

Front Porch

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

DENVER, COLORADO

STAPLETON

APRIL 2015

Plan for Tower Packs a Punch



Left to right: Jim Chrisman, senior vice president, Forest City, Chris Herndon, District 11 city councilman, and Robert Thompson, CEO and founder of Punch Bowl Social, share a laugh in front of the Stapleton control

tower complex, which will be converted into Punch Bowl Social, a diner and old-school entertainment facility. The three teamed up to bring life back to the building that has remained vacant for 20 years.

By Madeline Schroeder

Among rows of modern homes, the 1960s tower sticks out like an appendage to the neighborhood. The Stapleton airport tower complex at Martin Luther King and Central Park boulevards is an icon of the former Denver airport that was converted into a residential area. After remaining

vacant for 20 years, the tower finally has a new future: it will be converted into the dining and entertainment center, Punch Bowl Social.

"At this time, this is really the only viable proposal that has come forward. Overall I think the consensus is most people are pretty excited about it and I think it will integrate (continued on page 3)



Test Prep

By Carol Roberts

The start of Colorado's new state-mandated tests in March triggered fresh debate on the subject of testing. For a behind-the-scenes look at how the testing went, seven local principals shared candid feedback about their first week of CMAS (Colorado Measures of Academic Success).

These language arts and math tests, (continued on page 5)

All principals the *Front Porch* interviewed said they try not to make a big deal of the annual standardized tests so students won't feel pressure about them. Some took further steps to help students relax and do their best. Denver Discovery had a meditation session before each test (left). Bill Roberts had students exercise before the test and practice deep breathing. Ashley teachers made a silly and fun video.

Mythic Creatures Arrive at DMNS



Through Sept. 7, the Denver Museum of Nature & Science will host their new exhibit, "Mythic Creatures: Dragons, Unicorns and Mermaids." These legends offer windows into history and how cultures adapted different meanings. For example, in European stories dragons are powerful, wicked, and dangerous. In East Asia, dragons have sweeping powers, including breathing clouds, moving the seasons, and controlling the waters of rivers, lakes, and seas. Story on p. 34.

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



The 29th Avenue Town Center donned for spring.



Most of the events listed below are FREE or support nonprofits. All are open to the public (additional events are listed on pages 26-28).

APRIL

Friday, April 3

Spring break wildlife guided viewing tours. 9:30-11:30am. Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge* www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

Saturday, April 4

Hippity Hop Easter Troop and Kids Cotton Tail Fun Run. Stapleton Central Park*

Sunday, April 5

Easter Bunny at Bass Pro Shops, 8340 Northfield Boulevard. Visit website for more details. www.basspro.com

Sunday, April 5

Stapleton Fellowship Church Easter Services. 7, 8:30, 10 and 11:30am on The South Green*

Thursday, April 9

Active Minds Seminar - Franklin Delano Roosevelt. 6:45-7:45pm, Sam Gary Library* www.activeminds.com

Friday, April 10

Hike-N-Bird. 9-11am. Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge*

Wednesday, April 15

Beer Festival planning committee 6:30pm, Community Room*

Saturday, April 18

Saturday Night Live for Kids. 6-9pm at the Central Park Rec Center* Ages 7-12. Snacks, dinner, games, pool time, prizes and music. Register at www.StapletonCommunity.com or MCA office, 7350 E. 29th Ave.

Saturday, April 18

Fishing season begins at Lake Mary and Lake Ladora at Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge* sunrise to sunset. Artificial bait and barbless hooks only. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

Wednesday, April 22

Aquatics Sponsor Lottery 6:30pm, Community Room*

Thursday, April 23

Active Minds Seminar- William Shakespeare. 6:45-7:45pm, Sam Gary Library* www.activeminds.com

APRIL

Thursday, April 23

Nature Tots- "Rabbit." Ages 3-5 and their adults. 10-11am. Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge* Hike around Lake Mary and discover world of frogs. RSVP required. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

Sunday, April 26

Auditions for "Seussical the Musical" 1-5pm, Community Room*

MAY

Friday, May 1

Registration opens for FFF & Beer Festival - noon, online at www.StapletonCommunity.com

Saturday, May 2

Reclaim free mulch. Denvergov.org/DenverRecycles

Sunday, May 3

Race for Open Space 5K/10K/Half Marathon. 8am-12pm. Bluff Lake & Sand Creek Greenway* Volunteers needed. Register: www.raceforopenspace.org

Saturday, May 16

SUN Block Party Day. <https://sites.google.com/site/sunwebsite1/>

Sat, May 16 & Sun, May 17

Stapleton Community Garage Sale 8am-1pm.

Tuesday, May 19

SUN Annual Community Forum and elections. 6:30pm (doors open at 6). Central Park Rec Center* <https://sites.google.com/site/sunwebsite1/>

* More information at Events@stapletoncommunity.com
Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge: 6550 Gateway Road
The North Green: between Roslyn & Syracuse on 29th Ave
The South Green: 8700 E. 21st Ave.
Sam Gary Library: 2961 Roslyn St.
Community Room: Town Center, 7350 E 29th Ave #300
Stapleton Central Park: 8601 E. MLK Blvd.
Central Park Rec Center: 9651 E. MLK Blvd.
Bluff Lake Nature Center: 4755 Paris

Events & Announcements at Stapleton

Community DNA

Several issues related to dogs often arise in the spring. The first is that off-leash dogs in areas not designated as off-leash are more of a problem than ever in our community. Off-leash dogs in on-leash areas are a safety concern for other dog owners with dogs on a leash as well as for people enjoying the park without dogs. Most of our on-leash parks and open spaces see a variety of uses: cyclists, joggers, small children playing, skateboarders and those just wanting to enjoy the park. No dog owner can predict when their dog might respond in a negative way to a stressful event. Off-leash dogs also run the risk of running into the street and being hit by a car. There is a great dog park in Stapleton that will keep your dog safe and in an environment expecting all playmates to be off-leash. And, please note: per Denver Leash Law Sec. 8-16. "It shall be unlawful for any owner, possessor or person who keeps any dog to permit the same to run at large" and you can be ticketed by the police.

The second dog issue deals with picking up after your dog. Remember that you as the dog's owner are responsible for carrying the bags and disposing of them in a trash bin. All the parks in Stapleton have dog waste bags and trash cans. Please be considerate of others.

I recently saw a sign that I think speaks to both of these issues. "Be the kind of person your dog thinks you are. Please be courteous; leash and pick up after your dog."

Saturday Night Live...for kids only!

The next SNL is scheduled for Sat., April 18. It will be a night of entertainment for children ages 7-12 at the Central Park Rec Center from 6-9pm. The event will include snacks, dinner, games, pool time, prizes and music. Registration is open online at www.stapletoncommunity.com or by visiting the MCA office at 7350 E. 29th Ave. or registering at the Central Park Rec Center.

Active Minds

Thursday, April 9, 6:45-7:45pm

"Franklin Delano Roosevelt"

Reflecting on Roosevelt's presidency, his biographer commented that FDR "brought the United States through the Great Depression and World War II to a prosperous future. He lifted himself from a wheelchair to lift the nation from its knees." Join Active Minds* as we look at the life and leadership of one of our nation's most admired presidents and examine how his legacy is currently viewed (for better or worse) through the lens of our recent challenges.

Thursday, April 23, 6:45-7:45pm

"William Shakespeare"

Born 450 years ago in 1564, William

Shakespeare is regarded by many as the greatest writer in the English language. Although he is most famous for his plays, he rose to fame in his life as a poet, writing 154 sonnets and two long narrative poems. Most of his plays were not published until after his death in 1616, leading some to question his authorship. Join Active Minds as we seek to understand Shakespeare's life and connect his story to his plays and poems.

Everyone is welcome. For more information, visit www.ActiveMindsForLife.com. This program is brought to you by the Stapleton Master Community Association. **Location:** Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

Auditions

The Three Leaches is holding auditions for their performance of *Seussical the Musical* on Sun., April 26 from 1-5pm in the Community Room at the MCA, 7350 E. 29th Ave., Suite 300. For more information, contact Melissa Leach at melissa@thethreleaches.com.

Stapleton Beer Festival Planning Committee

The MCA is looking for residents who would like to participate in planning and working our annual Beer Festival in July. We have our first meeting scheduled for Wed., April 15 at 6:30pm in the MCA Community Room. Dinner will be provided. Please email your RSVP to ddeeter@stapletoncommunity.com by April 13.

We're Hiring!

The MCA is accepting applications for seasonal positions for the summer season. We are hiring for lifeguards, coaches, manager, swim lesson instructors and front desk/concessions. Applications can be found online at www.stapletoncommunity.com. Please submit completed applications to jobs@stapletoncommunity.com.

2015 Event & Aquatics Sponsorships

The MCA offers a variety of opportunities for sponsorship of the events and pools. Event sponsorships include single event sponsorships as well as packages. Prices vary for each sponsorship level. All prices are located at www.stapletoncommunity.com. If you have any questions, feel free to contact ddeeter@stapletoncommunity.com or call the MCA office at 303.388.0724.

If you have any questions or comments about the information above, please feel free to contact ddeeter@stapletoncommunity.com or call the MCA office at 303.388.0724.

Diane Deeter
Community Director
ddeeter@stapletoncommunity.com

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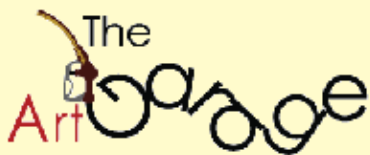
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Plan for Tower Packs a Punch

(continued from page 1)
well into the community,” says Jim Chrisman, vice president of Forest City Stapleton.

Over the years it’s been a challenge to find a functional and unique use for the building. When Councilman Chris Herndon, who represents Stapleton, was elected in 2011, he vowed to find a worthy reuse. A few restaurants have expressed interest in the ground floor, but without a use for the upper floors it wasn’t realistic. And a few years ago, the Stapleton Master Community Association proposed a community arts center, but the proposal did not end up going forward.

This past year it dawned on Herndon that Punch Bowl might be the right fit. “We always talked about what the community needed and they wanted something authentic. I’ve always thought a unique event space would do well here, so Punch Bowl naturally came to mind,” he says.

Punch Bowl Social has an “eatertainment” concept that combines craft cocktails, diner-inspired food and entertainment, including old-school arcade games, pool tables, bowling alleys and more. They’re known for hosting lots of private parties and events. Herndon expects parents will enjoy taking the kids during the day, but then also having a place to go out at night with other adults.

Punch Bowl Social will acquire 1.8–2 acres of land with the 15,000-square-foot building and the tower. Renovation is expected to cost about \$5–\$6 million. The building will be mid-century architecture with elements of art deco, according to Becky Stone of OZ Architecture who is designing the interior and exterior.

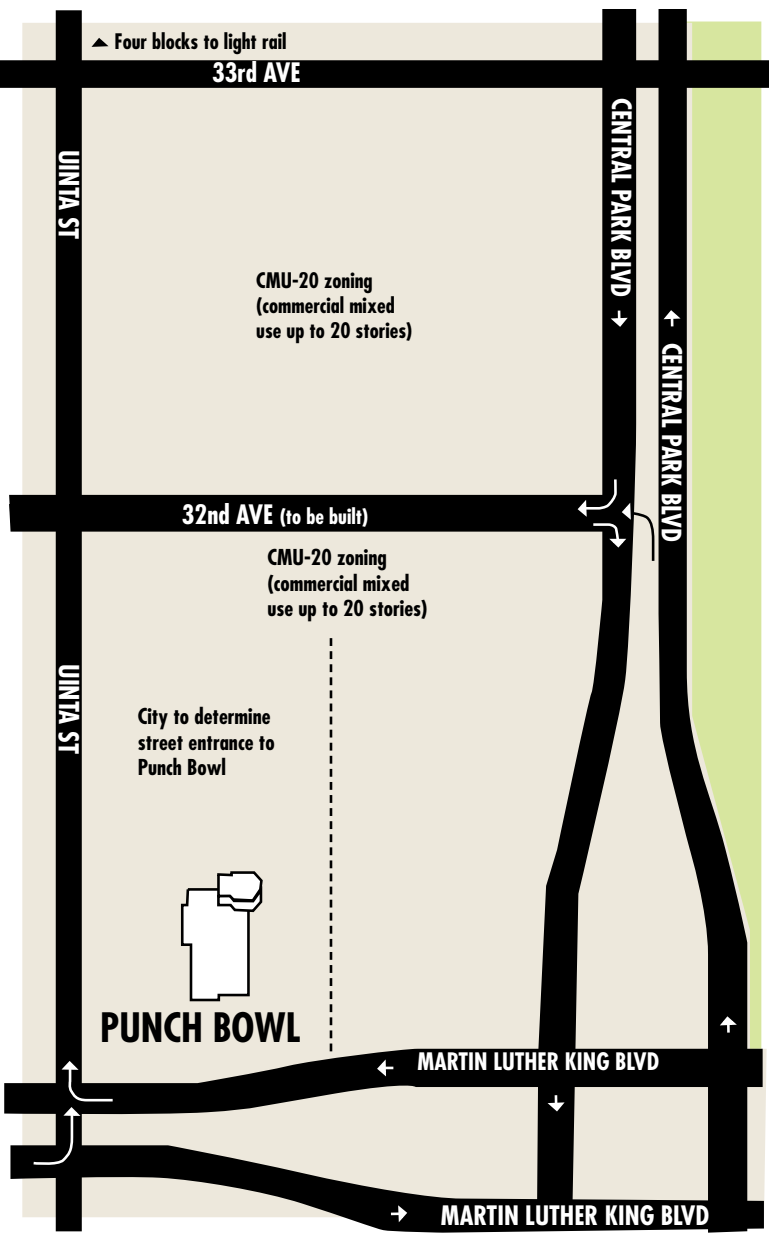
The first and second levels will be restaurant and gaming. The third level will house Punch Bowl Social corporate offices.

Punch Bowl is proposing a 3,400-square-foot addition to the first level that will include an outdoor patio. Their ideas for this outdoor space include bocce courts, hopscotch, a 18-inch wading pool for adults, and Hula-Hoops everywhere. Nice dogs will be welcome.

Plans for the second floor include a 2,200-square-foot addition with a patio facing away from the nearby homes, so the neighbors won’t have Punch Bowl guests looking at them. The second-floor patio will have garage-like doors that can open and close depending on weather and noise.

In the original design proposal, the tower had a “Punch Bowl Social” sign at the top, but Denver has a height restriction on signage that would not allow this.

Through all the renovations, Chrisman says Stapleton’s design review committee wants to be sure the tower doesn’t look leftover or like some neglected piece of a renovated building.



“The different components must all work together,” he says.

There will be a covenant against the property that Punch Bowl Social and future owners will maintain the tower and cannot demolish it, according to Chrisman.

“We want to celebrate the tower and the neighborhood,” says Robert Thompson, CEO and founder of Punch Bowl Social. “Our concept is flexible enough that it can adapt to different neighborhoods.”

Having his office on the third floor, Thompson will be a new neighbor in Stapleton. Thompson, a Montclair resident with a 23-month-old and another on the way, eats at home most of the time, but when he does go out he is guilty of eating at his own restaurants—Punch Bowl Social, and Argyll Whiskey Beer that recently opened at 17th and Downing.

At Punch Bowl he often eats a quesadilla with strawberries, melted leeks, queso Oaxaca, and queso cotija. Breakfast is his favorite meal, so

it’s served until 3pm every day at Punch Bowl. They serve items like Monkey Bread French Toast—sticky, gooey brioche bread, salted caramel, and candied walnuts. Thompson also loves the pancakes slathered in syrup at Snooze. “It brings me to action,” he says.

Thompson started doing versions of the “eatertainment” concept in the ’90s and perfected his “crown jewel,” Punch Bowl Social, in 2010. There are locations in Portland, Austin and Detroit, each being unique. The first location in Denver opened on South Broadway in 2012, which is a “grittier, younger entertainment district than Stapleton,” Thompson says. The South Broadway location is 21 and older after 9pm, and open until 2am. He is open to doing things differently at the Stapleton location and wants it to fit the neighborhood.

He and his team have met with Stapleton community groups to solicit ideas and concerns.

Keri Terwilliger lives across from the tower on Uinta. Half of her friends feel bad for her and half are jealous. “I’m very excited to have something done with the tower, but I’m concerned that people will park in front of my driveway,” she says.

The city has the final authority to determine where the entrance(s) to Punch Bowl will be located and Forest City confirmed that 32nd Ave. will be built from Uinta to Central Park Blvd. Currently, 105 parking spaces have been allotted. According to Jim Chrisman, the adjacent commercial tenants will likely have a shared parking agreement with Punch Bowl Social so they can use each other’s spaces and prevent on-street parking. If parking does overflow into the neighborhood, Punch Bowl has agreed to make “Resident Parking Only” signs, which they did at the South Broadway location.

The 2.4–2.6 acres of land adjacent to the tower could be used to expand parking, if needed. Christopher Gleissner, development and planning supervisor for the City and County of Denver, says the tower lot and the adjacent land to the east and north are zoned CMU-20 or commercial mixed use up to 20 stories, which could be office, retail, restaurant and residential (houses, apartments or townhomes). “We don’t anticipate anything out of scale or out of character for the neighborhood. It will complement the Punch Bowl,” he says.

Jim Chrisman acknowledged that Forest City’s concept for the land north of 32nd is mid- to high-rise apartments, but said that phase of development is two or more years out.

Punch Bowl Social is expected to open in late 2016. “We’re going to be here for years and years, and the community isn’t going anywhere. I think Punch Bowl has a lot of long-term staying power,”

Thompson says he has been overwhelmed by support from residents so far. Punch Bowl will present and solicit feedback at the Stapleton United Neighbors Annual Community Forum from 6:30–9pm on Tuesday, May 19 at the Central Park Recreation Center, 9561 MLK Blvd.



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A directory with links to these businesses can be found at www.FrontPorchStapleton.com > Business Directory

The New Tests: How Did They Go?

(continued from page 1) also referred to as PARCC, are new this year. They have a new type of questions, they are based on new standards, and they are the first standardized tests to be taken on computers.

The responses in a nutshell

After heavy news and social media coverage about opting out, very few families did. In our sample of seven schools (Ashley, Denver Discovery, DSST: Stapleton and Conservatory Green, McAuliffe, Swigert and Bill Roberts), 10 students opted out. In DPS, the preliminary count of opt-outs district wide was .53 percent (subject to change once all tests are over).

Did students lose valuable class time to test prep? The principals unanimously say only minimal time was spent on test prep—most spent one to two class periods on the logistics of logging in and getting familiar with some of the sample questions.

Were there glitches with computerized testing? Some schools reported no trouble at all. Some reported initial glitches logging in and slow computers that left students sitting and waiting awhile to get logged in. None reported an inability to complete the testing due to computer problems. All the schools have individual computers or one computer for two students, so lack of computers was not an issue.

Did the testing cause anxiety for students? Most of the principals said they observed very little stress and feel students are accustomed to standardized testing and take it in stride. That said, for some students, the unknowns of this test, new technology and new kinds of questions, did create stress.

Have the new standards changed teaching in positive or negative ways? The answer to this question was perhaps the most surprising of all the responses, given the national conversation on Common Core State Standards and tests associated with them. Most of these principals/administrators felt the new standards are good for their teachers and students and have raised the level of rigor in the classroom.

Are the tests too long? Superintendent Boasberg



recently testified to a congressional committee that although Colorado's mandated assessments (which are tied to federal education funds) are of a high quality and very useful, they are too long. Currently, between state and district assessments, students spend between two hours (kindergarten) and 25 hours (grades 7 and 8) per year on tests—which is .2 percent to 2.5 percent of their time. Alyssa Whitehead-Bust, chief of innovation and reform, says the district is also committed to reducing the length of the DPS assessments and has a goal of reducing testing time to .5 percent to 1 percent of total classroom time.

The results take too long—they won't come back until next fall. Whitehead-Bust explained that in the very first year of a new test, "cut scores" (where the lines are drawn on proficiency) need to be set, and that will require an extended time period this year. In future years, with computerized testing, the results should come back much more quickly.

Test prep

Chalkbeat (an online newspaper about education issues) recently ran a letter from four Colorado Teachers of the Year that said, "Teachers know how to prepare their students for testing at any level, but understand that statewide standardized-test preparation takes away valuable classroom time."

Our local principals seem to have made a commitment not to let that happen.

McAuliffe Principal Kurt Dennis: "We've only devoted one English language arts class and one math class period to taking a practice assessment. We spent 30 minutes during homeroom doing an infrastructure test to make sure that all the computers and the wireless were going to work fine when we start testing." None of the principals spent any more time than that.

Student anxiety

Ashley Principal Zachary Rahn: "I did not observe anxiety amongst students in regards to testing. Our team went to great lengths to message PARCC/CMAS as an opportunity to show what you know and cultivate a culture that supported this." The teachers created a video to convey this message to kids and families in a fun and silly way (online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGNua_5OXOs&feature=youtu.be).

Christine Nelson, chief of staff, DSST Public schools: "Our natural student culture around assessment is strong, so there was very little anxiety about the testing."

Swigert Principal Liz TenCate: "We did have some kids who were worried about their performance on the tests. Our message was that this is an assessment to help inform our teaching and help us understand what our students already know and where our areas for growth are as a school and individually. The biggest challenge is to have third-graders typing all responses. It is tough to have eight-year-olds ready to keyboard fluently."

The new standards

Denver Discovery Principal Kristen Atwood says they have integrated the new Common Core standards into their curriculum so kids are "learning concepts in an authentic way. We don't call it test prep, we call it excellent teaching."

"We have a guide, a set of expectations, that are rigorous, that have set the bar higher, and our kids and our staff are rising to a higher level of expectation and performing at a higher level. It's not going to be easy and I don't want to pretend and sugarcoat that life and high school and college and the working world are going to be easy for them. You're going to have moments of strug-

gle. So there are some standards that are super tough. We teach the kids that it's okay because life isn't easy and you have to be able to persevere and fight through those difficult learning opportunities."

Kurt Dennis: "Overall, the new assessments are a great improvement from previous tests. In terms of our teaching staff, the shift to the Common Core and the

released items from the PARCC have caused an instructional shift amongst our teachers that has shown great improvement in the quality of the curriculum and the quality of the instructional approaches.

"So yes, it's more rigorous and it's more challenging but I think it is driving better instruction, provided the necessary things are in place that need to be in place to deliver great instruction: more time, a strong school culture, and high-quality teachers in every classroom. If those things are in place, I think PARCC and Common Core are helping to create better learning opportunities for all kids."

Zachary Rahn: "I would say the shift to these standards has impacted how we are teaching and what we are teaching in a very positive direction."

Christine Nelson: "Common Core standards have definitely pushed us to raise the level of rigor in core content areas."

Most of these schools have adjusted their school day and/or school year to both raise the bar on core academics and nurture the whole child with daily offerings in physical education, the arts and music.

Kristen Atwood: "We don't cancel PE, orchestra or art. We still allow them to have lots of playtime throughout their day. But when we're in that core class, we're hitting it hard."

Length of tests

Bill Roberts Principal Trich Lea: "They are too long. This is only part one—we have science and social studies coming up after spring break and then it is Skills for Literacy and Math. Then we also have district testing."

Liz TenCate: "We agree with the district that finding the right assessments and limiting the time we take on assessments is important. The right tools can guide us incredibly well."

Kurt: "I think that we could obtain the information that we need with shorter tests. The tests are too long and sometimes it becomes more a test of stamina than what kids actually know and can do."



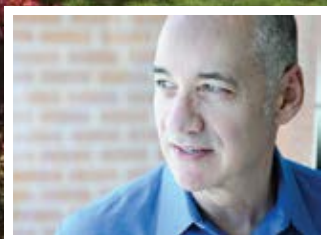
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Homeschooling the Right Fit for Some Families

By Rebecca Loy

As thousands of Denverites await the results of the school choice lottery, a handful of parents reviewed their options and chose none of the above. These families are in a small minority who have opted to homeschool their children.

“I wasn’t planning on homeschooling, but I knew full-day kindergarten wouldn’t work for my daughter,” Clea Edelblute said. “None of the schools I looked at felt like a good fit.”

“It wasn’t something we planned on doing,” Heather Thornton said of homeschooling her son. But after an idyllic preschool experience, Thornton faced the prospect of enrolling her son in a low-performing public school in Texas, where her family was living at the time. Instead, she decided to try to replicate at home what had worked at the preschool. “We gave it a shot, it worked beautifully, he thrived, and we never looked back,” she said.

Amanda Sanford found herself in a similar situation, where her son had a positive preschool experience, but was languishing in a kindergarten classroom where his individual needs were not being adequately met.

“He seemed underchallenged his first semester (in kindergarten),” Sanford said. “We made the decision to homeschool him and challenge him for the second semester. We fully intended to re-enroll him the following fall for first grade.” But instead, the Sanfords discovered that homeschooling “was a great match for our family,” and they have done it ever since.

Many homeschooling families say that once they stepped away from the public education model, they discovered an approach that allowed them to tailor curriculums and content to meet their children’s individual needs.

“Our society is used to school,” Edelblute said. “We take school and its pros and cons for granted. But once a person steps out of the school model—five days a week with a set teacher, set curriculum, desks, government accountability—and focus on learning, it’s very freeing.”

The home, said Thornton, is “a school with a 1:1 student teacher ratio, where the teacher knows the child completely and cares about his well-being above all.” She noted that homeschooling allows her to incorporate experiential learning into her son’s education. In the course of about a week, she and her son “visited the zoo, saw the local Matisse exhibit, attended music lessons, and enjoyed an incredible

Amanda Sanford home schools her two children Alex, 11, and Reagan, 8. Sanford chose to home school when Alex was languishing in a kindergarten classroom where his individual needs were not being adequately met.

live lecture by Dr. Neil DeGrasse Tyson.”

“We make sure everything our child needs is accessible to him, and if my child is really enjoying learning about a particular subject, we can devote more time to it,” Thornton added.

“So much individual instruction and attention for each child helps them excel,” Sanford agreed, noting that homeschoolers are able to “move forward at a quicker pace once a skill is mastered” and slow down to spend more time on challenging skills.

Sanford, who has a master’s degree in early childhood special education, finds that her background as an educator has helped her make decisions about which curricula to use for her children.

“Both of our children have ADHD and I am able to modify our day as needed, in order to help them reach their fullest potential. We adhere to a routine, but appreciate some flexibility as well,” she noted, repeating a common refrain among homeschooling families that the ability to tailor the school day and curriculum to fit their children is liberating.

While homeschoolers have wide latitude in choosing curriculum and content, the Colorado Department of Education does have some guidelines in place for homeschooling families. For example, homeschooled children must have a minimum of 172 school days per year, must take standardized tests in 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th and 11th grades, and must learn reading, writing, math, history, civics, literature and a regular course of instruction on the Constitution of the United States. If homeschooled children do not score above the 13th percentile on standardized tests, they are required to attend public or parochial schools until the next testing period.

Homeschooling families in Denver are required to register with their neighborhood DPS school. As of October 2014, there were only 262 students in grades K-12 registered as homeschoolers in Denver, according to the district’s official statistics. To put that number in context, there were 90,150 K-12 students enrolled in DPS schools, with thousands more attending local private schools.

Unlike in some states and localities, the financial burden of curriculum development, books and materials is entirely assumed by the homeschooling family, without monetary support from the state or many local school districts, including DPS. However, many homeschooling families, including those in Denver, participate in the Aurora Public Schools “Options” program, which provides curriculum support for homeschooling families who enroll their children in the school for five to six hours per week. Many homeschooling families with older children take advantage of the program to allow access to science labs, foreign language instruction, standardized testing, and group sports.

Homeschooling parents confessed that there were some difficulties to homeschooling their children.

“Sometimes mom needs a break and it’s hard for me to get that,” Edelblute said, though she added that her supportive family has helped

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In Thornton's words, "Homeschoolers have friends of varying age groups, genders, and geographic locations and can function in any situation, just as public school veterans

"It's not about hating schools or thinking I am so much better than the system; it's about meeting the individual needs of my family in a way that works."



Amanda Sanford thoughtfully plans out creative lessons for her children, including a lesson for Pi Day.



Current view of high school construction from 56th Ave looking southwest. The gym is at left; the classroom building is at right.

A Look at Northfield High School’s First Class

By Carol Roberts

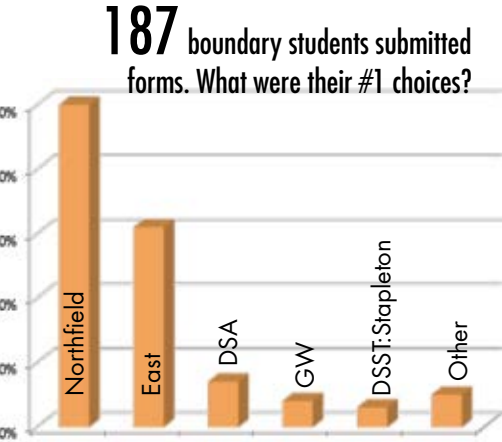
The new Northfield High School (NHS) turned out to be the second most requested high school in the city (after East)—and it had the most requests per seat of all DPS high schools.

The school’s admission priorities, as set by the DPS Board, are that all boundary students (Stapleton and East Park Hill) are guaranteed a seat if they want one, and after that 35 percent of the seats are set aside for students from Far Northeast Denver (FNE). Interest was strong from FNE students, who represented 65 percent of those whose first choice was NHS.

Principal Avi Tropper has already hired the administrative staff, an advisor, a history and a science teacher. He is observing literature and math teachers present lessons in local middle schools in March

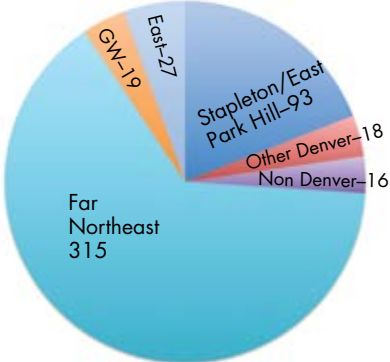
and April and expects to hire more teachers soon. The faculty will vote on the school’s innovation plan early in the school year. Tropper asks teacher applicants to

read the school innovation plan and write how the plan fits with their philosophy as an educator. He says “...a key part of the process for any teacher is to



What DPS high schools were listed #1 the most?

East – 703
NHS – 488
South – 366
NHS choices came from these school boundaries:



NHS Feeder Schools	
McAuliffe	69
Bill Roberts	23
MLK	14
Strive Prep Montbello	11
Omar Blair	9
Greenwood	8
Sims-Fayola	8
Howell	7
DCIS at Montbello MS	6
DSST Stapleton	6
KIPP Montbello	6
Odyssey	6
Pitt Waller	6
Other FNE	11
Other DPS	21
Other not DPS	23

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Principal Avi Tropper speaks to the founding class of NHS at an orientation on March 23. 90 percent of the class attended.

buy into the vision of the school where you want to be part of the team.” One component of the innovation plan is that teachers will serve at the will of the principal in the first year, and after good ratings in the first year they will have annual contracts.

Northfield students will select two “pathways” (interest areas) that they will pursue throughout their four years in high school. In a survey at the orientation, engineering was the most popular student selection in the STEM choices (Science, Technology, Engi-

neering, Math). Other STEM options were computer science and biomedical science. Tropper reports that overall, engineering was the most popular pathway selected.

The arts pathways to be offered in the fall of 2015 will be music, studio arts, creative writing and theater. Studio arts was the most popular in this group. The economics and business pathway and the politics and law pathways will also be launched this fall.

A final list of fall sports is not yet available, but at the meeting volleyball was the most popular student choice for girls. Soccer for boys and cross country for boys and girls were also listed as popular fall choices, and those coaches have been hired.

Since the founding class was announced, Tropper has been visiting the feeder middle schools and has met with nearly all the new students. He says, “The excitement, passion and diversity that our students are bringing to the school is amazing.”

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Presented by Jody E. Donley

Stapleton Market Snapshot

Available Homes for sale: **35**
44 Under Contract and 107 sold in last 6 months

Average Days on Market: **27**
MetroList single family as of 3/20/15

NPRE 2015 Stapleton stats:
10 sold and 15 Under Contract
(Buy side and Listing side)

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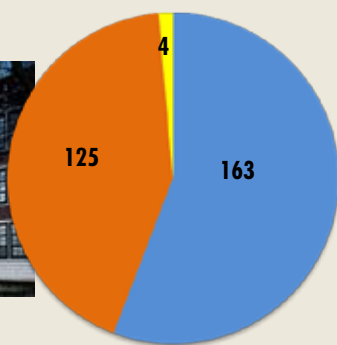
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6th grade class
size by school

292

Stapleton Park Hill Other Denver Non-DPS

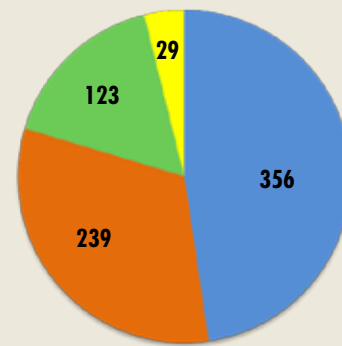
MCAULIFFE



747 6th graders were assigned

With 150 more 6th graders than last year but only 75 more seats, there was no way to match last year's outcome of 98% getting their first choice.

(The 75 new seats opened this year were: 40-McAuliffe; 20-Denver Discovery; 10-DSST:CG; 5-Bill Roberts)

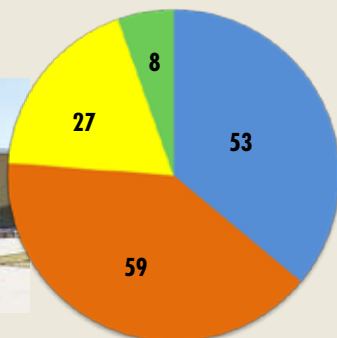


75% got their 1st choice

92% got 1st or 2nd

96% got 1st, 2nd or 3rd

DSST: STAPLETON



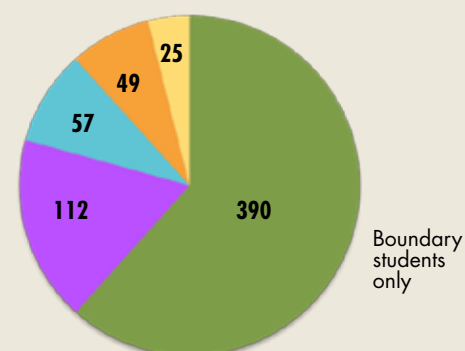
#1 Choices

McAuliffe DSST:Stapleton Denver Discovery Bill Roberts DSST: CG

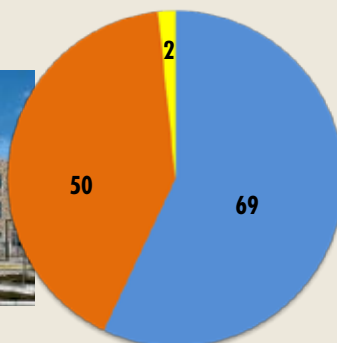
68% of all Park Hill students and almost 60% of Stapleton students chose McAuliffe first.

Who didn't get their first choice?

McAuliffe – 122
DSST:Stapleton – 47
Bill Roberts – 3
Discovery – 0
DSST:CG – 0



DENVER DISCOVERY

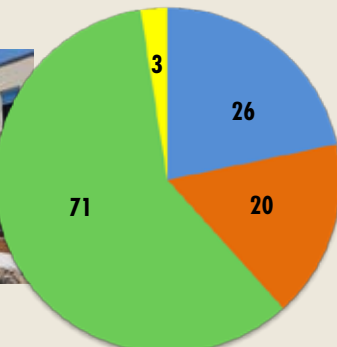


New school in 2016?

From DPS: "DPS has been forecasting for several years the need for an additional school to serve Stapleton/Park Hill middle school students to open in the fall of 2016. We look forward to working with the community in the coming months on the design of the new middle school. We are grateful for the work of our teachers and school leaders in our existing Stapleton/Park Hill middle schools, which has made these schools so popular with the community's families. At the same time, we also recognize that very popularity makes our work in starting a new middle school all the more urgent.

"Unrelated to the need for a new middle school in the Stapleton/Park Hill boundary and in response to the district's recent call for quality new schools in Near Northeast Denver, McAuliffe Principal Kurt Dennis is applying for a replication of McAuliffe to serve as a feeder middle school for Manual."

DSST:CONSERVATORY GREEN

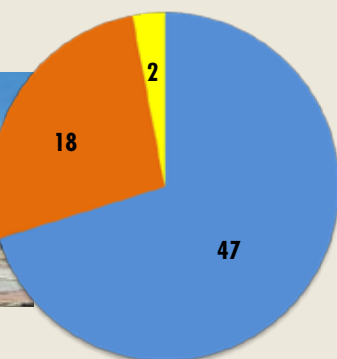


Who is choosing in and out?

In... 73 boundary students not previously attending DPS choiced in for middle school.
176 out-of-boundary students requested but did not get a seat in the shared boundary.
923 students listed one of the shared boundary schools as their first choice.

Out... 5% of Stapleton 6th graders choiced out of the shared boundary schools (many to DSA).
In addition, an estimated 5% attend Odyssey and Denver Language School and don't participate in choice for 6th.
25% choiced out of Park Hill (most of these live west of Colorado and chose closer schools including DSST-Cole, Hill, Bruce Randolph, Morey and DCIS)

BILL ROBERTS



What is the projected class size for 2016?

The cohort of current 4th graders between Stapleton and Park Hill is very close to the current 5th grade cohort so DPS doesn't expect a large increase in size above the current year's size.

96% of boundary students submitted choice forms.
19.5% submitted online district-wide. DPS recommends online submission because families learn results sooner and it saves the district money.

2014-15 Demographics

Stapleton is 9% FRL, 4% ELL and 25% students of color
Park Hill is 62% FRL, 26% ELL, 72% non-white
Currently the shared boundary is 36% FRL, 74% ELL, and 51% students of color.

(FRL-Free and reduced lunch; ELL-English language learners)

by Carol Roberts with data from DPS

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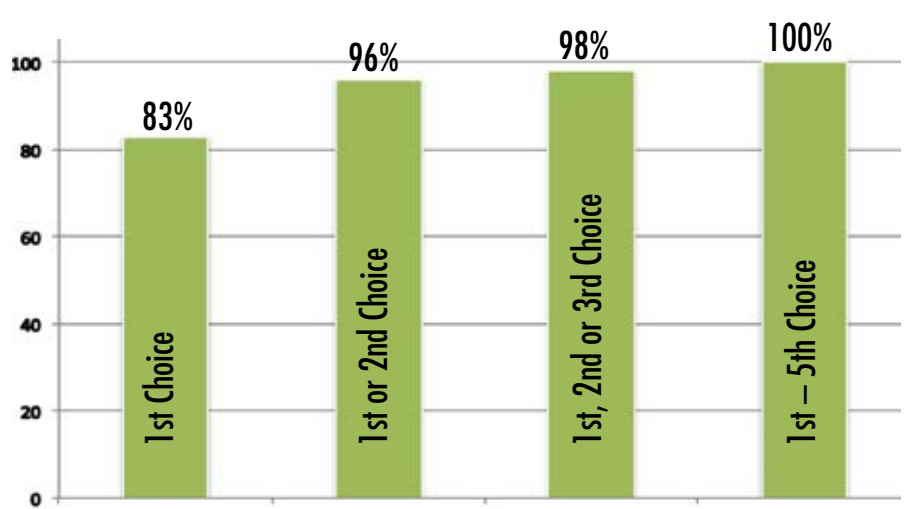
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Choice Outcome for Stapleton Elementary



430 applications were received for Stapleton elementary schools. Last year 434 applications were received. No further elementary school data was available from DPS at the time the *Front Porch* went to the printer.

Choice: Why It's Such a Big Deal in NE Denver

By Carol Roberts

Traditionally public school students have known exactly what school they will attend based on their neighborhood boundary. But that system didn't work with the rapid growth at Stapleton. Homes were initially spread out and everyone attended the one and only school. With growth came new schools, but families didn't want to change schools because a new one was built closer to their home. The solution was a zone. Everyone could attend any of the schools in the zone, subject to availability of seats based on a lottery and established priorities (such as for siblings and children of full time employees).

A year ago, DPS instituted the zone concept for Stapleton and Park Hill residents to have a guaranteed seat at one of five middle schools, but not an assurance of attending any particular one.

Stapleton is only 60 percent developed and growing rapidly. The middle school class size in the shared boundary area grew by 150 students in the past year, changing the percent of those who got their first choice from 98 percent last year to 75 percent this year. This dramatic growth and change in class sizes has created anxiety for families with children entering kindergarten and middle school, wondering what their chances will be of getting into their first choice school.

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Far left: Eileen Moore and John Ogle show photos of their recent 5-week trip to Patagonia to their friends, Diane and Wayne DuBois, who are approaching retirement.



Left: Wayne Olsen backpacking the desert/canyon country in Utah. He believes money isn't necessary for a happy retirement. He enjoys a frugal lifestyle and inexpensive travels.

Thebaud also recommends retirees volunteer or mentor to help give meaning to their lives. Moore wanted to volunteer in Haiti and on a Navajo Indian reservation while her medical skills were still up to date. DuBois wants to volunteer maintaining and hiking the Colorado Trail and providing medical assistance to the homeless. "The opportunities will present themselves and if I'm alert, I'll recognize them."

Too much togetherness?

Two retirees under the same roof can turn a marriage topsy-turvy. Thebaud says if a couple is prepared for it, retirement can bring them closer but if they aren't, it can tear them apart. Married 38 years, DuBois and his wife, Diane, who is semi-retired, have talked at length about what it will be like. "She has her interests, I have mine and we have some mutual interests," says DuBois. "We'll just see how much that meshes."

Throughout their 37-year marriage, Ogle and Moore have nurtured their shared and separate interests and so far, retirement hasn't been any different. A five-week trip to Patagonia tested their

ability to get along. "I don't think I got on her nerves too much," laughs Ogle. "It was exciting each day wondering what are we going to do, how it would turn out," says Moore.

Thebaud suggests couples attend a few counselling sessions to prepare for retirement. "There may not be anything wrong in the relationship, but it's about adjusting to having that much time together." She suggests couples have date nights as if they're meeting for the first time. "Because they are kind of just meeting each other again. They'll discover new things about each other if they give it a chance," Thebaud says.

It Comes Down to Money

No discussion about retirement would be complete without talking finances. "Everybody's wondering 'do I have enough money to last a long life?'" says DuBois. Financial advisor Scott Ranby says there's reason to be concerned because people can live 25-30 years after retiring.*

When Olsen had the opportunity to retire in his late 50s, he was grateful. He'd had a great career but says he "felt like I had been doing

the same dance for a long time." Olsen isn't concerned about having enough money to last the rest of his life. He started saving right out of college, investing a little every month in mutual funds and IRAs, taking advantage of company matches. Olsen also lives modestly, cutting back on eating out and doing most of his own home and auto repairs. He has worked some part-time jobs since retiring and knows he'll probably do so again.

While having enough money is a concern for many in retirement, so is making sure they have enough quality time to enjoy what's left of their lives. The sudden death of a friend who had been very active was a consideration in Ogle and Moore's retirement timing. Although they are healthy and very active now, Ogle says they are both aware that, at some point, health issues will change things. Not knowing how much time they will have together, Moore says they figured, "We'd at least feel like we had these years together when we weren't preoccupied with work. We had time for each other and our interests."

Making Sense of the Dollars and Cents of Retirement

Scott Ranby, CFP, financial advisor with Kuhn Advisors, Inc. in Stapleton, offers advice whether you're starting out or getting ready to retire.

- Don't get too conservative with investments – After saving for years, it's tempting to play it safe and avoid the stock market. But Ranby points out that "the average retirement can be almost as long as someone's career. If you make your investments so conservative they aren't going to grow any more ... you are risking not being able to keep up with inflation."
- Do estate planning – In addition to having a will, be sure to also have both financial and health powers of attorney and other documents in case you are unable to take care of your health or financial decisions.
- Complete beneficiary forms – Certain accounts, such as retirement accounts, pass according to beneficiary forms, not a person's will.
- Plan to save approximately eight times your final salary for retirement.
- Plan for the lifestyle you want – Some expenses will go away in retirement but new ones will be added.
- Be strategic about claiming Social Security – When and how you start claiming your benefits can make a big difference in how much you get. "And you only get one chance to make them," says Ranby.
- Put yourself first – There are many ways to finance your child's college education, but you can't finance your retirement.
- Start saving early – Put time and compounded interest on your side.

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Just the Facts

What makes Colorado snow so special?

by James Hagadorn



By James Hagadorn

Spring is the zenith of our snow cycle. It's when the Rockies brim with our most essential economic ingredient—water, in the form of snowpack. The distribution, amount, and melting of this snowpack bodes boom or bust for skiers, growers, fishermen, farmers, and frackers alike—in Colorado and beyond.

It all starts with the snow. And our snow is special.

Sourced mostly from evaporating oceans, it's born when moist, saturated air rises over the Rockies, cools, and encounters wind-blown dust and other microscopic particles. Snow crystals form when water vapor solidifies around these particles.

As ice crystals in the sky grow, they become heavier and fall earthward. En route they often collide, melt, refreeze, or combine to form all sorts of snowflakes. Like down feathers in a puff jacket, the snowflakes have air trapped between their snow crystals, giving them insulation-like properties. Our snow is also dry.

Wait a sec. If snow is formed from water,

how can it be dry?

In many parts of the country, snow forms and/or falls in places where the temperatures are close to the freezing point of water (32° F). Under such conditions, crystals within snowflakes may melt a bit as they fall, land, and settle into the snowpack. The melted water becomes trapped or frozen in between unmelted snow crystals, making these “warm weather” snowflakes denser and wetter.

Our snow is dry because nearly all our snow falls at high elevations, where air temperatures tend to be well below freezing. Subfreezing conditions help prevent the tiny snow crystals from combining and partially melting as snowflakes settle—this preserves the insulative air spaces between the crystals and leaves less liquid water available to help the crystals stick together. This leads to our glorious champagne “powder,” and buildup of a thick but not-so-dense snowpack.

Yet a foot of Colorado snow doesn't usually equal a foot-deep puddle of water that we can use. A foot of our finest powder often yields less than an inch of water. For comparison, the “wet” snow that regularly socks the north-

eastern U.S. typically yields more than twice that amount. Ugh. Every time I shovel our front walkway, I'm grateful for having snow that weighs less than it ought to. Sometimes I even use a broom!

Because much of Colorado is semi-arid, and most of its people and industries are in these areas, the amount of water



A family goes for a walk in Stapleton during a 2006 snowstorm. What makes Colorado snow so light, fluffy and fun?

in our snowpack is incredibly important. Like a giant frozen cistern, the snowpack dribbles water down to these areas, swelling creeks, rivers, and lakes along the way. Meltwater discharge often peaks in June-July, but by cajoling the water through tunnels, irrigation canals and reservoirs, we extend the duration of its influence through dry intervals, and help it reach arid areas of the state.

Without the delayed release of our mountainous reservoir of snow-water, towns from Grand Junction to Greeley would not thrive as they do. Nor would our ranchers or farmers. All of these industries and locations receive more than half their water from melting snow, not to mention that after such water has been taken, four major rivers deliver this snowmelt to other states and Mexico. Thus there's a horde of snow-techs up in the mountains, monitoring the snow's water content and accumulation to assess its proclivity to melt. Comparison of these characteristics to historical records of stream flow helps predict how much water will trickle out of the mountains.

As Colorado's climate warms in the coming decades, ought we think about how this will impact our special snow, and in turn our

water? The bark beetles that brown our forests signal that this change is underway—on average our winter low temperatures aren't as cold as they used to be. Continued tempering of our winters will impact how much and where our snow accumulates, and when and how it melts.

There are some downsides to our snow. Because it doesn't stick or clump together as easily as wet snow, snowballs and snowmen are harder to make. And no matter how dry it is, our snow still snarls traffic and parking lots.

But mostly our snow is a benefit. Its physical characteristics make it fun for recreation and foster its enormous, year-round impact on the people and industries of Colorado. So next time someone complains about dealing with our latest snowstorm, perhaps we should suggest they relocate to New York or Michigan to gain some perspective. We've got it pretty good.

James Hagadorn, Ph.D., is a scientist at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science. Suggestions and comments are welcome at jwhagadorn@dmns.org.

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Women Team Up to Make a Bigger Impact

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

When someone wants to give to a charity, the obstacles are often having enough time or money to give to really make a difference. A local organization of women has found a way to combat both concerns by pooling their money to give more charitable bang for the buck.

When Montclair resident Jennifer Coffman, executive director for the Neuroscience Institute at Children's Hospital Colorado, saw a Milwaukee friend's social media posts about her local 100 Women Who Care chapter, Coffman was intrigued. "I've always had this need to do something more philanthropic and I knew I just didn't have the time to commit to volunteering," says Coffman. "So when I heard about how it worked and what the commitment was, it was a perfect solution to feeling like I could make an impact on the community." Along with her like-minded friend, Rhondi Clark, they launched 100 Women Who Care Denver www.100WomenWhoCareDenver.com in 2013.

There are more than 150 local branches of 100 Women Who Care in the U.S. and Canada, each operated independently but with a common concept of having at least 100 members who commit to giving \$100, four times per year, to charities voted on by the group. "It's \$100 per quarter, \$33 per month. If you have 100 women, that's \$10,000 that you're able to donate to a specific charity and, oh my gosh, what a huge impact that can have, especially on some of the smaller charities," says Coffman.

Members nominate charities they feel are worthy, some of which they may have a connection to such as prior donations or being part of the organization. "That's fine," says Coffman. "If they are aligned with a certain organization and want to present them, we're okay with that as long as they continue to be members and support the other ones the next time around." The majority of charities are what Coffman describes as community-centric, focused on the underserved, children or animals. "People want to feel good about who they are supporting and where their money is going." Recent recipients include Denver Urban Gardens, the Wild Animal Sanctuary, Dress for Success and Camp to Belong.

Members give a presentation about why their chosen charity should be selected. One consideration is the amount of funding that goes to administrative costs versus the organization's mission. "If we have two to three charities that have been nominated and one of them puts 25 percent of what we donate to administrative costs ver-

sus 5–10 percent with another, that goes into the selection process people vote on," explains Coffman.

The charity chosen the prior quarter is required to report on how they utilized the donation. "That's when people feel the most engaged and really proud of what we've been able to accomplish," says Coffman. "It's not just sending your money into a black hole where you are never sure where it's being used." She adds that the organizations so far have been very appreciative, even when there were few members and therefore, smaller donations. Occasionally the group will lose a member who moves out of state or can't manage the \$100 quarterly commitment. A group membership is also available so that people can divide up their \$100 contribution but together equal one vote.

The demographics of 100 Women Who Care Denver range from women in their 20s to retirees, from stay-at-home moms to working professionals. They live all over, as far as Evergreen. "It's a good opportunity to meet other women who are like-minded and have a philanthropic mindset," Coffman says.

Coffman feels 100 Women Who Care meets the needs of people who want to support their communities. "When we don't have a ton of money, we don't feel like we make a difference, so the power of a group contribution gives us a lot more weight or voice in our community."



Left to right: Rhondi Clark, co-founder of 100 Women Who Care, Rebecca Andruszka, director of development at Denver Urban Gardens, and Jennifer Coffman, co-founder of 100 Women, stand in the Urban

Garden at Park Hill Elementary School. 100 Women Who Care pools donations and votes on charities to have more impact than individual donations. They recently donated to Denver Urban Gardens.

April 15—100 Women Who Care Meeting
At 6:30pm on Wednesday, April 15, 100 Women Who Care will have their next meeting, which usually lasts about one hour. Further details (location, etc) have yet to be finalized but will be available at www.100womenwhocaredenver.com

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Get to Know Dr. Stephen Rotholz

Steve has been in practice for more than 20 years with extensive experience in all aspects of obstetrics, as well as minimally invasive gynecologic surgery. He trained at the University of Arizona and George Washington University. He lives with his family in Stapleton and has active interests in photography and music.

Meet the Kids

Oddball, endearing and quirky answers to life's questions

By Madeline Schroeder

Imagine aliens come to Earth, and humans and aliens must live in one society together. How would that work? I asked sixth- and seventh-graders from McAuliffe Middle School this question and it was like I asked them about their breakfast. There is no worry. Aliens are probably stupid or less developed than humans, they say nonchalantly. They are probably defenseless like “little shrimp things at the bottom of the sea.” Humans would rule society.

But what if aliens are not dumb? What if they are profound thinkers capable of feeling emotions and understanding morals?

The students briefly mull this over, and in the same moment eyes widen as the implications of the scenario settle in: Could they think like humans? What if they're smarter than us? What if they have weapons? What if they're violent? Mayan Caplan sums it up—“The way we're reacting now would mirror the world—a lot of fear and tension.”

The group decides the first step for humans would be deciding how we feel about aliens. Are they the stereotypical aliens that want to invade our planet? “Maybe we can't assume the aliens want to hurt us,” Caplan says. To live together, we would



Ethics & Aliens

Students from McAuliffe Middle School share insightful predictions about the human race if aliens came to Earth to seek refuge during space exploration. Left to right: Jayden Fahres, Ibrahim Mohammed, Courtney Ross, Jazmine Pace, Mayan Caplan, and Bella Gomez Padilla.

probably have to abandon that assumption and make every man, woman and alien equal.

But Ibrahim Mohammed says inequality would be inevitable. “The aliens would think we're dumb, and we would think they're dumb.” Plus, how would we even communicate?

Mohammed suggests we could use our understanding of ciphers to break down the alien language and find the most common sound. The other students seem to think this is complicated and agree math or art would be better ways to communicate. They move on.

Bella Gomez Padilla says yes, humans would feel invaded but the aliens would probably feel just as invaded being so far from home. She thinks we need to communicate nicely.

In fact, maybe these aliens did not even intend to visit Earth at all but came looking for help during space exploration. They don't have food or resources; perhaps there is disease and poverty. Would we help them? “Oh my gosh, that is so tough,” Caplan says.

Some of the students are more inclined than others to provide help. “If they came right now, today, there would just be no room for them in our society because we have way too many problems and if we try to feed them

and all of the other hungry people out there, there's just too many,” says Jazmine Pace.

Pace sticks to a more patriotic view that Earth is our planet and we must protect it. We have more priority than the aliens; not to say she doesn't feel bad for them.

She suggests aliens should live in a designated part of society, like the Indian reservations. Gomez Padilla piggybacks that idea. “I think we'd keep them a little separate, not like a zoo where you would go and see them, but somewhere you would be able to talk to them like a normal human, like we do. But it would be kind of separate, not like a glass wall either. Somehow a bubble.”

Mohammed agrees if they have disease it must be handled like Ebola. They need to be quarantined and studied to understand the disease.

OK, so these aliens are separate and struggling to survive. Would there be a revolt? A lot of the students predict another Civil War. As the conversation goes on, the fear seems to build and they decide this could all be avoided by sending the aliens home.

“Honestly, we should kill them. You have to eliminate the threat. We would have to get into contact with their alien leader and tell them don't come here,” Gomez Padilla says.

“If they come here and have disease, give

them what they need to leave,” Pace says in agreement. “If they're coming for fun you'd have to kill them because it wouldn't be worth it to kill the whole human population of the world just to save some aliens who come here to explore.”

“But what if all the aliens came here? Would it be worth it to kill the whole alien population?” Caplan says. The debate is endless. They go back and forth whether it's right to send the aliens off or eliminate them. If we give resources to the aliens, are we abandoning our loyalty to humans?

Courtney Ross pipes in to add a comment that nails the issue on the head. “All of this is already happening. Other countries are already asking for our help. That's what our world problems are about.”

Whether or not the students were aware, the conversation wasn't really about aliens. The topic just forced them to ask themselves all the same ethical questions that come up in today's world about diverse cultures co-existing: Are refugees equal in society? Should they go back home? Do countries have an obligation to help their poor citizens or help other countries in need? Much of the discussion seemed to mirror the kinds of questions world leaders are wrestling with today.

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Each month, the Indie Prof reviews a current film in the theater and a second film that is available at Redbox or VOD. Follow "Indie Prof" on Facebook for updates about film events and more reviews.

Girlhood (2014)

No, *Girlhood* is not a companion piece to Richard Linklater's *Boyhood*. While they might share some contextual similarities—both tell stories of struggling youths—they couldn't be more different. *Girlhood* is set in suburban Paris and follows young Marieme, a disaffected teen who has non-existent parents, a culture and neighborhood ruled by boys, and no prospects for high school, much less college. She begs her counselor to let her go to high school even though her grades are low and she vows to do better; her counselor replies curtly and it cuts hard: "It's too late for that." Faced with the bleak prospect of going to vocational school, Marieme teams up with a group of free-spirited, independent, fighting, shoplifting girls. You know where this is going. But maybe we don't.

The film is real, affecting, alternately heartbreaking and uplifting. The dialogue seems perfectly real, and at times we feel like we're watching a documentary; if not for the beautiful cinematography, the biting screenplay, the intense acting, and the sheen of the bleak settings, we might be watching a documentary. Yet this is a professionally crafted, acted, shot, and executed fictional film that tells the story of young black girls struggling to make it, and find themselves, in this world.

There are two scenes in particular that are absolutely exhilarating—opposite in their content, yet both filled with real

emotion and energy. One shows the girls, dancing and celebrating their togetherness. The other is singular and more brutal, yet we cheer for Marieme anyway. Both scenes soar.

Director Céline Sciamma is downright brilliant. Her first two films, *Water Lilies* and *Tomboy*, were both intimate and emotional portrayals of young girls at different stages of adolescence. *Girlhood* follows her project of the first two films and expands her *oeuvre*, adding in the sociological forces effecting young girls. The ensemble cast of teens is phenomenal, led by Karidja Touré as Marieme. This is one of those gems you do not want to miss, a film that opens our eyes to the world and changes our perceptions about things we thought we knew. I also think it is a must-see for teens. Go see it.

You will like this film if you enjoyed *Thirteen*, *Pariah*, and/or *Blue is the Warmest Color*. Starts at the Sie Film Center on 4/3.



Above: Scene from *Girlhood* Below: Scene from *The Drop*

The Drop (2014)

A few months ago I wrote about Tom Hardy's performance in *Locke*, and how it was a virtuoso, star-making turn. His follow-up to that film is *The Drop*, directed by Michael R. Roskam and also starring James Gandolfini in his final role. The film is a small mob thriller based in Brooklyn, and Hardy plays a soft-spoken bartender caught up in the middle of a mob deal gone bad. There is also a love story. Here, Hardy's performance is soft-spoken and understated—the opposite of his role in *Locke*. This performance again cements him as one of the world's leading actors.

The setting is one of the characters: this is not the pretty Brooklyn portrayed in the contemporary press: there is no Jay Z. and Beyoncé sitting courtside at a basketball game, no pretty people who have moved from Manhattan, no little girls named "Brooklyn." This is a dirty, cloudy, cold, and unforgiving Brooklyn, one that recalls a working-class New York of the past. In addition, there are neither Italian Mafia nor African-American gangs. In fact, the ruling gang is Chechen (not Chechnyan, as Gandolfini's Ray is corrected by Hardy's Bob).

The film is semi-hypnotic, an odd quality for what is really a mob thriller. The direction and the acting pull this off with such great skill that we barely notice. Tom Hardy is brilliant, James Gandolfini is perfect, and the supporting cast headed by Noomi Rapace holds their own against such acting giants. As I've said before on these pages, the mark of a great film and great direction shows up in the secondary characters, and they are all up to the task. And though only Roskam's second film, he shows that he is a competent director of actors, story, and visuals. All are first-rate. Oh yeah, and there's a puppy.

You will like this film if you enjoyed *Killing Them Softly*, *Locke*, and/or *Eastern Promises*. Available on most VOD outlets and at Redbox.

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

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Do-it-Yourself Furniture Makeover



Cory Konz and her daughter, Kassi Hemerka, both Stapleton residents, repurpose an old piece of furniture at Konz's new business Paint & Pizzazz.

By Nancy Burkhart

Cory Konz, owner of Paint & Pizzazz makes it easy for her clients to become do-it-yourselfers, repurposing old furniture and home accessories —and having fun while doing it.

Paint & Pizzazz is located next door to Picker's Paradise furniture thrift store on Montview. Owner Cory Konz acquires everything from small tables to dressers there and teaches classes on how to do chalk painting, distressing and repurposing to jazz them up.

"Chalk painting sticks to anything," Konz explained. "You don't



Konz and Hemerka show off plywood they converted into a children's height measuring stick.

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have to prep it or sand it. The more distressed looking the better. Chalk paint comes in one color. You apply a top coat with a wax to protect it. You can use colored waxes to change the outcome of the color. Then you can sand it to make it a shabby chic project.”

Konz and her husband, Steve, moved to Stapleton from Denton, Texas, about six months ago to be closer to their daughter and son-in-law, Kassi and Joe Hemerka, and their sons, 2½-year-old Lincoln and 13-month-old Marshall. The Konzs’ other daughter, Breanna Konz, moved to Stapleton from Minneapolis about the same time as her parents.

One day Kassi was going to buy a 6-foot board to make a ruler to measure her children when it dawned on her mother that \$85 was too much to pay for something that would be easy to make for a nominal fee. Konz decided to start a shop similar to one a Texas friend of hers has, and Paint & Pizzazz was born.

“I come from a dental background,” Konz said. “Now I have allowed myself to be messy and not sterile. I really love it when people are so excited about



Paint & Pizzazz provides all the tools to paint, distress, and repurpose old furniture for a jazzed-up look.

their finished projects.”

Classes for four to six people are \$40 per person. A one-on-one class is \$50. Clients can bring in their own pieces to work on or choose one at Paint & Pizzazz or Picker’s Paradise.

“They get live instruction,” Konz said. “They don’t have to buy the paint supplies. I supply it all. I have all the prototypes. All the projects to choose from are on my Facebook page.”

Clients delight in the distressed, chalk-painted look, according to Konz. The process often gives them the idea to bring in something from home that is chipped or dinged to change the color.

To schedule a session individually or with a group of friends, call 720.460.1117. Paint & Pizzazz is located at 9575 E. Montview Blvd. and is open from 10am to 5pm. Mon. through Sat. Check the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/paintpizzazz.



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Mental Health Center of Denver

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Some people might compare changing a crib or bunk bed sheet to wrestling a wild animal. Changing one can involve back-breaking, finger-pinching maneuvers. With years of sheet changing under her belt from three children, including twins, Stapleton resident Caroline Portis thought her friend's invention was brilliant: a crib sheet with a base that doesn't have to be removed and a top that zips off and on, taming the sheet-changing beast. With applications for older kids, college students, people with arthritis, RV owners and eldercare, the potential for the QuickZip Sheet Company was great. It just needed some nurturing from MergeLane, a Boulder-based business incubator aimed at women-led businesses.

When her daughter, now a teenager, was a baby, the sheet's inventor, Elizabeth Sopher, couldn't believe more people weren't complaining about the difficulties involved with changing a crib sheet, something that has to be done often with babies. The design not only made sheet changing easier but also eliminated hazards from sheets coming loose.

The company had been more of a sideline than a full-time venture for Sopher and her former partner. But with an opportunity for the sheets to be sold in buybuyBABY stores, there



Caroline Portis, left, and Elizabeth Sopher, right, founders of Quick ZipSheets, demonstrate how the sheets zip on and off to ease the bed-making process.

was impetus for growth. Sopher asked Portis for help, knowing she had experience as CFO of the Boppy Pillow Company, and various other jobs in accounting, finance and operations. Portis was getting ready to leave Boppy to start her own

consulting business and took on Sopher's company as her first client. After seeing the potential of the sheet, which also comes in twin, twin XL and full sizes, Portis gave up her consulting business and invested in QuickZip Sheets as a

Selected companies must have at least one woman founder and the company has to have some traction under its belt." Unlike other business accelerator programs that require being in-residence, away from home, family and business for long periods,

co-founder last year.

Portis' work experience had taught her about consumer products, the customer base, the supply chain and textile purchasing involved in juvenile consumer products. "I know from my Bobby days what the opportunity is. I know how many babies are born a year. I know who the players are," she says. One of the main challenges Portis sees for QuickZip Sheets is explaining the product to people because it is different. That's one of the issues that MergeLane is helping QuickZip address.

Hundreds of companies applied to be one of eight businesses chosen for MergeLane's inaugural year of the program. Founded by two women, Portis explains that "the mission of MergeLane is to broaden the on ramp for women-led companies.

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The businesses receive curriculum targeting early-stage business issues, connections and mentorship specific to their industry. The businesses and mentors are matched up through mutual selection in what Portis describes as 30-minute meetings like speed-dating. “You’re meeting with this guy who just sold a company to Twitter or this person who is a designer out of New York or this one who is a COO of a major company,” she says. “These were phenomenal people!” QuickZip gained mentors who have helped with the company’s marketing plan, branding, investment banking, legal issues and help with reaching nursing homes, home health care and occupational therapists, a market Sopher and Portis feel the sheets are perfect for. “It’s an elegant solution,” says Portis. “This product provides seniors and people with arthritis a sense of self-sufficiency, accomplishment and dignity.” Various sizes of the sheets are currently available at buybuyBABY

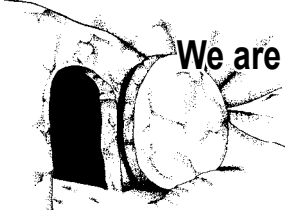


After the Quick ZipSheet demonstration, Jada Jacobelli, 2, shows off her toys in the crib.

stores, through the company’s website, wayfair.com and on Amazon.

MergeLane receives 6 percent ownership in exchange for an initial \$20,000 in seed money, with the potential to further invest in the company down the road. The program culminates in April with Demo Day, pitching to a room of potential investors. “This is gold,” Portis says of the experience with MergeLane. “We could have grown without them but

it would have been a lot harder and a lot more painful.” Sopher and Portis are gearing up for the success they hope will come their way. Portis feels her experience with high-growth companies, solving problems and building processes and systems for growth, has helped prepare her for what she and Sopher face. “I’ve never really had the inclination to invest,” says Portis. “But when I saw this, I thought it was meant to be.”



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—Erma Wolf

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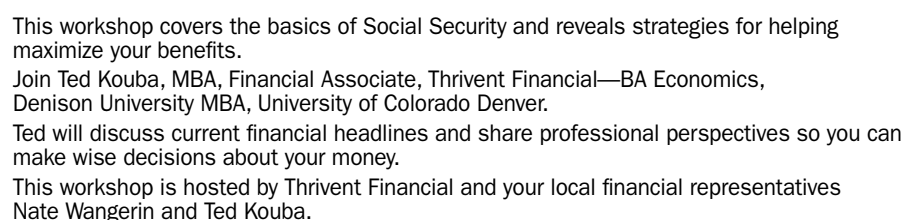
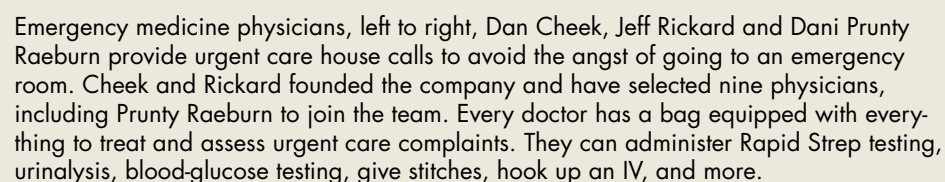
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By Madeline Schroeder

Cheek—a former EMT, ski patroller and member of the Mahoosuc Mountain Rescue Team—conceived the idea

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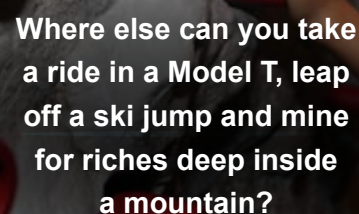


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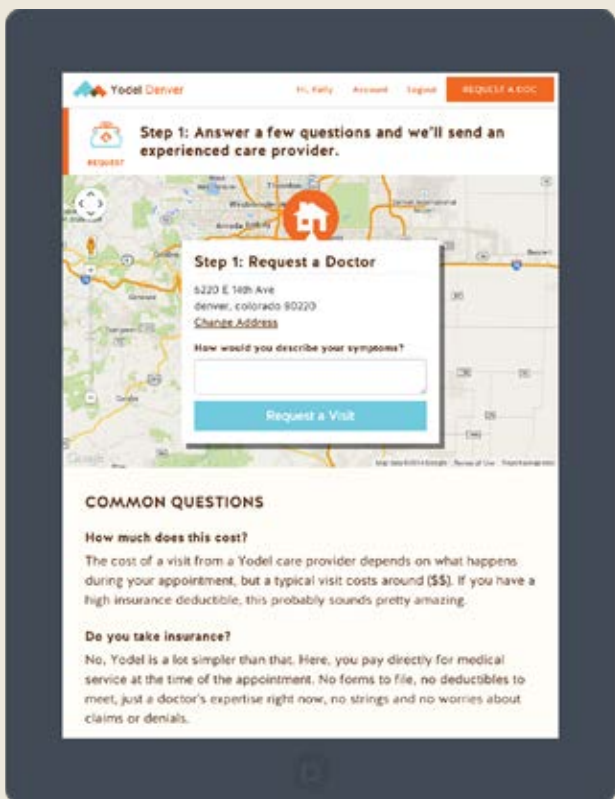
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Yodel Health is web-based in that patients create an account online, select symptoms, and request a doctor. GPS tracks the doctor's location until he/she arrives at the patient's house. Photo provided by Yodel Health.

cuts that need stitches, strep throat, influenza, cough and cold symptoms, asthma exacerbations, sprains and strains and minor fractures, vomiting and diarrhea, urinary tract infections, and rashes and many other minor medical problems. Yodel doctors can also provide prefilled prescriptions or antibiotics and recommend a doctor for follow-up.

"I'm excited to bring back the human aspect of medicine," says Dani Prunty Raeburn, MD and Yodel Health provider who lives in Stapleton. "I'm excited about seeing my neighbors and friends at the pool three months later and asking how a laceration is healing. I'm excited to see them doing well and their family growing and answer their questions. It's more than the one visit, it's the follow-up."

Jeff Rickard, DO, Yodel Health co-founder and Park Hill resident, says the demand for one-on-one care is growing, but making it affordable is the challenge. "People do want this type of medicine so we're trying to get into the area where people can afford it because we don't want it to only be for rich people," Rickard says. Right now they are targeting Stapleton, Park Hill, Cherry Hills, Cherry Creek and Hilltop. Yodel Health visits begin at \$300, plus fees for lab testing and treatment. Fees are all listed online so patients know exactly what they're paying for. Yodel Health currently does not accept insurance but hopes to change that in the future. For more information, visit www.yodelhealth.com.

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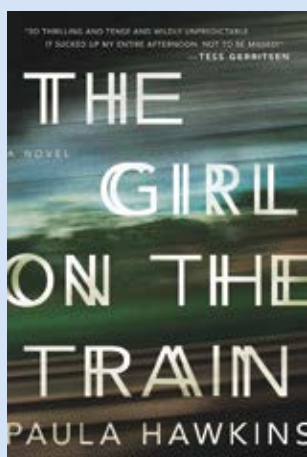
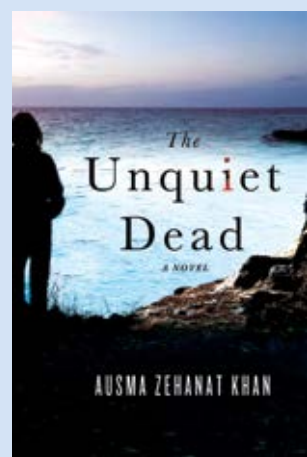
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The Front Porch prints book reviews by local librarians, rotating to a different library each month. April reviews are by librarians Kelly Wright and Kristi Harder from the Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn. Librarians interested in writing book reviews can email Madeline@FrontPorchStapleton.com.

The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawkins
Adult Fiction: 5/5 stars

Rachel lives on the outskirts of London and takes the train into town every day for work. She loves looking at the suburban houses as she passes by and thinking about the lives of the tenants. One couple in particular she feels like she knows: they seem to have the perfect life, which is something Rachel feels she has lost. One day Rachel sees something suspicious from the train and gets immersed in a tangled web of murder, confusion and suspicion. If you loved *Gone Girl*, then this is a thriller you should definitely keep on your radar.

Unquiet Dead by Ausma Zehanat Khan
Adult Fiction: 5/5 stars

Denver author Khan's first novel is not the usual mystery. Khattak, a Canadian Muslim who investigates hate crimes, is assigned the death of a man who went off a cliff. Accident or murder? It turns out the victim may have been a Serbian war criminal in hiding who directed the slaughter of thousands of Muslims at Srebrenica. Khattak's people of interest are a group of Bosnian Muslim refugees who witnessed the atrocities. Excerpts from testimony from war crimes trials reveal the horrors that took place. If he was murdered, who could blame the murderer? Memorable.

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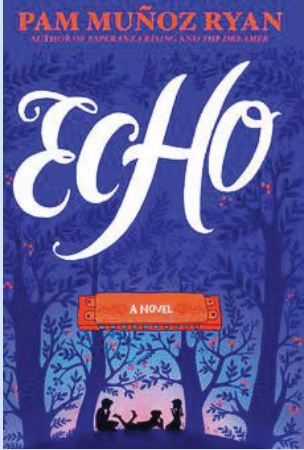
The Rosie Project by Graeme Simsion
Adult Fiction: 4/5 stars

Don, a socially inept, rigid genetics professor, thinks it's time for the "wife project." He's designed an unrealistic questionnaire to identify the perfect woman. No smokers, drinkers or chronically tardy need apply. Enter Rosie, who Don mistakenly thinks is a candidate sent by a friend, but is shockingly unsuitable. Rosie is searching for her father and needs Don's help on the genetics front. Can they both find what they seek? A funny, charming romantic comedy that is entertaining despite the expected outcome. I listened to this book and it made me laugh out loud.



Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda by Becky Albertelli
Young Adult: 4/5 stars

Simon is 16 years old and not out of the closet. It's not that he's ashamed; he's just waiting for the right time. Then a classmate reads his emails and starts blackmailing him, threatening to reveal his sexual orientation to the whole school. This book follows Simon through his junior year with all the drama that ensues. Simon has to play wingman for his dorky classmate, and he's falling for a mysterious boy named Blue who he's been emailing with. A heartwarming, funny and adorable coming-of-age story that encourages teens to embrace their individuality.



Echo by Pam Muñoz Ryan
Children's: 5/5 stars

Three intertwined stories feature a special harmonica with a spell on it that imprisons three princesses. They can only be set free when the harmonica saves a life, but whose? The answer to that question keeps the reader glued to the page in these stories

that take place during WWII. The main characters range from a boy in Nazi Germany, to a pair of orphaned brothers, and a girl living in California. The writer deftly connects each tale through a love of music and the suspense about who may have to die to end the curse.

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Don't Miss These Events

April 11—"Threads of Commonality" Our Neighbors Ourselves Art Event

On Sat., April 11, the Aurora Cultural Arts District, 1400 Dallas, will host the 3rd annual "Threads of Commonality," a collection of various art focused on the sense of home and belonging, a struggle not only for refugees. Art will be for sale. The Flobots and Kid Astronaut will perform. For more information or to submit art, visit www.projectworthmore.org/ono-call-to-artists.

Through April 12—"Colorado Stories": Photography Exhibit at Cake Crumbs

"Colorado Stories" traces a 20-year body of documentary-style photography by Walter Martin who has been capturing iconic moments across Colorado since 1972. The photos are on display now through April 12 at Cake Crumbs, 2216 Kearney St. For information, contact Kathryn Charles at 720.270.1570 or katycharles@yahoo.com.

April 18—Young Entrepreneurs Marketplace

From 10am-2pm on Sat., April 18, Young Americans Bank, 3550 E. 1st Ave., is hosting the annual Spring Young Entrepreneurs

Marketplace. Fifty entrepreneurs, ages 6 to 21, will showcase their businesses. Free admission and parking. For information, call 303.321.2265 or visit www.yacenter.org/YEM.

April 20—Choices Matter: A Community Conversation with John Amaechi

From 7-9pm on Mon., April 20, the History Colorado Center will host John Amaechi, human rights advocate, psychologist, New York Times best-selling author, and former NBA player in a conversation about fostering a more compassionate and inclusive society. In 2007, after retiring from the NBA, Amaechi became the first former NBA player to openly identify himself as gay. Since retiring, he pursued a PhD in psychology and works as a consultant to help institutions better understand, manage and improve their personnel, climate and culture. The event is free and open to the public. The History Colorado Center is located at 1200 Broadway. For questions, contact Jillian_Low@facing.org.

April 22—Earth Day at Denver Botanic Gardens

From 6:30-8:30pm on Wed., April 22, the Denver Botanic Gardens, 1007 York, will show Arise, a film "that captures the portraits and stories of extraordinary women around the world who are

coming together to heal the injustices against the earth, weaving together poetry, music, art and stunning scenery to create a hopeful and collective story." To learn more, visit www.arisethemovie.com. The Denver Botanic Gardens will host other Earth Day events: botanicgardens.org.

April 24—Denver Public Schools Annual Shakespeare Festival

On Fri., April 24, the 31st Annual Shakespeare Festival will take place at the Denver Performing Arts Complex, 1345 Champa. Performances are ongoing throughout the day. Approximately 5,000 DPS students will perform. For more, visit <http://shakespeare.dpsk12.org/>

April 25—Swigert Touch-A-Truck

From 10am-1pm on Sat., April 25, Swigert International School will host Touch-A-Truck, an event for kids to get up close with vehicles, including ambulances, limousines, tractors and more. The event will take place at the Sam's Club parking lot, 7805 E. 35th Ave. Ticket prices and information: <http://touchatruck.swigertpta.com/>

April 25 and 26—Doors Open Denver

The 2015 "Now & Then"-themed Doors Open Denver will take place Sat. and Sun., April 25 and 26. The free 2-day event features Denver's most interesting architecture, including the Stanley Marketplace. Take guided tours, bike to historic places, or walk through neighborhoods. Buildings generally will be open 10am-4pm. For details about tours or special events, visit doorsopendenver.com.

April 28—Family Genealogy Presentation

From 7-8:30pm on Tues., April 28, the Lowry Foundation will host its Speaker Series featuring James Jeffrey from the Denver Public Library. Jeffrey will talk about researching family genealogy. The talk will take place at the Eisenhower Chapel, 293 Roslyn. To learn more: www.lowrydenver.com/calendar/2015-04/

May 2—Dumb Friends League Furry Scurry

At 9am on Sat., May 2, the Dumb Friends League will host the Furry Scurry Dog Walk at Washington Park. Owners and their dogs will walk 2 miles and enjoy refreshments, contests, demonstrations and visit 150 pet-related vendors. To register, visit FurryScurry.org or call 303.751.5772, Ext. 1378.

May 23—Journalist Helen Thorpe Speaks at Montview Presbyterian

On Sat., May 23, author and journalist Helen Thorpe will speak at the Montview Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia, to raise proceeds for the Park Hill Community Bookstore. A silent auction, with wine and refreshments, will open at 5:30pm, followed by Thorpe's presentation at 7pm. Thorpe has written books including Just Like Us and Soldier Girls, and produced stories on This American Life. To purchase a ticket, visit the Park Hill Bookstore, 4620 E. 23rd Ave., or call 303.355.8508.

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April 2015

26

Stapleton Front Porch

For more events, search our online event database

Also submit your own event at FrontPorchStapleton.com > Events

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

DENVER METRO EVENTS

- 4/3 Friday—First Friday Art Walks.** Santa Fe Arts District, Tennyson Art Walk, River North (RiNo) Art District, Golden Triangle Museum, Navajo Street Art District. www.denver.org/things-to-do/denver-arts-culture/denver-art-districts
- 4/4 Saturday—Chicken Keeping.** Complete class on raising backyard chickens, where to buy chicks, feed, shelter and using manure for gardens. 1-3:30pm. \$35. Repeats 4/18. Denver Urban Homesteading. www.denverurbanhomesteading.com
- 4/8 to 4/12—Denver Auto Show.** Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th St. Adults \$12; kids \$6; under 6 free. www.denverautoshow.com
- 4/8 Wednesday—Board Game Night at Denver Museum of Miniatures, Dolls, and Toys.** Decide which vintage games to add to our collection. After-hours night of games and wine. \$6 (\$3/DMMDT members) includes 1 drink. Event is 21+ only. 1880 Gaylord St. Reservations required: 303.322.1053, education@dmmdt.org , www.dmmdt.org, www.dmmdt-game-night.eventbrite.com
- 4/11 Saturday—Altitud Latin American Music Festival.** Music workshops, dance classes and concert. Celebrates diverse Latin American music styles. \$48; concert only \$29. Daniels Hall, 71 E. Yale Ave. www.swallowhillmusic.org
- 4/11 Saturday—Denver Brass Presents “A Taste of Sparkling Brass and Spring Brews.”** Pub concert, brew tasting and light dinner. \$50. Wynkoop Brewing Company. 6:30pm. www.denverbrass.org
- 4/11 Saturday—Haute Cuisine Titanic Dinner.** Molly Brown House. Relive fashionable night on the Titanic with 8-course meal and live entertainment. 6pm. Reservations required. www.mollybrown.org
- 4/11 Saturday and 4/12 Sunday St. Martin’s Chamber Choir: Beat! Beat! Drums! The Civil War at 150.** Period and more modern settings of Civil War texts with readings of soldiers’ letters, diaries and other primary documents by Civil War antiquarian Richard de Tar. St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, 2015 Glenarm Pl. www.StMartinsChamberChoir.org
- 4/12 Sunday—Robotics at the Hangar.** Wings Over the Rockies Museum, Lowry. www.wingsmuseum.org
- 4/13 to 4/17—Become a Mediator.** 5-day, 40-hour training meets basic guidelines of Colo. Council of Mediators and Mediation Assoc. of Colo. 7653 E. 1st Pl. \$1061 or \$1045/CFU members. Contact helen@compuskills.com or 303.399.0093 ext 0.
- 4/17 Friday—Spanish Happy Hour: Chicano Movements.** Dancing and music from the Movimiento. Museo de las Americas. 5-9pm. \$10. RSVP required. www.museo.org
- 4/18 Saturday—Young Entrepreneurs Marketplace.** Unique gifts by entrepreneurs 6-21 years old. Young Americans Center, 3550 E. 1st Ave. Denver. Free admission and

parking. www.yacenter.org

- 4/22 Wednesday—Earth Day Denver 2015.** Civic Center Park. 10am-2pm. www.denverGov.org
- 4/25 Saturday—Women of the Titanic Tea.** Molly Brown House. Sittings 11:15 and 2:15. Reservations required. www.mollybrown.org
- 4/25 to 4/26—Doors Open Denver.** FREE annual two-day event celebrating architecture and design. Over 70 sites open to the public through self-guided tours, expert guided tours (must preregister) and urban adventure tours. www.doorsopendenver.com
- 5/1 Friday—First Friday- Cinco de Mayo Celebration.** 5-9pm. Museo de las Americas. Museo.org/
- 5/2 to 5/3—28th Annual Cinco de Mayo Festival and Parade.** Civic Center Park, FREE. Largest Cinco de Mayo Hispanic culture celebration in U.S. at Civic Center Park. Latino music, food, culture, low-rider parade and some of Mexico’s top recording stars. www.cincomedayodenver.com

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- Mother’s Day 5K Registration Open.** City Park, 9am. Sun., 5/10. \$30 individual, \$90 family. www.mothersday5k.com
- 4/4 Saturday—Hippity Hop Easter Trot and Kids Cotton Tail Fun Run.** Stapleton Central Park. www.active.com
- 4/7 to 5/26—Free Yoga Classes.** Im U’nique presents Illustrating Yoga Union Tours. FREE yoga classes Tuesdays, April and May. 6pm (arrive by 5:30pm). Denver Museum of Nature & Science. Ages 8 and up, all skill levels. Mats available. www.imuniqueunited.com
- 4/12 Sunday—13th Annual Platte River 1/2 Marathon.** www.platteriverhalf.com
- 4/17 to 5/2—9News Health Fairs.** Free and low-cost health screenings at various metro-area locations. www.9healthfair.org
- 4/26 Sunday—Cherry Creek Sneak.** Cherry Creek Sneak. 10 Mile 5Mile, 5K, 1.5 mile sneak sprint and 1/2 mile kids run. www.cherrycreeksneak.com
- 5/2 Saturday—Denver Dumb Friends Furry Scurry.** Wash Park. Register : www.furryscurry.org
- 5/2 Saturday—Walk MS.** Benefits Multiple Sclerosis Society. City Park, 9:30am. www.walkms.org
- 5/3 Sunday—Denver Promise Walk for Preeclampsia.** Walk/Run benefits Preeclampsia Foundation research/awareness of preeclampsia, which affects pregnant women and their unborn children. 8:30am. \$20/adults, \$10/kids under 13 (T-shirt and goody bag). Denver City Park. www.promisewalk.org/denver

KIDS AND FAMILIES

- 3/1 to 5/31—The Bold Chryslers, 1955-1962.** Chrysler designs of Virgil Exner. Free with museum admission. 4303 Brighton Blvd. www.forneymuseum.org
- 4/3 Friday—Storytime in the Exploration Station.** 10:30am. All ages, repeats 4/17. Wings over the Rockies Museum, Lowry www.wingsmuseum.org
- 4/4 Saturday—Home Depot Kids Workshop.** 9am-12pm. FREE how-to clinics first Sat. monthly, ages 5-12. Get Home Depot apron, wooden project and project pin. Metro-area Home Depot stores. www.homedepot.com
- 4/7 to 4/28—Tuesdays in April Four Mile Historic Park Small Settlers.** Ages 2-5 with parent/caregiver. 9-10am. \$5/child adults free, members free. 715 S. Forest St. Advance register: 720.865.0814 or education@fourmilepark.org www.fourmilepark.org
- 4/8 Wednesday—2nd Wednesday Create Playdates at Denver Art Museum.** Kids 3-5, 10am. Art, story times, scavenger hunts. Included in museum adm; 5 and under free. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. 720.865.5000, www.denverartmuseum.org
- 4/9 Thursday—Tiny Tots Love Music, Denver Brass.** Special concert for tiny tots and parents; introduce little ones to magic of live music. Augustana Lutheran Church 5000 E. Alameda, 10:30am. \$8/adults \$5/kids. www.denverbrass.org

4/10 to 4/24—Lowe’s Build and Grow workshops. Bring kids to Lowe’s stores to build FREE wood project: Monthly, 2nd and 4th Saturdays. Free apron, goggles, project-themed patch, merit certificate on completion. 10am. www.lowesbuildandgrow.com

4/12 Sunday—Junior Rangers. age 6-12, 1:30-3pm. Learn about the plants and animals of Star K Ranch. RSVP required, 303.326.8650 www.aurora.gov/nature

4/18 Saturday—Cockpit Demo Day. Wings Over the Rockies Museum, Lowry www.wingsmuseum.org

4/24 Friday—Denver Botanic Gardens Family Fun Night. 4th Friday of each month explore nature at night in the Mordecai Children’s Garden. Monthly themes, snacks by the campfire, other fun activities. www.botanicgardens.org

4/26 Sunday—Family Fun Forum. Discover various performance skills and win tokens for prizes. FREE. All ages. 6-8pm. Robert and Judi Newman Center for Theatre Education, 1101 13th St. www.denvercenter.org

4/28 Tuesday—Tiny Tots, Inside the Orchestra. 45-minute Colorado Symphony concerts for kids 6 and under who sit next to musicians and hear classical music they may recognize! Temple Emanuel Concerts: 9:30 and 10:45am. \$9.95; children under 1 free. Tickets: www.insidetheorchestra.org

LECTURES AND CLASSES

- 4/7 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Van Gogh.** 10:15-11:15am. Jewish Community Center, 350 S Dahlia St. 303.316.6359. www.ActiveMinds.com
- 4/9 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—FDR.** 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. www.ActiveMinds.com
- 4/23 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—Shakespeare.** 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. www.ActiveMinds.com
- 4/20 Monday—Choices Matter: Community Conversation with John Amaechi.** Human rights advocate, psychologist, author, former NBA player talks about fostering a more compassionate, inclusive society. History Colorado Center, 1200 Broadway. 7-9pm. Free. Contact: Jillian_Low@facinghistory.org or register: www.facinghistory.org/events/c2015co1-choices-matter-community-conversation-john-amaechi/www.facinghistory.org/
- 26 Sunday—Parenting Book Workshop Series.** Dr. Alison Auster and Lauren Ross lead next monthly workshop. 3:45-4:45pm, Sam Gary Branch Library, 2961 Roslyn St. Helping Your Child with Peer Relationships. All families welcome. laurenross1818@yahoo.com. www.familytoolkitcoaching.com
- 4/28 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Tibet.** 5-6pm. Tattered Cover 2526 E. Colfax. 303.322.7727. www.ActiveMinds.co

MUSEUMS—DENVER ART MUSEUM

- 4/10 Friday—Uncorked Wine Tasting 2015.** 15th annual Uncorked Wine Tasting on 4/10 and Uncorked Reserve on 4/11 at Denver Art Museum. 300+ wines, food from Kevin Taylor Catering, and silent auction. 6-9pm. Contact: 720-913-0034, uncorked@denverartmuseum.org. \$90/DAM members, \$125/nonmembers, \$45/designated drivers. Includes regular hours DAM admission on 4/10. www.denverartmuseum.org/calendar/dam-uncorked-wine-tasting-2015
- 4/26 Sunday—Dia del Nino Celebration 2015.**Free admission and family-friendly programs celebrate children around the world at Denver Art Museum Complex, Denver Public Library, Clyfford Still Museum, History Colorado Center and Byers-Evans House Museum. Live music/dance at DAM. 12-4pm. Contact: criciardi@denverartmuseum.org with DDN 2015 in subject line, or 720.913.0072. www.denverartmuseum.org/calendar/dia-del-nino-celebration-2015

MUSEUMS—DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURE AND SCIENCE

- Through 5/3—Traveling the Silk Road.** Separate ticket required for exhibit. www.dmns.org
- Through 9/7—Mythic Creatures: Dragons, Unicorns and Mermaids.** Exhibit free with admission. www.dmns.org
- 4/1 to 4/30—IMAX Films.** Prehistoric Planet: Walking with Dinosaurs 3D; Tiny Giants 3D; Deep Sea Challenge 3D; Journey to the South Pacific 3D. www.dmns.org
- 4/1 to 4/30—Planetarium Shows.** Perfect Little Planet; Cosmic Journey: A Solar System Adventure; Black Holes: The Other Side of Infinity; One World, One Sky. www.dmns.org
- 4/16 Thursday—Science Lounge- Make it Mythicl.** Third Thursdays, 6:30-9:30pm. \$10/members; \$12/nonmembers. www.dmns.org

MUSEUMS—FREE DAYS

- 4/2 Thursday—Children’s Museum Free Target Tuesday.** 4-8pm. www.cmdenver.org
- 4/3 Friday—Four Mile Historic Park Free Day.** SCFD Free 1st Fri., 12-4pm. Repeats 5/1. www.fourmilepark.org
- 4/4 Saturday—Denver Art Museum Free Day.** SCFD Free day. Repeats 5/2. www.denverartmuseum.org
- 4/9 Thursday—Aurora History Museum Free Day.** SCFD Free day. Repeats 4/28. www.auroragov.org
- 4/12 Sunday—Denver Museum of Nature & Science Free Day.** SCFD Free day. Repeats 4/25 www.dmns.org
- 4/15 Wednesday—Molly Brown House Free Day.** SCFD Free day. www.mollybrown.org
- 4/22 Wednesday—Denver Botanic Gardens Free Day.** SCFD Free day. www.botanicgardens.org
- 4/24 Friday—Clyfford Still Museum.** SCFD Free day. Free admission last Fri. monthly all day. Also free Fridays 5-8pm. 1250 Bannock St. www.clyffordstillmuseum.org

MUSEUMS—HISTORY COLORADO CENTER

- Through 5/10—The 1968 Exhibit.** Free with admission. Explore this pivotal American year through photographs, artifacts, vintage pop culture items and interactives. 1200 Broadway. www.historycoloradocenter.org
- 4/1 Wednesday—Preschool Story Time.** 9:30 am, ages 2-5 with caregiver. 1200 Broadway www.historycoloradocenter.org
- 4/3 to 4/4—Hippie Haven Lounge.** Celebrate the ’68 Exhibit with fun activities. 11am-2pm. www.historycoloradocenter.org
- 4/17 Friday—Collections and Library Behind Scenes Tour History Colorado Center.** 3rd Fri. of month, 1pm. Free with admission, register at front desk. Limit: 12 people. Visit rarely seen storage and processing areas; view artifacts up close. www.historycoloradocenter.org
- 4/26 Sunday—Dia del Nino.** Celebrate children from around the world with live performances and craft activities. 10am-5pm. www.historycoloradocenter.org

NORTHEAST DENVER/AURORA EVENTS

- 4/1 to 4/30—Stanley British Primary School Earth Month Recycling Event.** Red Apple Recycling Clothing Drive Challenge collects used clothing, shoes, backpacks, purses, toys, stuffed animals, towels, sheets, etc. Red Apple local nonprofit sells items to local textile recycler; proceeds fund sustainability/wellness programs in local schools. Stanley gets \$.10/lb to fund its sustainability initiatives. Place items in Little Red Schoolhouse at Stanley, 350 Quebec St. Allison Neckers: 303.360.0803
- 4/1 Wednesday—Wands and Wishes Character Story Time.** 10:30 am, stories, songs and character meet and greet first Wed. of month. \$11.50 price includes a book. 2208 Kearney St. 720.612.4363 (continued on p. 28)

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LOCAL EVENT LISTINGS

(continued from p. 27)

4/2 to 4/5—Augustana Lutheran Church Holy Week and Easter Services. 4/2 Maundy Thurs. worship 11am and 7pm; 4/3 Good Friday worship 1 and 7pm ;4/5 Easter worship 8am, 9:30am and 11am. www.augustanadenver.com

4/2 to 4/29—Star K Kids. Thursdays, 9:30 and 11am; kids 5 and under. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E. Smith Rd., Aurora. www.auroragov.org/nature

4/3 Friday—First Night Passover Kohelet Community Seder. 6 pm. Kohelet House, 428 S. Forest St. Informal, joyous celebration of our heritage. Each contributes favorite traditional foods and helps tell Passover story. RSVP: Barbara, beiserbj@gmail.com.

4/4 Saturday—Temple Micah Community Passover Seder. RSVP and to inquire re availability and prices: elaine.lee@micahdenver.org, 303.388.4239 ext 1. Families with kids under 5 may be eligible for MazelTot discount.. www.micahdenver.org

4/5 Sunday—Stapleton Fellowship Church Easter Services. 7am. Sunrise Service at Founders Green. 8:30am, 10am and 11:30am at 8700 E. 21st Ave. www.stapleton-church.org

4/7 Tuesday—League of Women Voters Presents Hunger in Colorado. Montview Presbyterian Church, Social time 5:30, program 6pm. lwvdenver.org

4/11 Saturday—Our Neighbors, Ourselves. Annual art show/fundraiser benefits local refugee population. "Threads of Commonality" will feature a variety of art from local artists. ACAD gallery (14th and Dallas). Live performances by Kid Astronaut and the Flobots with 303 Choir. Appetizers, drinks and desserts. Purchase discounted advance tickets online, or at door. www.projectworthmore.org, www.facebook.com/ourneighborsourselves

4/18 Saturday—Stapleton Arts Spring Show 2015. 6 artists, 6 mediums. SmartSpace, 2373 Central Park Blvd. 10am-5pm. www.stapletonarts.com/springshow2015/

4/28 Tuesday—Getting Started With Genealogy. FREE. James Jeffrey, DPL genealogy specialist in Western History and Genealogy Dept. talks about library and online research tools/services. 7-8:30pm. Eisenhower Chapel, 293 Roslyn St. Contact Karen House: khous@jherzog.com or 303.757.7658.

5/2 Saturday—Montview Community Preschool & Kindergarten's Annual Carnival. Live music, food trucks, games/prizes, train rides, magic shows, vendors, petting zoo, etc. 11am-3pm, 1980 Dahlia St. (Montview Blvd.) Tickets on sale 4/20: \$7/advance, \$9/door, under 2 and 65+ free. Celebrate our 50th year; free cake at noon. 303.322.7296, www.montviewpreschool.org

5/2 Saturday—Denver Recycles Mulch Giveaway and Compost

Sale. Havana Nursery, 10450 Smith Rd.(loader service + dig your own compost only at this site). Fred Thomas Park, Quebec and 26th, dig your own mulch only. 720.913.1311 www.denverGov.org/DenverRecycles

NORTHFIELD EVENTS

To 4/5—Easter Bunny at Bass Pro Shops. Visit website for more details. www.basspro.com

4/7 Tuesday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. Furious 7; While We're Young. www.harkinstheatres.com

4/10 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. Dial a Prayer. www.harkinstheatres.com

4/17 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. Monkey Kingdom. www.harkinstheatres.com

4/24 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. Little Boy. www.harkinstheatres.com

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

To 4/3—Spring Break Wildlife Viewing Tours. 9:30-11:30am. Naturalist leads bus tour thru refuge to view bald eagles, bison, coyotes, deer, raptors, etc. RSVP required. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

4/4 Saturday—Bird-ology. Be a wildlife biologist for a day, bird banding techniques using replica birds, collect and record scientific data. Ages 6 and up. RSVP required. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

4/10 Friday—Hike-N-Bird. 9-11am. Novice to expert birders; hike explores woodland, wetland and prairie habitats. Must be comfortable hiking up to 3 miles. Repeats 4/18. RSVP required.

4/12 Sunday—Beginning Birding. 9-12pm. Learn secrets to identify common birds in indoor program, then head outdoors to test knowledge. Participants receive special refuge bird guide. RSVP required. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

4/12 to 4/25—Wildlife Viewing Tours. 9:30-11:30am Saturdays; 1-3pm Sundays. Naturalist-led bus tour through refuge to view bald eagles, bison, coyotes, deer, raptors, etc. RSVP required. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

4/18 Saturday—2015 Fishing Season Opens. Catch and release fishing allowed at Lake Mary and Lake Ladora on all Tues., Sat. and Sun. sunrise to sunset. Wading allowed in Lake Ladora after Memorial Day. \$3 refuge daily permit and Colorado State license for anglers 16

and older required. Artificial bait and barbless hooks only. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

4/23 Thursday—Nature Tots- "Ribbit." Ages 3-5 and their adults. 10-11am. Hike around Lake Mary and discover world of frogs. RSVP required. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

THEATRE

Through 4/5—Athena Project's World Premiere- Harm's Way. Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E. Colfax Ave, Aurora. www.aurorafoxartscenter.org

Through 4/10—Charlotte's Web. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada. www.arvadacenter.org

Through 4/11—Cock. Avenue Theatre, 417 E. 17th Avenue www.avenuetheater.com

Through 4/19—One Night in Miami. Space Theater, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, 14th and Curtis www.denvercenter.org

Through 4/19—The Archbishop's Ceiling. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada. www.arvadacenter.org

Through 4/19—Motown the Musical. Buell Theater www.denvercenter.org

Through 4/26—Ain't Misbehavin'. Vintage Theatre. 1468 Dayton St., Aurora Cultural Arts District. www.vintagetheatre.org

Through 5/3—Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks. Vintage Theatre. 1468 Dayton St., Aurora Cultural Arts District. www.vintagetheatre.org

4/4 to 5/2—The Lion in Winter. Firehouse Theater Company at John Hand Theater. 7653 E. 1st Place, Lowry. www.johnhandtheater.org

4/22 to 4/26—Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. Buell Theater. www.denvercenter.org

4/22 to 6/28—Defending the Caveman. Garner Galleria Theater, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. www.denvercenter.org

4/24 to 5/16—She Kills Monsters. Aurora Fox Arts Center. 9900 E. Colfax Ave. www.aurorafoxartscenter.org

4/28 to 5/17—A Man of No Importance. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada. www.arvadacenter.org

4/29 to 5/10—Annie. Buell Theater. www.denvercenter.org

5/2 to 5/30—Marvelous Wonderettes. Avenue Theatre, 417 E. 17th Ave. www.avenuetheater.com

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Montview Lane Closures Over the Next 6 Months

As part of the Lower Westley Creek Project, a new roadway bridge will be built, which will affect commutes along Montview Blvd. All westbound lanes of Montview from Clinton to Yosemite will be closed from 7:30am to 5pm for three months. When bridge work is complete on the north side, the eastbound lanes for the same vicinity and time period. For questions call the Aurora Water Department at 720.859.4312.

Calling for Ashley Elementary Reading Partners

Reading Partners is a local nonprofit serving struggling readers at under-resourced schools. Reading Partners is currently seeking volunteers who can commit 1-2 hours (or more) per week to work one-on-one with a student at Ashley Elementary, 1914 Syracuse. To sign up or get more information, email Kayla Thomas-Walker at kayla.thomaswalker@readingpartners.org or call 720-557-9909.

Upcoming Denver Citizens' Police Academy

The Denver Police Department (DPD) hosts several Citizen Police Academies (CPA) throughout the year that are open to all Denver metro area residents. The CPA is designed to give insight into how and why DPD operates, and covers traffic enforcement, officer safety, police history, and more. The next academy, co-hosted by Districts 2 and 5, will take place April, 1, 8 and 15. Participants must be 18. The program typically runs for 6 weeks from 6-9pm on Wednesday evenings at varied locations. For information or to register call 720.913.6167 or visit www.denvergov.org/citizensacademy.

Tool Keeps Track of Your Property in Case of Theft

LeadsOnline is a free tool for citizens to keep

track of personal belongings in the event that they are lost or stolen. When property is inventoried and advisable, law enforcement has a record of property and helps to possibly retrieve it. For more info visit <https://reportit.leadsonline.com>.

DMV Makes Effort To Be More Convenient

Denver Motor Vehicles eliminated the 2.7 percent convenience fee on credit card payments for drivers renewing their vehicle registration with the city, an incentive to pay online or over the phone instead of standing in line. DMV also began mailing Renewal Mailers with a self-addressed postage-paid envelope to mail the payment, again so people don't have to go into a location. For more information visit www.denvergov.org/dmv.

Avoid Identity Theft and Attend Shred-A-Thon

From 9-11am on May 1 at The Hub at Stapleton, shred your old documents and credit cards that have identity information to avoid possible identity theft. The event is free, thanks to Northeast Transportation Connections, the Stapleton Foundation and Denver Police District 5. The Hub is located at 7484 E. 29th Ave. For questions contact resource officer Brandi Thomas at Brandi.Thomas@denvergov.org.

Throughout April Donate Used Backpacks to Denver Charities

For the whole month of April, the Montclair Rec Center will be collecting gently used backpacks for the St. Francis Center and Denver Rescue Mission. They will also accept cloth grocery bags for the Gathering Center, a drop-in center for women, their children, and transgender individuals who are experiencing poverty or homelessness. The box for donations will be located in the main lobby at 729 Ulster.



Left to right: Chris Herndon (city councilman), Les Perry (police commander), Kelly Kitts (Central Park Rec Center supervisor), Michael Tooley (lifeguard), Charlene Branch (aquatics coordinator), Ben Hensley (operations coordinator), Jordane Ruhmann (lifeguard), Justine Sullivan (lifeguard), and Issac Simental (recreation instructor) gather for the staff to be recognized for saving a swimmer.

Central Park Staff Saves Man's Life

By Madeline Schroeder

On Oct. 23, 2014, the staff at the Central Park Recreation Center averted a potential tragedy. A senior citizen was swimming laps when he started to struggle swimming and became unconscious. The aquatics coordinator and on-duty lifeguards pulled him out of the water and immediately started CPR. They used an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to restart his heart beat by the time the paramedics arrived.

The paramedics returned later that day to congratulate the staff for a job well done. "The internal processes worked to perfection," says Kelly Kitts, Central Park supervisor. The man is almost 100 percent recovered now. For the quick action and safety process, the staff was

recognized by the Denver Police Department at a ceremony on Fri., March 3 at the recreation center. "If we didn't have the support we do from Denver Parks and Rec, I don't think the employees would have quite the confidence to react the way they did that day," Kitts says.

At the ceremony, she made a special recognition of Charlene Branch, the aquatics coordinator, who has focused on training the staff for a potential emergency. Other staff members recognized included: Ben Hensley, operations coordinator; Jordane Ruhmann, lifeguard; Michael Tooley, lifeguard; Justine Sullivan, lifeguard; and Issac Simental, recreation instructor.

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Residents' Calls Help Police Make Two Arrests

Police are encouraging residents to be aware of suspicious activity and call when they see something. In the past month police were able to make two arrests in Stapleton based on calls from residents.

One person called the police to say a male was looking into car windows and checking door handles—and the police were able to catch and arrest him.

At 28th and Macon a person was observed just sitting in the park for an extended period of time and a resident, suspicious of what he was doing there, called police. It turned out he had a warrant and was arrested.

“We can’t be everywhere and we need your eyes to see things,” says District 5 Community Resource Officer Brandi Thomas.

Two burglary attempts happened around 31st and Trenton at night. In one case the burglar cut the screen but the window was locked so he was unable to get in. In a second case, the window was open and the burglar made entry through the screen. It appeared he was under the influence of something and the homeowner chased him off.

Thomas says there has not been a pattern of such burglaries, just this one incident, but she reminds residents that as the weather gets warmer, people need to keep doors and windows locked.

Police Shoot Man in Walmart Parking Lot

On March 20, about 11:15am, a family member notified police that John Thomas Clark, 42, was in the Walmart parking lot. Clark, who was wanted for sexual assault of a child, had skipped out on his bail and was on the run. The family member warned that he was armed and he was going to attempt suicide by a cop. The police used pepper spray, and after some kind of movement by the man in the car, police shot him in the shoulder and he was taken to the hospital. The case is still under investigation.

A police officer en route to the scene was in a two-car accident when a driver with a green light did not yield as the officer went through a red light. According to Lt. Wycoff, Department policy states the officer is at fault in that situation. The officer was taken to the hospital and was released the same day with a broken rib.

Upcoming Development

Marriott

A four-story Marriott hotel is starting construction at 4667 Central Park Blvd. It will have 112 rooms and an indoor pool; it is approximately 104,000sf. They hope to open in September 2016.

Bladium

Bladium, which previously submitted expansion plans that did not get built, is now pursuing a different expansion plan. They are currently in the process of getting permits for the project. Bladium is located at 2400 Central Park Blvd., Stapleton.

Front Porch Places New Racks in North Stapleton

New bright blue Front Porch racks have been placed in central locations north of I-70. Residents who don’t get a copy delivered to their door can find a box on the plaza at the south end of Conservatory Green adjacent to the firepit; at the mailboxes located at Maverick Pool (just east of High Tech Elementary/DSST: Conservatory Green); and at the apartment rental office at Xenia and Northfield Blvd. In the near



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future, a box will be placed at the mailbox cluster in the park located south of 55th between Uinta and Trenton.

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Westerly Creek North/Uplands Construction Has Begun

Photo by Madeline Schroeder



The groundbreaking ceremony for the 64-acre Westerly Creek North/Uplands project was held March 10. Mayor Hancock (waving from the backhoe) said there will be 4,000 linear feet of 12-foot wide regional trails, 9000 linear feet of concrete and soft surface park trails, and a pedestrian/bike bridge over the creek. More than 500 trees and 1600 shrubs will be planted to create a natural looking open space similar to the rest of Westerly Creek Park.

The project will be done in two phases: phase one includes the earthwork and the pedestrian bridge; phase two will be the irrigation, trails and landscaping. It is hoped the park can be completed by the end of 2015, with trails ready for public use, but planted areas will be fenced off until the

landscaping takes hold.

An estimated 118,000 cubic yards will be moved from the creek bed to form mounds in the Uplands area to the east of the creek. Like the rest of Westerly Creek, this northern section of the creek is designed to contain floodwater during heavy rainfall.

City To Issue RFP for Pavilion at Central Park

Councilman Chris Herndon says the city solicited proposals for the pavilion near the playground in Central Park in 2006 and no responses were received. Now the city plans to try again and hopes to get an RFP posted on April 15 with a due date the first week in May (if posted as planned). Herndon says a couple of coffee shops have already expressed interest. Visit www.denvergov.org/purchasing to see the RFP.

Eastbridge Update

Councilman Chris Herndon confirmed on March 19 that a decision has been made to move the gas station planned as part of the Eastbridge Town Center to the adjoining lot to the north, as shown above. He said Forest City made the decision based on concerns about the lighting near residences. A petition signed by over 400 residents objecting to the gas station in Eastbridge was submitted to the Stapleton Design Review Committee at about the same time Forest City made the decision to change the location.

King Soopers Director of Public Affairs Kelli McGannon responded to a Front Porch inquiry about the development, saying they continue to work in the spirit of partnership with the Stapleton Design Review Committee. "While we are still in the planning stages and trying to find reasonable compromises, we remain focused on creating a community grocery store that will serve the



needs of this unique Denver neighborhood."

In March, Evergreen Development met with the Stapleton Design Review Committee (SDRC) and they submitted their site development plan and their transportation engineering plan to Denver for initial review. Tyler Carlson of Evergreen Development says the feedback from SDRC "was tremendously beneficial and positive" and once they receive feedback from Denver they'll take into account all the new information and engage the neighborhood again. Carlson added, "We are also getting strong traction from exciting retail and restaurant users—all new to Stapleton—and as soon as I have executed leases, we'll be sharing names as well. It looks like we'll be able to execute the rooftop patio on the west end of the project, which is very exciting."



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SUN Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm (Block Captain meeting) and 7:30pm (Board meeting) at the Central Park Recreation Center, 9651 MLK Jr. Blvd. For information about SUN, visit www.stapletonunitedneighbors.com. To contact SUN or confirm meeting time, email stapletonunitedneighbors@gmail.com

When and Where is the SUN Block Party?

By Amanda Allshouse

SUN Block Party Day is a neighborhood tradition where each block (or a group of blocks) throws a party. The location of each party varies with the geography of each block. Block party locations range between closed-off streets, alleys, private courtyards and pocket parks.

SUN encourages neighbors to keep up the tradition, and sets the date in the fall in coordination with the MCA for a community-wide date of parties. This year, the day is the traditional block party date: the Saturday after Mother's Day (May 16). The MCA sponsors block parties by waiving the fee for greenspace usage on that day. The City of Denver has waived fees and the insurance requirement for block parties (thrown on any date).

Denver Police is another organization who supports Block Party Day, by encouraging neighbors to get to know each other and what is "normal" around the block to better

recognize unordinary activity. Individuals who know their neighbors are more likely to report suspicious behavior (e.g., using the Stapleton-area-only text a tip line to directly connect with a District 5 dispatcher: 720.723.8911). Also, conflicts can be avoided, as people are far less likely to have disputes with neighbors if they know them and have a community bond with them.

To answer the questions in the title: hopefully, there will be a block party on YOUR block, whether it is in a street, alley, courtyard or greenspace. In 2015, Block Party Day is Sat., May 16. Most block parties are in the late afternoon or evening; however, the timing is up to the people planning it. While the Stapleton Garage Sale was scheduled for the same weekend, its official hours end at noon so the overlap could be minimal. We will evaluate afterwards and adjust planning this fall if necessary.

Kickball. The 12th Annual Stapleton Kickball Tournament (Aug. 8, 10am) will raise

funds to be donated to a charity or local nonprofit. Suggest a recipient to SUN via email or the website (below).

Connect in-person. SUN hosts monthly meetings on the third Tuesday of most months in the Central Park Rec Center. SUN block captains meet from 6:30-7:30pm, and the SUN board meets immediately afterwards from 7:30-9pm. The annual Community Forum and SUN board election will replace the May meeting and will take place during the 6:30-9pm time block on May 19.

Connect online. To sign up for community emails, submit an anonymous question, register your team for the kickball tournament, or learn more about SUN, visit www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.org. If interested in finding out if your block has a block captain, email SUNoutreach@gmail.com. If interested in a seat on the SUN board, email StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com

A Food (r)Evolution!

I am a Denver Native who recently moved to North Aurora. I primarily buy organic, natural and non-GMO food, and it is so frustrating to have to travel so far for healthy food. I am grateful that our local King Soopers offers some organic alternatives, but I would prefer to shop at a market that is dedicated to healthy options. I was really amazed to hear that all the health foods stores were shunning our neighborhood. This is why I was so excited to find out, by word of mouth, about the NCCM (Northeast Community Co-op Market).

I used to shop at an amazing co-op when I lived in Brooklyn, NY. I loved the community feel and the prices were more affordable than traditional grocery stores. A co-op is owned by the members, giving a voice to the wants and needs of the community, offering local options and other benefits. The NCCM makes it easy to become a member, with a \$200 fee for a lifetime membership. There are several payment plans available to make it more accessible to all income levels.

I am not willing to sit idly by, wishing for something to change in regards to the lack of healthy food options for my family. That is why I joined. The sooner the membership grows, the sooner the store will open. Why wait? Be part of this amazing project, you will be glad you did! <http://www.northeastco-op.org/>

—Lalania Simone Carrillo, Northeast Community Co-op Market Board of Directors



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Letters to the Editor

Vaccine article showed bias

This article showed bias and blatant disregard and disrespect for the families/people who opt out of vaccinations and/or question the safety of vaccines or who choose to do so on a delayed or reduced schedule. While this is quite common, it is tiresome and not an accurate portrayal of all of the information available or sides involved. I noticed two interviews and information in this article regarding children with cancer who could not have been vaccinated at one time and then blanket, opinionated statements following those interviews regarding a number of topics. However I did not see any interviews of families with children who have been injured by a vaccine or information on families making other choices and decisions. It seems to simply be acceptable to ignore the people who find themselves on the opposite side of this debate or that even raise questions and compare them to Jenny McCarthy (does anyone on staff or the people quoted in the article know of anyone directly who has based their decision making on this topic on what she has said?) and make other inaccurate and inappropriate representations and accusations.

There are benefits and risks to either choosing to vaccinate or not. Vaccination is a medical intervention and the notion that people make this decision lightly or use exemptions as a convenient loophole are not supported by any data or fact. The VAERS system of reporting is said to only contain around 10% of actual vaccine adverse events and reactions so to claim that an adverse event is extremely rare may not be accurate because enough data is not available and there may be more adverse events than are reported. Currently there has been no safety study done on the current, full immunization schedule. There have been studies done on individual vaccinations but none done on receiving them at the rate currently given. It's unfortunate that any information that "rocks the boat" on this issue is ignored and dismissed.

Again, this issue is complex and heated and these decisions are for families to make in private with their doctors. It's unfortunate that such a vicious, disrespectful tone has been taken in the media, news and elsewhere. Opportunities on both sides are being missed for meaningful, rational discussion. I wanted to point out that there is bias and disregard present in your article that doesn't help the current debate tone regarding this issue.

Thank you,
Julie Buck

Frisbee Golf in Stapleton

We need to install a disc golf course in Stapleton. Disc golf courses provide a low cost recreation option at a low cost to install and maintain. The average cost of installation of a 18 hole disc golf course is less than \$15,000. Disc golf is a low impact exercise that will enhance existing parks and optimize under utilized land/space. Disc golf is a sport for all ages and will bring more local community members into the parks system.

Building a disc golf course is environmentally friendly. The installation and use does not require mowing maintenance, clear cutting or the grading of land. Disc golfers play an active role with the upkeep of the course and the surrounding communities. Many parks with disc golf installations have noticed a reduction in crime and vandalism. Anyone can play this sport, regardless of age, sex, religion or Creed. Disc golf courses are an active place for community engagement and awareness. Many local community business are willing to donate to the equipment costs, especially if the have the right to advertise on the Tee signage.

A disc golf course will bring more of our local community members into the parks system. It is time we build a disc golf course in Stapleton.

—Justin Bowers

Vaccine article stated facts

While I disagree with Ms. Buck's assertions that your Front Porch article was disrespectful or vicious, she raises some important points. Like many parents who are opposed to vaccination, she appears to have a deeply held personal belief. However, just because one believes something very strongly does not make it so. The science is overwhelmingly in favor of the fact that the benefits of vaccination far outweigh the risks. Ms. Buck raises the concern that no opposing views were reported in the article. When media outlets give "both sides" in a story about something as crucially important as children's health it creates a 'false equivalence' that could mislead some parents into believing that there are opposing scientific views, when, in fact, it is actually known science versus emotional beliefs. Doing so also gives a pulpit to what is in reality a very small proportion of the population (the overwhelming majority of parents support vaccination).

To Ms. Buck's other specific points: she uses a common tactic of anti-vaccine advocates, which is to misrepresent scientific publications or quote them out of context as a scare tactic. For example, she mentions the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), implying that there may be more vaccine reactions out there than we know about. What she does not mention is that VAERS is but one piece of a very sophisticated and powerful vaccine safety monitoring system we have in the U.S. which has shown that vaccines are in fact amazingly safe. She also does not mention that her statement that "there has been no safety study done on the current, full immunization schedule" was a misrepresentation of one sentence taken completely out of context from a 220-page Institute of Medicine report. Here is what she left out from the actual conclusions of that report: "This report is the most comprehensive examination of the immunization schedule to date. The IOM committee uncovered no evidence of major safety concerns associated with adherence to the childhood immunization schedule. Should signals arise that there may be need for investigation, however, the report offers a framework for conducting safety research using existing or new data collection systems."

Thanks to vaccines, like most parents today, Ms. Buck probably does not have much experience with vaccine-preventable diseases. Sadly, though, if enough parents take her approach, as this recent measles outbreak has shown, our children will suffer from potentially devastating—but entirely preventable—diseases.

Sincerely,
Sean O'Leary, MD, MPH
Dr. O'Leary is a pediatric infectious diseases specialist at Children's Hospital Colorado

Energy Efficiency Appeal

Today, most inefficient commercial buildings are small and built by smaller developers. When these buildings are constructed or renovated, it's typically not cost effective to add high efficiency features. Because of this, these buildings tend to be drafty and of poor air quality, making the home or work environment uncomfortable. Did you know that inefficient buildings waste up to half of the energy that they consume? This presents an opportunity to make buildings more efficient. By doing so, owners can save energy and money, while improving the value of their building. That's where Colorado House Bill 1236 comes into play. This measure would provide a tax credit to building owners who invest in making their buildings more efficient; the credit is larger for developers of low-income apartments. It makes economic sense to provide incentives for instituting positive change while creating jobs. Lets hope our state legislators see that too!

—Nicole Shook

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Mythical Creatures



Left: The fearsome kraken was the largest sea monster ever imagined, with tentacles as long as a ship's mast. In the 1850s, scientists recognized the kraken as a real, much smaller animal: the giant squid.

Right: Wishful imaginings: after many months at sea, sailors missing female companionship might have fancied manatees to be mermaids. Mermaids were thought to be beautiful but dangerous, so some ships avoided mermaid figureheads for fear they would bring bad luck.



Above: The griffin in Greek mythology—part eagle, part lion—was probably an interpretation of fossils from the *Protoceratops* dinosaur.

Above right: Sightings of the *Aepyornis*, a 9-foot extinct bird, may have inspired exaggerated tales of the giant roc, a bird so big it could carry a whale.

Left: In Greek mythology, the winged horse Pegasus springs forth from the head of Medusa when Persius cuts off her head.

By Laurie Dunklee

They are the stuff of dreams—and nightmares: creatures conjured from our imaginations as friends or foes continue to inhabit stories told in books and movies. Through the centuries, dragons, unicorns and mermaids tell the tales of human struggle and triumph.

The Denver Museum of Nature & Science brings imagination to life with its Mythic Creatures: Dragons, Unicorns, and Mermaids exhibit, on display until September 7.

From ancient sea tales to *Pirates of the Caribbean* movies, why do we continue to be fascinated with made-up creatures? “Even in 2015, these creatures are interesting because we love to let our imagination run wild,” said Samantha Richards, an educator for the exhibit. “We know

so much about the world now, but as humans we always want to know what else is out there—that is what drives scientists to the bottom of the ocean or outer space.”

Throughout history, humans have caught glimpses of mythic creatures sliding beneath the waves, running silently through the trees, and soaring above the clouds. The exhibit sections, Water, Land, Air and Dragons, explore how these fantastical beings came to be and how the tales surrounding them have evolved.

Origins of mythic creatures can often be traced to fossil records, Richards said. “The griffin in Greek mythology—part eagle, part lion—was probably an interpretation of fossils from the

Protoceratops dinosaur. Fantastic creatures were thought to be real and even appeared in scientific textbooks. There wasn't enough scientific understanding to know that just because a creature hadn't been seen, didn't mean it wasn't real. This exhibit explores how the scientific process has changed—how we've learned more about the natural world.”

“Evidence” of dragons was found in Austria in the 1200s. “Fossilized skulls of the woolly rhinoceros, an Ice Age animal, were purported as proof,” Richards said. “Dragon bones and blood—actually rocks and tree resin—were sold in Medieval Europe as remedies for various ills.”

Stories of dragons' fire-breathing capacities might have originated in the properties of caves and swamps,

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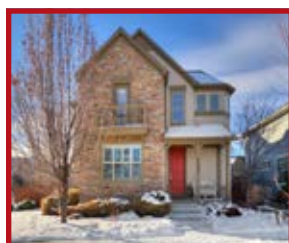


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Above: Live faeries, fauns, a mermaid and other magical folk were on hand for the exhibit opening, courtesy of Festival of Faerie, which will hold their annual day-long event June 20 in Lafayette featuring a parade, music, dancing, storytelling and an assortment of imaginary characters including dragons, leprechauns and the Fairy Queen. See www.festivaloffaerie.com.

Below: Strange but real: Gigantopithecus, an enormous ape that became extinct 300,000 years ago, is the basis for stories all over the world, including King Kong and Bigfoot.



Richards said. “In caves and swamps in Europe, methane gas built up and using torches caused an explosion. Fire-breathing dragons were an explanation, since people didn’t understand about the methane.” Found body parts from real animals became the basis for some of our favorite fantastic creatures. “The unicorn was thought to have magical powers, including purifying water,” Richards said. “The tusks of narwhals, Arctic whales, were presented as evidence of the existence of unicorns.”

Other legendary critters were conjured from misinterpretations of real animals. Sea monsters were a concern for sailors in the 1500s, and frightening rumors ran rampant. The giant kraken was described as having tentacle-arms that sank ships. In the 1850s, scientists recognized the kraken as an authentic animal: the giant squid.

Some imaginings were the result of wishful thinking. “Sailors at sea too long were lonely for female companionship and might have mistaken manatees for mermaids,” Richards said.

A few creatures in the exhibit are real but extinct animals. *Gigantopithecus*, an enormous ape that became extinct 300,000 years ago, is the basis for stories all over the world, including King Kong and Bigfoot. A very rare *Aepyornis* egg is evidence of a 9-foot flightless bird that became extinct in the 1500s and inspired tales of an enormous bird of prey.

Colorado’s own legendary creatures

are also on display, including the jackalope and the fur-bearing trout. “The jackalope, a jack rabbit with antelope horns, was made by a taxidermist in the 1930s,” said Richards. “The idea may have started with sightings of rabbits with a papilloma virus that causes horn-like warts on the head. The fur-bearing trout was a hoax that promoted the existence of furry trout in the Arkansas River. It’s all good fun.”

Children will love the activity area, where they can make their own mythical creatures using overlapping stencils of real creatures.

“Over the centuries, mythical creatures

helped explain things in the natural world that we couldn’t explain,” said Richards. “They are in the stories about good and evil; it’s a way to explore the dualities. They fight to keep the world in balance.”



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