

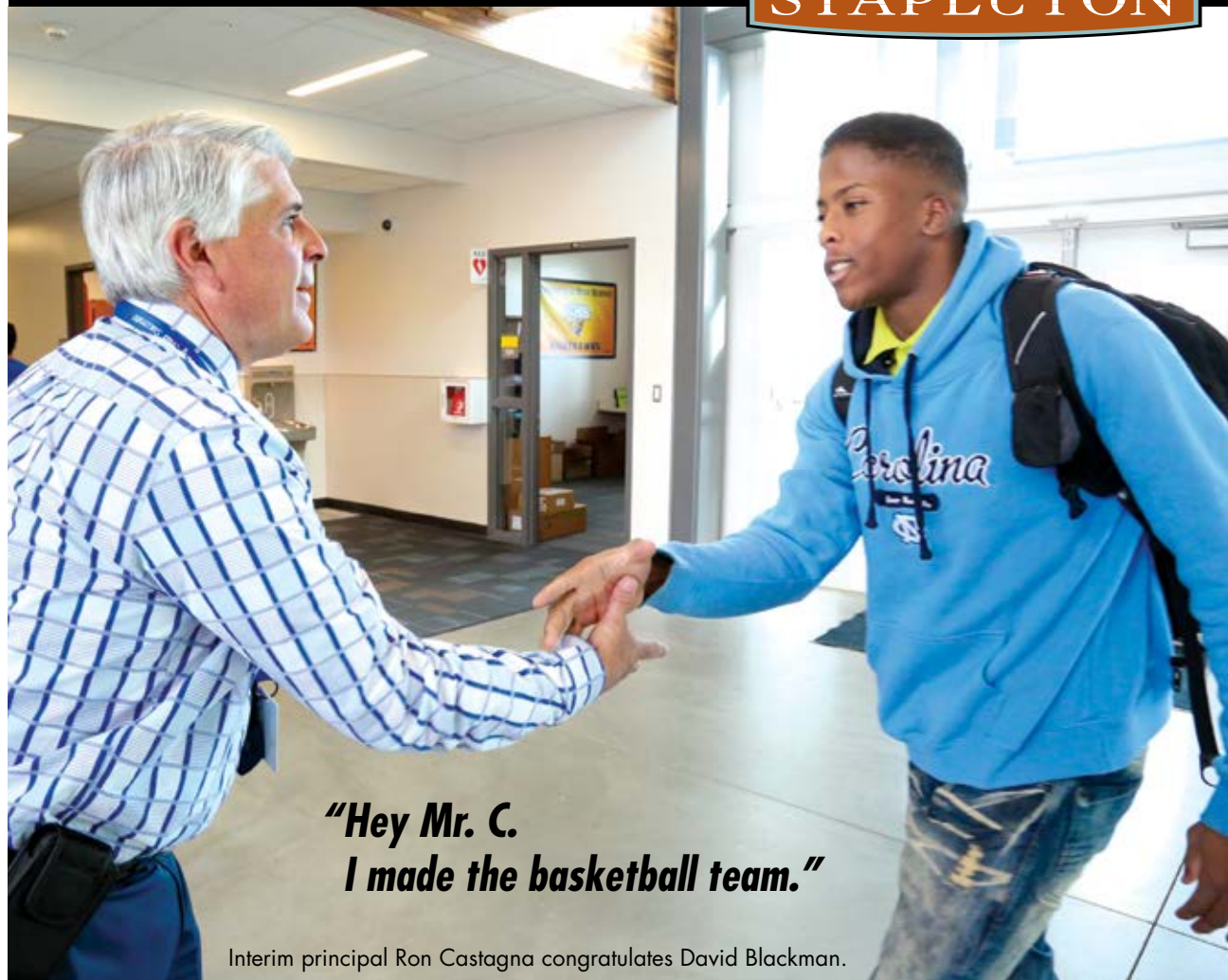
Front Porch

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

DENVER, COLORADO

STAPLETON

DECEMBER 2015



**"Hey Mr. C.
I made the basketball team."**

Interim principal Ron Castagna congratulates David Blackman.



NHS Interim Principal Jumps In

By Carol Roberts

Northfield High School was founded on a visionary plan to have a diverse student body with a full IB (International Baccalaureate) curriculum for all students and, ideally, no achievement gap. After the resignation of founding principal Avi Tropper in October, DPS tapped the recently retired Lakewood High School principal, Ron Castagna, to serve as interim until a permanent principal starts.

Susana Cordova, DPS Chief of Schools,

says DPS is 100% committed to the plan as designed for Northfield and they are not currently thinking about changing that plan. "The vision at Northfield is how do we change the traditional paradigm of who is successful in a traditional IB program. We're sure we'll have learning to do along the way around how we help more kids be successful... We prefer at this point to err on the side of getting more kids through than backing off the vision." She says they'll figure it out and make adjustments as they work with the program and the vision.

Cordova says DPS has had "tremendous success" opening up the advanced placement program. There was concern about the kids not being successful and pass rates going down. In fact, she says the rates have gone up "a little" and they've tripled the number of kids taking AP. They accomplished this by getting more kids to enroll and making sure they had support; changing students' beliefs about themselves; changing teachers' beliefs about what it takes to help kids to be successful; providing support for teachers through AP

training and group work; and, in some cases, double blocks for AP classes so students would have a lab class to support the AP class.

Cordova says one way Northfield has paved the way for other DPS high schools is having a later start time. Ten DPS high schools have now expressed interest in a pilot program for later start times next year. Changes to start time and length of day at Northfield would be a school based decision, she says, and an important subject for the hiring committee.

(continued on page 34)

Snowy Winter Welcome

On Nov. 20, 1,500 cold and wet but enthusiastic people gathered in Stapleton's E. 29th Ave. Town Center for the annual Winter Welcome event.

One thousand s'mores were eaten. A horse-drawn carriage, lights dedicated to Paris, and princesses from *Frozen* were all new this year, according to Diane Deeter, Community Director of the Stapleton Master Community Association. Dog calendars were handed out—and copies can be picked up at the MCA office at 7350 E. 29th Ave, Suite 300. Available as long as supplies last.



Coming Soon!

Front Porch Resource Guides

January:

- * Sports Teams
- * Churches in NE Denver

February:

- * Summer Camps

Submit information now.

See page 2 for details.

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



People gather around a fire at the annual Winter Welcome on November 20 in Stapleton's E. 29th Avenue Town Center.



Most of the events listed below are FREE or support nonprofits. Additional events are listed on pages 27-29.

DECEMBER

Now until Sunday, Jan. 3

Free holiday art show. Montview Blvd. Presbyterian Church. 1980 Dahlia. 303.355.1651, www.Montview.org.

Now until Sunday, Jan. 3

Zoo Lights. Denver Zoo, 2300 Steele. 5:30-9pm. 720.337.1400 or www.denverzoo.org. See page 26.

Tuesday-Friday Weekly

Free group walks around Stapleton Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. One hour long. Times vary. See page 29.

Now until Saturday, Dec. 12

Denver School of the Arts performances. 7111 Montview. Visit dsa.dpsk12.org/calendar/

Saturdays weekly, Dec. 5-19

The Masked Bandit. Presentation at ferret exhibit. Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, 6550 Gateway Rd, Commerce City. fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

Sunday, December 6

Annual Menorah Lighting. The Green, 29th and Syracuse. 5:15pm. www.JewishStapleton.com. Details on page 29.

Submit Info for Upcoming NE Denver Resource Guides

Email information to:
frontporchevents@gmail.com.

Churches—A directory of NE Denver churches will run in our January issue. To be in the printed directory please submit info by December 15: the church's name, denomination, 25 words describing the culture of the congregation/services, and contact information, including address, phone number and/or e-mail.

Sports Teams and Summer Camps—Please refer to the existing sports team and summer camp guides at FrontPorchStapleton.com/news/resource-guide/ and send new and/or updated information.

Send Sports Teams by Dec. 15 to run in January. Send Summer Camps by Jan. 15 to run in the February issue.

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 6

Free holiday caroling. 4pm starting at Stapleton pools. Hosted by Neighborhood Music Stapleton. Details on page 29.

Thursday, December 10

George Washington High School tour and informational session. 5pm. 655 S. Monaco Parkway. gwhs.dpsk12.org

Thursday, December 10

Northfield High School open house. 6pm. 5500 Central Park Blvd. <http://northfield.dpsk12.org/>

Thursday, December 10

Active Minds. "The History of Tea." 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library* www.activeminds.com

Sunday, December 13

Chanukah in Candyland. 8301 Northfield Blvd. #1610. Chanukah crafts, latkes and more. 4-6pm. www.JewishStapleton.com. Details on page 29.

Thursday, December 17

Active Minds. "Venice: Biography of a City" 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library* www.activeminds.com

Saturday, December 19

Coffee and cocoa with the cops. Get to know Dist. 5 officers, ask questions, share concerns. 1-5pm. Community Hub, 8320 E Northfield Blvd #1350.

Thursday, December 24

Stapleton Fellowship Church Christmas Eve service. 3, 4:15 and 5:30pm. 2961 Roslyn. www.StapletonChurch.com

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve at Montview Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia. 3, 5, 7:30, 10:15, and 11pm. www.montview.org

JANUARY

Thursday, January 7

Northfield High School open house. 6pm. 5500 Central Park Blvd. <http://northfield.dpsk12.org/>

* More information at Events@stapletoncommunity.com
Founders Green: E. 29th Ave. and Roslyn St.
Conservatory Green: Valencia & 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



Winter Movie on The Green

Friday, Dec. 4, 6:30pm, *Home Alone*
Join us for the winter movie on The Green at 29th and Roslyn! This year's movie will be *Home Alone*. Fire pits will be roaring, s'more makings will be available and we will have hot drinks for kids and adults!

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, Dec. 10, 6:45-7:45pm

The History of Tea

Other than water, tea is the most widely consumed beverage in the world and one of the oldest, tracing its roots (so to speak) to at least the fifth century B.C. Join Active Minds as we tell the story of tea, including the role it played in colonial empire building, the different types of tea, how it is grown and processed, who grows and drinks the most (which are not the same) and much more.

Thursday, Dec. 17, 6:45-7:45pm

Venice: Biography of a City

Perhaps no other city in the world conjures such distinct images as the gondolas plying the canals of Venice. Join us for a virtual tour of this beautiful and historic city that is visited by more than 20 million tourists each year. We will cover the story of the city, the most notable features, and end with a look at what the future holds for this city that is both sinking and shrinking as the waters rise and the full-time residents move away.

Santa's Best Christmas Trees

Visit your local tree lot for your 2015 Christmas tree! Santa's Best Christmas Trees will be located at each of The Greens. The Greens are located at 29th Ave. and Roslyn St. and 49th Pl. and Valencia St.

The Denver Police Department Reminds You to Keep Yourself Safe

The Denver Police Department would like to offer some helpful tips on keeping yourself safe.

When walking keep alert; don't allow a conversation on your cell phone to distract you from your environment. When you are at your home or apartment, be aware of any suspicious people or activity around your home or in your neighborhood. Report suspicious activity to the Denver Police Department ASAP. If you experience car trouble, pull over to a safe location away from the flow of traffic. Stay inside your vehicle with the doors locked and call the police for assistance.

Snow Removal Policy

During major snow events as defined by current Denver City & County standards, the Stapleton MCA will initiate its emergency snow removal plan for the alleys along with the city's plan for neighborhood streets. In the event of a major snow event, the snow removal plan will include the continuous use of heavy equipment, light equipment and hand work to remove the snow from alleys, intersections and major pedestrian paths. Alley work will be limited to the removal of enough snow from the alleys so residents can access their garages. This emergency-only procedure involves attempting to open up a single drive lane through each alley in the community. The drive lanes will not be scraped down to pavement, to eliminate the need to truck any snow off-site.

This procedure does not negate individual property owners from participating in snow removal during these types of storms. Although we are unable to address the complete removal of snow on the roads, it is our goal during major snow events to remove enough material to allow for some level of travel in and out of alleys. Paths and parks are done to open up some level of pedestrian travel. We will continue to address all the pocket parks and pathways to ensure that they are as snow free as possible to promote pedestrian access throughout the community. For detailed information about the snow removal policy, visit our website at www.stapletoncommunity.com.

The MCA Holiday Schedule

The MCA will be closed from Thursday, Dec. 24 through Fri., Jan. 1. We will re-open on Monday, Jan. 4 at 9am. Call 303.388.0724 for any emergencies.

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

Diane Deeter
Community Director
ddeeter@stapletoncommunity.com

Get the latest on 

Master Community Association



Sponsored by Stapleton MCA

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Holiday Cheer...Found Here.

Give the gift that fits just right! Northfield Stapleton gift cards are available in any denomination, online or in the Northfield Stapleton management office.



**Free Festive Horse
& Carriage Rides**
December 12 & 19 • 1-9pm

**Chanukah in
Candyland**
December 13 • 4-6pm



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Over 80 specialty shops and restaurants, including:

Bass Pro Shops • Macy's • JCPenney • Old Navy • Improv Comedy Club • Victoria's Secret • Harkins Theatres 18 • SuperTarget



Northfield Stapleton Main Street Shops Directory

Abode & Co.303-574-3334
Bar Louie303-457-5900
Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World....720-385-3600
Bath & Body Works720-374-2966
Brothers Bar & Grill303-953-0229
Buckle.....303-574-0842
Charlotte Russe303-373-1404
Charming Charlie303-371-3060
Claire's303-375-1165
Cold Stone Creamery303-373-0500
Colorado Hut.....720-255-5438
Colorado Rustic Furnishings303-371-1483
Cowboys SaloonComing Soon
El Forastero Western Wear.....303-373-0111
Ergo Aveda Salon & Spa.....303-373-5455
Famous Footwear.....303-373-1314
Finish Line.....303-373-4155
GameWorksComing Soon

Grandrabbits Toy Shoppe303-443-8675
Hand & Stone Massage
and Facial Spa.....303-574-0150
Harkins Theatres Northfield 18.....720-374-3118
Hot Topic303-576-0300
Improv Comedy Club
& Dinner Theatre303-307-1777
Islamorada Fish Co.720-385-3500
(Inside Bass Pro Shops)
JC Nail Spa720-287-5858
JCPenney303-576-6661
JCPenney Portrait Studio
(Inside JCPenney)720-374-7207
Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Q303-371-1566
Jos. A. Bank303-373-0766
Journeys303-574-0880
June Ruby.....303-880-2965
Justice303-576-6880

La Sandia Tequila Cantina303-373-9100
Lane Bryant/Cacique303-209-0227
LensCrafters303-574-0647
Macy's.....303-227-7222
Marco's Pizza.....303-996-2929
Menchie's Frozen Yogurt.....303-375-1101
More Than A Perfume.....303-955-4603
Mountain Man Nut & Fruit Co.720-638-5972
My Best Friend's Closet.....303-371-4838
New York & Company.....303-371-1927
Off Broadway Shoes303-371-0131
Old Navy.....303-371-3992
Phenix Salon SuitesComing Soon
Pigtails & Crewcuts303-371-1110
Qdoba Mexican Grill303-286-7337
Red Robin's Burger Works720-214-2747
Salati Italian Street Food.....303-307-1695
Sephora (Inside JCPenney)303-576-6661

Stapleton Tap House720-449-2337
Starbucks.....303-371-1503
Subway.....303-574-0344
SuperTarget.....303-209-8720
Texas de Brazil720-374-2100
The Gentry & The Lady720-639-6666
T-Mobile303-373-3991
Verizon Wireless.....303-307-8570
Victoria's Secret303-574-3055
Which Wich720-508-3394
Whimsy Paint & Sip303-373-5555
Yankee Candle.....303-371-2955
Your Soul's Movement
Yoga & Dance StudioComing Soon
Zen Asian Sushi Bar & Grill303-371-4644
Zumiez720-374-4763

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Coloradoans are all about keeping things local from food to goods to music and businesses. If it's local, people feel better about spending their time, money and efforts there. And when "local" goes so far as to mean neighbors, all the better. How fortuitous then that the latest batch of businesses to be announced in the Eastbridge Town Center all have a neighborhood connection.

Chef Troy Guard, owner of Los Chingones and a yet-un-named breakfast/lunch restaurant

Restaurateur Troy Guard has a collection of restaurants around the city. But when he opens two more in the Eastbridge Town Center, it will mark the first time he'll have restaurants in his own neighborhood, where he lives just blocks away. Guard will open a breakfast/lunch concept restaurant that has yet to be named and Los Chingones, a Mexican taqueria with a rooftop patio and expansive views. When he envisions the restaurants and the Town Center open, Guard pictures a fun, busy atmosphere where people know each other, share tables and feel like it's their place. It's something he wants for himself and his own family. "Restaurants bring the best out



Neighbors and future Eastbridge retail owners gather where their new businesses will be located by fall 2016. Back row, left to right: Colin Ness, Lon Symensma, Jonah Bradley. Front row Natalie McLaren and Brian Tepp. Not pictured are Troy Guard and Chris Lindley.

Future Merchants Excited to Share Eastbridge Space

tenth locations but the first so close to home for Chris Lindley and his family. The Eastbridge location will offer hot yoga and a barre studio while the Stanley location will include kids' gymnastics and an adult high-intensity fitness studio space. He sees the two locations as a nice complement to each other.

Lindley, who is also a firefighter, is looking forward to getting his neighbors to go work out with him. "People want convenience and like to go somewhere close that they can walk or ride to. That's a big appeal. We're happy to be right in the middle of it

of everyone, I think." Guard expects and welcomes feedback from the neighborhood. "I like to think I'm going to have a lot more texts and phone calls saying 'Hey, you should put this on the menu' or 'We didn't have a good experience and this is why' and I like that." While there's always pressure to do well with any of his restaurants, Guard says there is a little bit more pressure with the East-

bridge restaurants. "Now I have a reputation to live up to. I want to be very proud of it," he says. "I live out here and know what it's like. I know the people and people are waiting for something like this." Chris Lindley, owner, Endorphin When they open, the two locations of Endorphin at the Stanley Marketplace and at Eastbridge will mark the business's ninth and

now," he says. Lindley is also glad to offer an option for people at the Anschutz campus, especially those working at the VA hospital since Lindley is a Bronze Star-decorated Iraq War veteran. Lindley is looking forward to working with his neighboring businesses in Eastbridge including Pilates Evolution Stapleton. "It's just another opportunity for people to move and any type of movement is better than no move-

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



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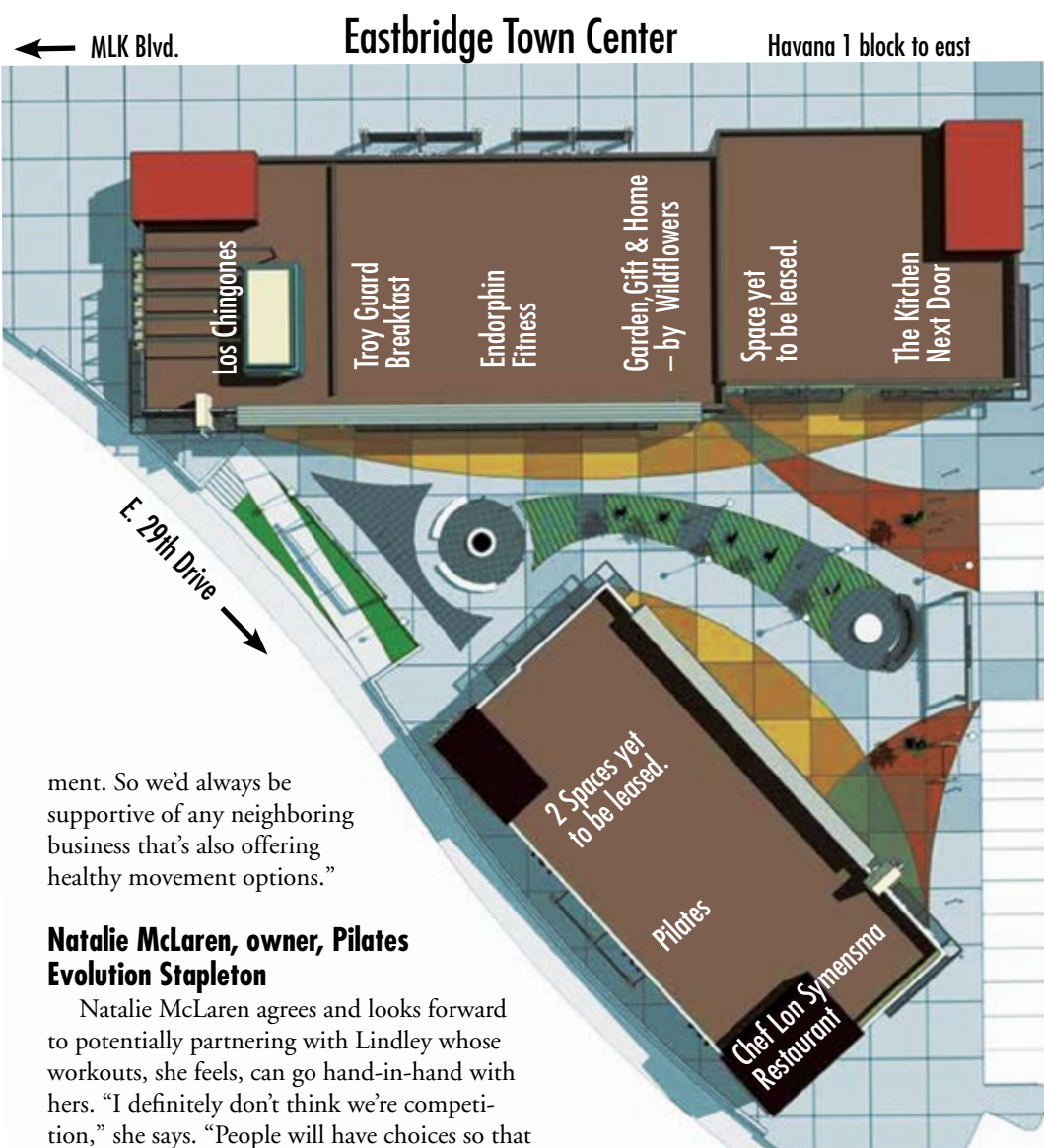
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A directory with links to these businesses can be found at www.FrontPorchStapleton.com > Business Directory

December 2015

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Stapleton Front Porch



ment. So we'd always be supportive of any neighboring business that's also offering healthy movement options."

Natalie McLaren, owner, Pilates Evolution Stapleton

Natalie McLaren agrees and looks forward to potentially partnering with Lindley whose workouts, she feels, can go hand-in-hand with hers. "I definitely don't think we're competition," she says. "People will have choices so that will be great."

With a location in Cherry Creek that she opened in 2008, McLaren is looking forward to bringing her workouts to her own neighborhood under the name Pilates Evolution Stapleton. Her workouts are a new evolution of pilates (thus the name) that combines cardio and strength training with pilates.

When McLaren, who had wanted to open a location in Stapleton where she lives with her family, heard the concept of the Eastbridge project, she knew it was the right opportunity. "I like that it's people from the neighborhood and Denver and not chains. It's a nice feeling of community over there." In addition to having friends and neighbors come work out (and potentially teach too), McLaren is also looking forward to

getting to know her fellow tenants. "We're all in the same boat; we all live around here and want to be successful. It's going to be amazing and it's going to create a very cool vibe."

Jonah Bradley and Brian Tepp, owners of a yet-to-be-named business

McLaren already knows one of her neighboring tenants, friend Jonah Bradley who, along with husband, Brian Tepp, currently own Wild Flowers in Congress Park. The Park Hill residents haven't decided on a name for the new business but it will include "by Wild Flowers" to maintain a connection.

Like their current location, the new one will be a garden, gift and home shop carrying

everything from houseplants to jewelry to candles and unique greeting cards. Local artisans will be featured. "We try to focus on the little guys in the neighborhood selling neighborhood goods," says Bradley. "We value the entrepreneurial spirit, so when we can develop a partnership with them, it works really well."

Bradley hopes neighborhood kids will come in to feed the fish they'll have at the front of the store, like neighborhood kids do now in Congress Park. "We'd love to create a place where people come in, visit, feed the fish and do their rounds." He feels it's the relationships that have an impact in the community. "We've created relationships with our clientele," says Bradley. "That's something we're hoping to see at Stapleton as well."

Lon Symensma, Executive Chef/Owner of a yet-to-be-named restaurant

With successful Asian restaurants ChoLon Bistro and Cho77 under his belt, Lon Symensma is ready to take on something new—American cuisine. Although the name of the new venture isn't quite set, his vision for the restaurant is. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, the Executive Chef/Owner says there will be coffee, a juice bar, hot breakfast items and pastries at breakfast and soup, salad and sandwiches at lunch. "We're really going to hone in on the neighborhood and what their wants, needs and expectations are and deliver a concept that people will want to come to frequently." At dinner, Symensma wants the restaurant to become a destination, drawing people from all over the city to see what's happening at Stapleton.

Although Symensma doesn't live in the area, his new Chef de Cuisine,

Luke Bergman, will be moving to Stapleton with his family as the project nears completion. Symensma says that combining his own talents with Bergman's, whose resume includes some of Manhattan's best Michelin-star-rated restaurants, will add another layer not only to Stapleton but to Denver and Colorado as a whole. "There are some heavy hitters that will be in this whole development," he says. "It's a project that's going to draw some attention and culinary talent to the Stapleton area."

Colin Ness, director of operations, The Kitchen Next Door

The Kitchen Next Door will add to its collection of restaurants with the new location in the Eastbridge Town Center. Director of Operations Colin Ness lives in Stapleton as does the restaurant's Culinary Director, Merlin Verrier. Their insider understanding of the community helped them tailor the restaurant to appeal to the broadest audience possible. "I know the community has a lot of families so we kept that in mind when we designed the restaurant. We want to be the default place people always feel comfortable going to."

The restaurant will serve traditional pub fare plus sandwiches and salads, all using mostly organic, locally-sourced ingredients including beef sourced from a local ranch.

When Ness envisions what it will be like when the Kitchen Next Door and the entire Eastbridge project is open, he describes "a vibrant community where kids are playing in the common area while parents relax and linger over their meal on the patio or people watching sports, on a date or hanging out with friends. There's going to be a sense of place that will encourage people to linger and enjoy the environment that's been created by the physical building but also the energy from each of the restaurants. I really feel like people are going to want to spend time there."

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6th Annual *be well* Awards and Community Celebration

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Stapleton

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Greater Park Hill

NE Park Hill

Northwest Aurora

Nominate someone who is impacting their zone!

Submit your nomination at bewellconnect.net/awards

Submission deadline December 18th

GET IN YOUR ZONE!

be well

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- Physical Activity Leadership
- Nutrition Leadership
- Community Advocate(s) of the Year
- Preventative Care Leadership
- Community Service Award
- And new this year...The Legacy Award

For more information call 303-468-3243

Community Celebration • Thursday, January 28th • 5:30 - 8pm • The Renaissance Hotel



Left: Mark Shaker (second from left) and dignified stakeholders smile at the opening of an obstetric hospital in Niger built to treat fistulas, a hole caused by tissue damage from a prolonged obstructed labor.

Below: Shaker sits with villagers at an educational meeting about how to prevent fistulas.

Right: As part of Shaker’s work to eliminate fistulas, he began a prevention program that trained one woman and one man from each village to educate other villagers how to prevent fistulas. He created an illustrated flipchart, shown here, because many villagers were illiterate.



Mark Shaker Not a Real Estate Developer, A Social Worker


By Madeline Schroeder

Many know Stapleton resident Mark Shaker as the man behind Stanley Marketplace, a massive project at 25th and Dayton that will transform an abandoned military aircraft ejection seat manufacturing plant into a citywide marketplace. But few know Shaker as the man behind the success of the Worldwide Fistula Fund. “People call me a real estate developer, but I’m not really. I’m a social worker. I look at things differently to find creative solutions and engage stakeholders,” he says. So what exactly is the Worldwide Fistula Fund? The story begins in 1995 when Dr. Lewis Wall, an OB-GYN from Washington University in St. Louis, started the organization. He had traveled back and forth to Niger in western Africa for several years performing fistula surgeries. A fistula is a hole caused by tissue damage from constant pressure on the vaginal area

during a prolonged obstructed labor. A hole can be created either between the vagina and bladder or vagina and rectum. Fistulas generally do not cause severe pain, but women can be uncomfortable and get secondary infections. The hole causes leaking, and, due to the smell, women are ostracized from society much like lepers. Fistulas do not exist anywhere in the world with modern medicine, but are common in impoverished areas. Niger has the highest fertility and poverty rates in the world. Many women have prolonged obstructed labor due to lack of health care or lack of access to a hospital during labor. On top of that, malnutrition and child marriage make delivering a baby much more problematic. In 2009, Shaker, who was getting his executive master of business administration degree at the University of Denver, read an article in *The New York Times* about Dr. Lewis Wall and his work to raise awareness and funds for women with fistulas. Much like Wall, Shaker could not believe this

segment of human life existed. “It was absolutely horrific. It was mind-blowing, like how can this exist? How did I not know about this?” Shaker and three others, including Megan Von Wald who is now a partner in the Stanley project, reached out to Wall and provided pro bono consulting work for six months. Then, the board of directors asked Shaker to be the CEO to help take the organization to the next level. He agreed, and soon after, Shaker flew to Niger to set up the groundwork to build a freestanding obstetric hospital. After arriving in Niger, Shaker quickly realized it was not the right time to build a hospital. No relationships had been established between the Niger people and the organization. The hospital is located on Christian missionary property in a 99 percent Muslim country with complicated tribal politics. Each group had different priorities and kept to themselves; many hadn’t even

met one another despite being neighbors. Shaker needed time to understand the stakeholders, bring them together, and grow support for the hospital before launching into construction. “There are typically people who come in to these West African countries and stay a few weeks but don’t have continued communication or relationships,” he says, and often make cultural faux pas. They delayed the project and for six months Shaker had no agenda except to get to know the people. He carefully navigated the web of stakeholders, including the tribal chiefs, government leaders, the Ministry of Health, the women and families affected by fistulas, and more. After a while, Shaker learned the culture and how to approach each stakeholder. He flew back and forth from the U.S., and each time he arrived, though weathered and



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exhausted, made sure to go straight to the chiefs and let them know he was in town and looked forward to working together. He went from being totally ignored by the people to being known as “Sugarba,” or “Boss” in the native Hausa language. Village people fought over who got to host him for dinner when he was in town.

Everyone experiences some degree of sorrow or trauma in Niger, according to Shaker, so he wanted to create a reason for the people to celebrate—every time Sugarba was in town there was a dance party.

People began to take pride in the hospital by being involved in the project. Shaker gave villagers responsibilities that were essential to the project’s development. “These people were always told what to do in their lives. They were never a part of a process before. By being a part of the project, they were contributing to the development in a meaningful way and actually wanted to help build the hospital.”

He also created a fistula prevention education program called “When the Sun Sets Twice” that teaches if a woman is in labor for two sunsets, she needs to get to a hospital to prevent a fistula. Because 85 percent of the women are illiterate, he created a flipchart with educational drawings and traveled to all the villages within 100 miles of the hospital. He went over the importance of getting to a doctor quickly, and came up with an evacuation strategy with each group of women. He demonstrated riding in a donkey cart to the next village where there was a car to drive to the hospital. As part of the prevention program, one man and one woman in each village were trained to be educators, which

was seen as a great honor.

Within one year of the hospital opening, new cases of fistulas were completely eliminated. The hospital is a model prevention program for similar fistula prevention initiatives around the world. Over time, the hospital operated efficiently enough that Shaker’s role became obsolete and he returned to the U.S. full time, where he started the Stanley Marketplace project.

Located on the boundary between Stapleton and Aurora, Stanley Marketplace has its own web of stakeholders. Much like in Niger, Shaker has sought out the chiefs in Aurora and Stapleton and figured out how to approach them. He has also demystified people’s perceptions of the building, which was locked off and abandoned for many years.

“The concept of really understanding all the stakeholders and meaningfully engaging with them is exactly the same with Stanley as in Niger,” he says.

Inspired by the African markets where people go for the entire day, Shaker wants Stanley Marketplace to be a gathering place for people across the city to come celebrate and spend their day. Much like the hospital that gave new life to Niger, he hopes Stanley will give new life to Northwest Aurora. “So no, I would not call myself a real estate developer. I’m a social worker,” he says.

DPS Choice Starts January 5

- Choice forms are due by 4pm Jan. 29, 2016.
- To research schools, DPS enrollment guides with information about all schools are available online at <http://schoolchoice.dpsk12.org/enrollment-guide/>.
- Round 1 Choice forms are available beginning Jan. 5, 2016, at any Denver Public School, online at schoolchoice.dpsk12.org, or through the parent portal. DPS recommends online application as it streamlines their processing of the forms.
- Ranking priorities on the choice form: Students who wish to attend an assigned boundary school can simply put that one school for their first choice. Students in an enrollment zone should enter all five choices, including at least three zone options.
- Paper forms can be turned in at any DPS school, at a Choice & Enrollment Services Office at 3131 N. Eliot St., or at 4800 Telluride St. Building 5. Online forms are submitted through the DPS Parent Portal.
- By Friday, March 18, 2016, DPS will notify students of school assignments.

Front Porch 2016-17 Guide to Stapleton-Park Hill Middle Schools

With the help of our local principals, the *Front Porch* has updated our online Guide to Stapleton-Park Hill Middle Schools for the 2016-17 school year. This guide includes each school’s philosophy, culture, supportive learning services, and more. Find it at FrontPorchStapleton.com > News > Resource Guides. The five middle school principals also shared a favorite memory from the past school year:

McAuliffe International School, 2540 Holly

“Last year we had our first large-scale musical production. It was really fun and impressive to see how powerful musical theater can be in a school. To have kids who have never sang solos in front of 500 people is really powerful. The great thing is that every kid has the opportunity to participate because there are large casts and multiple productions. We heavily invest in the arts here.”

—Kurt Dennis, principal

Denver Discovery School, 3480 Syracuse

“One of the ideal moments this past year was when we took our kids for the annual trip to the woods. We were having a morning celebration meeting and sitting in this prairie below Longs Peak. A child said to another, ‘I have been in middle school with you now for six weeks and I sit near you in science, but I didn’t know who you were. This camp experience allowed me to know who you are, and now I have 100 new friends.’”

—Kristen Atwood, principal

DSST: Conservatory Green, 8499 E. Stoll Place

“My favorite memories always center around our end of trimester award ceremonies. While we do a lot to celebrate our students on a weekly basis, including weekly awards and shout-outs, these end of the trimester celebrations truly recognize the immense value that our students bring to our community.”

—John Clark, principal

DSST: Stapleton, 2000 Valentinia

“Once a month we have what is called ‘Ubuntu,’ which is African philosophy that means ‘I am, because we are.’ During this time, groups of students from sixth, seventh and eighth grades combine and spend time building community and having a lot of fun. Some activities that students do at this time might be a scavenger hunt competition, creating human pyramids in the commons, discussing the history and purpose of selfies, discussing the importance of community, and many, many more things.”

—Jessica Heesacker, principal

Bill Roberts K-8 School, 2100 Akron Way

“My favorite memory is when we did a Halloween Trick-or-Treat street, where the middle school students hosted a trick-or-treat for grades K-2. It’s amazing to see how much our middle school students embrace leadership and their place as role models in the school.”

—Erik Cohen, principal

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By John Fernandez

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ondos as a share of single-family construction starts have dropped from 25 percent in 2007 to 3.4 percent in 2015.¹ Despite that drop, condo re-sales constitute 29.3 percent of all single-family unit sales, evidence of a strong market demand for condos.²

The Denver City Council has approved a condo construction defects ordinance with the goal of having more multi-unit for-sale dwellings on the market.

It is the latest in a series of laws adopted by Front Range cities addressing what is generally referred to as the construction defects problem—where builders shy away from for-sale condominium products due to concerns with future litigation.

Denver’s ordinance is similar to ones adopted previously in Lakewood, Littleton and Aurora. Its three key features strive to strike a new balance between the builder and the homeowners association when construction defects claims are made:

- It requires “informed consent” of a majority of homeowners and a majority vote before litigation can be pursued.
- It requires alternative dispute resolution (arbitration or mediation) for construction defect claims if the covenants creating the HOA so require and it prohibits elimination of such covenants by the HOA.
- It eliminates technical code violations as a cause for action and requires that actual damage, injury or risk be demonstrated (Denver only).

Denver’s New

Photo above shows condos being built in Stapleton near 23rd and Syracuse in April 2002. No new condos have been built in Stapleton in the past 10 years.

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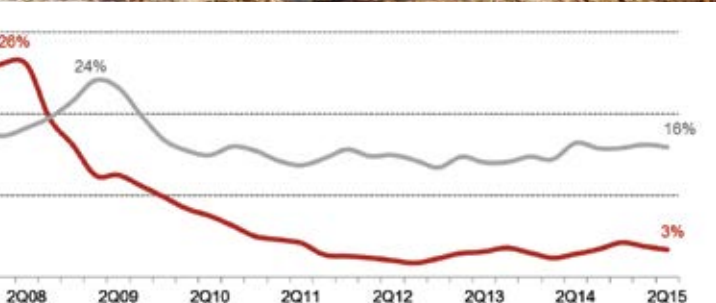
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In 2008, condo sales (red) were 26% of the metro Denver market, townhomes (gray) were 18% and single family homes were 56%. In 2015 condo sales were 3%, townhomes were 16%, and single family homes were 81%. Graph by Metrostudy.

The Denver ordinance takes effect January 1 and applies to any “community interest association” created after that date. (It does not apply to existing condo associations.) The local ordinances have been enacted in the absence of state legislation, which has traditionally set the framework for resolving construction defect claims.

Condo owner groups are opposed to the ordinance on several grounds. Molly Foley-Healy, legislative liaison for the Community Associations Institute (CAI), a national trade group representing homeowners associations, says the ordinance “stacks the deck against condo owners” by forcing use of arbitrators selected by the developer/builder. She also said that HOAs, which are nonprofit corporations, do not have the revenue base to pay for arbitration—asserting that arbitration is more expensive than going to court and generally results in less than full settlements.

Denver views for-sale condos as an important part of its overall affordable housing strategy since condos are typically less expensive than single-family detached housing. A staff-prepared fact sheet states, “Denver will see upwards of 50,000 new residents in the next five years and needs a diversity of housing types

to remain a vibrant and thriving city.” Assistant City Attorney David Broadwell said, “It’s a statewide issue, but particularly acute in Denver... we have a huge amount of stuff being built right next to our TODs (transit-oriented developments) and it’s all rental.”

But Denver cannot require rental units to be affordable under current state law. Due to a 2000 Colorado Supreme Court decision, Denver and other cities are unable to require an affordable housing set-aside in rental projects.

Skye Stuart, the mayor’s legislative affairs director, says, “Since 2002 when the IHO was adopted, there has not been one project that has gone from apartments to condos in Denver,” which she believes is due, in part, to fear of construction defects litigation.

Forest City supports the IHO legislation, says Tom Gleason, vice president for public relations, “as it could be helpful in our efforts to expand the range of housing options at Stapleton.” He said Stapleton has only a couple hundred condo units total, with none built in the past 10 years.

The Denver ordinance is aimed at condominiums that are structured as “air rights” ownership units, as distinguished from units that sit on their own lots, such as duplexes, townhomes or row home condominiums.

The city’s staff memorandum to Denver City Council ac-

knowledges that construction defect litigation reform has been controversial, stating, “Advocates on both sides of the issue disagree at the most basic level regarding whether or not the risks and costs associated with construction defect litigation are the fundamental reason there is a lack of condominium construction in the Denver metropolitan region.”

Foley-Healy and other opponents of the legislation argue that construction defects are not the main cause for the dearth of condo construction, citing other reasons such as stricter financing qualifications for builders and owners in the wake of the credit market scandal.

Foley-Healy agrees that there are problems with the current legal framework for resolving construction defect issues but says a statewide solution is needed, not piecemeal approaches by individual local governments. She also predicts litigation over whether any home rule city has the authority to legislate on this matter given existing state statutes. Broadwell says the Denver ordinance “complements and does not conflict with existing state laws” that already govern the legal relationships between homebuilders and homebuyers.

¹ Compiled by Metrostudy from metro Denver permit data.

² Patty Silverstein, Development Research Partners, quoted in Denver staff background memo to Denver City Council.

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By John Fernandez

On a bench in the “great hall” of Denver Union Station sits Dana Crawford, on her cell phone, conducting business. Seeing her interviewer approach, Crawford hands the phone to her associate, who comments, “Wherever Dana is, that’s her office.”

We are meeting in what she likes to call “Denver’s living room—do you know it’s open 24/7 and never locked?” The bench is just across from the lobby of the Crawford Hotel, named in her honor and in recognition of her 50 years of work revitalizing Denver. It’s a mission she continues as head of Urban Neighborhoods, a real estate development company she founded in 1988. She shows no signs of stopping, with numerous projects underway and apologizes for cutting short the interview.

Fortunately for all of us, Mike McPhee has summarized Crawford’s importance to Denver in a highly readable, beautifully illustrated book, *Dana Crawford: 50 Years Saving the Soul of a City* (2015 Upper Gulch Publishing Co.). McPhee is a retired Denver Post reporter who has launched a second career as a biographer.

McPhee claims Crawford is the “most quoted woman in Colorado history.” A partial list of her accomplishments suggests why:

-Creator of Larimer Square in the mid-1960s at a time when all development trends were spinning out to the suburbs

-Developer of the Oxford Hotel

-The person who brought industrial warehouse loft living to Denver

-Charter member of Historic Denver

-Recipient of the highest award from the National Trust

for Historic Preservation

-Leader of the partnership that re-developed Denver Union Station (DUS)



Author Mike McPhee, who wrote Dana Crawford’s biography, sits with her at Union Station near the Crawford Hotel.

She was such an early leader in historic preservation, she put Denver on the map—consulting nationally on how to link legacy buildings with urban revitalization. She was 50 years ahead of today’s millennials and their affinity for urban living. And sitting today in the DUS great hall, she worries that when commuter rail opens for service

next April, the place will get overcrowded. Being practical and a visionary, she can foresee that the bathrooms in RTD’s bus concourse and in DUS will not be adequate. Despite the concern, she still wants A Line riders to hop on the train and get acquainted with

DUS and all that LoDo has to offer.

McPhee’s book makes a strong case that Crawford’s legacy is nothing less than a healthy Denver.



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Crawford ul of the City

Those with an historical perspective know what Denver was like 50 years ago and that things could have gone very differently absent leaders like Crawford.

McPhee's book traces Crawford's small town, central Kansas upbringing on to junior college, Kansas University and to graduate business school at Radcliffe. This was a time when women weren't admitted to Harvard even though "we took the same classes from the same professors and studied the same cases as the Harvard Business School." That kind of gender bias was undoubtedly formative in shaping the hard-nosed businessperson she became, a reputation that McPhee addresses in his book. Internships in Boston and New York acquainted her with urban living. After graduation, at a friend's suggestion, she moved to Denver and soon wrote to her mother, "After New York, everyone here is so damn nice. I LIKE Denver."

Landing a job in public relations, she was soon introduced to city leaders and took on a high-profile assignment to "help sway public opinion about 'Big Bill Zeckendorf,'" an eastern developer with a disdain for suburbia and big plans for Denver's future (he eventually built the I.M. Pei-designed May D&F department store and plaza at 16th and Court Place as well as numerous other

From the Crawford Hotel mezzanine level, Dana Crawford looks over the Denver Union Station great hall that she considers "Denver's living room." She is the subject of a new biography by Mike McPhee titled, *Dana Crawford: 50 Years Saving the Soul of a City*.

projects). Experiences like that, plus memories of Boston's Back Bay and New York's Greenwich Village, and exposure to Aspen's revived 19th-century Victorian mining town ambience began to coalesce in the back of Crawford's mind even as she raised four boys and continued with her consulting career.

Seeking to be a developer herself, eventually she settled on redevelopment of the 1400 block of Larimer Street, a place

steeped in Denver's pioneer history but better known by the 1950s as the city's skid row. Countering the prevalent trends in urban renewal, she brought in "rebuilding crews" instead of wrecking crews. She set out to "transform a shabby district into a handsome and useful one ... it will contain the nucleus of Denver's nightlife." She attracted investors, assembled parcels, refurbished buildings, vetted potential tenants and in 1965, welcomed the world to "Larimer Square."

This lively, mixed-use district of older buildings formed a distinct contrast to the acres of vacant properties and parking lots elsewhere in LoDo created through the building demolitions facilitated by the Denver Urban Renewal Authority's 27-block Skyline project. Through Crawford's tenacity, Larimer Square itself had been saved from demolition when it was granted an exemption from DURA action and protected as a "rehabilitation area."

The rest, as they say, is history—but one that continues to play out today in Denver. McPhee sees Crawford's work as the crucial first step in revitalizing Denver as a thriving core city and showing the way to others across the country. He notes the impressive series of Denver mayors who "imagined a great city" and then went out

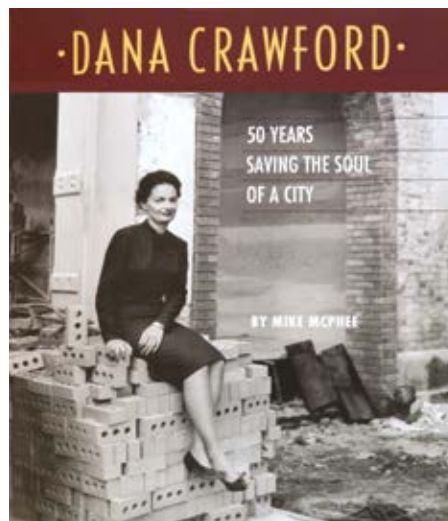
and did something about it. He recounts Mayor Federico Peña's shock at finding that the 4,600 acres of the Central Platte Valley in the early 1980s contributed a grand total of \$40,000 in property taxes to the city. Crawford herself says that Peña doesn't get enough credit for the vision and effort he brought to transforming Denver.

However, it is clear from the numerous testimonials in McPhee's book that city leaders in the know believe that it all started with Crawford. Peña: "Dana was truly a visionary. She set up historic preservation in Denver. There's no one else like her." Wellington Webb: "Dana's hands are on everything in this city ... So many of her projects were ones that everyone else gave up on and said they couldn't be done." John Hickenlooper: "Dana had the foresight and the appreciation of what those buildings had to offer, that no one else at the time seemed to have ... She single-handedly saved lower downtown Denver."

McPhee notes that Crawford was so far ahead of the market that it diminished her personal financial returns. The example he gives is the requirement by banks that she pre-sell residential

loft units because they had so little confidence in her warehouse renovation projects. This prevented her from profiting from the units' price appreciation. McPhee writes, "By all appearances, she's financially fit and comfortable but without the extensive holdings of the most successful real estate developers." McPhee said it's unfortunate that our society tends to measure success in dollars because Crawford is a true success who cares more about doing things right.

Crawford ended our interview by mentioning her involvement in 18 separate projects at the present time. Now in her mid-80s, she admitted to working more than fulltime. Many of her projects are still downtown but she has branched out to help the City and County of Broomfield fashion their own downtown with a project at First and Main. She also said she has been contacted by the owners of the Argo Mine near Idaho Springs. With a twinkle in her eye, she said she is considering a hotel and restaurant project at the mine itself, her latest venture in making something new and better out of something older and undervalued.



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The Indie Prof

Film reviews by Vincent Piturro

Each month, the Indie Prof reviews a current film in the theater and a second film that is available on DVD or VOD.

The Wonders (2014)

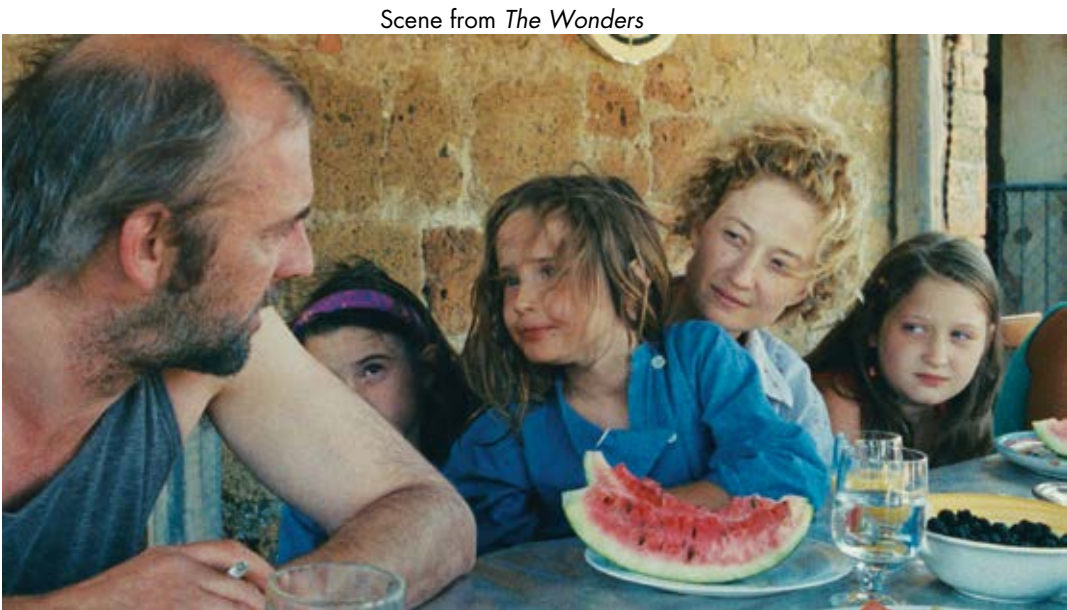
In just her second film, Italian writer/director Alice Rohrwacher has fashioned a gem. Winner of the Grand Jury award at Cannes last year, it tells the story of a family of Tuscan beekeepers who are fighting to save their way of life. Living on the farm with her German father and French mother, the story is told through the eyes of young Gelsomina (the very name harkens back to the 1952 Fellini classic *La Strada*, another coming-of-age story that follows the transition into womanhood). The film is imbued with the wonderful energy of the great Italian filmmakers, and it follows in their footsteps.

The story is thin: the family ekes out a meager, simple existence, but they are on the verge of losing their farm unless they make state-man-

dated renovations. When a (ridiculous!) reality TV show named *Countryside Wonders* shows up in the town, Gelsomina is fascinated and longs to be on the show. Father Wolfgang will have none of it, even though their financial situation is dire. Gelsomina secretly submits an application, and the family gets accepted.

While the story is thin and the characters are frustratingly underdeveloped, the mood is the thing. The atmosphere is wonderfully set in both cool and warm colors, and Gelsomina's burgeoning pre-teen spirit is expressionistically rendered in beautiful sequences. Cinematographer Hélène Louvart moves between documentary-like realism and beautiful expressionism with the ease of a master, and the end result is a feast for the senses.

This is not necessarily a film for everyone—not everything is explained, there is a great deal of missing backstory, and relationships are oblique. But there is something alluring about the film, much like living off the grid may seem attractive to many.



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Scene from *The Man in the High Castle*

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The Man in the High Castle (2015)

Early on in the first episode of Amazon's new original series *The Man in the High Castle*, Joe Blake (Luke Kleintank) gets a flat tire driving his truck through Colorado. With the Rockies as a backdrop, the setting is idyllic, even pastoral. A police officer stops to help Joe, and as they fix the tire and share a sandwich, ash rains down from the sky. "That's the hospital," the cop explains, "Tuesdays they burn cripples, the terminally ill. Drag on the state."

Such is America, 1962, in a re-imagined world where the Allies lost WWII, the Germans rule the East Coast of America, and the Japanese rule the West Coast. There is a small neutral zone in the middle, marked by the Rockies. The series is based on a book by Philip K. Dick, the great sci-fi writer who gave us *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, the book on which *Blade Runner* was based. If you know his work, you know that Dick had a beautiful mind, and the series does the book and that mind justice.

The series is plot heavy: the main characters are part of a resistance, some on the East Coast

and some on the West Coast. Joe Blake and Juliana Crane (Alexa Davalos) meet in the middle, trying to find the elusive man in the high castle, who supposedly runs the resistance and has distributed a film showing an alternate America—one in which the Allies won the war. The Nazis rule New York as they ruled Germany, and some live neatly tucked away in the Long Island suburbs. The big question: is it an alternate universe? Or are the films simply meant to inspire or even confuse the resistance?

With so much story to work through, the first few episodes are a bit slow to develop.

It is a daunting task, but the amount of action is just right, and the series picks up steam as it moves along. The series is produced by Ridley Scott (dir. *Blade Runner* and *Alien*) and Frank Spotnitz (*The X Files*), and the pilot is directed by Daniel Percival, a TV veteran. The steady hand shows up on screen, with high production values and excellent acting all around.

It is an ambitious project, and it works. Amazon seems to be catching up to Netflix in developing new series, and the long form canvas must be candy for filmmakers. Look for more filmmakers to make the jump to the original series format in the near future.

You will like this if you enjoyed *Blade Runner*, *A Scanner Darkly*, and/or *The Adjustment Bureau*.

Now playing on Amazon.

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

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Mark Shaker (left), from Stanley Marketplace, introduces sculptor Derrick Velasquez and Courtney Stell, curator for Black Cube.

Nomadic Art Museum Brings Sculpture to Stanley

By Carol Roberts

Artist Derrick Velasquez recently unveiled his 26-foot tall sculpture, *New Brutal*, for a one-month exhibit at Stanley Marketplace. The 6 x 6 foot tower built with bare plywood and Tyvek also has elaborate white molding. It is, he says, “in a lot of stages—and the city is in a lot of stages. It’s something to contemplate.”

On trips in the East he has viewed older row homes—crumbling or demolished—that leave an empty space between them. “In some ways this is my way of thinking about what fills up the spaces that are either vacant or need to be reclaimed in some ways. But those spaces are only 15-20 feet wide. And you see this negative space in those (missing) row houses.

“Verticality is something that I wanted to do also. I wanted something that’s a little off proportion too. It [the sculpture] is only a six by six foot footprint.”

When he travels in the East or in Europe he takes pictures of trim molding. With all the ornate trim on the sculpture, it’s not surprising

to hear him say, “I love that stuff. It’s trying to jam American and European designs in one piece.”

**Sculpture Exhibit at Stanley Marketplace
New Brutal by Derrick Velasquez**

Nov. 12 to Dec. 12

Thursdays 6-8 pm & Saturdays noon to 4 pm

**Velasquez will speak about his work at 7pm,
Thursday, December 10 at Stanley.**



Sculptor Derrick Velasquez

was founded in 2015 to spread their belief that art is an essential part of a healthy society and it does not exist just within the white walls of museums (thus the name Black Cube).

Black Cube funds the creation of works by “fellows” such as Velasquez and searches for locations for temporary exhibits. With this approach they aspire to reach new audiences not regularly exposed to contemporary art.

Velasquez says they wanted a construction site for his sculpture. “That shifts the idea that you have to have some white cube museum that doesn’t influence—but totally influences the way you look at art.”

Velasquez teaches in the Fine Arts department at Metropolitan State University of Denver and the University of Denver. He has undergraduate degrees in Art History and Studio Arts and a Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture from Ohio State University.

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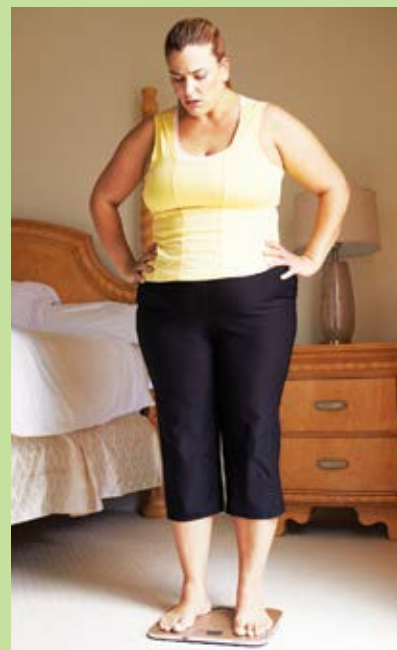


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Just the Facts

Colorado's Downhill Doozies

by James Hagadorn



Last year a block of earth 20 times the size of Coors Field slid downhill at upwards of 80 mph, bowling over a forest and killing three Coloradans near Collbran. Two decades prior, and not too far away, a football-field-sized chunk of I-70 heaved upward 14 feet—making the roadbed more suited to monster trucks than Camrys.

As the nation's cradle for steep slopes and high mountains, Colorado experiences over a thousand mass movements of earth—each year.

Should we be concerned?

Most of these are as small as your backyard, but some are the size of towns. Although there are many names to describe different types of downslope earth movements, we can lump them together as “landslides” *sensu lato*. Such landslides are to dirt/rock as avalanches are to snow, except that landslides are a year-round affair.

Fortunately, there is some predictability and patterning to such events. Many are triggered by rainfall—whether from a hovering storm system or an afternoon downpour. And those wildfires we've had in recent years? They just exacerbate the situation. Vegetation-less landscapes slough off curtains of loose sediment, turning rainy runoff into a wall of moving mud.



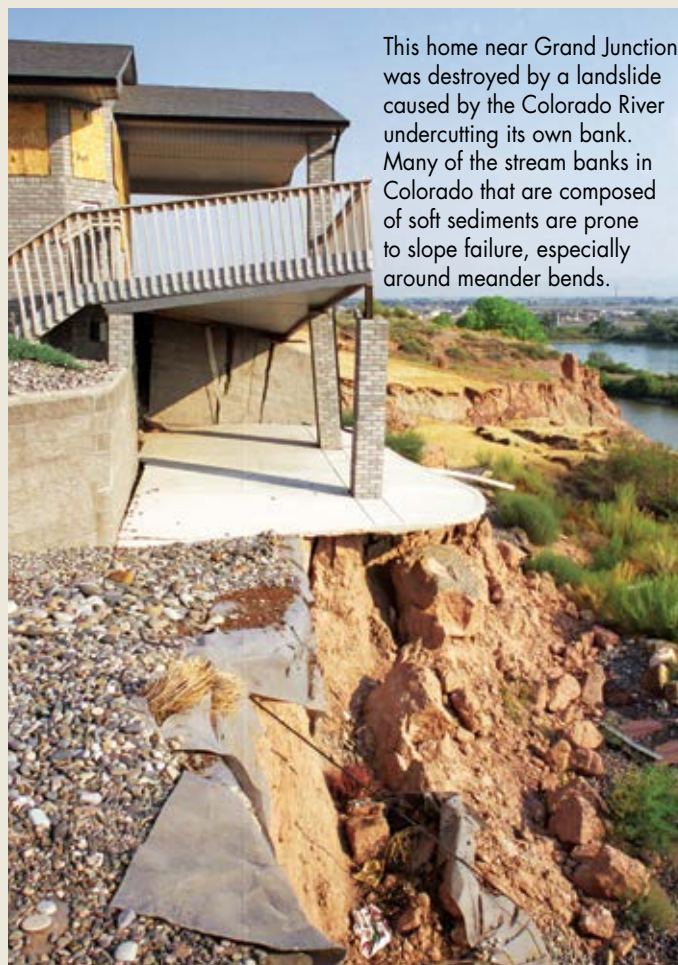
Approximately 10.5 million cubic yards of material mobilized when heavy rains and meltwater triggered a catastrophic slope failure above West Lost Creek in the San Juan Mountains in 1991. Eyewitness reports suggested that the slide moved nearly half a mile in 30 seconds.

Water infiltration, which peaks when snowmelt wicks its way down into cracks and pores in the earth, is another big cause of Colorado landslides, generating hillside slumps, rock slides and embankment failures. These types of landslides can lag behind their triggering event, sometimes occurring months after a snowmelt or late summer monsoon because it can take a long time for the pores and cracks in soils and rock to become filled with slowly infiltrating meltwater. Not only does the water-saturated dirt become heavier, but water also reduces the frictional characteristics of the soil, inhibiting its ability to “hold” its place on a slope.

Colorado's large daily temperature variations are another cause of landslides. Think of those days when you walked the dog with morning frost on the ground but later stepped out for lunch on a sunny 50-degree afternoon. These

temperature fluctuations cause expansion and contraction of rock and soil as water in pore spaces and rock fractures repeatedly freezes and thaws. Called ice-jacking, it triggers downslope movement of unstable earth. It's the same thermal process that causes so many potholes to form in our roads.

Not surprisingly, high-elevation communities are in the belly of the landslide-producing beast, much as they are for avalanches. Just pick your favorite pass. Loveland, Red Mountain, Slumgullion—they teem with downward-moving rock and dirt. Ditto for Colorado's high parks and mesas, where slides are catalyzed by flood-and-furrow agricultural irrigation



This home near Grand Junction was destroyed by a landslide caused by the Colorado River undercutting its own bank. Many of the stream banks in Colorado that are composed of soft sediments are prone to slope failure, especially around meander bends.

Photos from CGS archive

before commencing development. Moreover, just because a property (home, road, business, farm) was platted back in the day doesn't mean that it was ever assessed for geohazards like landslides, underground faults, abandoned mines, or swelling or collapsible soils.

Fortunately, the lion's share of large land movements move slowly, perhaps creeping an inch or a foot per year. And, many landslide-prone areas and regularly moving slides are known. See coloradogeologicalsurvey.org/geologic-hazards/landslides-2/

There's a saying among landslideologists: “Some landslides you fix, and others you name.” Fixing landslides includes buttressing the earth, holding it back

practices together with our bad habit of lopping off the toes of slopes during development.

And the Front Range? Western Colorado Springs is such a classic example that it ought to be included in the FEMA training handbook. Much of the Springs was developed over the last few decades, with builders siting houses on ancient landslides or slide-prone surfaces. It's like a perfect storm. Grade some of these sites, exuberantly irrigate the turf, and add a wet winter or two and ... kasloosh!—landslides let loose. Ponder it next time you're sipping chai at the Broadmoor.

Many other parts of the Front Range are also at risk. The same tectonic processes that tilted up those beautiful red sandstone beds to become the Flatirons, Red Rocks Amphitheatre, Roxborough Park, and the Garden of the Gods? They also tilted upward the slippery, poorly consolidated shales that underlie many communities ... which can slip and buckle when not developed with caution.

Surprisingly, Colorado doesn't require all builders, municipalities or agencies to assess risk

using soil- or tie-back anchors, or making it less heavy by drying it out or removing weight or earth from atop it. And the landslides that get named? Usually we address them by avoiding them and/or monitoring them with devices that notify authorities when their rate or distance of movement changes markedly.

The good news? Fatalities from these geohazards are extremely rare. Also, Colorado has a bunch of dedicated “slide scientists” who are embedded in places that count—like CDOT, CGS and the USGS.

Like the study of earthquakes, the study of landslides has moved from reactive to proactive in the last few decades. With new laser-based scans of ancient and current landslides, Colorado's landslide science could soon be predictive, employing risk-based asset management principles to protect people and property.

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



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ColoradoCare: A Bold Step in Healthcare for Coloradans to Consider

Editors Note: The Front Porch will provide further coverage with differing views on ColoradoCare in future issues.

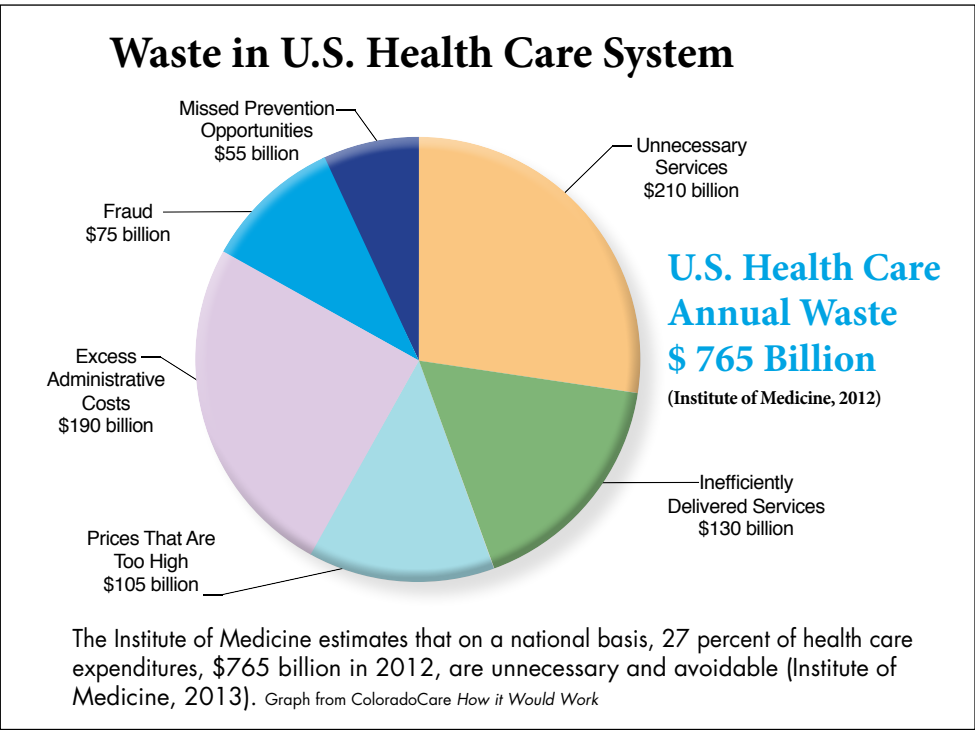
By Madeline Schroeder

Buried within the Affordable Care Act is section 1332, or State Innovation Waiver, that allows states to come up with innovative ways to deliver health care while complying with standards established by the Affordable Care Act. Colorado, having successfully created a state exchange, is now eligible under federal law to create a statewide health care system that covers every Coloradan. Colorado is one of the first states to propose such an alternative. It is being called ColoradoCare.

Colorado is one of 24 states that allows citizens' initiatives on the ballot. In preparation for the 2016 election, citizens have already collected more than the necessary signatures to put ColoradoCare, now Amendment 69, on next year's ballot.

ColoradoCare is a universal system—many call it a single payer system, but the bill's authors say a single payer system is not possible on a state basis and the more accurate description is universal health care system. Through ColoradoCare, an elected board of trustees manages all health care financing for the state, but care is still delivered by private entities. This board governs a system that collects and makes payments with revenue from a health care premium tax, billed as follows:

- 6.67 percent payroll tax paid by employers
- 3.33 percent payroll tax on employees
- 10 percent tax on non-payroll income, excluding:
 - Unemployment insurance, alimony, Social Security, and some pension income up to



\$33,000 per individual and \$60,000 for joint tax filers
-Income over \$350,000 per individual and \$450,000 for joint tax filers
(The premium tax is deductible on federal taxes, reducing the tax impact to 5.577 to 8.537 percent depending on tax bracket.)
The board of trustees that will govern ColoradoCare will be elected by Colorado voters for four-year terms. It will have 21 members from seven regions around the state.
All Coloradans would be covered through

ColoradoCare. The system must meet four conditions to be approved federally:

- Cover as many people as are covered through the Affordable Care Act (ACA)
- Provide equally rich benefits as the ACA
- Cost no more than premiums being paid under the ACA
- Not increase the federal deficit

"There are multiple issues with our current Colorado health care system that ColoradoCare will solve. And it can help us to improve affordability," says medical doctor and Colorado State

Senator Irene Aguilar, who first introduced the idea of a statewide, non-profit health care financing system.

"Through ColoradoCare, everyone contributes—but based on your income. ColoradoCare prohibits deductibles and limits co-pays so that preventive and primary care are available without payment. Other payments need to be approved by the board of directors," Aguilar says.

ColoradoCare's explanatory booklet states, "ColoradoCare saves money through business efficiency. Provider pay is not the major cause of high costs, and ColoradoCare would continue to pay quality providers competitively..." A graph in the booklet shows that the number of physicians increased 200 percent from 1970 to 2010 and in that same time period the number of administrators increased about 3,300 percent (Himmelstein & Woolhandler, 2012).

The ColoradoCare founders believe if health care costs less, people will be more proactive with their health, cutting down the number of hospital visits due to lack of treatment for chronic diseases. They also believe with only one entity paying claims, doctors would spend less time on billing, enabling them to spend more time with patients. Aguilar points out, "Every other developed nation in the world has a way to make sure all people have health insurance." She hopes this will pass and Colorado will be a model for the rest of the U.S.

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/CooperateColorado or <http://coloradocareyes.co/>. Watch a video and download a booklet explaining ColoradoCare at <http://coloradocareyes.co/about>

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Colorado HealthOp Shuts Down

Colorado HealthOp, the only health cooperative in the state, recently shut down after a change in the federal budget cut its loan money.

A quick recap of how cooperatives came to be: A cooperative (a consumer-oriented and operated plan) is a nonprofit health insurance option. The theory is that with no profit motive, co-ops provide better coverage at lower rates and force other insurance companies to lower their prices, allowing more people to have coverage.

Julia Hutchins, CEO and founder of Colorado HealthOp says, "We started this company believing that consumers need

a voice in healthcare." The cooperative had the lowest rates on the exchange and provided good benefits, as well as incentives for policyholders to take care of their health.

"Everything was laid out really well... They were very proactive and would e-mail about my health. 'Hey, I noticed you have asthma, here are some things you might want to know,'" says Laura Mahony, Stapleton resident and one of the cooperative's 80,000 policyholders until its recent closure.

From the beginning, critics said co-ops were doomed because they could not survive with low rates in the competitive marketplace. The cooperative was given 10 days to pull together funds after notice that it would not receive its expected federal loan. They had letters of intent for loans, but they did not have funds within the required deadline.

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Get to Know Dr. Stephen Rotholz

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

Proposed Urban Walkway to Promote Culture, Health, Community

By Courtney-Drake McDonough

They say “getting there is half the journey.” That’s true in more ways than one for the people behind 303 ArtWay, a proposed urban trail throughout Park Hill that would promote culture, health and community. But getting to the point of the completed project is a journey in itself.

The 303 ArtWay would create a bike and pedestrian path using primarily existing right-of-ways, with public art installations along the way leading to area businesses, public transportation access, historical destinations and entertainment offerings—all while promoting physical activity.

The project, inspired by the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, is currently in the planning stages, garnering support and input from the community to make it a reality. The first phase would start at the A Line commuter rail station opening next spring at 40th and Colorado Blvd. and would end at Holly Square on 33rd and Holly. A second phase would extend through North Park Hill to South Park Hill, including the Denver Zoo and Denver Museum of Nature & Science.

The idea for the project started last year when the Urban Land Conservancy (ULC), a nonprofit real estate investor organiza-

tion focused on community-based projects including affordable housing, nonprofit office space and charter schools, began talking to the community about their property at 40th and Colorado, adjacent to the light rail station. Neighbors expressed concern that they couldn’t walk or bike to the location because the infrastructure wasn’t there.

“We also heard concerns that with all the changes going on, the identity of the communities around the station would change and that they wouldn’t be represented,” says Tony Pickett, ULC’s vice president of master site development. “They were afraid new people would move in and ‘brand’ the neighborhood in a different way.” The ULC then began figuring out how to maintain and celebrate a sense of the local, multicultural identity of the residents.

For assistance and support in the community, ULC reached out to other organizations including Northeast Transportation Connections (NETC), located in the Community Hub at Northfield. With a mission to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality, they were interested in the project. “We want to make sure the residents of our neighborhoods have safe access to the rail line. If it’s easy for them to get to the train, they’ll be a lot more

likely to use that option,” says Jesse Livingston, transportation program consultant with NETC. “We’re also very community-focused so we’re excited about the public art, heritage and history components of Park Hill.” They are also hoping the project will serve as a model for other areas of Denver.

The ULC is asking people to get involved by voting on possible routes and destinations,

donating funds and attending community meetings. In the next year, concept images will be created and temporary installations placed to give the community an idea of what the final trail could look like. At that point, actual costs and a completion timeline will be determined. For more information about the 303 ArtWay project, visit www.303artway.org/.



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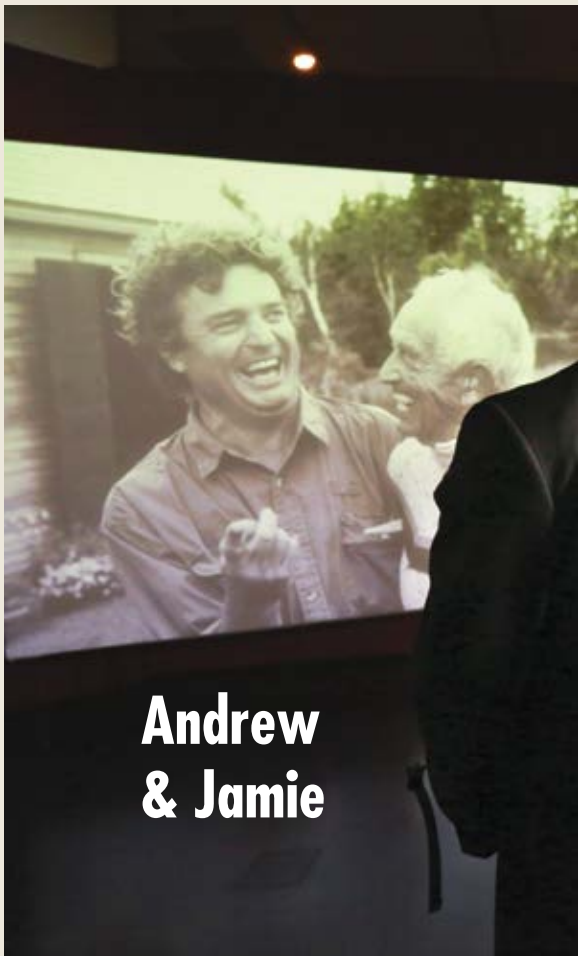
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Portrait of Andrew Wyeth by Jamie Wyeth, 1969. Father and son painted each other's portraits. "It was a subtle, quiet dialogue between the two," Curator Standring said.



Faraway by Andrew Wyeth, 1952. Andrew said of this portrait of Jamie, "It's a moment that I'm after, a fleeting moment but not a frozen moment."



By Laurie Dunklee
"Andrew and Jamie Wyeth are two artists who respond poetically to the world around them," said Timothy Standring, curator of *Wyeth: Andrew and Jamie in the Studio*, the first-ever pairing of works by the famous father-and-son artists. "Poems help us stop and say, 'Yes, that fleeting moment was worthwhile.' Both Wyeths sought to capture fleeting moments in visual form. And because they worked in the vernacular of realism, they were able to do that."
Wyeth, on view at the Denver Art Museum through Feb. 7, features more than 100 works in a variety of media, including pen and ink, graphite, charcoal, watercolor, tempera, oil and mixed media.

The Wyeths are a dynasty of American artists, including Andrew's father, N.C. Wyeth, one of America's great illustrators. "Andrew and Jamie's careers overlapped for 10 decades and Jamie is still producing," Standring said. "Their works have been shown many times but this is the first time they are mixed together. We tell their story by contrasting and comparing. You can look closer at each artist by contrasting and comparing."
 The exhibition is a dialogue between father and son, including side-by-side portraits: Jamie's painting of his father and Andrew's of his son. "It was a subtle, quiet dialogue between the two," Standring said. "They challenged each other and responded to each other. Although their work is different, they are cut from the same cloth. Father and son are both

painterly and brilliant."
 Andrew Wyeth (1917-2009), primarily a realist painter, was one of the best-known American artists of the middle 20th century. His favorite subjects were the land and people around him, both in his hometown of Chadds Ford, Pa., and his summer home in Maine. Wyeth noted: "I paint my life."
 "The Wyeths live in the beautiful Brandywine River Valley and they migrate to the archipelago of mid-coast Maine," said Standring. "They respond to their place. They don't need to travel because they convey their poetic responses to their surroundings and people."
 One of the best-known paintings in 20th-century American art is Andrew Wyeth's 1948 *Christina's World*, depicting a woman lying on the ground in a treeless field, looking up at

a gray house on the horizon. Christina Olson—who had been crippled by polio in childhood—and her brother Alvaro were the Wyeth's neighbors in Maine. Christina also posed for other portraits, including *Christina Olson* (1947), on display here. Although *Christina's World* is not on display in this exhibit—because New York's Museum of Modern Art never lends it—Wyeth's *Study for Christina's World* is on view. The family resemblance is apparent in his near-by portrait of Alvaro Olson, *The Oil Lamp* (1945).
 Jamie Wyeth, now 69, spent much of his career as a portraitist of both people and animals. He is influenced by his father's and grandfather's work but he experiments with a brighter palette and includes the abstract as well as the precise.



Left: *The Oil Lamp*, Andrew Wyeth, 1945, portrays Alvaro Olson, a blueberry farmer, the Wyeths' next-door neighbor in Maine. Alvaro was the brother of Christina, the subject of Wyeth's famous *Christina's World*.
 Right: *Maga's Daughter*, Andrew Wyeth, 1966. Wyeth's wife, Betsy. "The color of those cheeks under her coal black hair and that hat gives the portrait a real edge," said Wyeth.



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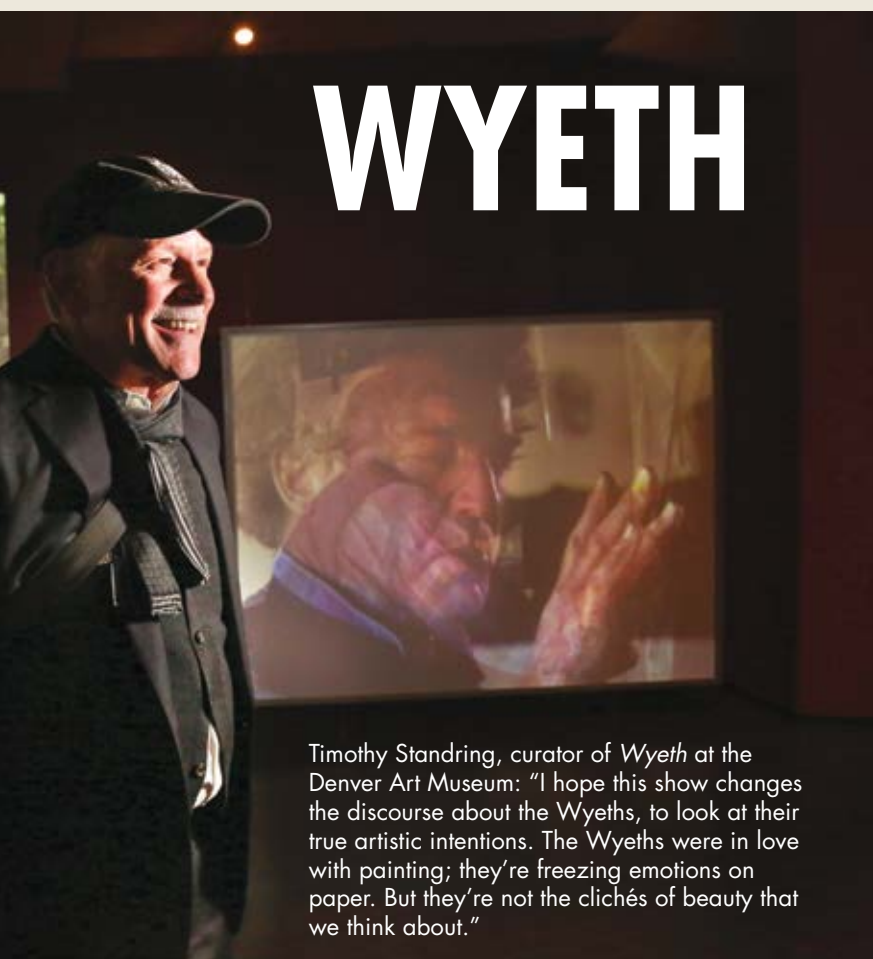

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Timothy Standring, curator of *Wyeth* at the Denver Art Museum: "I hope this show changes the discourse about the Wyeths, to look at their true artistic intentions. The Wyeths were in love with painting; they're freezing emotions on paper. But they're not the clichés of beauty that we think about."



Visitors explore some of Jamie Wyeth's work, including a portrait of Andy Warhol behind a screen door, 2015. "I met Andy through a writer friend and ended up spending some time at The Factory [Warhol's studio]," Jamie said. "He was childlike as a person, fascinating really."

Jamie Wyeth's exhibited work ranges from his early portraits to his experimental and recent works, including a portrait of Andy Warhol behind a found screen door, created this year. "I met Andy through a writer friend," Jamie said in a Denver Art Museum interview. "He was terrified of people. I thought that I would paint him behind a screen door ... perhaps fitting of his fear."

Also on view is Jamie's *Seven Deadly Sins* series (2005-08), depicting seagulls in acts of human depravity. It's both real and abstract, leaving it open to interpretation.

"Jamie's focus is on the peculiar, the incongruous," said Standring. "Most people go to the Maine coast to paint beauty and they follow clichés of beauty. Jamie said they're missing the drama."

The Wyeths' dark side is demonstrated in the

last gallery, called *Wondrous Strange*. Works evoke the humorous as well as the macabre, including a primitive bird-like creature in a military jacket, Venetian masks and a skeleton based on Andrew's own X-rays.

"Halloween is their national holiday," said Standring.

Despite some unusual images, the exhibit is family friendly. Stapleton resident Shadia Lemus, communications manager for the museum, says her 6-year-old daughter will like the five "fairy doors"—tiny portals set into the walls at kids' eye level that open to reveal surprises. "She'll also like the paint studio. After you go through the exhibit, you can paint something on your own."

Special admission price for *Wyeth* is \$16 for adults and \$5 for children. For more information, see denverartmuseum.org or call 720.865.5000.



The Lobster Bib: Third in a Series of Untoward Occurrences on Monhegan Island, Jamie Wyeth, 2013.

Jamie explains that the grimacing man, whose lobster dinner has been interrupted, is reacting to the sight of the obese owner of the hotel walking around naked. Jamie has painted six "untoward occurrences on Monhegan Island."



Three in The Seven Deadly Sins series, Jamie Wyeth, 2005-2008.

Pride (left), *Gluttony* (middle) and *Anger* (right). The watercolor and gouache series depicts seagulls in acts of human depravity, including envy, greed, sloth, and lust. It's both real and abstract, leaving it open to interpretation. "Gulls are nasty birds, filled with their own jealousies and rivalries," Jamie said.

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Get Home Faster in the New I-70 Express Lane

By John Fernandez

As locals know all too well, the “bugaboo” on Coloradans’ minds is not a Canadian mountain range but the frustrating traffic congestion we all experience heading up I-70 to play in the high country. Before the end of this calendar year, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will inaugurate the country’s first toll lane serving recreational rather than commuter users. Dubbed the I-70 Mountain Express Lane, the facility will consist of a single east-bound lane added to the highway from Empire through the Veterans Memorial Tunnels east of Idaho Springs, approximately 13 miles in length. It will operate for a maximum of 73 days throughout the year during peak demand periods for eastbound traffic, typically Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. CDOT anticipates it will save 30 minutes of travel time. Drivers can choose to use the Express Lane or the two free lanes, which will always be available.

The I-70 Mountain Express Lane will toll all vehicles that use it. There will not be free carpool or HOV access as vehicles in this corridor average more than three passengers already. Tolls will be collected electronically through an “ExpressToll” account or through a “License Plate Toll” (LPT). CDOT uses ExpressToll, a part of the E-470 Highway Authority, for toll road billing on all Express Lanes, E-470 and the Northwest Parkway.

LPT is a toll lane user who has not registered with ExpressToll. LPT users are subject to a surcharge to cover administrative costs for Express Lane billing, so their bill from ExpressToll will be higher than that of someone who has set up an ExpressToll account.

ExpressToll registrants can obtain a free sticker for use on the I-70 Mountain Express Lane. For a \$15 fee, ExpressToll will also provide a switchable transponder for those who want to use Express Lanes in the metro

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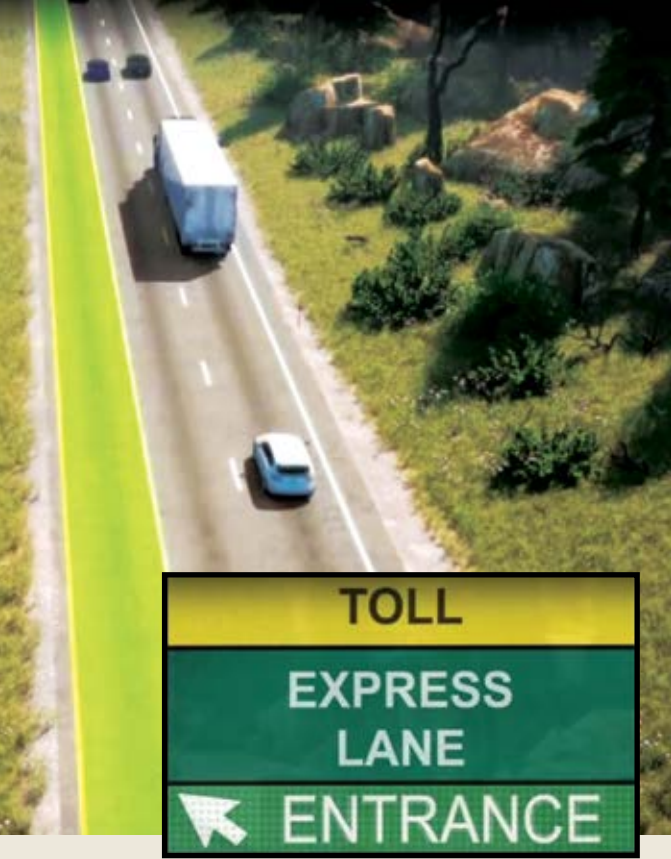
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Division of Geriatric Medicine COMIRB #06-0537 5/9/2014 PI: Kerrie Moreau, PhD



Graphics courtesy of the Colorado Dept. of Transportation

area and take advantage of free travel where Express Lanes have free HOV. The “switchable” aspect of the transponder refers to a situation where the driver can switch from tolling status to free status in an Express Lane when the vehicle contains the minimum number of passengers.

The I-70 Mountain Express Lane uses a responsive pricing system, i.e., responsive to demand subject to an overall price cap. Rates for ExpressToll account holders will range from \$3 to \$30, with the additional LPT surcharge imposed at a sliding scale of \$3.75 to \$10. Thus, the total LPT charge will range from \$6.75 to \$40.

Physically, this new eastbound lane has been created by widening the highway shoulder, restriping the inside shoulder lane, and reconstructing and modifying two bridges near Idaho Springs. CDOT has also added signage and tolling equipment including fiber-optic lines.

New signs near Empire, the west terminus of the lane, will tell drivers whether the Express Lane is open for use and, if so, what the toll rate will be. Drivers will have a four-hour grace period during which they may leave the Express Lane to stop for services without being charged a second time. At the east end, eastbound drivers who access the left-most lane to exit I-70 for U.S. 6 (Clear Creek Canyon) will not be subject to a toll. Similarly, drivers who are diverted to the lane by emergency service providers will not be charged during the time it takes to clear traffic through the area.

Interestingly, CDOT does not expect to open the lane during heavy snowstorms due to safety concerns. When the Express Lane is not in use, it will be used as a shoulder available for emergencies.

Those seeking additional information about this new facility can find it at the CDOT website (www.codot.gov/programs/expresslanes/corridors/i-70-west).

ACLU Develops App to Monitor Police/Citizen Interactions

By Madeline Schroeder

Video has been a game changer when it comes to police interactions. Now there is an app designed specifically to preserve documentation of these encounters.

The Colorado Mobile Justice App, released at the end of October, was developed by the American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado (ACLU Colorado) and allows users to upload videos directly to the ACLU server. The app exists in 10 versions customized for different states nationwide. Thousands of Colorado residents downloaded it within the first two days.

“When we have video we are closer to understanding the truth. The goal of all our work is to determine the truth and if there are violations against people’s rights,” says John Krieger, communications and outreach director for ACLU Colorado. He worked directly with the app developers.

One of the main reasons the ACLU of Colorado decided to develop the app for Colorado was the case of Ryan Brown. In March 2015, brothers Benjamin and Ryan Brown, who are African American, were pulled over for a cracked windshield, but it escalated quickly. Benjamin was arrested and Ryan was pulled out of the car and pushed face down in the snow, which was caught on film by Ryan. The officer threw Ryan’s phone but the video was salvaged. Later, upon review of the footage, the ACLU says the brothers cooperated just fine and the two were released of charges for resisting and public interference with a public official and driving with obstruction of view.

“The concerning part is that the officer did not recall doing any of that. People’s memories change, so the app holds everyone accountable,” Krieger says.

The Colorado Mobile Justice app has four main features:

Record and Submit Videos

Users can record and submit videos directly to the ACLU server. Videos are also automatically saved on your phone, but if deleted, always remain on the ACLU server.

“Know Your Rights”

The “Know Your Rights” guide provides information about what you can and cannot legally do during an interaction with a police officer. Recording a video is within legal rights, although part of this section also discusses how to safely keep a distance to not further escalate a situation.

Witness Function

A user has the option to turn on their GPS, which tracks their location, and can press “Witness,” alerting other nearby app users where you are and that you need a witness. The bystander can come to the location and record to provide secondary evidence. This feature was designed with protests in mind where there may be several app users in one location.

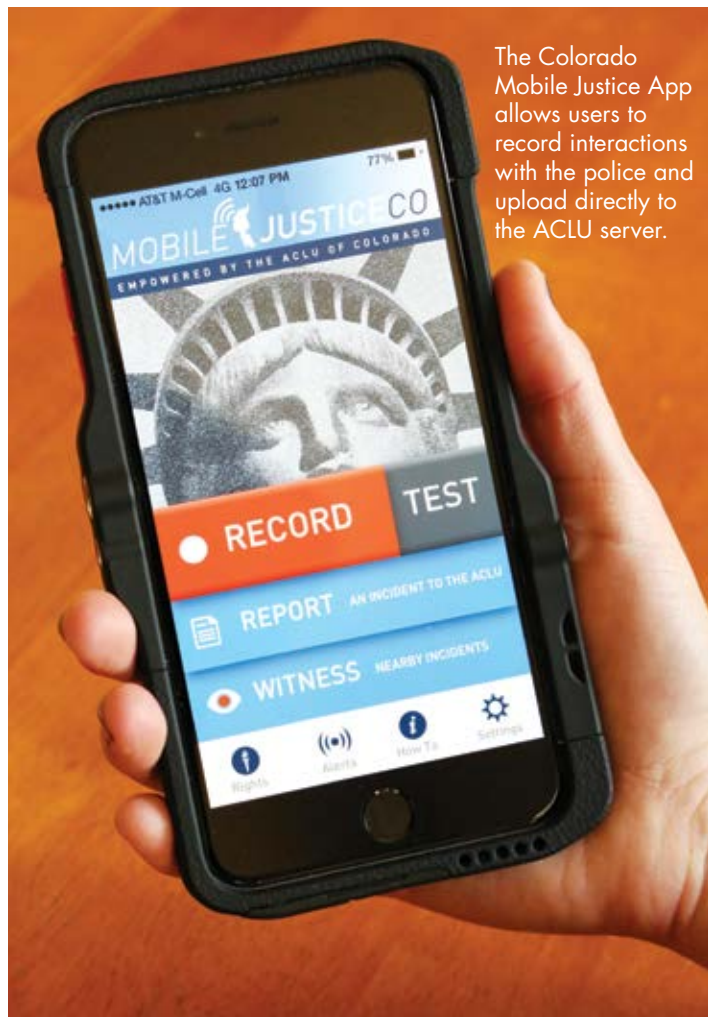
Updates

The app provides information about what ACLU does in Colorado and upcoming events.

Lt. Bob Wyckoff of District 5, who normally speaks with great enthusiasm, had little to say about the app. “We [police] always have to be watched and recorded. There is a segment of society that will always believe we need to be recorded.” Unfortunately, part of police work is sometimes negative and could be taken out of context, he explains.

Wyckoff has led an effort to increase police transparency by hosting meetings to answer questions and going out in the neighborhood to introduce himself and fellow officers.

“If you want to record an officer, that is fine, you are totally within your rights to do that. What I encourage people to do is not go beyond that and interfere with an officer when he or she is out conducting their business on the street. By that I mean, injecting yourself in the situation and questioning the officer.”



The Colorado Mobile Justice App allows users to record interactions with the police and upload directly to the ACLU server.

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information about Rolling
Smoke BBQ, Stanley's
latest business
announcement.

The Big Wonderful Com

Photo courtesy of The Big Wonderful

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By Laurie Dunklee

The big wonderful, a popular weekend festival that began in Curtis Park near Denver's River North Art District (RiNo), will expand to the Stanley Marketplace in spring of 2016.

The warm-weather weekend festival featuring food trucks, a beer market, music and urban gardens will also expand to downtown Littleton. "We'll probably do two festivals per month at the Stanley and one per month in RiNo and Littleton," said Josh Sampson, who founded the festival in 2014.

Sampson said he started The Big Wonderful because he wanted a place to incubate new businesses, and because he wanted a centralized place to get world food. "The festival is a great place to start a business—it's a low-cost and win-win opportunity for vendors to try out new ideas. New businesses don't need pressure, they need creativity to bring their unique food, whether it's grandma's Thai recipe or your cousin's French cooking. The more ideas, the better."

The Big Wonderful welcomes an average of 100 food trucks and other vendors, hailing from as far away as Colorado Springs and Vail. Between 5,000 and 15,000 patrons attend on each festival day. "We get the larger numbers for opening and closing events," said Sampson.

He said he expects attendance at the Stanley festival to be high, especially since the event will not be held every week.

Sampson said Stanley is a great fit for The Big Wonderful. "Mark [Shaker, a Stanley co-owner] and I are aligned on what the neighborhood needs and how to incubate small businesses. He's building a home for us, so we'll bring the positive energy."

Mark Shaker approached Sampson last year about joining the businesses at the Stanley. "The Big Wonderful is about community, sustainability and fun. Those are some of the same core values at Stan-

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es to Stanley



A flyover image shows the Big Wonderful at Curtis Park, a weekend festival that attracts up to 15,000 people. Starting 2016, it will move to Stanley Marketplace.

ley,” Shaker said.

“The Big Wonderful is a major family day

outing,” said Sampson. “We encourage people to walk, bike or take the light rail, which will happen even more at Stanley.”

The Big Wonderful will occupy four acres on the Stanley site, including a two-acre urban farm. “I’m excited about getting the farm going because it’s important to educate people about farms, especially in urban areas,” said Sampson. “The farm will be biodynamic, which is beyond organic—it’s about paying attention to how nature works. Understanding nature’s cycle, we’ll use what we grow to feed the land, like a forest takes care of itself. Anybody will be welcome to learn and I hope The Big Wonderful food purveyors will use the food.”

Sampson said the “heartbeat” of the festival will be

live music. He plans to host musicians in many genres, including bluegrass, rock, reggae and world music.

Outdoor festivals with amplified music can run into concerns from nearby residential neighbors, and The Big Wonderful is no exception. Alenka Han, a mother of two who lives five blocks west of the Stanley, is concerned about the noise and increased traffic near her home. “I value our quiet neighborhood,” Han said. “So I talked to Mr. Shaker and he was reassuring that they’re trying to create a family-friendly environment and are sensitive to the neighborhood’s concerns. He said he went to the Big Wonderful in RiNo and that it usually shut down by 7:30 or 8pm. He’s thinking they’ll probably have similar hours here, but they haven’t nailed that down yet. He also said that there will only be pedestrian access from the west and north, with vehicle access only on the south and east sides. So, we’re not likely to get a lot of traffic on our street. The Stanley people have been responsive to my concerns, and I’m now more optimistic that this won’t be some wild party going on until all hours every weekend.”

Sampson says festivals are on the rise. “It’s a nice way to get off your cell phone and get to know people. Everything is in the spirit of fun.”

Why is it called The Big Wonderful?

“It was my first guess at a name. I tried hundreds of others after that, but ‘The Big Wonderful’ stuck.”

For more information, see thebigwonderful.com or facebook.com/thebigwonderful. To read about all of the businesses that have been announced for Stanley, visit FrontPorchStapleton.com and search “Stanley.”

nized by other countries. We make cool and different beers with spices from China, tropical fruits, chocolate, coffee and other flavors.”

The couple chose the Stanley for its location. “We love this area because it’s not already flush with breweries—but replete with beer lovers,” Javier said.

Casita will sponsor athletic teams, including a running club and a disc golf club. The couple plans to donate a portion of sales to help the community.

See casitabrewing.com or call 303.214.4492.

New Stanley Brewery Celebrates Mexican Roots

By Laurie Dunklee

Lowry residents Javier Pérez Koch and Jennifer Pérez will open Casita Brewing Company in the Stanley Marketplace next year. The production facility and public taproom will occupy a 3,000-square-foot multilevel space, with seating outside as well.

Casita will be “fusion-focused,” meaning its beers incorporate flavors from all over the world. “We draw inspiration from our Mexican roots,” said Javier, who started brewing in the couple’s kitchen. “Most people know about the Mexican beers that are German, like Pacifico and Dos Equis. But Mexico was also colo-

Go to advanced search at FrontPorchStapleton.com and select the category “Stanley” to see a list of all businesses announced so far.

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Creativity Combines with Sips at New Painting Studio

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Originally, Whimsy Paint and Sip was aimed as a socializing activity for women. “Their options are to go to a movie where you can’t

talk, a restaurant where time is limited because they want you to leave, and they don’t want to go to a bar because they might be hit on,” says owner Roxane Moen. At her new shop, women

could enjoy each other’s company, have a drink, be creative, and have a painting to take home. But then Moen quickly realized it wasn’t just a concept for women, it was for everyone who

wants to be creative.

Despite having opened her first Whimsy Paint and Sip location in south Denver just last December (after having been an enthusiastic customer), she opened the Northfield location in August. When she was approached by Northfield to open the store, Moen visited and found the area homey and welcoming. “I said, ‘This is an opportunity I can’t pass up.’”

Moen says a lot of people will look at the selection of paintings, exclusively designed by her artist-teachers, and say “I can’t do that, I’m not a painter.” But she credits her well-trained teachers with knowing how to provide step-by-step instruction, teaching skills in the process, resulting in creations people are proud of.

People can come in individually, in groups, on dates, as team-building exercises and for parties. A full bar is available, which is a unique feature to Whimsy Paint and Sip, and people are welcome to bring in food. There are open-studio times when people can paint without formal

instruction and a Saturday morning Kids Club for children ages 7–15. Ages 16 and up can come to the adult classes.

While certain paintings are slated for certain nights, people can choose to do different color schemes or even different subject matter. “We encourage you to be creative,” says Moen. “We all need to find our creative place and let it out.”

Whimsy Paint and Sip is located at #1425, 8246 Northfield Blvd. and can be reached at 303.373.5555.



Left: Three customers left to right, Kimberly Gomez, Kristin Padgett, and Karen Balogn, laugh during a recent class at Whimsy Paint and Sip. Above: Instructor, Kelly Crowe, shows how to paint a scene at dusk. Below: Christina Sutton demonstrates adding texture to mountains.



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Kid-Friendly Salon Also Serves Adults



Front to back, Elizabeth Kreiger, owner, and stylists Richelle Gurule and Rein Trudell stand by vehicle-shaped chairs designed for little customers at the new Pigtails & Crewcuts in Northfield.

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Time was, if a child needed a haircut, they were taken to Dad's barber or Mom's salon. But one size doesn't fit all when it comes to places that know how to deal with clients who are wiggly at best and hiding under furniture at worst.

Pigtails & Crewcuts opened mid-September, owned by Elizabeth and Bernard Kreiger and run by their son and daughter-in-law, Nate and Tanya. After seeing Nate and Tanya's 5-year-old daughter eagerly get her hair cut at the other Colorado location, they were immediately interested in opening a franchise of their own.

Tanya is the Stapleton location's manager and, as the mother of two young children, can relate to customers' needs. Recalling her son's first haircut, which included a lot of flailing and hair all over her, she understands how tough it can be. "We know, as a parent, you're more embarrassed than anyone else is," she says. "We reassure the parents that their child is not the only kid who does this."

Pigtails & Crewcuts is designed to make the haircut experience as easy and pleasant as possible. With a mix of standard chairs along with chairs that look like automobiles and airplanes for little ones, the salon serves children and adults. Kid-friendly movies play at each station and there are lollipops and animal crackers as pre-haircut incentives or post-haircut rewards, depending on what the situation calls for.

When kids are having a hard time, the staff encourages them to hang out, sometimes playing with them at the train table or blowing bubbles to help them become more comfortable with the stylist and the salon. Sometimes, families go for a walk or go home and come back another time with no charge for trying again.

Pigtails & Crewcuts offers hair products, accessories and themed birthday parties in a separate party and craft room.



Edgar Page, sales consultant, sits in the new store, The Gentry & The Lady.

Store Helps Customers Find Their Style

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

As a shirt-and-tie-wearing Cary Grant-emulating teenager, Richard Humbert knew he wanted to be a haberdasher. Today, he is, indeed, selling men's (and women's) clothing at his new store, The Gentry & The Lady. A Stapleton resident, Humbert first got a taste for dressing well as a teen in Philadelphia, working as head print boy at an architecture firm, on a street lined with boutiques. "I'd walk by those shops and say, 'Someday I'm going to own a shop and someday I'm going to be able to shop at a place like this.'" Humbert bought a

clothing store out of college. With his love of fine clothing and training as an accountant, he says, "It all fits with what I'm doing. I want people to go to 'that guy who made me look really nice and feel good.'"

Humbert is the president of The Gentry & The Lady and his business partner, also a Stapleton resident, Winifred Harris is the buyer. On the women's side, clothing is generally by European designers and the focus is on Italian designs for men. They pride themselves on being socially and environmentally-conscious, buying fair trade clothing with natural fibers and repurposed materials whenever possible.

They want to be considered the go-to boutique for the community and offer a neighborhood discount for people for a limited time.

Providing custom fitting and alterations, buying with the customer's likes in mind and helping customers find their style is their goal. It's old-fashioned retail that Humbert hopes shoppers will appreciate. "You can buy an outfit here and not see yourself three times before you get to where you are going," he says, adding that they only buy six to eight of any item and don't reorder it. "We like people who are fashion-conscious, but we love people who don't know exactly how to achieve the look they want. That's what we're here for."

Visit the shop at 8246 Northfield Blvd., Suite 1430 and give them a call at 720.335.6454.

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By Carol Roberts

Zoo Lights is open to visitors from Dec. 4 to Jan. 3, but the lights take almost a full year to put up and take down. Installation by a crew of three begins in August and removal ends in May. Imagine organizing the storerooms full of lights that together create a 70-acre event! Events and Logistics Coordinator Lauren Huffer (pictured above) leads the team of nine that makes the event happen.

The lights are organized in a one-mile loop where visitors can see all the displays with everyone walking in the same direction. For those who need to stop and warm up, heated animal houses and restrooms are open along the way. Huffer estimates it typically takes about an hour to make the full loop.

The zoo's regular hours end at 4pm. Readmission is required to visit Zoo Lights from 5:30-9pm. Tickets can be purchased online, where visitors can find a description of events happening on specific days, such as ice carving, music and dance performances. The general public price is \$11. For children 3-11 it's \$7. Seniors 65 and up pay \$9.



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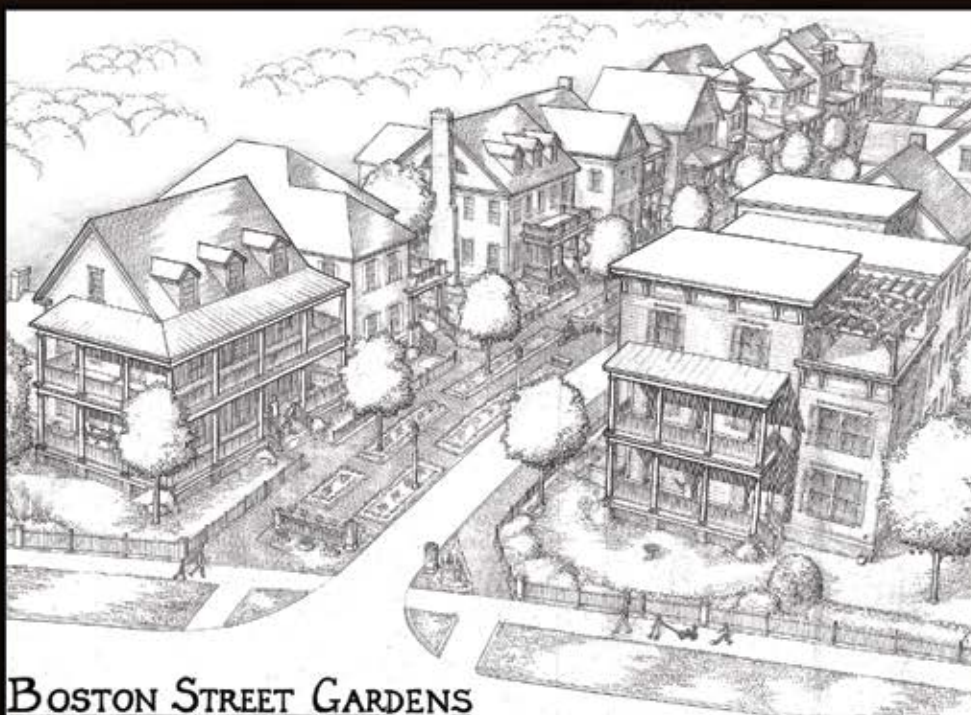
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LOCAL EVENT LISTINGS

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/HOLIDAY EVENTS

Through 12/23—Colorado Railroad Museum's Polar Express. Performances/train rides weekends and select days. Tickets from \$40 adult; \$35 kids 11 and under. www.coloradorailroadmuseum.org

Through 12/23—Denver Christkindl Market. Vendors from Germany and other countries, local artisans, carolers, traditional German food/drink. Skyline Park, 16th & Arapahoe. Hours vary. www.denverchristkindlmarket.com

Through 12/27—The Nutcracker. Presented by Colorado Ballet. Tickets: www.coloradoballet.org

Through 1/2—A Hudson Gardens Christmas. Holiday lights, wagon rides, Santa, music, etc. Select dates, 5-8:30pm. www.hudsongardens.org

Through 1/2—Blossoms of Light. Denver Botanic Gardens York St. www.botanicgardens.org

Through 1/2—Trail of Lights. Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms. www.botanicgardens.org

Through 2/15—Southwest Rink at Skyline Park. FREE ice skating in downtown Denver; bring skates or rent: \$2/pair. www.downtowndenver.com

12/3 to 12/5—Denver Gay Men's Chorus Holiday Concert. Tinsel and Treasure. Central Presbyterian Church, 1660 Sherman St. Tickets: www.rmarts.org

12/4 to 12/5—9News Parade of Lights. Marching bands, giant balloons, floats. Fri. 8pm and Sat. 6pm. FREE. www.downtowndenver.com

12/4 to 12/5—A Colorado Choir Christmas Concert. 7:30pm. Augustana Lutheran Church. Tickets \$20, senior \$15, under 5 free. www.augustanaarts.org

12/4 to 12/24—Olde Golden Christmas. Historic Downtown Golden, Washington Ave. Weekends thru 12/24. Santa, Christmas parades, carriage rides, dog cart rides, carolers, etc. www.visitgolden.com

12/4 to 1/3—Zoo Lights. 5:30-9pm. Denver Zoo. 720.337.1400, www.denverzoo.org

12/5 Saturday—Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum 1940s White Christmas Ball. Charity ball with 1940s holiday party theme. Live music, costumes, classic holiday films enactments, sleigh rides, food/drinks and dancing. Annual sell-out event raises money for Wounded Warriors Project and Spirit of Flight Center Colorado. http://1940sball.org/1940sball/1940s_christmas_ball/

12/5 Saturday—A Colorado Christmas. Four Mile Historic Park. Celebrate Victorian-era Christmas, carols, sleigh rides, Father Christmas, etc. www.fourmilepark.org

12/5 Saturday—Denver Brass Holiday Brass Fest. Anyone with a horn is welcome to play in community concert. DPCA Galleria. 10:30am register/check in; 11am rehearsal; 1pm free concert. \$10 returning musicians w/books, \$20 if music book needed. Register: www.denverbrass.org

12/5 to 12/13—55th Annual Georgetown Christmas Market. European-type market: handcrafted gifts, carolers, horse-drawn wagon rides, roasted chestnuts and St. Nicholas. First 2 weekends in Dec. 10am-6pm. FREE. www.historicgeorgetown.org/Christmas_Market

12/10 to 12/20—Holiday High Tea. At Molly Brown House. Sitzings on select days at 11:15, 12:15, 1:15 and 2:15. jwilms@mollybrown.org or 303.832.4092x17. Tickets from \$20 at www.mollybrown.org

12/10 to 1/10—Butterfly Pavilion Living Lights. Lights illuminate rainforest and outdoor gardens. Weekends, 5:30-9pm. Tickets: www.butterflies.org

12/11 to 12/12—Hammonds Candies Candy Cane Festival. Santa and Mrs. Claus, storytelling, caroling, cookie decorating, face painting, trolley rides, etc. 11am-4pm Fri., 9am-4pm Sat. 5735 N. Washington St. www.hammonds Candies.com

12/11 to 12/12—Handel's Messiah. Stratus Chamber Orchestra and Seicento Baroque Ensemble, Augustana Lutheran Church. Tickets: www.augustanaarts.org

12/11 to 12/13—Colorado Symphony Presents A Colorado Christmas. With Colorado Children's Chorale. Boettcher Concert Hall, 1000 14th St. Tickets \$22-\$84. www.coloradosymphony.org

12/11 to 12/23—Downtown Denver Holiday Carousel. Denver Pavilions; \$3/ride or free with canned good donation. 9am-10pm. www.denverpavilions.com

12/12 to 12/13—Manheim Steamroller Christmas by Chip Davis. The Buell Theatre, Denver Center for Performing Arts. www.denvercenter.org

12/12 to 12/21—Nutcracker 2015 from Ballet Ariel. 2pm shows Sat. 12/12 & 19, Sun. 12/13 & 12/20 and Mon. 12/21. 7pm shows Sat 12/12 and 12/19. \$25-35. Box Office: 303.987.7845. 470 S. Allison Parkway. www.balletariel.org, www.lakewood.org/tickets

12/13 Sunday—Stratus Chamber Orchestra and Chancel Choir: Marvel at This Night. Free. Augustana Lutheran Church. 7:30pm. www.augustanaarts.org

12/17 Thursday—Jackie Evancho Sings Holiday Hits & More. Boettcher Concert Hall, 1000 14th St. Tickets: www.coloradosymphony.org

12/18 to 12/20—Colorado Symphony Presents Handel's Messiah. Boettcher Concert Hall, 1000 14th St. Tickets: www.coloradosymphony.org

12/18 to 12/20—Holiday Brass at Montview Blvd. Presbyterian Church. Colorado Symphony Brass presents seasonal favorites. 5pm. www.coloradosymphony.org

12/19 Saturday—Colorado Women's Chorale Holiday Sing-Along. 10:30 am. Augustana Lutheran Church. Tickets: www.augustanaarts.org

12/19 to 12/20—Denver Brass: Feels Like Christmas. Newman Center for Performing Arts, \$22-44. www.denverbrass.org

12/20 Sunday—Tuba Christmas Concert. 1pm. Skyline Park, 16th and Arapahoe. Register 9am; rehearsal 10am. Auraria Events Center. FREE to public, \$1 participant fee. 303.556.8123 or www.tubachristmas.com

12/22 Tuesday—Symphony at the Movies: Home Alone. Presented by Colorado Symphony, Boettcher Concert Hall, 1000 14th St. Tickets: www.coloradosymphony.org

12/31 Thursday—A Night in Vienna. Presented by Colorado Symphony, Boettcher Concert Hall, 1000 14th St. Tickets: www.coloradosymphony.org

12/31 Thursday—New Year's Eve Downtown Fireworks Display. 2 shows: 9pm and 12am. 16th St. Mall. www.downtowndenver.com

12/31 Thursday—Noon Year's Eve at The Denver Children's Museum. 9am-4pm. Ball drops on the hour from 10am-3pm. www.mychildsmuseum.org

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

12/24 Thursday—Christmas Eve at Montview Presbyterian. 3pm and 5pm family services. 7:30pm traditional candlelight service. 10:15pm Westminster Choir. 11pm prepare to welcome Christ Child as Christmas Day begins at midnight. Montview Blvd. Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St. www.montview.org

12/24 Thursday—Denver Presbyterian Christmas Eve Service. 4pm at Smiley Middle School. www.denverpres.org

12/24 Thursday—Stapleton Fellowship Church Christmas Eve Service. 3pm, 4:15pm and 5:30pm. 8700 E. 21st Ave. www.stapletonchurch.com

12/24 to 12/25—Augustana Christmas Worship. Christmas Eve, 3pm, 5pm and 11pm. Christmas Day, 10:30am. Augustana Lutheran Church, 5000 E. Alameda Ave. 303.388.4678, www.augustanadenver.org

(continued on pg. 28)



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DENTISTRY

(continued from p. 27)

DENVER METRO EVENTS

Through 1/31/2016—Toys of the '50s, '60s and '70s. Free with museum admission. See website for special events for this exhibit. www.historycolorado.org

12/3 to 12/6—Denver Potters Association Show. Features Castle Clay Artists and guests. Wood, clay, ceramics, glass jewelry, more. 6th Ave. United Church, 6th & Adams. www.castleclayartists.net

12/4 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

12/4 to 12/16—Colorado Symphony Presents All Beethoven. \$13-\$25. www.coloradosymphony.org

12/5 Saturday—Young Entrepreneurs Marketplace. 10am-2pm. Young Americans Center, 3550 E. 1st Ave. Repeats 12/12 Sat., 10am-2pm, Young Americans Center Belmar, 401 S. Pierce St. www.yacenter.org

12/8 Tuesday—Colorado Gives Day. www.coloradogives.org

12/12 to 12/13—Rocky Mountain Toy Train Show. Denver Merchandise Mart, I-25 and 58th Ave. \$9 kids under 12, military and scouts in uniform free. 10am-5pm. www.rockymountaintrainshow.com

12/13 Sunday—Denver Beer Fest. Beer festival showcasing Denver-area breweries. Wings Over the Rockies 2pm. Tickets at www.denverbeerfest.com

12/19 Saturday—30th Annual Winter Solabration. Celebration of Christmas and solstice customs, storytelling, dance, juggling, more. Sons of Italy Hall, 5925 W. 32nd Ave. 6-11:30pm. Tickets: www.wsolstice.org

12/19 Saturday—Cockpit Demo Day. Free with admission. Wings Over the Rockies Museum, Lowry. 10am-2pm. www.wingsmuseum.org

12/26 to 12/27—A Weekend of Star Wars. Presented by Colorado Symphony, Boettcher Concert Hall, 1000 14th St. Tickets: www.coloradosymphony.org

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

12/13 Sunday—Denver Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis. 8am-12pm. Washington Park. www.jinglebellrun-denver.org

12/19 Saturday—A Christmas Carol Classic 5K, 10K and Tiny Tim 1K. Benefits Denver Children's Home. City Park. 9am. www.featonthetstreet.com

**To view more events
or to submit your own,
visit FrontPorchStapleton.com > Events**

12/19 Saturday—Denver Ugly Sweater Run. Dick's Sporting Goods Park, 6000 Victory Way, Commerce City. www.theuglysweaterrun.com

12/31 Thursday—New Year's Eve Resolution 5K. Washington Park. Registration at South High School 3:30pm. Post-race pasta party, South High School 6-7pm. www.resolution5K.com

1/2 Saturday—Resolve 5K/10K. Denver City Park, 9am. www.featonthetstreet.com

KIDS AND FAMILIES

12/2 Wednesday—Preschool Story Time. 9:30 am, ages 2-5 with caregiver. History Colorado Center, 1200 Broadway www.historycoloradocenter.org

12/3 to 12/31—Star K Kids. Thursdays, 9:30 and 11am; kids 5 and under. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E. Smith Rd., Aurora. www.auroragov.org/nature

12/3 to 12/31—Tuesdays in December Four Mile Historic Park Small Settlers. Ages 2-5 accompanied by parent/caregiver. No session 11/25. 9-10am. \$5/child adults free, members free. 7150D. Forest St. Advance register: 720.865.0814 or education@fourmilepark.org www.fourmilepark.org

12/3 to 1/2—Denver Puppet Theater. Santa's Big Surprise. 3156 W. 38th Ave. www.denverpuppettheater.com

12/4 to 12/18—Storytime in the Exploration Station. 10:30am. 1st and 3rd Fri. Free with admission. Wings Over the Rockies Museum, Lowry. www.wingsmuseum.org

12/4 Friday—Four Mile Historic Park Hay Bales and Tall Tales. 12-1pm free with admission. 715 S. Forest St. www.fourmilepark.org

12/4 Friday—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

12/12 to 12/26—Lowe's Build and Grow workshops. Bring kids to Lowe's stores to build FREE wood project: Monthly, 2nd and 4th Saturdays. Free apron,

goggles, project-themed patch, merit certificate on completion. 10am. www.lowesbuildandgrow.com

12/29 to 12/31—Winter Break Camp. 9am-noon. Morrison Nature Center at Star K Ranch, 16002 E. Smith Rd, Aurora. 303.326.8445, nature@auroragov.org www.auroragov.org/nature

LECTURES AND CLASSES

12/1 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Napoleon. 10:15-11:15am. Jewish Community Center, 350 S Dahlia St. 303.316.6359. www.ActiveMinds.com

12/10 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—The History of Tea. 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. www.ActiveMinds.com

12/12 Saturday—Active Minds (Free)—Paris: Biography of a City. 11am-noon. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd., 720.865.0250. www.ActiveMinds.com

12/17 Saturday—Active Minds (Free)—Venice: Biography of a City. 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325, www.ActiveMinds.com

12/22 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—The Year in Review. 5-6pm. Tattered Cover, 2526 E. Colfax. 303.322.7727, www.ActiveMinds.com

MUSEUMS—DENVER ART MUSEUM

Through 12/31—Paint Studio. Adults and kids daily find creative inspiration at hands-on artmaking space, Level 1, Hamilton Bldg. Try art materials; experiment with techniques. Weekend demos by local artists 12-3pm. Free with museum admission. Youth 18 and under free general admission daily. Closed Mondays. denverartmuseum.org. <http://denverartmuseum.org/calendar/paint-studio-weekend-artist-demonstrations>

Through 2/7/2016—Wyeth: Andrew and Jamie in the Studio. Groundbreaking exhibit of Andrew Wyeth and son Jamie, American icons. 100+ works using varied media, including pen and ink, graphite, chalk, watercolor, dry brush, tempera, oil and mixed media. Ticketed exhibition with member discount. www.denverartmuseum.org. <http://denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/wyeth-andrew-and-jamie-studio>

12/5 Saturday—Free First Saturday & CelebrARTE. CelebrARTE at Denver Art Museum, bilingual fun for everyone, with 2pm Collection Highlights tour in Spanish, Create-n-Takes and new storytelling program Cuentos del Arte. Repeats 1/2. <http://denverartmuseum.org/calendar/free-first-saturday>, <http://denverartmuseum.org/programs/celebrarte>

12/19 to 1/3—Winter Break: A Place of My Own. Free

for kids 18 and under. Paint Studio, Create-n-Takes and Family Activity Cart available for visiting families. Explore galleries, watch for special performances and storytelling. DAM closed Mondays and 12/15. denverartmuseum.org. <http://denverartmuseum.org/programs/winter-break>

MUSEUMS—DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURE & SCIENCE

Through 1/10—The Power of Poison. Special exhibit, free with admission. www.dmns.org

Through 1/28—IMAX Movies. Galapagos 3D, Nature's Wonderland, Journey to Space 3D, Secret Ocean 3D. www.dmns.org

Through 1/31—Sherlock Holmes. Step into Victorian London and test your powers of observation and interpretation. Ticketed exhibit, adult nonmember \$23.95, child nonmember \$17.95, discount for members. www.dmns.org

Through 6/2—Planetarium. Black Holes: The Other Side of Infinity; Cosmic Journey: A Solar System Adventure; Destination Solar System; Dream to Discovery; One World One Sky: Big Bird's Adventure; We are Aliens. www.dmns.org/planetarium/current-show

MUSEUMS—FREE DAYS

12/1 Tuesday—Children's Museum Target Free First Tuesday. Target Tuesday, free admission 4-8pm. www.mychildsmuseum.org

12/5 and 1/2 Saturdays—Denver Art Museum Free Day. SCFD Free Day. www.denverartmuseum.org

12/6 Sunday—Four Mile Historic Park. SCFD Free day www.fourmilepark.org

NORTHEAST DENVER/AURORA EVENTS

Through 1/3—Holiday Art Show, Montview Blvd. Presbyterian Church. 1980 Dahlia. Painting and photo artwork available for purchase by contacting artist directly. Free, open to public. 303.355.1651. www.Montview.org

12/1 to 12/20—Denver School of the Arts. Montview and Quebec. Dec. performances, tickets: www.dsapresents.org, www.dsa.dpsk12.org/performances

12/1 to 12/30—Stapleton Walks. Group walks led by volunteers through Stapleton's neighborhoods, currently Tues., Wed., Thurs. and Fri. See website for times, meeting places and walk descriptions. stapletonwalks@gmail.com <http://walk2connect.com/events>

12/2 Wednesday—International School of Denver Preschool-Kinderergarten Open Houses. 9-11am. Repeats 1/13. Middle school visits by appt. RSVP: admissions@isdenver.org. www.isdenver.org

12/4 to 1/22—Youth at DAVA Exhibit. Downtown Aurora

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Granite slab and new appliances?

Choosing a new home is less about the fancy new kitchen and more about finding the right place to share the day over the warmth of a good soup or pass down grandma's secret recipes. The slower pace of our winter months is a great time to find that space and bake up some new memories from scratch. Give me a shout if I can lend a hand!

Visual Arts youth exhibit; opening reception 12/4, 4-7:30pm. Handmade holiday gifts for sale. 1405 Florence St. 1 block south of E. Colfax. Mon.-Fri. 10am-5pm and by appt. www.davarts.org

12/5 Saturday—Aurora Symphony Presents The Christmas Movie. 7:30pm. North Middle School Auditorium, 12095 Montview Blvd. Tickets: aurorasymphony.org

12/5 Saturday—Temple Micah's 6th Annual Top Latke Taste-off and Hanukkah Party. 5pm. RSVP w/payment by 12/2. 303.388.4239 x1 or www.micahdenver.org

12/5 to 12/6—Christmas Fair Trade Market. 9am-3pm Sat. and 9am-1pm Sun. Montview Pres. Church, 1980 Dahlia. www.montview.org

12/6 Sunday—Glorious Sounds of the Season. 5pm. Montview Church, 1980 Dahlia. www.montview.org

12/12 to 12/13—The Holliest, Jolliest Holiday Show Ever! Presented by Illuminate Theatre Company. 2pm both days, Miller Center Theater. Donations at door in lieu of tickets benefit DSST students traveling to Italy. www.neighborhoodmusicstapleton.com

12/13 Sunday—Augustana Christmas Concert: Marvel of This Night. FREE but tickets required. 7:30pm. Augustana Lutheran Church, 5000 E. Alameda Ave. 303.388.4678. www.augustanadenver.org

12/13 Sunday—Festival of Lessons and Carols. 5 pm. Montview Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St. www.montview.org

12/15 Tuesday—Love Unbound. A service of remembrance at the holidays. Montview Presbyterian Church, 1980 Montview. 7pm. www.montview.org

12/19 Saturday—St. Martin's Chamber Choir Presents A Bavarian Christmas. 7:30pm. Montview Presbyterian Church. Tickets: \$10-\$35. www.StMartinsChamberChoir.org

12/20 Sunday—Augustana Children's Christmas Program: Simply Christmas. 10:30am. Augustana Lutheran Church, 5000 E. Alameda Ave. 303.388.4678. www.augustanadenver.org

12/20 Sunday—Lowry Home for the Holidays Festival. Santa, horse and carriage rides, crafts, gingerbread house, live music, mini train, etc. www.lowry.org

NORTHFIELD EVENTS

12/4 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. Christmas Eve; Krampus; The Letters. www.harkinstheatres.com

12/5 Saturday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. The Good Dinosaur. www.harkinstheatres.com

12/11 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. The Danish Girl; Don Verdean; Hitchcock/Truffaut; In the Heart of the Sea. www.harkinstheatres.com

12/12 to 12/19—Free Horse and Carriage Rides. 12/12 and 12/19, 1-9pm. www.northfieldstapleton.com

12/13 Sunday—Chanukah in Candy Land. Northfield, 4-6pm. Free. www.northfieldstapleton.com

12/18 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip; Sisters; Star Wars: The Force Awakens; Youth www.harkinstheatres.com

12/25 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. Carol; Concussion; Daddy's Home; Joy; Point Break www.harkinstheatres.com

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

12/5 to 12/19 Saturdays—The Masked Bandit. Learn about ferrets in refuge's one-of-a-kind ferret exhibit. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

12/12 Saturday—Winter Raptors. 8:30-11am. Learn to identify birds of prey native to the refuge; bring camera and binoculars. RSVP required.

12/19 to 12/20—Wildlife Viewing Tours. 9:30-11am 12/19, 1-2:30pm 12/20. Free 2-hour bus tour of refuge. RSVP required. www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

THEATRE

11/13 to 12/6—Vodville. Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E. Colfax Ave, Aurora. orafoxartscenter.org

11/20 to 12/23—Irving Berlin's White Christmas. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada. www.arvadacenter.org

11/21 to 12/19—A Ring-a-Ding Christmas: A Crooner Holiday Review. Firehouse Theater Company at John Hand Theater. www.firehousetheater.com

11/25 to 12/27—Jacob Marley's A Christmas Carol. Vintage Theatre. 1468 Dayton St., Aurora Cultural Arts District. www.vintagetheatre.org

11/27 to 12/20—Santa's Big Red Sack. Avenue Theatre, 417 E. 17th Ave. www.avenuetheater.com

11/27 to 12/27—A Christmas Carol. The Stage Theater, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. www.denvercenter.org

11/27 to 12/27—Little Women. Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E. Colfax Ave., Aurora. www.aurora-foxartscenter.org

11/27 to 12/27—The Santaland Diaries. The Jones, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. www.denvercenter.org

11/27 to 1/17—Funny Girl. Vintage Theatre. 1468 Dayton St., Aurora Cultural Arts District. www.vintagetheatre.org

12/16 to 12/27—A Christmas Story. The Buell Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. www.denvercenter.org

FEATURED EVENTS

December 4 to January 3—Denver Zoo Lights

From 5:30-9pm nightly Dec. 4 through Jan. 3, Denver Zoo, 2300 Steele, will be open for the 2015 Zoo Lights showcasing 70 acres of lights and 150 animal sculptures. For details, www.denver-zoo.org/events/zoo-lights-2015.

December 6—Grand Menorah Lighting on The Green

The 2015 Annual Menorah Lighting on The Green, 29th and Syracuse, to kick off Chanukah will take place at 5:15pm on Sunday, Dec. 6. The night will include a fire juggler, hot cocoa bar, donuts, and Chanukah treats. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.JewishStapleton.com.

December 6—Free Holiday Caroling

From 4 to 5:30pm on Sunday, Dec. 6, Neighborhood Music Stapleton teachers and staff will set up stations with cocoa, candy canes and cookies at each of the Stapleton pools and lead carolers around the surrounding neighborhood. Treats begin at 4pm and caroling begins at 4:15pm. The event is free and open to the public. For the list of pool addresses, visit neighborhoodmusicstapleton.com/holiday-caroling. RSVP to skye@neighborhoodmusicstapleton.com.

December 13—Chanukah in CandyLand

From 4 to 6pm on Sunday,

Dec. 13, join the free event "Chanukah in CandyLand" in the Northfield Mall at 8302 Northfield Blvd., Suite 1610. The evening will include donut decorating, an olive oil press, Chanukah crafts and latkes.

Tuesday–Friday Weekly Stapleton Walks

Tuesday through Friday weekly, join in free Stapleton walks hosted by Walk2Connect, a Colorado-based social group creating connections between people and their neighborhoods through walking. Two Walk2Connect volunteers lead these walks in Stapleton, which are 2.5 miles or one-hour long.

- **Tuesdays, Westerly Creek Trail**
Meet at 8:50am at the Westerly creek Trail east of Central Park Blvd. and south of MLK Blvd.
- **Wednesdays, Conservatory Green & Northfield Mall**
Meet at 7am at the Northfield Mall Starbucks, 8340 Northfield Blvd.
- **Thursdays, Conservatory Green amenities**
Meet at 2:50pm at the fire pit in Conservatory Green Park, south of 49th Pl. between Valentia Ct. and Valentia St.
- **Fridays, Alzheimer's Garden in Westerly Creek**
Meet at 7am at the Central Park Rec Center, 9651 MLK Blvd. Watch the sunrise.

For the full calendar of walks, visit walk2connect.com/events/ or contact walk leader Chris Englert at cee33x@yahoo.com.

DENVER

Treecycle 2016



JANUARY 4 – 15

RECYCLING YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE IS AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3!

1

Remove all decorations, lights, and the tree stand. Natural (real) trees only! NO artificial or flocked trees.

2

Set your tree out for collection during the two week Treecycle collection period (January 4th to 15th). Trees are collected by tree-only collection trucks during this period.

3

Reclaim free mulch made from your tree at the Annual Mulch Giveaway & Compost Sale in the spring!

Your Treecycle set out instructions depend on your regular trash service type.

• Manual & Cart Service Customers: Trees are collected on your regular trash collection day during the week of January 4th or the week of January 11th. Set trees out by 7 a.m. near your normal trash set out location.

• Dumpster Service Customers: Set trees out on your side of the alley by 7 a.m. on Monday, January 4th or Monday, January 11th and the trees will be removed during that week.

Do not place trees in carts or dumpsters, and remember to set trees at least 2 feet away from trash or recycling containers, cars, and other obstacles.



DENVER PUBLIC WORKS

DENVER RECYCLES

Treecycle is for Denver residents only.

For more information call 720-865-6810 or visit DenverGov.org/DenverRecycles

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SURGICAL

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December 2015

Low PARCC Scores Show Effects of “A Higher Bar”

By Carol Roberts and John Fernandez

The new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) online standardized tests were given for the first time last spring. As predicted, they returned lower scores than the prior Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) tests. The new PARCC tests, based on the Common Core standards for English and math, are more rigorous than TCAP and require students to use critical thinking and higher-level problem-solving skills in preparation for college and careers.

Federal law has, for many years, required state-level language arts and math testing, but each state can use its own tests and academic standards, which has made it difficult to compare data. Proponents of Common Core and PARCC believe an accurate state-by-state comparison of student performance is important.

In an e-mail to parents, DPS Superintendent Boasberg wrote: “Remember these new results don’t mean your students are learning less; instead, we’ve given them a higher bar to meet and, with your support, we will help them get there ... Results of these new tests in English language arts and math cannot be compared to the results of previous state exams ... What the results do provide is an import-

ant baseline on which we can build and move forward.”

As with prior tests, significant achievement gaps occurred based on ethnicity and socioeconomic factors.

On the seventh-grade language arts test, for example, 58.3 percent of Asian students and 51.7 percent of whites met or exceeded expectations compared to 24.7 percent of Hispanics and 25.6 percent of black students.

In fifth-grade math, 14.9 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch met or exceeded expectations, compared to 41.9 percent of other students.

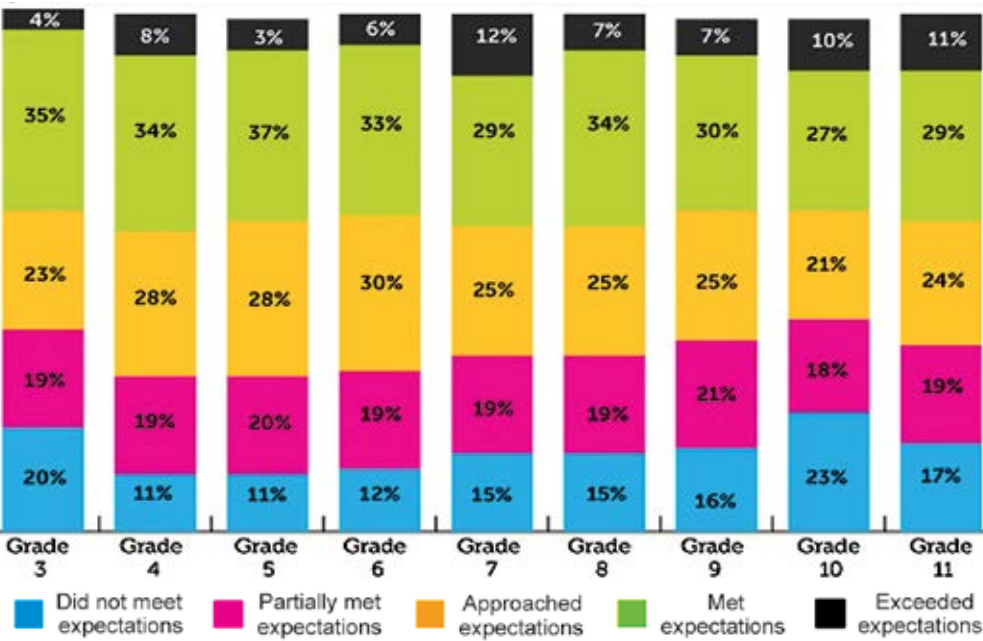
Statewide data was released on Nov. 12. Individual district and school scores are expected to be released Dec. 11 and will be covered in an upcoming issue of the *Front Porch*.

DPS Director of Media Relations Will Jones says the district’s goal is to mail individual student PARCC reports to DPS families by January 15.

The online education newspaper *Chalkbeat* published an explanation of PARCC scores and testing on Nov. 12. For more information, visit co.chalkbeat.org and search for PARCC scores. The charts at right are courtesy of Nic Garcia and were pulled from the Nov. 12 PARCC article by Nic Garcia and Eric Gorski.

Colorado’s PARCC results, English

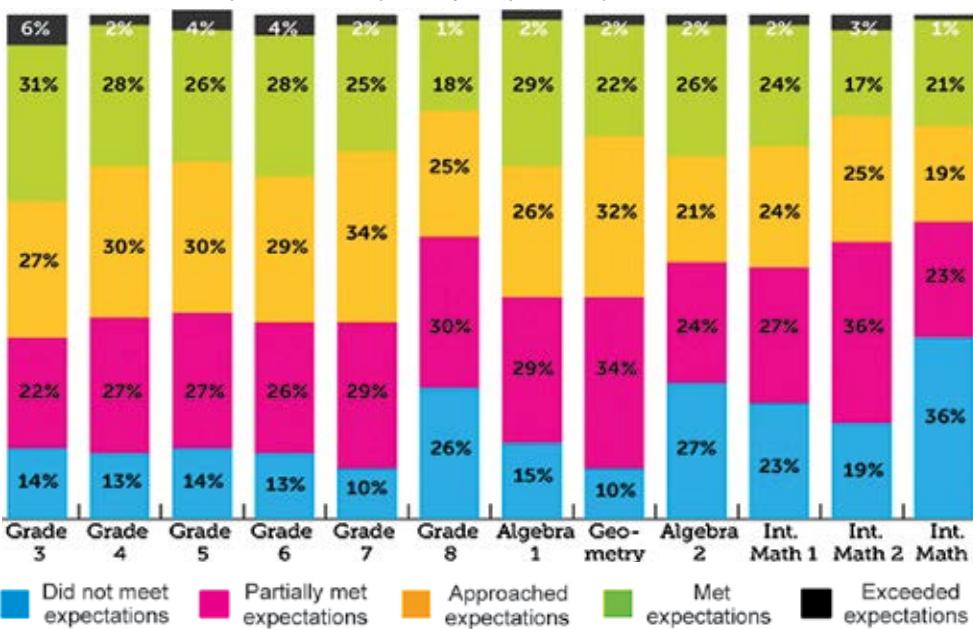
PARCC uses five performance levels to determine how well students demonstrate their knowledge and ability on tests. Here, in percentages, is how well students did on the 2015 test. Students in the top two categories are considered on track for college or career.



Charts by Nic Garcia, Chalkbeat. Source: Colo. Dept. of Education

Colorado’s PARCC results, Math

PARCC uses five performance levels to determine how well students demonstrate their knowledge and ability on tests. Here, in percentages, is how well students did on the 2015 test. Students in the top two categories are considered on track for college or career. Note: Math tests in high school are given by subject, not grade.





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Longtime CAB member Jim Wagender points to the area north of 56th where affordable and rental housing are concentrated. He says the Green Book called for intermingling different types of housing.



Affordable Housing Goals a Hot Topic as Stapleton Approaches Buildout

At its November meeting, the Stapleton Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) unanimously agreed on a statement expressing concerns that master developer Forest City is failing to keep pace with the affordable housing percentages required under its development agreement with the city. CAB's statement will be reported to the Stapleton Development Corporation (SDC) during its Dec. 3 meeting. CAB will seek SDC support and a decision to request a meeting with the mayor to present the 2015 CAB report early next year.

CAB is concerned that housing diversity goals expressed in the "Green Book" (Stapleton's development plan) and the development agreements will not be met if current trends continue. The CAB motion references these housing goals:

- 10% of all for-sale housing shall be affordable



CAB chair David Netz is working on a report for SDC and the city that will evaluate the likelihood of Forest City meeting its affordable and rental unit obligations. He says, "We're going to start to run out of land for apartments unless we are proactive."

Stapleton Update

- 20% of all apartments shall be affordable
- 25% of all affordable apartments shall be very low income

The CAB statement also references a goal of 33 percent of housing units as rentals. However, there remains a difference of opinion with Forest City as to whether the 33 percent is a contractual obligation between the developer and the city, or merely a "projection."

CAB believes the housing diversity issue has reached a critical point because there remains only one large, undeveloped residential parcel in Stapleton (Section 10, north of 56th Ave. bordering the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge). CAB Chair David Netz said that although Forest City met the housing diversity goals with its plans for the first phase of Section 10 (Filing 49), meeting the minimum goals for Section 10 may not enable Forest City to catch up with the requirements for Stapleton as a whole.

CAB also expressed concern about the planned location of affordable housing in Section 10, saying it is concentrated on major streets such as Central Park Blvd and 56th Ave. and is not dispersed and integrated within neighborhoods in accordance with Green Book principles.

CAB members noted that the Stapleton land is owned by the City of Denver. Their statement reads, in part, "The City has failed to require pacing of affordable housing to match market-rate development as required by the development agreements and may lack the political will to pursue this."

Netz said CAB members and SDC staff will be creating their own build-out counts of currently-planned affordable for-sale sites in Stapleton. He said the CAB and SDC are doing this because Forest City "has to know this [number of units] already—they just won't tell us," a situation he described as "bizarre." That report will be presented at CAB's January meeting.



CAB visitor Ted Manley, Associate Professor of Urban Studies at Johnson & Wales, tells CAB that the consequence of separation of housing is social isolation, which creates a stigma on children.

By John Fernandez

CAB Supports Pursuing a Cycle Track on 26th Ave.

CAB expressed support for continued investigation of a "cycle track" on the south side of 26th Avenue from Westerly Creek to Moline Street.

A cycle track, also referred to as a protected bikeway, is a relatively new kind of bicycle facility intended to provide increased protection for cyclists. The proposal in this instance is to place a two-way bicycle lane on the south side of an expanded 26th Ave., located between the curb line and a row of on-street parking. CAB endorsed the proposal at its September meeting. The proposal originated with Northeast Transportation Connections (NETC), Stapleton's transportation management association.

However, Stapleton Aurora received final approval from the Aurora Planning and Zoning Commission on Oct. 14 for separate bike lanes on each side of 26th Ave. The planned street has two through lanes, a turn lane at some intersections, parking, on-street bike lanes plus a curb lawn and detached sidewalk on both sides of the street. Steve Rodriguez, city of Aurora case manager, noted that changing the roadway design now would require an amendment to the site plan and to an intergovernmental agreement between the two cities.

In a Nov. 2 letter to the city of Aurora, Forest City said, "We do not feel 26th Ave. is an appropriate location for such a facility (cycle track). We feel the proposed on-street traditional bike lanes in conjunction with the off-street 10-foot-wide concrete pathway through the park and open space provide wonderful bikeway options for the public to use."

NETC Director Angie Malpiede told CAB her organization will survey 26th Ave. residents to determine the level of support for the cycle track despite the fact that Forest City "turned us down." Several CAB members expressed continued support for the cycle track, noting the opportunity to connect several schools, the Stanley Marketplace and, eventually, downtown to the Fitzsimons/Anschutz Campus.

Two Lead Administrators Resign From Izzi B

Two of the three lead administrators at Isabella Bird Community School, Sonny Zinn and Traci Bushnell, recently announced they will not be returning next year. Zinn and Traci, along with Traci's husband, Jeff, started the school in 2013. Jeff is currently planning to stay on next year to run the Family Resource Center, which helps immigrant and refugee families transition to their new lives.

Zinn and Traci resigned for similar reasons: stress, long hours, health complications related to stress, and little time with their families. "...I hope I'm modeling for our staff and our families that sometimes in life it's really important to pay attention (to health and family needs)," Zinn says. The two are confident in the staff and parent community and believe the school will continue just fine without them.

Susana Cordova, Chief of Schools says DPS will post the principal position in December, with opportunities for parent input to take place by January. She says parents can provide input on principal selection in various ways: a subgroup of the Collaborative School Committee (CSC) can serve on the selection committee; parents can vote on committee representatives; schoolwide meetings can be held, etc. Cordova says DPS believes in the original vision for the school but acknowledges that implementation evolves over time based on the principal's particular strengths and interests. DPS' goal is to have new principals for 2016-17 hired by May 1, 2016.

Isabella Bird Community School started in 2013 with 89 students in K-1. It has expanded to 472 students in ECE-5th grade.



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

The SUN Spot

The independent voice of Stapleton
Brought to you by Stapleton United Neighbors

By Amanda Allshouse

Some Stapleton residents have been vocalizing heightened concerns about safety in the neighborhood in light of a recent incident. At the November 17 SUN Block Captain/Outreach/Safety Forum, more than 100 residents filled the seats and lined the walls shoulder to shoulder.

At about 2:30am on Thursday, Oct. 29, four shots were fired at 29th and Lima. The bullets traveled through a window of a Stapleton home and hit the wall about 6 inches above an infant's crib. No one was injured. The homeowners awoke but didn't realize the bullets actually penetrated the house so they attempted to go back to sleep and no 9-1-1 calls were made. In the morning, upon finding the bullet hole, they called the police. Officers collected as much information as possible and a detective has been assigned to the case, but unfortunately, there are no witnesses or leads at this time, according to Denver Police Department (DPD) District 5.

Many residents have been worried that the neighborhood is becoming crime ridden so the meeting was called for reassurance from police officers about their efforts to prevent crime, as well as reminders to residents how to prevent crime. District 5 Commander Ron Thomas empathized with residents and understood the October 29 incident was alarming. Comparatively, Stapleton is a very safe neighborhood, though. Last month, there were 19 reports of gunfire in Stapleton, whereas 33rd and Holly had 1,000 reports. Crime in Stapleton makes up 3 percent of all crime in the city of Denver, and Lt. Bob Wyckoff added that precinct 511 (Stapleton) is a very safe community.

Cmdr. Thomas reminded the crowd about basic crime safety tips: close and lock doors, keep valuables out of sight both in the house and car, and always contact the police first with concerns, suspicious behavior, audible gun shots or crimes in action. These crime prevention tips, as well as continued communication with the police, are the recipe for a strong relationship between resi-



Residents Share Safety Concerns,

dents and the police department, according to Cmdr. Thomas. He reiterated contact phone numbers for **non-emergency concerns: 720.913.3000; his direct contact: 720.913.1400; and Text-a-Tip: 720.723.8911.** Text-a-Tip allows Stapleton residents to text information about suspicious people, incidents or vehicles, as well as photos, directly to the dispatch center. DPD has found people are not always inclined to call 9-1-1 when they observe suspicious activity, but Text-a-Tip makes it more convenient.

"By a show of hands, who has ever heard gunfire or seen suspicious activity, but not called the police?" Eastbridge resident Chuck Montera asked the room, which was followed by hands raised by a majority of the people. Cmdr. Thomas emphasized the importance of calling 9-1-1 because the department is unable to respond to a situation if they're unaware of it. Also, 9-1-1 calls provide important data used to determine resource allocation. For example, if there are gunshots but no calls to the police, there is no record of it happening and no apparent need for additional resources. Even if a suspect is not in view, still call. While police officers occasionally



Rosie Bellville

"I do not support one dollar of my community dues going to a wine night before I feel like my children are safe."

check social media sites including NextDoor and the Stapleton Community Watch Facebook page, those posts cannot be used as data and are often seen a while after the fact. Social media posts should always be accompanied by a call or text to the police department, according to Cmdr. Thomas.

The Q & A session began with a resident's concern about seeming racist for posting photos of suspicious activity carried out by people of color. Cmdr. Thomas suggested not posting these photos to social media, but sending them directly to the police.

A question was raised about security at elementary schools, particularly Isabella Bird Elementary. DPS later clarified they fund security at middle schools but not elementary schools. Bill Roberts K-8 School has security provided by DPS not because of its proximity to a region of Aurora with a high crime rate, but because it has a middle school.

Wal-Mart remains a major problem, making up a majority of the crime in northeast Denver. Wal-Mart and its parking lot have a high rate of crime against property, violent crime and family crime. While 74 to 77 percent of all of Stapleton's crime takes place in retail establishments, Wal-Mart makes up 20 percent alone. Some

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Letter to the Editor

Re: "Effective Sex Ed Discusses Life Goals, Being a Good Partner"

The November article, "Effective Sex Ed Discusses Life Goals, Being a Good Partner," was simply a thinly veiled advertisement for Planned Parenthood, an organization that was sued just last year in our own city for failing to report the rape of a 13-year-old girl. It is terrifying to me as a parent that the *Front Porch* would advocate contact between Planned Parenthood and children in our schools. Planned Parenthood has been embroiled in controversy over the illegal sale of body parts, including our own local branch, over which a lawsuit has been filed in our state just last month. It should shock us all that our neighborhood newspaper is willing to endorse such a corrupt organization. We can do better for our children. Parents should be presented with resources above the quality of Planned Parenthood. Some resources such as the Best Friends Foundation, Worth the Wait (a Texas program) and Sex Can Wait (an Arkansas program) have generated positive results. Parents need to know that there are alternatives for talking to their children about sexual health in ways that are age-appropriate.

—Sarah Deeney, Stapleton resident

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District 5 Lieutenant Bob Wyckoff addresses a crowd of more than 100 that gathered to discuss recent concerns about safety in Stapleton.

Police Reassure Stapleton is Safe

off-duty officers take reports at Wal-Mart in order to free department resources for the rest of District 5, which is the largest police district spanning Stapleton, Montbello and Green Valley Ranch.

“Any consideration to changing district boundaries to make the area smaller?” asked one attendee, to which Cmdr. Thomas responded it has been considered many times but decided against because Stapleton would then be split in half, and they want to focus on it as a whole. He has made staffing changes to have officers work fewer hours in one shift, but have more officers on patrol at any one time. There are typically 9 to 16 officers on one shift. City Councilman Chris Herndon noted that city council has control of the budget resources allocated to Denver Police, and people can reach out to him with police staffing questions.

Attendees suggested that Stapleton should hire private security to add extra patrol. One resident said, “I do not support one dollar of my community dues going to a wine night before I feel like my children are safe,” which was followed by ap-

“There were 19 reports of shots fired in one month in Stapleton. There are 1,000 in one month at 33rd and Holly.”



Commander Ron Thomas

plause. Keven Burnett, executive director of the Stapleton Master Community Association, which collects HOA fees for parks and recreation management, ongoing recreational and cultural programming (including wine nights), responded that residents of Stapleton were intended to and have always relied on city resources for emergency response, including fire and police.

The MCA hires private security to patrol the pools and alleyways, but not the entire Stapleton area. Cmdr. Thomas said that, in his experience, private patrols are inexperienced and cannot even make an arrest so they have little effectiveness at responding to crime. Prior to the forum, several residents have expressed on social media sites that rather than spending money on private patrols, residents need to take personal responsibility for preventable crime.

For more information about safety, police operations or police resources, contact District 5 Community Resource Officer Sherikera Heflin at Sherikera.Heflin@denvergov.org or Councilman Chris Herndon’s office at 720.337.8888.

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MLTU-QTAD-A-R1

6th-7th Graders Combine Science and Math Skills to Build Structures



By Madeline Schroeder

In a collaboration between their science and math classes, sixth- and seventh-graders from Denver Discovery designed hurricane-resistant buildings and compost bins and presented their models at the school’s annual expo nights in mid-November.

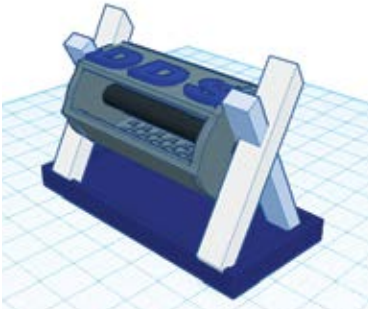
To design each of these projects, the math and science classes collaborated. For example, to design compost bins, the seventh-graders studied ecosystems and abiotic organisms in science. In math, they studied proportions and scaling to create the blueprints in an online software program. They then printed their designs on the school’s new 3D printer.

Attendees at the seventh-graders’ event voted on the best compost bin design, which will be made into a real compost bin for the school’s garden. Meredith Rigsby had the winning design. Her pentagon-shaped bin will

be made of recycled plastic and re-purposed wood with two mesh sides so the compost will easily come out when it is finished. The bin will also have a sliding door to easily put green and brown matter inside. The underside of the bin has a tray to collect the finished compost.

“The kids were all super passionate about it. We were really surprised to see how many of them incorporated school spirit with the DDS logo. It was cool to see us raise the bar and them rise above it,” says math teacher, Abby White.

Some groups focused mainly on functionality. “Our design has rotators inside to mix the compost,” one group said. Others focused on aesthetic appeal, like a turtle-shaped bin made by a group that loves turtles. “Except for me,” added one member of the group, “I woke up one day and said turtles aren’t that great.”



The winning compost bin design



Interim principal Ron Castagna is shown in his “fishbowl” office across from the main school office. He says he wants to see the comings and goings at the school.

NHS

(continued from page 1)

Hiring a permanent principal

DPS has convened the hiring committee for Northfield and Cordova says they have had “incredibly high interest” in the position. In the past when DPS has selected a successor principal and there’s a need for stability at a school and a new principal who could use a year as an apprentice, DPS has had interim principals stay another year. Or, she says, “We may find a real rock star veteran principal, in which case we want to make that move as quickly as possible. But it will be hard to say until we have a candidate pool.”

Interim principal Castagna, when asked by a parent at a recent open house if he would stay next year, replied, “If the district and students and parents want me, it’s hard to pick up and leave something you’re just making headway in. I love being here.”

It is unknown how long Castagna will be at Northfield—but it didn’t take long for him to start having an impact. Whether that impact is temporary or longer term remains to be seen, depending on the permanent principal selected. Castagna’s philosophy

about what works at a high school is unambiguous—and it is not eye-to-eye with Cordova’s vision described above. It sounds like the traditional comprehensive high school Stapleton families talked about in meetings while the school was being planned.

IB for all?

DPS has comprehensive high schools that offer something for everyone. For Northfield, Cordova says, they are committed to a new model that changes the paradigm.

Castagna, with many years of experience at a traditional high school with an IB program, expresses concern that an all IB school wouldn’t be as welcoming to a wide range of students. “The sad part for this place would be if it would develop a reputation that you can only go here if you can cut it.” He would give every student IB for two years. “Then they’re going to have to come to some sort of a crossroads to decide, ‘Do I want to continue with IB as the full meal deal, or do I want to take one class, or do I have another pathway within the school to be successful?’ What’s the pathway when they choose not to take our full model? What I don’t want to say is, ‘Well, then, you have to leave our school because you don’t fit in.’ That to me just throws the whole model upside down. It



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becomes an elitist setting.” And he points out that even the best, most engaged parents can’t force some kids to do things that they’re not willing to do.

“You want to prepare kids to make great choices and be successful...I can’t force them at the end of the day to finish an IB, but I don’t want them to leave.” He says Lakewood High School programs included a wide variety of AP courses in addition to IB—and striving to do something after high school became part of the culture there, whether it was college, two-year college, vocational schools, training programs, or military. “What’s wrong with the original goals of public education in America,” he asks, “productive citizens being able to take care of themselves, and give back to the world we live in? When you look at comprehensive high schools that try to meet the needs of all kids, that’s what floats my boat.”

The IB Program

As a longtime principal at a high school with a successful IB program, Castagna says the IB program is “hard.” He has seen average-ability kids “with incredible work ethics” complete the program, but he adds, “It is not for the faint of heart who don’t have that work ethic and know how to manage time.” Students who complete the IB program, he says, will be the best prepared students in their dorm when they get to college.



Principal Castagna checks in with Ahjante Birch, foreground, who is about to make the school-wide announcements on the PA system as Terry Luu looks on.

The current Northfield plan calls for students to select a pathway (or two) in freshman year and stick with it for four years. In traditional IB pathways, Castagna says, “You take five core classes and then you get to pick an elective. You don’t have to pick your elective pathway til junior year.” He believes students should have the opportunity to try different electives, pointing out that he, like many others, changed his college major several times. “Let them find out what really floats their boat.” (He likes that phrase.)

Diversity—one of NHS’ strengths

Castagna is excited about the diversity of NHS, currently one-third White, one-third Black and one-third Hispanic. “The breath and fresh air of this place is that you can come in from all walks of life.” He cites a favorite example of the importance of getting students interested and involved in sharing diverse viewpoints. “When IB said one of their goals was to have people work towards getting rid of land mines (IB chooses an issue each year that students can work on while fulfilling their community service requirement), a couple of the kids from South Korea said, ‘You realize that’s the only thing that keeps North Korea from marching down the road and just devastating South Korea?’”

Innovation Plan

Castagna believes the school’s innovation plan offers him and the staff the flexibility to make

some changes that make the program run more smoothly. He looks at the plan as “a great gathering of good ideas...a lot of stuff about what the research says,” but adds, “If there’s any flaw in it, it’s that you’ve got to have some experience of sitting in this seat for a while to understand, ‘Can I make this work? There are the practical pieces of how much staffing are you going to have in terms of teachers to make this work? What can I afford to do within the research?’”



Upcoming NHS Open Houses—Thursday, Dec. 10 and Jan. 7 at 6pm
Above: Interim principal Castagna speaks to parents and students at the Nov. 12 open house, attended by approximately 120 people.

- Changes Castagna has made**
- A dress code that “expects students to learn what ‘appropriate’” is.
 - A lower GPA for sports eligibility, 2.0 as set by CHSAA (Colorado High School Athletic Association) that doesn’t scare kids off from trying harder classes.
 - Two mid-day PE periods rather than all students in PE at the same time, starting at semester.
- Castagna’s suggestions for future changes**
- For next year, Castagna’s choice would be a schedule from 8:30am to 3:40pm.
 - He’d like to get supplemental pay for teachers and add some after-school work sessions for students.
 - He would like the school to give weighted grades to reflect honors work.
 - He would like to see a class size of 300 rather than 200 since a bigger school can offer more options (in sports and music, for example).

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