

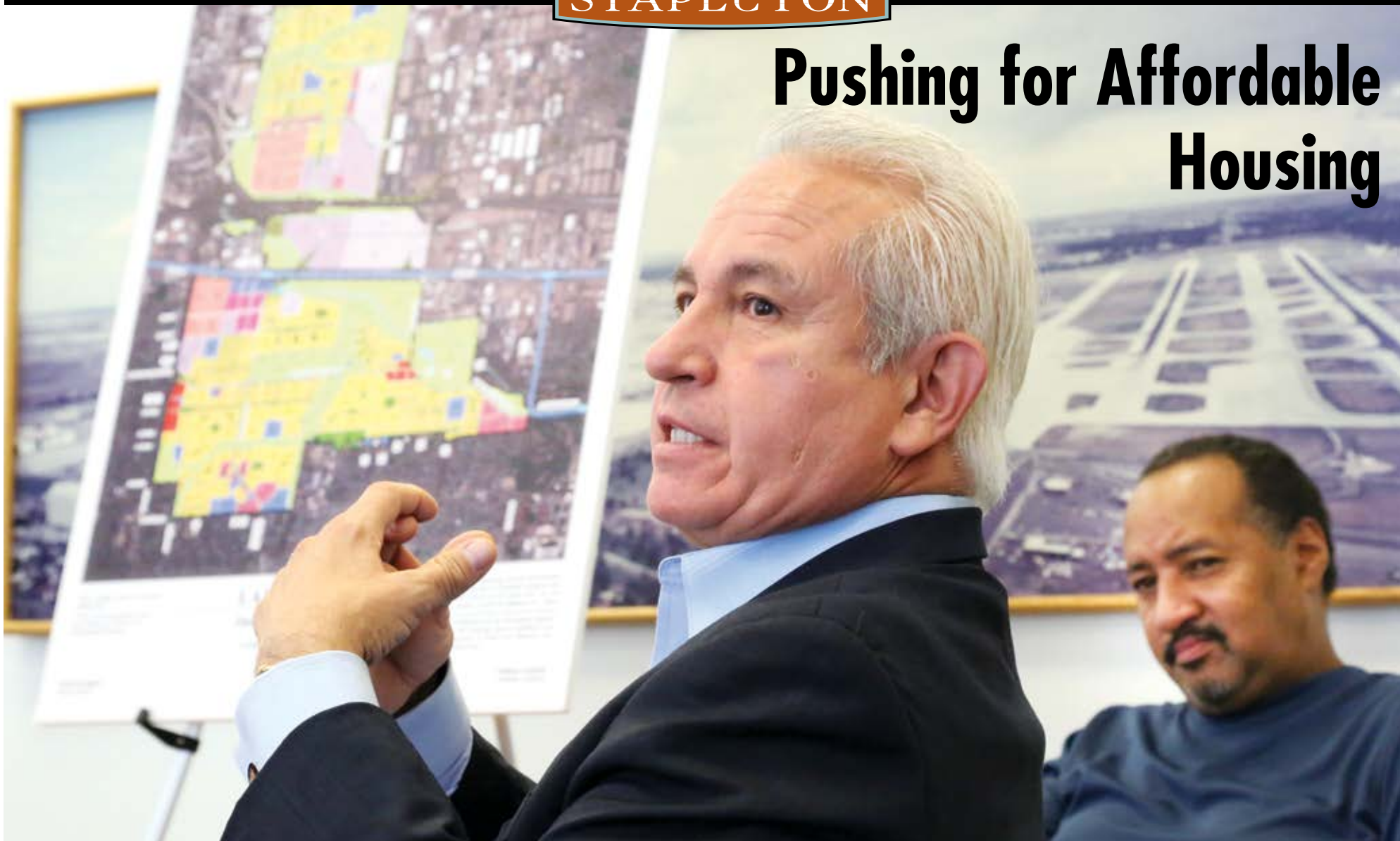
Front Porch

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

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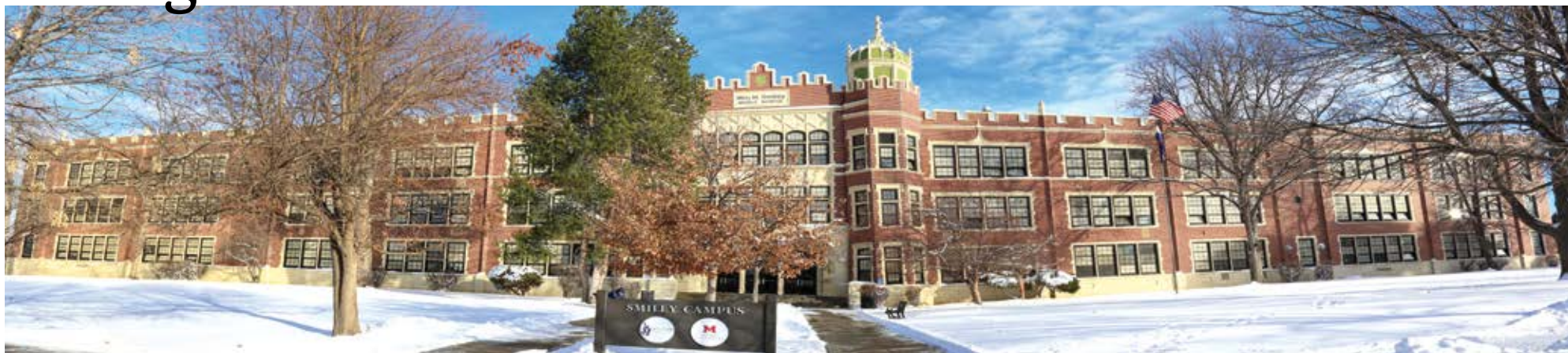
JANUARY 2016



Pushing for Affordable Housing

SDC Chair Kevin Marchman listens as Denver Housing Director Rick Padilla asserts the city's interest in seeing Stapleton reach its affordable housing goals. With Stapleton land use planning nearing completion, Marchman wants a plan for achieving the affordable goals by the end of first quarter 2016. *Story by John Fernandez on page 27.*

Changes Lie Ahead for McAuliffe



By Madeline Schroeder

Denver Public Schools is facing a capacity problem in the Park Hill-Stapleton shared boundary middle schools. Families with children are continuing to move to the area and all the middle schools except one, McAuliffe International School, have maxed out their space.

Under the leadership of the successful Principal Kurt Dennis, McAuliffe has consistently been the top pick in the DPS choice lottery system, where families prioritize schools within the boundary area. McAuliffe has top-performing students, a thriving arts programs, multiple sports teams, and an array of electives like choir, orchestra, journalism, stagecraft and Mandarin.

Because of the high demand for McAuliffe and potential space for more students, DPS has turned its attention to the school to accommodate the growing middle school population in coming years.

Currently, McAuliffe shares the (continued on page 30)

LA Has Hollywood, NY Has Times Square

Denver Has the Stock Show

There's no "cow town" without cows.

By Dick Kreck

Denver residents may be divided on whether their city should become a mega metropolitan area or preserve its roots that stretch back to the dusty, roo-tin'-tootin' days of 100 years ago. But for 16 days in January, everyone agrees that the National Western Stock Show is a rip-roarin' good time.

The 109th edition of the show kicks off January 9 and runs through January 24 at the (continued on page 6)



Printed with soy-based ink. Paper contains 30% postconsumer waste.

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



The 29th Ave. Town Center will keep its festive lighting through January 24.



Most of the events listed below are FREE or support nonprofits.
Additional events are listed on pages 23-25.

JANUARY

Now through Fri., Jan 22

Downtown Aurora Visual Arts "Mysteries of the Season" exhibit. Youth artists prepare projects year round. Free and open to the public 10am-5pm Mon-Fri. 1405 Florence. E-mail gallery@davarts.org, call 303-367-5886 or visit www.davarts.org.

Fri., Jan. 1—Sun., Jan. 31

Free weekly Stapleton walks. Led by volunteers from neighborhood organizations. stapletonwalks@gmail.com or walk2connect.com/events. See p 25.

Wednesday, January 6

DPS community meeting. McAuliffe Principal Kurt Dennis will present his proposal for a larger McAuliffe in 2017-18. 6pm. Smiley auditorium, 2540 Holly. See page 30.

Thurs., Jan. 7—Sun., Jan. 24

National Western Stock Show Parade Jan. 7 at noon. Stock show starts at 9am, Jan. 24. National Western Complex, 4655 Humboldt. See page 6.

Thursday, January 7

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

Submit Info for Summer Camp Guide in February

Send the name of the camp, a one-line description, ages, dates, and contact information. Email information to: frontporchevents@gmail.com.

A Guide to NE Denver Churches is now posted at FrontPorchStapleton.com > Resource Guides

To be added to the online list please send: 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. Send to address listed above.

CORRECTION

MCA's Use of Private Security

SUN Spot, in the December Front Porch, quoted MCA Executive Director Keven Burnett on their use of private security. Burnett says they only hire private security to patrol pools and parks. They do not patrol alleys (as stated in the article.)

JANUARY

Friday January 8, 15 & 22

Free meditation group at Stapleton MCA, 9am, 7350 E 29th Ave. RSVP at stressintel.com. See p. 25.

Saturday, January 9

Denver Preschool Program's Annual Preschool Showcase. 10am-2pm. Green Valley Ranch Recreation Center, 4890 Argonne Way, Denver

Sunday, January 10

"Build a Bison" at Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Refuge* Assemble a bison skeleton. 1:30-2:30pm. 303.289.0232.

Sunday, January 10

Active Minds. "The History of Tea." 3:30-4:30pm. Sam Gary Library* 720.865.0325. www.activeminds.com

Tuesday, January 12

Memory Cafe at Schlessman Family Branch Library, 100 Poplar, 720.865.000. See page 4.

Thursday, January 14

Active Minds. "The Lewis and Clark Expedition." 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library* 720.865.0325. www.activeminds.com

Saturday, January 16

Free one-hour social security and retirement session. 9am at The Berkshire, 7352 E. 29th Ave. Limited seating. Sign up 303.803.1016 or scott@kuhnadvisors.com.

Tuesday, January 26

Memory Cafe at Schlessman Family Branch Library, 100 Poplar. See page 4. 720.865.000

Friday, January 29

DPS choice forms due by 4pm. Information at <http://schoolchoice.dpsk12.org/>

Saturday, January 30

Stapleton Blood Drive. Register at www.bonfils.org > Donate blood > Schedule an appointment. Use site code 5463. See page 28.

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

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, Jan. 14, 6:45-7:45pm

The Lewis & Clark Expedition

Join us for a program focusing upon Lewis & Clark's expedition that opened the West over 200 years ago. We will discuss achievements and challenges of the expedition as well as the legacies it left for the young nation. Building upon the experiences from the expedition, we will also discuss the evolution of our country's relationship with Native Americans and the lands they inhabited.

Thursday, Jan. 28, 6:45-7:45pm

Nigeria

The recent emergence of the Islamist group Boko Haram in the north of Nigeria has exacerbated a north/south split in the country that divides primarily along religious lines (Muslim/Christian). As the most populous nation of Africa and one of the leading oil exporters in the world, Nigeria is a key player in the region. Join Active Minds as we explore the past, present and future of this important country.

Community Night with the Denver Nuggets

Friday, Jan. 15, 7pm

Denver Nuggets vs. Miami Heat, Pepsi Center

Join the Denver Nuggets for the first ever Stapleton MCA Community Night with the Nuggets on Friday, Jan. 15. All supporters are welcome to join the Nuggets for the VIP experience prior to the game. Plus, 25 selected kids will be able to take part in one of the High Five Fan Tunnels to high-five the players as they run on the court! To purchase tickets, visit www.nuggetstix.com/stapletonmca1516. For more information, call Rachel Ekanger at 303.405.1693 or email rekanger@pepsicenter.com.

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: Keep your doors and windows closed and locked when you're away from home, even if it's just for a few minutes. When walking, travel with friends during the day and at

night, avoid deserted areas—do not cut through parks, alleys or vacant lots at night. If you think you're being followed, cross the street, change direction or go to a public place where others are present.

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 the 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 the 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.

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

Jennifer Olsen
Communications Coordinator
jolsen@stapletoncommunity.com

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Master Community Association



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Reference Librarian, Amy DelPo takes a turn leading the group in songs. DelPo was inspired to start the Memory Cafe at the library by her own mother, who has Alzheimer’s Disease.

Memory Cafe an Escape for With Memory Loss & Their



By Courtney Drake-McDonough

During a time of year when many people are making New Year’s resolutions about getting fit or saving money, the more pressing issue for some is figuring out how to cope with loved ones with memory loss issues. Whether it’s just a little forgetfulness or an actual diagnosis, finding a sense of community and fun can be the goal in the face of an isolating situation.

Ed Whitney walks into the community room with Kathy, his wife of almost 35 years, beaming and raring to go. He writes “E-Z Ed” on his name tag, a nickname that harkens back to his time in the military. Both are clearly happy to have arrived at the Memory



Café in the Lowry neighborhood’s Schlessman Family Branch Library. It’s a social outlet for the couple and a chance to help Ed with

memory skills in fun and creative ways.

Kathy describes Ed’s Alzheimer’s as being in the early stage, “but heading into mid-stage at this point—things are changing.” During the Memory Café, which started in October and meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month for 90 minutes, visitors take in musical entertainment, even singing along and playing simple instruments. They learn new skills, work puzzles and talk and laugh over coffee and doughnuts. Those happy times are also therapeutic for everyone in attendance.

Being able to strategize with other people about how to remain positive in the face of the challenges they live with is helpful. “The disease is not only isolating for the person with memory loss but it can be somewhat isolating for the person who is a caregiver,” says Kathy. She tries to spend time with her friends, “But there’s a point where, if friends don’t have a sense of what it means to have the disease or be living with someone (who does), they don’t have as much understand-

ing. Although they are very caring, you don’t want to wear out your welcome when you’re talking to people.”

The Schlessman Memory Café was started in October by Reference Librarian Amy DelPo whose mother has Alzheimer’s disease. When her mother was in the middle stage, DelPo looked around Denver and couldn’t find much for her mother to do and says, “She was very lonely, isolated and withdrawn.” DelPo looked to the library, figuring there would be things she could take her mother to, but there weren’t. Then she looked online and learned about the Memory Café concept, started in Europe, with many throughout the U.S. There are currently eight Memory Cafés in Colorado, a program of the Alzheimer’s Association. But DelPo’s program is thought to be the only one in the state located in a library. Because most neighborhoods have a library that is accessible and familiar to residents, she hopes that the Memory Café concept will grow to many other libraries in Colorado.

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

Those Caretakers



Above: As comfort levels rise among the group, singing and playing music give rise to dancing. Rick Leete is shown dancing with instructor Kera Magarill.

Left: Kathy and Gregg Cupp share a moment. Time at the Memory Cafe helps caretakers and those with memory loss enjoy time together and a break from the focus on their medical situations.

Far left: Dorothy McNeese and her fellow cafe-goers make music with bells and other instruments.

The Memory Café models DelPo had seen elsewhere were either only free-form social time or a very structured program. She com-

bined the two with the more structured program at the start to help break the ice, such as singing, learning about meditation, a cooking class or art—and then more social time in the second part to allow for conversation. A grant

from the Denver Public Library covers food, games and sometimes the guest presenter.

When Kera Magarill leads the group in singing and making music, that's just part of her job as early stage service coordinator with

the Alzheimer's Association of Colorado where she provides social engagement programs. Her program also provides information and classes in future planning, including legal and financial issues for people recently diagnosed and their care persons. Magarill says the Memory Cafés help normalize life for the attendees and help them battle the tendency toward becoming isolated.

DelPo's formerly social mother hesitated to go places out of fear of embarrassing herself by not remembering names or being unable to follow directions. "She immediately isolated herself and it was so sad," says DelPo. "That's what I love about this group—you can come and not remember people's names and you don't need to be embarrassed because it's understood that everyone here deals with memory so it's just fine." There is no criteria for who can come to the Memory Café. Anyone with any level of memory loss and every age is welcome.

Although the Memory Café is not a medical or educational program, the activities are mentally, physically and emotionally stimulating. That break from having life revolve around medical issues is beneficial. "I have people say to me, 'It's such a relief to come to something that isn't medical' because so much of what's out there for this community is health care-based or social services-based, whereas this is just about 'let's have a good time,'" she says. "There's still a lot of life to live and a lot of quality of life to enjoy and it's kind of a relief to not have to be put in that box when you come here."

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Visiting the Stock Show

Above: The opening ceremony at the rodeo celebrates the glory of the old west.
Below: The elevated walkway offers an overview of the stockyards behind the Expo Hall.
Right: In the bareback rodeo event, riders attempt to stay on the horse for a grueling eight seconds. This photo was taken at the MLK Jr. African American Heritage Rodeo at the National Western Stock Show.



The 2016 National Western Stock show kicks off with the annual parade downtown on January 7 at 12pm and runs from Jan. 9 – 24. Visit nationalwestern.com/schedule for a day-by-day listing of events.

Grounds admission prices are \$13/weekday, \$17/weekend & holiday for adults, and \$2-3 for children 3 – 11 (the last Saturday is \$19 and the last day is \$10). Gate admission is free on Jan.19. Parking is free every day in stock show lots.

Tickets for special events, including the Mexican Rodeo Extravaganza (Jan. 10) and the MLK Jr. African-American Heritage Rodeo (Jan. 18), can be purchased online or by phone at 303.295.6124 or nwtickets@nationalwestern.com. Special event tickets include grounds admission for the day of the show.



(continued on page 1) historic complex at 46th and Humboldt streets.

It's a community-wide event. Herds of little buckaroos and buckarettes, many outfitted in bandannas and hats that fall over their ears, are rounded up and led through the grounds, perhaps to come face-to-face with an Angus bull, rabbits, chickens and, maybe, a pink or blue cloud of cotton candy. Young men and women from outstate stroll the grounds to show off their form-fitting jeans and western wear. Their parents can wander through 900 booths and other spaces that offer household goods, clothing, jewelry and, if needed, bull semen—and visit the Coors Western Art Exhibit & Sale. Or rest their boots in the popular Cowboy Bar. Two rodeos a day give attendees a chance to whoop and holler just as their counterparts have done for almost a century.

The show traces its roots to 1905 when a group of businessmen decided that what their town needed “to preserve the western lifestyle” was an agricultural show that would bring visitors, and their money, to the Mile High City. The first show, which opened on Jan. 29, 1906, to promote better breeding and feeding techniques to stockmen, lasted for six days and drew 15,000 visitors. A horse show was added in 1908; one of the nation's largest indoor rodeos became an annual event in 1931, and the famed Westernaires riding team joined the show in 1954.

It isn't just about entertainment; it's also about money. Big money. Cattlemen (and women) pour in from around the country to show off and sell their animals, hoping to win

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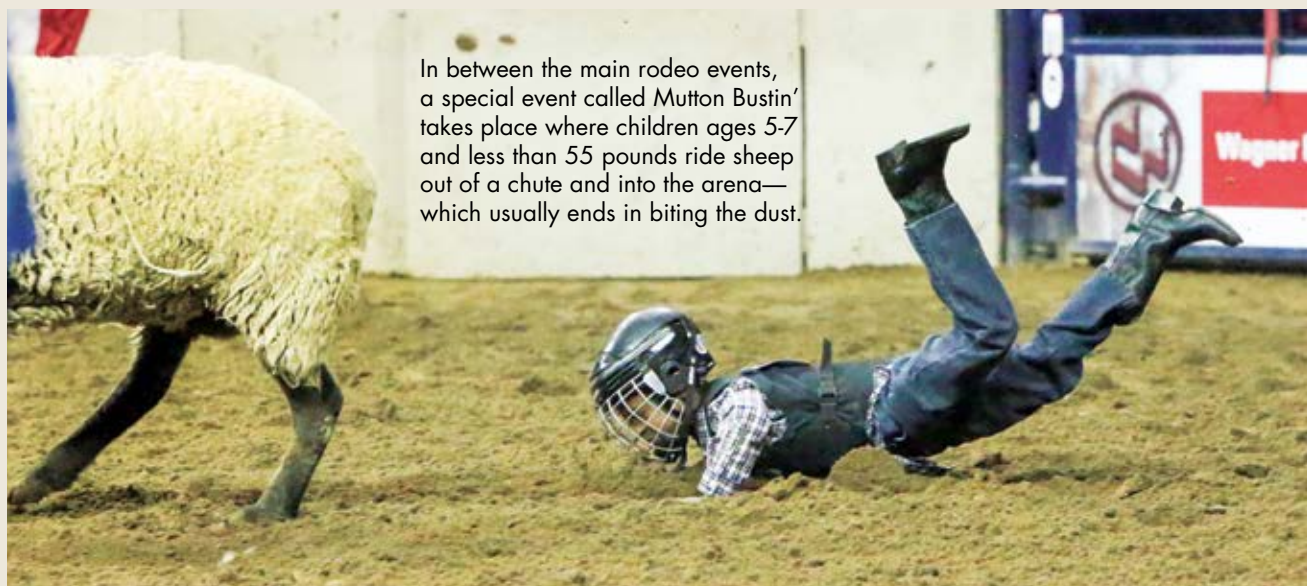


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Above and right: At the National Western Nursery in the Events Center Paddock, children have the chance to meet and learn about farm animals.



In between the main rodeo events, a special event called Mutton Bustin' takes place where children ages 5-7 and less than 55 pounds ride sheep out of a chute and into the arena—which usually ends in biting the dust.

one of the many best-in-show competitions for beef, pigs and sheep. Today, the stock show complex covers 120 acres, draws 18,000 entries to its horse show and continues to grow. In 2006, the National Western's 100th anniversary, attendance reached a whopping 726,972. The largest opening-day crowd of 44,616 took to the grounds in 2008 and drew its largest single-day attendance that year with 68,610.

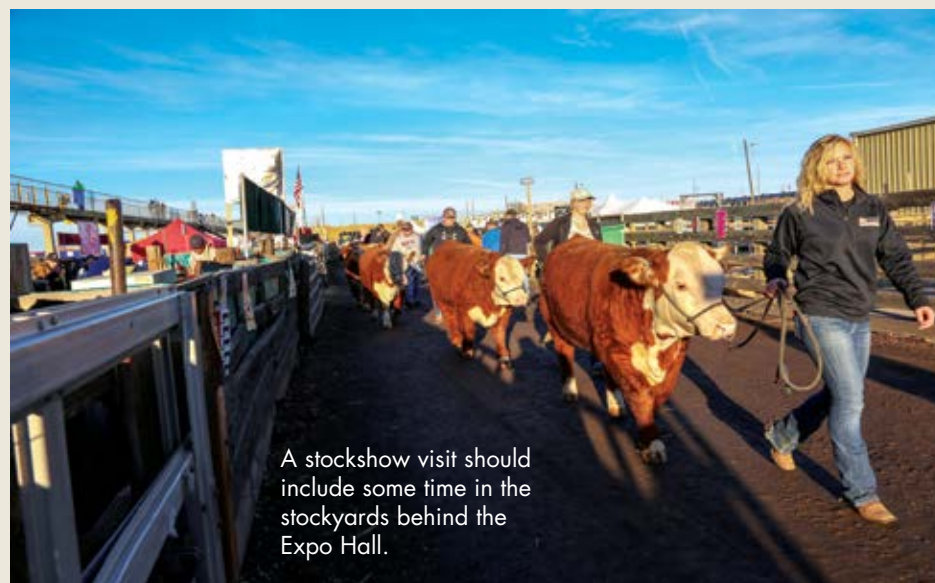
Many Coloradans equate the stock show with frigid temperatures, but Billy Saul, the late public-relations man for the show, was fond of reminding would-be visitors, "There is no such thing as Stock Show weather."

The National Western is on the brink of a new era. In November, Denverites voted to extend indefinitely a 1.75 percent tourism tax on hotels and car rentals to raise \$476 million of

a projected \$778 million cost for construction and improvement—river cleanup, preservation, public transportation and the creation of art and cultural spaces. It's also expected to rejuvenate the long-neglected neighborhoods around it.

Denver Mayor Michael Hancock, whose administration threw its full weight behind the proposal, told the *Denver Business Journal*, "It's a big number but we have to keep it in perspective with the city's role for being the catalyst in reconnecting the neighborhoods" with "a new entertainment, education and tourist attraction."

Dick Kreck was a longtime Denver Post editor and columnist. He asked that his writing fee be donated to the children's program at the local library.



A stockshow visit should include some time in the stockyards behind the Expo Hall.

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



Renderings courtesy of North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative



(1) South Platte river-front in summer (above) and winter (right). The stockyard pens (2) will be removable so festivals can be held in that area in the summer. The bridge in the foreground will connect National Western Drive to Washington St. in Globeville. A water resources center is planned along the river as a research lab and to offer educational opportunities for students and the public.



By Carol Roberts

Since 2011 when the National Western Stock Show talked of moving, Denver has put significant efforts into planning for the highest and best future uses of the facility, culminating in the National Western Center Master Plan released in March 2015—and recent success securing funds to implement the plan. The renderings shown here provide a snapshot of the long-term vision, estimated to cost \$856.4 million dollars (not including redevelopment of the aging Coliseum) over ten or more years.

The funding that enables work to begin on the massive project includes a rental car and lodger's tax of 1.75 percent. Denver voters, in November, approved ballot measure 2C

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The Stock Show of the Future



(3) The "N" Line to Thornton is projected to open in 2018 with a rail stop at the National Western Stock Show. Visible beyond the rail line looking west is the new Equestrian Center (4) on the right and the Livestock Center (5) on the left. The left foreground building is the Trade Show/Exhibition Hall. In the right foreground corner area will be transit oriented development and parking.



Above: The new Tradeshaw/Exhibition Hall (6) and new arena (7) are located along Brighton Blvd. and the new Bettie Cram Drive, which will continue west over a new bridge to Globeville.

Below left: The Stadium Arena Market (8), built in 1909, will be redeveloped and the CSU Center (9) will be constructed. The vision for the Colorado Commons (10) plaza area is to have small retail spaces, areas for events, research growing plots and a small urban farm.

Not shown in renderings: The Livestock Exchange building (11) and the Forney Museum (12) will remain. The Coliseum (13) will be redeveloped at a future point.

For more information visit:
DenverGov.org/NationalWestern

that permanently continues this tax that otherwise would have expired in a few years. That revenue source will enable the project to borrow for infrastructure work and get initial projects started.

In addition, \$121.5 million in funds through the Regional Tourism Act (RTA) were approved in December. A mayor's office press release states, "Buildings such as the new Livestock Center, Stockyards/Events Pavilion and the Equestrian Center will create new tourist opportunities."

Further funding commitments have been made by the Stock Show (\$50 million) and Colorado State University (\$16.2 million).

The first three steps as the project moves forward will be land acquisition, rail consolidation, and site remediation, says Erika Martinez, Communications Director for the North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative, the mayor's initiative for the stock show project lead by Kelly Leid.

The stock show currently has 120 acres and will grow to the 270 acres shown here. Land acquisition has begun. The S. Platte riverfront plans will require moving rail lines to create riverfront access when the stockyard area is used for festivals, as shown in the upper left photo. And based on prior industrial uses and testing, it is known that some degree of environmental remediation will be required before project construction can begin. A complicating factor during construction will be the need to keep the Stock Show open and accessible throughout the 10-year project.

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Westerly Creek Principal Jill Corcoran, math teacher Stacie Williamson, Ashley Elementary Principal

By John Fernandez

Local principals and teachers say they weren't surprised by the newly released PARCC results, which had lower scores than prior tests. But, they point out, PARCC isn't just harder, it's fundamentally different. PARCC is considered a "next generation" assessment, a deliberate attempt to test in a different way, focusing more on problem solving, critical thinking and explanation—described by teachers as critical, real-life skills.

Westerly Creek Elementary School Principal

NE Denver Elementary Schools	Grade	ELA % Met or Exceeded Expectations	Math % Met or Exceeded Expectations
Ashley Elementary School			
	3	20.0%	8.3%
	4	17.4%	< 11.0%
	5	20.4%	14.3%
Denver Language School			
	3	56.1%	52.0%
	4	62.9%	39.8%
	5	50.0%	26.3%
Hallett Fundamental Academy			
	3	6.3%	10.4%
	4	13.0%	< 11.0%
	5	36.6%	17.1%
Isabella Bird Community School			
	3	54.3%	54.3%
	4	57.1%	28.6%
	5	65.4%	48.1%
Lowry Elementary School			
	3	60.5%	63.2%
	4	42.7%	41.0%
	5	42.3%	26.8%
Montclair Elementary School			
	3	24.1%	23.0%
	4	30.0%	17.4%
	5	44.7%	25.3%
Palmer Elementary School			
	3	15.6%	9.4%
	4	23.1%	16.0%
	5	29.3%	12.2%
Park Hill School			
	3	50.0%	46.4%
	4	68.0%	50.7%
	5	62.1%	41.4%
Smith Renaissance School			
	3	25.0%	22.4%
	4	25.0%	10.4%
	5	22.6%	22.6%
Stedman Elementary School			
	3	10.3%	< 12.0%
	4	9.3%	7.5%
	5	25.9%	13.8%
Swigert International School			
	3	70.5%	72.1%
	4	78.4%	62.2%
	5	73.6%	67.9%
The Odyssey School			
	3	56.0%	48.0%
	4	65.4%	34.6%
	5	72.0%	44.0%
Westerly Creek Elementary			
	3	66.3%	73.0%
	4	65.4%	51.9%
	5	69.1%	67.3%
William (Bill) Roberts K-8 School			
	3	70.1%	70.1%
	4	73.6%	64.4%
	5	67.3%	65.1%

Patricia Lea



Jill Corcoran says, "Students are asked to read, to comprehend, to organize, to answer a series of questions from different perspectives, to use evidence to support an answer." Patricia Lea, Bill Roberts K-8 principal, supports that statement, saying, "There's a lot of explaining required in this genre of a test. You have to defend a position. It's a good approach, just as in real life."

Denver Discovery middle school math teacher Mandy Hicks says, "One hundred percent of every second of every lesson I teach, I'm thinking about that test. Not because I am data-obsessed but because I know that is how we are measuring success and that's how ultimately the kids will feel successful ... We are trying to teach authentically and we are teaching for the long term ... from my opinion as an educator that teaches these standards every day, this is the trajectory we should be on." Kristen Atwood, DDS principal, says, "We truly do believe these (Common Core standards) are the guidelines for success in the 21st century."

However, Corcoran points out that the PARCC math test is especially difficult for elementary school children who are behind in literacy skills. She says students who could solve equations might have been able to get a proficient score on the old tests, but now they don't have the language proficiency to explain how they reached their answer and why it's correct. Ashley Principal Zachary Rahn cites the magnitude of the change for such students at Ashley Elementary, "Forty-seven percent of kids were proficient or advanced under TCAP in math two years ago. This year it was 9 percent." Rahn explains that their turnaround philosophy at the school was to focus on literacy the first year so they didn't spend as much time on math, but he also points out that what is demanded in the math assessment is greatly different than what it was in the prior tests—and Ashley's drop in math scores was in line with what happened nationally.

The PARCC assessment was given last spring to students in grades three through 11. It's a computer-based test at all grade levels, requiring strong computer navigation skills. See page 12 to read this author's experience taking a portion of the third

The Charts

Despite the federal (and state) requirement for testing, students may opt out of a PARCC test. The average participation rate of NE Denver schools in the Front Porch distribution area was 96.2%. DPS' participation rates ranged from 67.7% to 98% across all schools. At its most extreme statewide, participation rates fell as low as 4% for some tests.

These charts show NE Denver schools in the Front Porch distribution area on the English Language Arts tests (ELA) and on the math tests. The scores show the percentage of students at the two highest performance-levels: meeting or exceeding expectations. The remaining performance levels were "did not meet expectations," "partially met expectations" and "approached expectations." Extended charts are available for downloading at FrontPorchStapleton.com.

Zachary Rahn





educators Weigh in on PARCC Tests

Zachary Rahn, Bill Roberts Principal Patricia Lea, and Site Assessment Leader Kim Lewis.

grade test. Although NE Denver schools enjoyed relatively high scores, substantial numbers of students, even majorities, didn't "meet expectations." This result did not seem to be a significant concern to the local educators with whom the *Front Porch* spoke. Teachers and principals say the PARCC results are providing the data needed to fine-tune teaching methods and content as Colorado educators continue to implement the Common Core standards.

There seems to be wide acceptance that Common Core standards are raising the bar and the PARCC tests help teachers track achievement of the new standards. Ashley Principal Rahn says, "CMAS fundamentally changes the way we teach. We can now make data-based decisions." Stacie Williamson, a math teacher at Westerly Creek Elementary, echoed that sentiment, saying, "The Common Core gives us something to teach to, and PARCC gives us the test on those standards. It's just asking what we've taught."

The educators hope future scores will become available before summer so they can analyze the data to see the subject areas where their students were weak and strengthen their teaching in those areas—perhaps even finding a teacher whose students were strong in that area to share lesson plans.

Despite their acceptance of the test and the Common Core standards, the elementary teachers and principals have plenty to say about difficulties in implementation. Problems included not enough computers, bandwidth limitations forcing staggered test-taking times, and third-graders' computer readiness given the typing and other skills needed. The job of logistics is so daunting that each school has a "SAL" or site assessment lead. The SAL coordinates test taking with the overall school and districtwide calendars. Kim Lewis, SAL at Westerly Creek Elementary, says, "Logistics are hugely complex, just finding 90-minute blocks of time and even enough test proctors (is difficult)."

Bill Roberts Principal Lea points out, and they all agree, the PARCC test is just one measure of their students. "I feel that kids need to have multiple ways to demonstrate or show us what they know ... I know how college acceptances have changed. They have SATs, ACTs, they look at their grades, they look at what they do, are they into athletics or clubs? It is just not one thing."

The PARCC English Language Arts (ELA) test

requires three 75- to 90-minute test sessions; math requires four 60-minute sessions. This is on top of similar requirements for science and social studies assessments. Teachers welcome the 90-minute reduction in PARCC testing now

being planned for spring 2016. Nevertheless, the elementary teachers and principals agree that the amount of time allocated for this so-called "summative" testing is excessive for their lower-grade students. For the 2015-2016 school year, PARCC testing will be limited to grades three through nine.

The district will be sending individual student score reports to parents (continued on page 12)

NE Denver Middle Schools	Grade	ELA % Met or Exceeded Expectations	Math % Met or Exceeded Expectations
Denver Discovery School			
	6	64.8%	53.70%
Denver School of the Arts			
	6	83.5%	64.6%
	7	83.7%	65.3%
	8	82.3%	64.5%
DSST: Conservatory Green Middle School			
	6	55.5%	46.10%
DSST: Stapleton Middle School			
	6	46.1%	39.5%
	7	67.9%	59.6%
	8	67.1%	62.4%
Hill Campus of Arts and Sciences			
	6	37.1%	31.6%
	7	36.9%	30.5%
	8	49.7%	32.3%
McAuliffe International School			
	6	65.3%	68.6%
	7	71.7%	67.1%
	8	69.3%	64.9%
The Odyssey School			
	6	80.8%	42.3%
	7	58.3%	29.2%
	8	53.8%	30.8%
William (Bill) Roberts K-8			
	6	80.7%	77.2%
	7	65.5%	44.8%
	8	59.2%	44.7%

NE Denver High Schools	ELA Grade	ELA % Met or Exceeded Expectations	Math by Level (not by grade)	Math % Met or Exceeded Expectations
Denver School of the Arts				
	9	86.3%	Algebra I	69.1%
	10	78.9%	Geometry	68.7%
	11	79.7%	Algebra II	54.3%
DSST: Stapleton High School				
	9	63.6%	Integrated I	> 64.0%
	10	69.4%	Integrated II	48.0%
	11	88.5%	Integrated III	> 65.0%
East High School				
	9	52.9%	Algebra I	13.2%
	10	38.7%	Geometry	25.7%
	11	38.3%	Algebra II	40.4%
George Washington High School				
	9	44.8%	Algebra I	28.7%
	10	36.7%	Geometry	31.1%
	11	32.5%	Algebra II	22.0%
Venture Prep High School				
	9	21.7%	Integrated I	10.0%
	10	15.1%	Integrated II	< 11.0%
	11	34.5%	Integrated III	14.8%

About PARCC

PARCC stands for Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. It is a consortium of states that have banded together to create a new assessment tool for elementary and secondary education. Among its many intended benefits is the ability to compare academic achievement levels between schools, districts, within a state and among states.

PARCC covers math and English language arts (ELA), complementing separate tests in science and social studies developed by the state of Colorado. Taken together, they constitute a new testing regime known as CMAS, or Colorado Measures of Academic Success. CMAS is the state's common measurement of students' progress at the end of the school year. States such as Colorado that accept federal education funds are required to administer statewide assessments to all students.

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By John Fernandez

So what's it like taking a PARCC test? Does it really require the analytical and critical thinking skills said to be hallmarks of the Common Core and overall Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) system?

Here's what third-graders face. First, they need significant computer skills: reading detailed instructions, scrolling forwards and backwards and up and down, activating mouse-overs, dragging-and-dropping, highlighting text, typing, clicking on radio buttons, toggling between skills and deleting prior choices.

Taking A 3rd Grade PARCC Test

PARCC units covering math and English Language Arts range from 75 to 90 minutes each for a total of seven sessions. The test is not for the easily distracted. In the online English practice test, the first set of questions is based on a 31-paragraph excerpt of a children's story akin to an Aesop's fable, heavy on symbolism and metaphor. Just reading the story takes time, and then the questions begin:

- Select a sentence that best describes what's

happening in a picture.

- Complete a chart by dropping and dragging boxed phrases that answer a question.
- Select the phrase that contains the main idea of the story or article.
- Identify a word's meaning as it is used in a specific paragraph.
- Select from given phrases the one that provides details supporting the selection in the prior question.
- Write an essay that explains how a character's actions and words are important to a plot.

My personal favorite question on this third grade ELA exam was reading two articles addressing similar but different subjects, then selecting sentences and dropping them into a Venn diagram to indicate which sentences applied to both articles (where the circles overlapped) and which applied to only one article.

On to the math test ... It may be computerized but this is no simple "fill in the bubble" exercise. The interface requires multiple ways of interacting, often in a sequence of tasks that build upon each other:

- Pointing and clicking on a number line.
- Typing in a number or an explanation.
- Selecting one or more correct answers from

statements or from models such as geometric shapes.

- Selecting boxes in a grid to create an array and then quantify the array.
- Selecting from a drop-down menu to correctly complete an equation, along the way choosing the appropriate math symbols, e.g., +, -, X, \.

A sample question asked students to explain why "Daniel" is not correct in this statement: "Daniel says the number with the greatest value he can make with the digits 5, 7, and 6 using the digits only once is 657 because the 7 is in the place with the greatest value." Students are then asked to devise the number with the greatest value using each digit only once, and then explain why this number has the greatest value.

In another question, the student is asked to look at a drawing of a wall divided into six equal vertical panels, four of which are painted. From there, the student is asked to describe in fractions how much of the wall is and is not painted. A separate exercise asks the student to write a fraction between 3/2 and 5/6 and explain how they know this.

The tests are clever and sophisticated, and students are asked to do more than regurgitate memorized information. The emphasis is on problem solving and understanding the concepts—they have to cite evidence supporting their answer or explanation.



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Educators Weigh in on PARCC

(continued from page 11) by early January. Each school is expected to hold a parents' meeting in January to discuss the test results with the school community, but the elementary principals said there simply isn't time to go over individual student's scores with parents.

The current results from tests taken last spring are being used to establish a baseline. Trend information on performance over time will be the real payoff. Ironically, however, a debate is taking place over Colorado's continued participation in PARCC (see "What's The Future of PARCC?" on page 13).



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What's The Future of PARCC?

By John Fernandez

In a remarkable coincidence, two long-awaited educational events occurred the same week in December: release of the PARCC test results for Colorado students and congressional passage of ESSA, a new federal education bill that has the potential to undo PARCC.

Even as PARCC was being developed, critics complained of the burden and expense of testing, and what is viewed by some as unwarranted meddling in the local control of education. Steve Durham, chair of the State Board of Education, was recently quoted in *Chalkbeat*, an online education publication as saying, "The odds of continuing with that particular assessment are slim beyond next year. But I have only one vote." In December, that publication also reported that the newly appointed State Commissioner of Education Richard Crandall has "signaled an openness to move Colorado away from the Common Core and its membership in PARCC, the multistate testing effort."

However, State Sen. Mike Johnston, who has been a prime mover of educational reforms in the Colorado Legislature, explained that state law regarding education is complicated due to Colorado's unusual educational governance structure. An independently elected state board and the state commissioner of education, who it appoints, are in the position of having to implement educational policies set by the Legislature and governor. Because of that structure, and because of House Bill 1240, passed in 2012, that requires Colorado to participate in PARCC, Johnston said, "I don't think there are any significant shifts coming for Colorado as a result of that legislation."

The *Front Porch's* request for comment from



State Sen. Mike Johnston

the Colorado Department of Education yielded this response: "Colorado will be administering the PARCC exams in spring 2016. We are looking into the possibility of an assessment pilot project in which we would look at other ways of assessing students over the next few years. The ESSA opens the door to these types of pilot projects."

ESSA, the Every Student Succeeds Act, supersedes the No Child Left Behind Act that dates to 2001 and was a hallmark of the Bush presidency. Signed by President Obama in December, ESSA retains features such as the testing requirement and calendar but will allow, over time, more flexibility at the state level on matters such as how schools and districts are evaluated.

By contrast, Johnston said, "What we're hearing overwhelmingly from principals, superintendents and teachers is stand back, let us do our work, stand down, don't change it, don't fix it, don't revise it, don't overhaul it, just give us the chance to implement it. Let us get some iterations of doing that with fidelity. As we get stronger, we'll tell you if we need tweaks. But there is no reason to rebuild the plane before you've flown it."

He noted that measures have already been taken to reduce the testing burden by 90 minutes for the 2015-2016 school year, bringing testing as a percentage of total instructional time below the 2 percent limit to almost 1 percent, and the PARCC test has been eliminated for 10th- and 11th-graders.

Johnston also cautioned that it would take years and millions of dollars to develop replacement tests that, in the end, would require "double testing" to have them validated against PARCC.

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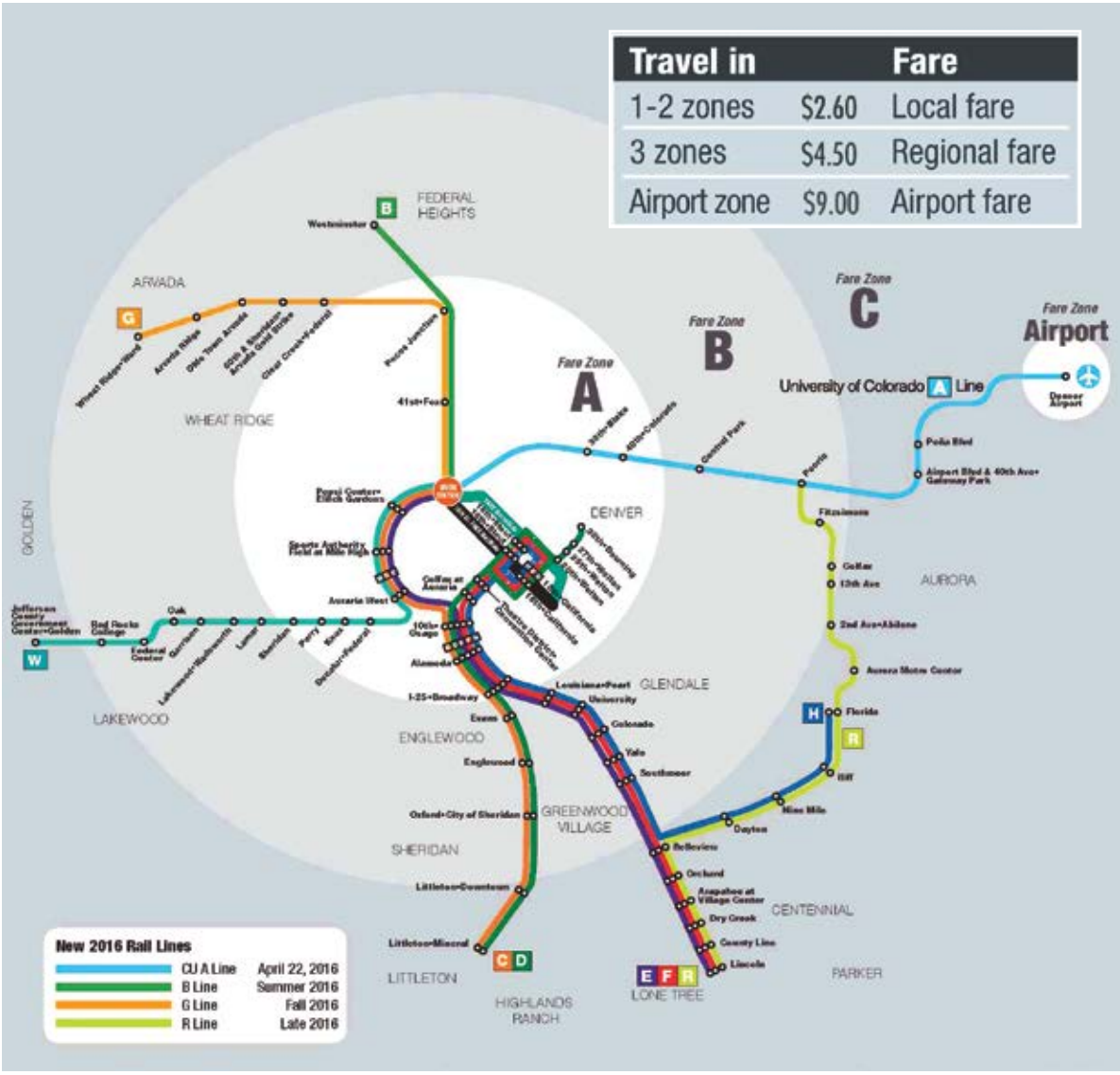
All fares are free from 7pm New Year's Eve until midnight Jan. 1

RTD's new fare structure starting January 1, 2016 was designed to simplify fares and payment. New features include: day passes offering riders unlimited trips through the entire service day for the cost of a single round trip; simplified rail zones; a flat \$9 fare for services to and from Denver International Airport; and printers aboard buses for day pass purchases.

- Local day passes will cost \$5.20 and Regional/Airport day passes will cost \$9. Day passes will provide unlimited trips throughout a service day for the cost of a round trip and the Regional/Airport day pass will include an Airport fare.
- New bus and rail trip categories are Local, Regional and Airport.
- Express bus routes will become Local or Regional trips, with some fares along these routes going down in price.
- New rail zones are A, B, C and Airport. Travel in one or two zones will require a Local fare; travel in three zones will require a Regional fare; and travel in the Airport zone will require an Airport fare.

- A one-way Local trip will cost \$2.60; a one-way Regional trip will cost \$4.50; and a one-way trip to or from DIA will cost \$9.
 - Half-fare discounts will still be available for elementary, middle and high school students ages 6-19, Medicare recipients, passengers with disabilities and people ages 65 and above. A one-way Local Discount trip will cost \$1.30 and a Regional or Airport Discount trip will cost \$4.50 for qualifying passengers.
 - Active military personnel will continue to ride RTD services at no cost, as is the current policy.
 - 10-Ride tickets books are available at retail outlets and provide an approximately 10 percent discount on single rides.
- Passengers can find more information about RTD's new fares at www.rtd-denver.com/fares-2016.shtml or by calling RTD Customer Care at 303-299-6000.

Information provided by RTD.
A downloadable rail map is posted with this article at FrontPorchStapleton.com.



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Think It Up Stops in Denver

By Madeline Schroeder

Think It Up, a national program for public school teachers and students grades 7-12, made a stop at George Washington High School on December 8.

Think It Up was created by the Entertainment Industry Foundation and donorschoose.org to bring excitement into learning by helping students and teachers get funding for projects they've designed. On average, teachers spend \$500 of their own money on resources and supplies for their students, according to Misty Espinoza, associate vice president of communications for the Entertainment Industry Foundation.

Winning projects are included on donorschoose.org where the public and donors can make contributions.

Since launching in September, Think It Up has funded 600 projects across the U.S. In North

Carolina students created a weather balloon and sent it into space. In New Jersey a group designed a remote-controlled car that drives itself out of a maze.

The program also launched "Think It Up Live" events where students and teachers pitch their ideas to judges, similar to the show *Shark Tank*, where budding entrepreneurs seeking funding pitch business ideas to a board of investors.

More than 200 students from all over Colorado gathered in the gym at George Washington for the Denver Think It Up Live on December 8. The night began with speeches by Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock, Denver Public Schools Board of Education President Anne Rowe, and Colorado Avalanche center Matt Duchene.

"It's amazing to see collaboration between teens and adults. These student-led projects will



Left to right: George Washington High School seniors Nayely Raygoza-Nunez, Janessa Rice, Theresia Sari and junior John Clayman, hash out details of their project with their AP Calculus teacher Joseph Bolz at the "Denver Think It Up Live" event.



Theresia Sari explains the group's project to a panel of judges similar to the show *Shark Tank*, where budding entrepreneurs seeking funding pitch their business ideas to a board of investors.

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Get to Know Dr. Maryam Guiahi

Maryam Guiahi completed her undergraduate work at Cornell University and trained at Loyola University in Chicago. She did sub-specialty training in contraception and family planning at Columbia University where she also received a Master's of Science in Epidemiology. She has a special interest in contraception for women with complex medical conditions. Maryam lives in Cheesman Park with her husband and son.

Just the Facts

Defrosting Colorado Roads

by James Hagadorn



Photo courtesy of CDOT

To avoid dangerous, slick roads, Colorado deploys snow plows that spray salty chemicals. What are these compounds, how do they work, and what are their impacts?

a mineral supplement, and you may have even used it as a bath salt. And sodium chloride? You can find bighorns licking it off the side of I-70.

But on metal, all of these substances catalyze corrosion. Especially if you don't wash them off your car. To alleviate mag chloride's corrosive impact, utilities regularly rinse it off roadside powerline equipment, and highway agencies power-wash it off roadside posts and signage.

What about the roads? These compounds speed roadbed breakdown, because the dissolved salts weep into cracks and pores in the pavement, where they undermine the integrity of its cement, tar, and/or aggregate (i.e., its itty-bitty rocks). The water that freezes and expands in the roadbed exacerbates these salt-driven effects, causing popouts, flaking, and scaling of the road's surface.

In high concentrations, none of these compounds are particularly good for roadside vegetation, soils, animals, or aquatic communities. Although concentrations are generally high next to roads, they generally diminish within yards to tens of yards away from roadways; exceptions occur when wind transports salty

spray farther afoot.

Road treatments are applied more judiciously today than ever before, with strategic focus on challenging areas like shady inclines, intersections, and susceptible bridges. The goal is to make the road safe but minimize the salt's impact to flora and fauna. In many of the state's urban centers, solid treatments are removed by street sweepers within days of a storm's passage. On high-traveled corridors, they are removed from the road and adjacent settling ponds each spring.

Each year Colorado agencies apply over 250,000 tons of salt and nearly 15 million gallons of brine to our roads; the materials alone cost tens of millions of dollars. These compounds, together with other snow-fighting strategies, save lives, reduce injuries and property damage, and amplify the state's economy through fostering predictable mobility for people and goods. Thus their positive impact is immense, but not without known tradeoffs.

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

As recently as the '90s, wintry Colorado drives were quite perilous. Many mountain roadbeds stayed caked in snow and ice for weeks or more, despite plowing.

In contrast—today we think nothing of cruising through mountain passes mere hours after storms hit. In part that's because Colorado's street scientists deploy a fine-tuned array of salty substances to keep roads from becoming automotive skating rinks.

What are these compounds, how do they work, and what are their impacts?

Solid salts, brine, and traction sand are the most common tools. Their key ingredients are naturally occurring minerals that lower the freezing point of water. Just like the alcohol that's in wiper fluid, these minerals prevent ice from forming and slice like a hot butter knife through existing ice.

Solid salts are typically a blend of three "chloride" minerals, named after the chlorine ion each possesses. They're dominated by bischofite, also known as magnesium or "mag" chloride. They also contain some halite, a.k.a. table salt or sodium chloride, and sylvite, a.k.a. potassium chloride. Such salts are mined in Utah from Jurassic (165 million-year-old) rocks that formed

as an ancient Persian Gulf-like sea dried up. As the water evaporated, it left its dissolved sea salts behind.

Road brine is a mag chloride-rich liquid that also contains a skootch of corrosion inhibitor. Some of this mag chloride comes from giant man-made ponds of water that are evaporated on the edges of Utah's Great Salt Lake. In winter, brine is sprayed on the road as a storm commences to help break snow's hold on the road and allow plows to remove the snow. Sometimes it's used to moisturize traction sand, to help the sand to stick to the road rather than bounce off or become airborne as it's being spread from the back of a truck. In summer, mag chloride brine is applied to some dirt roads to help reduce dust and harden the roadbed. It's hygroscopic, so in warmer weather it sucks water vapor from the air and acts like a glue to hold the road's sand and gravel particles together.

Traction sand is usually mixed with brine, or with a small amount of solid salt. The solid salt prevents damp sand from freezing into clumps and helps it flow smoothly into a sand-truck's hopper and distributor. Our sand is mined from ancient riverbeds or volcanic cinder cones. Traction sand works best when it becomes half-way embedded in the ice/snow that mantles the roadbed, thus forming a sandpapery texture that inhibits wheels from slipping.

So what are the downsides?

For human health, mag chloride is not a major danger—it's actually used as

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Each month, the Indie Prof reviews a current film in the theater and a second film that is available on DVD or VOD. As Oscar season draws near, this month I review two of the contenders.

Mustang (2015)

Wow. I see a lot of movies. I always try to keep a dispassionate distance from the film, so I can give an objective review. Most critics do. I found that impossible to do with this film, however. It bit me, and my reaction was purely visceral. So what you read here is siphoned through that reaction. Maybe that's not such a bad thing.

In the beginning of *Mustang*, the five Turkish sisters who embody the symbolic essence of the title are full of life. When we meet them, they are walking home from school, playing with boys in the sea, stealing apples from a neighbor (forbidden fruit!), enjoying each other's company, and displaying the strong will and rebellion we find in most teenage girls on the planet. The verve doesn't last.

They live in a Black Sea enclave with their strict Muslim grandmother and uncle (their parents have long passed), and when their grandmother finds out about their (mis?)deeds, she beats them. Their uncle then begins to fortify the house as if they were in a prison. Grandma quickly gives them lessons in wifey-hood: cooking, cleaning, dressing, and sewing, and then begins to marry them off one by one. The first two, the oldest, go quickly. As the youngest of the bunch, Lale, and the sometime narrator of the film, adroitly puts it: "Two down."

Despite the ugly content at times, the film emits a fairy tale brilliance: the cinematography is lush and verdant yet simple and understated, the music and silence engage in a melancholic ballet, and the acting chews. First time writer/director Deniz Gamze Erguven fashions a story that is both contemporary and timeless—channeling Austen and every other writer or filmmaker broaching the topic of young females trying to keep their independence while being pummeled by some type of dogma. Erguven is a Turkish national who now lives in France, and make no mistake, this film was mostly meant for Western audiences. It ignited a firestorm in Turkey. Is this the norm there? Of course that would be generalizing, but it is not generalizing to say that women in most parts of the world are overly sexualized and repressed. Erguven knows it and lived it.

I could say a lot more about the politics of the film: particularly examining the unforced marriage of tradition and religion that creates such a patriarchal Fascism in many parts of the world. Yet before we get to that point, it is helpful to remind ourselves of the beauty of the movies: we *feel*. And that is where we should start.

Starts Jan. 8 at Chez Artiste.

You will enjoy this film if you liked *Pride and Prejudice* (the book), *The Virgin Suicides*, and/or *Girlhood*.

Amy (2015)

Jim Morrison, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Kurt Cobain, Brian Jones. And Amy Winehouse. Their commonalities are many: all were supremely talented, all were superstars thrust into the limelight while still very young, and all died when they were 27. Amy Winehouse is unfortunately one of the latest members of the club. In today's 24-hour digital society, we have more non-stop access to stars, there is a bevy



of extant material on them, and we can gaze into anyone's personal life with shocking, and disturbing, ease. This documentary taps into that nerve: through a montage of video and audio interviews with her friends and family, still photographs, phone conversations, paparazzi footage, and turn-your-head-away-embarrassing moments, Winehouse's life is chronicled in a new documentary by Asif Kapadia (*Senna*). It is one of the favorites for the Best Documentary Feature at this year's Oscars.

We are all voyeurs. Whether we admit it or not, we all like to sit in our chairs, binoculars in hand, and watch people's lives outside the window. Hitchcock knew we have an insatiable voyeurism, but he also knew there was a price to pay for such voyeurism. The story of Amy Winehouse is one we've heard before: a young, talented singer/songwriter is thrust into a superstardom that she can't handle and then is undone by alcohol and drugs. Yet there is something intensely watchable about this film—perhaps because it is so recent, perhaps because of the close and immediate access

we are afforded, or perhaps because the culpability may lead back to all of us.

There is no shortage of villains here: her mother, who dismissed her teenaged bulimia; her father, who nixed an attempt at sending her to rehab early on; and her husband, who turned her on to hard drugs and rode the co-dependency train with her. Of course Amy herself was no angel and the film doesn't make judgments nor does it place explicit blame. It uses the non-narrative style Kapadia used before, leaving the narrating to the participants and Winehouse's own lyrics. It is an interesting, well-made, sad, and disturbing documentary that serves as an example of our current society. Pick up those binoculars.

You will like this if you enjoyed *Senna*, *Twenty Feet from Stardom*, and/or *Gimme Shelter*.

Now playing at various VOD outlets.

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

Here's wishing all a truly wonderful New Year!



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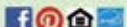
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Studio manager Chris Coleman laughs while producing a show in the Seacrest Studios at Children's Hospital Colorado, where patients can participate in or host live shows.

By Madeline Schroeder

At Children's Hospital Colorado, healing comes in many forms. Seacrest Studios, which opened in June 2014, is designed to heal and lift the spirits of patients. It is a 1,000-square-foot in-house radio station located off the main lobby where patients can participate in or host live shows that stream on channel BBOY 45, named after the hospital's mascot, Balloon Boy. The show airs 10am to 3pm Monday through Friday to patient rooms and waiting areas throughout the hospital.

"The studio heals your heart and your soul and your mental health," says Chris Coleman, the studio manager.

The Ryan Seacrest Foundation funded a handful of these studios at children's hospitals nationwide. Unlike most radio studios with 10-year-old coffee cups and dark lighting, Seacrest Studios is high-tech, bright and inviting, and very sanitary. The space is dedicated purely to fun.

"We figure these kids' lives right now are inundated with beeps, cords, IV poles, numbers and tests, so we keep this space as nonmedical as possible because it's all about escape and fun," Coleman says.

Coleman has been with the operation since the beginning. He and his co-director and child life specialist Cody Hudson come up with all the daily programming, which they make sure is always interactive rather than



Celebrities like Ed Sheeran shown here visit the radio studio to spend time with patients.

observational so kids are involved in every show. The programming ranges from game shows to performances to celebrity interviews. Ed Sheeran, Missy Franklin and Gavin Degraw have all visited the studio. Hudson or Coleman introduces the celebrity, but then patients ask all the questions.

"Kids say whatever is on the top of their minds. Like the Deep Thoughts skit on *Saturday Night Live* that said, 'A child's face says it all, especially the mouth part,'" Coleman says. Of course there is the occasional whacky comment on air, like one patient who said to Missy Franklin, "You know, I have a leaky bladder," which Coleman immediately followed with, "OK, let's play a quick game!"

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Lauren Sperry, 10, and her brother Ericson, 8, play Deal or No Deal. They stop at Seacrest Studios every time they visit Children's Hospital, where Lauren recently finished treatment for Leukemia.



Coleman and Hudson improvise a lot to keep the conversation moving and quickly accommodate patient requests on air. They encourage kids to get as creative as they want. Coleman and Hudson have had pies chucked in their faces on a slow-motion camera. They've made up games with Broncos players where they jump really fast this way, and then turn, and jump really fast another way. "Pretty soon we were all sweating and very competitive," Coleman says and laughs.

Patients also have the opportunity to come up with their own regular shows. Each week features Eric's baseball show, Elizabeth's superhero spotlight, and Carter's bug show complete with a singing bug duo on Segways.

Some families who fly in to the hospital for treatment have scheduled their visits around the radio programs. One mother could not get her son to get on the plane to go to the hospital until the Seacrest Studios opened and now he can't wait to visit. These are the types of stories that remind Coleman and



The show airs 10am to 3pm Monday through Friday to patient rooms and waiting areas throughout the hospital, shown on the screen at back. Patients who are unable to leave their room can call in to make requests or answer questions.

Hudson why they love what they do. "I have the privilege of helping these people get through a tough time so I have no choice but to smile," Hudson says.

There is a lot of smiling and laughing in this studio, not just kids but adults as well. To see more photos or watch videos of celebrity interviews, visit the Children's Hospital Colorado YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/thechildrenshospital/videos.

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By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Larry Leith, founder of Tokyo Joe's, answered the call. Through social media and emails (his name and email address are on every cup), the Stapleton neighborhood said they wanted the restaurant on their turf. "This area was very requested," says Leith, who has 30 locations in Colorado, five in other states and 11 more on the way. "We've looked in this area, literally, for five years and never quite found the right project." The neighborhood was ready, lining up

at the door for their December 17 opening.

With giant, red oval light fixtures overhead, made by Tokyo Joe's, the space is distinctive, continuing with their intention to give a distinctive look to each location. The company is big on architecture and design, with Leith saying they are equally known for their architecture as they are for their food. The newly built building gave them both the benefit and challenges of a corner location. "It had to read from all three sides and we wanted to make sure we were keeping with the theme of what's

Eat Well and Inexpensively at New Japanese Restaurant



Left to right Jessica Adney, kitchen manager, Kate Eggleston, general manager and Kris Cotton, district manager gather outside Tokyo Joe's on Northfield Blvd. at the restaurant's grand opening.

going on around here," Leith explains.

A former pro skier, Leith started Tokyo Joe's 20 years ago, inspired by his coaches' advice to eat healthy, focusing on a chicken and rice-based diet. "It was always about a

healthy, clean place to eat that wasn't 'health food,' where people could eat affordably all the time," he says. Serving Japanese-oriented cuisine, everything is grilled or steamed without use of woks, deep fryers or microwaves.

Kate Eggleston, the general manager will be the face of the Northfield Stapleton restaurant. She has been with the company for more than 10 years, working her way up the ranks, serving on the opening team for all of the out-of-state locations. "Kate's a rock star!" says

Leith. "Northfield scored because they get to keep her."

As part of the company's "Joespitality" movement, a play on "hospitality," the general managers will have a strong presence out

on the floor, mingling and getting to know people who come in. "You'll see me out in the dining room a lot," says Eggleston.

Leith and Eggleston are excited to bring Tokyo Joe's to Northfield. "We've been practicing this for 20 years," says Leith. "We've evolved a lot but the concept is better than it's ever been—that's what happens with practice."



Larry Leith, founder of the Tokyo Joe's chain of restaurants, attended the opening at Denver's newest location in Stapleton.

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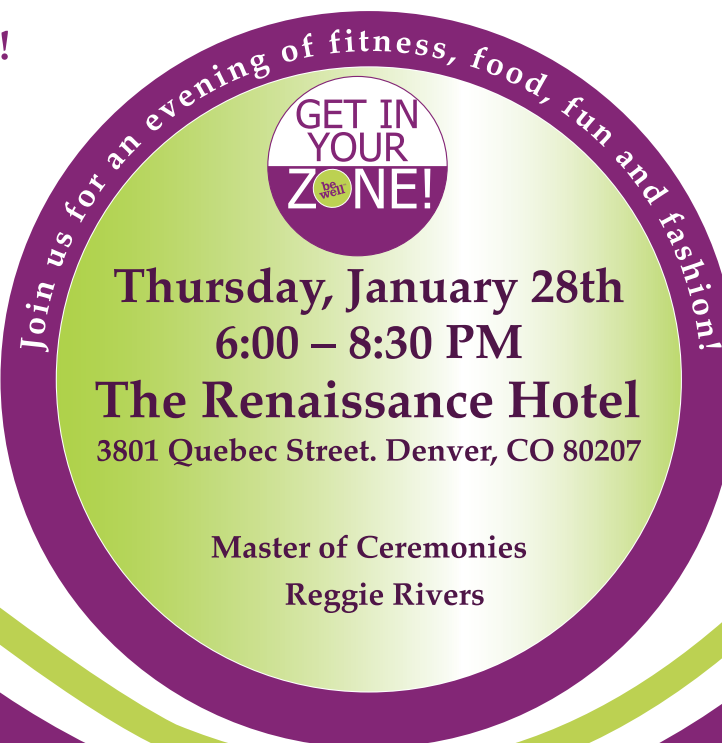
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T.C. Clark, owner of the new Northfield restaurant Salati, Italian Street Food (right) and Culinary Director, Shahin Afsharian Campuzano sit in the main dining area.



Above: A tiny Italian chef greets customers at the door.

Below: Salati took over the adjoining retail so they could have a more casual dining area (shown below) and a more formal dining area (left) equipped with a full bar.

Authentic Italian Street Food—Now Open in Northfield

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

He calls it a “a labor of love,” referring to the October opening of Salati Italian Street Food in Northfield. It started with love, too, when restaurateur T.C. Clark and his wife went to his homeland, Italy, for their honeymoon. They encountered a lot of street food, sold off of carts or out of little huts where “a little Italian grandma would slide open a window and, boom, the smell would hit you,” recalls Clark. One street food, the piadina, stood out to the couple. Flat bread thrown onto a hot stone bubbled up before being wrapped around meats, cheeses, vegetables and sauces. The couple was hooked and wanted to bring the idea back to Colorado. Besides being delicious, Clark really loved the idea of walking up to a vendor and getting authentic, fresh food they could customize with the ingredients they wanted.

Despite running Milo’s, a sports bar in South Denver, Clark couldn’t get the idea out of his head of opening a place based on the concept of “Salati,” slang for “savory.” To Clark, that meant food that is enjoyed as it is seen, heard and tasted. To bring that full experience to life, Clark hired his Culinary Director, Shahin Afsharian Campuzano, who has experience cooking all over the world. “I told him ‘here’s the concept but you’re a classically-trained chef. You’re going to get to play and bring your skill set to Salati’ and he has, he’s amazing,” says Clark. During the day, one side of Salati focuses on express meals where diners can choose from a piadina bread, pasta or salad base, adding a protein (including a pork porchetta which has had 32 hours of preparation), sauces or dressings and vegetable additions. Come evening, Salati becomes something more. While diners can still take advantage

of the express side, they can also relax in the lounge area with a full bar and menu of Italian style tapas, designed to be shared. The idea of communal food where people would have a drink, share food and be together came from Clark’s childhood. “There were huge tables, everyone standing around eating, waving their arms in the air, being Italians, having a good time, eating good food...that was my family,” says Clark. While the burgeoning development of the Northfield area was a big draw to Clark in locating the first Salati (he hopes to open more locations around the Metro Denver area), it was really the broad-ranging demographics that were the appeal. Clark says, “We’ve met young kids to retirees and they’ve welcomed us with open arms. It has been over-the-top unexpected but really appreciated.”





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2016 Front Porch Sports Guide

Northeast Denver offers numerous recreational and competitive sports teams. The annual *Front Porch Sports Guide* lists the leagues and their contact information.

Periodically, the *Front Porch* publishes guides or comprehensive catalogues of resources from sports teams to music teachers to craft breweries. To view the full

list, visit FrontPorchStapleton.com > News > Resource Guides. To be added to any of the guides, please e-mail frontporch@frontporch-stapleton.com.

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Sports Guide by Chris Hegstrom

BASEBALL	Boys Baseball/Girls Softball – SE Denver Baseball & Softball League (SEDBSL)	Affiliated With National Babe Ruth & Cal Ripken Organization; sedenverbaseball.com ; 303.696.7312; registrarsedenver@live.com
	Boys Baseball/Girls Softball – Arapahoe Little League	arapahoelittleleague.com ; arapahoell@gmail.com ; 2016 registration opens 1/1/2016; 303.745.3341; 17002 E. Kentucky Ave Aurora 80017
MULTI-SPORT	Metro Denver Arapahoe Youth League (AYL)	www.aylsports.org ; 303.495.3900; Competitive football, Basketball, Volleyball and Baseball.
	Jewish Community Center (JCC)	Tennis, Baseball, Basketball, Swimming; www.jccdenver.org 303.316.6304
	Denver Police Activities League	Baseball, Football, Basketball, Softball and Jump Rope; denverpal.com ; 303.937.1223; 1240 W. Bayaud Ave Denver 80223
	Stapleton All Sports	Year round sports programming for kids ages 21/2 - 10 yrs. Basketball skills, League basketball, Wrestling, Lil Bombers coach pitch baseball, Baseball Skills, Cheer, Summer Golf Lessons, Summer Tennis Camps, Summer Sports Camps, Early Ball Skills, Flag Football, Football Skills, and Soccer Skills. stapletonallsports.com ; 720.985.6642; info@stapletonallsports.com
	YMCA of Metro Denver	Baseball, Swimming, Basketball, (rec and competitive) Lacrosse, Soccer. DenverYMCA.org ; click on Stapleton/NE Denver; 720.524.2750
	Denver Parks & Recreation	Flag football, Cheerleading, Gymnastics, Tumbling, Soccer, Volleyball, Baseball, Softball, Basketball (rec and competitive) Tennis, Swimming. denvergov.org/recreation (activities and programs tabs;) Montclair Rec 720.865.0560; Central Park Rec 720.865.0750; Hiawatha Davis 720.865.0590
BASKETBALL	Gold Crown	Competitive Basketball for ages 9+; www.goldcrownfoundation.org
	Colorado Premier Basketball Club	Camps, leagues, tournaments, small group training for several age groups and skill levels. Denver metro area, www.coloradopremierbasketball.com
	Denver Kings Basketball Club	New competitive basketball club serving NE Denver, ages 18 and under; www.denverkings.com denverkingsbasketball@gmail.com
	ProSkills Basketball	Camps, clinics and teams; central Denver www.proskills.com
FOOTBALL	National Flag Football	www.nationalflagfootball.com
FUTSAL	303 Futsal	soccerelectric.com
GOLF	Golf – The First Tee Denver	thefirstteeofdenver.org ; 303.370.1554
GYMNASTICS	Colorado Gymnastics Institute	15540 E 6th Ave Aurora; 303.363.7272; www.coloradogymnastinstitute.net
	Gymnastics Plus	6180 E Warren Ave; 303.512.0799; www.coloradogymplus.com
	Commerce City Rec Center Gymnastics	6060 E Parkway Drive, Commerce City 80022; 303.289.3789; www.c3gov.com
	Dardano’s School of Gymnastics	dardanosgymnastics.com ; 303.355.0080
ICE HOCKEY	Denver University Family & Youth Recreation Junior Pioneers	recreation.du.edu ; (See Jr. PIONEERS link) 303.871.7728
	Big Bear Ice Arena	Boys and girls ages 5-12 learn to play and competitive programs; www.bigbearice.com
FIGURE SKATING	Big Bear Ice Arena Lowry	Learn to skate and competitive; bigbearice.com ; 303.343.1111
LACROSSE	Denver Lacrosse Club (DLC)	For boys and girls; denverlacrosse.org ; 720.220.3004
	Denver City LAX	Boys and girls; denvercitylax.com ; info@denvercitylax.com
	Stapleton Jets Boys Lacrosse	Boys grades K to 8. Spring, fall and winter programs. Learn to play and competitive. Register at www.stapletonjets.com .
	Stapleton Electras Girls Lacrosse	www.electraslacrosse.com
KARATE	Mike Giles Family Karate	mikegileskarate.com ; 303.377.5425; info@mikegileskarate.com
	Stapleton Family Karate	StapletonFamilyKarate.com ; 303.928.0043; erin@stapletonfamilykarate.com
RUGBY	Glendale Youth Rugby	For boys and girls; www.infinitypark@glendale.com
RUNNING	Girls on the Run	girlsontherunrockies.org ; 720.530.1064; info@girlsontherun.org
SOCCER	Colorado Rapids Youth Soccer	Rec and competitive soccer for boys and girls ages 4 and up; indoor and outdoor; www.rapidsyouthsoccer.org
	Bladium Sports & Fitness Club Stapleton	Indoor – Lil Kickers and West Hamm United Soccer Club; Bladium.com ; 303.320.3033; denverSA@bladium.com
	Colorado Storm	Year round soccer programs for boys and girls ages 5+. www.coloradostorm.com
	Skyline Soccer Club	Year round rec and competitive soccer for boys & girls ages 5 and up. 303.691.5662; www.skylinesoccer.org
	Soccer Electric	SoccerElectric.com
SWIMMING	Stapleton Neighborhood Community Pools (summer)	Lessons and Stapleton Stingray Swim Team. stapletoncommunity.com
	Synchronized Swimming – Rocky Mountain Splash Swim Team	rmsplash.org ; 303.693.4330; info@rmsplash.org
	Denver Stingrays (year round)	www.denverstingrays.com
TENNIS	Denver Tennis Club Hilltop	denvertennisclub.com ; 303.322.4524; 400 Forest St Denver
	Tennis – Gates Tennis Center	gatestenniscenter.info ; (See juniors link) 303.355.4461; 100 S. Adams Denver 80209
TRACK & FIELD	Denver Lightning Track Club	www.denverlightning.org

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January 2016

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Stapleton Front Porch

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

DENVER METRO EVENTS

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

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

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

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

1/1 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

1/4 to 1/15—TreeCycle 2016. Questions: call 311 or visit DenverGov.org/DenverRecycles

1/6 to 1/9—Colorado RV Travel Show. Tickets: \$12. 12 and under free. Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th St. www.gsevents.com

1/7 Thursday—National Western Parade. Downtown Denver. Free. www.nationalwestern.com

1/7 to 1/24—National Western Stock Show and Rodeo. National Western Complex. Complete event listings: www.nationalwestern.com

1/8 to 1/10—Denver Boat Show. Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th St. Downtown Denver. Tickets: \$12 16 and under free. Fri. 12-9pm, Sat. 10-9pm, Sun. 10am-5pm. \$2 off with website coupon. www.denverboatshow.com

1/14 to 1/17—Denver International Sportsman's Expo. Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th St. Downtown Denver. Tickets \$15, under 16 free. At door cash only. Thurs/Fri 11am-8pm, Sat 10am-8pm, Sun 10am-5pm. www.sports-expos.com

1/15 to 1/17—Colorado Symphony Presents Pixar in Concert. Boettcher Concert Hall. www.coloradosymphony.org

1/18 Monday—Martin Luther King Jr. Parade and Program. Largest in U.S. Gather in City Park at Colfax and Columbine, program and march to Civic Center Park. Program 10am. Parade formation approx. 10:45am after program. www.drmartinkingjrhc.org

1/22 to 1/23—Denver Winter Brewfest. 7pm. Mile High Station. \$35-\$40. Benefits Swallow Hill Music. www.denverbrewfest.com/winter

1/22 to 1/24—35th Annual Indian Market and SW Showcase. Fri. 1-7 pm; Sat. 10am-7pm; Sun. 10am-5pm. Adm.: \$13; under 13 free; good for all shows/demos all weekend. Denver Merchandise Mart, 451 E. 58th Ave. www.indianmarket.net

2/6 Saturday—Hearts of All Ages 2016. University of Colorado Hospital (UCH) fundraiser at Hyatt Regency Convention Center honors Dr. Igal Kam of UCH Transplant Program. Dinner, cocktails, silent/live auctions and fun activities. 5:30-8:30pm. Tickets: Megan Thomasson, 720.848.7772 or megan.thomasson@uchealth.org. Register: <http://bit.ly/HOAA2016> <https://uch.thankyou4caring.org/pages/events/hearts-of-all-ages/hearts-of-all-ages-2016>

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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

1/8 Friday—Free Meditation Group. Meditate with others and focus on achieving peace and enlightenment. www.stressintel.com. Repeats 1/15 and 1/22.

1/9 Saturday—19th Annual Quaker Oatmeal Festival and Quicker Quaker 5K Walk/Run. Downtown Lafayette. www.lafayettecolorado.com

1/28 Thursday—6th Annual be well Awards and Community Celebration. 6-8:30pm. Free evening of fitness, food, fun and fashion. The Renaissance Hotel, 3801 Quebec St. RSVP by 1/22 for you and up to 3 guests: www.bewellconnect.net/awards, bimmons@stapletonfoundation.org, or 303.468.3243. www.bewellconnect.net

KIDS AND FAMILIES

1/2 Saturday—Home Depot Kids Workshop. 9am-12pm. FREE how-to clinics first Sat. monthly, ages 5-12. Get Home Depot apron, wooden project and project pin. Metro-area Home Depot stores. www.homedepot.com

Depot stores. www.homedepot.com

1/5 to 1/26—Tuesdays in January Four Mile Historic Park Small Settlers. Ages 2-5 accompanied by parent/caregiver. 9-10am. \$5/child adults free, members free. 7150D. Forest St. Advance register: 720.865.0814 or education@fourmilepark.org www.fourmilepark.org

1/6 Wednesday—Preschool Story Time. 9:30 am, ages 2-5 with caregiver. History Colorado Center, 1200 Broadway www.historycolorado.org

1/7 to 1/28—Star K Kids. Thursdays, 9:30 and 11am; kids 5 and under. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E. Smith Rd., Aurora. www.auroragov.org/nature

1/7 to 2/28—Denver Puppet Theater. Aesop's Fables. www.denverpuppettheater.com

1/9 Saturday—2016 Denver Preschool Showcase. FREE one-stop opportunity for Denver families to find and compare quality preschool options, learn about tuition support and talk with Denver-area preschool resources. Activities for kids with appearances by PBS characters Clifford or Curious George. Held at Green Valley Ranch Rec Center (4890 Argonne Way) and The Studios at Overland Crossing (2205 S. Delaware St.). 10am-2pm. 720.206.7657. <http://studiosatoverlandcrossing.com/> <http://www.dpp.org/showcase>

1/9 to 1/23—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

1/10 Sunday—Junior Rangers. Ages 6-12, 1:30-3pm. Learn about plants and animals of Star K Ranch. RSVP required, 303.326.8650. www.aurora.gov/nature

1/15—Storytime in the Exploration Station. 10:30am. 1st and 3rd Fridays. Free with admission. Wings Over the Rockies Museum, Lowry. www.wingsmuseum.org

LECTURES AND CLASSES

1/5 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Vietnam. 10:15-11:15am. Jewish Community Center, 350 S Dahlia St. 303.316.6359. www.ActiveMinds.com

1/6 Wednesday—Active Minds (Free)—Vietnam. 10:15-11:15am. Jewish Community Center, 350 S Dahlia St. 303.316.6359. www.ActiveMinds.com

1/9 Saturday—Thinking Italy, A Travel Planning Seminar. Informative travel seminar by experienced traveler, language teacher and Italian native. 10-11:30am. Light refreshments. Enrollment confirmed by follow-up email or call. No walk-ins. www.italianinstitute.com, 303.733.4335. Italian Institute, 3773 Cherry (continued on p. 24)

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(continued from p. 23)

Creek N. Dr. www.italianinstitute.com. Repeats 1/13, 1/15, 1/25 and 1/30.

1/10 Sunday—Active Minds (Free)—The History of Tea. 3:30-4:30pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. www.ActiveMinds.com

1/12 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Venice: Biography of a City. 12:30-1:30pm. Tattered Cover, 2526 E. Colfax. 303.322.7727, www.ActiveMinds.com

1/14 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—The Lewis and Clark Expedition. 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. www.ActiveMinds.com

1/14 Thursday—Let's Talk about Autism. Dr. Brooke Carson speaker. 6:30pm. Free. Stapleton Fellowship Church, 8700 E. 21st Ave. Register: www.stapletonchurch.com

1/16 Saturday—Social Security Changes and Your Retirement. One-hour free session. Two ways to attend: Online webinar 1/12, 13 or 21 at 10am or 12pm. Register: KuhnAdvisors.com/investor-education. Free breakfast session: 1/16, 9am at The Berkshire, 7352 E 29th Ave. Limited seating. Sign up: 303.803.1016 or scott@kuhnadvisors.com.

1/17 Sunday—Active Minds (Free)—Paris: Biography of a City. 2-3pm. Schlessman Family Library, 100 Poplar St. 720.865.0000. www.ActiveMinds.com

1/26 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Greece. 5-6pm. Tattered Cover, 2526 E. Colfax. 303.322.7727, www.ActiveMinds.com

1/28 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—Nigeria. 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. www.ActiveMinds.com

2/2 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Malcom X. 10:15-11:15am. Jewish Community Center, 350 S Dahlia St. 303.316.6359. www.ActiveMinds.com

MUSEUMS—DENVER ART MUSEUM

Through 1/17—Super Indian: Fritz Scholder, 1967-1980. The artist claimed his art was not political—but he polarized the art world. Included with gen. admission; free for members, and kids 18 and under. www.denverartmuseum.org. <http://denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/super-indian-fritz-scholder>

er-1967-1980

Through 2/7—Wyeth: Andrew and Jamie in the Studio. Groundbreaking exhibit of Andrew Wyeth and son Jamie, American icons. 100+ works using varied media. Ticketed exhibition with member discount. www.denverartmuseum.org. <http://denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/wyeth-andrew-and-jamie-studio>

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. Enter 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

1/21 Thursday—Science Lounge- Underwater Giants. Third Thursdays, 6:30-9:30pm. \$10/members; \$12/nonmembers. www.dmns.org

MUSEUMS—FREE DAYS

1/2 Saturday—Denver Art Museum Free Day. SCFD Free Day. www.denverartmuseum.org

1/5 Tuesday—Denver Botanic Gardens Free Day. SCFD Free day. Other SCFD Free days at the Gardens: 1/18 and 2/2. www.botanicgardens.org

1/8 to 1/9—Denver Zoo Free Days. SCFD Free Day. Other zoo free days: 1/31 and 2/1. www.denverzoo.org

2/5 Friday—Children's Museum Free Target Tuesday. 4-8pm. www.cmdenver.org

2/5 Friday—Four Mile Historic Park Free Day. Free First Friday. www.fourmilepark.org

2/6 Saturday—Denver Art Museum Free Day. SCFD Free day www.denverartmuseum.org

NORTHEAST DENVER/AURORA EVENTS

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

Through 1/22—Youth at DAVA Exhibit. Downtown Aurora Visual Arts youth exhibit. Handmade holiday gifts for sale; 1405 Florence St., one block south of E. Colfax. Mon.-Fri. 10am-5pm and by appointment. www.davarts.org

1/1 to 1/31—Stapleton Walks. Group walks led by volunteers through Stapleton neighborhoods, currently Tues., Wed., Thurs. and Fri. See website for more info: stapletonwalks@gmail.com <http://walk2connect.com/events>

1/1 to 1/31—Violethive Art Therapy. Art classes, art therapy and workshops for children and adults. Located in Mayfair neighborhood. Class listings: www.violethiveart.org

NORTHFIELD EVENTS

1/8 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. The Forest; The Hateful Eight; The Revenant. www.harkinstheatres.com

1/15 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. 13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi; The 5th Wave; Anomalisa; Norm of the North; Ride Along 2. www.harkinstheatres.com

1/22 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. The Boy; Dirty Grampa. www.harkinstheatres.com

1/29 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release. The Finest Hours; Kung Fu Panda. www.harkinstheatres.com

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

1/9 Saturday—Winter Raptors. 8:30-11:00 am. Learn to identify birds of prey native to the Refuge, bring camera and binoculars. RSVP required.

1/10 Sunday—Build A Bison. 1:30-2:30pm. Assemble a bison skeleton from head to tail.

1/16 Saturday—Wildlife Viewing Tours. 9:30-11:30am. Naturalist leads bus tour through Refuge to view bald eagles, bison, coyotes, deer, raptors, etc. Repeats 1/24, 1-2:30pm. RSVP required.

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

1/20 Wednesday—Nature Tots—Track It. 10-10:45am. Programming for tots ages 3-5 and their adults. RSVP required.

1/23 Saturday—The Masked Bandit. 10-10:45am. Learn about black-footed ferret in Refuge's ferret exhibit; naturalist-led program. RSVP required.

THEATRE

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

Through 2/21—Murder for Two. Garner Galleria Theater, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, 14th and Curtis www.denvercenter.org

1/2 to 2/6—The Big Bang, An Explosive Musical Comedy. Fire House Theater Company at John Hand Theater. www.thisisspotlight.com

1/8 to 2/14—The Arabian Nights. Presented by Ignite Theatre. Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E. Colfax Ave., Aurora. www.aurora-foxartscenter.org

1/15 to 2/21—Normal Heart. Vintage Theatre. 1468 Dayton St., Aurora Cultural Arts District.

1/22 to 2/21—Mrs. Mannerly. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd., Arvada. www.arvadacenter.org

1/22 to 2/27—Tell Me On a Sunday. Avenue Theatre, 417 E. 17th Ave. www.avenuetheater.com

1/26 to 1/31—Dirty Dancing-The Classic Story on Stage. Buell Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, 14th and Curtis. www.denvercenter.org

2/5 to 3/27—One Man Two Guvnors. Vintage Theatre. 1468 Dayton St., Aurora Cultural Arts District. www.vintagetheatre.org

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FEATURED EVENTS

Monday–Friday Weekly Stapleton Walks

Monday through Friday weekly, join the free Stapleton walks hosted by Chris at EatWalkLearn and Ed at StapletonWalks, two volunteers for Walk2Connect, a Colorado-based social group creating connections between people and their neighborhoods through walking. These walking movement leaders head these walks in Stapleton, which are 2.5 miles or one-hour long.

Monday, Westerly Creek Trail

Meet at 9:50am at the Westerly Creek Trail east of Central Park Blvd. and south of MLK Blvd. The Westerly Creek Trail is very stroller friendly. We meet at the Bus Stop at Beeler Street and 29th Avenue

Wednesdays, Conservatory Green & Northfield Mall

Meet at 7am at the Northfield Mall Starbucks, 8340 Northfield Blvd.

Thursdays, Conservatory Green Uplands Park

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 Central Park and Westerly Creek

Meet at 7am at the Central Park Rec Center, 9651 MLK Blvd.

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

Friday Morning Meditation at Stapleton MCA

Stapleton resident and stress counselor Sandra Thebaud hosts meditation sessions every Friday from 9-10am at the Stapleton MCA community center, 7350 E. 29th Avenue. She gives tips for meditating at home, including: find undisturbed space, sit comfortably with eyes closed, watch your thoughts enter and allow them to leave your mind, practice for 20 minutes a day. RSVP at stressintel.com.

Classes at Share Denver

Share Denver is a 1,600 square-foot community craft space at 29th and Fairfax. Every month classes focus on a different craft from crochet, embroidery and cross stitch, to tarot, to kombucha brewing. All of the teachers live in the community. www.sharedenver.com.

"Tear, Cut & Paste: The Art of Collage"

January 7– February 14, the exhibit "Tear, Cut & Paste: The Art of Collage" will showcase some of Colorado's finest collage artists. Talks by the artists will be January 16, 23 and February 6. Visit the Art Gym Denver at 1460 Leyden. Visit www.artgymdenver.com for the full details.

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“Mayor of Stapleton” Receives Brand-New Smile

By Madeline Schroeder

Most Stapleton residents have probably seen or spoken to John Alexander. For five years he has sold the newspaper, *The Voice*, outside of Starbucks in the 29th Ave. Town Center. But he doesn't just sell the paper. He kindly welcomes conversation with anyone who passes and has been named the honorary “Mayor of Stapleton.” Even in blizzards, he's outside Starbucks.

This year, Lisa Mazik, a United flight attendant who lives in Parker and periodically teaches at the United Flight Center, stopped at Starbucks and got into a conversation with Alexander. “This lady, Lisa, had a sharp eye, and noticed that I don't smile as happy as I used to be. I was suppressing it,” Alexander says.

Five years ago when Alexander first started working at *The Voice*, he had just kicked a bad cocaine habit. His teeth had a lot of damage, which did not slip by Mazik. She insisted that he show them to her, which he reluctantly did. Mazik then went to Dr. Brett Kessler at Town Center Dentistry and Orthodontics.

Kessler used to treat patients at a sobriety house downtown where homeless people can get resources when they commit to a better life, but they were having a lot of problems getting jobs without having their teeth fixed. “The scars of their addiction were on their face,” Kessler says.



Dr. Brett Kessler (left) from Town Center Dentistry and Orthodontics and John Alexander (right) stand outside the 29th Avenue Starbucks where Alexander sells *The Voice*. Kessler recently gave Alexander a brand new smile for getting his life back on track and helping others after kicking his addiction.

Mazik spoke with Kessler and returned to Alexander with his business card. “They'd like to meet you,” she said. Alexander took the card and kindly thanked her, but never went to see Kessler. When Mazik would travel through Denver, she'd stop in Stapleton for her Starbucks and follow up with Alexander whether he had gone. He fibbed and said he went but no one was there. So one day an assistant from the dentist's office was waiting outside of Starbucks in the snow to give Alexander

another business card and let him know they were still waiting to meet him. A few days later, and six months after Mazik first suggested the idea, Alexander got the courage to go.

“After the consultation, I'm still thinking that we will work out dental payments and maybe pull one tooth here, get something done here, but she [appointment coordinator] slid my Medicaid card to the side. *I don't have no money. What are they going to do?*” Alexander remembers thinking.

Kessler pulled all 32 of Cotton's teeth and gave him new dentures as a gift for inspiring people and committing to get his life back on track after addiction. After three months of recovery, Alexander says he is

a new person with his new smile. “What I hadn't known is that a person can be very happy and if they suppress that, it can do a lot of damage,” he says.

Alexander still works for *The Voice* and has started lecturing about homelessness and the gaps of understanding in society. At his first lecture, he had a standing ovation. “What they really saw and were feeling were *my* feelings no longer being suppressed, and me being able to fully express my happiness and joy.”

About a month ago, Mazik came by Starbucks and Alexander could finally show her his new smile. This time she did not have to coax him.

To contact John Alexander to speak at your church, business, class, etc., call 720.415.6098.

Rep. Angela Williams Receives 2015 Legislator of the Year

By Madeline Schroeder

Colorado State Rep. Angela Williams was awarded the 2015 Legislator of the Year for Region XII at the 2015 National Black Caucus of State Legislators in Los Angeles, Calif.

Region XII is made up of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah and Washington. “It was a pretty big honor to be chosen,” she says.

In 2015, Rep. Williams pushed legislation that focused on minority issues. Her biggest legislation focused on the rebuilding of trust between community and law enforcement in light of the recent shootings. “I woke up one day and thought Colorado needs to get ahead of the curve to avoid an incident like Ferguson.” She introduced 10 bills for rebuilding trust between community and law enforcement and six were passed with bipartisan support, including: law enforcement use of body-worn cameras, police officer training improvement, prohibit police officer interference with a person doing lawful recording, disclose misrepresentation by police officers, transparency after an officer-involved shooting, and police shooting data collection.

Also in 2015, Rep. Williams helped ensure minority small businesses can be successful through her work as chair of Business Affairs and Labor. She successfully passed a work act that created a grant program for middle-skilled workers to help fill job gaps like construction. The program will be given \$10 million over the next three years for recruitment, training and marketing.

“My role as a state legislator for the minority communities is to ensure that we have equity and justice for all, in all parts of our lives, whether it be education, jobs, business, health care. My job is to uplift communities of color and ensure that they're being treated fair and equitable and have access,” she says.



Photo courtesy of Rep. Angela Williams

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Pushing for Affordable Housing

Forest City has acknowledged that it will “probably not” achieve the 10 percent affordable for-sale goal contained in its development agreement with the city by the time its build-out of market rate houses in Stapleton is completed.

To avoid that result, the Stapleton Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) and the Stapleton Development Corporation (SDC) are pressuring the city of Denver and Forest City to develop a plan to accelerate the production of affordable housing at Stapleton. One immediate response is

the city’s commitment to quarterly meetings with those groups to work on such a plan.

SDC Chair Kevin Marchman says construction of for-sale affordable housing “absolutely must keep pace” with market rate products. He is pushing for a plan to be in place by the end of the first quarter of 2016. He says, “If we fail here (in Stapleton), we fail the city.”

Forest City’s 2001 agreement with the city contains these affordable housing requirements:

- 10 percent of all for-sale residential units shall be “affordable”.
- Of rental units, a minimum of 20 percent shall be affordable and 25 percent of those shall be reserved for very low-income renters.

(Affordability is defined in terms of renters’ or buyers’ income relative to the regional median income—80 percent, 60 percent, etc.)

The agreement states Forest City “will develop or cause to be developed” such housing “at a pace reasonably consistent with the pace of development of market rate housing at Stapleton.” Forest City is donating and setting aside land that it says is sufficient to accommodate the required number of affordable for-sale units and a separate requirement of eight acres for very low income rental units. Forest City also says it is making cash donations for affordable housing as another subsidy.

The Stapleton development agreement assumes that a “public subsidy” will be required to implement affordable housing here. The question is what will that subsidy be beyond Forest City’s land and cash donations, and from whom?

An additional factor in the overall plan for affordable housing at Stapleton is the mix of for-sale vs. rental units. The citizens’ groups believe Forest City is obligated to provide at least one-third of residential units in Stapleton as rentals. Forest City’s 2001 “Stapleton Affordable Housing Plan” states the “parties (Denver, Forest City) have assumed that approximately 8,000 for-sale dwelling units and 4,000 multi-family rental units will be developed at Stapleton upon final build-out.”

Forest City refers to that mix as only a “projection.” CAB and its Housing Diversity Committee believe it is a requirement and cite years of housing reports by Forest City in which housing data is presented in terms of meeting the two-thirds/one-third mix.

CAB has noted three additional reasons for the importance of rental units in Stapleton: first, without a minimum amount of required rental housing, the otherwise agreed-upon goal of 20 per cent affordable rental is meaningless; second, the continuing uncertainty in the condo market, a market sector that has historically provided entry level for-sale housing; and third, the continuing strength of the rental housing market in the region.

CAB members have also expressed concern that deed restrictions on the re-sale of afford-

able units phase out after 15 years, eventually eroding the supply of affordable housing.

Finally, CAB and SDC have repeatedly expressed that development of affordable units should keep pace with market rate development. Stapleton, which is being built on land formerly owned by the city, should have homes that people from all walks of life in Denver can afford.

As shown by Forest City’s third quarter housing statistics below, both market rate rentals and affordable-for-sale units are at about *half* of the desired levels.

- 7,325 total residential units built (61% of total build-out of 12,000 dwellings)
- 6,086 total for-sale units (83.1%)
- 289 affordable for-sale units (4.75% of for-sale dwellings)
- 1,239 total rental residential units (16.9%)
- 277 affordable rental units (22.4% of which 160 are affordable at “very low income” levels (57.76%)

The percentage of affordable rentals exceeds required levels, but it is based on *half* as many total units as CAB believes should be built by now.

Despite its disagreement with CAB over whether the one-third rental mix is a requirement or a projection, Forest City says the proportion of rental units is increasing with recent projects.

Affordable housing has emerged as a major priority for Mayor Hancock’s admin-

istration with efforts such as a new \$10 million revolving loan fund and the “3by5” initiative, a commitment to construct at least 600 units per year over five years. Stapleton Foundation CEO Beverly Haddon advised the Housing Diversity Committee in November that “this is the opportune time” to approach the city with its concerns.

Rick Padilla, Denver’s Director of Housing and Neighborhood Development, attended the Housing Diversity Committee meeting on Dec. 10 as a visible presence of the city’s commitment to continue working with Forest City on the Stapleton affordable housing efforts. He promised to explore all financing options and mentioned the possibility of a “pilot project” for Stapleton’s transit oriented development (TOD) site—the large vacant parcel immediately south of the Central Park Boulevard commuter rail station where TOD has long been envisioned. He said he is “very encouraged” by recent discussions he has had with Forest City.

Preliminary ideas for accelerating the pace of affordable housing construction at Stapleton are expected to be presented at the January 28 SDC meeting. While the focus will be on how affordable housing can keep pace with market rate construction, questions are beginning to be raised about what responsibilities for affordable housing Forest City would

(continued on page 29)

Damon Knop, CAB



SDC member Justin Ross (above) and CAB member Damon Knop have spoken out for years about their concerns that affordable housing has consistently lagged behind the goals set in the housing contract between the city and Forest City.

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Would you like to learn more about autism? Do you have a child with autism or know an individual with an autism spectrum disorder? Stapleton Fellowship Church is hosting a free community event just for you! Come hear from Dr. Brooke Carson, a national expert in the area of autism education for over 27 years. Suggestions for home, school, and community interaction will be shared with participants.

This is a great opportunity to share a cup of coffee and meet other families in the community while learning together.

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If Eligible, Please Donate Blood in Stapleton

—Saturdays: January 30, April 30, July 30—

By Amanda Allshouse, Instructor, Department of Biostatistics and Informatics Colorado School of Public Health and Board Member Stapleton United Neighbors

Bonfils and SUN will host blood drives in Stapleton on the 30th of January, April and July (last Saturdays of each month). Registration is online for the January 30 blood drive, www.bonfils.org. Choose Donate blood > Schedule an appointment > type in site code “5463.”

It has been six years since a blood drive was sponsored by SUN; the last was to honor the memory of Edison Sherlock in early 2010. Former Stapleton resident and SUN board member Amanda Baldwin spearheaded multiple blood drives within the community. “I loved being involved in the Stapleton Blood Drives when I lived there. It always warmed my heart to see my neighbors take the time to roll up their sleeves and give the gift of life. When I approached the SUN board about starting the drives, I got so much support from them and the block captain network. The Bonfils representatives were blown away when we would quickly meet our goals, but I wasn’t surprised. Thanks to all who take the time to support the Stapleton Blood Drives and be a hero for someone in need.”

There are many exclusions for participating in blood drives, making the participation of those who are eligible so much more appreciated. Many Stapleton residents are ineligible as donors must be older than 18 years old, weight more than 115 lbs, able bodied,

feeling well, without history of some cancers, not pregnant, clear of malarial-endemic areas for at least one year, and more. Check the full list of exclusion criteria or prescreen when registering online.

Other members of the community cannot donate blood because the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not allow gay or bisexual men to donate if not abstinent within the past year. This policy was announced December 21, 2015 and is a revision from the previous stance from 1983 whereby a man who reported having had sex with another man (MSM) once since 1977 was permanently deferred from donating blood. This current federal policy is regardless of a man’s marital status despite being in the era of federally-recognized gay marriage per the June 26, 2015 Obergefell, et al. v. Hodges decision. In November 2015, France joined the UK, Australia, the Netherlands and Japan in allowing MSMs to donate blood if it had been more than one year since last MSM contact. In France, if sexual contact was limited to one partner within the past four months, a plasma donation is allowed.

In a position paper* Georges C. Benjamin, MD and Executive Director of The American Public Health Association, stated, “Such a [policy] continues to prevent low-risk individuals from contributing to our blood supply and maintains discriminatory practices based on outdated stereotypes. Instead, we strongly urge FDA to issue guidance that is grounded in science to ensure a safe and robust blood supply.” Then adding “Full elimination of [the 12-month



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

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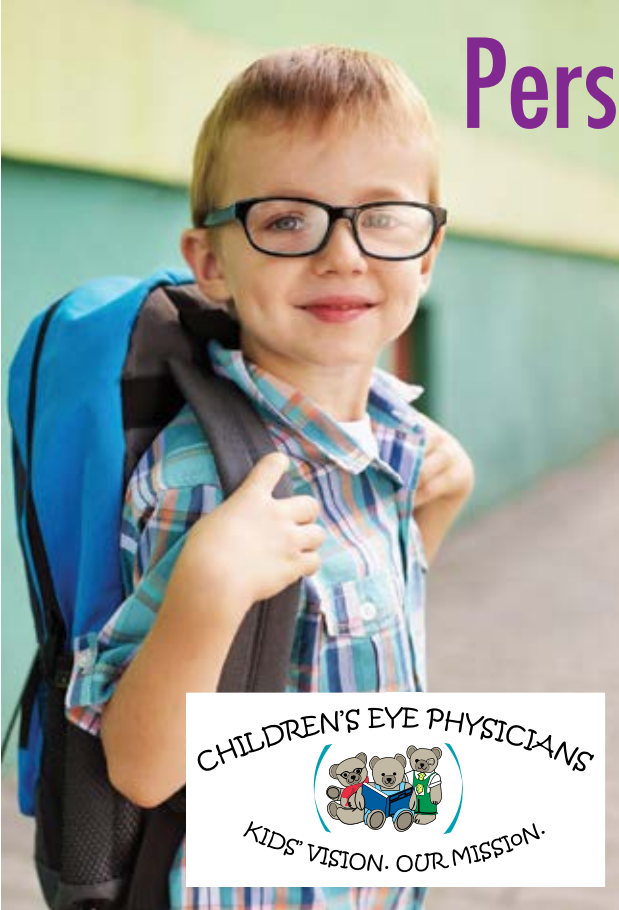
ban] would result in 4.2 million newly eligible donors and an estimated 615,300 additional pints of blood donated each year increasing the total annual blood supply by 4 percent.”

Bonfils stated, “Our top priority is to provide a safe and adequate blood supply for patients in need of blood transfusions. Blood centers are regulated by the FDA and we must abide by their guidelines. All blood centers will comply with the current FDA blood donation eligibility criteria.”

Blood donation is very important and much needed, especially at this time of the year. SUN’s encouragement for those eligible to participate is not in support of the FDA’s continued discriminatory stance preventing gay members of the community from participating.

In December, Denver police D1 Officer Tony Lopez Jr. lost a critical amount of blood after being shot seven times on duty. To donate in his honor, notify Bonfils. To share a story about why you will be donating, or your thoughts on this topic, email SUN Outreach@gmail.com. This author will be donating in honor of the late Corporal Barry Beam who required 50+ units during a five-month battle with an aggressive Lymphoma in 2015.

*https://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/advocacy/testimonyandcomments/150612_fdablooddonor.ashx



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Letter to the Editor

Students Counter Misconceptions about DSST

As current students at DSST: Stapleton, we have heard families and friends mention many misconceptions about DSST schools. Three common misunderstood aspects of DSST include the academic environment, the supposed lack of athletic programs and creative opportunities, and the overall experience students will have. We hope to add our own voice to the conversation.

One of the most common misperceptions families have is that DSST has such a strict environment it is impossible for the students to have an enjoyable or exciting experience. The truth is that DSST sets expectations that hold students accountable and better prepares them for college. Although academics are a primary focus for the school, the core values are what truly shape the community. This creates a unique experience for students because it teaches them values that extend beyond the classroom.

A second misconception is that DSST lacks a variety of extracurricular activities. DSST Athletics is a thriving program that has gained a lot of momentum over such a short span of time. DSST: Stapleton High School has had success in Boys’ and Girls’ Basketball, Girls’ Volleyball, Tennis, Cross Country, Boys’ and Girls’ Soccer, and Boys’ Baseball. The same sports are offered in the middle schools, along with artistic clubs that range from acapella, to art club, to film, to creative writing. Most may not realize this, but DSST is overflowing with athletic and artistic talent, and students have aspirations in studying both science and the humanities.

Finally, many families worry that DSST cannot provide students with a traditional high school experience. It is true that DSST does not align with what many would consider a “typical” high school; however, the culture of the school allows students to thrive as individuals, something larger, traditional schools may not be able to provide.

We hope families and students take this letter into consideration when choosing a new middle school or high school. In addition to our most recent PARCC scores, for which all three of DSST’s high schools ranked among the top four high schools in DPS in both math and English, we truly believe DSST to be a great community for all.

—Ben Vandal and Lizzy Pulis, DSST: Stapleton 11th-graders



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Stapleton Update

(continued from page 27) have under its agreement with the city once it completes its market rate projects.

CAB has said it wants to explore options such as attracting additional affordable housing developers to Stapleton as well as public subsidies through local, state and federal governments.

Inspire Elementary to Open in 2016 at NHS

By Madeline Schroeder

A new school called Inspire Elementary will open for the 2016-17 school year and be included in DPS Choice, where families list school preferences, starting January 5. The school, originally referred to as Stapleton Elementary VI, will have 150 students K-2 its first year and share a building with Northfield High School (NHS) at the Paul Sandoval Campus.

Inspire Principal Marisol Enriquez has been hosting meetings for interested parents where approximately 50 families have been attending. The school has developed the motto "Inspire, Innovate, Impact."

Inspire Elementary cannot be compared to any other elementary schools in the Stapleton boundary and is a hybrid, according to Principal Enriquez. It will use teaching elements of expeditionary learning and the Stanley British Primary at 350 Quebec, where students K-8 have strong relationships with their teachers, participate in hands-on activities, and learn by working on their own, rather than just being given information. Inspire Elementary will be a part of the Stanley Teacher Preparation Program, where intern teachers work full-time in the classroom alongside mentor teachers throughout Denver.

A main priority is small class sizes for more personalized learning, according to Enriquez. Every classroom will have one teacher and one intern.

The school will share a building with Northfield High School for one year and then move to a permanent location somewhere within a one-mile radius of NHS. Inspire will use the south wing of the first floor, which currently has the engineering, martial arts, and art classes, as well as a smaller library. Those classes will move to the north wing of the building, and a barrier will be placed at the bottom of a stairwell to separate the young students from the high school. NHS students are currently brainstorming ways to mentor the Inspire students next year.

There will be no playground the first year, but Enriquez is working on getting karate and physical education, and she plans to have lots of structured play in the classroom.

Enriquez worked as a math specialist

for 35 schools in northeast Denver and then assistant principal at Martin Luther King. She went on to Vista PEAK P-20 in Aurora, where she helped turn around the school in one year.

Interested teachers or parents can contact Marisol at Marisol_Enriquez@dpsk12.org.

New SDC Appointees

The Mayor's office announced the reappointment of Allegra "Happy" Haynes and Terry Whitney to the Stapleton Development Corporation Board of Directors. Eddie Miller, executive vice president of Big Sky Communications, has received a first-time appointment to the SDC Board.

Transition Ahead for Stapleton Foundation

Beverly Haddon, Stapleton Foundation CEO: at the same CAB meeting, Beverly Haddon announced a "transition"—her plan to leave her CEO position next year after 14 years. For the next two months, she'll be working with the Foundation board on a new strategic plan and hopes to post her position in the spring. The mission of the Stapleton Foundation is to advocate, sustain, and realize the principles of the 1995 Stapleton Development Plan, more commonly referred to as "The Green Book." It runs programs focusing on education, health and wellness, transportation and sustainability.

King Soopers Sale

Forest City spokesman Tom Gleason reported at the December 17 Citizens Advisory Board meeting that King Soopers has closed on the purchase of the parcel for their new store which will anchor the Eastbridge Town Center project. He said King Soopers has told him previously that it would break ground on the project in January.

Big Wonderful Update

Residents on 26th Avenue across from Stanley Marketplace (2501 Dayton) have expressed concerns regarding The Big Wonderful, a weekend festival planned for the outdoor space at Stanley beginning 2016. The festival includes food trucks, beer and music. Residents are concerned about noise and parking and say they were not included in planning for the festival. Flightline Partner Mark Shaker says they have been very open throughout the development process and the festival will be low key. The City of Aurora will host a meeting at the Martin Luther King Library in mid-January to discuss how the re-development of Stanley will affect neighboring residents, including The Big Wonderful. Check frontporchstapleton.com for the date of that meeting.

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Upcoming changes planned for

McAuliffe at the Smiley Campus



CURRENT 2015-16 SCHOOL YEAR

McAuliffe & Venture Prep share Smiley

McAuliffe

290 sixth-graders
270 seventh-graders
270 eighth-graders

McAuliffe is the No. 1 school in choice in the Park Hill-Stapleton boundary. It currently operates at 113 percent capacity.

Venture PREP

275 students

Venture PREP is charter high school that has been on the Smiley Campus for four years and will move at the end of the year to the Barrett Facility.

2016-17 SCHOOL YEAR

McAuliffe will expand & "McAuliffe 2" move in

McAuliffe

360 sixth-graders
290 seventh-graders
270 eighth-graders

McAuliffe will add 70 sixth-graders to accommodate demand and use some of the space not needed by the new program, "McAuliffe 2."

"McAuliffe 2"

150-180 students (~100 less than Venture PREP)

"McAuliffe 2" will replicate the McAuliffe model. Smiley was chosen for McAuliffe administration to easily provide support getting the school on its feet.

(continued from page 1)

Smiley campus with Venture PREP that has 275 students. Because of the shared space and increasing number of students at McAuliffe over the past years, McAuliffe is currently operating at 113 percent capacity, with teachers rolling around mobile workstations because there is not enough office space. So how could it possibly fit more?

At the end of this school year, Venture PREP will move to its permanent location at the Barrett facility.

For the 2016-17 school year, a new, smaller program, currently referred to as "McAuliffe 2," will move in for the 2016-17 school year. This program will draw students from a different enrollment zone west of Colorado Blvd.

Smiley was chosen as the location because the new program is intended to be a replica of the McAuliffe model. By co-locating, Dennis and the McAuliffe team will be readily available to provide expertise for the program's leaders.

McAuliffe 2 will only have 150-180 students, nearly 125 less than Venture PREP, freeing up space in the building. The district plans to increase McAuliffe's sixth-grade class from 290 to 360 next year (2016-17). After one year, McAuliffe 2 will move to its permanent location at Manual High School.

For 2017-18, McAuliffe will again reallocate space in the building based on options proposed by the Denver School Board. Option 1 would expand McAuliffe to take over the

entire building with a total enrollment of 1,010 students, including 360 sixth-graders, 360 seventh-graders and 290 eighth-graders. Kurt Dennis has been directly involved in planning for this option and hopes it will be approved. Option 2 would shrink the size of McAuliffe to a total enrollment of 830 students, including 180 sixth-graders (110 less than in 2016-17), 360 seventh-graders and 290 eighth-graders, as well as add a new, undecided program to share the building made up of 180 students.

If Option 2 is approved to shrink the school, Dennis will face a compromising position at the end of next year. Because he will hire staff to accommodate the added seats next year, he will have to fire staff when the class size shrinks

down the following year. He will need to do this re-hiring and firing every year to accommodate the large "bubble" of sixth-graders as they move through the school.

"It would be detrimental to our staff culture and, in turn, our school culture having to go through that," he says. He is much more hopeful about Option 1.

If Option 1 is approved to expand McAuliffe to occupy the entire building, there will be more students, but the school will operate at 100 percent capacity with the additional space rather than the current 113 percent.

At community engagement meetings that took place at Stapleton and Park Hill elementary schools throughout December, families seemed



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DPS Community Meeting – Wed., Jan. 6 at 6pm
McAuliffe Principal Kurt Dennis will present his proposal for a larger school in 2017-18. Smiley auditorium, 2540 Holly.

2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

**The two options below for the 2017-18 year are proposals and a final decision will be made by the Denver School Board in mid-January.*

McAuliffe will expand to whole building or downsize and share the campus

OPTION 1: Expansion

McAuliffe 1,010 students total
360 sixth-graders
360 seventh-graders
290 eighth-graders
If approved, McAuliffe will expand to occupy the entire Smiley Campus for the first time. Students will be a part of “houses” of 180 students, eight teachers, one administrator, and one counselor for all three years to provide a small school feeling. This option is proposed and designed by principal Kurt Dennis.

No additional program

OPTION 2: Downsize & share campus

McAuliffe 180 sixth-graders 360 seventh-graders 290 eighth-graders If approved, McAuliffe will shrink down, at least 10 teachers will lose their jobs, and administration will sort out logistics of sharing the campus with a new program. There is no information about the new program at this time.	Undecided program 180 students
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to favor expanding McAuliffe but were concerned that a big school may not be right for their child. Dennis, however, is very confident they can produce a small school feel. “We know that it seems counter-intuitive but in order for McAuliffe to ‘feel smaller,’ we need the school to grow larger,” he says.

As his proposal for the large school states, he will create small learning communities in each grade called “houses.” The house model has been used in several large cities, including New York City, Philadelphia and Chicago.

Each house will have 180 students, eight teachers, one administrator and one counselor. Students will spend 80 percent or four out of five classes during the day with their

house, which will remain in one part of the building. The students will only leave houses for specialty electives like band or physical education.

In these houses, students will have the close relationships they would find in a smaller school. The administrator and counselor will stay with the students for all three years of middle school so that relationships stay consistent, and the parents keep the same primary connections with the school. But students will also be a part of a larger community and enjoy the benefits of a bigger school, including enrichment programs and potentially more sports teams. Dennis is working with the school district to confirm they will

have more teams.

“Being able to offer kids the best of both worlds where they are a part of a small learning community and supported by a small group of staff for the vast majority of their school day, while at the same time allowing kids to benefit from the great offerings of a big school, is a win-win for everyone,” he says.

Because the school will occupy the whole building, students will also be able to enter and exit through three doors, whereas in the shared building they currently only use one.

Dennis will present his proposal for a larger McAuliffe in the 2017-18 school year at 6pm on Wednesday, Jan. 6 in the McAuliffe

auditorium at 2540 Holly. A final decision will be made in mid-January.

Unfortunately, the proposed changes at McAuliffe will only be a two-year solution for the capacity problem. The school district will need to find another solution in 2018 or 2019, according to DPS spokesperson Brian Eschbacher. “We know we are going to add another middle school north of the highway [I-70] because that’s where a lot of the growth is,” he says.

Options may include expanding Isabella Bird Community School to a K-8 or potentially moving a school to the Paul Sandoval Campus that currently houses Northfield High School. Stay tuned.

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