years to eight years old. I will have a pick-up from Swigert Elementary

Socialization and Fun for Kids Six Months to Four Years

ing Preschool.

Brodt came to the Stapleton Baby Power and Forever Kids when she first decided that she wanted to own a Baby Power and Forever Kids franchise.

I wanted a job where I could bring my one-year-old son, Connor, and have extra time with him,” she explained. “I wanted to incorporate him in my work. I take him to open gym three or four days a week. It gives me a chance to be on the same level with the parents, and he loves it.”

The Stapleton program was highly recommended to Brodt.

“I found out about it because it is a franchise,” she said. “I was considering opening one in the Highlands, the franchise owner told me to talk to Rachel Baumel and see the business. I really liked it, and my son really liked

School at 3:30 p.m. for children K-2 and a pick-up from Creative Learn-

it, and I just really hit it off with Rachel.

Baumel and Brodt currently have a shared ownership agreement, which will end June 1 when Baumel’s new business, Creative Learning Preschool opens next door and Brodt becomes full owner of Baby Power.

“I’ve been getting to know the parents I want them to feel comfortable leaving their kids with me. I am a parent too and I know how important that is.”

Brodt has a Masters Degree in social work. She has been working with children for more than 10 years. Currently she is taking early childhood education classes and is focusing on developmental growth. Baby Power and Forever Kids has two certified teachers with Masters Degrees who also are mothers, according to Brodt.

“Parents can expect to have developmental, social and emotional growth for their children,” Brodt said. “Our programs can help the kids prepare for preschool. We do ABCs, shapes, colors, music, instruments and so much more. We prepare them to be in a social environment alongside their peers.

“I want Baby Power to be very welcoming. I want the parents to tell me what activities they are interested in, whether it’s yoga, art, language, music or something we have not yet explored.” “It’s important for me to meet the needs of the community.”

Baby Power and Forever Kids, which offers a free trial class or open gym session, is located at 7505 E. 35th Ave., Suite 330. For information, call 303-377-8855 or go to: www.babypower.com/Denver. Email: marguerite.brodt@gmail.com.



Marguerite Brodt, new owner of Baby Power and Forever Kids



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By Carol Roberts

For the past nine years, Stapleton residents Rachel Baumel and her husband, Dan Mitzner, have run Baby Power and Forever Kids. But over that time their interests and expertise evolved toward a focus on preschool. Now they have sold their business and on June 1 will be moving next door to open Creative Learning Preschool.

“It’s a licensed neighborhood preschool serving two- to four-year-olds,” Mitzner explained. “Baby Power was an evolution over the last nine years. As the community had the demand for it, we launched the preschool. It’s literally outgrown the space that it’s in.”

“We use ‘Creative Curriculum for Preschool’ and we really focus on teaching children through creative learning styles and encouraging play while teaching them certain skills,” Baumel said.

Baumel and Mitzner have two children, Alexis, 11; and Chloe, 8. Mitzner works in marketing and Baumel practices family law.

“When we started Baby Power, Alexis was 2 ½ and Chloe was a newborn,” Baumel said. “They have grown up with Baby Power. At that time, it was perfect for us.”

Familiar Faces at New Preschool in Quebec Square

Left: Rachel Baumel and Dan Mitzner, owners of the new Creative Learning Preschool.

Now Baumel and Mitzner are ready to move on to serve older children of preschool age. Creative Learning Preschool will have four preschool teachers. They will offer child-teacher ratios of 7 to 1 for two-year-olds and 9 to 1 for three-year-olds.

“When we talk to our director or teachers, it’s from the perspective of the parent,” Baumel said. “When our daughter was three, almost four, years old, she wanted to learn to write her name. I went to the teacher and she said she couldn’t help her to write her name. They were a play based preschool and couldn’t teach that. I felt that, if a child wants to learn, that’s something you should embrace. We

make sure that all the teachers work with the kids on writing letters and their names. We not only want kids to be socialized and creative, but we want them to keep up with other kids.”

“We offer a rare opportunity for working parents with two-year-olds,” Mitzner said. “It’s better than daycare. Studies are showing more and more that if you can put your kids in a learning environment, it’s good. Our goal isn’t to be an intense environment. We wanted to offer something unique, something we weren’t able to find for our kids.” However, Creative Learning Preschool does not offer a full-day option five days a week. They take children in an AM program, a PM program or full day up to a maximum of 15 hours a week.\$

“Our teachers send a weekly email to parents about what is happening with their child. It’s such a personal experience. The parents are involved. The children, parents and teachers work together,” Baumel said.

The fact that Creative Learning Preschool and Baby Power and Forever Kids will be housed next door to each other was planned.

“Baby Power complements our programs,” Mitzner explained. “They work with babies up to

two years old. We work with two- to four-year-olds. It’s not by accident that they’re together.”

Baumel and Mitzner’s program also complements the half-day classes at nearby Swigert school. They will pick-up after the morning session or drop off students for the afternoon session to create a combined full-day program that goes until 3:30pm.

Creative Learning Preschool will move to its new location, 7505 E. 35th Ave., Suite 340, next door to Baby Power and Forever Kids on June 1. Enrollment is being accepted now for the summer session, which starts June 3, and the September session (which is filling rapidly, says Baumel).

Information is available at www.creativelearningdenver.com



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Ever notice how some of those “healed” injuries in youth catch up with us later on? For instance, no matter how quietly I tiptoe up the stairs late at night, my wife always hears me coming. That’s because my ankles crack with each step, like the Tin Man of Oz—a sequel to basketball sprains of my youth.

Despite injury risks, exercise is fun and essential to those of us who aren’t hunter-gatherers—and a healthy habit to instill in kids. But it can be hazardous and surprisingly expensive for parents. For example, the average cost of an inpatient emergency room visit for a kid’s sports-related injury is over \$20,000. Holy cow! That’s on par with tuition.

For our kids, how do such risks compare to the damage of too much sedentary screen time? Should we encourage them to play “risky” contact sports in lieu of Angry Birds or Call of Duty? When considered on a societal scale, there is plenty of data indicating sports and exercise are worth the associated risks.

But how can we evaluate and balance such risks? Or know if we’re better off signing up our kids for summer soccer or for ballet, or if we ought to tone down our jogging and turn up our Pilates? As we surf the web to learn more, we’re engulfed by increasing rates of ACL knee traumas, widespread

football concussions, and repetitive stress injuries we can’t even pronounce. While one study seems to say one thing, another indicates the opposite. For example some injury rates are reported per hour of play and others per hour of practice, or per year, and all yield different results. Per hour of play, boys’ hockey, rugby and soccer have the highest injury rates; for girls it is soccer, then basketball and gymnastics. For really severe injuries it’s cheerleading and football. But per hour of practice, cross-country running seems to be most injury-causing for both boys and girls. Not what I expected...but what’s left of my knee cartilage aches in agreement.

So how can you filter this information and extract the parts relevant to you? One approach is to examine the risk of sports injuries in young kids and in teens, and use this data to temper exercise choices, and to shape a fitness strategy.

Much of the data is sobering. At least 1 in 15 of all youth sports participants go to the emergency room each year for a sports injury (remember that \$20,000?), and most injuries occur in practice not in games. This risk is repeated every year a kid plays sports—in or out of school. Fingers crossed for good health insurance. Even more mind-boggling...up to 1 in 5 high-schoolers per-month may experience a sports injury bad enough to see a nurse or a doctor but not require an ER

Just the Facts

Exercise, Sports & Kids’ Injury Risk

by Whitey Hagadorn

.....

visit. Let’s see...I’ve got three kids, multiplied by three months per year for each sport, modified by the amount of time they spend playing vs. practicing, times a 6.7 percent minimum incident injury rate, times the number of sports they play, times 12 years of sports activity per kid, times...oh-my-goodness, my head just exploded from the arithmetic!



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How do the risks of sports compare to the damage of too much sedentary screen time?

So should we encourage recreational or solo exercise instead of team sports? On one hand, contact- and collision-filled team sports have the highest frequency of minor- or medium-level injuries such as contusions and repetitive-stress injuries. Yet the most severe injuries occur in recreational activities and in individual sports. Some of these are due to physiological differences, such as girls' higher knee injury rates in cutting or jumping sports, whereas others are position- or sports-specific. For example, who knew that gymnasts, ice hockey players and ballet dancers have amazingly high lumbar injury rates?

And concussions? Rates are high for lacrosse and soccer, but for football the rates are mind-blowing. Puns aside, technological modifications such as improved helmet design have not significantly reduced incident rates, nor in extreme activities like equestrian or snowboarding. In some cases concussion rates are actually rising. In part this is because concussions are not usually associated with easy-to-recognize symptoms, like loss of consciousness, and in part because it is difficult to evaluate the phenomenon of "risk compensation." Risk compensation is where players who have better protective gear may become more aggressive or different in their

style of play. Like an arms race, a sport can escalate with each new technological advance. Witness the padded suits now worn under the oversized jerseys and shorts of many college and pro basketball players.

But what about non-sporting injuries—for example from PE class or kickball in the park? This information is relevant to all of us who exercise recreationally. In these categories, youth injury rates tend to be higher than in organized sports, about 1 in 9; and rates are highest for those with low levels of regular physical activity. The message: approach exercise gradually and carefully when migrating from a couch-bound lifestyle, or when prying screen-bound kids into an exercise routine. And just for the record, trampolines and bouncy castles can be more dangerous than any of the sports we've discussed thus far.

So how might we put all these risks in perspective? A key "grain of salt" is right in front of us. Seniors. They are the you of the future, or our kids a half-century from now. What were the effects of the sports they played in their youth and which ones do they still participate in? The latter are the sustainable, lifelong activities that will make up the bulk of our body's exercise experience. So while kids' injury rates are helpful to examine, the other end of the age spectrum gives insights too.

Try collecting the data for yourself. Go to the gym/park/studio/mountains and count the number of seniors participating in 10 different activities. Unless you're hanging around with Richard Branson and his buddies, you probably won't find many doing extreme sports. How many are playing everyday contact sports like football/soccer/basketball/field-ice-hockey? Prediction: Not many. How many are playing non-contact sports like running/biking/surfing/tennis/golf? Prediction: Some. How many walk, hike, swim, dance or do yoga/tai-chi/qigong? Prediction: Most. What follow-up questions might make sense to ask next? How many of them were injured while doing these activities? Which group do you predict has the fewest injuries?

So for kids, or for times in our life when we're able to engage in organized sports...the next steps might be: First: don't worry too

much, especially if you're a parent of young ones. Parental fear and perception of injury can result in reduced youth sports participation, especially among daughters, and often doesn't result in kids using increased caution while participating in sports. Second, for activities you have interest in, dive into "the data" on risks, injury types and solutions for avoidance. Perhaps begin by surfing sites of the NSCA, NCCSI, NIH, BJSM, AAP or CDC. Third, strategize involvement, so you know what to recognize and where

rest recovery, technique instruction, preventative conditioning or coaching can make a difference. Fourth, temper all of this with what you know about the specific characteristics and history of those involved. Exercise is fun but an evolving routine!

Meanwhile, I'm going to go ice my elbow—it is sore from too much mousing. James "Whitey" Hagadorn, PhD, is a scientist at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science.

Suggestions and comments welcome at jwhagadorn@dmns.org.

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DISCLAIMER: The Front Porch obtains event information through websites and press releases and cannot guarantee that events will occur as listed. Please use contact information to check for updates.

EARTH DAY 2013 EVENTS-

4/20 Saturday- Race for Open Space. Inaugural 5K run and Earth Day celebration. 9am-2pm. Music, food, fun and prizes. Bluff Lake Nature Center, 3400 Havana Way. www.blufflakenaturecenter.org

4/20 Saturday- Earth Day Tree Sale. The Park People's Denver Digs Trees Earth Day yard tree sale, 9am-12pm, at Sloan's Lake and City Park. www.theparkpeople.org

4/22 Monday- Denver Earth Day Fair. FREE Denver Earth Day Fair to highlight actions/investments residents/businesses can make to save money and reduce environmental impact. 10am-2pm. City and County Building Plaza, 1437 Bannock. www.denvergov.org/Earth-Day

4/22 Monday- SUN/MCA collaboration Earth Night Dinner and Movie, Genetic Roulette. Movie is free. Food for sale for \$8-10 by the Garden in Park Hill. Door Prizes 6-8:30pm.

4/26 Saturday- Arbor Day Tree Planting. Adult volunteers needed to help with planting, 8am-2pm. Email Caroline (marcelekb@dvierow.com)

RECURRING ARTWALKS

First Fridays

Santa Fe Arts District. Santa Fe Dr. between 10th and 6th. 5-8pm. www.artdistrictonSantaFe.com

North Denver's Tennyson Art Walk. Tennyson St. and 44th Ave.6-10pm. www.denverartwalk.squarespace.com

River North (RiNo) Art District, 6-9pm. RiNo starts at Broadway and Walnut St. www.RiverNorthart.com

Golden Triangle Museum District. 5-9pm. www.goldentriangleofdenver.com

Navajo Street Art District. 5-9pm. www.navajostreetartdistrict.com

Third Friday

Santa Fe Arts District. Santa Fe Dr. between 10th and 6th. 5-8pm. www.artdistrictonSantaFe.com

DENVER METRO EVENTS

Denver Public Art Tours. FREE tours by foot, bike, scooter, for art/architecture lovers. Reservations required. Schedule/signup: www.denvergov.org/publicart.Also download PDF of Denver's Public Art Guide.

Through 4/28- Denver's 2013 Month of Photography. www.mopdenver.com for participating galleries and shows in April.

4/11 Saturday- 11th Annual Arvada Kite Festival. 10am-4pm. Robby Ferrufino Park, 74th Ave. and Carr Dr.,Arvada. www.arvadafestivals.com

4/13 Saturday- Cockpit Demo Day.Wings Over the Rockies Museum, Lowry.10am-12pm. www.wingsmuseum.org

4/13 Saturday and 4/14 Sunday- 2013 Doors Open Denver (DOD): Denver the City Beautiful Then and Now. FREE annual 2-day event celebrating architecture and design. Over 70 sites open to the public through self-guided tours, expert guided tours (must preregister) and urban adventure tours. www.artsandvenuesdenver.com

4/14 Sunday- Living Local. Organic vendors, composting demonstrations, historic interpretation and more. 12-4pm. General admission applies. www.fourmilepark.org

4/14 Sunday- Rocky Mountain Bridal Show. Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th St. Tickets \$7 and \$10 cash only at door. www.rockymtnbridalshow.com

4/18 Thursday "Urban Treats" features Five Points Jazz Artists. 3rd Thursday every month through May. McNichols Civic Center Building. Enjoy lunch with Five Points jazz artists. FREE. 11am-1pm.

4/18 Thursday- American Institute of Architects Denver Chapter (AIA Denver) Third Thursdays – Open Studio! H+L Architecture, 1755 Blake St., Ste. 400. 5pm. www.aiacolorado.org

4/18 Thursday to 4/21 Sunday- Just Between Friends Kids' Gear & Clothing Sale. 90,000 items at 50-90% below retail. National Western Complex, I-70 & Brighton Blvd.Thurs. 10am-7pm. \$3

admission; Fri. 10am-7pm \$2 admission, \$2 off with *Front Porch* listing. Sat. and Sun. 10am-4pm. Free Parking.

4/19 Friday and 4/20 Saturday- The Good, the Bad and the Brass. Denver Brass, Bethany Lutheran Church. 7:30pm.Tickets: 303.832.HORN or www.denverbrass.org

4/19 Friday 4- The Art of Shabbat: Eye on Contemporary Israeli Art. Mizel Museum curator leads the discussion.Art of Shabbat is a community Shabbat dinner and discussions about art as it relates to culture, history, current events and multicultural traditions, plus candle lighting, prayers and kosher vegetarian dinner: 6:30pm. \$28/members; 32/nonmembers. 400 S. Kearney St. Register: <http://www.mizelmuseum.org/eye-on-israeli-art/>.

4/20 Saturday- First Ladies of Jazz Performed by Mary Louise Lee. Boettcher Concert Hall, 1000 14th St. 7:30pm.Tickets: www.coloradosymphony.org

4/24 Wednesday- Diversity in Education Job Fair. 9am-3pm. Denver Athletic Club, 1325 Glenarm. Public school recruiters from Denver, Cherry Creek,Aurora, Douglas and Jefferson counties and more will be present. Contact: Martina Will, martinashhrp@gmail.com or 720.840.8117. www.shhrp.net

4/25 Thursday- The Happening fundraiser for Assistance League of Denver. 6-10pm. Balistreri Event Center at the Winery. Live music, live and silent auctions, wine tastings and more. \$60/person, www.denver.assistanceleague.org, or 303.322.5205

4/25 Thursday- Bessie's Hope 2013 Fundraising Gala: Copacabana Night. Grand Hyatt Downtown Denver. Silent auction, gourmet dinner, music, dancing to benefit Bessie's Hope, which enhances lives of people in nursing homes and assisted-living elders. Tickets \$150/person, \$200/patron. www.bessieshope.org

4/28 Sunday- Colorado Hebrew Chorale presents Lag B'Omer at Four Mile Historic Park. Colorado Hebrew Chorale (CHC) and guests from Denver Zoo celebrate Jewish festival of Lag B'Omer. Music, food and bonfire. \$10/adults; \$8/students (6-17), seniors (+65), military; \$5/members CHC, FMHP; free/kids 0-5. Four Mile Historic Park, 715 S. Forest St. 303.355.0232, coloradohebrewchorale@yahoo.com, www.coloradohebrewchorale.org

5/4 Saturday and 5/5 Sunday- Cinco de Mayo Festival and Parade. Civic Center Park. FREE. Largest Cinco de Mayo Hispanic culture celebration in U.S. Latino music, food, low- rider parade, and some of Mexico's top recording stars. www.cincodemayodenver.com

5/4 Saturday- Jockeys, Juleps & Jazz. Benefits MyLifeline.org cancer foundation. Denver's premier Kentucky Derby Event. Four Seasons Hotel, 1111 14th St. 3-7pm.Tickets: \$125 at www.mylifelinederby.org

Denver Film Society. Daily movies/programs. Lowenstein Complex, 2510 E Colfax and various locations. www.denverfilm.org

FREE Wednesday Senior Activities. 1st Wed., 10am, crafts/light lunch; 2nd Wed., 12pm, big lunch/entertainment; 4th Wed., 12pm, light lunch/bingo. RSVP: 303.439.7554 for big lunch, 303.807.0619 for other services. Bosworth House, 1400 Josephine St. Sponsor: Assistance League of Denver

Denver Urban Homesteading Farmers Market. Indoor, year-round farmers market and homesteading school with local/organic foods. Thurs/Fri 3-7pm, Sat 9am-3pm. 200 Santa Fe Dr. FREE. www.denverurbanhomesteading.com for classes/seminars

Denver IDEA Café. FREE startup workshop and speakers presented by Small Business Chamber of Commerce. 2-4pm, 2nd & 4th Fridays, Tony's Market, 950 Broadway. 303.861.1447 or www.SmallBizChamber.org

Live Music at The Soiled Dove. 7401 E 1st Ave, Lowry.Tickets: www.soileddove.com

Denver 2 for 1 Tix provides weekly 2 for 1 ticket and admission discounts for metro Denver arts and entertainment. www.denver2for1tix.com

More ideas on what to do in Denver: Visit www.denver.org or www.GalleryGuideDenver.com.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

4/2 and 4/9 Tuesdays- Stress ReliefYoga. Movement, meditation, candlelight and essential oil temple rub. Fee based. 5:45pm. MCA Community Rm. 2823 Roslyn St. www.loveyogacolorado.com

4/7 Sunday- 11th Annual Platte River ½ Marathon. www.platteriverhalf.com

Throughout April- 9News Health Fairs. Free and low-cost health screenings at metro-area locations. www.9healthfair.org

4/14 Sunday- Habitat Hustle 5K Family Fun Run/Walk. Support building decent, affordable housing. Benefits Youth United program at Habitat for Humanity Metro Denver. Sign in 9:30am, run/walk 10am. \$20 adult, \$15 youth (6-17), under 6 free. Stapleton Central Park. madison.eiss@gmail.com, <http://bit.ly/VGGVBFB>

4/18 Thursday- Free HIV testing at Rocky Mountain CARES nonprofit for holistic HIV care. 1-5pm, 3rd Thursday monthly and by appt. 4545 E 9th Ave, #120. Shannon Southall: 303.951.3694

4/21 Saturday- Run Ugly Fitathlon. It won't be pretty, but will be fun. Stapleton Central Park. 9:30am. www.runuglyfitathlon.com

4/27 Saturday- 2013 Dress For Success Power Walk. 9am. Stapleton Central Park. www.dfspowerwalk.org

4/28 Sunday- Cherry Creek Sneak. 10 mile 5 mile, 5K, 1.5 mile sneak sprint and ½ mile kids' fun run in Cherry Creek North. Register: www.cherrycreeksneak.com

5/4 Saturday- Dumb Friends League Furry Scurry. 2-mile walk at Denver's Washington Park benefits Denver Dumb Friends League. \$50/person. 9am. www.ddfl.org

FREE Car Seat Inspections. Most car seats are used incorrectly. Children's Hospital Colorado offers free inspections at Aurora Main Campus by child passenger safety professionals.Wed. 1-3pm, Sat. 9am-12pm. Schedule appointment: 720.777.4808

Fridays in April- Friday Night Yoga Club. Various Denver yoga studios. www.fridaynightyogaclub.com

Base Fitness Denver. Boot camp classes, indoor/outdoor. 7565 E. Academy Blvd. info@basefitnessdenver.com, 303.539.4877

Registration open- Walk MS. Benefits Multiple Sclerosis Society. City Park, 9:30am, May 4. www.walkms.org



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Registration open- **Mother's Day 5K.** City Park, 9am, May 12. \$30/individual, \$90/family. www.mothers-day5K.com

LECTURES AND CLASSES

Active Minds – Listing/info on all sessions:
www.ActiveMinds.com. **FREE.**

4/9 Tuesday- Iraq. 10:15-11:15am. Jewish Community Center. 350 S. Dahlia St. Lil Shaw: 303.316.6359

4/23 Tuesday- The American West. 5:30-1630pm. Tattered Cover, 2526 E. Colfax. 303.322.7727

4/25 Thursday- The Emancipation Proclamation. 7pm. Stapleton Master Community Assoc., 2823 Roslyn St. 303.388.0724

5/7 Tuesday- Saudi Arabia. 10:15-11:15am. Jewish Community Center, 350 S Dahlia St. 303.316.6359

4/17, 4/24, 5/1 and 5/8 Wednesdays- Christianity Reexamined. Free 4-night seminar for nonreligious/religious on meaning of Christianity. Speaker: pastor of Fellowship Denver Church. 6-7pm, dinner/childcare check-in; 7-8:30pm seminar. Sherman St. Events Center, 1770 Sherman St. Register: christianityreexamined.com.

LIBRARIES

Visit www.denverlibrary.org for children's story hours, book club info, crafts sessions and complete program list. A few selected programs shown below:

Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. 720.865.0250. Closed Mon. Wed. and Sun.

Pauline Robinson Library, 5575 E. 33rd Ave. 720.865.0290. Closed Fri., Sat. and Sun.

Monday to Thurs. weekly- After School Is Cool. 4-5pm. Crafts, games and more. See website for specific daily programming.

Mondays- Computer Basics. Teens and adults, 6-7:30pm.

Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. Closed Tues., Thurs. and Sun.

Mondays- Tales for Twos Story Time. 10:15am; repeats 11am

Wednesdays- PJ Story Time. 7-7:30pm.

Fridays- Book Babies. 10:15am, repeats 11:15am

4/6 Saturday- What Can I Do? Multimedia Environmental Concert with Laurie Dameron. 11am.

To submit 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.

Press releases for suggested stories should be sent separately to FrontPorchStapleton@gmail.com

4/13 Saturday- The Civil War at Riverside Cemetery. 11am

4/20 Saturday- Where Denver's Scandals Are Buried. 11am

4/27 Saturday- Drumming: Afro-Cuban Rhythms. 11am

TEEN/PRE-TEEN PROGRAMING

4/3 Wednesday- Make Your Own Button. Bring favorite photo or use magazines to make 1" button. 4pm. Grades 4 and up.

4/13 Saturday- Manga Drawing. 2pm. Learn to draw Manga, develop own characters. Registration required. Grades 4 and up.

4/17 Wednesday- Clay Hand Building. Create unique clay sculpture. 4pm. Registration required. Grades 4 and up.

4/27 Saturday- Painted Tattoos. 2pm. Skin-safe inks last up to a week or can remove. Registration required. Grades 4 and up.

Schlessman Family Library, 100 Poplar St. (1st and Quebec). 720.865.0000. New Hours: Mon/Wed 10-8, Tues/Thurs 10-6, Sat 9-5, Sun 1-5. Closed Fri.

4/8 Monday- The Incredible Egg. Recipes and samples. 6:30pm.

4/13 Saturday- Anna Komara: Lawrence Halprin's Skyline Park. 2pm.

4/14 Sunday- 12 Gorgeous Groundcovers for Preventing Weeds. 2pm.

4/28 Sunday- Dearly Departed Architects of Denver. 2pm.

4/29 Monday- Make-Ahead Meals. Recipes and samples. 6:30pm.

(continued on page 18)

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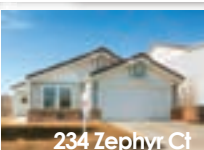
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(continued from page 17)

NORTHEAST DENVER /AURORA EVENTS

4/3 Thursday- Listening to the Community: Bluff Lake Nature Center Town Hall Feed-back. 7-8:15pm. The nature center seeks input/ideas from community on programming, land management, relationships. Refreshments served. FREE; no RSVP necessary. Stapleton MCA Conference Rm, 2823 Roslyn St. jlamontagne@blufflake.org, www.blufflakenature-center.org

4/6 Saturday and 4/7 Sunday- Colorado State Button Society 45th Annual Show. View/purchase antique buttons. 12-5pm Sat.; 11-4 Sun. DoubleTree by Hilton Stapleton North, 4040 Quebec St. 303.331.0131.

4/7 Sunday- Clayton Early Learning Open House. Learn about enrollment for children under age 5 at Park Hill Educare Denver School and NE Denver Clayton Early Learning. 2-4pm. Clayton Educare Denver School, 3751 MLK Blvd. www.ClaytonEarlyLearning.org

4/11 Thursday- Guided Seasonal Tour of Bluff Lake Nature Center. 4-5 pm. Sunset tour with historical/ecosystem interpretation. Meet at Welcome Station on parking lot north side. FREE. 3400 Havana Way. **Repeats 4/27 Saturday for morn-**

ing tour, 10-11 am. REklewis@blufflake.org, www.blufflakenaturecenter.org

4/13 Saturday- “Swing Your Sweetheart” Barn Dance. Dinner/dance with square and line dance lessons, farm animals. Pony rides \$5 at 4pm, dinner/dance 6-9pm. Adults \$25, couples \$45, under age 12 \$10, under 2 free. The Urban Farm, 10200 Smith Rd. www.theurbanfarm.org

4/13, Saturday- “Get A Grip” Skateboard Art Show/Auction. Sponsored by Aurora Rise to benefit Aurora movie theater shooting victims. 5-9pm. Park Hill Skates, 2236 Oneida St. Donations accepted through 4/8.

4/13 Saturday- Aurora Warms the Night Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser. Aurora Warms the Night is a cold-weather shelter for the homeless. 6-8pm. American Legion Hall, 1427 Elmira St., Aurora. \$10 donation or \$7 with can of pull-tab soup. Ticket at door. www.aurorawarmsthenight.org

4/14 Sunday- Bully Awareness Seminar at Mike Giles Karate. With excerpts from movie *The Bully Project*. FREE. 1-3pm. 7506 E. 36th Ave. #480. 303.377.5425, mikegileskarate@comcast.net

4/16 and 4/23 Tuesdays- Naturopathic Super

Medicine: Daily Habits for Optimal Wellness. Tips you can begin for optimal health and deeper healing. \$41 with \$2 materials fee. Colorado Free Univ., 7653 E. 1st Pl. www.freeu.com or 303.399.0093 ext 0.

4/18 Thursday-Venture Prep Scholar-led Art Show. 5:30-7pm. Community invited. Donations appreciated. 2540 Holly St. Kmeyer@ventureprep.org, 303.893.0805

4/21 Sunday- Fresh Floral Design Fundamentals. 2-5pm. Using fresh blooms, learn secrets of pro floral designers; leave with arrangement to take home. \$51 with \$15 materials fee. Colorado Free Univ., 7653 E. 1st Pl. www.free.com or 303.399.0093 ext 0.

4/27 Saturday- Westerly Creek Elementary Annual Baby & Kids’ Stuff Sale. 8am-12pm. Enter at north doors facing 28th Ave. CASH ONLY. Clothing, strollers, cribs, bedding, toys, books, bikes, etc. Donations accepted 4/25 and 4/26 only. Contact: Marissa Ross 720.280.8416

4/27 Saturday- Swigert Touch-a-Truck. Kids can climb on and explore dozens of trucks and vehicles during a family event that supports Swigert International School. 10am-1pm. Sam’s Club Parking Lot- Quebec Square. Tickets: touchatruck.swigertpta.com

5/6 Saturday- Montview Community Pre-school and Kindergarten Carnival. 11am-3pm. 1980 Dahlia St. Tickets \$6/advance and \$8/at door.

Fridays and Saturdays- Wine Tastings. Wine Cellars, the Bottle Shop of Stapleton. 4-7pm. FREE. www.facebook.com/WineCellarsatStapleton

Central Park Recreation Center. Info: www.denvergov.org/recreation, 750.865.0750 or Facebook Central Park Recreation Center. Registering for sports programs.

Denver School of the Performing Arts. Various dance and music performances; many free! See website for details. Quebec and Montview. www.dsa.dpsk12.org/performances

April events- Unity on the Avenue, 4670 E. 17th Ave. www.unityontheavenue.org or 303.322.3901.

April events- Center of Light, 2300 Forest St. Denver@CentersOfLight.org or 720.308.9944

DENVER ART MUSEUM
100 West 14th Ave Parkway, www.denverart-museum.org

Through 4/28- Georgia O’Keeffe in New Mexico: Architecture, Katsinam, and the Land.

Through 9/8- Rocky Mountain Majesty: Paintings of Charles Partridge Adams.

Final Friday at Denver Art Museum. 6-10pm. Untitled is the museum’s Final Friday series, Jan.-Oct. Music, cash bar, munchies, offbeat art encounters, unique de tours of DAM collection. General admission applies; members free. www.denverartmuseum.org

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RECURRING MEETINGS

Business Groups

GREATER STAPLETON BUSINESS ASSOC. 3rd Tuesday, 8am-7CA, 2823 Roslyn St. 303-393-7700 www.stapletonbusiness.com

STAPLETON AND BEYOND LEADS & NETWORKING GROUP—First Tuesday, Smart Space, Aaron.Ktafoya@farmersagency.com, 303-955-0861

WORK-FROM-HOME GROUP. 1st Wednesday, 12-1pm. Smartspace, 2373 Central Park Blvd #100. Brown bag or group order for lunch. www.stapletonhomebusiness.com

Civic Groups

BLUFF LAKE SITE STEWARDS. Every Wednesday, 8-11am. Bluff Lake Nature Center. 303-945-6717

NPET: First Saturday Clean Up Activities. 9am-12noon. Contact Caroline Fry, Sand Creek Regional Greenway CFry@Sandcreekgreenway.org or Lucia Correll Lcorrell@dotnet.net for place each month.

P.E.O. INTERNATIONAL LOCAL CHAPTER MEETING. Supporting women’s educational opportunities. 2nd Thursday, 7pm. copeojc@gmail.com

STAPLETON ROTARY CLUB. Every Tuesday, 7:30am. Stapleton Community Room, 2823 Roslyn St. www.denverstapletonrotary.org

Interest Groups

BLUFF LAKE BIRDERS. 1st Saturday, 7-9am. Nature Center. BluffLakeNatureCenter.org

COLORADO FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS. 3rd Thursday. Grace, 303-455-0839

COLORADO SYMPHONY GUILD. Every 3rd Thur. at St. Luke’s Church, 13th & Quebec, 10am–12pm. macregar@gmail.com or 303.333.2707

CYCLETON BIKE REPAIR CLINIC. 2nd Tuesday, 6pm. 7480 E. 29th Ave. www.cycleton.com 303.329.0069.

DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION . 3rd Saturday. Adagio Bed and Breakfast, 1430 Race St. Prospective members welcome- rsvp to Helen Strader, 303-997-6788

HOUSE DIST 7 REPUBLICANS. 7pm, 1st Mon. after 1st Tues. Islamorada Fish Co (inside Bass Pro). chrismaj@gmail.com

LOWRY PEAK SPEAKERS TOASTMASTER CLUB. 2nd and 3rd Wednesday, noon- 1pm. Pinnacle Assurance, 7501 E. Lowry Blvd, Denver 80203. lowrypeak.freetoasthost.org lpstoastmasters@gmail.com

STAPLETON WINE APPRECIATION GROUP. Periodically. stapletonswag@gmail.com

Stapleton Groups

PARKS ADVISORY GROUP. 2nd Tuesday, 7:30am. 7350 E 29th Ave, 3rd fl. Lcorrell@dotnet.net

STAPLETON CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD MTG. 3rd Thursday, 7:30-9am. 7350 E. 29th Ave., 3rd fl. 303.393.7700

STAPLETON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MTG. 4th Thursday, 7:30-9am. 7350 E. 29th Ave., 3rd fl. 303.393.7700

SUN BOARD MTG. 4th Monday, 7:30pm. Central Park Rec Center, 9651 MLK Jr. Blvd. stapletonunitedneighbors@gmail.com

SUN TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

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

Support Groups

AA OPEN DISCUSSION MTG. Every Tuesday, 7:30pm. MCA, 2823 Roslyn St. 303-912-7075

AA OPEN MEETING. Every Tuesday, 6pm. St Thomas Episcopal Church, 22nd and Dexter. Shirley 303-726-2998

ADOPTEEES IN SEARCH GENERAL MEETING. 4th Tuesday, 7:30-9pm. Montview Presby. Church, Study Group Room. AISCTC.org 303-232-6302

ADOPTEEES IN SEARCH SUPPORT GROUP. 2nd Wednesday, 7-8:30pm. Montview Presby. Church, Robinsom Rm. AISCTC.org 303-232-6302

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP. 1st Tuesday, 5-6:30pm. AF Williams Family Medicine Clinic Conf Rm. (West entrance) 3055 Roslyn (at MLK). 720-848-9000

NE DENVER/PARK HILL MS SELF-HELP AND SUPPORT GROUP. 2nd Saturday, 10:15–11:45am. Dist. 2 Police Station, 3821 Holly St. 303-329-0619

PARKINSON SUPPORT GROUP IN NORTHEAST DENVER. 4th Saturday, 9:30am. Hiawatha Davis Recreation Center, 3334 Holly St. www.parkinsonrockies.org Regina Jones 720-298-5760

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NT LISTINGS

HISTORY COLORADO CENTER

1200 Broadway, www.historycoloradocenter.org

5/7, 5/14, 5/21, 5/28 Tuesdays- Behind Closed Doors: The Artifacts You Rarely Get to See. State archaeologists lead 4-part workshop on rarely seen artifacts from the museum during statewide Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month. \$75. History Colorado Center, 1200 Broadway. 303.866.2394, www.HistoryColorado.org

Through 5/27 Monday- Thomas Jefferson's Bible. From Smithsonian American History Museum.

4/11 Thursday- Browsing Jefferson's Version of the Bible. Reservations required, 1-2pm. Members \$4; nonmembers \$5.

4/14 Sunday- Meet Thomas Jefferson. 11am-1pm. Free with museum admission.

4/16 Tuesday- Digging Snowmastodon: Discovering an Ice Age World in the Colorado Rockies. Lecture: 7-8pm. \$8.50/members, \$14/nonmembers (lecture and admission).

DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURE AND SCIENCE

Montview and Colorado Blvd. www.dmns.org, 303.370.6000

Through 5/27 Monday- Mammoths and Mastodons: Titans of the Ice Age. Special exhibit ticket required.

4/18 Thursday- Science Lounge. Cocktails/entertainment every 3rd Thurs. of month. 6:30-9:30pm. \$8/members; \$10/nonmembers
Planetarium- *Wildest Weather in the Solar System; Super Volcanoes; Black Holes, One World, One Sky, Cosmic Journey: A Solar System Adventure.* www.dmns.org/planetarium/current-shows

IMAX Movies- *Titans of the Ice Age 3D, Flight of the Butterflies 3D Rocky Mountain Express.* Various times. Tickets: \$8/3-18; \$10/adult

NORTHFIELD EVENTS

Bass Pro Events- 720.385.3600, www.BassPro.com

Hunting, fishing and marine seminars offered throughout the month. Call or visit BassPro.com for details.

Harkins Theatres 18- 720.374.3118

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

Toby Keith's I Love This Bar & Grill- 303.728.9468, www.countrybarco.com. Local and regional live music nightly.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Reservations required for events marked* at 303.289.0930. Free unless noted. Hours: Mon.-Sun., 6am-6pm. Visitor Center: Tues.-Sun., 9am-4pm. Refuge closed federal holidays. Directions/ events: www.fws.gov/rockymountainarsenal/

Last Saturday of month- Wild Rides.* 9:30-10:30am. 1-hour guided viewing tour.

Self-guided Wildlife Drive Auto Tour Route. Daily 6am-6pm

Saturdays- "Wild" Talks. 1pm. Join a naturalist every Saturday for 10-minute mystery "wild" talk.

THEATRE

4/5 to 5/5- The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas. Vintage Theatre 1468 Dayton St. 303.856.7830 or www.vintage theatre.com

4/7- One Night Stand in Wonderland. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St, Aurora. 303.856.7830, www.vintage theatre.com

4/12 to 4/21- Blue Man Group. Buell Theater, Denver Performing Arts Complex, www.denvercenter.org

4/12 to 5/11- Tigers Be Still. Firehouse Theatre Company at John Hand Theater. www.johnhandtheater.com

4/12 to 5/12- The Color Purple. Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E Colfax Ave. www.aurorafoxartscenter.org

Through 4/12- No Dogs Allowed. Arvada Center Children's Theater, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada. www.arvadacenter.org

Through 4/14- Man of La Mancha. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada. www.arvadacenter.org

Through 5/12- Motherhood Outloud. Avenue Theater, 417 E. 17th Ave. www.avenuetheater.com

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Project Worthmore. Volunteers needed to be on teams (6-month commitment) to assist refugees from Burma by "cultural mentorship" (how to ride bus, grocery shop, bank, enroll kids in school, navigate government paperwork, etc.). www.projectworthmore

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

Volunteers of America Foster Grandparent Program. Seeks adults 55+ with lower incomes who love working with kids and can give 15/more hours/week. Small stipend given; transportation reimbursed. www.voacolorado.org, 303.297.0408 (Naomi Taggart)

Assistance League of Denver. Seeks members to help underserved in metro Denver. Programs for victims, students, children and seniors. www.denver.assistanceleague.org or 303.322.5205

KIDS AND FAMILIES

Through 4/28- Silly Wishes. Denver Puppet Theatre, 3156 W 38th Ave. Tickets: \$7 ages 3 and up. 303.458.6446, www.denverpuppettheater.com

Through 4/30- Woodie Station Wagons at Forney Transportation Museum. \$6-\$8. 303 Brighton Blvd. www.forneymuseum.org

Thursdays in April- Star K Kids. Puppets, stories, activities, outdoor explore, ages 5 and under. 9:30 & 11am. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E Smith Rd, Aurora. 303.739.2428, www.auroragov.org/nature

4/14 Sunday- Music Train Family Concert Series- '80s Rock: Raising Cain. Presented by Swallow Hill. 4pm. Daniels Hall, 71 E. Yale. www.swallowhillmusic.org

4/14 Sunday- Junior Rangers. 1:30-3:30pm. Ages 6-12. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E Smith Rd, Aurora. Reservations required. 303.739.9428, www.auroragov.org/nature

4/17 Wednesday- Create Playdates at Denver Art Museum. Kids 3-5 roar, bang, stomp 2nd Wed/month. 10am. Art, story times, scavenger hunts. Included in museum admission; 5 and under free. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. www.denverartmuseum.org or 720.865.5000

4/26 Friday- Denver Botanic Gardens Family Fun Night. 4th Friday each month explore

nature at night in Mordecai Children's Garden. Monthly themes with performers in Sagebrush Stage, snacks by campfire, etc. \$20 member/family of 4, \$3 each additional. \$25 nonmember/family of 4, \$4 each additional. Kids 2 and under free. www.botanicgardens.org

Mile Into The Wild Walkway at Wild Animal Sanctuary. Largest carnivore sanctuary in Western Hemisphere: 300 lions, tigers, bears and

mile-long, 30-ft-high walkway gets you up close. \$15/adult, \$7.50/kids 3-12. Keensburg, CO. www.wildanimalsanctuary.org

KIDS CAMPS AND CLASSES

Aurora Fox Theater- Drama classes ages 4 and up. Lisa Mumpton: 303.739.1573 or www.aurorafox.org

Art Students League of Denver- Programs for kids/teens. 303.778.6990, www.ASLD.org

Small Hands Art Studio- Art classes in Stapleton. www.smallhandsart.com

Start Art- Art classes. Startartkids.com

The Art Garage- Classes ages 4 and up. 6100 E 23rd Ave, Park Hill. www.artgaragedenver.com

4/6 Saturday- Home Depot Kids Workshop. 9am-12pm. FREE how-to clinics first Sat. monthly for ages 5-12. Get Home Depot apron, wooden project and project pin. Metro-area Home Depot stores. www.homedepot.com

4/13 and 4/27 Saturdays- Lowe's Build and Grow Kids Clinics. Bring kids to a Lowe's store to build FREE wood project: free apron, goggles, project-themed patch, merit certificate on completion. 10am. www.lowesbuildandgrow.com

Denver Museum of Miniatures, Dolls and Toys Workshops. Museum adm: \$6/adults, \$4/kids 5-16/under 5 free. 1880 Gaylord St. www.dmmtd.org for current workshops

The Urban Farm- Embracing Horses- info@theurbanfarm.org

Neighborhood Music Stapleton- Private and group instruction. Ages 3 and up. Skye Barker Maa. www.neighborhoodmusicstapleton.com, 720.353.6622

Music Lingua Musical Spanish Classes- Ages newborn-6 years. Learn Spanish with your child in interactive parent/tot classes. samanthabensoncox@hotmail.com, www.musiclingua.com

Club J- After-school programs at Jewish Community Center for kids grades K-5. www.jcc.org

Stapleton All Sports- Registering for spring baseball, t-ball, early ball skills, cheer and yoga. www.stapletonallsports.com

Sol Vida Dance Studio and Dance Camps- Kid/adult classes, workshops, camps, etc. www.solvidadance.com

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Announcements

Wed., April 24—Diversity in Education Job Fair

The Society of Hispanic Human Resource Professionals (SHHRP) is sponsoring a job fair at the Denver Athletic Club Grand Ballroom, 1325 Glenarm Place, from 9am-3pm. School districts from around the state (including DPS, Cherry Creek Schools, and Aurora Public Schools) will be on hand to recruit teachers and paraprofessionals as well as facility management staff, security staff, support staff, food service workers, transportation workers, etc. Free and open to the public. Contact Martina Will at martinashhrp@gmail.com.

Free Financial Counseling Services Centers to Help Low-Income Residents Achieve Financial Success

Approximately 21 percent of Denver’s 600,000 residents live below the federal poverty level. Seven new Financial Empowerment Centers will provide free, one-on-one professional financial counseling services to low-income Denver residents. Clients will be assisted in building healthy credit, opening safe banking accounts and creating budgets that facilitate savings. The two nearest centers are located at: Office of Economic Development Denver Workforce Center at Montbello, 4685 Peoria St., Suite 251 and Tramway Nonprofit Center, 3532 Franklin St., Unit B www.mpoweredcolorado.org

April 13—Casting Call at Toby Keith's for TV's Extreme Makeover: Weight Loss Edition

Eyeworks USA, producers of Extreme Makeover: Weight Loss Edition, is touring nationwide in search of participants for Season 4 of the show. People who are “super obese” and want to transform themselves are invited to a Denver casting call on Sat., April 13, 10am–5pm, at Toby Keith's I Love This Bar and Grill, 8260 Northfield Blvd. #1370. The show will premiere May 28. Information on how to apply (home tapes are an option) can be found at www.extrememakeovercasting.com. Attendees should bring a nonreturnable photo. Casting call applications will be provided.

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Fundraisers & Special Events

April 6—Save the Signs Fundraiser to Bring Back Classic Colfax Ave. Neon Sign

Save the Signs on Colfax is holding its first fundraiser to preserve Denver's neon sign history. Held at the Park House Tavern at E. Colfax and Madison St., from 5pm on, the evening will feature a silent auction with neon-themed art/photography by local artists and local Rockabilly musicians, classic cars, pin-up girls and the crowning of Miss Colfax. Suggested front-door donation of \$5; proceeds go to purchase and restoration of the historic Sid King's Crazy Horse Bar sign. Save the Signs is working to become a nonprofit dedicated to preserving, restoring and collecting classic neon art from the Denver area. Contact: Corky Scholl at 303.548.9039 or email corkyscholl@comcast.net.

April 9—Free Lowry Lecture Series Presents Arthur Jones of The Spirituals Project

On Tues., April 9, Arthur Jones, PhD, will speak on “Guide My Feet”: Lessons in Humanity from the Ancestors. Dr. Jones, a noted Denver professor of psychology and culture, singer, author and founder of The Spirituals Project, will present on the sacred folk songs known as spirituals created and first sung by Africans enslaved in America in the 18th and 19th centuries. The free interactive event will be from 7–8:30pm at the Eisenhower Chapel, 293 S. Roslyn St. For more on the series, contact Sandra Hittman: 720.838.3830 or smhittman@aol.com

April 13—Robotics at the Hangar

Explore cutting-edge robotics technology on Sat., April 13 from 10am–4pm at Robotics at the Hangar. Meet with roboticists, inventors and robot enthusiasts and see real robots in action. Local robotics-related companies will be on-site. Admission: \$11/adults; \$6/kids (under 4 free); \$9/seniors, active military and veterans. All activities included with Wings Over the Rockies Air and Space Museum admission; members free. Location: Historic Lowry Air Force Base Hangar No. 1 near Alameda and Quebec. www.wingsmuseum.org/events

April 13—FUNdraiser to Benefit The Urban Farm

The Urban Farm, a nonprofit that works to improve the lives of children living in high-risk, urban neighborhoods through activities at the farm, is holding a barn dance FUNdraiser on Sat., April 13 to support its programs. Pony rides/meet the animals: 4-6pm; dinner/dance: 6-9pm. Ticket price includes barbeque dinner and live barn dance music with Rudy Grant & the Buffalo Riders Band. Location: 10200 Smith Rd. Adults/\$25; adult couple/\$45; kids under 18/\$10 and under 2/free. Must buy tickets in advance: www.theurbanfarm.org/specialevents

April 13 and 14—View 70 City Beautiful Buildings at Free 2013 Doors Open Denver

“The City Beautiful: Then and Now” is the theme of the 2013 Doors Open Denver event to be held April 13–14. The free celebration of architecture and design welcomes the public inside more than 70 landmark sites and offers 60 expert guided tours with rides on the Platte Valley Trolley. New are guided bike tours, tours of Denver parks and parkways and historic buildings. Event

headquarters will be at the McNichols Civic Center Bldg., at Colfax and Bannock. For a complete listing of sites and tour information, visit www.doorsopendenver.org.

April 20—WeeCycle Hosts “Blues, Brews & BBQ” Fundraiser

The 2nd annual Blues, Brews & BBQ will be held on Sat., April 20 from 7–11pm to raise funds for WeeCycle, a Denver-based project of the Colorado Nonprofit Development Center that collects new and gently used baby gear for families in need. The event includes a silent auction, food donated by Moe's Original BBQ, beverages, music by Coyote Poets of the Universe and a vintage car viewing. MCed by Reggie Rivers. Location: 3960 High St. Must purchase tickets in advance: \$75 at www.WeeCycle.org

April 27—The Power Walk for Dress for Success

Dress for Success (DfS) Denver will host its third annual Power Walk for Dress for Success Denver on Sat. April 27 (register: 9am; walk: 10am) at Central Park Stapleton (MLK Blvd. at Xenia), an event also taking place worldwide. DfS promotes economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, career tools and a support network for women to thrive in work and life. Create a team (4+) or register as a Power Hero and walk to honor someone who helped you succeed. Power Hero: \$35; Virtual walker/\$25; student/\$15; kids 12 and under/free; doggie walker/\$5. Register or create team: www.dfsdenverpowerwalk.org

May 4—The Kids’ MarketplaceSells Kids’ Creations

Unique items for sale made by kids will be showcased at The Kids’ Marketplace from 10am-2pm on Sat., May 4. Support the young kidpreneurs. If your child would like to participate, vendor marketplace applications will be accepted through April 28; just \$15 each. Go to www.thekidsmarketplace.com or contact Tammi Holloway at 303.564.8308. Held at Clayton Early Learning, 3801 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Summer Camps

Mile Giles Karate Fun Camp. Ages 3 to 12. Half-day (9am-12pm) and all-day (1-4pm) sessions offered. Dates: 6/10-6/14, 6/24-6/28, 7/8-7/12 and 8/19-8/23. \$125 per session. Contact: mikegileskarate@comcast.net, 303.377.5425 or www.mikegileskarate.com. Held at Mike Giles Family Karate, Quebec Square, 7506 E. 36th Ave. #480.

Camp Primrose 2013 Passport to Adventure. From the great outdoors to science and food fun, Camp Primrose offers engaging activities, guest speakers and field trips with a new theme each week. Select specific camp weeks or come for a whole summer of fun! Call for weekly themes and to register for camp. Primrose School at Stapleton: 303.322.7200, 2501 Syracuse St., www.primrosetapleton.com

Graland Country Day School Summer Camps. Grades K-8th-grade graduates. Keep your child content and productive over the summer. A well-rounded catalog offers classes in art, science, math, athletics, academics and adventure. Enroll in one or more programs. For full-day campers, lunch included. Located in Denver Hilltop neighborhood. Register at www.graland.org/summerprograms or contact Tanisha Davis at 303.336.3731.

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April 2013

20

Stapleton Front Porch

Big Pop in a Small Space

Easy tips for creating a garden that is beautiful all year round

By Laura Robinson

Do you ever look at neighbors’ yards and wish, with a minimum investment of time and money, you could make your own yard more interesting? Have you imagined it as an overwhelming task? It’s not. Gather a few necessary supplies, take it step by step, and you can have a low-maintenance garden in a small space that adds a big pop to your yard all year-round.

The suggestions here assume a garden space that gets half- to full-day sun and is approximately 10 feet by 7 feet (but could be any size).

Supplies needed: (1) larger or smaller spade depending on hole size, (2) big bag of compost, (3) pruners to snip off broken or leggy stalks, (4) trowel and (5) gloves

First, decide what plant material you should keep and what to get rid of (if applicable). Throw away or give away plants you don’t like or that aren’t performing. In a small site, every plant needs to pull its weight and deliver color and/or interest.

Remove mulch (if existing) and set aside. Of the plant material that you want to reuse, think about height and size. You want the tallest plants in the back of the bed and the shortest in front. Existing plant material should be moved (if necessary) based on height.

Keep it simple. Once you have whittled down your existing plants, it’s time to choose a plant palette of five or six types of plants and repeat them throughout the space. The suggested shrubs and perennials listed below have long bloom durations and alternating bloom times. They are hardy and easy to grow, readily available at any garden store and, best of all, they perform. Winter interest in the garden will be gained through the use of evergreens and/or broadleaf shrubs that stay green when everything else is dead.

Group like plants to create sprays of color for more impact. Plants in groupings should be staggered (rather than lined up) to create a softer, more natural look. Groupings are an easy and fail-safe trick that gives the space a cohesive look.

If your soil is heavy clay, as is most soil along Colorado’s Front Range, you’ll need to amend it by spading in peat moss or well-aged cow manure. Spread about an inch and a half of the amendment in the area to be planted and mix it into the soil. (To avoid

extra work, remember that areas that won’t be planted don’t need to be amended.) The organic matter will improve drainage, aeration and water-holding capacity. It also will make existing soil nutrients more available to the plants. Avoid using “clay-buster” sand. This will only make the soil heavier.

Complying with Mandatory Watering Restrictions

Denver Water has announced drought conditions and restrictions on residential watering (see page 11). Their goal is for everyone to reduce water use by 20 percent. Keep in mind, if you do new planting, to find other ways to reduce water use. For the survival of new plants and maximum growth in the first year, plant no later than late April/early May. The plant selection listed below should survive all but the hottest periods with twice-a-week watering after the first year. When new plants need water more often than your two designated watering days, water only by hand (preferably using a bucket). Do not run irrigation or sprinklers on non-allowed days. Additionally, you should always use 2”–4” of bark or rock mulch to top dress your garden. This promotes water retention and weed prevention.

Watering Tips for the First Year

The first year, new and transplanted plants may need additional hand watering in order to establish. During the first three weeks after planting, if temperatures are 90 degrees and above, plants may need daily watering. If it’s under 85 degrees, then every two to three days should suffice. After those first weeks, three days a week should be fine. But if there’s a heat wave, additional water may be necessary. The best way to determine whether to water or not is to feel the soil around the plant. If the soil is at all muddy, it won’t need additional water. If soil is dry down to 1” below grade, water is needed. After the first year, plants should be sufficiently established to survive twice-a-week waterings in subsequent years.

Suggested Plants

- Spring blooms:**
Creeping phlox (Phlox subulata) 6”h x 18”w. Blooms April–May. Pink, blue, or white flowers cover this evergreen groundcover. Plant at the borders of the beds for early pops of color.
- Late spring blooms:**
Cottage Pinks (Dianthus plumarius) 8”h x 1”w. Red, white and pink flowers on same plant, blooms May–June. Foliage grows in tight grassy clumps that add interest after flowers have faded.
- Turkish Veronica (Veronica liwanensis)** 1”h x 18”w. Blooms May–June. Deep blue flowers cover a small, glossy, dark green mat of leaves.



Globe Blue Spruce



Chrysanthemum

Photos courtesy of Front Range Community College

Summer blooms:

Ice plant (Delosperma sp.) 1”h x 18”w. Blooms in cycles May–September. Low-growing, succulent leaves resembling jelly beans form a very dense mat of foliage. During bloom periods, the mat will be covered with stunning 1” daisy-like flowers. Different varieties will give either yellow, bronze, purple or pink blooms. Best in full blazing sun.

Double Knockout Red Rose (Rosa RADtko). 3’h x 3’w. Blooms in cycles May–October. Absolute staple in any yard. Maintenance-free. No pruning or fertilizing needed. Super drought-tolerant and disease-free. Double cherry red blossoms cover entire shrub when in bloom. Only 5+ hours of full sun needed to perform. A bit taller than most perennials, so be sure to plant a bit further back in the beds, based on height.

Moonbeam Coreopsis (Coreopsis verticillata ‘Moonbeam’) 2h x 18”w. Blooms June–September. Creamy yellow daisy-like flowers atop thread-like stems. Very delicate and airy looking. Can handle any soil condition and very drought-tolerant.

Fall blooms:

Purple Dome Aster (Aster novae-angliae ‘Purple Dome’) 18”x18”. Blooms August–September. Flowers are royal purple with greenish-gold central star. Disease-resistant. Perfect to bring cut flowers into the house. TIP: Prune back entire mound of leaves and stems down to 6” in June time frame to double amount of blooms in fall. Also allows plant to be more compact and less floppy.

Cushion Mum (Chrysanthemum hyb.) 18”h x 24”w. Blooms September–October. Mums are common for a good reason. Long autumn color when nothing else is in bloom. Comes in reds, rusts, yellows and whites. A gorgeous cushion of color!

Winter interest:

Canadale Gold Euonymus (Euonymus fortunei ‘Canadale Gold’): 3’h x 4’w. Large green leaves with yellow margins. Yellow leaves brighten dark spaces. Thick leaves stay on this compact shrub year-round adding winter interest. Pairs well with Double Knockout red rose.

Globe blue spruce (Picea pungens ‘Globosa’) 3’h x 4’w. Compact, rounded dwarf spruce with bright powder blue needles.

Laura Robinson is a landscape designer and horticulturist. She owns Sundial Designs, Inc., a Stapleton-based design/build company that serves Stapleton and the greater metro Denver area. She can be reached at www.sundialdesigns.com.



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by Jon Meredith

The Rockies Can Keep My Opening Day Ticket This Year

Opening Day has always been a metaphor for renewal. Winter is coming to a close, days are longer, flowers are beginning to bloom and every major league team is tied for first place. There is an air of hope and optimism among us all, not just baseball fans. Thomas Boswell, a well-known Washington Post sports columnist, wrote once that "time begins on opening day," and for most of us it does because we are outdoors again. There are many things to enjoy in early spring here in Colorado: two feet of spring snow that melts the next day (while everyone in the rest of the country thinks that we are still stuck in our igloos), spring skiing, golf, bicycling and our beautiful parks. Those things do not include spending a fortune on opening day Rockies tickets when the club has made absolutely no improvements since their worst finish ever, last fall.

For the first time since the Rockies came to town I will be absent from the

opening-day festivities at 20th and Blake. I have been such an ardent fan in the past that I took my five-year-old daughter to the first Rockies game ever at Shea stadium in Queens. No one will notice my absence because the game will still sell out and fans, by and large, will have a wonderful time whether their team wins or loses. That is part of the problem: despite the team having one of the worst overall records in all of Major League Baseball over the last 20 years, fans still go to 20th and Blake and many of them are really not all that concerned with the outcome of the baseball games.

For fans that do go, there are bands outside the stadium, wonderfully courteous ushers, a huge American flag covers the entire outfield, our military is duly honored, players introduced (many of the home team players most fans have never heard of before), a rousing national anthem is played and then there is a fighter jet flyover. This year, there will be no flyover because of the sequester.

Unfortunately, all the pomp and circumstance is not worth the price of a ticket, not this spring.

The Rockies are coming off their worst season ever. That is saying a lot for a 20-year-old team that has been in the playoffs only three times, never won their division and perpetually relies on developing players who somehow don't make it in the big leagues (Tulo being a very notable exception). Over the previous years, there has been something to look forward to about the team. We once had the Blake Street Bombers who could always outslug other teams to a win. Our current hitting coach, Dante Bichette, was in left field and it was always a collective gasp if the ball was hit to him, since fans were never certain he was going to catch it. We had Larry Walker, one of the all-time best right fielders and Todd Helton, in his prime, was on the fast track to the Hall of Fame. We used to acquire a few new pitchers in the off season who would at least give one hope that

they could pitch at a mile high.

So what do the Rockies do in this off season to avoid another debacle? Not really anything other than sign a high school coach to manage and resign Jeff Francis from the scrapheap. The only other team in the majors to spend less than the Rockies is the New York Mets, who are in horrible financial condition due to their owners being involved with the Bernie Madoff scandal.

So, for the first time ever, the team is not worth the price of admission on opening day. The Rockies play in a division that certainly does not stand pat. The Dodgers have replaced the Yankees as baseball's biggest spenders and the Giants have won two of the last three World Series. All this adds up to no hope for the hometown team, no chance for a renewal and one big fan missing on Opening Day.

Jon Meredith lives in Stapleton. He can be reached at jon.meredith@q.com.

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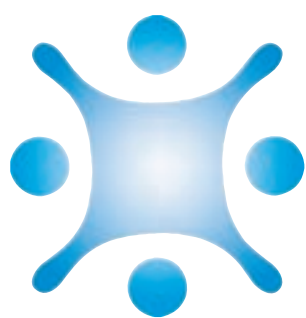
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Call for Artists for Open Studio Event in Stapleton and NE Denver

A group of local artists is looking for other artists who would like to participate in an open studio event in Stapleton and NE Denver. The spirit of the event, proposed for late September 2013, is to educate the public on the talent, time and methods involved in the creation of each artist’s medium and to showcase artists’ work in their own studios. Painters, photographers, sculptors, jewelry makers, fiber artists, and any other artists who would like to participate are invited to contact Lin Clark at Lin@ArtandFramingStapleton.com. Artists who do not have a home studio can also participate using optional studio locations.

Perimeter Trail at Rocky Mountain Arsenal Offers 26-Mile Off-Road Route for Cyclists

A reader commented on last month’s article about a bike route to the Arsenal—saying it’s ironic to have a bike route to a place that doesn’t allow bikes. We contacted the Arsenal to see if bikes will be allowed in the future. They said they’ll be soliciting community feedback this summer on their future plans (we’ll announce those meetings). In the meantime we have posted a map of the Arsenal’s perimeter trail at Front-PorchStapleton.com > Article Supplements.



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Left: Players erupt during the final minutes of the game that put them into the State semi-final tournament. Above: Bailee Cotton on her way to a basket in the first round of the playoffs against Coal Ridge. DSST won 67-37.

A Cinderella Season for the Lady Knights

By Jack Gurr

There is no way around it, DSST: Stapleton High School is not known for its athletics. The school has made incredible strides in academic achievement and is one of the best charter schools in all of Colorado. But with all that focus on academic greatness, athletics seem to have fallen through the cracks. The school has had 100 percent college acceptance in each of its nine years, but a state championship has continued to elude it. This black mark on the school’s reputation was nearly erased during the month of March when the DSST girls’ basketball team took part in the state playoffs at CSU’s Moby Arena in Ft. Collins. The Lady Knights made it all the way to the Final Four, and ended with a third-place trophy after beating the number-one ranked team entering the tournament.



Lady Knights basketball coach Geneice (CeCe) Brame

The Lady Knights enjoyed a relatively easy regular season, plowing through some opponents by a margin of 60 or 70 points, and finishing the regular season with an impressive 24-3 record. Holy Family, the team that ended up defeating the Ladies in the Final Four, was one of only two teams that beat them in the regular season. (Holy Family went on to win the tournament for the fifth time in six years.) During the regular season the Lady Knights scored an average of 62 points per game, and had a perfect 11-0 league record. This average was helped by a team average of nearly 30 rebounds and 20 steals per game. The team’s aggressive style of play led by the dynamic Cotton sisters kept their opponents on their toes and the ball in their court.

The elder Cotton sister, Bradlee, a veteran senior, became the foundation of the team this year, averaging 11.5 points

and 5 rebounds per game while leading the team on and off the court. Bradlee was chosen as one of 20 (3A-5A) female players to participate in the SHOW, an elite all-star game,

taking place April 6 at the Pepsi Center. Additionally, she has been selected to represent the Frontier League in the State Game at Adams State University in June. Her sister, Bailee Cotton, a junior, ended the season in fifth place in scoring for all of 3A, eighth in blocks and ninth in rebounds.

Although the Cotton sisters were integral to DSST’s success, the team’s accomplishments do not land solely on their shoulders. For the first half of the year, before her season-ending injury, London Holland placed seventh in scoring, seventh in three pointers, sixth in steals, and eighth in assists for the entire Frontier League. Carmen Ramey, coming in for London after her injury, had big shoes to fill and rose to the occasion. In this writer’s opinion, this year’s Lady Knights

team was a dream team—a team of players worthy of being all-stars who played together seamlessly to produce one great season.

Coaching the girls this year, and an award-winner in her own right, was veteran head coach, Geneice “CeCe” Brame, named the Frontier League’s Coach of the Year. Assisting Coach CeCe were Darris Taylor-Lewis, Mary Cotton and Art Brame.

Although they are losing some of their biggest players after this season, I predict the Lady Knights will have an even better season next year. Stay tuned.

Jack Gurr, a junior at DSST: Stapleton, was an intern at the Front Porch.

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Why Is School Finance Reform So Critical Now?

By Carol Roberts

“Almost fifty cents of every tax dollar in Colorado goes to K-12 education. It is the single most significant and most important investment we make in the state,” says northeast Denver’s State Senator Michael Johnston. “When you look at this as Colorado’s biggest bet on the future of our state, we’re making this large investment because we think education is the most likely opportunity to dramatically improve the state over the next 50 years.” Johnston goes on to say that we need to make sure we’re using those dollars to make the most impact, and, “What we do with education in the state is the most profound statement of our values.”

This article will help readers understand the unintended consequences of the tax structure in our state created by the TABOR and Gallagher Amendments and how that has affected funding for our schools. Johnston explains, “The combination of these constitutional amendments has meant that in districts where their assessed valuations increased the most, their mill levies got driven down the fastest. So the result is some of the wealthiest districts in the states, by assessed property value, are paying one tenth of the tax rate that the poorest districts are paying.”

Johnston’s bill, designed to create more equitable educational opportunities among districts around the state, has already been amended in a way that he says “has the direct impact of being a big direct subsidy to all the suburban districts.”

The bill will be debated in the state senate early in April. “I don’t think it will stand in it’s current form,” Johnston says, adding, “We’ll have to figure out a compromise and I’m optimistic about that.”

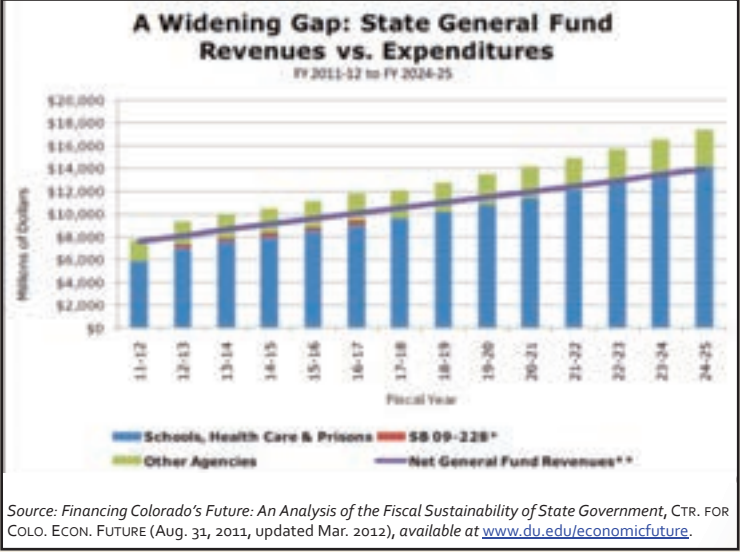
What’s wrong with our school finance system?

Johnston, a former educator, has spent the past two years talking to over 2,000 Coloradans to learn what’s not working and how best to modify our school financing system. His conclusion? The current system, established almost 20 years ago, has three major flaws:

It doesn’t provide adequate funding—Colorado ranked 42nd of 51 in per pupil spending in 2010—\$2,518 less per pupil than the U.S. average.

It doesn’t provide equitable education to all Colorado children—The funding formula results in wealthier districts getting more funds than poorer districts.

It’s not fiscally sustainable—According a projection by Denver University, under our current tax structure, the state will only be able to pay for schools, health care and prisons, with no remaining general fund revenue for other agencies by the year 2024, as illustrated in the Revenues vs. Expenditures chart at left.



How does the current funding formula work?

A base amount of per pupil funding is set for each pupil, currently about \$5800.

The base amount is adjusted based on three factors (called weights).

- To compensate for the fact that smaller districts can’t get the same economies of scale as larger ones, additional funds are given to smaller districts,
 - To compensate for differences in cost of living, additional funds are given to schools in areas that are very expensive (the largest of the weighting factors)
 - To compensate for the fact that students from low socio-economic families need extra educational services, additional funds are allocated for students who qualify for free lunch.
- In addition to the funds described above, the state partially



funds “categorical” programs, which include special education, English language learners, gifted and talented, and transportation, among others. The amounts from the state don’t fully cover the cost of the programs (with school districts particularly needing to supplement special education and English language learners programs).

The base and the categorical amounts are protected by Amendment 23 and must be increased every year by the rate of inflation.

But the weights aren’t protected by Amendment 23 and, due to decreasing revenues in recent years, the state has been cutting the amount allocated for these weights (referred to as “the negative factor.” In 2012-13, \$1.1 billion was cut from K-12 weights.)

The current average per pupil funding amount for base plus weights is \$6474. Categorical funds are in addition to that amount.

How are the state and local contributions determined?

The answer is, it varies widely. And therein lies the equity problem. But first, an explanation of mill levies:

One mill is .001 (\$1 per \$1,000 value). Property taxes are determined by multiplying the mill levy by the assessed value of a property. Currently, the state-mandated amount for assessed value is 7.96% of the actual property value.

For example, a property valued at \$250,000 would have an assessed value of \$19,900 (.0796 x \$200K). A mill levy of 27 mills (the current state maximum for school taxes) would yield a tax of \$537.30 (.027 x \$19,900).

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Left: The Senate Education Committee hearing room was packed when Sen. Johnston presented the school finance reform bill. Right: Sen. Johnston shares a hug with Keith King, former state senator from Colorado Springs.

A home valued at \$1,000,000 would have an assessed value of \$79,600. A mill levy of 3 mills would yield a tax of \$238.80. Why would a district with high property wealth have a low mill levy and a district with low property wealth have high a high mill levy? A district with a very large tax base can raise a large amount of funds with a low mill levy. A district with a lower tax base would get much less tax money from the same rate, as shown in the example below.

Tax Revenue Relative to Property Wealth

District	Property Wealth	2.5 Mills/Pupil
District 1	\$2,553,629,900	\$3,879
District 2	\$30,159,400	\$91

In years past, the majority of school funding came from local tax revenues. But the recession and Colorado's tax structure (Gallagher Amendment, Amendment 23 and TABOR [Taxpayer Bill of Rights, which restricts the growth of tax revenue and requires a vote for all mill levy increases]) have shifted that formula. Because of the significant cost-of-living weight in per pupil funding and the variations in mill levies, the state, in many cases, provides the highest levels of support to the wealthiest districts (see chart below).

Variations Among Disticts in Property Wealth, Mill Levy and State Share

District	Property Wealth	% Poverty	Mill Levy	State Share
District 1	\$1,493,634,640	31.42%	6.6 mills	62%
District 2	\$64,818,546	91.52%	27.0 mills	26%

Under the current school finance system, districts with low mill levies have no obligation to increase them (and, under TABOR, a vote would be required to increase them).

Increase in State Share of Per Pupil Funding

Year	Avg Mill	State Share	Local Share
FY 94-95	40	30%	70%
FY 12-13	20	64%	36%

At the same time, Amendment 23 requires the state to make up the difference between local tax collections and the state mandated per pupil amount, regardless of the ability of that district to raise funds based on property wealth. So a district can have a lot of property wealth and a low mill levy and still get a lot of state support. Or a district could have low property wealth, a high mill levy and low state support. Among Colorado's 178 school districts, there are wide differences in mill levies and state funding percentage, as illustrated in the prior chart.

Currently, the statewide average is 64% of per pupil funding paid by the state and 36% paid by local districts. The Gallagher Amendment, which many people don't know about or understand, also plays a critical role in the balance between state and local contributions to school funding. The Gallagher amendment stipulates a 55%-45% ratio of commercial to residential property tax collection. It sets a commercial assessment rate of 29% of Assessed Value (AV) and requires the residential rate to float to meet the 45% ratio. When residential property values increase more rapidly than commercial properties, the assessed value of residential properties (currently 7.96%) is lowered to keep the 55-45% ratio.

Lawsuit for Inequities in Colorado Education

Based on inequities between districts such as the ones shown above, a lawsuit was brought against the state of Colorado by a group of parents from the San Luis Valley claiming the state is not providing a "thorough and uniform" system of education as mandated by the Colorado Constitution (Lobato vs. the State of Colorado). In December 2011 a judge ruled in favor of the parents' claim. It is now being heard by the state Supreme Court and if upheld is likely to mandate additional funding and changes to equalize state support to districts with less property wealth.

What school finance changes are being proposed?

A unique aspect of this bill is that if the legislature passes it, it won't become law until it goes on a statewide ballot and voters ap-



prove the additional taxes needed to implement the bill. (The total statewide tax increase is estimated to be about \$1 billion—about the same amount cut from the weighted factors in the 2012-13 school funding.)

New Method for Calculating Student Count:

The bill proposes allocating funding to districts based on

average daily membership (ADM) rather than the current system of a one day count on October 1. The one-day count had a more adverse effect on small districts, districts with high mobility, or districts with rapidly changing enrollments (and created a disincentive to add new students after October 1).

Changes to Base Funding:

Preschool—Make a commitment that all children eligible for the Colorado Preschool Program can attend.

Kindergarten—Fully fund full day kindergarten (rather than half day).

Grade 1-8—Funding would remain the same.

Grades 9-12—Fund online learning, blended learning (online with classroom) and concurrent enrollment in high school and college.

ASCENT—Add funding for 5th year high school students who meet certain criteria to take college courses paid for by their public school.

(continued on page 30)

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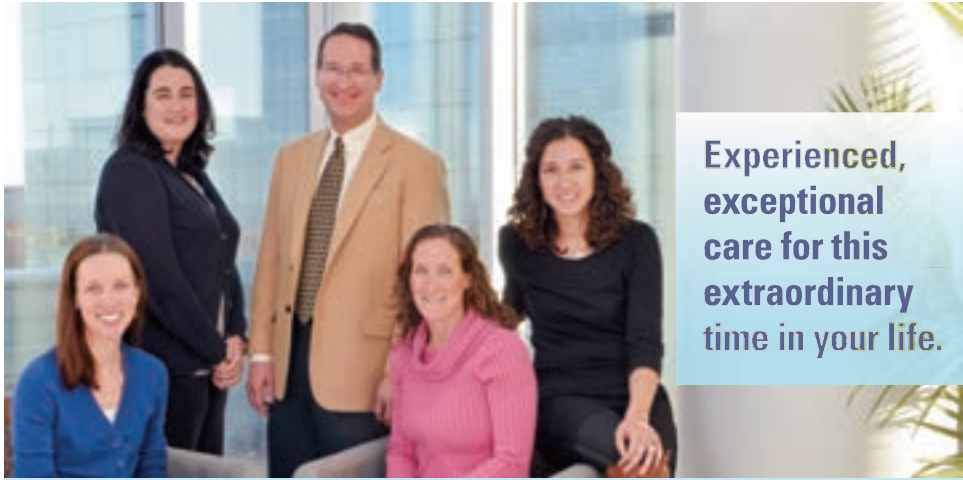
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Above left: Water covered the paths and bridges, but Westerly Creek contained the stormwater during the heavy rain in July 2011. **Above:** Westerly Creek's native vegetation with beautiful fall colors. **Above right:** "Drop structures" are built to control the flow of fast-moving water. When Westerly Creek was built, one of the methods of choice was stair-stepped concrete. **Right:** Today a more natural use of rocks and boulders (and less concrete) is the preferred method in natural settings. **Left:** Photo shows erosion of the banks in a section of Westerly Creek.



Photo courtesy of Muller Engineering

By Carol Roberts

Although Westerly Creek performed flawlessly in the (almost) hundred-year flood on July 7, 2011 (see Aug. 2011 Front Porch article), ten years of storm water has caused some erosion in parts of the creek bed and banks—and now a group of engineers is at work to find the best way to stop the erosion and maintain the natural look of the park.

With its bridges and curving concrete paths for cyclists, walkers and runners—along with the native vegetation, wildlife and, of course, the creek itself—Westerly Creek Park offers an easily accessible escape from city living for residents of NE Denver. But natural as it looks, the almost one-mile stretch from 26th to 35th Ave. (just east of Beeler St.) was a major engineering feat as a combined flood control channel and open space park.

"What the developer did here was impressive. To take a system that was underground and bring it back to the surface—that was the biggest part of this project," says Barbara

Chongtoua, senior project engineer with Urban Drainage. "This would have been a dream project for most communities. What was done to Westerly Creek (putting it underground when Stapleton was an airport) was how things were done in the 60s and 70s. Now we're realizing it's an amenity and we want to expose it, but it's very costly to do. Those that take this on, I have to applaud them...to have enough vision to say, 'This is something we can build. It can be the backbone of our neighborhood.'"

Since water flows without respect for city or county boundaries, drainage plans require a sign-off from the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District to be sure storm water will flow into the proper drainage channels and not into homes in an adjoining community. In the case of a major drainage channel like Westerly Creek, Urban Drainage, once they sign off on the plans, takes financial responsibility for future maintenance to keep the system working optimally.

Now, ten years after construction, Urban Drainage has identified specific erosion problems, and will fund the work

to correct the problem.

Although the system is still working well, in areas where the water moves most rapidly, it is carrying away soil from the bottom of the creek. Chongtoua points out that as water moves through a system, it's "hungry for sediment." In a natural system, sediment flows in and sediment is carried away—and it maintains a balance. In this system, the water coming in is from an urban drainage system so it does not carry sediment to replace that which is being lost. As a result, Westerly Creek is getting deeper in some areas and banks are getting steeper and caving in (as shown in the lower left photo above).

The current engineering wisdom for "natural" drainage channels in urban settings is to observe how water behaves in genuine natural settings and replicate a natural-as-possible flow of water in the manmade channel. John Yager of Muller Engineering, a contractor for Urban Drainage, says engineers now are choosing to use rocks rather than concrete to control the flow and stop erosion with a less engineered look, as shown above in the lower right photo. And, where possible, vegetation is a favored method to prevent erosion. In Westerly Creek native vegetation was planted and has worked effectively through much of the park to stop erosion.

The engineers from Urban Drainage pointed out that there isn't even a photo available of how the Westerly Creek channel looked before the creek was put into the underground pipes while Stapleton was an airport. They also pointed out that during the 50 years it was in underground pipes, it didn't have the opportunity to evolve naturally. So they are watching Westerly Creek as it evolves to see how the water wants to flow and determine which are the best techniques to stop the erosion and maintain the natural appearance. Work will be done in stages over a period of years and is expected to be minimally intrusive to visitors.

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Update

26th Ave Update

The Aurora Planning Commission held a hearing on March 13 about the 2-acre park at 26th and Fulton proposed by Forest City. Five speakers from Stapleton spoke in support of the park and also brought up other concerns associated with the 26th Ave. area including the unfinished road, dumping in the unfinished future park area, lighting, and the need for police patrol. The commission unanimously voted in favor of the park.

Construction of the street connections, by agreement between the City of Denver and Aurora, is scheduled to be completed by September and much of the park construction is expected to occur concurrent with the street work.

Stanley Aviation

A private ownership group is looking to transform the 22.5 acre Stanley Aviation property in NW Aurora into a 140,000 square foot center for entertainment and technology innovation. The proposed facility will become a home for Colorado's creative industries, whether they be in technology, media creation, advertising, marketing, fine art, or any other industry. The campus will provide offices, production space, editing suite, sound bays, live performance events, onsite catering and refreshments. The group hopes to make a formal announcement next month.

Walking Maps and Guided Walking Trips

Free compact water proof walking maps of Stapleton are available at The Hub at Stapleton (located on the south side of the building at the corner of E. 29th Avenue and Roslyn St.). The maps, which contain health and safety tips, are being distributed free to promote the benefits of walking; getting to know local businesses; meeting neighbors; seeing, hearing, feeling nature; stumbling upon the unexpected.

Free guided neighborhood walking trips are also being offered from April to July by Walk2Connect. A Park Hill walking trip is scheduled for April 24, 5:30 - 7:30pm. RSVP at jonathon@walk2connect.com or call 303.908.0076 or visit Walk2Connect.com.

A three-month schedule of NE Denver walks is posted at www.FrontPorchStapleton.com.

Bluff Lake



What You Probably Didn't Know About Bluff Lake

The land around Bluff Lake was set aside for decades as a buffer/crash zone for Stapleton airport. When the airport closed, the Sierra Club filed a lawsuit due to de-icing fluid in the area and generated some money to preserve the land and build some of the amenities. The settlement agreement specified that the two main purposes for the land would be open space/wildlife refuge and environmental science. For almost 20 years, Bluff Lake has had 4-5,000 kids visit every year on school field trips. Students spend half a day at the lake on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

"There aren't that many tracts of land in Colorado the size of Bluff Lake, 123 acres, that have quite the biodiversity that Bluff Lake has. It's hard to believe," says Bluff Lake Executive Director Jeff

Lamontagne. "Because it's along Sand Creek Greenway, it has a significant wetlands area, about 20 acres of woodlands or forest, and short grass prairie—all these habitats come together in this one spot. So it really was a remarkable bit of foresight by our predecessors to set aside the land. Tens of thousands of hours have been put into restoring the land and creating an even better habitat for the flora and fauna that live there or pass through."

Some of the volunteer labor has been done by corporations that do team building while they do habitat restoration.

In 2008, the land was transferred from the city of Denver to Bluff Lake, a non-profit organization, and they became the full owners of the

property. The transfer agreement requires that the land be used for a wildlife refuge and open space, which means no dogs and no bikes are allowed.

Race for Open Space

Saturday, April 20, Bluff Lake Nature Center

9am, 5K Walk/Run 8:50am Kids Run

Earth Day Fest 10am-2pm, \$5 donation

Register for the race at runningguru.com

Search for "Race for Open Space"

Proceeds benefit Bluff Lake and Sand Creek

property. The transfer agreement requires that the land be used for a wildlife refuge and open space, which means no dogs and no bikes are allowed.

Bluff Lake has teamed up with Sand Creek to do a joint fundraiser, Race for Open Space and Earth Day Fest on April 20. That event, and others, have been so successful Lamontagne says they are looking at opening up the Refuge for more public events where people have a good time and learn about the unique habitat there.

Perhaps most exciting is a recent promise that Bluff Lake has been selected to receive funding that will give them a year-round lake. "We have been verbally guaranteed from one source that we will get it," says Lamontagne. "It's just a matter of when. It may be a number of years. This past year has been so dry, the lake was dried out much of the time. Both for our guests and for our wildlife we'll have a better site and community amenity with a year round water supply."

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Damaged Artwork Removed from F15 Pool

By Barbara Neal

As a result of several instances of damage to the public art, Conditional Reflections, which formed the façade of the bathhouse at F15 Pool, this artwork will be removed and replaced by vertical cedar siding. The new siding will be completed in time for the opening of the pool Memorial Day weekend. This artwork was designed in three sections, each with five laminated glass panels. Each section depicts a stage of water: Frost, Liquid and Vapor.

The Stapleton Public Art Master Plan provides for the acquisition of artwork for the Stapleton community with the funding provided by the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) but those funds may not be used for maintenance or conservation.

After the damage this past summer, the Board of The Park Creek Metropolitan District (PCMD) appointed a committee to assess the artwork and identify a solution for the challenges to this artwork. The assessment revealed additional problems with the glass panels and the framework securing the panels. The committee explored a variety of solutions and concluded that the artwork could not be repaired or replaced successfully.

In January, the Public Art Advisory Committee reviewed the criteria established in the Public Art Master Plan for removing damaged artwork:

The condition or security of the work of art cannot be reasonably assured in its present location.

The work is damaged and repair is not practical or feasible, (continued on page 28)

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SUN Meetings are held on the 4th Monday of every month at 7:30pm at the Central Park Recreation Center, 9651 MLK Jr. Blvd. For information about SUN, visit www.stapletonunitedneighbors.com. To contact SUN or confirm meeting time, email stapletonunitedneighbors@gmail.com



Stapleton Earth Night Movie and Dinner

Monday, April 22

Stapleton MCA Community
Room 2823 Roslyn St.,
6–8:30pm



The Stapleton United Neighbors Sustainability Committee invites you to the fourth annual Earth Day event. We will screen a short film, *Seeds of Freedom*, and an award-winning full-feature film about the danger of genetically modified organisms (GMO), *Genetic Roulette—The Gamble of Our Lives*. There will be GMO-free cuisine by **The Garden** restaurant in Park Hill and libations graciously donated by **Guayaki Yerba Mate**.

Dinner will be served starting at 6pm with wonderful door prizes from our sponsors at 6:30pm and the movie at 7pm.

Entry to the movie only is FREE but you must reserve a ticket. Tickets for food are \$8 if purchased no later than April 15, and \$10 after that and at the door. We have a limit of 50 tickets, so please purchase early at <http://sunearthnight2013.eventbrite.com>. To pay by check or cash, contact SUNSustainability@gmail.com.

Thank you to our partners **Stapleton MCA**, **GMO Free Colorado**, **The Garden**, **Guayaki Yerba Mate**, and door-prize sponsors **SUN**, **Mile High Organics** with their bin of fresh food, and **Juice Plus+** with veggie and fruit chewables.

Stapleton Arbor Day Tree Planting



Saturday, April 27, Founder's Green
2900 Syracuse St., 8am–2pm

Please join the Stapleton MCA and SUN for Arbor Day tree planting. Come to Founder's Green to meet the sponsors from last year's SEED event. They are the ones who made this possible, so come and thank them for their generosity. There will be information booths as well as a sign-up booth where you can volunteer to help plant trees. Please arrive at 8am if you want to register.

The planting will take place in various pocket parks around Stapleton and all volunteers will receive food and a T-shirt. Be a part of history!

Thank you to our sponsors: Stapleton MCA, Forest City, The Home Depot, Stapleton Foundation, The HUB at Stapleton, Jim N' Nicks, Suntalk Solar, Live Green Real Estate, Quebec Square Family Dentistry, Real Goods Solar, Colorado Carbon Fund, and Rocky Mountain Music for Aardvarks.

For more information on these events, email the *SUN Sustainability Committee* at SUNSustainability@gmail.com.

Letter to the Editor

Is this what you want on your street? This is the question I would ask all Stapleton residents?

Michael Sennett



Removal of Public Art at F15 Pool

(continued from page 27) or it no longer represents the artist's intent.

The work requires excessive maintenance or has faults of design or workmanship.

The committee recommended to the Board of The Park Creek Metropolitan District that the artwork be deaccessioned, removed and destroyed. The artwork cannot be relocated because the act of removing it will destroy it.

The committee investigated more than a dozen different options for the façade of the F15 Pool bathhouse seeking a cost-effective solution that would complement the building, provide privacy for the dressing rooms and be sustainable. The new vertical cedar panels will be similar to the walls on the south side of the entry way. The Master Community Association (MCA) will increase the lighting capacity inside the dressing rooms.

For more information about these projects or the public art program contact Barbara Neal at barb-neal@mindspring.com.

Barbara Neal is the Public Art Consultant for Forest City Stapleton, Inc.



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Opinion—Colorado Needs Another Point of View and Another Form of Punishment

By Rep. Angela Williams (D-Denver-CO)

Colorado is a state of many pleasant surprises. We’ve made great history despite the opinions of many who assume we are governed by outdated Rocky Mountain stereotypes. We’ve transformed ourselves from sleepy rural plains to bustling Gateway to the West, a blossoming tech corridor with a world class airport. Our largest city has already had not one, but two African American mayors, a Latino mayor and two women Members of Congress. For the first time in our history, we elected five African American State Representatives to the Colorado State House. At one point, we boasted a black Senate President and a black House Speaker ... at the same time. We are now an open arms open-minded purple state rather than an intolerant uncompromising red state.

But, when it comes to the death penalty, we have a long way to go.

The death penalty in Colorado is an ugly stain on an otherwise great state. Modern Colorado should be bigger than that. Yet, we’re stuck in another era of antiquated “crime and punishment” models. In reality, Colorado’s citizens are being punished, guilty from our unnecessary association with an unnecessary act of government-sanctioned violence.

Repealing Colorado’s death penalty is both sound logic and clear moral judgment. When we witness its current application, we see 19th and 20th century Colorado intruding on forward-thinking, progressive Colorado: for example, all three men currently awaiting execution are all African American.

Something is wrong with that picture. A joint University of Denver and Rowan law school study found that prosecutors pursue the death penalty in only 3 percent of first degree murders it applies to. Interestingly enough, 4 percent of the state’s population is African American.

For a law that is used only 3 percent of the time we’re able to use it, we waste \$1 million of scarce taxpayer money to disproportionately impact our communities of color. Still, we’re not showing any real proof of its primary goal: deterring crime. There’s been only one execution since 1977. That’s \$1 million a year that could be spent on increasing the state Bureau of Investigations cold case unit from 1 staff person to 8.

Colorado is also a very spiritual state with a population that respects life as God made it. As we consider repealing state-sponsored executions, we have to ask ourselves if we, as fellow human beings, have the right to determine

who lives and who dies. It was April 19, 1995 when I found myself gripped by fear at the news of the Oklahoma City bombing by mass murderer Timothy McVeigh. I grew up in Oklahoma and had many family members who lived and worked in what is affectionately known as “OKC.” A sister-in-law who worked in the Alfred P. Murrah federal building was badly injured. Days and weeks of horror passed by as I watched news reports and waited for updates from family. In the meantime, McVeigh sat quietly in a jail cell awaiting trial, conviction and an execution date scheduled six years later.

Many families victimized by that bombing felt that McVeigh deserved a greater punishment. Execution was entirely too easy and too final. Ultimately, these views shaped and confirmed my beliefs on the uselessness of the death penalty. McVeigh, like so many death row inmates who committed horrific acts, never really suffered. He never felt the pain of those children in the Murrah building day care, their young lives snatched away from them. The sleep induced by the lethal injection was nowhere near as cruel or inhumane as the terror he inflicted on thousands of innocent people. Instead of spending life rotting away in a 5x5 cell for the rest of his life, McVeigh simply went to sleep.

We can be smart about the death penalty by repealing it or we can continue to blindly believe a quick fix band-aid in the heat of an emotive moment can make the pain go away. In reality, it doesn’t. But, getting rid of it can give us the valuable space we need to heal.

The author represents Colorado’s 7th legislative district.



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Taylor Named to DPS Board

(continued from page 1) hand. "I'm past that," he says, adding, "I think any of the candidates would have been a great selection." However, Taylor does feel his extensive community involvement made him stand out. "It led to me being... recognized throughout the city as someone who has been actively engaged in workforce, government and education and had a clear perspective on how to achieve success. I'm very proud of my track record."

Although Taylor says he can't speak to the specifics of how he will accomplish his goals as a board member, he feels his past experiences will give him direction. Those past experiences include having worked in corporate sales

and marketing for many years, followed by a decade handling minority outreach for Stapleton developer, Forest City. He then became the president and CEO of the Urban League of Metropolitan Denver.

Taylor grew up going to a segregated school in Texas that had high academic standards and a culture of excellence and says he and his wife passed on that value to their children. As a parent, he worked to improve his neighborhood school. Taylor and his wife, Gloria, were faced with the choice of sending their children to a low-performing neighborhood high school or sending them out of the neighborhood. They chose to mentor their kids and work with other parents and the administration to improve their neighborhood school rather than leave it.

When asked to co-chair the DPS turnaround committee for far Northeast Denver, Taylor took on the challenge, working with the community and DPS staff to help put that school reform effort in place. He says that turnaround has resulted in increased school attendance and retention of students and "a culture of excellence," a term Taylor comes back to again and again.

Taylor believes his goal to eliminate the

achievement gap "will never happen until we want it to change—and in order for it to change, we have to go at this like it is a war. And that's what the school board can be; acting like generals we are going to win this war...on low achievement." Taylor adds that the board needs to avoid focusing on what hasn't worked in the past, instead defining the current goal and avoiding distractions from agenda items that he feels have nothing to do with that goal.

"When you get distracted from what you're trying to achieve, you won't achieve it," he adds.

Taylor views the need for cultural change as a national issue, not

just a local one. "Our students are the center of our community. I truly believe that and I will work to make sure that others in our community realize the importance of our schools," Taylor says. "(We need to) ride the tide of filling the pipeline with the future leaders, the future employers and the future employees in this country. We may just be talking about Denver and DPS, but my vision is much broader than that. Denver, Colorado is in the perfect position to provide a template for leadership on how we get there."

Taylor says he will run for the board seat in the November election so he can, if elected, continue working toward his goals for DPS. "I can't accomplish the changes I want to see happen in just a few short months...It will take more than a few months to effect a corporate change throughout our system."

One of the issues Taylor voted on at his first DPS board meeting March 21 was whether to approve the funding package for the fourth elementary school in Stapleton. Taylor voted in favor of it, saying it is part of the original Stapleton development agreement. He points out that any new development gets roads, parks, retail and schools, and, "This is simply phasing in new schools as we go, according to the need."



Landri Taylor kisses his wife Gloria as his daughter Kristol applauds, following his swearing in as an interim DPS Board member for NE Denver, including Stapleton and Park Hill.

School Finance

(continued from page 25)

Changes to Weights:

Keep weights for small districts but make that weight available only to districts with pupil counts of 4,300 or fewer, which are too small to achieve meaningful economies of scale. (Currently, larger districts are also getting this weight.)

Add students who get reduced lunch for at-risk funding, not just free lunch.

Add a new weight for English language learners (ELL) with students eligible for five years of the extra funds. Studies have shown it takes five years for these students to catch

up. The above chart shows the increased need for additional funding for ELL.

Remove the weight for cost of living to help create the "thorough and uniform" education system called for by the state constitution. Wealthy districts have the capacity to address cost of living for their personnel, and the state has less of an interest in shouldering that responsibility for affluent districts than assuming responsibility for recruitment and retention of educators in impoverished districts.

Proposed Changes to Categoricals:

Increase funding for special education and for gifted and talented, the programs districts currently supplement the most.

Eliminate at-risk and English language categorical since they've been added to the weights

Remaining categorical remain the same.

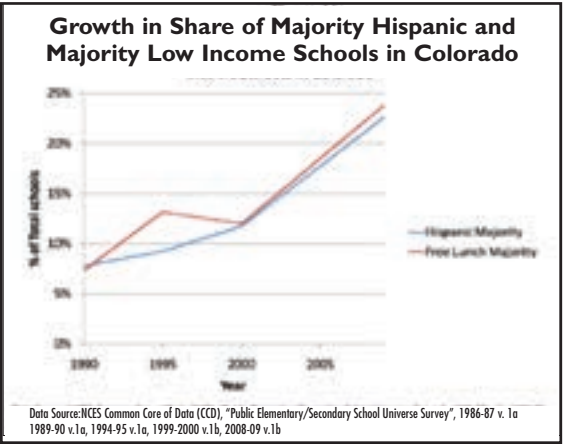
Proposed Changes to State and Local Share of Funds:

The proposed formula is based on ability to pay. A district's share of state funding would take into consideration the district's median income, assessed valuation of property wealth per pupil, and concentration

of free and reduced

lunch (FRL) students. Districts that will lose state share will have the option to raise their mill levies to make up the lost state funding, but no district will have to levy more than 25 mills for school taxes.

If a district receives more state share than it currently does, it will not be permitted to drop its mill levy. To prevent an abrupt loss of funding in districts whose state share is reduced, remedies are proposed to ease the transition. Other states in the country have successfully used a similar ability-to-pay formula. The share of state to local funding will remain as it is now, 64% state and 36% local.



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CASA experience leads this couple to adoption

By Laurie Dunklee

A Stapleton couple with a commitment to helping abused and neglected kids plans to escalate their role by becoming adoptive parents.

Jason and Michelle Emerson-Lewis have worked for four years as CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) volunteers, advocating for abused and neglected children in the child welfare court system. Most of the children have been removed from their homes and are in foster care.

"They've lived through something most kids don't have to," said Jason Emerson-Lewis. "They need someone to speak up for them because even though the folks in the social services system do care, the system is overworked and underbudgeted."

"So the CASA volunteer is there to focus all their energy on one family, one case at a time. We're there to look out for the kids."

CASA volunteers spend their time getting to know the family and investigating every aspect of the children's welfare, including interviewing medical professionals and teachers. They advocate for the best interests of the child in court, providing testimony if needed. In 2011, Denver CASA provided advocacy for 425 children through 154 volunteers.

"We make sure the kids don't fall through the cracks in the system," said Michelle. "We make sure their needs are being met and that they are being treated properly. It makes a big difference in kids' lives."

Michelle, 41, teaches criminology at Arapahoe Community College and got involved with CASA after a CASA spokesperson addressed one of her classes in 2009. "Once I heard about it, I signed up right away," she said.

Michelle became a program director for CASA and invited Jason to become involved in 2010. Jason, 33, is a police officer in Greenwood Village.

Through their jobs, both Michelle and Jason saw the need to help children going through the child welfare system. "We saw the kids' need for a constant, stable adult in their lives," said Jason.

Jason and Michelle have each completed cases involving multiple siblings, ranging in age from 2 to 13. As CASA volunteers



CASA Volunteers Offer Stability and Security to Abused and Neglected Kids

they are required to help their assigned families until the case is decided; Michelle and Jason's cases lasted about 18 months.

Michelle advocated for her assigned kids' education by helping them to remain in the same school during the case. She also worked with their teachers and social workers to improve the children's attendance and prevent them from getting behind in their schoolwork.

One boy's particular needs challenged her persistence and ability to make the system work effectively. "I pushed to get him into a day treatment program to help with his behavioral and emotional issues," Michelle said. "Those programs cost money so it

was a fight to get it to happen, because who would pay for it? Ultimately I got the department (Health and Human Services) to pay for it. Otherwise his needs would have fallen through the cracks."

Both cases involved parents with substance abuse issues, and in both cases encouraging the parents was a big part of the job.

"The parents hear about what they did wrong all the time," said Jason. "We try to point out what they're doing right. Coaching parents can be very important. Sometimes the best thing for the children is having someone root for their parents."

In both completed cases the children were able to return to their parents.

Michelle is completing work on a second CASA case, while Jason now volunteers in CASA's Young Philanthropist Project (YPP) group. The YPP meets monthly to strategize recruiting and fundraising events to support CASA, including the Pinwheels for Prevention event and dining card recognizing April as child abuse prevention month (see the sidebar for more about this fundraiser).

"CASA is a nonprofit that gets its funding from the community," Jason said. "It's not a public agency and money is tight. And while all the advocates are volunteers, the supervisors are paid staff. So in order to have more volunteers, we need more supervisors too."

He noted that YPP is a good way to help without making the larger time commitment that being a CASA requires. "CASAs are required to spend 12 hours a month, but the reality is that it takes more time. I tried to visit my CASA kids

CASA volunteers Jason and Michelle Emerson-Lewis in their Stapleton home

every weekend. If you don't have the time and emotional commitment for that, then volunteering with YPP is a great way to help."

Jason has scaled back his time with CASA in order to prepare for an even greater commitment: he and Michelle plan to become foster parents and to eventually adopt a child.

Next Step: Foster-to-Adoption

Jason and Michelle's work as CASAs led them to a desire to become parents.

"It's hard to know children are languishing in the system because they have no home, when we have a good home right here," said Jason. "We can't help every kid but we can help one kid. Hopefully that kid will grow up to help other kids."

The Emerson-Lewises moved to Stapleton with adoption in mind. They hope to adopt a girl, age 8 to 12. "We saw Stapleton as a great place to raise a child, so we built a three-bedroom house on a lot with a yard," Jason said.

They are entering the Foster-to-Adoption program, which identifies children in the foster system who are unlikely to be returned to their parents.

"When kids can go to a foster home that becomes permanent, instead of transitioning again, it eliminates a disruptive move for them," Jason said, adding that fewer moves are best for a child's well-being and stability.

Once Jason and Michelle complete the training to become foster parents, they'll foster a child for a minimum of six months before adopting. "The system requires that much time to be sure the dynamics work," said Michelle. "Sometimes it takes longer. Each case is taken at its own pace."

The Emerson-Lewises are well aware of the challenges of adopting an abused or neglected child. "They may have abandonment, safety, mental health or medical is-

suues, such as fetal alcohol or drug syndrome," said Michelle. "Because of our experience with CASA, we know more about what to expect than some new parents might know."

"CASA was a good training ground for us, and it brought out our drive to be parents," said Jason.

He advised couples who are thinking of adopting to think through their capabilities. "Parents need to discuss beforehand what they can realistically do. The worst thing would be to get in over your head."

Jason said the basic requirements for success are simple. "Most important is to have love and patience. As long as you have those, the experience can go well."

To learn more about CASA, go to www.denvercasa.org. For more information on fostering and adopting, go to www.childwelfare.gov.



CASA/Pinwheels for Prevention Fundraiser

Mayor Michael Hancock and Julie Wilson, CASA, plant pinwheels at the Shops at Northfield. The Pinwheels for Prevention campaign is a reminder that April is child abuse prevention month and prevention of child abuse needs to be a continuing priority.

The Shops at Northfield are offering a buy one get one free card for \$20 to be used during the month of April at Northfield or The Orchard in Westminster. 100% of the proceeds support CASA. For more information, visit NorthfieldStapleton.com



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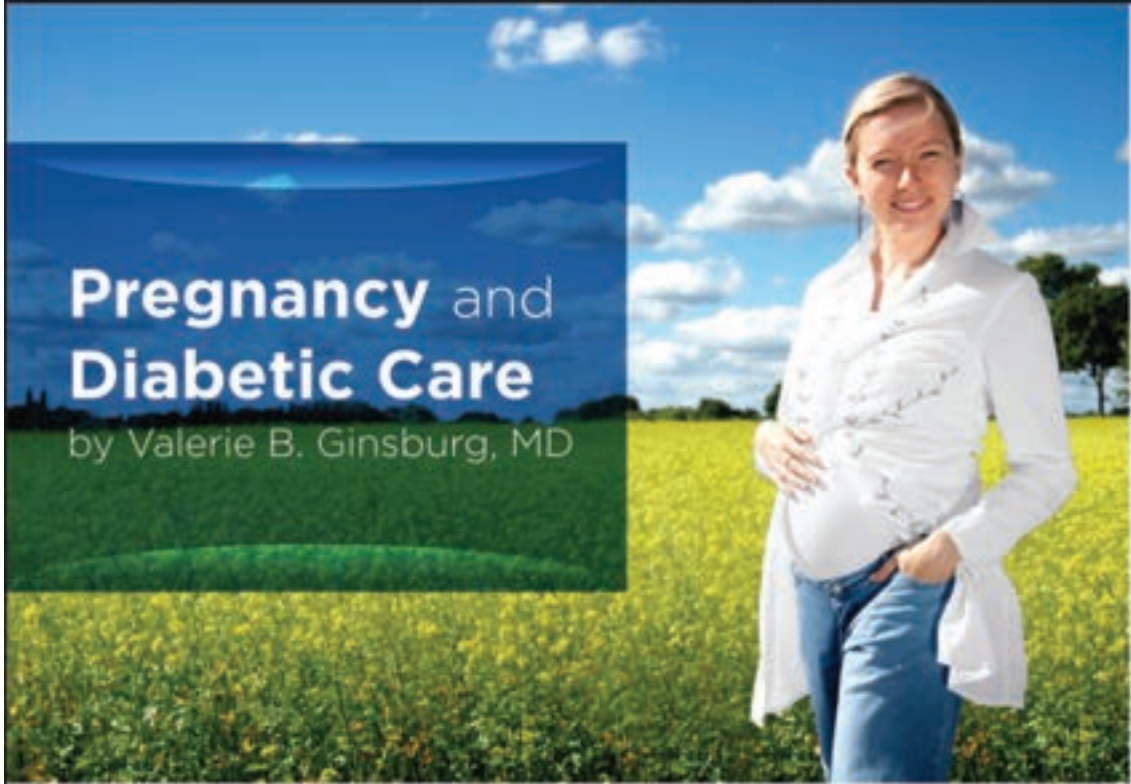



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Possible modifications to your insulin or diabetic medications
If you take insulin or oral medications, you may need to adjust the levels as your pregnancy progresses. Generally, your body will require more insulin during the last trimester of your pregnancy.

Weight gain
Many women think that pregnancy gives them license to eat for two. However, your daily calorie intake should only increase by 300 additional calories. So how much weight should you gain? Gaining between 20 and 25 pounds is typically a safe range during pregnancy, but this also depends on your pre-pregnancy weight. Discuss your appropriate weight gain target with your doctor.

If you would like to make an appointment with Dr. Ginsburg or Dr. Rustici, please contact the Stapleton Ob/Gyn office.



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