

# Front Porch

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

DENVER, COLORADO

STAPLETON

SEPTEMBER 2015



## What's New at Stanley?

Stanley marketplace will have a community area in the center for people to hang out and use free Wi-Fi. Upstairs, the "Mad Men Suites" will offer short- or long-term rentable office space for individuals and businesses.

By Madeline Schroeder

Construction workers, event planners, police officers, a nearby resident, and a person in media. Within a single hour, all of these people individually visited the massive project at 2501 Dallas in Aurora for various reasons. The site has a constant chirp of activity as anticipation grows for Stanley Marketplace.

The 140,000-square foot building that was used to manufacture aviation ejector seats will be a food and entertainment hub, Stanley Marketplace, and open in spring 2016. Demolition was completed at the end of August, launching full-on construction in early September. The building received landmark status in August for three elements: maintaining the hangar doors, restoring the

original Stanley sign, and keeping the color scheme.

The marketplace will be organized by "neighborhoods," or areas of similar businesses, like a health and beauty neighborhood or a breakfast and coffee neighborhood. The owners of Stanley have selected their favorite Denver businesses to join their vision. The new businesses already meet for happy hours and discuss how they can collaborate on events

and deals for customers. "We'd like for people regionally to come here to spend their hard-earned bucks on people who are really good at what they do, but also share the same values of a collaborative culture," owner Mark Shaker says.

For an element of suspense, he is revealing the businesses gradually. Read about the latest eight businesses to be announced. (continued on page 3)

## Affordable Housing: A Hot Topic in Stapleton, in Denver and in the Nation

By Carol Roberts

Over 20 years ago, as forward-looking Denver residents helped plan the new neighborhood to be built on Stapleton airport land, having a diverse range of housing was high on their list. That decision was made at a time when affordable housing in most of the country was being provided in large public housing projects that were separated from more prosperous parts of the community.

Today the national housing policy is mirroring the diverse housing policy in the Stapleton Development Plan. The model of the future, says Rick Garcia, Denver's regional administrator for Housing and Urban

is proposing that the city should have an ongoing sustainable source of funding for affordable housing. (continued on page 14)



Signs on empty lots in Stapleton designate future development plans. The ones that say "Starting in the mid \$100s" refer to homes in Denver's for-sale Affordable Housing Program.

Development (HUD), is "housing units [that] are dispersed within the broader community and a mix of incomes ... throughout the entire community."

### Affordable Housing in the News

Recently, a Supreme Court decision, a highly acclaimed new HBO series, and a Harvard research project that looked at the outcomes for children who grew up in poor neighborhoods but moved to a more affluent one, have all contributed to a national conversation on affordable housing.

In Denver, the mayor is proposing that the city should have an ongoing sustainable source of funding for affordable housing. (continued on page 14)

## Internationally Known Distillery a NE Denver Neighbor

Story on page 38.



A nearby distillery offers cocktail classes and tours of their small, busy operation.

Micha Hanson gets off the boat to swim a leg of the channel relay.



## Local Men Break Record Swimming English Channel

Story on page 24.

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





One of this summer's many impressive sunsets viewed from Greenway Park.



Most of the events listed below are FREE or support nonprofits. (Pools require a pass or entry fee.) All are open to the public. Additional events are listed on pages 31-33.)

## SEPTEMBER

### Every Sunday

Farmers Market, 8:30am-12:30pm. Founders Green\*

### Every Tuesday

Lowry Farmers Market. 4pm-dusk. Hangar 2, 7581 E Academy Blvd.

### Thursday, September 10

Active Minds Seminar. 6:45-7:45pm Sam Gary Library\* [www.activeminds.com](http://www.activeminds.com)

### Saturday, September 12

5280 Wine Festival. 11am-5pm. Featuring wineries, demonstrations, vendors, free entertainment. Northfield Main Street. [www.ticketwest.com/events/5280-wine-festival/58552/](http://www.ticketwest.com/events/5280-wine-festival/58552/)

### Fri., Sept. 18 & Sat., Sept. 19

StapleOM Yoga Festival at Founders Green\* Free admission includes live music and yoga performance. [www.StapleOM.com](http://www.StapleOM.com)

### Wednesday, September 23

5th Annual Cherry Pie Festival at Anchor Center for Blind Children, 2550 Roslyn. Benefits go to the school. <http://anchorcenter.org/> or 303.377.9732

### Friday, September 25

Blues and Brews on the Bluff. 6-9pm. Music, food and craft beer. Bluff Lake Nature Center, 3400 Havana Way. [www.blufflakenaturecenter.org](http://www.blufflakenaturecenter.org)

### Saturday, September 26

Northeast Denver Walk Fest. 12-4pm at Holly Square, 33rd and Holly. Join 10 walking routes, free hot dogs and hamburgers, music, shoe giveaway. [netransportation.org/newwalkfest/](http://netransportation.org/newwalkfest/)

### Saturday, September 26

Last Sweet William Market. Founders Green\* 9am-2pm. Call Master Community Association at 303.388.0724

### Saturday, September 26

RTD East Rail Line Public Open House at Central Park Station Park-n-Ride, Smith Road and Uinta Street. 11am-1pm. View designs, learn about train cars, enjoy food and prizes. [www.rtd-denver.com](http://www.rtd-denver.com) or call Joshua Solis at 303.297.5284

### Sat., Sept. 26 & Sun., Sept 27

Stapleton Open Studios Tour. 11am-5pm. Visit Stapleton artists' home studios. [www.stapletonarts.com](http://www.stapletonarts.com). See page 4.

## SEPTEMBER

### Sunday, September 27

37th Annual Park Hill Home Tour & Street Fair. Tour homes 11am-5pm. Visit site for locations. Street fair on Forest Parkway between Montview and 17th. wine/beer garden, music. [www.parkhillhometour.org](http://www.parkhillhometour.org). See page 8.

### Sunday, September 27

Farmers Market. 8:30am-12:30pm. Founders Green\* Local vendors. Call Master Community Association at 303.388.0724

## OCTOBER

### Thursday, October 1

RTD public meeting about service adjustments with opening of the East Line and I-225 line. At The Hub, 8230 Northfield Blvd, suite 1350 across from Toby Keith's.

### Saturday, October 3

6th Annual FarmFest at The Urban Farm, 10200 Smith Rd. 10am-6pm. Pony rides, face painting, carnival games, live music, and more. [www.theurbanfarm.org](http://www.theurbanfarm.org)

### Sunday, October 18

Farmers Market and pumpkin patch. 8:30am-12:30pm. Founders Green\* Local vendors. Call Master Community Association at 303.388.0724

### Thursday, October 22

Active Minds Seminar. 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library\* [www.activeminds.com](http://www.activeminds.com)

### Fri., Oct. 23- Sun., Oct. 25

CherryArts Festival at Stanley Marketplace, 2501 Dallas. Art, food, design, live entertainment. See schedule at [CherryCreekArtsFestival.org/cherry-arts-festival](http://CherryCreekArtsFestival.org/cherry-arts-festival)

\* More information at [Events@stapletoncommunity.com](mailto:Events@stapletoncommunity.com)  
Founders Green: E. 29th Ave. and Roslyn St.  
Conservatory Green: Valentinia & E. 49th Place  
Sam Gary Library: 2961 Roslyn St.  
Central Park Rec Center: 9651 E. MLK Blvd.  
Bluff Lake Nature Center: 4755 Paris  
Aviator pool: 8054 E. 28th Ave.  
Puddle Jumper pool: 2401 Xenia St.  
F15 pool: 2831 Hanover St.  
Jet Stream pool: 3574 Alton St.  
Runway 35 pool: 8863 E. 47th Ave.  
Maverick pool: 8822 Beekman Pl.

## Events & Announcements at Stapleton



### The Exchange

The MCA is pleased to partner with Mo' Betta Greens for an evening market on Thursday, Sept. 3rd & Sept. 10th from 5-8pm. Bring your extra produce to swap or just come and shop at the vendors featuring a variety of local produce and goods. It's a perfect place to put down your blanket and have dinner. There will be food demonstrations, music, activities and food trucks. We look forward to seeing you on Conservatory Green.

### Stapleton Rocks ... a Concert for a Cause

Our annual Stapleton Rocks Concert will be held on Friday, Sept. 11 from 6-10pm and Saturday, Sept. 12 from 4-10pm on The Green at 29th Ave. Get ready for two days of great music, games and other activities! This year all proceeds from activities and concessions will benefit Work Options for Women. The schedule for the bands is available at [www.stapletoncommunity.com](http://www.stapletoncommunity.com).

### Saturday Night Live...For Kids Only!

Stapleton MCA and Central Park Recreation Center are partnering to host a night of fun for children ages 7-12 from 6-9pm. The first SNL will be on Saturday, Sept. 12 at the Central Park Rec Center. Join us for a night of fun with games, dinner, snacks and more! Pre-registration is \$15 and available at [www.stapletoncommunity.com](http://www.stapletoncommunity.com).

### Dog Daze

On Sunday, Sept. 13 before winterizing the pool for the season, F-15 will open its gates once again to offer an afternoon of fun for our furry friends. All dogs will have plenty of room to run, swim, fetch and socialize throughout the afternoon. A DJ will be poolside pumping out fun-themed tunes and taking special requests from the crowd. The following schedule is based on the size of your pet:  
Small Dogs (Less than 40lbs) 1-1:45pm  
Pool Cleared 1:45-2pm  
Large Dogs (Over 40lbs) 2-3pm  
Cost is \$5 Early Event Fee; \$10 at door (with space available)  
All proceeds will benefit Planned Pethood Plus, Inc.

### StapleOM Yoga Festival

This yoga festival will feature classes, vendors, food trucks, local beer and wine and live music. The event will take place on The Green at 29th Ave. on Friday, Sept. 18 and Saturday, Sept. 19. For tickets and information, visit [www.stapleOM.com](http://www.stapleOM.com).

### Active Minds Seminar

This is a free, no-reservation-needed public program brought to you by the Stapleton MCA. Location: Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

Thursday, Sept. 10, 6:45-7:45pm

### Napoleon

This June marks 200 years since Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo. Join Active Minds as we

review this important leader's life and legacy. We will seek to understand the man and his impact in his time, as well as how his leadership changed the world in ways still having an impact today.

Thursday, Sept. 24, 6:45-7:45pm

### Cuba: Past, Present, Future

With President Obama's recent announcement signaling a historic shift in U.S. policy toward Cuba, join Active Minds for a past, present and future look at our communist southern neighbor. We will cover Castro's revolution, the Bay of Pigs, Cuban Missile Crisis, Guantánamo Bay and current implications of the U.S. policy change.

### Final Friday Night Flights-Wine Tastings

The final event of the season is Friday, Sept. 25 from 7-9pm at the West Crescent. We will take a flight to various countries to sample varying wines and offer a food pairing. The Grape Leaf will host the evening and provide fun-filled education about wines and cheeses provided. Tickets are \$25 per person and you will be treated to the backdrop of the black-and-white film, *The Artist*, and fire pits to warm you during the cooler autumn night.

Participants must be 21 and need tickets for this event. To register, visit [www.stapletoncommunity.com](http://www.stapletoncommunity.com) or call 303.388.0724. You may pick up your tickets at the MCA office Mon.-Fri., 9am-5pm each week. Space is limited.

### Stapleton Open Studios

Stapleton Open Studios is a free, self-guided studio tour of Stapleton artists. This year's tour will take place Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 26 and 27 from 11am-5pm and is intended for local artists to demonstrate their creative processes, show off works in progress and finished pieces, and educate the public about what they do. In addition, an opening reception will be held on Friday, Sept. 25, from 6-8 pm. The tour is a great opportunity to experience the vibrant art community in the Stapleton area. For more information, visit [www.stapletonarts.com](http://www.stapletonarts.com).

### Sweet William Market

The final Sweet William Market will be held on Saturday, Sept. 26 from 9am-2pm on The Green at 29th Ave.

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

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Get the latest on

Master Community Association



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# Front Porch

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# What's new at Stanley?

(continued from page 1)

## RESTAURANTS

### Denver Biscuit Company

For the first time, Denver Biscuit Company is going out on its own when it opens at Stanley. In its three current locations, the biscuit-centric business shares space and a partnership with the Atomic Cowboy bar and Fat Sully's Pizza, serving people morning to night. At Stanley, Denver Biscuit Company will continue serving items based on giant buttermilk biscuits including sandwiches, biscuits and gravy, and shrimp and grits over biscuits.

The restaurant will be full service with their own bar and open for breakfast, lunch and brunch. Owner Drew Shader says the atmosphere will be comfortable, encouraging people to linger but describes the offshoot as being "less Atomic Cowboy-ee and more brunchy."

After several years having the company's Biscuit Bus food truck at the Stapleton Farmers Market, Shader is looking forward to



Owners Mark Shaker (left) and Lorin Ting (right) show the site plan for the Stanley building. They stand on the stairs leading up from the main floor to the future cocktail lounge. The marketplace will be organized by "neighborhoods" or groups of similar businesses, like breakfast and coffee or hair and beauty.



The building has a constant flow of visitors, like this group from the Cherry Creek Arts Festival checking out the community space for the first-ever CherryArts Festival at Stanley October 23-25.

having a more permanent presence in the area. "We know Stapleton pretty well and that's why we're excited about the Stanley. It's a once-in-a-lifetime project for me," says Shader. "I think it's so unique and so cool and it's an amazing mix of people and businesses. And it's a good way to get in between Aurora and Stapleton and be part of something that's much bigger than us."

### Comida

It's not an official Pantone® color, but what owner Rayme Rossello coins "Comida Pink" will show up at her newest Comida location in the Stanley Marketplace. It's the familiar and bright color of her Comida Food Truck and appears in touches at her other locations in Longmont and at The Source in Denver. Rossello will continue to serve Mexican street food with a southern twist including sweet potatoes, grits and slow-cooked meats, reflecting

Rossello's southern roots. As with each of her locations, Rossello will leave some creative license to the chef to come up with their own creations.

The Stanley location will have a spacious feeling with an open kitchen, bar, patio, community seating and smaller tables. "We hope our guests will feel like we're a fun, lively, approachable and affordable cantina," she says.

"There's going to be a good synergy," says Rossello of the tenant mix. And she likes the vision of the project: "The story of the City of Aurora getting behind the project from the start and being very proactive and wanting something that was going to enhance and elevate the dining options for the community... It brings so much community to that area in one building without it being a mall."

(continued on page 20)

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# Artists Open Their Doors Sept. 26-27

Rebecca Tomlin creates whimsical clay sculptures out of her Conservatory Green home studio.

in many different mediums. A tour map and booklet are available at the Stapleton MCA, Abode & Company and Staybridge Suites in Northfield, and from participating artists, as well as on-line at [stapletonarts.com](http://stapletonarts.com). The opening reception, which is free and open to the public, will be 6 to 8pm on Sept. 25 at Staybridge Suites, 8101 Northfield Blvd.

The artists work in various mediums including oil and acrylics, pastels, mosaics, jewelry, mixed-media, sculpture, photographic art, glass, textiles and clay.

Randy Curry and Rebecca Tomlin moved to Conservatory Green last year to create art in their home. This is their first year participating in the Stapleton Open Studios Tour. Curry is a sculptor who builds large public art pieces, as well as smaller pieces for yards and homes. Tomlin creates whimsical sculptures from clay.

Curry, a retired architect, has completed public art sculptures for the cities of Lakewood and Monument. "They are 12- to 16-feet tall so I build them in pieces in the garage and put them together on the site," said Curry. "Certain

forms, colors and textures I use come from my architectural design work. I work in steel, aluminum and stainless steel and I like forms that make sense to people. My abstract designs might incorporate squares, balls, rings or tubing."

Tomlin, a retired art teacher, makes clay and mixed-media sculptures including whimsical, "tongue-in-cheek" characters and a line of ceramic jewelry holders that are for sale on Etsy.

By Laurie Dunklee

Have you ever wondered how etched glass is made? Or how large public art pieces are conceived? The third annual Stapleton Open Studios Tour is an opportunity to meet artists and see how they create art in their home studios.

"We find a lot of people don't understand what an artist

goes through from vision to finished product," said Kathy Skarvan, a photographic/multimedia artist and the coordinator of the tour. "We want to invite them into our home studios for demonstrations, a chance to visit one-on-one, and educate them about our process."

The free, self-guided tour on Sept. 26 and 27 from 11am to 5pm, features 12 Stapleton studios and 21 artists who work

## THE PAPER THAT'S ON THE COFFEE TABLE... ...NOT IN THE RECYCLING BIN



36,500 papers distributed

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A directory with links to these businesses can be found at [www.FrontPorchStapleton.com](http://www.FrontPorchStapleton.com) > Business Directory



com. Her work is also sold in a gallery in Taos and the Willow Artisan Center in Littleton. "I build and fire my pieces in parts, in a small kiln in our garage," Tomlin said. "Randy and I often collaborate on pieces, like he'll build a little car for one of my characters. Sometimes I provide a finial on top of one of his outdoor sculptures. It's a challenge to combine media; it's a journey and a learning process."

Linda Wingate, a three-dimensional, multimedia glass artist and Stapleton resident for 9 years, has participated in the Stapleton Open Studios Tour since its first year in 2013. Her work is sold in galleries in Florida and Steamboat Springs.

Wingate's art requires many steps and says people are amazed and enlightened to watch her work. "They say 'I never knew that's how it's done, that's how you get that effect,'" she said. "People need to see it for themselves to really understand the process. I love explaining what I do, but it's hard to understand until you see it."

Wingate's pieces incorporate forms from nature with symmetrical and geometric designs. "I've always been attracted to colored



Above: Linda Wingate shows some of the most colorful pieces of glass art she makes in her garage studio.



Left: Randy Curry, a retired architect who lives in Conservatory Green, builds sculptures for yards and homes.

glass," she said. "My primary focus as an artist addresses the inherent qualities of glass. Its optical and tactile properties are the perfect medium for channeling my creative energy and expressing my artistic vision."

Kathy Skarvan, tour coordinator and Stapleton resident, calls her work contemporary fusion art. "What is fusion art?" asks Skarvan. "It's when art mediums converge to make a composite. For me it is where products from the camera meet technology and other modes of creative expression. I start with a photograph and I experiment with mixing images, colors, shapes and textures to create unusual composites. I particularly like big pieces—my biggest is 53 by 53 inches."

"I hope people get inspired by watching the processes of creating art," said Wingate. "If you have curiosity, anything's possible. I say just try it."

For more information, see [stapletonarts.com](http://stapletonarts.com), Stapleton Open Studios on Facebook, [lindawingateglass.com](http://lindawingateglass.com), [kathyskarvan.com](http://kathyskarvan.com) and [etsy.com/shop/bokchitoartworks](http://etsy.com/shop/bokchitoartworks) (Rebecca Tomlin).



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## September Events

**Audition for The Holliest Jolliest Holiday Musical Ever**  
September 12, 3-5:30 PM

**Intro to Folk Guitar - Adult Workshop**  
September 13, 3-4:30 PM

**Viva L'Italia Vocal & Orchestra**  
Program in Rome, Italy July 2016  
Information meeting September 18, 6-8 PM

**Auditions 101**  
How to Conquer the World of Auditions  
September 10 - December 17  
Thursdays 4:30-6 PM





# Black Lives Matter Calls for Stapleton Name Change

By Carol Roberts

Black Lives Matter 5280 distributed 2,500 flyers in Stapleton the night of Aug. 8, 2015. The flyer informed residents that the community's name-sake, Mayor Benjamin Stapleton, had been a member of the Ku Klux Klan and the name "Stapleton" should be changed.

Bianca Pullen, representing the group, says about 25 volunteers participated in this action, and they want to use their influence "to diversify the neighborhood. We will be...calling on others in the community to join with us to engage in conversations with the developers, with the master association...

And so, we believe that changing the name and the things that will come from this, will be a part of creating something that's more welcoming for people of color."

Stapleton resident Genevieve Swift supports the Black Lives Matter movement and she supports changing Stapleton's name. Swift joined the Stapleton Community Advisory

Board's Affordable Housing and Diversity Committee a year ago because, she says, "I would like my community to be more diverse.

"We need a name that represents the ideals of the Green Book (the Stapleton Development Plan). There was supposed to be a seamless transition between Stapleton and the rest of northeast Denver. I can tell you, I have a lot of friends who don't feel comfortable walking the streets of Stapleton. It feels like a gated community and they don't feel welcome."



Black Lives Matter 5280 hung a "Change the Name" banner over the Stapleton Town Center sign.

## Same issue—14 years earlier

The issue being raised by Black Lives Matter 5280 was brought to the attention of the Stapleton Development Corporation (SDC) by another activist group in 2000. (SDC is an 11-member board of city-appointed volunteers that is charged with preserving the principles of The

Stapleton Development Plan. Stapleton land is conveyed by DIA to SDC, whose legal staff places covenants on it requiring that it be developed according to the plan.)

The SDC took that group's concerns seriously, say Dick Anderson, president, and Terry Whitney, board member (who together have served 25 years on SDC or the Citizens Advisory Board).



Dick Anderson

## Mayor Stapleton and the Klan in Denver

SDC reviewed research on Benjamin Stapleton and the history of the Klan in Denver. SDC records in this time period include a report<sup>1</sup> that states Klan membership nationwide in 1920 was 4,000–5,000 "knights," but due to their vigorous recruitment efforts, membership grew to 3 to 6 million by 1924.

"During this period, Colorado was virtually taken over by the Klan. Although Klan domination meant all minorities were threatened, the

Klan in Colorado placed Catholics and Jews high on their list of targets, perhaps because the numbers of minorities of color were relatively small.

"Existing social conditions also helped the Klan. In the 1920s, Denver suffered a sharp increase in prostitution, bootlegging, and prohibition violations; police were inefficient and corrupt. The Klan capitalized on these problems, promising to clean up Denver."

Most SDC board members were longtime Denver residents who had already spent years advocating for the creation of a diverse inclusive community. They understood the historical context of the city and northeast Denver and took into consideration a number of factors relating to "Stapleton" including:

Most people knowledgeable about Denver history understood that politicians in the early '20s had to be members of the Klan to get elected.

Mayor Stapleton served five terms and his accomplishments, according to his file on the Denver Library website, include Denver's water system, the Valley Highway project, a new airport and the Red Rocks Theatre.

His daughter-in-law, personally known to board members, was living in Park Hill at that time.

## The naming resolution

Whitney says Forest City stated very clearly that they needed to use Stapleton as a locator in the marketing of the new development. "There was a certain amount of pressure on the city, and in turn, us, as

appointed representatives of different neighborhoods to make sure that this huge infill project was not going to be a bust."

At the Feb. 2001 SDC meeting, according to the minutes, "Terry Whitney spoke on the Naming Process...After considerable discussion, the Board, by majority decision, adopted a resolution that said '...Developing new names (for the individual neighborhoods) should be done in the



Mayor Ben Stapleton

Photo courtesy of Denver Public Library Western History Collection

most inclusive and sensitive manner recognizing the diversity of communities that will live and work in this evolving Denver neighborhood. This policy is expressly not intended to prohibit references to Stapleton as a location for marketing purposes."

Whitney now says, "...it took a very long time to come up with that very short resolution because of the diversity of viewpoints and having the master developer at the table and

them feeling that a change in the name would significantly hamstringing their efforts." Dick Anderson recalls that there was agreement in the SDC board discussions that the word Stapleton would be used in a small font as a "locator" but not as a primary name and it was expected that the smaller neighborhood names (Eastbridge, Conservatory Green) would gradually be used more, and the use of Stapleton would diminish.

## Responses from the newspapers and the Citizens Advisory Board

Multiple articles about the board's efforts to minimize the use of Stapleton appeared in *The Denver Post* and *Rocky Mountain News* in November 2002 (posted at FrontPorchStapleton.com). The content ranged from, "You can't erase history" to "The name will fade over time."








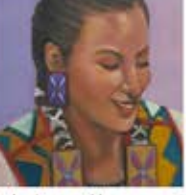




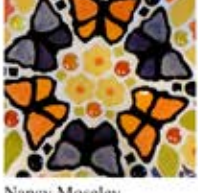



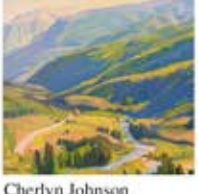
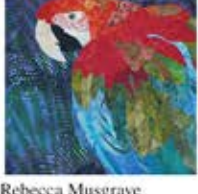


In December, 2002, Terry Whitney and Nadine Caldwell, co-chairs of the Stapleton Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) wrote a strongly worded letter to Greg Vilkin at Forest City about their use of "Stapleton" on a holiday card.

"Four of the six panels (on the card) were devoted exclusively to... 'Stapleton.' We believe the card was inappropriate and insensitive...Stapleton's association with the Klan remains deep in the collective memory of Denver's African-American community.

"...Stapleton is viewed in many communities as having been a great mayor... However, Ben Stapleton's connection with the building of a new community of homes, schools, parks and businesses, where people of all



Terry Whitney

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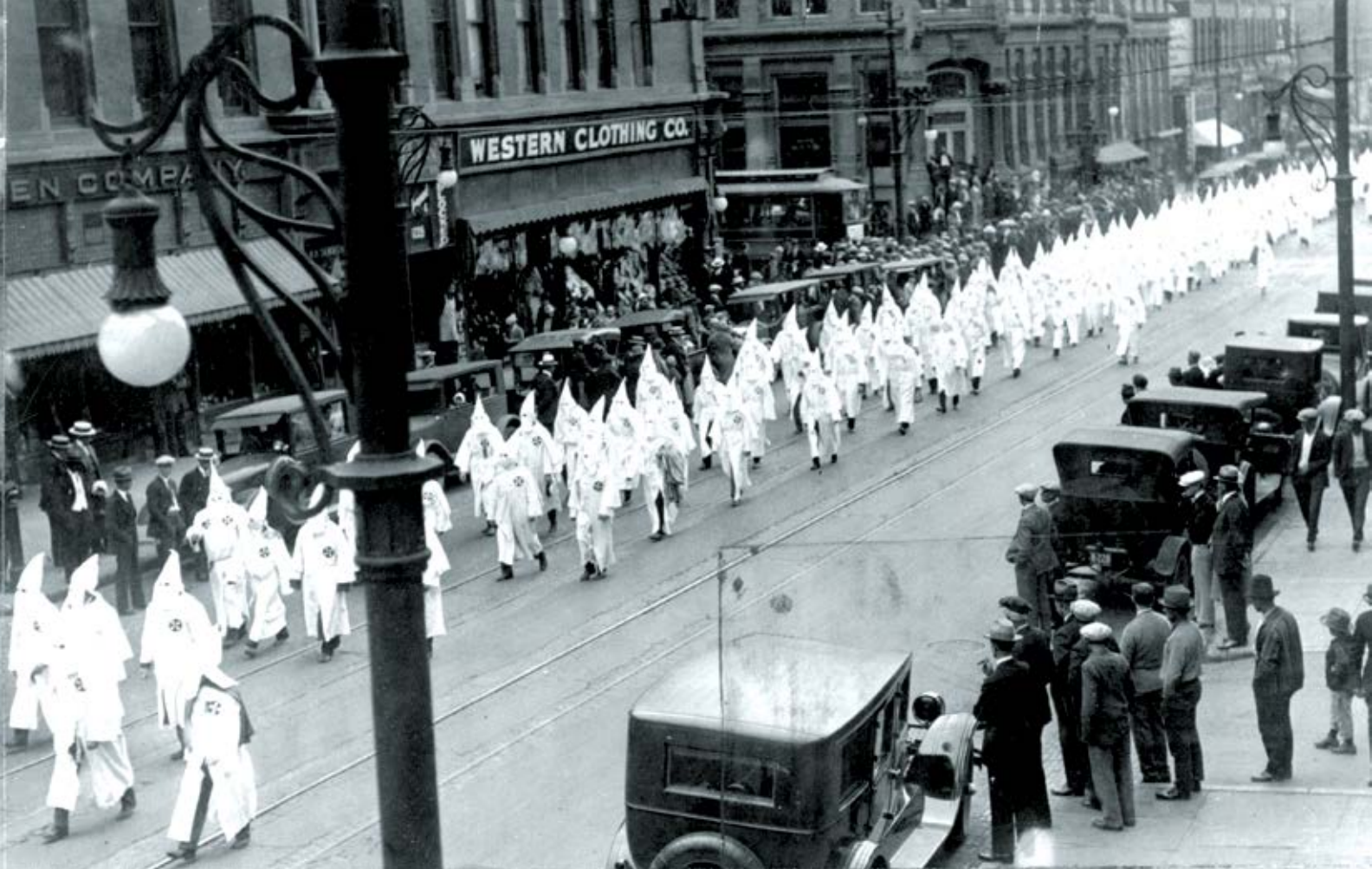
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On May 31, 1926, members of the Ku Klux Klan marched in a parade on Larimer Street in Denver wearing hoods and robes as spectators looked on. Photo from the Denver Public Library, Western History Collection, taken by Harry Rhoads.

racism, religions and ethnic backgrounds are needed and honored, is something different.

The mass distribution of your holiday card went far beyond [locator] use. It sends a message of disinterest of history of the land that you are developing, its residents and the surrounding neighbors. We are disappointed in Forest City.”



Councilman Chris Herndon

**Unresolved issues**

After all the discussions between 2000 and 2002, SDC was still left with two basic issues they couldn't solve. The first was that Stapleton wasn't then (and isn't now) a name that is officially recorded anywhere. There was nowhere to go to officially “erase” the name and change it to another one. It's simply a commonly used reference to a location in Denver.

The second issue is that no one came up with a viable alternative.

**Perspectives on the “Stapleton” name today**

Those two issues still exist. Stapleton's Council-

man Chris Herndon says he talked to the city attorney who told him, “There's no legislative action for City Council to undertake. There actually isn't even a process for naming a neighborhood per se, legislatively. In this instance, the branding, with Forest City being master developer, was their responsibility... how they were going to brand and market and come up with the name for Stapleton.”

“As a Stapleton resident...I think when people think of the Stapleton community, they think the name is based off the former airport...But for me, particularly as an African-American living in this community, I don't think hate or negativity when I think of the name Stapleton.” And he raises the further question of how a name change might impact the many businesses that have Stapleton in their names.

Terry Whitney, says of the flyers, “It troubles me that some folks raising concerns about this community's name seem to be more concerned about a dead racist than

ongoing gang violence in northeast Denver. The fact that two-thirds of black men nationally are either incarcerated or under the supervision of the criminal justice system or that even here in Denver last year, in 2014, almost 50 percent of Hispanic and Black males didn't graduate. I just look at the whole thing as misplaced priorities.”

Keven Burnett, executive director of the Master Community Association, Inc. (MCA), points out that the legal names of several of the organizations that make Stapleton work do not contain the word Stapleton. It is not in the legal name of the MCA, though it was added as a DBA (doing business as) to identify where the MCA operates. Stapleton is also not in the name of either Westerly Creek Metro District (the special district that collects tax from Stapleton residents to build Stapleton's local infrastructure) or Park Creek Metro District (whose main role is to build all Stapleton infrastructure, both regional and local).

Burnett thinks Stapleton is known as a place, not a person. He says the community



Keven Burnett



Tom Gleason

agreed over the years that the Stapleton name would be used in a limited role as a ‘locator’ (given that it was nationally and internationally known as Denver's airport for many decades) while we built the inclusive and diverse community envisioned by the citizens of Denver, Aurora and Commerce City who created The Green Book. Over that period of time, we have built eight new neighborhoods on the former airport along with new schools, parks and retail centers—all with new names and without the name of the former airport.”

[1] “Home-Grown Racism: Colorado's Historic Embrace—and Denial—of Equal Opportunity in Higher Education” by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. 70 U. Colo. L. Rev. 703. Copyright 1999, page 9.



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## Park Hill Home Tour September 27

*By Madeline Schroeder*

The annual Park Hill Home Tour celebrates the very best architecture in the neighborhood. This year from 11am to 5pm on Sunday, Sept. 27, visitors will be able to view a diverse mix of 10 homes. Along with the tour, the day will include a street fair on Forest Parkway from Montview to 17th Ave., featuring 100 vendors, 14 food trucks, kids' entertainment, bands, a wine and beer garden, and a classic car show. Advance tickets for adults are \$20, seniors \$15, children \$15 and younger than 6 are free. For more information or tickets, visit [www.parkhillhometour.org](http://www.parkhillhometour.org) or call Home Tour Chair Nina Kuhl at 303.913.5858.



### Converted Church

Many who visit this home may first wonder if they're at the wrong place. The exterior looks reminiscent of a church and two signs designate parking for "Pastor" and "Pastor's Wife." Enter and find a gorgeous modern with towering wood ceilings, lots of sunlight, and modern art.

The home, built in the 70s, spent its prior life as a church in Littleton until the congregation no longer needed

it and put an ad in the paper, "Free Church, if you can transport it." Another congregation moved it to north Park Hill, where it was only used for a couple of years. Valissa Tsoucaris and Mike Meyer purchased the church in 2012 to convert into a home for their family of four. "The goal was to buy an empty box or blank canvas that we could turn into our own," Tsoucaris says.

The home is the brainchild of Bill McDonald, a contractor and artist who's



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**Above:** Meyer, a cycling fanatic, wanted hooks installed to hang his bikes over his office, which is tucked around the corner on the first floor.

**Below:** The no-walls concept creates an open living room with views of the rest of the first floor.

**Left:** This home has the most unusual history of the Park Home Tour. It was originally built as a church in the 70s in Littleton and was transported to North Park Hill by a congregation before it was put on the market a few years later.

**Above:** Mike Meyer and Valissa Tsoucaris stand in the kitchen, which has concrete slabs for countertops and a refrigerator disguised as a cabinet to seamlessly blend in—much like the rest of the home that flows from one space to another.

particularly drawn to mid-century architecture. He lives around the corner from the church and has renovated several homes in the North Park Hill area.

With McDonald's help, the couple's vision for the home evolved massively. "The biggest challenges were not overdoing anything," Tsoucaris says, recalling one of her initial dreams for a grand staircase.

The home is a beacon of hope for giving dismal spaces new life. The two-

year renovation is stunningly simple and celebrates its history with items kept from the original church, like a pew in the entrance and long, narrow windows upstairs. It has quirky features like a ladder up to a hangout spot that used to be choir loft, and a hinged-glass back door.

The family has lived in the home for a little more than a year and expects it to be their forever home.

(continued on page 10)



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## Mid-century Modern



### Park Hill Home Tour

(continued from page 9)

Artists Kelly and Bill McDonald moved to North Park Hill 10 years ago because of the affordability and grittiness of the neighborhood—they’ve always proudly lived in areas with an integrated mix of housing and people. Prior to this home, they lived in Curtis Park downtown. “I’ve been drawn to neighborhoods on the edge,” says Bill McDonald, who renovated their home and several others in north Park Hill, including a converted church around the corner. “Plus, we are artists so we need somewhere cheap to live,” Kelly says and laughs.

They were drawn to the simple and thoughtful architecture of 1940s homes along 30th Avenue. This, along with a scattering of homes on Race, Albion, Ash, Forest and Glencoe, is the first neighborhood that Edward B. Hawkins chose to debut his architecture.

Hawkins, a developer, builder and designer, was born in 1902 in Park Hill. He worked in Chicago, where he became inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright’s Usonian simple and solid architecture. He returned to Denver in 1942 and continued those concepts. “The whole idea is to create affordable, solid, well-constructed, well-designed homes,” Bill says.

The home, built in 1947, is quaint but uses



**Clockwise starting left:** Edward B. Hawkins’ architecture, like this home in North Park Hill, uses Usonian concepts for well-designed, long-lasting homes for middle class families. **Top:** Bill and Kelly McDonald enjoy the afternoon in their living room, where most of the furniture was refurbished by Kelly. **Above:** Bill converted the old garage into their studio and added a separate carport.

space playfully. During the renovation, Bill purposefully kept the integrity of the original design, including a circular first-floor layout. He added a second story for their bedroom. He converted the garage into a studio and added a new carport.

Kelly was previously a guild, so she restored

much of the furniture in the house, including a massive cabinet from Pakistan and a dining-room table from the Philippines. The house looks like images in an *Anthropologie* catalogue: cozy, inviting and artistic. They live in the home with their 10- and 13-year-old sons and dog, Maizy.

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This home, built in 1927, has five bedrooms that fit lots of grandchildren.



The house celebrates its family history with photos and mementos from family members passed.



**Left:** The living room has a grand piano and intricate fireplace designed by Ernest Batchelder, who also did tilework for Grand Central Station. **Above:** Wood-lined walls make the office feel similar to Hogwarts.

# Arts & Crafts Bungalow

Few homes have as much family history as this Arts & Crafts bungalow, which was built in 1927 and has been occupied by the same family since 1961. Cheri and Joe Huff met in high school. He grew up in the home, and Cheri spent a lot of time visiting. After 50 years in the house, Joe's parents passed away and he wanted to move into the home to continue the family history, but Cheri wasn't so sure. "It was very much a

grandma house. There was carpet in every room and big floral wallpaper. The drapes were never opened." After an ambitious three-year renovation, the home is far from a stuffy old grandmother's house. Lots of chocolate-brown wood and an immaculate office with bookcases lining every wall make it feel a bit like Hogwarts. The fireplace has an elaborate tile design by Ernest Batchelder,

who worked on big projects like Grand Central Station. In the basement there is a movie theater, and around the corner a wall with family photos and mementos, including the C and C-sharp keys from a piano that Hitler reportedly played at a concentration camp. Cheri's grandfather was part of the U.S. Seventh Army that liberated the concentration camp at Dachau on April 29, 1945, and picked up two remaining keys after the piano had been destroyed by bombs.

While feeling grand and historic, the home is also inviting with lots of sunlight and children's fingerprints on furniture—there are always grandchildren running around. Much like Cheri and Joe's kids growing up, their grandkids now come over to the house to spend time with their grandparents. She hopes one of their grown children will move into the home after they pass away.

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# Music lessons are great for kids...

By Laurie Dunklee

Those in the business of teaching music say it provides practical benefits for learners. But what if parents invest in music lessons and their children simply don't want to stick with it? "Even if they stick with it for only six months, it's still a benefit because they learned to open up their creative brain," says Josie Quick, a violin teacher and Park Hill resident.

She has had a Park Hill business teaching violin for 25 years and says exposure to music and arts connects the creative brain to the logical brain. "The creative side helps us solve problems. If the creative brain isn't working, we're stuck doing things the same old way."

Skye Barker Maa, executive director of Neighborhood Music Stapleton, says it's easy to find studies linking musical training with success in life. "There are books about world leaders who studied music when they were young. Others say it's not the music but the parental engagement. Does music make kids smarter? I think music is a tool that teaches kids how to think because it uses so much of the brain."

Quick and Barker Maa both think parents can do a lot to help their kids hang in there for at least six months. "Parents should know that most kids start with a lot of motivation, but the bloom falls off the rose at about three months, when they realize how much work is required," said Quick. "I tell parents to make a commitment to one year, or six months at least, to get past the three-month slump. When a school year has passed, they can play songs and they have the self-esteem that comes from accomplishing that."

## Tips to help kids stay interested

1. Parent's commitment: "Parents need to be fully at the table to push through the hurdles," said Barker Maa. "Kids' days are busy and demanding with school, sports and other activities. It's important to make music part of the routine, consistent every day."



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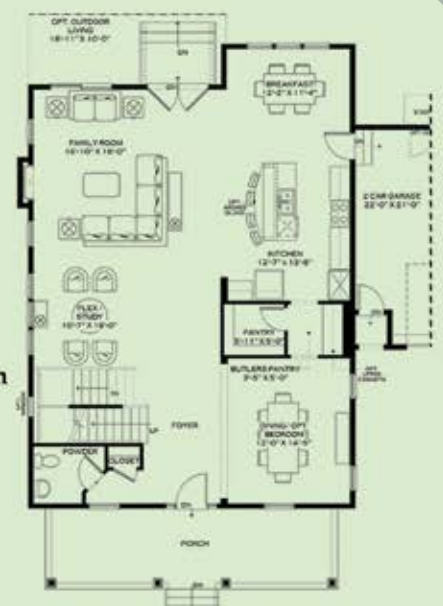
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...but what if they hate to practice?



Zohar Heiman theatrically portrays a child who won't practice. Josie Quick, violin teacher (left) and Skye Barker Maa, executive director of Neighborhood Music Stapleton (right), suggest techniques to keep kids interested.

- 2. Encouragement: "Kids need acknowledgment," said Quick. "It irks me when a parent sits in on a lesson with her face in her phone, and doesn't even look up when the child plays well. Kids look to their parents for encouragement and approval, a 'Did you see that?' moment. Tell them when they sound good."
- 3. Practice: How much practice is required? "I don't set a specific amount of time to practice," Quick said. "The old 30-minutes-a-day thing doesn't work if you're playing *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* 1,500 times. No wonder kids (and parents) get sick of it. The important thing is to pick up the instrument every day. I tell kids to play their lesson five times *well*, which teaches them to be self-motivated and self-critical."
- 4. Setting goals: Barker Maa said constant goals keep kids motivated. "This fall we'll do a haunted house with music and we'll have four of our rock bands in the Stapleton Rocks event on September 11. We're doing a winter musical and a recital at Denver School of the Arts. Having these opportunities to work toward keeps it interesting and keeps students moving forward."
- 5. Motivation: Neighborhood Music, which expects to have 350 students this fall, aims to feed music to kids in different ways, including ensembles and technology. "Our seven bands are like teams: your peers motivate you to practice. Technology also helps expand students' experiences, like our composition for video games class. They are learning music theory and paying attention because it's something they enjoy."
- 6. Technology: Bringing technology into lessons helps, Barker Maa said. "Teachers use iPads to explain concepts. We record

A Guide to NE Denver Music and Arts Teachers

The Front Porch Guide to Music & Arts Teachers includes more than 65 teachers in Northeast Denver and continues to grow. Visit [frontporchstapleton.com](http://frontporchstapleton.com) > News > Resource Guides to find a teacher that's right for you.

If you are a teacher and want to be added, e-mail [FrontPorch@FrontPorchStapleton.com](mailto:FrontPorch@FrontPorchStapleton.com) with information similar to existing listings. Also, please let the Front Porch know if you find any outdated information in the guide.

ensembles on GarageBand, listen to it right there, and walk through it to see where we need improvement. Some we put on YouTube. We embrace technology and it helps us speak to the tech generation."

Still, music lessons aren't for everyone. "Everyone takes to the arts in some way and if it's not music maybe it's painting, writing, or being a backstage technical person," said Barker Maa.

"I ask them, 'What do you like to do?'" said Quick. "I've had students who switched to writing or dance. As long as they have an activity to build on, it helps their self-esteem. The most valuable thing is accomplishing something weekly."



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## Affordable Housing

(continued from page 1) A summary of his proposal is on page 26.

The Supreme Court decision was a case decided in June in which a Dallas nonprofit sued the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs based on how they distributed federal funding for affordable housing. From 1995 to 2009, according to the lawsuit, all the locations that got funding had the same ghetto conditions that the Fair Housing Act of 1968 was meant to remedy. The question in this case was whether Texas needed to have the intent to discriminate to be found unlawful, or if their actions were unlawful because the outcome was discriminatory. The Supreme Court ruled, 5-4, that policies that segregate minorities, even if they are not intentional discrimination, do violate the Fair Housing Act.

Following just behind the court decision, the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule was released by HUD, which, Garcia says, complements the Fair Housing Act. "The intent is to be proactive and help communities get to the best decisions they can." The goal is to help communities think through "the best and highest use" of federal resources for housing.

But not everyone agrees. There are those who believe these kinds of policies will impact the zoning authority of local governments. It doesn't take much digging to find examples of neighborhoods in the U.S. that have resisted such policies that bring racial and economic diversity into their neighborhoods. The new HBO show, *Show Me a Hero*, is a stark example. The six-part series shows how the city of Yonkers, New York, rose up in the 1980s to resist a court order to build 200 units of low-rise subsidized housing in the mostly white middle-class area of that city.

The argument for dispersing affordable

housing got a big boost this past spring with results from a huge research project that showed every year a child spends in a better neighborhood contributed to higher earnings at age 26—and the more years, the greater the increase. The Harvard study<sup>1</sup> of more than 5 million children analyzed how moving across county lines impacted the prospects for upward mobility. "This delivers the most compelling evidence yet that neighborhoods



Gete Mekonnen, executive director of NE Denver Housing, speaks at the Jan. 2014 groundbreaking for the Spruce Townhomes.

matter in a really big way," said David B. Grusky, director of the Center on Poverty and Inequality at Stanford University, in a *New York Times* article about the study<sup>2</sup>. (An interactive map in the online *Times* article shows that earnings at age 26 by children who grew up in Denver are well below the U.S. average.)

### Old Perceptions and What "Affordable" Means Now

Getabecha "Gete" Mekonnen, director of Northeast Denver Housing for the past 30 years, acknowledges the need to educate the public to get past the old perceptions about affordable housing that came from concentrated and segregated public projects—a perception that has raised concerns about housing values and safety.

Potential buyers ask what the signs in Stapleton mean, wondering if there will be housing projects, says real estate agent Kim

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Kouba. Previously phrased as “Affordable” or “Income-qualified,” the signs now say “Future Site of Residential For Sale Homes Starting in the Mid \$100s.” Kouba says when she explains what the affordable for sale program is, it changes things for buyers considering nearby properties. They realize “that neighbor is going to be just like me.” They will have a job and a mortgage and responsibility for the upkeep of their investment. Mekonnen says



18 of 38 Spruce Townhomes, at MLK Blvd. and Spruce, are now completed. Similar affordable projects are planned in the future.

his organization requires affordable buyers to spend a minimum of six–eight hours at a workshop on financial planning and home-ownership and have an individual session with a housing counselor. His organization builds a relationship with each client so they’ll come back if they get into any problems with their mortgage or their house.

“I don’t think it’s about income-qualified. I think it’s about density,” says Kouba. She has heard concerns when single-family home-buyers look at houses that adjoin higher or denser dwellings, which, oftentimes, are not affordable units. But, she also thinks people who choose to live in Stapleton have pretty progressive views on diversity and mixed incomes and they appreciate the different housing styles and sizes. And, she adds, the affordable units are attractive. “I think the income-qualified housing kind of fits into that eclectic feel.” In this market, she thinks nearby

affordable has no impact on price. But when a buyer can pick from 25 homes, a whole range of factors such as busy streets, parking, density or affordable housing may affect their decision.

Mike Hagar, who is married and has two kids, ages 3 and 5, has lived near to NE Denver Housing’s 18-unit affordable rental complex on Central Park Blvd. near 23rd Ave. for eight years. He acknowledges the skepticism about affordable housing, but says, “In my experience it’s completely fine ... When you move into a great neighborhood you can still have an idiot neighbor. You can move into a low-income neighborhood and have great neighbors. So it’s not really income dependent. It’s just luck of the draw sometimes.” When he moved to Stapleton he thought the nearby empty lot was going to be a park. When he learned the land would have affordable apartments, he was concerned they would affect his property value, but says, “To date I have not heard of any of the sellers needing to shave dollars off their selling price because of it.”

**What Have We Learned?**

Matt and Katie Wagner live next to the affordable apartments. The Wagners like Stapleton’s environmentally sound concept of small lots and nearby open space. They chose their particular location in 2005 because they were told the nearby empty lot would be a small park or open space. But the park didn’t happen and the subject brings back their old anger and bitterness about the misinformation. They say they are not mad about the affordable apartments, but Katie says, “I think it started off on the wrong foot, which is very challenging.” The Wagners and Mike Hagar all think transparency about future land use is the biggest lesson (continued on page 22)

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# Just the Facts

## Will future Colorado have forests?

by James Hagadorn



Our forests are dying. The situation seems epidemic—with impacts to our economy and our landscape. What caused it, and can we fix it?

About a seventh of our forests have lost many of their pines, spruces, and firs in the past decade.

Infestation by bark beetles is the primary mechanism of tree death. These native insects have been burrowing under tree bark for millions of years, usually targeting trees that are already stressed. Attacking beetles bore through the bark, girdling the tree, then make tunnels and chambers in which the eggs are laid. Both the adults and, later, legions of newly hatched beetle larvae, chow down on the soft living inner tissue of the tree. To add to the mix, beetles also carry fungi whose spores sap the tree of nutrients and water, and taint its wood blue-green.

Trees can be colonized within a matter of hours and infestations can kill a healthy tree within a few months. Normally, trees fight off beetles by producing toxic sap that poisons or entombs the invaders. But since the late 1990s, the sheer numbers of beetles—combined with the fact that many trees are stressed or weakened—are overwhelming forests.

The cause of this change? Fundamentally, it might be us.

Colorado’s warmer winters, earlier springs, and prolonged drought (like the one that began in the mid-90s) are now thought to be accentuated by global warming. Our warmer, shorter winters mean that beetle eggs don’t get frozen

in the late fall, that larvae can survive the winter, and that ever-increasing numbers of beetles can emerge to colonize the next trees in the summer. Drought inhibits trees’ ability to produce beetle-fighting sap and healthy bark. In some places, decades of fire suppression have led to overcrowded, less patchy forests with trees of a similar age. All these factors make things easier for beetles to reproduce, feed, and survive, harder for trees to fight them off, and easier for infestations to spread through forests.

Other than ugly brown mountainsides, how do insect epidemics affect ecosystems and people? Like rebooting a computer, widespread tree mortality can throw the ecosystem out of whack for a while. It changes patterns of regrowth and habitat for wildlife. In nearby states, for example, it impacts grizzlies whose diets hinge on abundant pine cones. Fewer pine cones makes the bears hunger for other stuff. I don’t know about you, but I don’t want to be around a hungry grizzly.

Millions of dead trees have safety impacts, too. Within as little as three to 10 years, beetle-killed trees decay enough that they’re easily toppled by wind and other disturbances. They form piles of fuel that may alter fire hazard if lightning strikes. Thus they’re being removed where they might fall in campgrounds, along roads, utility paths, and near buildings.

But it isn’t all bad. Beetle boring activities provide habitat for other animals and fungi that help redistribute nutrients throughout a forest. Thus, despite their drastic effects during epidemics, beetles are a vital part of a healthy forest. Their comings and goings lead to forests having canopies of a variety of ages,



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A photo taken outside of Granby, Colorado shows the alarming number of reddish trees that have died due to beetle kill. Photo by Carlye Calvin, provided via Creative Commons license by UCAR photo library

different densities, and a variety of undergrowth like shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers. This variety makes for a more resilient forest long-term.

The forest death might have beneficial impacts for local businesses too. It provides cheap wood to our under-capacity sawmills and pellet mills, like those in Montrose and Walden. Ditto for our log-home industry, which prefers to use spruce trees, whose trunks are now available en masse. It's even providing fuel to the state's one wood-to-energy plant in Gypsum.

But only a tiny fraction of beetle kill wood is harvested—less than 5-10 percent. In part, this is because of the logistics and regulations governing gathering the wood and in part it's because of the cost of cutting the wood versus its sale price. Thus, government agencies hire contractors to cut down most of the dead trees, and ultimately taxpayers foot the bill. Wood is either chipped and left to decompose on-site, or burned on-site in winter.

What can we do about it? Short of spraying trees one-by-one, by hand, with carbaryl every single year, like the folks in Rocky Mountain National Park are doing, there isn't really a solution. We can manage the situation and plan for the future, removing hazardous trees where appropriate, and managing uninfested stands with an eye to fostering growth of more diverse and resilient forests.

Our forests have been hammered. But they're resilient and will recover over the next 100–200 years.

In the meantime, if we don't like the brown Rocky Mountain slopes, perhaps we could take a page out of drought-stricken California's book. Paint 'em green.

*James Hagadorn, Ph.D., is a scientist at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science. Suggestions and comments are welcome at [jwhagadorn@dmns.org](mailto:jwhagadorn@dmns.org).*

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Aurora Municipal Building  
15151 E. Alameda Parkway  
Aspen Room  
**Monday, September 21, 2015 • 6:00 p.m.**

**Downtown Denver**  
RTD Administrative Offices  
1600 Blake Street, Rooms T & D  
**Wednesday, September 23, 2015 • Noon and 6:00 p.m.**

**Denver**  
Glenarm Recreation Center  
2800 Glenarm Place  
**Thursday, September 24, 2015 • 6:00 p.m.**

**Swansea**  
Swansea Recreation Center  
2650 E. 49th Avenue  
**Thursday, September 24, 2015 • 6:00 p.m.**

**Green Valley Ranch**  
Green Valley Ranch Community Center  
4890 Argonne Way  
**Monday, September 28, 2015 • 6:00 p.m.**

**Montbello**  
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15555 E. 53rd Avenue  
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**Stapleton**  
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For details on these changes, see the Proposed A and R Rail Lines Service Plan brochure on buses, light rail, and at RTD transit stations or visit **rtd-denver.com**

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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. This month, however, the reviews are both available on demand. The supply of newer films did not live up to the Prof's scrutiny.

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

### *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* (2014)

This is an American-made Iranian-ish film about a female vampire stalking the Iranian town of Bad City, spoken completely in Persian and shot in a beautiful black and white. It is an intriguing mix that works: New director Ana Lily Amirpour fashions a smart, interesting, sexy, and surprising first-time feature, one that impresses and shows great promise for her future. The film is another in a line of excellent recent art-house horror films, such as *Only*



Scene from *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night*

*Lovers Left Alive* or *Let the Right One In*. Amirpour's film matches up to those films, and the aesthetic and pacing are very much akin to Jim Jarmusch, the king of the art-house independent films.

The story is about a young female vampire, "The Girl" who is stalking the town and picking off men. At times, she is a moody, brooding teenager, at home with her pop culture iconography; other times she is a ruthless, stalking, veiled killer. Played by second-generation Iranian-American actress Sheila Vand, she is at times shy and young, and at other points old and omnipotent. Her love interest is sparked by the handsome young leading man, Arash (Arash Marandi), a James Dean-type young man whose heroin-addicted father seems to be the only family in the film. They are both great, with

subtle performances by these young actors, but the real star is behind the camera.

The atmosphere and mood are established early on: a seemingly lawless world where oil derricks pump away in the background, bodies lay untouched in fields, and the town is borderline deserted. Amirpour has counted Sergio Leone as one of her influences, and the opening

of her film can be traced back to Leone's own *A Fistful of Dollars*. That same sense of a fallen, diseased world



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Scene from *Antarctica: A Year on Ice*

permeates the film and seeps through every aspect of the setting.

Aside from the excellent cinematography and superb acting, an autobiographical subtext is revealed in the storyline. As a young Iranian-American growing up in the U.S., Amirpour must have experienced her fair share of teen angst. The teenage years can be difficult enough without a feeling of being “The Other.” Lensed through this context, the character’s name “The Girl” is quite apt. As “The Girl” feasts on predatory men in the film, we can sense some catharsis going on. Overall the film succeeds on all levels, including the aesthetic and the thematic.

(Anyone else have a young son/daughter and not looking forward to those teenage years?)

You will enjoy this film if you liked *Only Lovers Left Alive*, *Let the Right One In*, and/or *Persepolis*.

Available at all VOD outlets.

*Antarctica: A Year on Ice* (2013)

“Nature documentaries” take on a negative connotation—we immediately entertain thoughts of long stretches of landscape, animals running wildly, and “the voice of God” narration from a droning professional that always seems completely disconnected from the subject. And then there is *Antarctica: A Year on Ice*, shot over the course of 10 years by first-time documentarian Anthony Powell. The film is stunningly beautiful, fascinating, and surprisingly human in such a desolate setting. We get to see and feel what it’s like to be there through the endless summer days and the darkness of winter. We feel the loneliness and desolation, but we also under-

stand the lure of the place, the natural beauty, and the effects of living in such a world.

Much of the film is shot in time-lapse in extremely difficult conditions: sometimes in -60 degree temperatures where the LCD display on the camera would freeze. Many times, Powell did not know what his footage looked like. But the payoff is stunning: the shots of the Southern Lights—ethereal, otherworldly, and even psychedelic, are the highlights of the film. But there is also the stark reality: snow/ice storms so bad that the doors become blocked, the icy world around the camps that seeps in through the cracks, and the frequently changing weather that can be deadly with one bad choice. But the people still live on.

And at its heart, this is really a film about people: their decisions to go/stay, how their lives move along (or don’t) in such a place, and the interactions that keep them going throughout the year. As we watch, we are just as fascinated by the little moments people miss: “a shower,” “the sound of falling rain,” or “cauliflower” as we are by the stunning landscapes. The moments of ordinary life, both present and past for the residents, are captivating, and round out this gem of a film.

You will like this film if you enjoyed *Chasing Ice*, *The Cove*, and/or *The End of the Line*. Available at all VOD outlets.

Vincent Piturro, Ph.D., teaches Cinema Studies at Metropolitan State University of Denver. He can be reached at [vpiturro@msudenver.edu](mailto:vpiturro@msudenver.edu).



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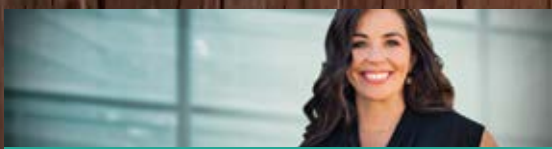
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## What's new at Stanley?

(continued from page 3)

### RESTAURANTS

#### Sweet Cow at Stanley

As a company, it's Sweet Cow ice cream's model to become part of the fabric of the community. Drew Honness, co-owner, says it typically takes two to three years of being in a neighborhood for that to happen. "All of a sudden, we're a destination for a good report card, after choir or basketball practice, or for a first date," he says.

Opening his fifth location in November, Honness is excited to continue serving 24 flavors of house-made ice cream and sorbet (from 135 rotating recipes) in Sweet Cow at Stanley, the sixth location.

"I think the project itself is the coolest thing to hit the Denver area in a decade. The design is going to be tremendous," says Honness, who has wanted to be in the Stapleton neighborhood for a year and a half but couldn't find the right location. "This is why we're going in there—it's how we're being incorporated into the Stapleton neighborhood, how they are creating this gathering place, this community center of shops and businesses and opportunities. Most communities don't have a big enough piece of land to be able to do this. We saw this as a ground-breaking opportunity."

#### Rosenberg's Bagels and Delicatessen

Josh Pollack, owner of Rosenberg's, is serious about bagels—so serious that he developed a water filtration machine to re-create the New York water that gives bagels in the Big Apple their distinctive character. "The different levels of minerals create a texture that enhances the strength of the gluten, making the crust crunchy and chewy, so it will stretch and not crack," Pollack said.

Pollack opened his first Rosenberg's Deli in the Five Points neighborhood in 2014 and will join the restaurant options at the Stanley next year. "We'll have about 2,500 square feet, similar to our size in Five Points. The design allows us a large patio and we have a corner space, so people can pop in from the inside or the outside. We plan to re-purpose the old guard booth for drive-through orders."

Pollack grew up in New Jersey and learned the deli business from his best friend's father. "The deli world has seen a generational shift," he said. "Two generations ago, lots of people had delis, but not all their kids wanted to keep doing that. I was lucky to find an expert to pass the torch along."

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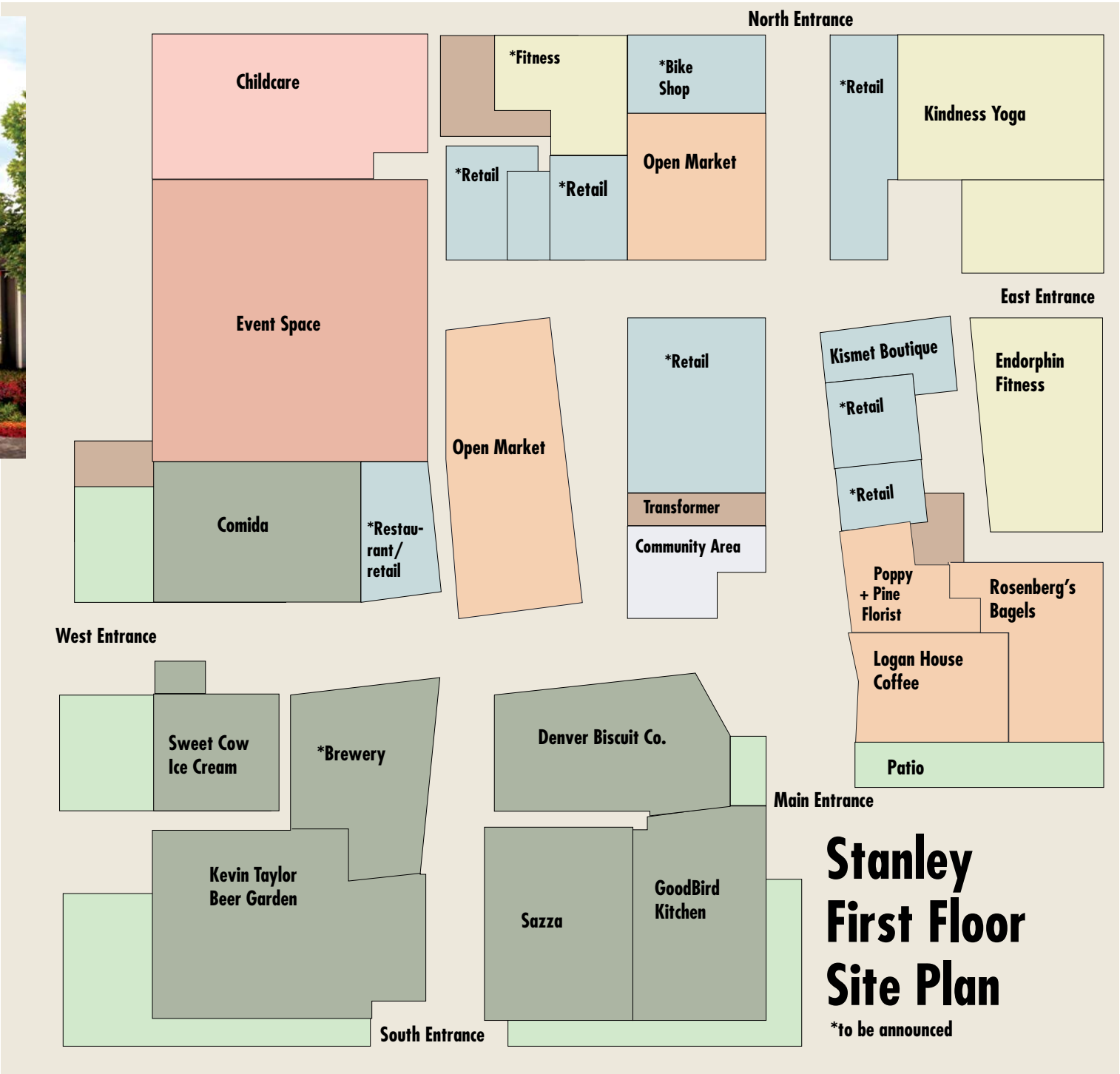


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A rendering of the main southeast entrance shows lots of landscaping and outdoor seating. At left, the original Stanley sign will be restored—one of the requirements the building met to achieve landmark status.



For more information, go to [rosenbergbagels.com](http://rosenbergbagels.com) or call 720.440.9880.

**GoodBird Kitchen**

GoodBird Kitchen is the newest of 10 restaurants owned by the Big Red F Restaurant Group, including nine in Colorado and one in Kansas City.

GoodBird at Stanley will be a smaller version of The Post Brewing Company in Lafayette, serving fried and rotisserie chicken, seasonal side dishes and Post beers. “It will be a similar menu,” said Dana Faulk Query, wife of owner Dave Query and marketing director at Big Red F Restaurant Group. “We’ll also serve the green chile mac-and-cheese and mashed potatoes that are so popular at The Post.”

Faulk Query said the big difference at the Stanley restaurant will be its “supreme casual” concept, meaning diners can order at the counter and then get full service at their table. “You can be in and out quickly; it’s perfect for kids who can’t sit still. Or you can take your time. We want people to use our restaurant however they want.”

Faulk Query said GoodBird’s décor

will have a Colorado-mountain-meets-Michigan-roadhouse feel, inspired by husband Dave’s Boulder upbringing and summers spent in rural Michigan. “It’ll be rustic, super casual and fun,” she said.

For more information, see [bigredf.com](http://bigredf.com) or call Faulk Query at 303.807.4687.

**Sazza**

Sazza owners Jeff Rogoff and Jenni Hayes want to demonstrate the connection between farm and table. Their new restaurant at Stanley will include a half-acre farm for education and to add hyper-local ingredients on their menu. “Reclaiming the half-acre off

the Stanley parking lot will demonstrate food transparency and how to sustain a farm in the city,” said Rogoff. “We’re all about food justice, sustainability and leaving the planet a better place.”

Rogoff and Hayes, a married couple with two sons, opened (continued on page 23)

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## Affordable

(continued from page 15 going forward.

Apart from the usual density issues (more cars in the alley, more likelihood that a trash can gets left in the alley, more children's voices), Matt Wagner says living next to the affordable apartments has not been an inconvenience (and he adds that if you don't like the sound of kids playing when you open your windows, you shouldn't live in Stapleton).

Mekonnen acknowledges there may be incidences where kids and families aren't the ideal, but overall believes their management is good. Katie and Mike agree with that, but like any neighborhood with small lots, when there is a problem, the next-door neighbor is the one who sees it, not the person two or three houses away.

Katie points out that organized efforts to help the neighbors get acquainted with the apartment residents would be helpful.

Mekonnen acknowledges that making the neighborhood socially seamless would be ideal, and maybe that's something his organization could do a little bit better.

Then he explains that he's working his way through five or six layers of financing for his next affordable for-sale units. For the 84-unit affordable rental building on Northfield Blvd. just west of the Staybridge Suites, he says there are 10 different layers of financing. Getting money for the physical building is hard enough. When he tries to add in a person, the financing people say, "Gete, I'm not paying for that." But his organization is still committed to helping people who purchased homes through them, even if it was 20 years ago, and his plan is to continue that model.

### What Lies Ahead?

As of the latest statistics (first quarter 2015), with a total of 7,186 rental and for-sale units built, the affordable housing goals and achievements for Stapleton are:

- 10% of all for-sale homes should be "affordable" (currently 4.84%)
- 20 percent of rentals should be "affordable" (currently 22.4%)
- One-third of all residences should be rentals (currently 17.2%)

The 322 homes planned for the Aurora portion of Stapleton will not include an affordable program and will not have any rentals.

Tom Gleason, Forest City VP said, by e-mail,

"We are setting aside lots as we go forward that will enable us to meet our affordable housing commitment."

Maps at [StapletonDenver.com/affordable](http://StapletonDenver.com/affordable) (and posted with this article at FrontPorch-Stapleton.



The Bluff Lake affordable rental apartments near MLK Blvd and Havana, built and managed by Mercy Housing, opened in June 2012.

com) show the currently known locations. "I do not anticipate at this time that the lots marked for future affordable development will change, although it is always important to remember that all aspects of future development are subject to change," Gleason wrote.

All affordable housing built in Stapleton is subsidized by Forest City with land provided at no cost, cash, or both—and combined with other subsidies for construction.

For information on upcoming affordable housing in Stapleton and qualifying for the affordable housing program, see page 34.

(1) "The Impacts of Neighborhoods on Intergenerational Mobility, Childhood Exposure Effects and County-Level Estimates" by Raj Chetty and Nathaniel Hendren, Harvard University.

(2) *New York Times*, May 4, 2015, "An Atlas of Upward Mobility Shows Paths Out of Poverty" by David Leonhardt, Amanda Cox and Claire Cain Miller.

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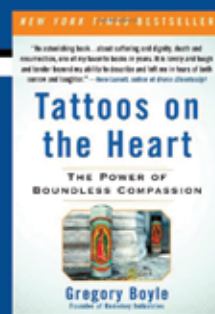
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The west entrance is between Comida and Sweet Cow Ice Cream. To the right of Sweet Cow, on the south end of the building, will be the beer garden, which Mark Shaker points out below.

## What's new at Stanley?

### RESTAURANTS

(continued from page 21) their first Sazza (short for salads and pizza) in Greenwood Village in 2006, where they also ran a small farm until this year. They'll expand their menu at the Stanley to include sandwiches, homemade rolls, pasta dishes and "sazzones" (their version of calzones). Specialty dishes will feature produce from the new farm, called High Street Farm. "High Street Farm soup will be a specialty," said Hayes.

Besides supplying some ingredients for the restaurant, High Street Farm will offer educational programs for schools, as well as farm-to-table dinner events. "We hope to eventually have bees and chickens as well," said Rogoff.

At 3,100 square feet, Sazza at the Stanley will be about twice the size of the Greenwood Village location and will have a patio for dining. As at the original restaurant, recycled tables, tableware and even staff shirts will demonstrate the couple's commitment to sustainability. "Everything has a purpose and a reason," said Rogoff. "Our outdoor tables are made from recycled bottles and our glassware is made from wine bottles. Our mismatched silverware and employee shirts are donated by our customers."

For more information, go to [sazzarestaurant.com](http://sazzarestaurant.com), or call 303.797.2992.

### RETAIL

#### Clementine's Salon

Dani Everson, owner of Clementine's Salon, knew she wanted to expand her business to Stanley as soon as she heard about the project. "We have clientele in Stapleton and they kept talking about the Stanley," Everson said. "It's a unique project because unlike The Source—which is mostly food-oriented—the Stanley will have a wide variety of businesses. We want to be a part of it."

Clementine's offers men's and women's haircuts, color and styling, as well as makeup application. The salon opened in 2011 in the Highlands neighborhood at 33rd Ave. and Tejon St. "Other Highlands businesses are expanding to the Stanley, so there will be people we know there," said Everson.

"The Stanley is an old building, like our space now. I like a space with character, with history attached to it. The new space is 2,000 square feet, nearly double the 1,100 we have now, so we'll have more stylists working. Also, we'll be able to host educators to teach our stylists the latest trends."

Everson said the new Clementine's will keep its signature look, with a bit of a difference. "We'll keep our 'shabby-chic' décor, with a bit more polished look."

For more information, see [clementinesdenver.com](http://clementinesdenver.com) or call 720.328.3594.



The patio of the beer garden will extend out as far as where Shaker is standing. The railings will be made with recycled materials from the original building, shown below.



#### Hope Tank

Hope Tank is a boutique with a mission to help the community. Owner Erika Righter, a former social worker, helps nearly 70 local charities through sales of handmade and imported gifts, toys and clothing. Artists donate a portion of their sales to a charity of their choice.

"I wanted to create a place where inspired people could come together to have an impact on our community. I built a store that could introduce customers to interesting products, and at the same time, educate and inspire them to give. I want people to own their impact, and plant the seeds to do more."

Since Righter opened Hope Tank in 2012 at 64 Broadway, the store has donated almost \$60,000 to charities benefiting people and animals.

She said the Stanley store will carry mostly children's products. "We've had lots of requests for a kid store version of Hope Tank. We'll feature educational toys and items for special-needs children."

The "look" of the Stanley store will be unusual and different, said Righter. "It's a surprise, a secret. We're asking our nonprofits to help design it, which is different than the way most people do this."

Learn more at [www.HopeTank.org](http://www.HopeTank.org) or call 720.837.1565.

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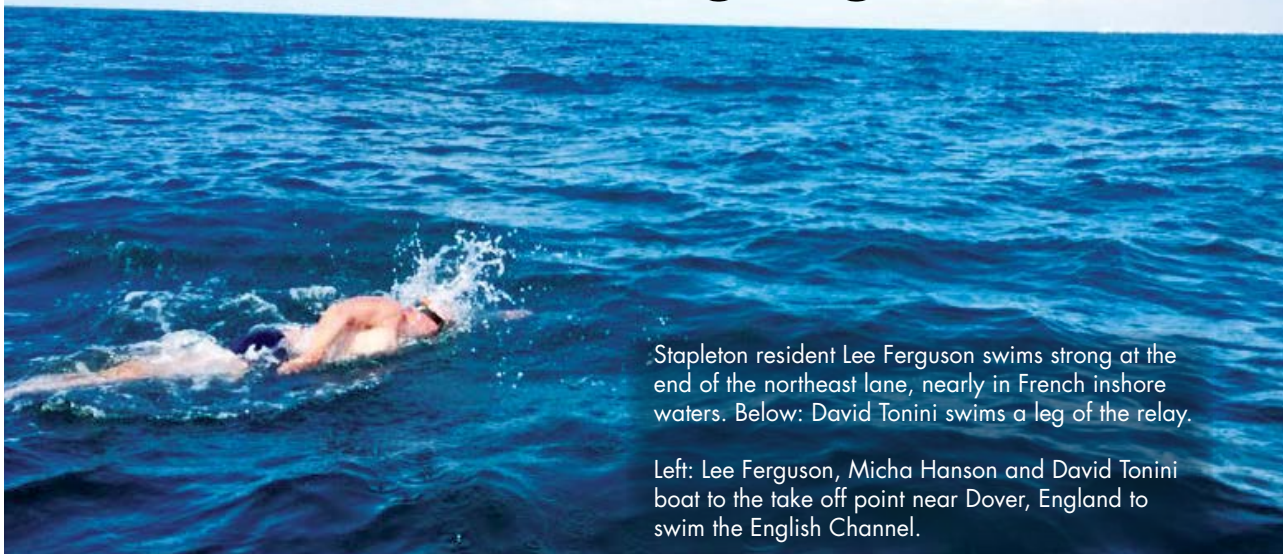
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# Three Stapleton Friends Break Record Crossing English Channel



Stapleton resident Lee Ferguson swims strong at the end of the northeast lane, nearly in French inshore waters. Below: David Tonini swims a leg of the relay.

Left: Lee Ferguson, Micha Hanson and David Tonini boat to the take off point near Dover, England to swim the English Channel.

Photos courtesy of swimmers

By Molly Worth

**T**he waiting is the hardest part—so goes the hit song by Tom Petty. It’s a sentiment that consumed three Stapleton men, Lee Ferguson, Micha Hanson and David Tonini, in the days before Thursday, July 30, 2015, as they stood on the beach looking at the turbulent sea. They had been waiting 10 days for the cyclonic winds to subside so they could make their attempt to swim a three-man relay across the English Channel.

“I sat on the beach thinking I was going home [without swimming],” recalls Tonini, 39, about the day before the swim. An attorney, he had a trial starting and couldn’t wait any longer for the weather to improve. He began encouraging Ferguson and Hanson to make a go of it with a two-man relay. Ferguson and Hanson felt apprehensive about changing formats, so they started posting queries on discussion boards, looking for a third swimmer if they were cleared to go. After all, they’d been planning since 2013 and had spent a full six months lining up a registered pilot and boat. They’d logged tens of thousands of meters in training sessions. They’d completed more than 12 grueling cold-water swims in Colorado reservoirs and lakes. Would Mother Nature play her trump

card and thwart all their efforts?

Ferguson, Hanson and Tonini, who dubbed themselves the Continental Divide team, had to make the final determination when the weather was acceptable to make their attempt. The windy conditions finally calmed, and on Wednesday, July 29 a local team from Dover, who was slotted before the trio, ceded their spot for the next day to the waiting swimmers from Colorado.

So, on Thursday, July 30, Ferguson, Hanson and Tonini finally dove into the English Channel. They not only finished their channel swim, they set a world record with their time of 10 hours and 3



minutes for a three-man relay. They had navigated two years of planning, logistics, training and the added uncertainty of whether they could even attempt a swim to finally make the crossing and crush the record in the process.

Hanson takes all the blame for suggesting that he and his two buddies swim the channel. They were all lifelong swimmers, having swum in college and for several years in the Stapleton MCA Masters summer program. He brought it up over beers one night. Ferguson and Tonini laughingly replied that if Hanson did all the planning, they’d show up for the swim. They should have known then that he was crazy enough to follow through.

To put it into perspective, swimming the channel is considered the Mount Everest of open-water swimming feats. There are longer and colder swims, but it’s considered the most difficult for a variety of reasons. The tides whip swimmers all over the place, sometimes adding miles to the 21-mile swim, in which wetsuits are prohibited. The channel is one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, with 600 tankers passing through and 200 ferries and other vessels crossing each day. Swells can reach more than six feet. Add in the cold water and the inevitable waiting that comes with these crossings and their achievement becomes a mental and physical feat that most would never dream of attempting.

Ferguson says the cold-water training was significant. The Channel Swimming Association (CSA), which observes and authenticates cross-channel swims in the Strait of Dover, requires swimmers to log at least one two-hour swim below 60 degrees with a witness. The trio did more than 12 swims below 65 degrees. Hanson, who gained 10

pounds of insulation by drinking three protein drinks a day, also endured regular cold showers and ice baths to increase his tolerance. Still, he suffered symptoms of hypothermia after their May 1 swim in a bone-chilling Chatfield Reservoir. It was 55 degrees.

“I have very distinct memories of our 56- and 57-degree swims being very miserable,” relates the 47-year-old Ferguson, who opted for the unconventional nutritional approach of drinking more beer to maintain his weight.

Sitting around the cozy confines of The Bistro in Stapleton recently, all three swimmers admit they had doubts they could make their crossing after that



Micha Hanson approaches France as the team successfully completes “The Big Channel Swim.”

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Chatfield swim. Ferguson relates that it was so cold he could “feel Micha’s body heat” as his fellow swimmer waded by him in two feet of the icy water at the start of that swim.

“It’s all I could think about,” says Hanson, who poured over data on average temperatures and tried to extrapolate the temperatures they’d likely encounter. His fears about the cold and the possibility of a night swim—a regular occurrence for channel swims due to tides—were relieved somewhat by the CROWS (Colorado Represents Open Water Swimming). As they “chased cold water” throughout the spring, the trio would routinely meet members of this veteran group of marathon swimmers who always had encouraging smiles and much-needed advice.

But when splashdown finally came, the cold was hardly a factor. The water temperature on July 30 was 61 degrees—still cold, but not mountain-lake cold. “It’s a bit lumpy today,” remarked their boat pilot, Eric Hartley, about the residual waves from the previous days of high winds. Toni-

ni says there were swells approaching four feet. But the team wasn’t likely to be deterred at this point. In fact, the long wait and the uncertainty seemingly fueled the adrenaline required for a record-breaking swim.

In accordance with CSA rules, each member of the relay must swim for a minimum of 60 minutes each time he enters the water and be out of the water by the 65-minute mark. The team members transition by having the new swimmer enter the water and overtake the prior swimmer in that five-minute interval. As the Continental Divide team neared their landing point, France’s Cap Gris Nez, the boat had to anchor some 200 yards from land due to rocky shoals. Ferguson and Tonini were on board scrutinizing the clock. Hanson, who was in the water nearing dry land, had to finish under the 65-minute maximum per swimmer. Otherwise, Ferguson would have to swim from the boat, overtake Hanson and complete the swim, adding precious minutes to their time. With barely audible screams from his teammates to swim faster, Hanson touched down on French soil 93



After successfully swimming the channel, the Continental Divide Relay Team signed their names and times on a wall at the White Horse Inn in Dover, England—a tradition for those who complete the swim.

seconds before his maximum swimming time was up.

Elated, relieved and tired, the three rode back in the boat to Dover. A text from Ferguson’s wife brought the astounding news that they had broken the record for a three-man relay, but this wasn’t confirmed by the CSA observer who accompanied the team on the boat until Hanson got a phone call as he was boarding the plane home. The former record held by a three-man relay was 10 hours 45 minutes. The Continental Divide team beat it by 42 minutes.

Back in Dover, the three friends ended their journey just how

it began—by enjoying a few pints. This time, they sat at the legendary White Horse Tavern, where channel swimmers adorn the walls with their sentiments and times. Hanson may visit again someday, as he’s thinking about a solo swim. His teammates will likely be there in spirit. Both Ferguson and Tonini feel one Mount Everest of swims is plenty to satisfy their thirst for adventure.

*An avid swimmer, Molly Worth lives in Stapleton and is a freelance writer*



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# Mayor/Councilmembers Propose Funding for Affordable Housing

Mayor Hancock and council members Robin Kniech and Albus Brooks, recognizing that skyrocketing rents and home prices threaten to squeeze low and moderate income people out of Denver, are proposing an annual source of funding to build and maintain affordable housing—which they say will also help Denver attract new businesses and keep a strong workforce.

The mayor, Kniech and Brooks, believe Denver needs a reliable source of revenue for affordable housing—just as the city has for other priorities, like parks and libraries. In 2012, voters authorized the city to keep property tax mills that would otherwise have been returned to taxpayers under TABOR guidelines. Those mills have been used to catch city services back up to where they were before the recession. However, Denver did not keep all the mills authorized by the voters, it has been crediting some back to taxpayers. Hancock, Kniech and Brooks are proposing that one of those mills now being credited be used instead to sustainably fund affordable housing in Denver.

The three sponsors of the proposal are asking the community to join in a conversation about asking City Council to vote to dedicate up to one of those mills for affordable housing. Dedicating an existing property tax mill could generate up to \$13 million a year, would be stable over time, and would cost the typical homeowner only \$25-50 a year (with homes from \$250,000 to \$500,000).

In addition, the three sponsors believe

the city should explore charging a low fee on new development to help mitigate the housing demand those projects stimulate. Called a “housing linkage” or “impact fee,” this approach has been successful in other cities to

help balance growth with housing demand. Development cycles go up and down with the economy, so pairing this fee with the more stable property tax source would

ensure the city can maintain a steady commitment to affordable housing.

The mayor, Kniech and Brooks say \$15 million of dedicated revenue could provide over five times more affordable homes than the city’s existing resources would provide in the next ten years—including housing with support services for the homeless, workforce rental housing and homeownership opportunities. Currently, the mayor’s 2016 budget proposes \$8 million for preservation and construction of affordable homes, more than double that of prior years, pending approval by City Council.

Stakeholders, civic leaders and City Council will begin work on the details of this proposal in September, with updates and opportunities for input from the public in the coming months. For more information or to share your feedback, e-mail: [mayorsoffice@denvergov.org](mailto:mayorsoffice@denvergov.org); [kniechatlarge@denvergov.org](mailto:kniechatlarge@denvergov.org); [albus.brooks@denvergov.org](mailto:albus.brooks@denvergov.org).

*Information provided by Mayor Hancock and Councilmembers Kniech and Brooks.*



Mayor Hancock speaks at an affordable housing opening in Stapleton in 2007.



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# St. Stephen Moves to Stapleton

By Carol Roberts

In December 2007 St. Stephen Missionary Baptist Church purchased Stapleton property on Montview between Uinta and Valentia. After years of planning, their dream of building a new church and preschool is becoming a reality. The Acacia Preschool will open in September (see story on the August *Front Porch*) and the congregation will start meeting in a temporary sanctuary in the pre-school building until the new church gets built. Their prior location has been at 3125 Humboldt Street.

At an event celebrating the completion of the preschool, members of the congregation shared information about their church with the *Front Porch*. "We consider ourselves a family. Once you walk into St. Stephen you're going to feel at home," says Carol Calhoun. She hopes that with the move, people who live in their new neighborhood will come worship with them.

"We are a family" and "we take care of our kids" are recurring themes at St. Stephen. Brenda Locke says after her granddaughter's mother passed away, the church embraced her. "...she's a junior in college but she has a whole family and they are people that did things for her financially, they supported everything she did...Someone told me once that I had done a good job with my granddaughter raising her. I said I didn't raise my granddaughter by myself. St. Stephen helped me... And they do that with all our kids. Our kids are number one and we should have a day care center cause kids are number one."

Calhoun adds, "We're determined not to lose a child. If one of our kids is struggling, somebody is going to pick him up, adopt him, love him and put him on the right path. And that's what I love best about our church."

Locke points out that it's not just their kids that they care for. The church also reaches out to the community. They have provided food and clothing for the homeless, school supplies for any child who needs them, and they have an after school program for kids who need help with homework. "We have people who call people when they're away from church and find out why they're away, if they need anything."

"We're going to have a lot of things to meet the community, not just our church, but we want to help the whole community advance and grow," says Locke.

Music director Barbara Smith says they periodically have Friday night programs for kids. "We keep our kids involved, because they could be running the streets...but they're here."



Watch a video at [FrontPorchStapleton.com](http://FrontPorchStapleton.com)

Above and right: The youth choir sings at St. Stephen's Youth Day service in their church at 3125 Humboldt St. before their move.

Left: The church's youth praise dance group performed and 27 young people from the church were recognized for their educational achievements or scholarship awards during the Youth Day service.

Below: Members of the congregation greet one another.



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# Stapleton Builder Gives Iraq Veteran a New Home

By Madeline Schroeder

Just when Marco Dominguez was most cynical about the world, his cynicism was thrown upside down. He and his wife and three children received a custom-built Stapleton home with no mortgage for as long as they want to live there.

"It's amazing," Dominguez says. "The house itself is amazing, the features are state-of-the-art, the amenities are beautiful, the area is great, the neighbors are amazing, the kids in the neighborhood are about the same age, there are block parties, everybody barbecues. It's Rockwellian, but modern times. It's better than I even imagined."

While serving as an army sergeant in Iraq from 2004 to 2007, Dominguez received two Purple Hearts. He was severely wounded by a roadside bomb, causing burns on 20 percent of his body, a traumatic brain injury and nerve damage that rendered his left side weak.

After returning home to his wife and son in San Antonio, Texas, in 2007, he encountered invisible wounds—the emotional and stressful burden of fitting back into American life after being at war. He felt alienated and useless, suddenly going from a hero to a disabled citizen. Every job seemed incomparable to the adrenaline and pride of fighting for our country. Plus, violence, which is taught as one of the best and most appropriate responses during war, has no place in normal life. His marriage was on the verge of ending, he missed most of his oldest child's life, and he couldn't find work. The cynicism grew.

They had two more kids, a girl and a boy. They couldn't pay their mortgage, and this past year their house foreclosed. The cynicism fully settled in. Marco's wife, Tammi, suggested they apply for Operation Finally Home, a national nonprofit that connects builders,



suppliers and supporters with wounded, ill or injured veterans, or surviving spouses and their families.

Desperate for a fresh start, the Dominguez family became interested in living in Colora-

do, so Operation Finally Home sent his bio to Wonderland Homes, which had reached out wanting to help a veteran. Wonderland Homes chose the family as the recipient of the home and planned a surprise announce-

Steve Phua, president and CEO of Wonderland homes (front left) stands arm in arm with Marco Dominguez. The rest of the Dominguez family stands in front of their new Wonderland home: (from left) Adrian, 7, Tammi, Isabella, 6, and Nicholas, 14.

ment. While on a visit to Colorado, the Dominguez family went to an Avalanche hockey game, where it was announced on the Jumbotron they would receive a brand-new custom-built home by the developer Wonderland Homes in the Conservatory Green neighborhood of Stapleton. And just like that, their lives were changed.

"If you're looking for a fresh start, there's probably no better place in the country than Stapleton—it's near the VA [Veterans Administration], the local transit, employment hubs [and it has] the neighborhood feel and amenities," says Steve Phua, president and CEO of Wonderland Homes.

The home, valued at \$529,000, will only cost the family the homeowner's association fee and utilities. Wonderland Homes included the Dominguez family in the design and building process so it was customized to their taste. And it's not just any home—it has unique features to accommodate his disabilities, including a handicap shower and widened doorways to fit a wheelchair.

The house was move-in ready. Suppliers partnered with Wonderland Homes to donate everything including furniture, kitchen supplies, bikes, barbecues and more. Stapleton Home Services donated free housecleaning for life. On move-in day, neighbors welcomed the Dominguez family with a banner with best wishes.

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# Stapleton Author's Book Career Fires Up



Photo by Laura Mahony Photography

By Madeline Schroeder  
With the exorbitant number of books published today due to self-publishing services like Amazon's Kindle Direct, it's impressive any book can stand out among the rest. Stapleton resident Aimee Henley expected zero success when she got into the book world, especially after months unsuccessfully searching for a literary agent.

Yet here she is, three novels and two novellas later, a best-selling Amazon author. "I am floored in having any level of success at all," she says.

Her newest novel, *The Fire Sisters*, is the final book in her young adult series, Brilliant Darkness. The book features 17-year-old Fennel, a blind young woman who has an unusual sense of her surroundings for having no sight. Braver than most, she takes on the Scourge, gruesome creatures that threaten her people.

Henley, who also has a psychology practice in Capitol Hill, came up with the idea for the book while traveling with her family through the bayou in Louisiana and imagining how swamp creatures might survive—most of her ideas come while traveling. Upon returning home, she wrote the first chapter in a day and hasn't been able to stop writing since.

She now works at her practice a couple of days a week and writes a couple of days a week. Henley believes her understanding of people and their motivations from her psychology practice helps her create believable characters in her writing.

Her 12-year-old daughter is her best judge and always the first to read the completed product. Her 9-year-old son hasn't read any of the books yet because he heard there are kissing scenes and he doesn't believe he's ready for that yet.

After self-publishing the first book in 2012, Henley re-queried a literary agent who had not responded previously. After reading the book, the agent made an offer and has represented Henley for three years.

"I'm writing more than I am doing my psychology at this point. It's really my passion," she says. *The Fire Sisters* comes out September 25 and can be purchased at [www.aghenley.com/books](http://www.aghenley.com/books).

## Calling Suspense Readers



Photo provided by Sam Neumann

By Madeline Schroeder  
For those with a special fondness for Colorado and its endless adventures, Park Hill resident Sam Neumann's *The Call of the Mountain* is likely a good literary pick.

The fictional book follows Julian Meyer, a New York stock analyst who hates his life and decides to move to Colorado on a whim. While he escapes the drudge of

city life, Meyer encounters unusual people and even horrifying situations. Amazon reviewers say the book reads like a movie and has remnants of the thriller series *True Detective*.

"I'm very proud of it. It's fresh right now so I think it's the best thing I've ever done," Neumann says. This is his fourth book. He also wrote *Memoirs of a Gas Station: A Delightfully Awkward Journey Across the Alaskan Tundra*, a New York Times bestseller. He's hoping *The Call of the Mountain* will be his second New York Times bestselling book.

In addition to writing, Neumann does photography and videography. He will continue striving to solve every author's challenge of finding what's popular. "It's difficult because if you write for what's popular, by the time you release your book it's too late. I think a good story and well-packaged product will always be in." For more information, visit <http://theotterlodge.com>.



The Stingrays coaches celebrate after having their best season. Left to right: Rich LeDuc (Head Coach), Caitlin Moore, Elizabeth Hannifin, Alyssa Rupert and Kirk Witulski.

Photo courtesy of Rachael Vincent-Newell

## Stingrays Have Best Season Yet

The Stingrays Metro League swim team, consisting of 136 swimmers, placed first at the Metro League relay meet on July 1, second at the Metro League Championship meet on July 17, and first in division 2 at the state Summer Club Championship meet on July 24–26, ranking fourth overall in the state.

The Stingrays Metro League dive team, consisting of 31 divers, placed second at the League championship on July 15.

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# Life-size LEGO Zoo Animals

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

He's not employed by LEGO® but Sean Kenney is probably their best sales and marketing person, by association. He can rattle off LEGO's history (the company started in 1958) but for more than 10 years, the award-winning LEGO® Bricks artist has been writing his own history. With a 17-person staff in New York, he creates nature-inspired, life-size (and larger) sculptures completely out of LEGO parts. More than 35 of Kenney's sculptures are currently on display in a traveling exhibit at Denver Zoo through November 1 in "Nature Connects, Art with LEGO® Bricks" brought to you by The Goddard School. Ten of the pieces were specially commissioned by Denver Zoo for this exhibit.

"I was always a super-LEGO fan," says Kenney. "And I was always an artist, a graphic designer. I just merged my two interests together." When I told him about the super-deluxe set of LEGOs I had as a child and then passed onto my children, he asked, in all seriousness, "Why did you ever stop playing with them?" He clearly didn't.

LEGO is aware of Kenney (he's their best customer, buying all of the pieces he needs, in bulk). The company has called on him to help with sculptures for certain LEGO events. But Kenney says he wouldn't want to be financially backed by the company. Describing himself as a "bootstrapper by nature," he pulls himself up by the bootstraps to do what needs to be done. "If I worked



Silar Washer, 6, and Solomon Washer, 7, found a new hero at the Denver Zoo—LEGO artist Sean Kenney who is shown explaining how he created his life-size sculptures.

Watch a video at [FrontPorchStapleton.com](http://FrontPorchStapleton.com)



for LEGO, at any point, they could decide they don't need me anymore or don't want me to do this. This way, I control what I do. I'm a small business and they are a large corporation." He's happy keeping it that way.

Kenney stands proudly in front of one of his sculptures at Denver Zoo, a life-size mama polar bear with her cubs located, purposefully, around the corner from the live polar bears on exhibit at the zoo. This particular sculpture took three people four months to finish. It has 125,000 pieces and weighs 625 pounds. All of his sculptures are hollow except for 1- to 2-inch-thick walls. The sculptures are supported by metal bars internally and sit on a metal base covered with mulch. A special coating helps protect the sculptures from harmful UV rays that could alter the colors. This is the largest sculpture Kenney has ever made. "You should have seen the looks I got as I wheeled it out the door of my New York studio!" he recalls.

After sketching out designs and planning how to achieve the shapes and colors he is after, Kenney and his crew set to work, gluing each piece in place as they go describing it "like brick and mortar." The sculptures are made entirely of LEGO parts, even utilizing accessory pieces in different ways. It might be a cauldron from a witches set for a baby polar bear's eye, or a translucent part from an alien ship layered with colored blocks behind it to create just the right shade for another animal's eye. Even the animals' whiskers are fiber optic cables from LEGO sets.

The animals' faces can be a challenge for Kenney and his crew. In the studio, they stand there, in front of the animals and discuss that maybe one of the eyes looks a little sad or the smile is looking more like a smirk. "It's very much like any discussion in a fine art studio," he says. One major difference between Kenney's works of art and artists working on canvas is that people really, really want to touch



his works of art. "LEGOs are so tactile," Kenney says. "The only mishaps that have ever happened were because of vandalism. No one goes up to a Monet and says, 'I wonder what that paint feels like' but they do want to touch the LEGOs." Touching and climbing are not allowed with any of Kenney's sculptures.

The sculptor, who has written eight children's books offering tips and tricks for building with LEGOS, hopes his sculptures will be inspiring. He would like to encourage an appreciation of nature, seeing it in a new way. And he hopes kids will see his sculpture of a polar bear, then go see the real polar bears, then go home and draw them or try to make their own animals with LEGOs. Kenney knows he's inspiring creativity and a love of animals "in fun ways." "It's just a lot less serious, like me."

"Nature Connects, Art with LEGO® Bricks" is included with zoo admission. Special events are planned throughout October in advance of Halloween, including the unveiling of several new, spooky sculptures. For details, visit [www.denverzoo.org](http://www.denverzoo.org).



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

### SEASONAL EVENTS

- 9/4 to 9/7—A Taste of Colorado, Festival of Mountain and Plain.** Civic Center Park. [www.atasteofcolorado.com](http://www.atasteofcolorado.com)
- 9/10 to 9/13—Longs Peak Scottish Irish Festival.** Pipe bands, Irish and folk dancing, parade, much more. Estes Park. [www.scotfest.com](http://www.scotfest.com)
- 9/18 to 9/20—Broomfield Days.** Broomfield, Colo. [www.broomfield.org](http://www.broomfield.org)
- 9/18 to 9/20—Denver Oktoberfest.** 20th and Larimer, Ballpark neighborhood. Repeats 9/25-9/27. [www.thedenveroktoberfest.com](http://www.thedenveroktoberfest.com)
- 9/18 to 9/20—Downtown Boulder Fall Fest.** Downtown Boulder downtownboulder.com
- 9/18 to 9/20—Summerset Festival.** Clement Park, Littleton. [www.summersetfest.com](http://www.summersetfest.com)
- 9/18 to 11/1—Botanic Gardens Corn Maze.** Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield, 8500 W. Deer Creek Canyon Rd. [www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org)
- 9/23 to 11/1—Anderson Farms Fall Festival.** Corn maze, pumpkin patch, hayrides, barrel train and more. 6728 County Road 3¼, Erie, Colo. [www.andersonfarms.com](http://www.andersonfarms.com)
- 9/27 to 10/31—Cottonwood Farms Pumpkin Patch and Fall Festival.** Farm animals, straw bale maze, 1½-acre corn maze, wagon rides. etc. Daily 10am-6pm. 75th and Arapahoe, Boulder. [www.cottonwoodfarms.com](http://www.cottonwoodfarms.com)
- 10/3 to 10/4—Lakewood Cider Days.** Lakewood Heritage Center. 10am-5pm; \$4-\$7. [www.lakewood.org](http://www.lakewood.org)
- 10/3 to 10/4—Pumpkin Harvest Festival.** Four Mile Historic Park. Horse-drawn wagon rides, pumpkin patch, build a scarecrow, etc. 10am-4pm. 715 S. Forest St. [www.fourmilepark.org](http://www.fourmilepark.org)

### DENVER METRO EVENTS

- Through 9/7—Colorado State Fair.** Pueblo Fairgrounds, Pueblo, Colo. [www.coloradostatefair.com](http://www.coloradostatefair.com)
- Through 9/12—Print & Process—Possibilities in Print.** Explores relationships between regional printmakers over multiple generations. Traditional prints, printed sculpture, book art and installation pieces. Art Gym at 1460 Leyden St. FREE. [www.artgymdenver.com](http://www.artgymdenver.com)
- Through 10/11—In Bloom: Painting in the Age of Impressionism.** 60 19th-century French floral still-life paintings by Manet, Degas, Renoir, Cezanne, van Gogh, etc. Denver Art Museum. [www.denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/bloom](http://www.denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/bloom)
- Through 10/18—Deborah Butterfield—The Nature of Horses.** Contemporary cast bronze horse sculptures amid Denver Botanic Gardens' outdoor environment. Included with admission. [www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org)
- 9/4 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](http://www.denver.org/things-to-do/denver-arts-culture/denver-art-districts)
- 9/4 to 9/7—A Taste of Colorado.** Food, music, arts and crafts. Fireworks and carnival rides. Civic Center Park. [www.atasteofcolorado.com](http://www.atasteofcolorado.com)

- 9/12 Saturday—Cockpit Demo Day.** Free with admission. Wings Over the Rockies Museum, Lowry. 10am-2pm. [www.wingsmuseum.org](http://www.wingsmuseum.org)
- 9/12 Saturday—Sunnyside Music Festival.** Chaffee Park, NW Denver. [www.sunnysidemusicfest.org](http://www.sunnysidemusicfest.org)
- 9/12 Saturday—Tour de Fat.** Bike parade around NE Denver sponsored by New Belgium Brewery. Bands, food, beer. Registration 10am; parade 11am. Festivities in City Park till 6pm. [www.newbelgium.com/events/tour-de-fat/denver](http://www.newbelgium.com/events/tour-de-fat/denver)
- 9/12 to 9/13—12th Annual Festival Italiano at Belmar.** Italian food, wine and artisan vendors. 10am-9pm Sat., 10am-5pm Sun. [www.belmarcolorado.com](http://www.belmarcolorado.com)
- 9/12 to 9/20—Denver Coliseum Mineral Fossil and Gem Show.** Denver Coliseum, I-70 and Brighton Blvd. Largest mineral and fossil show in U.S. Hundreds of exhibitors, 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 9am-5pm Sunday. FREE admission. [www.coliseumshow.com](http://www.coliseumshow.com)
- 9/12, 9/19 and 9/26—FREE Learn to Compost Classes.** Saturdays. Offered by Denver Recycles. 9/12 and 9/19 worm workshop; 9/26 Build a Pile. Registration required: 303.292.9900 [www.dug.org/compost](http://www.dug.org/compost)
- 9/18 to 9/20—48th Annual Denver Gem and Mineral Show.** Denver Mart Expo, 451 E. 58th Ave. I-25, exit 215. Tickets \$4-\$6, under 13 free with adult. Cash or check only. [www.denvermineralshow.com](http://www.denvermineralshow.com)
- 9/18 to 9/26—Denver Beer Fest.** Tastings, tours, paired dinners and more. Multiple locations. [www.denverbeerfest.com](http://www.denverbeerfest.com)
- 9/19 Saturday—Afternoon Tea Etiquette.** Molly Brown House. Ages 8 and up. \$24. Sittings: 11:15am, and 2:15pm. [jwilms@mollybrown.org](mailto:jwilms@mollybrown.org) or 303.832.4092x17. [www.mollybrown.org](http://www.mollybrown.org)
- 9/19 Saturday—Denver Dumb Friends League Wag N Trail.** 1.6-mile hike with your dog to help homeless pets at Buddy Center. 8am-12pm. Glendale Farm Open Space, Castle Rock. 303.751.5772 ext 1378. [www.ddfl.org](http://www.ddfl.org)

- 9/24 Thursday—League of Women Voters Kickoff Meeting.** Presentation by Andrew Romanoff. 5:45pm. McCollum Rm., Montview Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St. [www.lwvdenver.org](http://www.lwvdenver.org)
- 9/25 to 9/26—Botanic Gardens Fall Plant & Bulb Sale.** West Terrace. 9-5pm Fri., 9-3pm Sat. Free admission to Gardens both days. Thousands of bulbs, plants and bushes; members get 10% off. 1007 York St. [www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org)
- 9/30 to 10/4—Just Between Friends Gear and Clothing Sale.** Denver's largest kids' gear & clothing resale event. Thurs.-Sun. \$2 off with Front Porch listing. National Western Complex, I-70 & Brighton Blvd. [tracey@jbfsale.com](mailto:tracey@jbfsale.com) or 303.884.9198. Hours/admission: [www.denver.jbfsale.com](http://www.denver.jbfsale.com)
- 10/2 Friday—29th Carousel Ball Presented by Children's Diabetes Foundation.** John and Paige Elway honored with High Hopes Tribute Award. Hyatt Regency Denver. Benefits Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes for clinical care/research for 6,000+ children and adults. [www.childrensdiabetesfoundation.org/events/2015-carousel-ball-denver/#sthash.XkiTlvCv.dpuf](http://www.childrensdiabetesfoundation.org/events/2015-carousel-ball-denver/#sthash.XkiTlvCv.dpuf)
- 10/4 Sunday—Denver's Worldwide Festival.** 10am-4pm. Galleria, Denver Center for Performing Arts. [www.denversistercities.org](http://www.denversistercities.org)

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- Through 9/24—Denver Bike Night.** Wednesdays through 9/24. Evening bike rides thru downtown Denver. 7pm. Various start points. [www.denvercruiserride.com](http://www.denvercruiserride.com)
- 9/13 Sunday—3K Walk to Defeat ALS.** Sloan's Lake. 9am register, 10am walk, or register at [www.alsa.org/denverwalk](http://www.alsa.org/denverwalk)
- 9/13 Sunday—5K Run for the Animals.** Costume-based 5K. Dick's Sporting Goods Park. [www.5krunfortheanimals.com](http://www.5krunfortheanimals.com)
- 9/19 Saturday—2015 Walk to End Alzheimer's.** Denver City Park. 8am. [www.coloradoalzwalk.org](http://www.coloradoalzwalk.org)


(continued on pg. 32)

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(continued from p. 31)

**9/20 Sunday—7th Annual Hop, Skip and a Jump Start.** Stroller- and family-friendly 5K and expo benefits Children's Museum of Denver. [www.mychildsmuseum.org](http://www.mychildsmuseum.org)

**9/27 Sunday—Step Up for Down Syndrome Walk 2015.** Denver City Park. Continental breakfast, face painting, games, entertainment, resource fair and performance by local cover band Flip Side. [www.StepUpDenver.org](http://www.StepUpDenver.org)

**9/29 Tuesday—Center for Women's Health Research Annual Community Luncheon.** "Controversies in Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease: Aspirin, Estrogen and Vitamin D." Keynote: JoAnn Manson, MD, DrPH, Harvard Med. School. 11:30am-1:30pm. Seawall Ballroom, Denver Center for Performing Arts. Tickets/sponsorships: [Nancy.Oudet@ucdenver.edu](mailto:Nancy.Oudet@ucdenver.edu) or 303.724.9179. [www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschoo/centers/WomensHealth/Documents/2015\\_CWHRsympo-sium\\_SaveTheDate.pdf](http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschoo/centers/WomensHealth/Documents/2015_CWHRsympo-sium_SaveTheDate.pdf)[www.cwhr.org](http://www.cwhr.org)

## KIDS AND FAMILIES

**Through 10/4—Toys of the '50s, '60s and '70s.** Free with museum admission. See website for special events during exhibit. [www.historycolorado.org](http://www.historycolorado.org)

**Through 11/1—Nature Connects, Art with LEGO Bricks.** Over 35 life-size and larger animal and plant sculptures created using LEGO bricks. Free with Zoo admission. [www.denverzoo.org](http://www.denverzoo.org)

**9/1 to 9/29—Tuesdays in September—Four Mile Historic Park Small Settlers.** Ages 2-5 accompanied by

parent/caregiver. 9-10am. \$5/child adults free, members free. 715 S. Forest St. Advance register: 720.865.0814 or [education@fourmilepark.org](mailto:education@fourmilepark.org) [www.fourmilepark.org](http://www.fourmilepark.org)

**9/4 to 9/18—Storytime in the Exploration Station.** 10:30am. 1st and 3rd Fridays, Free with admission. Wings Over the Rockies Museum, Lowry. [www.wingsmuseum.org](http://www.wingsmuseum.org)

**9/2 Wednesday—Preschool Storytime at History Colorado Center.** 9:30-10am, For kids 2-5 and their caretakers. Free with admission. [www.historycolorado.org](http://www.historycolorado.org)

**9/5 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](http://www.homedepot.com)

**9/12 to 9/26—Lowe's Build and Grow Kids Clinics.** 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](http://www.lowesbuildandgrow.com)

**9/12 to 9/27—Day Out with Thomas the Tank at Colorado Railroad Museum.** Sat. and Sun. only. 25-minute ride with Thomas, meet Sir Topham Hat, storytelling, live music. [www.coloradorailroadmuseum.org](http://www.coloradorailroadmuseum.org)

**9/13 Sunday—Junior Rangers.** 1:30pm. Ages 6-12. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E. Smith Rd., Aurora. Reservations required. 303.739.9428, [www.auroragov.org/nature](http://www.auroragov.org/nature)

**9/19 Saturday—Teddy Bear Clinic at Denver Zoo.** Kids can bring stuffed animals to Zoo; volunteers/staff provide "medical" procedures at stations scattered in zoo, while educating young guests about healthy habits. Free with admission. [www.denverzoo.org](http://www.denverzoo.org)

**9/25 Friday—Denver Botanic Gardens Family Fun Night.** 4th Fri. monthly explore nature at night in Mordecai Children's Garden. Monthly themes, snacks by campfire, other fun activities. [www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org)

**10/1 to 10/12—Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Present Circus Xtreme.** Denver Coliseum, I-70 and Brighton Blvd. Tickets from \$15. [www.ringling.com](http://www.ringling.com)

## LECTURES AND CLASSES

**9/1 Tuesday—Active Minds presents: Cuba: Past, Present & Future.** Jewish Community Center, 350 S. Dahlia. Lil Shaw: 303.316.6359. [www.activeminds.com](http://www.activeminds.com)

com

**9/2 to 9/23—History and Walking Tours of Denver.** MSU Denver's new continuing educ. initiative called LearnOn. Class visits 3 historic Denver areas: Auraria Campus, LoDo Historic District and Civic Center. 4 Wed. nights starting 9/2, 6-8pm. \$10/hour. Not-for-credit class for adults to continue learning. Register: [www.msudenver.edu/learnon](http://www.msudenver.edu/learnon) [watsonm@msudenver.edu](mailto:watsonm@msudenver.edu)

**9/8 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Nigeria.** 12:30-1:30pm. Tattered Cover, 2526 E. Colfax. 303.322.7727. [www.ActiveMinds.com](http://www.ActiveMinds.com)

**9/9 to 9/30—Contemporary Art: Inspiring Dialog.** New MSU Denver continuing educ. initiative LearnOn class includes gallery walk, artist's lecture and hands-on project in contemporary art. 3 Wed. evenings at MSU Denver Center for Visual Arts, 965 Santa Fe, 5:30-7pm. \$10/hour. Register: [www.msudenver.edu/learnon](http://www.msudenver.edu/learnon), [watsonm@msudenver.edu](mailto:watsonm@msudenver.edu)

**9/10 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—Napoleon.** 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. [www.ActiveMinds.com](http://www.ActiveMinds.com)

**9/22 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Napoleon.** 5-6pm. Tattered Cover, 2526 E. Colfax. 303.322.7727. [www.ActiveMinds.com](http://www.ActiveMinds.com)

**9/24 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—Cuba: Past, Present & Future.** 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. [www.activeminds.com](http://www.activeminds.com)

**9/28 Monday—Free estate planning seminar** hosted by Yvonne Olivere, Olivere Law at The Bistro at Stapleton, 2955 Ulster. 6-8pm. RSVP required [admin@olivercypers.com](mailto:admin@olivercypers.com) or 720.295.6250

**9/30 to 10/21—Classical Music Insights: In Beethoven's Time.** MSU Denver's LearnOn continuing educ. class shares stories behind the scenes, lots of listening and why Beethoven sounds how he does! Auraria campus in Student Success Building. 4 Wed. nights, 6-8pm. \$10/hour. Register: [www.msudenver.edu/learnon](http://www.msudenver.edu/learnon), [watsonm@msudenver.edu](mailto:watsonm@msudenver.edu)

## MUSEUMS—DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURE & SCIENCE

**Through 9/7—Mythic Creatures: Dragons, Unicorns and Mermaids.** Exhibit free with admission. [www.dmns.org](http://www.dmns.org)

**Through 9/7—Denver Museum of Nature & Science—Free admission for Military Families.** Free general admission for active military and up to 5 family members. [www.dmns.org](http://www.dmns.org)

**Through 1/10/16—The Power of Poison.** Special exhibit; free with admission. [www.dmns.org](http://www.dmns.org)

**Through 1/28/16—IMAX Movies.** Galapagos 3D: Natures Wonderland, Journey to Space 3D, Secret Ocean 3D. [www.dmns.org/imax/current-films](http://www.dmns.org/imax/current-films)

**9/17 Thursday—Science Lounge.** Cocktails/entertainment every 3rd Thurs. of month. 6:30-9:30pm. \$8/members; \$10/nonmembers. [www.dmns.org](http://www.dmns.org)

## MUSEUMS—FREE DAYS

**9/1 Tuesday—Children's Museum Free Day.** Free Target Tuesday Night, 4-8pm. [www.mychildsmuseum.org](http://www.mychildsmuseum.org)

**9/5 Saturday—Denver Art Museum Free Day.** SCFD Free day. [www.denverartmuseum.org](http://www.denverartmuseum.org)

**9/9 Wednesday—Denver Botanic Gardens Free Day.** SCFD Free day. [www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org)

**9/27 Sunday—Denver Museum of Nature & Science.** SCFD Free day. [www.dmns.org](http://www.dmns.org)

## NORTHEAST DENVER/AURORA EVENTS

**Through 9/29—Lowry Farmers Market.** Tuesday evenings thru Sept. 4pm-dusk. Hangar 2, 7581 E Academy Blvd.

**9/12 Saturday—Auditions for Holliest, Jolliest Musical Ever.** Ages 5-17. 3-5pm, Neighborhood Music Stapleton studio, 10255 E. 25th Ave, Aurora. One block from 26th and Fulton. No charge for rehearsal. \$75 costume and rehearsal fee if show spot awarded. Rehearsal/show schedule: [www.neighborhoodmusicstapleton.com](http://www.neighborhoodmusicstapleton.com)

**9/19 Saturday—Aurora Fox 31st Season Gala Benefit.** 6pm. Features full production of season opener Jekyll and Hyde, silent auction, food, wine and more. Tickets \$60. Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E. Colfax Ave, Aurora. [www.aurorafoxartscenter.org](http://www.aurorafoxartscenter.org)

**9/23 Wednesday—5th Annual Cherrity Pie Festival.** Benefits Anchor Center for Blind Children. [www.anchorcenter.org](http://www.anchorcenter.org)

**9/25 Friday—Blues and Brews on the Bluff.** Music, food and craft brews. Bluff Lake Nature Center, 3400 Havana Way. Tickets: [www.blufflakenaturecenter.org](http://www.blufflakenaturecenter.org)

**9/26 Saturday—RTD East Rail (A) Line Public Open House.** Join RTD and its contractor Denver Transit Partners for last community open house prior to opening A Line in spring 2016. Info on testing progress of RTD FasTracks East Rail (A) Line to DIA, view final station designs and learn about new train cars, safety and how to ride them. Food and prizes. RTD's new Central Park Park-n-Ride (just north of current Stapleton Park-n-Ride). 11am-1pm. For more info, special needs request or to request Spanish translation, contact Joshua Solis

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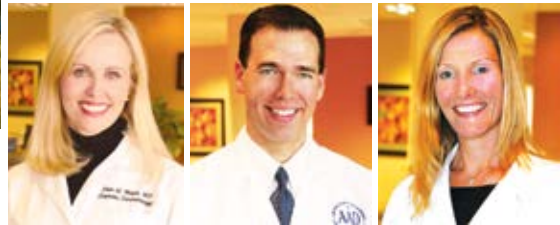
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**9/27 Sunday—37th Annual Park Hill Home Tour & Street Fair.** Tour homes 11-5pm. Street Fair, with 100+ vendors betw. Montview and 17th on Forest Parkway 10am-5pm. Kids' activities, wine/beer garden, music. Tickets at greaterparkhill.org, King Soopers, Park Hill Bookstore and Park Hill Library: \$20 adult prior to event; \$25 day of. \$15/\$20 senior (65+) and \$15/\$20 kids (7-14), 6 and under free. www.parkhillhometour.org

**10/3 Saturday—6th Annual FarmFest at The Urban Farm.** 10am-6pm. Pony rides, face painting, carnival games, hayrides, farm animals, live music, etc. Tickets: www.theurbanfarm.org

**NORTHFIELD EVENTS**

**9/4 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release.** Transporter Refueled. www.harkinstheatres.com

**9/11 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release.** The Second Mother. www.harkinstheatres.com

**9/12 Saturday—5280 Wine Festival.** Featuring wineries, demonstrations, artisan/lifestyle vendors, entertainment, delicious cuisine, etc. Northfield Main Street. Tickets: www.northfieldstapleton.com

**9/18 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release.** Everest www.harkinstheatres.com

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

**Through 9/27—5th Annual Refuge Amateur Photo Contest.** Entries due by 9/27 to be displayed for public voting 10/3-11/29. See website for contest details. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky\_mountain\_arsenal/

**9/12 Saturday—Build a Bison.** 10-11am. Explore real bison bones as you work in teams to assemble a bison head to tail. All ages. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky\_mountain\_arsenal/

**9/13 Sunday—Wildlife Viewing Tour.** 9:30-11:30am, 2-hour bus tour of the refuge. Repeats 9/19, 26 and 27. RSVP required. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky\_mountain\_arsenal/

**9/19 Saturday—Fall Hike n Bird.** 8:30-11:30am. Guided hike explores woodland, wetland and prairie habitats. Be comfortable hiking up to 3 miles. RSVP required. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky\_mountain\_arsenal/

**9/26 Saturday—National Public Lands Day Seed Gathering.** 9am-2pm. With Refuge staff, gather pollinator-friendly seeds to enhance prairie habitat for birds, bees, butterflies and beetles. Ages 8+. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky\_mountain\_arsenal/

**THEATRE**

**Through 9/6—La Cage aux Folles.** Presented by Ignite Theatre at Aurora Fox Theatre, 9900 E. Colfax Ave. www.ignitetheatre.com

**Through 9/13—The Book of Mormon.** Ellie Calkins Opera House, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. www.denvercenter.org

**Through 10/3—Bright Ideas.** Avenue Theatre, 417 E. 17th Ave. www.avenuetheater.com

**9/4 to 10/25—Any Given Monday.** Vintage Theatre. 1468 Dayton St., Aurora Cultural Arts District. www.vintage theatre.org

**9/8 to 9/20—Matilda The Musical.** Buell Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. 303.893.4100, www.denvercenter.org

**9/11 to 10/11—Lookingglass Alice.** Stage Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. 303.893.4100, www.denvercenter.org

**9/15 to 10/4—Saturday Night Fever.** Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd., Arvada. 720.898.7200, www.arvadacenter.org

**9/18 to 10/11—Jekyll and Hyde-The Musical.** Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E. Colfax Ave, Aurora. www.aurorafoxartscenter.org

**9/18 to 11/1—Curtains.** Vintage Theatre. 1468 Dayton St., Aurora Cultural Arts District. www.vintage theatre.org

**10/3 to 11/8—My Mother's Lesbian Jewish Wiccan Wedding.** Presented by Theatre Or at the Soiled Dove Underground, Lowry. www.theatre-or@mindspring.com



District 5 police officers and the Northeast Transportation Connections (NETC) are now headquartered at the Community Hub at Northfield. Leaders of these two groups gather for a photo at the grand opening. Left to right- Commander Ron Thomas, Community Resource Officer Sherikera Heflin, Lieutenant Bob Wyckoff, Angie Malpiede with NETC, Chief of Police Robert White and Director of DPD Volunteers in Policing Jacqueline Muncy.

**Grab a Cup of Coffee, Relax at the New Hub**

By Madeline Schroeder

The Community Hub at Northfield had its grand opening on Friday, Aug. 7. The Hub, previously located in the 29th Ave. Town Center, is the new headquarters for Northeast Transportation Connections (NETC) and the District 5 Cop Shop. The bigger space accommodates these organizations' growing presences within the community. "There is nothing like this in the state," Lt. Bob Wyckoff said at the grand opening celebration.

Volunteers operate the Hub seven days a week, and NETC employees and District 5 community resource officers are on-site throughout the week. There is a children's activity area, bike

library, space to host public meetings or presentations, and resources like local maps and bus schedules. The public is invited to visit and learn about Northeast Denver or simply relax and get a cup of coffee. Wyckoff encourages neighbors to stop by and get to know their local officers. The Cop Shop will also host safety courses and burglary seminars.

The Community Hub at Northfield is located at 8230 Northfield Blvd., Suite 1350 across from Toby Keith's and can be reached at 720.865.2356. "If you need a place to meet, give us a call. This is your Hub," said Angie Malpiede, vice president of the Stapleton Foundation, who also oversees NETC.

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Northfield Blvd. to 56th Ave.

Two- and three-bedroom units will be built in three- and fourplexes. New Town owner Gene Myers says they tested

numerous concepts to come up with one that is attractive, not too repetitive and is affordable within the limits of the program. Designing so all the foundations are the same is one of the ways they reduced costs.

The two bedroom units will be sold for \$172,900 and have 1,213 square feet. The three bedroom units will be sold for \$189,900 and will have 1,330 square feet. All will have an attached garage in the back.

**Affordable For Sale**

Maximum household income (before tax) to qualify.

- 1 person: \$44,750
- 2 person: \$51,150
- 3 person: \$57,550
- 4 person: \$63,900
- 5 person: \$69,050
- 6 person: \$74,150

Visit [StapletonDenver.com/affordable](http://StapletonDenver.com/affordable) for more information

The homes will alternate between threeplexes and fourplexes, which will have different designs to create variety. New Town will build two furnished model homes, one of each size.

Myers says they looked for a way to build the homes with basements, but they couldn't keep them in the required price range.

New Town built affordable row homes south of I-70 several years ago, and has been building mixed income row homes with one in six units as part of the affordable program. Going forward, New Town's mixed income and affordable homes will all be north of I-70.

**New Town Builders—  
160 Affordable For-Sale Units**

New Town Builders is embarking on by far the largest affordable for-sale homes project Stapleton has seen. They will be building about 160 affordable row homes on the west side of Central Park Blvd., north of I-70. The lots stretch from

**Northeast Denver Housing  
Upcoming Affordable For-Sale Units**



NE Denver Housing's recently completed Spruce Townhomes located on MLK at Spruce St.

Northeast Denver Housing will build all their future affordable homes south of I-70. They have completed the 18 units shown above on MLK near Spruce and are building 20 more in the same location. These are all sold but more are planned. Twenty similar homes will be built on the southwest corner of MLK and Central Park Blvd. And twenty homes are also planned at Montview and Ulster. These are two- and three-bedroom homes from \$163,000 to \$230,000 and are expected to be available late summer or early fall 2016.

**Northeast Denver Housing  
Upcoming Affordable Rental Units**



84-unit affordable rental apartment on Northfield Blvd.

Northeast Denver Housing hopes to start construction on an 84-unit affordable apartment building on Northfield Blvd., west of Staybridge Suites before year end. Forest City VP Tom Gleason expects future affordable for rent will apartment buildings approximately this size, but the do not know which affordable site will be developed next. Forest City's map of affordable sites is at [StapletonDenver.com/affordable](http://StapletonDenver.com/affordable).

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Visit [www.DenverHousing.org/Affordablehousing](http://www.DenverHousing.org/Affordablehousing) for income limits and other information about affordable rental in Denver.

For information about NE Denver Housing affordable rentals, including the new apartment building in Northfield, call 303-377-3334, email [info@nedenverhousing.org](mailto:info@nedenverhousing.org), or visit [www.NEdenverhousing.org](http://www.NEdenverhousing.org).

For information about Mercy Housing, which has two apartment buildings in Stapleton, call 303-830-3300.



Aurora Park

At an August 18 meeting at Fletcher School in Aurora with over 100 attendees who came to hear about the new Stapleton homes and park, the audience (most from Aurora) responded favorably to the plans.

The plans were printed in the August *Front Porch* and can be viewed at [FrontPorchStapleton.com](http://FrontPorchStapleton.com).

Questions and requests from the audience included:

**Will there be toilets or porta-potties at the ball fields?**

They are not in the plans because it was expected the park will primarily be used by those who live nearby. The request was noted by the planners since it was pointed out that organized games would bring people from other neighborhoods.

**Will the park be lighted at night, especially the path from Stanley to Stapleton that will**

**likely get a lot of nighttime use?** There will be street lights, but the park itself will not be lighted and is officially closed at sunset. However the request for a lighted path from Stanley to Stapleton is being taken into consideration.

**Will there be shade structures in the**

**park?** There will be one shade structure big enough for four picnic tables near the 26th and Fulton playground.

**Who pays to build and maintain the park?** Although bigger than other pocket parks in Stapleton, the park is local infrastructure, to be built with funds from the

extra mill levy Stapleton residents pay. The MCA will maintain the park.

**How much parking will the park have?** There is no parking lot but there are 170 parking spaces on the street.

**How long is the loop path around the park?** One mile.



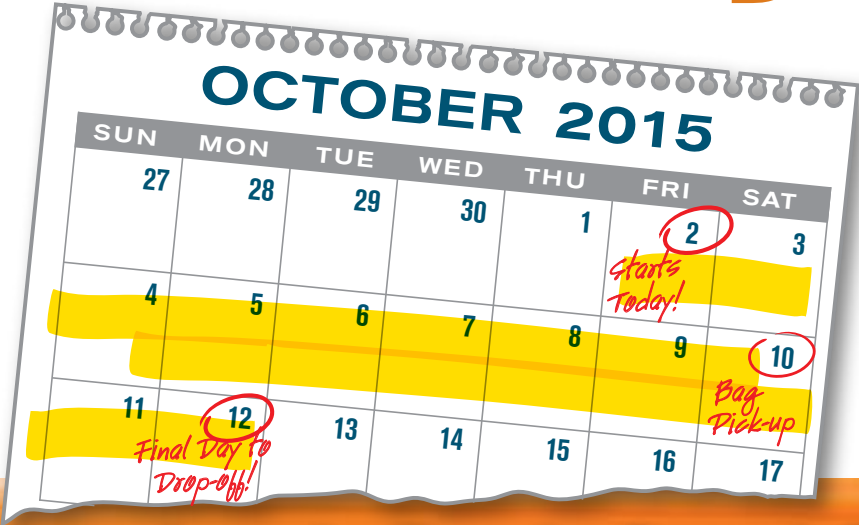
Left: A rendering of the new Aurora Park looking west shows Fulton St in the foreground and 26th Ave. on the right. The completed park at Fulton and 26th is not shown as it actually is now with playground equipment. Above: Flat grassy pocket parks with decorative trees will be built at the intersection of each street along 26th Ave.

Renderings courtesy of Forest City

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Stapleton Community Food Drive

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CHOOSE ONE OF THREE WAYS TO HELP:

- 1 Gather non-perishable food items in the bag (fill it... c'mon!) delivered to your door on Saturday, Oct 3rd. Place the filled bag on your front porch by 9:00am on Saturday, Oct 10th. Volunteers will come around to collect the bags. Donations will be delivered to neighborhood school food pantries and Food Bank of the Rockies.
- 2 Make a cash donation directly to Food Bank of the Rockies. 96¢ of every \$1 you give goes toward food. Visit [foodbankrockies.org/goto/stapletonfooddrive2015](http://foodbankrockies.org/goto/stapletonfooddrive2015).
- 3 Bring your donations to your neighborhood school, or one of these sponsors:

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| • Boulder Creek           | • Mici's                           | • Stapleton Home Services |
| • Blue Creek              | • Neighborhood Custom Paint        | • Stapleton MCA           |
| • Clair Family Dentistry  | • Neighborhood Music               | • Stapleton Orthodontics  |
| • Dance Institute         | • New Town                         | • Stapletonion            |
| • David Weekley           | • Orange Theory Fitness            | • Wonderland              |
| • Etai's Bakery Cafe      |                                    | • Zen Sushi Bar & Grill   |

For More Info and Volunteer Opportunities, visit the *Giving Back* tab at [NPREco.com](http://NPREco.com)

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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](http://www.stapletonunitedneighbors.com). To contact SUN or confirm meeting time, email [stapletonunitedneighbors@gmail.com](mailto:stapletonunitedneighbors@gmail.com)

## SUN Special Meeting Sept. 10 at the Hub to Discuss Stapleton Name Change

By Amanda Allshouse

The Stapleton United Neighbors (SUN) Board of Directors will hold a community meeting on Thursday Sept. 10 at 6:30pm at the Community Hub at Northfield (8230 Northfield Blvd #1530 —also known as the new location of the Cop Shop in Northfield Mall) open to the public. The focus of the meeting will be to hear from the community about the proposal to change the name of our neighborhood and discuss concerns raised by the organization Black Lives Matter 5280 (BLM5280) through flyers distributed the weekend of Aug. 8. Their online petition regarding the history of the community's namesake was signed by over 1,200 residents of Northeast Denver neighborhoods and other individuals.

As a registered neighborhood organization (RNO) in the city of Denver, SUN's mission is: to provide a forum for our residents; to maintain a communication network between ourselves, our neighboring Denver residents, and the city of Denver; and to act on issues of importance to the community as a whole. The SUN board believes that discussion of this naming issue falls in line with our mission statement, as there are many members of SUN who have requested a change in the name of

the neighborhood, and thus the name of SUN as well.

This meeting will be SUN's first step in helping foster a community discussion on this issue. The agenda will be designed to facilitate a civil discussion, allowing all individuals a chance to be heard and to hear from others.

While a public meeting is one method of measuring public opinion, the SUN board includes members whose professional lives involve polling and statistics. As such, SUN's full approach will likely include both the rescheduled public meeting Sept. 10, as well as a communitywide survey that will be constructed based on input gathered Sept. 10 and fielded after that meeting. Please sign up for emails from SUN at [www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.com](http://www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.com) to ensure you are sent an invitation to complete the survey when it is available.

The SUN board has decided to hold a special meeting due to the previous cancellations of our normally scheduled August and September meetings. Starting in January 2014, SUN has hosted regular board meetings on the third Tuesday of most months. At such meetings, we make an effort to hold timely discussions and always provide a forum for community members to bring issues to our attention.

The August SUN board meeting would have occurred on the 18th, and would have included the discussion of the proposal for a name change. The August SUN meeting, however, had been previously cancelled July 23 due to the public meeting at Fletcher Elementary School, which was announced via a press release by Forest City. At this meeting, plans for the development of Stapleton in Aurora were described in detail by the developer's contractors. Members of the SUN board and active community members who typically attend monthly SUN meetings indicated their preference for attending the Forest City-hosted meeting and canceling the SUN meetings.

The third Tuesday in September falls on the second day of the Jewish holiday Rosh Hashanah. Months ago when the conflict was noted, the September meeting was cancelled. After the August meeting was canceled at the end of July, the board noted the long stretch without a SUN-hosted meeting and began discussions about how best to handle this gap. After hearing from concerned community members about the importance of having a meeting to discuss the proposal of renaming our neighborhood, the SUN board has decided to hold a special meeting. We will return to our normal meeting schedule in October.

Send Letters to the Editor to  
[frontporch@frontporchstapleton.com](mailto:frontporch@frontporchstapleton.com).

## Trail Etiquette

Stapleton boasts more than 36 trail miles. This commitment to making the outdoors accessible to urban dwellers is one of the reasons for the community's popularity. However, as a daily user of those trails, I frequently encounter individuals who appear to be unfamiliar with conventional trail etiquette. Generally, it seems to be the walkers who don't understand the conventions. When there is confusion, it can lead to collisions or confrontations. To minimize injury and irritation, here are some suggestions.

Just as there are rules of the road for drivers, there are conventions that govern walking, cycling, skiing, or horseback riding on shared trails. Unfortunately, many users may simply not be aware of these conventions. For those who may be unfamiliar with trail etiquette, here are the basics (and these apply to mountains or cities):

1. Walk on the right (it's just like driving in the USA). This allows faster walkers, joggers and cyclists to pass safely (and uniformly) on the left.

2. Pass on the left. When you are passing on the left, if you think the person you are overtaking may be unaware of your presence, politely announce yourself by saying, "On your left," or using your bicycle bell.

3. Leash your dog. If you are walking your dog, the proper way to walk it is on your left. That means that the dog will be on the pavement, close to the person or cyclist walking the opposite direction;

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9. You can believe in Dinosaurs.
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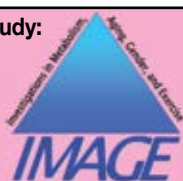
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Letters to the Editor

therefore, dog owners need to be alert so as not to have the dog or leash trip (or nip) the oncoming pedestrian/cyclist. It's perfectly reasonable to switch your pet to walking on the right or to step off the trail in these cases. Or, if your dog is a "tenderfoot," and you want to keep it on a left-sided leash but on the grass, please don't walk on the left side of the sidewalk. Step off onto the grass *along with* your dog. You are a hazard when you stand or walk on the left.

4. In places where the trail is narrow, move off the trail if you are going to yield or stop.

5. When walking in a group, remind the others that single file is best, so that others can safely pass on the left. If you want to walk abreast of each other, be alert to others approaching from behind or in front. A group should not force a solo walker or cyclist off the trail.

These are very simple guidelines to follow. For more detailed suggestions on yielding to uphill/downhill hikers and horses and other types of trail users, you can find information at The Hiking Dude [www.hikingdude.com/hiking-etiquette.php](http://www.hikingdude.com/hiking-etiquette.php) or REI <http://blog.rei.com/hike/trail-etiquette-who-has-the-right-of-way/>.

When the conventions are not followed, it causes difficulty for other trail users. Make yourself memorable as a conscientious trail user, not as someone who caused injury, collision, or confrontation. Let's all continue to make this a safe, healthy, and enjoyable community!

—Sharon Cairns Mann

AirBnB in Denver

After staying in three different AirBnBs over the last 2 months, my husband and I were surprised to learn that Denver frowns upon their citizens using their furnished, spare bedrooms for overnight guests. On observation, our hosts, with the rising costs, simply wish to supplement their incomes by using property they already own. Our experiences with AirBnB have been nothing

but positive. All of our hosts are good neighbors, are respectful and considerate, and have no intention of causing problems in their neighborhoods. We also realized that AirBnB makes a significant contribution to the commerce of the city and is a much-needed option for people like ourselves, who are in the process of relocating, buying a home, and becoming Colorado residents.

I believe AirBnB should be embraced as a valid option for guests of the Mile High City and should be allowed with minimal regulation. After reading about this topic in *The Denver Post*, speaking candidly with our hosts and other locals, I strongly support the idea of Denver property owners having the right to use AirBnB as long as it does not conflict with any existing zoning laws or other restrictions. AirBnB sends their hosts a 1099-K at the end of the year so any income that is generated from the use of their home is included when filing their State Income Tax. I do believe the hosts should be exempt from additional taxation as they are already paying property taxes.

—Christina Heilmann

Homeless Man Living in Stapleton/Aurora

The *Front Porch* received an anonymous letter expressing sympathy and concern about a homeless man living in an old explosives shack on the Stanley Marketplace property at 25th and Dallas. Aurora and Denver police officers say they have received this information and locked and fenced the building. The man has not been seen recently.

This is actually a far more complicated situation that one might assume. Homeless people actually have rights to where they take up residency. The *Front Porch* will provide more information on that subject in an upcoming issue.

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a video at  
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John Brett (left) and Chris Hays approach the The Leopold Bros distillery in Montbello, which is open for tours and cocktail classes.

By Courtney Drake McDonough

At first, the group is quiet. A few people arrive together, but the majority are strangers. They sit at a high-top community table where there is water, popcorn, glassware and recipes for the class at Leopold Bros. Small Batch Distillers of Fine Spirits. Divided into small groups, they take turns behind the bar to make their assigned cocktail under the expert tutelage of Alec Ropes, senior market specialist at Leopold. Soon, the strangers are talking and laughing and the noise level rises, filling the high ceiling of the tasting room that opened to the public in November 2014. It's another "spirited" evening at Leopold Bros.

The distillery, which produces 22 spirits distributed in 20 states and most major European countries, got its start in 1999 in Ann Arbor, Mich., although the two Leopold brothers, Todd and Scott, are from Colorado. Todd studied malting and brewing

and apprenticed in Europe. Scott studied economics and industrial engineering and worked creating sustainable manufacturing processes that would come in handy when they opened their brewery and distillery. After finding success in the college town, the brothers decided to move their operations to their home state in 2008, first in an industrial location on Nome Street and then four blocks away to their new location on Joliet that they built from the ground up.

Everything is done on-site, or as Ropes puts it, "from grain to glass." The staff is small, just seven full-time employees, four of whom run things on the production floor. The brothers' parents, Bob and Joanne Leopold, are also involved. Bob and his sons have planted a variety of flowers, trees and plants outside the distillery windows that will eventually inoculate the entire distillery, but primarily the large, wooden fermenters. "We're propagating

pollens and wild yeast strains that can only occur in our garden," says Ropes. It's an investment that will create "terroir," unique flavors that will be specific to Leopold Bros.' aged spirits. The premise is described in detail by Ropes on his tours, as is the overall process for distilling the spirits that Leopold does from milling the grain to fermenting the "mash" of grains, to distilling and bottling. The entire production process can take as little as two weeks and as long as two and a half years.

Leopold Bros. does not use any artificial ingredients in their spirits, which are gluten-free. Their operations are also sustainable. "Water and waste usage are greatly reduced compared to modern standards," explains Ropes. "For example, for every bottle of spirit produced, there is only one bottle of waste-



water. In the business, I've heard that for every bottle produced it is common to have six to even as high as 25 bottles of wastewater at other distilleries."

Tours, which include samples of the spirits, run Friday through Sunday. Leopold Bros. donates 50 percent of the \$15 cost of the tour to the visitor's choice of the Dumb Friends League, Colorado Symphony, Food Bank of the Rockies or Children's Hospital of Colorado Foundation.

Ropes calls his classes "The Cocktail Hour with Alec," held twice a week for



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## Tips for Making a Great Martini

By Alec Ropes, senior market specialist, Leopold Bros.

The trick to a great martini is both preparation and execution:

1. Always stir your martini instead of shaking.
2. Use a generous amount of ice. The colder and denser ice will require more time, and the smaller and more watery ice will require

less time. Cocktails are all about ice. Use the densest, coldest and best-quality ice possible at home.

3. If you think you are done stirring, you're still not there yet! Stir times can last between 20–30 seconds depending on your ice quality. A properly stirred martini will create a pleasant silky texture on your palate.

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**Left:** Instructor Alec Ropes shows the class how to finish a Classic Martini with a lemon peel twist instead of olives.

**Below left:** The class listens as Ropes tells the history of certain spirits.

**Right:** Ropes pours The Martinez cocktail over a single block of ice which slows dilution.

**Far right:** Chris Hays practices the method for stirring a cocktail properly to mix it and simultaneously cool it down.



**Below:** Production Floor Manager and CDO, Erich Harbowy stands next to a German-made still that makes gin, absinthe and Aperitivo. The other stills in the room make whiskies and vodka.



The class participants, who started out as quiet strangers, were soon laughing and socializing.

\$20. Class topics include Libations Using Fruit Whiskies; Martine or Martini; The Manhattan; and Herbal Madness. Each class is augmented by Ropes' enthusiastic and animated explanations of the history behind certain spirits and some of the stories behind the cocktails. A fan of Mike Myers' "Linda Richman" character, Ropes periodically throws a spirit-oriented fact out to the group, telling them to "talk amongst yourselves" while he quickly washes the barware for the next cocktail to be taught. Ropes makes sure

to point out that although he is providing recipes, the participants should experiment and create their own variations.

Tours and classes must be scheduled in advance on their website and are popular for dates, friends, family and even corporate



events, but they are restricted to people age 21 and over. For more information, visit the Leopold Bros. website at [www.leopoldbros.com](http://www.leopoldbros.com).

Get the recipe for Alec Ropes' The Martinez at [FrontPorchStapleton.com](http://FrontPorchStapleton.com) and also see tips for a perfect martini below.

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