Isabella Bird—Stapleton’s 4th School

Unique Model for New Elementary School Drawn from Staff’s Years of Experience

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Isabella Bird Community School (IBCS), Stapleton’s fourth elementary school, will start up this fall in a temporary location and move to its new building in the Bluff Lake neighborhood in the fall of 2014. The school is named after a turn-of-the-20th-century explorer and adventurer who dedicated her life to helping others, a value that is a part of the school’s philosophy. IBCS is currently designated as an ECE-grade 5, but could change to ECE-8 based on community input in the coming years. The curriculum is comprised of elements including experiential and service learning, art and performance. “It’s a combination of things—we’ve found our own model,” says Lead Teacher Jeff Bushnell. The blended philosophy comes from the collective 75 years Bushnell, his co-Lead Teacher and Wife, Traci Bushnell, and Lead Administrator/Principal Sonny Zinn have from teaching in the U.S. and internationally.

A particularly unique aspect of this school is to enroll students from other countries who may not speak English. Starting in the fall of 2014, the school will be designated a Newcomer Center for families new to the United States and will have a Family Resource Center. Its purpose will be to provide services such as parenting and nutrition classes and to connect families with resources they may need including medical and dental health services.

(continued on page 4)
JUNE

See additional MCA activities at right.

Thursday, June 13
Active Minds Seminar: “The Great Depression” 7-8pm. MCA Community Room

events@stapletoncommunity.com

Friday, June 14
Move on The Green: “Monte Carlo Kingdom” Starts at dark. The Green

events@stapletoncommunity.com

Sat. and Sun., June 15 & 16
Wildlife viewing tours at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, 11:30am.

Sunday, June 16
First Farmers Market of the Season. 8:30am-12:30pm; Sundays through Oct. 13

The Green events@stapletoncommunity.com

Sunday, June 16
Active Minds Music Seminar & Brunch: Explore the life and times of George Gershwin 9-11am

F15 Pool events@stapletoncommunity.com

Saturday, June 22
Stapleton Rocks... a Concert for a Cause. Noon-10pm. The Green events@stapletoncommunity.com

Saturday, June 22
Bicycle Libracy Grand Opening at the Hub 10am-3pm (see article on page 20)

Wednesday, June 26
Bike to Work Day

www.3ccc.org/BikeToWork (see page xx for breakfast stops)

Friday, June 28
Move on The Green: “To Kill a Mockingbird” Starts at dark. The Green

events@stapletoncommunity.com

Saturday, June 29
Sweet William Market. 9am-2pm. The Green events@stapletoncommunity.com

*Stapleton MCA Community Room, 2823 Roslyn St. The Green, 2796 Ave. and Roslyn St. F15 pool 2823 Harvard St. West Crescent Fountain on 29th Ave. and Roslyn St.

Master Community Association

Stapleton Front Porch

The Stapleton Front Porch is published by Stapleton Front Porch, LLC, 2566 Syrene St., Denver, CO 80238. 33,000 papers are printed. The free paper is distributed during the first week of each month to homes and businesses in Stapleton, Park Hill, Lewry, Mondaire, Mayfair, Hale and East Colfax.

Get the latest on

Stapleton Front Porch

The Aurora Fox Theatre and the MCA will be presenting three more showings of Hairspray on The Green! Theatre on The Green will begin at 7pm and will be featured on June 1, 3 and 8.

First Friday Flight

The MCA and Grape Leaf are excited to present the first wine tasting of our summer wine-tasting series. First Friday Flight will be held at 6pm on Fri., June 7 at the West Crescent (the fountain area on 29th Ave. and Roslyn St.). The first flight will feature Italian wines and cheeses.

Participants will need tickets for this event! You may pick up your tickets at the MCA office prior to the event (includes online registrants). Tickets will be available for pickup from Wed.-Fri., 9am-5pm each week. If you cannot pick up your tickets at this time, please visit the will call station on the day of the event. The will call station will open at 5:30pm on Fri., June 7 at the West Crescent. Space is limited. To register, visit stapletoncommunity.com

Stapleton Rocks... a Concert for a Cause “Stapleton Rocks... A Concert for a Cause” is scheduled for Sat., June 22 from noon-10pm on The Green. The Denver Children’s Home is the selected nonprofit organization again this year and we look forward to raising money for their programs. Event activities include the bungee trampoline, hamster ball, a magician and a concession stand (equipped with snacks, water, soda and adult beverages).

Movies on The Green

Movies on The Green will begin this month for the MCA’s annual summer series! All outdoor movies are free and open to the public. “Monte Carlo Kingdom” will be played at dark on Fri., June 14. To Kill a Mockingbird will be played at dark on Fri., June 28. Concerts on The Green will begin in July. A concession stand will be featured at each Movie on The Green. Proceeds from the concession stand will benefit select local nonprofit organizations. Food trucks will be parked along The Green during all movies and concerts.

Danni Maud
Communications Coordinator
dmead@stapletoncommunity.com
303-388-0724

MASTER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Events & Announcements at Stapleton

Stapleton resident Scott Swisz splashes the kids with a cannonball at Aviator pool on May 25, opening day for all of Stapleton’s pools.

SUNDAY, JUNE 9

Midnight Yoga

A monthly feature of the Active Minds Music Seminar & Brunch. Explore the life and times of George Gershwin. Free. Registration required. 8:30am-12:30pm

events@stapletoncommunity.com

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Free theater production brings fun with a message
By Laurie Dunklee

"Hairspary is my favorite show," said Piper Lindsay Arpan, director of this summer’s Theatre on the Green musical, May 31 to June 8. "It’s impossible for me to watch the show and hear the great songs and not dance. It’s also a good story with an important message about seeing through stereotypes.

The fun and popular musical is the third annual free theater production to be presented at Founder’s Green in Stapleton, E. 29th Ave. and Quebec streets, by the Stapleton Master Community Association (MCA) and The Aurora Fox Arts Center. Performances are at 7pm, May 31 and June 1, 7 and 8.

Arpan said, "Hairspary is perfect for the Stapleton performances because it lends itself to families. Kids appreciate one aspect of it, while adults take away another. The audience will laugh, cry, dance and sing. Plus the kids can run around on the grass!"

Approximately 2,000 people are expected to attend the four performances this year, according to MCA Community Director Diane Dexter.

Hairspary, set in 1962 Baltimore, is the tuneful story of plus size teen Tracy Turnblad and her ambition to dance on a popular—and segregated—local TV show. The Stapleton production will feature a cast of 23 actors and a live band onstage. The high-energy dance numbers are choreographed by Arpan.

At two hours long, including a short intermission, "this production will fly," said Arpan. She said the fast-moving set changes and high-energy musical numbers will leave the audience breathless by intermission. Producing a full-scale musical outdoors, rather than in a more controlled theater space, makes it "a different beast," Arpan said. She said sound, lighting and costume changes all present challenges.

To ensure that every line of dialogue is heard, each character will wear a body microphone and the sound designer will sit at the sound board, script in hand, adjusting volume levels in real time.

Arpan said lighting is the biggest challenge because instead of lighting areas of an indoor stage, the designer must illuminate the darkness outside. "The lighting is by necessity more functional than artistic," Arpan said. "But our people do manage to make amazing things happen."

Because dressing rooms are a challenge, the crew gets creative about costume changes. "We plan to make two costume changes onstage while other things are going on, where the audience won’t see."

The outdoor space can also be a plus. Arpan plans to build a platform on the grass at ground level in front of the stage, so actions in two locations can be shown at once. "For instance, in the scene where Tracy is watching TV, we can watch both her and the TV studio," said Arpan.

For Arpan, performing outside keeps it real. "There are more risk factors, like wind," she said. "But what’s precious about live theater is every performance is different. It keeps the performers in the moment. For audiences it’s fresh every night, not like seeing a movie that is always the same."

Hairspary is not just another pretty musical; it is a social (continued on page 4)
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**Hairspray**

(continued from page 3) commentary on the injustices of parts of American society in the 1960s. The story deals with segregation and overcoming stereotypes.

“I read that a Georgia school had its first integrated prom this year,” Arpan said. “Segregation is alive in America. It’s hard to believe this story still needs to be told but evidently it does. My heart is into getting it out. I hope the message shines through this production.”

Hairspray began as a 1988 movie starring Divine as Edna Turnblad, Tracy’s mother. When it was adapted as a musical for the Broadway stage in 2002, the producers maintained the tradition of casting a male in the role and hired veteran actor Harvey Fierstein. John Travolta played the role in the 2007 movie.

“The casting reinforces the show’s theme—that you can’t look at someone and size them up and who they are,” Arpan said. “Our Edna is Todd Simmonds, also known as drag queen Mona Lotts. We were so thrilled when he auditioned.”

Arpan said that the actors like to perform to the broader audiences attending the free performances. “Whole families can come for free and the actors feel the audience is engaged. It ups our fun to look out and see people enjoying themselves. It turbo-charges our performance.”

Stapleton MCA plans to host more outdoor theater productions this year, including A Midsummer Night’s Dream in August, in conjunction with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. According to Deeter, they hope to present another Aurora Fox production in October.

For more information about the Theatre on The Green offerings, see www.stapletoncommunity.com or aurorafoxartscenter.org.

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**Isabella Bird Community School**

(continued from page 1) “As a Newcomer Center, we anticipate the majority of families who will utilize the Family Resource Center services will be those who are new to the country, since they will generally have a greater number of unmet needs than those currently living in Stapleton,” explains Lead Teacher Traci Bushnell. “However, the services available in the Family Resource Center are offered to all families.”

Because it is a new school with a unique philosophy, the community has expressed concerns during the various meetings the planners have held. Principal Sonny Zinn isn’t surprised. “We’re the new kids on the block,” she says. “[People wonder] what we’re really going to be able to pull off but we hope that as people get to know us, they’ll understand what we’re about.”

Some parents have expressed a concern that time and resources will be taken away from English-speaking students. Jeff Bushnell is quick to point out that the school uses a model that meets children at their point of need to individualize instruction while addressing the needs of the whole group. Traci Bushnell adds that...
the plan calls for English-speaking students to be taught Spanish while the ESL students receive concentrated English language time, creating what the staff refers to as a joint “world language time” for all students.

The staff feels the multicultural element has many benefits. “There’s a richness of having kids who bring different cultures and ideas together to prepare them for what they are going to face in the world,” explains Jeff Bushnell. “It’s essential that they have the skills to work with anyone on the planet.” Zinn adds, “That’s the 21st century learning profile.”

One of the standard concerns the staff has heard centers around making sure children will be sufficiently challenged and will develop a love of learning. “Those are questions every parent has,” says Zinn. “So that’s one that we absolutely embrace because we’re parents too. We get it.”

The staff understands parent concerns are to be expected, but they also see many unique opportunities. Along with the blended curriculum and student body, the primary one, according to Zinn, is the “opportunity to literally grow a school together…and to receive a tremendous amount of input on the new building, the name and the programming.” That input has come from Denver Public Schools, the community and specifically families that are already enrolled. “Their level of support is so lovely,” says Zinn. “We already feel like we’re a part of Stapleton.”

For more information about The Isabella Bird Community School, visit http://eastbridge.dpsk12.org/. See also page 27 in the May issue of the Front Porch.

Enrollment Projections:
• 2013/14: Three kindergarten classes, one first grade class (100 students anticipated at temporary facility at 11200 E. 45th Ave.)
• 2014/15: Addition of ECE-4 plus a second grade class at new facility
• 2015 and beyond, add one grade level (three classrooms each) per year
• Estimated size when school is ECE-grade 5: 525
• 2020/21: First year with ECE-grade 8. Total estimated enrollment: 750

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**SUMMER CAMPS**

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**DON’T FORGET TO REGISTER FOR FALL SOCCER**

To register for summer camps and/or fall league play visit rapidsyouthsoccer.org or call 303.399.5858

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Whether an aspiring elite player or a young player just starting in the sport, our camp offerings will engage and challenge all participating players in a safe and enjoyable environment. Each Colorado Rapids Youth Soccer Camp is designed and led by our highly qualified technical staff and is based on our Colorado Rapids Youth Development curriculum.

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Add a Taste of Art to Your Life
By Nancy Buechert
In 2008, Stapleton artist Ansley Young founded the Small Hands Art Studio to give children ages two to 12 an opportunity to add an element of creativity to their lives. Since that time, the children have grown, but they still want to take art classes. And their parents have expressed a desire to have classes of their own.
In answer to the demand, Pam Peters, who specializes in clay and has been teaching some of the classes, has become Young's partner. And, the art studio has a new name: Spark It Studios.
"We would like to expand our focus," Peters explained. "It's not just for small hands anymore. It's for all hands. We want to focus on older kids—teenagers, as well as adults. We've put a few more adult-only classes in our evening classes. In June, we will allow adults to work with clay on a wheel."
"I work in the world of clay," she said. "I have a lot of experience doing hand building (with clay). I have an anthropology degree focusing on clay. I do classes for kids and adults."
Young's focus is on painting and mixed media. "As an art term, 'mixed media' would be using an array of materials, painting, found objects, collaging, and layering all kinds of materials together to make one art creation," she explained. "We will be maintaining our classes going into the schools in the northeast Denver area," Young added. "We also are working on the adult classes in the studio. We also are working with some restaurants to do some evening art nights on a regular basis."
The restaurant art nights would take the studio's previous Mosaics and Sips of Sangria for adults to a room in a restaurant where adults can create mosaic tiles, frames or garden pots, using shards or stained glass.
"Part of the reason why we're looking at partnering with other businesses is that we want to create an atmosphere where people will want to create things," Young said. "Adults, especially, have felt it intimidating to be in an art studio."
"This might encourage people to try drawing or working on a mosaic piece," Peters added. "It will be a one-time activity."
The studio, located at 2667 Xanthia Court, will be the site for several adult classes. "Martinus and Mud" will be offered June 12 and 19 for $60. The first class will teach hand-building techniques, while the second class will allow students to finish their art pieces with a colorful glaze. The fire-p Fiat can be picked up the next week.
Spark It Studios will have an art-making booth at the Sweet William Market in Stapleton. And, on June 13, from 4 to 6 pm, the studio will host a Teen Art Mob for kids 11 years and older. At that time, the students can work with clay on a potter's wheel or make wood pieces. It will give them an opportunity to decide whether they are interested in art and want to go to another class. Children's art camps, for kids 4 years old and up, will be offered all summer, starting June 17, at Westerly Creek Elementary School.
"We want to light your creative fire," Young explained. "We want to give that opportunity to kids and adults alike. We feel like art is for everyone. We feel that when people find the right avenue for being artistic, they can feel really good about what they create."
"The creative process spills over into so many parts of your life," Peters said. "It makes you a really balanced and whole person."
For more information about Spark It Studios or to register for classes or children's summer camps, go to www.sparkitdenver.com or call 303 349 0961. Contact Pam Peters at pam@sparkitdenver.com and Ansley Young at ansley@sparkitdenver.com.

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Get comfortable.
CU Reproductive Medicine Clinic Moves to Stapleton

By Nancy Burkhart

Sensing a need to make reproductive medical services easier to reach, the University of Colorado has moved its Advanced Reproductive Medicine Clinic to Stapleton at 3055 Bodyn St., Suite 230, where patients will be seen starting June 4.

“We deal with patients who have difficulty conceiving,” explained Dr. Ruben Alvero, one of the six physicians located at the Stapleton Clinic. “We also deal with couples who have significant, recurrent miscarriages and women who have hormonal issues. We also deal with young women who have abnormalities of the uterus, vagina, ovaries and things that make it difficult for them to have normal menstrual cycles or reasons they have acute pain.”

Alvero noted that he is a robotic surgeon who uses the da Vinci robot to remove fibroid tumors. He also is a professor at the University of Colorado Medical School and holds the title of Division Director of Reproductive Endocrinology and Fertility at the Stapleton Clinic. He says he has three roles, that of: clinician, educator and researcher.

Stapleton Clinic. He says he has three roles, the of: clinician, educator and researcher.

“The clinic was moved to Stapleton to make it easier for patients to get help, Alvero said.

“Most patients are looking for an assessment and a treatment, with the goal of having one or several children,” Alvero noted. “Some want to know why they are having difficulty getting pregnant. Some also want to undergo treatment to have a family. For most patients, we will get an assessment completed within one menstrual cycle, and implement treatment and achieve pregnancy within several weeks or months. We hope to have treatment completed within half a year and, hopefully, then send them to their obstetricians once we determine it’s a viable pregnancy, late into their first trimester.”

Once a patient’s needs are determined, Stapleton Clinic physicians help them work out a plan.

“We try to individualize the patient’s needs and use the techniques that are the least invasive and the least expensive,” Alvero explained. “The University also has a Wellness Center, and improvement in diet and exercise may be helpful for patients to get pregnant or help them with other problems. We feel pretty strongly that this is a complement to treating their overall health needs.”

Patients don’t usually need a doctor’s referral to use the Stapleton Clinic’s services, depending on their insurance company, according to Alvero.

For information about the University of Colorado’s Advanced Reproductive Medicine Stapleton Clinic, call 303.724.8089 on and after June 4, or before June 4 call 720.848.1690. Go to the website at www.arm.coloradowomenshealth.com.
Our Legislators Reflect on the 2013 Session

Senator Michael Johnston

“I think we came to the legislature with a charge from the voters that there were a lot of things that seemed like common sense solutions that we hadn’t gotten done and this year we got those done. And those are all things that have, if you look at the polling on them, very, very broad public support, whether it’s election reform or gun safety or immigration reforms or civil unions or education. They just got caught in political grandstanding. I think people are mostly excited that what you wanted for governor didn’t win. The process still worked fairly. I think people are excited that the voters that there were a lot of significant meaty issues that really do make a difference in people’s lives. Whether we’re talking about criminal justice reform or civil unions or immigration issues or health care reform or election laws, all of these things really do touch people in their everyday life.”

Do you think the legislature overreached?

“I think the things people list when they say it was an overreach are all things that enjoy really broad popular support, like the gun safety legislation or the civil unions legislation or election reforms and same day registration and mail ballots. Those are all things that some of the folks who worked on the ground on these issues supported—and like the county clerks supported the election bill. If the county clerks are on board with an election bill, you know it’s going to make elections run better. More cost effective, more fair, more open. Those are the things people are complaining about when they say they overreach, and yet they were all things that are really popular with the voters of Colorado. It’s just that we did so much of it. Part of the problem is that certain things have been bottled up for a couple years. They should have passed in prior years and they were blocked. Some of why this year was so busy is because there was a lot of unfinished business that was overdue.”

Senator Pat Steadman

- First, I’ll chime in with what everyone is saying about this year’s session. It was incredibly productive and we worked really hard. I’ve never seen the legislature put in this many hours and tackle this many significant meaty issues that really do make a difference in people’s lives. Whether we’re talking about criminal justice reform or civil unions or immigration issues or health care reform or election laws, all of these things really do touch people in their everyday life.”

Do you think the legislature overreached?

“We do so much, you see it everywhere. It was the most productive and progressive session in a couple decades at least. At the top of the list is that we passed civil unions, which is something that I’ve believed in for many years. I’m thrilled that we passed civil unions. I see it as the civil rights issue of our time. As a professor, it’s fascinating to me that my students, when I’ve talked about this with them over the past several years, are like, ‘What’s your problem, old lady? Get it done already!’ Young people just don’t see why this isn’t just obvious to allow same sex couples to have the same rights as anyone else. I think it’s just phenomenal how fast this issue has turned around. Another one that I was thrilled to see pass was the ASSET bill. The old United Negro College Fund slogan was, ‘A mind is a terrible thing to waste.’ And that’s exactly how I feel about the ASSET Bill. That was one that I was really pleased to see a huge amount of support from business leaders, because they recognized the same thing. And I was pleased with the election bills. One interesting bill I worked on relates to a non-profit foundation that took over the Eisenhower Chapel in Lowry. They didn’t find out until a year or two after their purchase that they would owe back property taxes. The Denver County Assessor said the law didn’t allow for a protest that far back. Pat Steadman and I did the bill together to change state law so non-profits can protest property taxes back further and get out from under back taxes. Not earthshaking, but meaningful to constituents.

On the budget, one of the most important things for people to know is that we always balance the budget. We aren’t spending money we don’t have. And the historic thing we did this year was infusing millions of new dollars into mental health.”

Representative Lois Court

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Rep. Lois Court represents House Dist. 6, which includes Lowry, Mayfair and Montclair. She voted in favor of all the legislation on page 10 & 11. She can be reached at lois@loiscourt.com or 303.866.2967.

When asked about polls that show broad public support for universal background checks, Call responded, “The problem is that the legislation that was enacted is unworkable and probably unconstitutional. The way it restricts temporary transfers between family members, the way it restricts and limits inheriting guns from your grandfather... evidence of poor drafting and a willingness to push for legislation not because it actually works or fixes the problem that they say is there, but more out of a kneejerk reaction. Not earthshaking, but meaningful to constituents.

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Representative Angela Williams

“Being the prime sponsor of bills really makes me feel like I’m making a difference, apart from all the politics and partisanship. I passed the compensation for the wrongly convicted bill. Robert Dewey served 18 years and was proven innocent through DNA evidence and exonerated. The bill that I passed is going to compensate him $70,000 for each year he was incarcerated, he will be given tuition waivers at a state educational institution so he can go out and make a living, he’ll get access to health care, and he has to complete financial counseling. Making a difference in someone’s life…this was a big one for me.

“The ASSET bill was very gratifying. I felt like it was one of those bills where you’re making a difference in someone’s life directly.

“One more big highlight for me was the Colorado Firefighters Safety Act. I was really proud to have been the sponsor of this in the house. It’s going to give firefighters the ability to hold meaningful discussions with their employers on workforce safety, equipment needs and other employment issues where they’ve never been able to do that. We made great strides by passing this bill.

“The Modernization of Elections Act was just huge for Colorado.

“I think overall we had a very aggressive agenda and you’ll hear people talk about that a lot. But Democrats have the majority and I believe that we delivered on what we told the people of Colorado we would deliver on and that we’re moving the dial and making a difference in the lives of Coloradans. It was a very successful session for us.”

Rep. Angela Williams represents House Dist. 8, which includes Stapleton and part of Park Hill. She can be reached at 303.866.2909 or angela.williams.house@state.co.us. The Front Porch was unable to reach Rep. Williams to verify whether she supported all the bills on pages 10 & 11.

Representative Beth McCann

“I thought we had a very productive and exciting legislative session and I was very pleased overall with the amount of work we were able to get done. While some of the issues were clearly controversial, actually about 90% of the bills we passed had some bipartisan support.

“And I think we really addressed a number of important issues for the state, including some of the things we did to promote jobs and manufacturing development and our economy, which didn’t get a lot of attention, but we did do quite a bit of legislation in those areas. We also addressed some pretty important social issues, such as the child welfare and mental health issues, which I was very pleased that we were able to do. I think the election reform bill and the education reform bills are both really important bills for our state. Whenever I’m talking to people about what we did this year, I’m always amazed at how much we got accomplished in such a short time.

“We also addressed some of the environmental issues. There were some important bills that didn’t get a lot of attention. We have a bill now that allows for the use of gray water, which is water from bathtubs and showers and reuse of that water is now allowed for flushing toilets. We were the only state that didn’t allow the use of gray water, so there were smaller bills that were really important.

“I was disappointed that my mental health taskforce bill didn’t get passed, but otherwise I thought we really did a good job, and we, of course, balanced the budget.”

Rep. Beth McCann represents House Dist. 8, which includes Park Hill, E. Colfax and a small area of Stapleton. She voted in favor of all the legislation on pages 10 & 11. She can be reached at 303.866.2959 or beth@bethmccann.org
CONSUMER PROTECTION

— Homeowner association regulations: HOAs can no longer file a lien or start foreclosure without offering a fair debt collection plan; paid community association managers are now required to be licensed, which will require knowledge about proper HOA and fiduciary practices; HOAs are now required to register with an HOA information resource center, a first step before a regulatory agency for HOAs can be established.

— Timeshare resale: Legislation was passed to prevent fraudulent timeshare resale practices.

— Home Loan Modification Protection Act: New loan servicers are required to honor agreements with prior servicers.

EDUCATION

— A School Finance Reform Bill (to update the current bill created in 1994) was passed by the legislature, signed by the governor and will be on the November ballot for voters to decide on approval of the taxes needed to implement it. Look for an explanation of the tax formula in the fall with your ballot information (and in the Front Porch).

The bill modernizes how education is funded. Instead of a one day student count, it will make every day count in the student funding formula. Multiple learning modes are available now, and the bill will allow funding to follow students in the learning mode that works best for them, whether it’s in the classroom, online learning, work study, internships, or concurrent enrollment in higher education. The bill will also provide funding for districts that want to extend the school day or the school year to more closely match the level of education being provided in many other countries in the world.

The bill calls for investments in what has been shown to make the most difference. It provides Early Childhood Education (ECE) for eligible children and full day Kindergarten for every family that wants it. It calls for investing in effective teachers and principals who can implement Colorado’s new standards and assessments. And it designates resources to meet specific needs including gifted and talented, special education, at-risk students and English language learners.

The bill makes funding transparent, accountable and fair. A website will be created to track all education funding to show comparisons between districts. Two accountability evaluations will be performed every four years: to measure the return on taxpayer investments in education and to determine ongoing funding shortfalls. Funding will be distributed more equitably so children in all districts get the resources they need and everyone is paying a fair share of the state’s education costs (currently some districts have a mill levy ten times higher than others).

ELECTION LAWS

— Same day voter registration: Technology now allows tracking to prevent duplicate votes, making same day registration feasible. Bill had substantial input and support from county clerks.

— No more “inactive voter” status: All registered voters will receive ballots, even if they missed an election.

ENERGY

— Renewable energy: Rural co-ops will be required to increase their renewable energy to 20% by 2020.

— Fracking: Changes in the fine structure were discussed but the governor and the bill sponsor couldn’t come to agreement. The issue will likely be revisited next year. (Old companies have purchased agreements for drilling in Green Valley Ranch.)

GUNS

— Universal background checks: Private, internet and gun show purchases will require background checks. Guns given to family members or inherited guns are excepted.

— Background check fee: Estimated $12 fee will be paid by purchaser at time of sale.

— Size of magazine: Limited to 15 rounds. Existing magazines are grandfathered in but can’t be sold. Manufacturers in Colorado can produce larger magazines but can’t sell them in Colorado.

One of the traditions for the last day of the legislative session is for state legislators and staffers to shoot rubber bands at each other. Above right, Democrat Andy Kerr shoots a rubber band at Republican Bill Cadman, minority leader of the Senate. Another tradition, according to Sen. Mike Lee, is for the minority leader of the House to shoot a rubber band at the speaker. In 2013, that was speakerasis, but as Speaker Grantham is retiring, it’s unclear who will get the honor this year. Traditionally, the Legislative Leaders each give a rubber band of their color to the new leader of the other party. To ensure that all the leaders receive a rubber band, the rubber bands are placed at a table between the leaders each year. A tradition of mine is to write a story about the rubber band tradition before the session concludes, but I know that tradition doesn’t get written about too often.

What Happened in the 2013 Legislative Session?
Johnston’s Chief of Staff, Damon Lee Natali, is to collect rubber bands throughout the session and make them into a large ball. On the last day, the legislators inform the governor that the session is over and they go drop the ball from the highest level in the dome of the Capitol.

In-person handgun training: On-site training required for concealed carry, not just online.

Domestic violence offenders: Required to sell or turn in their handguns. (Formation of a task force to address mental health and gun possession did not pass.)

**IMMIGRATION**

**ASSET Bill:** Provides for in-state tuition to undocumented students who have completed three consecutive years of high school in Colorado, have graduated, and meet the entrance requirements of the chosen college.

Driver’s licenses for undocumented immigrants are now allowed. License does not indicate citizenship but it enables drivers to get insurance. Proof of Colorado residency, payment of taxes, and ID from country of origin are required. A prior law to get insurance. Proof of Colorado residency, payment of taxes, and ID from country of origin are required. A prior law was overturned.

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**IN PERSON HANDGUN TRAINING**

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**RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA**

**Taxation:** A single measure will be on the ballot in November for a 10% sales tax and a 15% excise tax. If passed, the 10% sales tax will cover the costs of regulating recreational marijuana and the excise tax, up to $40 million, will be used for school construction. If the tax is not passed, the cost of regulation will come from the general fund, significantly reducing funds for education and other state-funded services.

**Penalties and Penalties:** Individuals can have up to an ounce at a time. Out-of-state can only buy a quarter ounce at a time and they can’t invest in the industry. The Department of Revenue is developing regulations for businesses. Existing medical marijuana businesses will be allowed to start recreational sales January 1, 2014. Other new businesses can start recreational sales October 1, 2014.

**Marriage:** Medical marijuana businesses will be allowed to start recreational sales January 1, 2014. Other new businesses can start recreational sales October 1, 2014.

**MARIJUANA AND DRIVING:** A “DUI” bill sets a limit for the amount of marijuana in the system while driving.

**SOCIAL ISSUES**

**Civil Unions:** Gay couples now have rights such as hospital visitation, parental rights and personal property transfers (though the union may not be recognized in other states).

**Health Care:** Sustainable funding was approved for the Colorado Health Care Exchange that will start in January 2014, when everyone will be required to have health care insurance. One-time funding was approved for the website that will enable people to comparison-shop for insurance and get assistance credits; website goes live in October 2013 and will be staffed to offer assistance with selecting insurance.

**Mental Health:** A hotline and crisis intervention centers will be set up throughout Colorado so those with mental health crises (and their families and friends) can see treatment rather than going to the police. A task force will be formed to study the various types of emergency holds for people who are dangerous or disabled due to mental health or substance abuse.

**Child Welfare:** The state will have a single child protection hotline staffed by caseworkers who can identify when immediate intervention is needed. Child fatalities will be more thoroughly reviewed, focusing on how to intervene to prevent future fatalities.

**Human Services:** Funding for improved services to veterans, seniors and people with developmental disabilities.

**Medicaid:** Coverage was expanded to include adults without dependent children up to 133% of poverty level.

**Spousal Maintenance Bill:** Establishes guidelines for courts to use in ordering permanent alimony in divorce cases.

**TAX POLICY**

Two tax measures will be placed on the November ballot: school finance and regulation of marijuana (see education and marijuana sections). Both tax questions will place the taxes in statute, not in the constitution.
When the annual Taste of Puerto Rico Festival returns to Stapleton’s Central Park on Sunday, June 9, the swirling skirts and traditional drumming sounds of a new Puerto Rican dance and cultural group are sure to be remembered as a highlight.

The Barrio Ensemble, the organization’s formal performance group, will perform throughout the day at the annual family-oriented, cultural event featuring Puerto Rican food, dancing, music, art, history and heritage.

The festival coincides with a tradition that began in New York City in 1995: Puerto Rican National Day, which is celebrated the second Sunday each June. Over the years, the Denver event has grown from a small gathering of 350 in 1997 to more than 5,000 in recent years.

Barrio E’ was founded by Puerto Rican native Tamil Maldonado in September 2012 in Boulder. Maldonado and her husband, Daniel León, teach traditional drumming, singing and dancing to all ages and skill levels of students.

“I want to share my culture with other people,” Maldonado said. “Our theme is building a diverse community that embraces Puerto Rican traditions. Barrio E’ is a very inclusive group from all personal and professional backgrounds, ethnicities and ages: adults, kids, teens and seniors.”

Since Barrio E’ began last fall, the group has quickly expanded, with workshops in Denver and Fort Collins, after-school groups in Boulder, and performances across Colorado’s Front Range.

Elena Fernández, who participates with her 6- and 10-year-old children says, “What’s nice about this is it’s very family friendly. It’s one activity where all of us can participate equally…and the children love it. It’s a really comprehensive learning experience. We’re not just learning how to drum and dance and sing, we’re learning a lot about the Puerto Rican culture by doing it.”

Maldonado and Fernández agree that the appeal of Barrio E’ is much more than simply the music. It’s the sense of inclusion and community that the group brings.

At the festival, Barrio Ensemble members will answer questions, hold auditions, and sell Barrio E’T-shirts and tickets to the inaugural Barrio E’vent FUNdraiser (to be held at the Mercury Cafe in Denver Sat., July 6, from 1 to 5pm). A four-week Bomba Summer Class for kids, teens and adults will be held in June and July.


Christine Hollister is a journalist who has written for publications in Colorado and across the Midwest.
NE Denver Relay for Life, Aug. 2-3

“When you think about the people you know, somebody has cancer.”

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Come early August, a group of determined people will stay up all night, taking turns walking or running around Founder's Green in Stapleton. Periodically, they will stop off at their campsite for a little shut-eye before taking another lap—or 20. It’s not the usual scene at The Green—it’s a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society, the Relay for Life on August 2-3.

Last year was Rene C. Wilson’s first year participating, serving as the “Survivor Chair” for Stapleton’s event. This year, she is the event chairperson, putting in a minimum of 12 hours per week for the past six months coordinating meetings for the committees and teams, doing community outreach and increasing awareness. She juggles this volunteering position with her jobs as a casino auditor and working with at-risk youth. She does it because she’s been there.

Wilson was declared free of breast cancer two years ago, this June. “I’m one of the luckier ones,” she says. “I had very good doctors who were just amazing.” She went through chemotherapy but was able to avoid radiation. She continued working, only taking a total of three weeks off. “I didn’t miss a beat,” she recalls, describing her attitude as “I have it; what do I have to do to get rid of it and go forward!”

Participants include anyone affected by cancer, whether it’s cancer sufferers, survivors, those remembering loved ones who have passed away, medical staff, caretakers or friends. Wilson describes the event as emotional but also a lot of fun and a great way to meet people.

Money is raised for the American Cancer Society by teams of participants. The suggested fundraising goal is at least $100 per person. Wilson says teams get together to raise the money in a variety of ways from holding yard sales to asking people to donate spare change and drop it in a canister. The method is up to each team, which typically ranges from 10–15 people.

During the overnight event, teams take turns in relay fashion, walking, running or pushing cancer patients in wheelchairs around a track. They stop for a rest and maybe a quick nap at camp sites decorated according to each year’s theme; this year’s being “birthday parties,” in honor of the American Cancer Society’s 100th anniversary. There is also entertainment including a DJ, Zumba and yoga classes and themed food and drinks. Prizes range from a $100 shopping spree to a hand painted between midnight and 6am as people start to get tired. Perhaps it will be a ’70s lap with disco music and people wearing platform shoes. Or laps in celebration of winning a hand of poker.

“Anybody you know is affected by some form of cancer. It doesn’t just target one person here and there. It targets and affects everyone and not just the person who has cancer but also the caretakers, family members and friends,” she says. “If you think about the people you know, somebody has cancer. To me it’s very important to raise money and awareness and to know which organizations do what and to know what’s out there.”

According to Christina Breiner, Community Relationship Manager for the American Cancer Society (ACS), the 2012 Relay For Life Of NE Denver raised $40,000, had 25 teams, 168 participants and celebrated 26 cancer survivors.

To register a team for the Relay for Life, visit RelayForLife.org. To volunteer or for more information contact Christina Breiner at 720.524.5454 or christina.breiner@ancer.org.

ACS financial information posted at ColoradoGives.org shows that in 2010, revenue for the organization was $72 million and 80% of expenses were for programs, 14.5% for fundraising and 5.5% for administration.

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Natural Prairie Dog Control: Raptor Roosts

By Carol Roberts

Stapleton has become the first place in Denver to have raptor roosts—two poles in Westerly Creek south of Montview (one near 26th Ave.) and two in Northfield, just west of Bass Pro.

Scott Gilmore, deputy manager of parks for the city of Denver, says the city had removed prairie dogs from Westerly Creek because they were eating the vegetation in the park. But the park adjoins the Stapleton open space in Aurora and he was concerned those colonies would move into Westerly Creek. Gilmore says he was aware raptor roosts have been tried elsewhere and, “We wanted to be proactive and figure out additional ways to help manage the prairie dog colonies within the city. “We have a great working relationship with Xcel and explained it to them. They thought it was pretty exciting and wanted to help us out.” The raptor roosts were planned for January, says Gilmore, but Xcel sent crews to assist with hurricane Sandy, and were unavailable for this project until May 15. Xcel donated the roosts and the installation.

Gilmore explains that when there’s an area they want to restore and there are prairie dogs, Denver Parks has a contractor live trap as many as possible and they are euthanized on site with CO2. Those euthanized prairie dogs are then provided to the raptor centers to feed to injured raptors that have been rescued.

“The Bill Roberts third grade students just happened to be out there and they got pretty excited,” says Gilmore. “I talked to them about prairie dogs, ecology and wildlife.”

No prairie dogs have been removed in Northfield. “But,” says Gilmore, “we don’t want them to spread too much there so we put in two poles just to try to keep the population down. If they start getting into the detention pond or other areas where we don’t want them, we reserve the right to remove them.”

Gilmore says Denver Parks and Rec would appreciate hearing from neighbors about the raptor roosts. If you view raptors on the poles, record the date and time and email pictures to the city’s naturalist, Kelly Uthing. (Kelly.Uthing@DenverGov.org.) Also send photos to FrontPorchStapleton@gmail.com. We will post some of them on our Facebook page.

At the north end of Westerly Creek Park, Gilmore says they have installed a barrier to prevent the prairie dogs in the unfinished area of North Westerly Creek Park from entering the finished park that starts about 35th Ave. “Prairie dogs will need to be removed off the (North Westerly Creek) site before they build the park though. That’s something that has to be done.”

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The Iran Job (2012)

We all act differently when there is camera on us. The only exception might be the first “true” documentaries, made by filmmakers in the early ’60s when handheld cameras were first invented. The seminal documentary Primary is one such film, and as it follows Hubert Humphrey and John F. Kennedy campaigning in the 1960 Democratic primary, nobody knows how to act in front of a camera since they’d never seen such a documentary before. Everyone knows how to act now.

The Iran Job is a documentary about basketball player Kevin Sheppard, a U.S. Virgin Islands native who accepts a job to play for a professional basketball team in Iran. He makes the journey by himself, without his reticent girlfriend back home? The answer: because we know more than we should.

Opens June 7 at the Sie Film Center. You will like this film if you expected:

- Hoop Dreams
- 42
- Hoosiers

Drive (2011)

You’ll want to put the kids to bed before this one.

Few films, if any, have ever reminded me of Taxi Driver (1978—directed by Martin Scorsese), but Drive (2011—directed by Nicholas Winding Refn) is one of them. It tells the story of a Hollywood stunt driver (Ryan Gosling as The Driver) who moonlights as a getaway driver for robbers. He befriends a bartered, dew-eyed mom neighbor (Carey Mulligan as Irene), and we think the n’er-do-well will change his ways, go completely straight, and the film will blossom into a beautiful love story. Think again. The Driver agrees to do a job for Irene’s recently-released-from-prison-husband, and of course, things don’t go so well. But the ride is exhilarating!

This is a complex film with a simple plot, masterfully directed by Danish director Nicholas Winding Refn (The Pusher trilogy) who is known for his realism, violence, and hyper-masculinity. All three are present here. The cast is stellar, including Gosling, Mulligan, Bryan Cranston, and Golden Globe-nominee Albert Brooks in a supporting role. The cinematography is superb—echoing late ’60s and ’70s B-movies, the editing is crisp, and the soundtrack is particularly inspired.

The film has moments of serenity and beauty punctuated by moments of extreme violence when we least expect them. It is such a pleasure to watch a film and not know what to expect. It was nominated for various awards after its release but snubbed by the Oscars. The Academy tends to do that to films released on an Independent label (see: Requiem for a Dream). It is a film that requires a bit of interaction from the viewer, but you are rewarded for it. I think it was one of the best films of 2011 and one of the better films of the past several years.

Available on the Netflix instant stream and on DVD in the library. You will like this film if you enjoyed:

- Taxi Driver
- Bullitt
- The Pusher Trilogy

Please look for my D VD reviews in the Sam Gary Library under the “Staff Choices” section.

Stapleton resident Vincent Pitowsky, PhD, teaches Cinema Studies at Metropolitan State University of Denver. He can be reached at spitowsky@msudenver.edu.

Putting a New Spin on Re-Cycling

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PREVIEW OF DENVER-AREA 4TH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS

7/1 Wednesday - Independence Day Eve Celebration in Civic Center Park. 8pm FREE community concert with patriotic favorites by Colorado Symphony lightshow and fireworks. Denver Civic Center Park. www.civiccenterconservancy.org

7/4 Thursday - Liberty 4 Mile and Firecracker Kids Run. 8:30am Walk. www.hallucinationsports.com

7/4 Thursday - 3rd Annual Hill 4th of July Parade. 1:30pm. 22nd Ave from Denver to Kearny www.hillparade.com

7/4 Thursday - Colorado Rapids v New York Red Bulls. Fireworks after game. 8pm. 100th annual 4th Fast Family Activity Zone www.coloradorapids.com


7/4 Thursday - Colorado Rockies v Dodgers. Fireworks after game.

7/5 Friday - Oldie Town Arvada Spirit of America 4th of July Festival. Free family events: classic car show at 4pm; fireworks at dusk. www.arvadafestivals.com

7/4 Thursday - Odele Town Arvada Spirit of America 4th of July Festival. Free family events: classic car show at 4pm; fireworks at dusk. www.arvadafestivals.com

7/4 Thursday - Old-fashioned 4th of July Celebration at Four Mile Park. www.fourmilepark.org

7/4 Thursday - Elitch Gardens. Fireworks at dusk.

7/4 Thursday - Odele Town Arvada Spirit of America 4th of July Festival. Free family events: classic car show at 4pm; fireworks at dusk. www.arvadafestivals.com

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7/5 Friday - Odele Town Arvada Spirit of America 4th of July Festival. Free family events: classic car show at 4pm; fireworks at dusk. www.arvadafestivals.com

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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

11am

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

6/2 Sunday- Happy Healthy Baby Foods. 2-3pm

6/6 Thursday- Denver Zoo Presents Wild Wonders. 2-3pm.

6/12 Wednesday- Tie-dyed T-shirts with My Art Workshop. 4-5pm

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

Thursdays in June, 3pm: Book Babies and Baby Yoga.

6/4 Tuesday- Meet an Ambassador Dog with the Dumb Friends League. 10:30-11:00am

6/11 Tuesday- Dig into Reading Magic! 10:30am

(continued on page 18)
mellow roof. Suggested $1 donation. keating Sababa. rabin@denverartmuseum.org Repeats Thurs 6/27 with "The Diva of Dung."

DENVER ART MUSEUM
100 West 14th Ave Parkway, www.denverartmuseum.org

HISTORY COLORADO CENTER
1200 Broadway, www.historycoloradocenter.org
6/6 Thursday- Green Building Tour. History Colorado Center, Free with admission. 2-3pm.

DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
Montview and Colorado Blvd. www.dmns.org, 303.370.6000
6/20 Thursday- Science Lounge. Cocktails/entertain
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KIDS CAMPs and CLASSES

Aurora Fox Theatre - Drama classes ages 4 and up. Lisa Mumps- ton: 303.739.1573 or www.aurorafx.org

Art Students League of Denver- Programs for kids/teens. 303.778.6990; www.ASDL.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 22nd Ave, Park Hill w w w .griggidesigns.com

Saturdays 6/8 to 8/24 - Tribal Tots Camp. 10-10:45am. www.solvidadance.com

Western Tennis Academy (WTA) Summer Program. 7/5 to 8/12 M/W/F 3-6pm ages 10-18 Smoky Middle School. Kerry Nash 303.322.9112 karrynash@gmail.com


The Urban Farm - Embracing Gardening. 6/8-6/10. Smiley Middle School. Kerry Nash info@thearabfoodfarm.org

FAm ILY EVENTS

6/28 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 Sapparh Stage, snacks by campfire. Largest carnivores sanctuary in Western Hemisphere. 300 lions, tigers, bears and mil-elephant 30-high walkway gives you up close. $15/child, $7.50/kids 1-2. Keensburg, CO. www.wildanimalsanctuary.org

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Limited spots available!
More Events

Tuesdays at 10am—Denver Center for the Performing Arts 10 for $10 Tickets
Each Tuesday at 10am, The Denver Center for the Performing Arts will release a limited number of $10 tickets. Ten seats for every Denver Center Theatre Company performance in the coming week will qualify (up to 25 shows per week). Tickets available by phone 303.893.4100 or in person in the Helen Bonfils Theatre Complex lobby at Speer & Arapahoe. Play information at www.denvercenter.org.

June 6 to 9—Denver Public Library’s Gigantic Used Book Sale
DPL’s Annual Used Book Sale will take place Thurs., 6/6 to Sun., 6/9. Located on the north lawn of the Central Library, 14th Ave. & Broadway, it features over 70,000 items: children’s, audio and nonfiction/fiction books, CDs and DVDs, prices start under $1. New items added daily. DPL Friends Foundation preview is Wed., 6/5 from 6–8pm. On Saturday and Sunday, 10am–4pm; and Sun., 10am –1pm. To donate year-round, contact Hannah Miles at HMiles@denverlibrary.org or 720.865.2045. More info: dplfriends.org or 720.865.2051.

June 8—Park Hill Garden Walk
Master gardeners, enthusiasts and strollers alike will enjoy the diversity and beauty of the 2013 Park Hill Garden Walk. This all-ages event takes place on Sat., June 8 in Park Hill and features everything from native xeriscape gardens to lush formal plantings. Also, view a restaurant uniquely dedicated to growing its own produce on-site and artist showings at each of the 12 gardens. Tickets $12 in advance ($10 discount for seniors 65 and up). For more info and to purchase tickets online, visit www.SparkYourPulse.com. More info: 303.468.3233.

Up with Bicycles!
June 26 is Bike to Work Day
Riders are invited to register at www.biketowork2013.org to win prizes and help in reporting the impact of taking thousands of vehicles off the road that day. Free breakfasts will be served to riders at the Stapleton King Soopers, Cake Crumbs at Keary St. in Stapleton, and Denver Police Dept. District 2. After work, a Stapleton Bike Home Party will be held at the Hub @ Stapleton/Cyclotron, Stapleton Town Center, for bike tech and prizes. Local sponsors are Stapleton Area Bicycle Library, Stapleton Area Transportation Management Assoc., The Hub @ Stapleton/Cyclotron. For more information, call 303.468.3233.

New Bike Library Opens Saturday, June 22
Join the new Bike Library for $20/year and have access to loaner bicycles for up to 48 hours at a time. Membership also requires eight hours of community service, but on opening day, June 22 from 10am to 3pm, everyone is invited to come and try out a bike at the Hub, in the Stapleton Town Center (behind Cyclotron). Visit www.StapletonMTA.com or call 303.468.3233.

NE Denver Bike Coalition Is Being Formed
Whether you ride to commute or for pleasure, whether young or old, beginner or advanced, a group is forming to share information about bicycle connections that are available and identify new ones needed. Email Shanizzle@StapletonFoundation.org to get on an email list for future information.

2013 Stapleton Yard Sale To Be Held July 20-21
The 2013 (8th annual) Stapleton Community Garage Sale will be held Saturday and Sunday July 20-21.
Online Registration will begin June 1 at www.BuildingStapleton.com/garagesale.
Participants can sign up for Saturday, Sunday, or both days.
Signs will be available to the first 300 homes to sign up.
Everyone who signs up will be included in the map and participant list, which will be posted online before the sale.
The sale will be advertised in the Denver Post, Craigslist, the Front Porch and via social media.
Organized by realtors Diana and Michael Kears in 2006, the first Stapleton Community Garage had 75 registered participants. In 2011, the sale expanded to two days; last year 333 homes registered to participate. This year the Kears expect over 400 participants. Michael Kears believes that the Stapleton Community Garage Sale must be one of the largest sales in Colorado. He says he has received emails from people as far away as Kansas who come to the sale each year. Kears says participants have reported average sales of over $300 each and points out that community organized events like this are a way to raise funds and awareness. After the sale, many participants choose to donate unsold items to charity. Charity (donation) partners include Goodwill Industries, Children’s Advocacy Center, Goodwill Industries, and the Epilepsy Foundation of Colorado. Diana and Michael Kears, who organize and sponsor the event, say they do it as a thank you to the community where, through their business, The Kears Team, they help their neighbors buy and sell homes. The Kears can be reached at Diana@KearsTeam.com or Michael@KearsTeam.com.

ADHD? Summer Camp
Do you or a member of your family have difficulty concentrating or focusing? Are you concerned about hyperactivity or impulsive behavior? Now there is a clinically proven alternative to medication.
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Ask us about our accelerated summer program!
Proximity to the bus line does not correlate with increased or decreased property values. Not does having a bus stop in front of a house correlate with significantly lower property values. Traffic: Because most buses in Colorado are run by a municipality or a partner agency, integrated route planning occurs before bus lines are added in streets. This minimizes the addition of unnecessary buses and reduces their impacts on traffic. Outside of urban cores, adding buses does not cause significantly greater traffic delays.

Litter: “Common sense” suggests that new bus stops bring more litterbugs to an area and concentrates the activities of existing litterbugs. Ironically, I found no quantitative data to support this correlation. That said, maybe this hypothesis (more buses = more trash) is so obvious, nobody has ever tested it.

Parking: Data on the parking impact of bus service is equivocal. During installation of a bus line, street parking is sometimes removed to create bus stops. At the same time, in urban cores and along key arteries, buses can free up parking by reducing the number of cars requiring parking spaces.

Crime: In some cases, installation of a bus line correlates with changes in the distribution of already-existing crime types in a neighborhood (e.g., vandalism). But in residential neighborhoods most data suggests that the presence of a bus line does not correlate with or cause an increase in crime. Nor do homes closer to bus lines typically experience more crime.

Buses are our most cost-effective, flexible and common form of public transportation. They carry more passengers than all other modes of public transportation combined. Nonetheless, they can have a negative impact by increasing litter, noise and street wear. Some types of bus lines reduce home values, whereas others increase them. Buses typically have minimal to no impact on safety, traffic, parking or crime. On a per-passenger mile basis their impact on air quality, energy use and greenhouse gas production is often either negligible or an improvement.

The data above are only a starting point. Bus routes bring indirect economic benefits to cities and adjacent neighborhoods. Let’s review the data to see what the relationship to background impacts are.
When Amendment 64 was on the ballot last November, I simply didn’t think through the implications of making less than an ounce of pot, used for personal consumption, legal in Colorado. I didn’t like that we had to amend our state Constitution to make it legal, but I thought I would be somewhat of a hypocrite if I voted it down. It seemed so simple, such an easy libertarian process. Legalize marijuana and give citizens the benefit of taxing its sale and consumption. It seemed no more complicated than regulating liquor stores. But it’s turning out to be more complicated.

The Colorado Department of Revenue is developing regulations for businesses. Existing medical marijuana dispensaries will be able to sell recreational marijuana starting January 1, 2014. New recreational marijuana businesses will be able to open nine months later. The City of Denver will determine whether and how it can be sold and used in Denver, within the state laws. The legislature has passed a marijuana “DUI” law to limit the amount of marijuana in the system for driving. On the November ballot will be a tax question to pay the cost of regulating the new marijuana industry—a 10 percent sales tax and a 15 percent excise tax. If voters don't approve the tax, money will have to be pulled from the state's general fund to pay for the regulation of marijuana, as required by Amendment 64. Money pulled from the state's general fund for marijuana regulation would reduce money available for education and many other state services. Amendment 64 also designates that the first $40 million collected from the 25 percent excise tax be used for the construction of schools in Colorado.

Now that we have legalized marijuana, let’s be sure its regulation is paid for by those who use it—not by reducing funds for our children’s educations or our state colleges and universities. The picture of Civic Center Park with thousands of people and billowing pot smoke was national news prior to the shooting that took place at the event. That is certainly not the image of Denver that the local chamber of commerce wants as they try to bring business to the metro area.

Years ago, I was playing golf with a friend and his brother. The brother grew up in Denver and became an investment banker in Hong Kong. During the round he chimed in about Coloradans in general, saying, “The business world doesn’t want to locate here because they believe Coloradans care more about their free time, biking, skiing and drinking than people in other parts of the world.” I believe Coloradans believe in a healthy balance of work and recreation, which may be one factor in our being the least obese state.

Now that we have legalized pot, I can hear that banker saying all those Coloradans want to do “is smoke pot and live off the government.”

Colorado, we can be a frontrunner in the legalization of marijuana. We just need to carefully think through the far-reaching consequences of the legalization.

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

Fishwrap is a slang term that started in the ‘30s and refers to the transient value of yesterday’s newspaper.
Urban Farm Launches Aquaponics Classes

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Growing one’s own food can be a somewhat romantic, yet practical notion with visions of working the land in return for a bountiful harvest. Watching tiny seeds grow into food that moments later can be served for dinner… it makes you feel wholesome just thinking about it. But the space involved in gardening can be prohibitive if yard space is limited or nonexistent. What’s a would-be-farmer to do? The Urban Farm, located at the northeast corner of Stapleton on Smith Rd., has the answer and will teach you how to do it.

The Urban Farm is starting aquaponics classes in which the public can learn, hands-on, how to create a system for their own homes, potentially growing enough produce to feed their family and some neighbors too.

Aquaponics refers to a closed system in which fish, such as tilapia, which can later be harvested as a protein source, swim around in one container. The fish and their waste nutrients are what differentiate this system from hydroponics where nutrients have to be added to the water. The nutrient-rich waste water the fish produce is pumped up and circulated into another container to water and feed plants such as lettuce, cucumbers, strawberries and herbs.

Another pump pushes the water through the plants’ roots and soil, providing the fish with clean water. The circulating water is constantly being aerated. “The fish have to have oxygen and the plants have to have carbon dioxide,” explains Donna Garnett, executive director and co-founder of The Urban Farm. “With this closed system, you’re getting all the nutrients, all the oxygen, everything that lives in that closed system needs to survive.” The system can be as small as the width of a 55-gallon drum or much larger, incorporating a “hoop house,” (shown above) a greenhouse of sorts that enables people to grow outside, year-round. When the plants are growing and vines, Garnett describes it as a big chia plant. “It’s really something!” she says.

The aquaponics system is inherently organic. “You can’t do anything but have organic food because you can’t add anything to your fish tank; otherwise you’ll kill the fish,” explains Rick Garcia, farm manager at The Urban Farm. “The food that comes off of these systems is high quality.” It’s also sustainable. Garnett explains that “In Denver, if our whole transportation system shut down, we would run out of food in about 48 hours. The idea behind sustainable agriculture is that we’re not dependent on a transportation system or on our international agricultural partners being mad at us or having a tsunami, drought or whatever. The idea is that we can sustain ourselves at a very local level and be able to provide ourselves with nutritional, wholesome, and good food.”

Garnett sees this as part of The Urban Farm’s efforts to help with the obesity problem in America. “A system like this using fish and vegetables is really to help create a healthier population where eating habits are not so unhealthy,” she states. This is a cause near and dear to The Urban Farm’s mission of helping children, youth and families make healthier lifestyle choices.

Now in its 26th year, Garnett says, “From day one, we’ve been an educational organization. Even before anyone else was talking about urban farms, we were out there as pioneers saying that city dwellers need to know about urban farms.” She adds, “You need to know where your food comes from; you need to not be dependent on some other type of system that might not be able to feed your family.” As the movement around good food and sustainable agriculture has picked up in Colorado and beyond, Garnett feels teaching aquaponics is a logical step for the nonprofit to take. “I like to think about it as that saying, ‘Give a man a fish and he’ll eat for a day but teach a man to fish’… well, if we can teach you to grow your fish and your vegetables, you’ll be able to feed yourself and others,” she says.

The Urban Farm also works with school groups, offers a community garden, camps and classes in horsemanship and working on a farm with animals, gardens and an orchard. For more about The Urban Farm and the aquaponics classes, contact Donna Garnett at 720.810.5475 or Rick Garcia at 720.495.6876.
The Reader

Mary Trujillo, known to many Park Hill school-age children as “Miss Mary,” has become the Pied Piper of reading in Northeast Denver. Through a program funded by the Denver Foundation, she runs after-school activities at the Pauline Robinson Library and she reads with children in Early Childhood Education programs at 12 elementary schools through a library literacy program.

Trujillo grew up in a family with strong roots in the San Luis Valley. She went to college in California and taught English on the Chilean island of Chiloé for seven years, where she met her husband. She came back to Denver to get her master’s degree and has worked in the North Park Hill community ever since. All of the places she has lived have a strong sense of community, each different in many ways. She has found that same sense of community at the Pauline Robinson Library, in the schools where she reads and especially in the children who always perk up and smile when they see “Miss Mary.”

Jon Meredith: Tell me about the after-school program at Pauline Robinson?
Ms. Trujillo: The program is on a drop-in basis. Any child who wants to participate can by simply coming to the library. There are five libraries in Denver that have this program. We focus on 8- to 12-year-olds, although I do have lots of younger-age kids who come in. It is a great way for them to have something positive to do after school and also to make great connections with us at the library. It continues through the middle-school kids. Although they may not participate any longer, they come in and know they are welcome.

JM: How does a parent get a child involved?
Trujillo: Come into the library and join in. There are no signups or parental permissions required.

JM: What is the Read Aloud Program?
Trujillo: The Denver Public Library runs the program through its Early Literacy Department. Volunteers and staff go out to classrooms and read to 3- to 5-year-olds who are either in the ECE programs or Head Start. I go to 8 to 12 classrooms a week; the same ones every week. The kids get very excited when I come because they know we are going to read and talk about books. It gets them familiar with the library, with someone who works at the library and encourages literacy at a very young age. At the end of each semester we give them each a book, in English or Spanish.

JM: How do you see this helps the children?
Trujillo: It is amazing. I start at the beginning of the year and I always forget how young the kids are. They are 3 and 4 years old and I forget what books I can read to them. I’m afraid I will lose them. By the end of the year they want more books, longer books and always pop-up books, because they are the fun ones. The change comes in the way they begin to talk about books, the way they talk about the pictures, the sounds and what they notice in the illustrations.

JM: Why does Denver Public Schools need someone from the library to come in and do this?
Trujillo: The schools make a great connection with the library. It makes reading fun. All the teachers receive big bins of books from the library’s deleted books section and every child gets a book twice a year. It puts a familiar face at the library for the kids and ensures that when they come into Pauline Robinson there will be someone there that knows them and will help them.

JM: I interviewed Commander Calo, who is in charge of District 2 of the Denver Police Department and was formerly the leader of the Gang Task Force. He told me that 3rd and Holly, specifically the old Holly Square shopping area, was ground zero for gang activity in Northeast Denver. How has that influence affected what you do here?
Trujillo: I feel completely removed from that side of this neighborhood although I am not oblivious to it. I know what goes on around here, but the library is kind of a safe island. I have worked here for five years and there has been one incident I can remember, a girl versus girl fight. The library does not get tagged and kids act appropriately. I love working in this community. I love the people here and especially the children. It may have a bad reputation but I don’t feel or touch that side of it.

JM: Having spent so much time in Chile, what has your experience here taught you that you could bring back to Chile?
Trujillo: Books and free libraries. My husband Jaime says that he is amazed by the literacy resources we have in this country. In Chile, I don’t think I ever saw or went into a library and books have an 18 percent sales tax.

Mary Trujillo, in the Pauline Robinson Library, holds a favorite pop-up book, Big Frog Can’t Fit In.

JM: Tell us about the Denver Public Library’s summer reading program?
Trujillo: The summer reading program starts June 3rd and runs until August 20th. There are great prizes for reading and the kids can read what they want, be it magazines or blogs. It keeps the middle-school students engaged and tries to have them avoid the “summer slip.” We don’t see some kids all yearlong, but when the summer reading signup comes along, they come in. It definitely gets more children to come into the library.

JM: How does a parent get a child involved?
Trujillo: Come into the library and join in. There are no signups or parental permissions required.

JM: What is the summertime program?
Trujillo: The Denver Public Library runs the program through its ECE programs or Head Start. I go to 8 to 12 classrooms a week; the same ones every week. The kids get very excited when I come because they know we are going to read and talk about books. It gets them familiar with the library, with someone who works at the library and encourages literacy at a very young age. At the end of each semester we give them each a book, in English or Spanish.

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Zichterman, Taylor Howard and Ethan Poland. Photo by Jenny Zichterman

Banek with two new headphones.

at the monthly awards assembly, the students presented Ms. bake sale when they surprised her with the news. On May 28 lunchtime. pose of their sale a secret from Ms. Banek until after the first school year ended.

classes to sponsor two bake sales. Their plan was to sell before W esterly Creek and the students managed to keep the pur -
goods donated by the 5th grade families were sold out by

ing hundreds of M ontview Preschool students, retired when

Zichterman, whose 5th grade class is just down the hall from Banek’s classroom, learned they had been stolen, he decided the four 5th grade classes at W esterly Creek (about 100 stu -
dents) could find a way to replace the headphones.

Zichterman, his teacher Amy Dickson, and his friends Ethan Poland and Taylor Howard organized the four 5th grade classes to sponsor two bake sales. Their plan was to sell before school, at lunch and after school, but at both sales the baked goods donated by the 5th grade families were sold out by lunchtime.

Bake sales to raise money for various causes aren’t unusual at W esterly Creek and the students managed to keep the pur -pose of their sale a secret from Ms. Banek until after the first bake sale when they surprised her with the news. On May 28 at the monthly awards assembly, the students presented Ms. Banek with two new headphones.

Beloved Montview Preschool Teachers Retire

After 28 years, Montview Preschool teacher E die B uchanan has taught countless children and worked in every room in the school. But her influence extended beyond her students.

Twenty-three years ago, when C arolyn H ill brought her child to Montview and em braced parent involvement. One of her favorite memories of teaching happened over 20 years ago when a little boy playing hospital in her classroom put a stethoscope to her heart and said, “Edie, I hear the kids in your heart.”

E die Buchanan says she was influenced by her father, a teacher who had a calm and respectful manner with his students. She says it was a gift to teach at Montview’s coopera -tive school, where children are accepted as they are. She believes in the bal -ance of open-ended and teacher directed activities and repeats John Dewey’s quote, “Knowing we cannot teach students everything, it is most impor -tant we teach them to learn.” Buchanan particularly loved the school-home connection at Montview and embraced parent involvement. One of her favorite memories of teaching happened over 20 years ago when a little boy playing hospital in her classroom put a stethoscope to her heart and said, “Edie, I hear the kids in your heart.”

As Carolyn Hill reflects on her years Montview, she says what’s most special is that it truly feels like a community people can depend on. As a parent herself, she realizes the struggles parents can face sending their children to school for the first time. She knows these parents put a lot of trust in her and she thinks having Montview teachers visit families and get to know them was especially important in developing that trust. She acknowledges the “awesome responsibility and honor” that come with being a child’s first teacher. “I hear ‘You’re the best teacher I’ve ever had!’ a lot, but that’s because I’m the only teacher they’ve ever had!” Hill says memories of all her favorite moments in teaching sometimes made her wonder if she should re -consider retirement, but she knows she won’t be far from the community she loves.

“I know I will still see everyone at the gro -cery store, or pool or just out walking my dog.” Her greatest wish for her students is that they will always love school as much as they do now! “They are so enthusiastic about coming and learning new things, I hope they carry that love of school with them forever.”

Information about Hill and Buchanan was provided by Montview Preschool in articles by Trisha Pshak and Melissa Krall.

By Carol Roberts

W esterly Creek 5th Graders Step In to Replace Stolen Items

English Language Acquisition (ELA) students at W esterly Creek School have had the benefit of using high quality head -phones purchased by ELA teacher Yaisa Banek to assist them in their learning. Banek also allowed other stu -dents to borrow the head -phones. Re -cently, however, they disap -peared.

When Ethan Banek also allowed other stu -dents to borrow the head -phones. Re -cently, however, they disap -peared.

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Havana Detour

As those who live in the Eastbridge neighborhood of Stapleton already know, Havana is closed to northbound traffic from Florence Way to Smith Road and Smith Road is one way going west between Moline and Havana (see detour map above). Denver Transit Partners expects Havana will be closed to through traffic until the end of June. Alternative plans would have caused 22 weeks of work in the area so they chose this re-routing option that will last for six weeks. For construction information from Denver Transit Partners call 303-297-5284. For after-hours construction related emergencies call 1-855-Denver Transit Partners call 303-297-5284. For after-hours construction related emergencies call 1-855-EAGLE-P3 (324-5373).

SUN Community Meeting May 2

Stapleton United Neighbors (SUN) president Mark Mehringer shared the results of a March community survey on a range of subjects that had over 2000 responses from approximately 5000 households ("an astonishingly high response rate," said Mehringer). The results of the survey are posted at StapletonUnitedNeighbors.com > Education. The majority of the questions were about schools. For the Stapleton high school there was a strong preference (67%) for a single comprehensive high school rather than a group of separate smaller schools. DPS superintendent Tom Boasberg has stated there will be enough seats at the comprehensive high school that every Stapleton student who wants to attend will be guaranteed a seat.

The middle school survey showed a strong preference (56%) for separate schools grades 6-8 rather than the K-8 model (25%). See the Middle School Update article on page 31 of this issue for upcoming meetings and information on middle school programming. At the elementary level, the survey showed a desire to move away from the current open choice system in Stapleton (23%) in favor of a tiered priority system (45%) that would give priority to new students to attend the school closest to their home. DPS has clarified that existing students would not be displaced under such a system. A number of Stapleton parents have been concerned that DPS numbers don’t accurately project the number of school age children in Stapleton in coming years.

Mehringer says, “I looked at DPS’ projections for kindergarten each year for the next several years and calculated from that how many kids they are estimating and compared that with how many our survey is suggesting we’ll get. Do we have twice as many kids as DPS projects? Or do we have half as many? I actually found it to be good news because they are estimating more kids about to enter elementary than our survey suggested, which actually makes a lot of sense because we’re still building houses. Their estimates look about right, plus they added some more because we’re still building houses.”

Keven Burnett, Executive Director of the Stapleton Master Community Association (MCA) reported that they have been working on spring maintenance projects, and with the help of the SUN sustainability committee and community volunteers they recently planted about 100 trees.

Burnett also informed the attendees that the MCA has about 2.5 million feet of alley and annually they take on the projects in greatest need of repair. Residents can report alley issues on the contact page at www.StapletonCommunity.com. Graffiti in parks can also be reported online.

June 29—Stapleton Pride Pool Party

To celebrate diversity, Stapleton Pride will hold its 2nd annual Stapleton Pride Pool Party on Sat., June 29 from 7–10pm at the Aviator Pool, 8054 E. 28th Ave. All who celebrate the diversity in our community and world are invited—singles, couples, traditional and LGBT families—to enjoy food, drinks, kids’ games, a DJ and music, giveaways, sponsor raffles and fun in the pool. Cost: $10/adults; kids 12 and under free. Benefits Bluff Lake Nature Center and Stapleton Pride. Sponsorships available. Space is limited. Do respond by June 10 to stapletonpride.com or info@stapletonpride.com.

Forest City Update

Forest City is considering two additional rental apartment projects south of I-70 and has not decided which will be built first. The empty square block in the 29th Ave. Town Center (across from Sam Gary Library) is being evaluated for apartment projects wrapping around a parking garage, possibly with one floor of public parking and potential retail on the ground floor. The number of residential units is still to be determined.

The second project is phase...
two of the Apter Town Center Apartments (at MLK and Roslyn), which is anticipated to have 130 new apartments, in addition to the 85 units already completed.

Lee Ferguson from Forest City reported at the May Stapleton Development Corporation meeting that Horizon senior housing has purchased their land along MLK, across from the self-storage units, and he thinks they will be breaking ground on the 109-unit apartment building in the next month or two.

**Community Center/Tower Update**

Keven Burnett says the community center project is still on hold as they explore all options. Forest City has offered them another possible location—the lot across the street from the control tower is available since the pediatric office building proposed for that location has fallen through. The steering committee still loves the project, says Burnett, but for now it is a fluid situation. They need to find a way for the MCA steering committee to come to consensus with the MCA Board, the majority of which is, and will remain, Forest City representatives until Stapleton is significantly more built out.

At the May Stapleton Development Corporation meeting, Tom Gleason stated Forest City’s issue is “What is the cost of the cultural center and where does it make sense to build it? We have said we intend to preserve the tower. The issue is what about the base building, which we tuned to market for office use because the figures we run show that the cost of utilizing that for the cultural center would be prohibitive and would cause an increase in HOA dues for the community that probably would not be supported by the community.”

Councilman Chris Herndon responded, “I do think there’s a difference of opinion between Forest City and the MCA. There was never a mention of a phasing process when the MCA was doing their analysis for a cultural arts facility. The MCA also talked about owning the building when they were doing their analysis. I think we’ve reached this point of stagnation, and that’s why I’m hoping that other entities, the board, the mayor’s administration, other people can come together and say, ‘We need to make sure this happens, so we need to bring these parties back to the table.’”

**RTD Shows Plans for the Stapleton Park-n-Ride and Bus Transfer Center**

At a May 23 community meeting at the Sam Gary Library, RTD showed drawings of the bus transfer center, parking lot plans, Kiss-n-Ride drop off routes, bike parking, and access to the rail station across Smith road, which is being built by Denver Transit Partners. Parking rows have been designed at an angle to direct commuters toward the Smith Road street crossings to the rail station. The Stapleton Park-n-Ride, with 1,500 parking spaces is one of RTD’s largest lots. Canopies in the bus transfer area slope toward the south so in the future solar panels could be placed on them. Four separate parking lots will be built, with construction on two of them starting in the fourth quarter of 2013. The smallest lot was placed in the center of the Park-n-Ride, next to the bus transfer area, with the idea that the first transit oriented development may occur on that lot (but the developer would be required to make up the 100 spaces that would be lost when that lot is developed). A pdf of the drawings is posted at www.FrontPorchStapleton.com > Article Supplements.

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Stapleton Block Party Day 2013
By Dan Ollendorf, Co-Chair, SUN Outreach Committee

The 9th annual Stapleton Block Party Day took place on Saturday, May 18, with residents gathering in Stapleton alleys, streets and parks across the neighborhood. “Block party day was started by Stapleton United Neighbors (SUN) as a way to facilitate community connections in Stapleton,” shares Mark Miehlinger, SUN president. “It has turned into a very successful event and we encourage residents to continue to build their own traditions and to plan other events with neighbors throughout the year. The City of Denver hopes to create its own similar tradition this August with 10 days of service projects and community events they are calling Denver Days.”

This year, block parties ranged from BBQs to breakfast gatherings. Some were informal potlucks and others were large events with activities, games, live music and entertainment. Amanda Allshouse, co-chair of the SUN Outreach Committee, facilitated members of the Denver Fire Department coming out with a truck to several block parties. Stapleton resident Lisa Tartar says her block loves the tradition. “This year it’s been a lot of fun, as we’ve had a few new families move in. It’s great to catch up with old friends and get to know the new ones as well.”

Block Party Day has benefits that go beyond just having fun with neighbors. Community events and traditions like this are very instrumental in creating an environment where neighbors know each other and look after one another, ultimately creating a stronger and safer community.

The SUN Outreach Committee wishes to thank everyone who helped make this Block Party Day another success. The Master Community Association (MCA) provided free reservations of all pocket parks for use on the day while local businesses including Rocky Mountain Chili Bowl, Mici Italian Stapleton, Stapleton Wine Cellars/The Bottle Shop and Jim ‘N Nick’s Bar-B-Q all offered specials for Stapleton block parties. We appreciate the time and efforts of the block captains as well. If you are interested in being a block captain, or you want to find out who your block captain is, email sunoutreach@gmail.com.

Bus Route 89

It is my hope that the article entitled “Neighbors Meet with RTD about Route 89,” also run in the May issue of your paper, provided clarity to Mr. Weller’s puzzlement over the picture posted in your April issue by Mr. Sennett of a bus on 29th Ave. with the caption “Do we want this on our streets?” If he did not I would like to explain that Mr. Sennett’s motive for posting the picture was purely selfish. Mr. Sennett and others are concerned about the recent addition of Route 89 on 29th Ave. 29th Ave. is used by cyclists of varying ages (many that are inexperienced riders) to travel to and from Stapleton’s many attractions. The picture was to demonstrate what a cyclist needs to navigate during their 29th Ave. travels when a parked car and a bus lock a cyclist in a small space. I personally would like to thank Mr. Sennett for his post and for all his efforts to look out for the members of this community.

Heidi Atkins

Families Needed to Host “Up with People” International Cast Members

Families in the Denver area are being asked to host one or more members of the Up with People cast in their home from July 12 to August 12 (or for a two-week period). One hundred members, representing 20 countries, will begin their summer world tour in Denver. During their stay, they will be volunteering at various local nonprofit agencies. Host families are asked to provide a bed, local transportation at the beginning and end of each day, as well as breakfast and most dinners. Hosts will receive complimentary tickets to Up with People’s production of Voices to be held on Aug. 10 at 7:30pm. Those interested in hosting should contact Abby Hull, staging manager, at abby@upwithpeople.org or call 720.215.3209. Up with People is an independent nonprofit, [501(c)(3)] organization without any religious or political affiliations. For more information, visit www.upwithpeople.org.
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City Park Jazz— “Best Lineup Ever” Memorial for slain officer to precede June 23 concert

By Laurie Dunklee

City Park Jazz is back this summer, stronger than ever. The 27-year-old grassroots festival is a labor of love for volunteers and concertgoers, who are determined to continue the popular concert series despite last year’s shooting of a police officer.

“People understand that the shooting last year was an isolated incident,” said Chris Zacher, president of the board of City Park Jazz. “This celebration of our community will go on. We won't allow violence to take over our public facilities.”

The concert series showcases Colorado musicians in free Sunday concerts at the City Park Pavilion, June 2 to August 4, 6 to 8pm. “This is probably our best lineup ever,” said Zacher. “We’ve got some of the household names and some acts that are new to the City Park Jazz stage.”

Zacher expects to welcome 85,000 concertgoers for the 10 concerts.

On June 24 last year, police officer Celena Hollis was shot and killed after she and other officers were alerted to break up a scuffle in a parking lot a half hour after the concert was over. According to news accounts, the shooter was running from gang members when he fired.

Zacher says there was no lack of security, and no concertgoers were in the immediate area. “The guy shot into the air as Celena was walking down the hill. He wasn’t going after her, she just got in his way.”

Zacher said Hollis was a friend and a professional who will be greatly missed. “Celena had worked with us for six years; she was a trusted member of our team. She could walk into a situation and diffuse it without yelling or weapons. She was a calming presence and a well-respected cop.”

A memorial ceremony for Hollis at 5:30pm, at a m emorial ceremony for Hollis at 5:30pm, at

“The police will be both more visible and better able to move through the crowd quickly if necessary,” Zacher said.

City Park Jazz is a showcase for Denver and Colorado musicians. “They are the best of the best,” said Zacher. “They often play for small numbers of people at clubs. We get them in front of big audiences.”

Concert highlights will include a rare performance of Miles Davis’ famous Concerto de Aranjuez jazz adaptation. Another first will be the Harmony Chorale, a GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, straight) chorus, backing up singer Haurl Miller.

Denver favorites in this year’s lineup include pianist Neil Bridge, bassist Kenny Walker, bluesman Sammy Mayfield, New Orleans-style pianist Henry Butler and jazz/vaety band AOA (Alive on Arrivals). AOA will feature special guest Alexo Ginshevich, a 10-year-old drummer Zacher calls a ‘phenom.’

Trumpeter Ron Miles and his quartet will front the Denver Municipal Band in a performance of Concerto de Aranjuez and Solea from Miles Davis and Gil Evans’ Sketches of Spain album. Concerto de Aranjuez, a classical piece for guitar and orchestra by Joaquin Rodrigo, was arranged in the jazz idiom by Evans and Davis. Davis said of the piece: “That melody is so strong that the softer you play it, the stronger it gets, and the stronger you play it, the weaker it gets.”

“Will it be a rare performance,” Zacher said. “The last time it was performed in the U.S. was in 2008.”

City Park Jazz began in 1986 by neighbors wanting to reclaim City Park. “The park was full of drug dealers,” said Zacher. “But these cultural facilities are ours to use. Denver has a dynamic parks system and when we use them, we win.”

Volunteer-run City Park Jazz is a nonprofit organization that raises its own funds to produce the concerts. “We pay for the musicians, permit fees, security and toilets,” said Zacher. “The city loves us because aside from providing a few extra police officers, they pay nothing.”

“The concerts are free so everyone can come: straight and gay, black and white, Hispanic, young and old. It breaks through socio-economic barriers. The City Park Jazz concerts show we’re strong and united as a city. It’s what keeps us going.”

For concert information, see cityparkjazz.org.
To make a donation to the Denver Police Foundation’s Celena Hollis Memorial Fund, go to denverpolicefoundation.org and click on Celena Hollis Memorial Fund.

Zacher said increased security measures this year include two additional police officers for each concert, several horse-mounted officers, and a police all-terrain vehicle. “The police will be both more visible and better able to move through the crowd quickly if necessary,” Zacher said.

City Park Jazz concerts show we’re strong and united as a community.”

This year’s June 23 concert will be preceded by a memorial ceremony for Hollis at 5:30pm, attended by Mayor Michael Hancock and Chief of Police Robert White. Plans will be unveiled for a memorial bench and walkway to be built in the parking lot where Hollis was shot.

“This season is dedicated to Celena,” said Zacher. “She did her job that day to protect the community. So we remember Celena and move on to celebrate our community.”

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To make a donation to the Denver Police Foundation’s Celena Hollis Memorial Fund, go to denverpolicefoundation.org and click on Celena Hollis Memorial Fund.
School Board Approves McAuliffe Move to Smiley

By Carol Roberts

The Denver School Board meeting on May 16, the board voted 6-1 in favor of the Denver Public Schools’ staff recommendation to move the McAuliffe IB program to the Smiley building. The vote followed months of well-attended community meetings in which DPS staff proposed, explained and answered questions about combining the Stapleton and Smiley enrollment areas. According to DPS, over 600 people went to five large community meetings and smaller “living room” meetings. The move allows McAuliffe to grow to a size principal Kurt Dennis believes is optimal for his programming and opens more middle school seats in what has quickly become a very successful and popular program.

Dennis says McAuliffe will be a very different school, something he never solicited. When asked about what changes will be made, he said, “I think the frustration was what they perceived as expectations and promises from the home builders and Forest City about where things would be and what they could do when they bought their homes… to the closest school… the school in the neighborhood. What they had expected would happen didn’t. But I don’t think we heard anything at the public hearing that night that hadn’t already surfaced in the previous meetings that had been held on the topic.”

Though the decision means a big move lies ahead for Dennis and his program, he says his number one priority for next year is getting his 210 new sixth graders off to a great start. “Once the new students and staff are comfortable we’ll begin to shift some of our attention to the move.”

Dennis is confident his program will handle the move, “so it will have as little impact as possible on the students and teachers.”

Approximately 48 Smiley students will be guaranteed a spot at McAuliffe when they are 8th graders in 2014-15. Dennis says those students don’t have to give up their identity or who they are or what they were. But they will also need to “acclimate”—become a part of the culture of McAuliffe, a culture of rigor, high expectations and accountability. Dennis says McAuliffe offers learning opportunities year round and hopes to bring the Smiley and McAuliffe students together over the summer of 2014 to ease the transition in the fall.

Dennis has met with Venture Prep High School Principal Ken Burdette and believes they won’t have any problem sharing a campus. (See Venture Prep High School article on page 29.) Venture Prep Middle School will remain on the Smiley campus in 2014 with approximately 50 8th graders, the last year before that program is phased out.

Dennis’ program is moving into a location where other programs have failed in the past and he faces the challenges of bringing together several different neighborhoods under one roof. These are challenges school districts all over the country have faced—and frequently have not succeeded. The Front Porch asked how the pressure to make this program work is affecting him.

Dennis, who lives in Stapleton, says from an academic perspective he’ll be interested in the data that comes from the program to see if something that’s replicable and can be used as a model across the country. But, he adds, “When you’re working with your neighborhood’s kids and your work influences your neighbor’s kids’ future, that’s where the pressure comes from.”

However, he says, “I’m very confident we’re going to succeed.”

At this point no decision has been made about changes to school names. If the McAuliffe program keeps its name after moving to Smiley, will the Swigert-McAuliffe building become Swigert-something else? DPS says they will listen to input from the community on that subject.

Programming for Two New NE Middle Schools

DSSST was the only middle school program to submit a proposal for the two new middle schools that will open in 2014 at the Swigert-McAuliffe building and the new school in Northfield. Following a presentation by Bill Kurt, CEO of DSSST public schools at the May 9 community meeting at Denver School of the Arts, some parents expressed concern that since DSSST holds 40-50% of their seats for free and reduced lunch (FRL) students, the school won’t offer the capacity needed to accommodate non-FRL students. Other parents expressed a concern that the strict culture isn’t right for all students, and with a DSSST middle school already in this area, adding another will limit the range of choices.

DPS says staff recommendations on the new middle school programs will be presented to the School Board on June 6th and are expected to be posted on the Board website (http://board.dpsk12.org/) a day in advance. DPS staff will share these recommendations at a community meeting on June 10 at Smiley Middle School from 5:30-7pm. (http://communityrelations.dpsk12.org/regional-community-meetings/near-northeast/current-community-processes/greater-park-hill-stapleton-middle-school-process-2012-2013/)

The board is expected to vote on middle school programming on the shared boundary for the Stapleton and Smiley attendance areas on June 20th. Public comment about those votes is scheduled for June 13 at 5pm, with registration required a day in advance.

Stapleton Elementary School Boundaries

DPS plans to start having community meetings about Stapleton elementary boundaries in the fall. If a new boundary system is implemented, it would only impact new students. Students who are currently enrolled at a school within the boundary would not be displaced or have to go through the Choice process to maintain their seat. The exception to this, which is the case in all regions of the city, is for ECE students.
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