

# Front Porch

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

DENVER, COLORADO

STAPLETON

APRIL 2017



## Grrreat New Tiger Exhibit

The question, "Are you being watched?" looms over the heads of visitors at the zoo's new tiger exhibit, *The Edge*, as the tigers look down on them.

By Melinda Pearson

One of the most striking features of Denver Zoo's newly opened tiger exhibit, *The Edge*, is the metal mesh catwalk that arches above the visitor viewing area. The big cats peer down as guests look up at them, creating the interactive experience that its designers intended.

At the opening for media and zoo support-

ers in early March, the contact was particularly close: the large male tiger, Nikolai, shook his damp coat and sprayed attendees below with a liquid of unclear origin. Happy Haynes, director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Denver, playfully referred to it as a "christening," apropos of the occasion.

The name of the new tiger exhibit, *The Edge*, reflects several aspects of the project: a

close relationship between guest and tiger occurs in the space; the yard is designed to appear as if on the edge of a forest; and it reminds visitors that the Amur tiger species, the largest living member of the cat family, is on the brink of extinction, says Shannon Block, president and CEO of Denver Zoo.

The *Edge* has two separate outdoor

enclosures, allowing two of the otherwise solitary Amur tigers to observe and be observed while exploring their new and enriched environment. At the opening, Nikolai and Nikita were outdoors while the zoo's third tiger, Thimbu, Nikolai's brother, was exploring the 3,000-plus sq. ft. indoor space. The tigers rotate regularly through the indoor and outdoor exhibit (continued on page 42)

## Upcoming development on Fairfax Park Hill Commons



A plan is in motion to build a new live/work/play/shop development along the entire 2800 block of Fairfax in Park Hill. Story on page 12.

## TABOR

Love it or hate it,  
it impacts your life.

Learn what it does.  
Do you think Colorado should  
keep it as is or change it? Page 10

By John Fernandez

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



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



Who says print journalism is dead? Maybe not for the next generation. These five young people appear to be avid newspaper readers: (left to right) Brody Goldsmith (on paper stand), Phoebe Stabio, Hadley Goldsmith, Oliver Stabio, William Stabio.



Photo by Brad Stabio

Most of the events listed below are FREE or support nonprofits. Additional events are listed on pages 35-37. Also visit [FrontPorchStapleton.com](http://FrontPorchStapleton.com) to view additional events and to submit events.

## APRIL

### Saturday, April 8

Stapleton Egg Scramble, 10am. Free event is open to children of all ages. Pictures with the Easter bunny, food trucks, event sponsors and more! Make sure to bring your basket or bag to collect eggs! Runway 35 pool.\*

### Thursday, April 13

Active Minds Seminar "Oil" 6:45-7:45pm, Sam Gary Library\* [activeminds.org](http://activeminds.org)

### Thursday, April 13

Screenagers Growing Up in the Digital Age A documentary on how tech time impacts kids; offering solutions for adults. DSST: Conservatory Green, 8499 E. Stoll St., North Stapleton. 7pm. \$5 Doors open 6:30pm. (See page 34)

### Sunday, April 16

Sunrise Easter Service, 7am. The Green\*

### Saturday April 22

Dress for Success 7th Annual Power Walk 5K Registration 9am. Walk at 10am, Central Park - Stapleton. [www.crowdrise.com/denverpowerwalk2017](http://www.crowdrise.com/denverpowerwalk2017). (See page 34)

### Wednesday, April 26

Aurora Visioning Workshop at The Hangar at Stanley, 5:30-8pm. Participants get a chance to weigh in on the plan for the city's future. To ensure there is enough food for the provided light meal, please RSVP at 303.739.7271 or [auroraplaces@auroragov.org](mailto:auroraplaces@auroragov.org). Activities for children will be provided.

## APRIL

### Thursday, April 27

Active Minds Seminar "The Soviet Union: The Road After Collapse" 6:45-7:45pm, Sam Gary Library\* [activeminds.org](http://activeminds.org)

### Fri-Sun, April 28, 29 & 30

Park Hill Art Club Spring Show and Sale. Friday 4:30-8pm, Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 10am-4pm. Park Hill United Methodist Church 5209 Montview Blvd. Free, live music, meet the artists. 720.949-0872, [horsens8543@comcast.net](mailto:horsens8543@comcast.net)

### Sunday, April 30

Día del Niño (Day of the Child) Celebration Sunday 10am-4pm. Denver Art Museum, 100 W. 14th Ave. Pkwy. Dance performances, vivid and colorful costumes and families making crafts. 720-560-5981, [www.denverartmuseum.org](http://www.denverartmuseum.org)

## MAY

### Sat & Sun, May 20 & 21

Annual Stapleton Community Garage Sale 8am-12pm. Registration begins early April at [www.buildingstapleton.com/Community-Info/Stapleton-Community-Garage-Sale](http://www.buildingstapleton.com/Community-Info/Stapleton-Community-Garage-Sale) (See page 34)

### Locations

\*More info. on these events at [www.stapletoncommunity.com](http://www.stapletoncommunity.com)  
Sam Gary Library: 2961 Roslyn St.  
The Cube: 8371 E. Northfield Blvd.  
Runway 35 Pool: 8863 E. 47th Ave.

# Events & Announcements at Stapleton



### Community DNA

We are excited to see our young community hanging out at the 29th Ave. Town Center, the West Crescent and Founders Green. We want to encourage use of Founders Green and of the West Crescent. Parents of the young community, we ask you to please remind your children to be respectful of the community property and to pick up after themselves. We want to make sure that these areas remain clean and enjoyable for everyone to use. We also ask the community to step up and say something if they see anyone being disrespectful to the property or leaving trash.

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

Saturday, April 8, 6-9pm

The Stapleton MCA and Central Park Recreation Center are partnering to host a night of fun for kids ages 7-12 from 6-9pm. The SNL will be held on Sat., April 8 at the Central Park Rec Center. Early registration will be open until the end of business Wednesday (4pm) prior to each SNL event date. Registrations will be accepted at the door, \$20 (cash only) per participant. Join us for a night of fun with games, dinner, snacks and more!

### 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, April 13, 6:45-7:45pm

### Oil

Over the past couple of years, the price of oil has gone from over \$100 per barrel to, at times, less than \$30 per barrel. This has had profound effects worldwide. Join Active Minds as we explore causes and consequences (positive and negative) of this dynamic. We will cover the role of China, the impact on fracking and the oil sector in the U.S., as well OPEC's role in addressing the fluctuating price of this crucial global commodity.

Thursday, April 27, 6:45-7:45pm

### The Soviet Union: The Road After Collapse

What was known as the Soviet Union dissolved 25 years ago this past Decem-

ber. Join Active Minds as we explore Soviet Union's history as well as causes of its failure. In addition, we will discuss the continued relevance of the Russian Federation, the influence of Vladimir Putin, and ongoing challenges to democracy in the region.

### Stapleton Egg Scramble at Runway 35!

Saturday, April 8, 10am-12pm

The Stapleton MCA's Annual Egg Scramble will be held from 10am-12pm on Sat., April 8 at a new location, Runway 35. This free event is open to children of all ages! The egg scramble will begin at 10am at Runway 35. Children will be released by age group to scramble across the field to collect Easter eggs. There will also be pictures with the Easter bunny, food trucks, event sponsors and so much more! Make sure to bring your basket or bag to collect the eggs.

### Friday Night Tastings-Wine Tasting

Friday, April 28, 6pm-8pm

The MCA will host a series of educational wine tastings at our new space, The Cube! Each month will be a different theme. Resident tickets are \$15 and nonresident tickets are \$20. All tickets are \$20 the day of the event. Tickets can be purchased at [stapletoncommunity.com](http://stapletoncommunity.com).

### 2017 Event & Aquatics Sponsorships

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

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

Jennifer Olsen

Communications Manager

[jolsen@stapletoncommunity.com](mailto:jolsen@stapletoncommunity.com)

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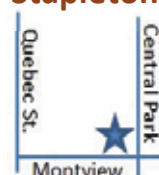
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# Front Porch

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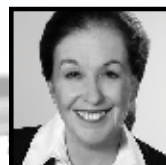
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# Stapleton is only halfway to its affordable homes goal. It's past time to remedy that.

By the Front Porch

Mayor Hancock has said affordable housing is a crisis for Denver—and it is his number one priority. In Stapleton, Denver has a neighborhood where vacant land previously owned by the city is available to build on—and the land sale includes a legal obligation to build 10 percent of for-sale units as affordable housing *reasonably on pace with market rate homes*. Further, Stapleton is a place where homeowners, if they do their due diligence, know they're moving into a neighborhood where a requirement for affordable homes *preceded* them.

With these major obstacles out of the way, why has the developer, Forest City, built only half of the affordable for-sale homes required by their contract with the city? They have not even given the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAB) a long-requested list and map of where the required units will be built.

When Forest City signed the contract to develop Stapleton, much of the land contained fuel, de-icer and other contaminants. Further, it was perceived to be in an area usable primarily for industrial purposes. And, there were those who argued the land actually had a negative value. Voters did not want the city to put their tax money into the project—they wanted someone else to take the risk.

Forest City stepped in and took the risk, including upfront loans to start infrastructure construction. The circumstances allowed them to negotiate a contract with the potential for a hefty profit based on increasing land values—if their project was a success. To their credit, they have been amazingly successful, holding on through the recession when many developers and builders went out of business.

Forest City's contract with the city requires it to purchase 2,935 developable acres of the former Stapleton Airport. For-

est City buys the land after it is environmentally remediated as needed for development. A 1999 appraisal set the land value at approximately \$79.34 million for an average per acre price of \$27,000. By contract, the price escalates with inflation based on the consumer price index (CPI). Based on the CPI since 2000, Forest City's purchase cost per acre today would be approximately \$37,000.



When Stapleton's first home was built in 2002, it sat alone on a huge flat empty landscape. As of Dec. 31, almost 7,000 homes and 1,609 apartment units had been built.

Forest City contracted for the creation of the master plan and marketed it, works with the city on permitting, oversees construction of infrastructure (which is built with tax increment financing [TIF] and special district tax revenue) and sells land to the builders. To date, 82 percent of the land (2,399 acres) has been purchased. Based on recent Stapleton land sale records, the *Front Porch* calculated the cost of Stapleton land now being sold to residential builders is approximately \$1 million per acre. (*Forest City did not respond to this calculation with other information.*)

These skyrocketing land values and resulting profit margins surely provide the funds for Forest City to fulfill its contractual obligation to build 10 percent affordable homes.

Build-out is fast approaching. As of Dec. 31, 2016, 6,961 for-sale units had been built in Stapleton—that's 87 percent of the 8,000

originally forecast. More than 8,800 are now anticipated at full build-out. (Approximately 4,000 total rental units are anticipated—but only 40 percent have been built so far.)

Forest City has not kept up with the 10 percent obligation while they have been generating a hefty profit on land sales. Tom Gleason of Forest City has said it is unlikely they will meet the 10 percent goal by the time market-rate units are completed. What incentive will Forest City have to stick around and build affordable homes that don't bring in a profit after their most profitable work is done? The city's

affordable housing contract with Forest City did not *require* that the affordable homes be built on pace with the market rate homes. The contract merely says they should *reasonably* keep pace with construction. What's "reasonable"? It may be reasonable to slow the pace during a recession. But if it's reasonable to slow down during a recession, isn't it reasonable to catch up during a boom?

Stapleton's CAB has repeatedly given reports to the Stapleton Development Corporation (SDC) and the city that construction of affordable housing has fallen behind. And SDC has a big tool at its disposal—the power to withhold land sales. It has refrained from using that tool because stopping construction would slow the amount of development that could be done with support from TIF. By law, TIF is available only for a limited time period (through 2025).

The *Front Porch* has written repeatedly about SDC's *talk* of making an action plan but as yet, we have seen no such plan and we did not see that they pushed the city to act when Forest City clearly had the resources to do so. Forest City's contract with the city acknowledges that "public subsidies" are required to make affordable rental housing projects feasible; but Forest City alone is responsible for building the 10 percent for-sale affordable homes—no waiting for public money is involved. Now, 15 years into Stapleton's redevelopment, it is time to move away from reliance on citizen volunteers such as CAB and SDC. That didn't work. It is time for the city to push Forest City to do what's reasonable during boom times—to use their profits to catch up on their affordable housing obligation. During those 15 years, the vision of Stapleton as an economically diverse community that reflects the city as a whole has been slipping away—and a different image is taking its place.

The city now says it is reviewing the land Forest City has set aside to determine how many affordable units it might be able to accommodate. But the contract is to provide housing units, not just establish a land bank. The city says Forest City is not officially in breach of their contract at this time. Councilperson Robin Kniech has told the *Front Porch* she believes the development agreement absolutely is enforceable and that the city is studying its legal options. Mayor Hancock, at the March Stapleton United Neighbors meeting, said the city doesn't have many tools and puts his hope in collaboration.

It is time for the city to come to grips with Forest City's failure to keep pace with its affordable housing obligation and to generate a plan of action that will cure the deficit before Forest City completes its build-out of market rate units. After all, if modest affordable housing goals cannot be met at Stapleton, a massive piece of city-owned land, what are the chances elsewhere in the city?

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# Vikings Land in Denver

A video from this exhibit is posted at [FrontPorchStapleton.com](http://FrontPorchStapleton.com)



'Gudmund the Red,' a trader, travels the world to trade his wool, wood, honey and fur for silver, glass and jewels. His scales reflect the value he places on certain items, like the ring he procured in the Middle East. Placing a heavy weight on the scales, he says, 'This ring is worth a lot to me, so you must give me this much weight in silver for it.'

By Laurie Dunklee

The thought of Vikings conjures visions of bearded barbarians pillaging their way across Europe in horned helmets. But this stereotype is only partly true, as demonstrated in *Vikings: Beyond the Legend*, at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science through Aug. 13.

"The Vikings were skilled craftspeople, merchants and farmers," said Samantha Sands, museum educator. "Their ingenuity showed in their tools and crafts, including textiles and

metalwork. They were particularly adept at shipbuilding, which is why they could sail great distances—as far from their homes as the Middle East and Newfoundland off of North America."

The word "Vikings" itself is misunderstood. Viking is not a nationality. Between 750 and 1100 CE, the area now known as Denmark, Norway and Sweden—Scandinavia—was inhabited by a mix of societies that had much in common but were not unified under one governing system. They used the term "viking" to describe a trade expedition or a raid but did not use the word to describe

themselves as a people. Over time, archaeologists and historians have come to refer to them as Vikings.

"It's true the Vikings were known for their brutality and pil-

A 'ghost ship' represented by a sculpture of 219 hanging iron rivets from an authentic aristocratic burial ship. All the wood from the boat disintegrated, leaving only the rivets situated in the ground in the positions shown in the sculpture.

An ax and a sword are among the crafts and tools on display. Display cases show the 'work-bench' of tools used to craft a product, the raw materials used, and the finished product. Axes were more common than swords, so axes were often used in battle.



## FREE ESTATE & FINANCIAL PLANNING WORKSHOP

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Odincarr Thorbjornson is a young nobleman who carries his family's blade, as well as a horn for mead (fermented honey), with which he receives guests. Behind him is the Arby, a 12-foot-long boat used for local travel along the coast, and a patchwork woolen sail.



Charles Bresler, 12, who attends DSST: Stapleton, lifts a sword to guess its weight: 6 or 7 pounds, he estimates.



Swedish dress pin, made with reference to the casting mould at left. Dress pins of this kind were usually molded out of silver or gold. Skilled craftspeople creatively used textiles, wood, metal, bone, leather, glass, and ceramics to create pieces for domestic life, ornamentation, and battle.



Dress pins of this kind were usually molded out of silver or gold. Skilled craftspeople creatively used textiles, wood, metal, bone, leather, glass, and ceramics to create pieces for domestic life, ornamentation, and battle.

The exhibition includes several reproductions of these "swift, sturdy ships," including the Eik Sande, a 120-foot-long ship built before 895, complete with an authentic woven wool sail. To re-create the ship, modern craftsmen used Viking-era tools, three-foot-wide oak planks and

laging, but they also used their swift, sturdy ships to establish trade with far-flung areas, and they preserved artifacts from other countries," said Swedish Ambassador Björn Lyrvall, who visited Denver for the exhibition's opening. Most of the nearly 500 items on display are from the Swedish History Museum.

tallow, as well as handmade rigging rope. Amid the authentic clothing, ornaments and weapons, visitors will NOT see horned helmets. "Artifacts show no evidence of horns," said Sands. "The horns came about in the late 1800s, when a villain in one of Wagner's Ring Cycle operas wore a horned helmet." The museum's historical enactors set the

stage and bring the Viking Age to life. Ingibjorg, a Viking wife, weaves as she tells visitors that her first husband went out on a "viking" and did not return, so she married his brother, a farmer. "In Viking societies, women held the keys to the family's valuables and inheritances came through both men and women,"

said Sands. "Often a widow married her husband's brother to keep the land in the same family." Denver's Museum of Nature & Science is open from 9am-5pm every day at 2001 Colorado Blvd. For more information and tickets, see [www.dmns.org](http://www.dmns.org) or call 303.370.6000.

# CRIMES OF THE HEART

BY BETH HENLEY DIRECTED BY JIM LANDIS

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## TABOR AND SCHOOL FUNDING

TABOR contains revenue growth restrictions using a formula for taxes that is indexed to inflation and is based on the prior year's revenue. Cuts that occur during temporary downturns in the economy become permanent (the so-called ratchet effect) due to this formula, which also slows recovery and prevents building up savings in good times.

The Gallagher Amendment of 1982 limits statewide property tax revenue to a formula that is 45 percent homeowner taxes and 55 percent commercial taxes. As the population has grown and property values have increased, residential property tax assessment rates had to drop to maintain the ratio. As a result, local property tax revenue to many school districts has dropped dramatically. At the same time, TABOR places limits on state revenue, reducing the state's ability to fill the school funding gap created

by low assessment rates. The combination of Gallagher and TABOR shifted the burden of school funding from local property taxes to the state general fund—which now provides more than 60 percent of school funding, whereas it used to be less than 40 percent. This explains the dramatic increase in the portion of the general fund now spent on schools.

Meanwhile, Amendment 23, passed in 2000, calls for the state legislature to increase education funding annually by the rate of inflation plus 1 percent for the first 10 years (and the rate of inflation thereafter), along with other specific provisions to restore education funding. Amendment 23 requires increased spending at the same time TABOR and Gallagher reduce revenue. The combined effect of these three amendments creates an unsustainable fiscal formula for Colorado.

## TABOR ESSENTIALS

TABOR limits revenue at all levels of government: the state, cities, counties, school districts and special districts. The formula for revenue limits varies at the different levels.

- State: population growth + inflation factor (consumer price index)
- Local: growth in assessed valuation from new development + CPI
- School districts: growth in student enrollment + CPI

TABOR is most identified with the requirement for a public vote on tax increases, whether new or rate increases. In fact, TABOR requires a vote by the public on a wide range of other matters including: mill levy above that for the prior year, extension of an expiring tax, tax policy change resulting in a revenue increase, and debt increase.

Revenues received by a unit of government in excess of a defined base amount must be refunded to taxpayers unless they vote to allow retention of the excess revenue.

A “ratchet effect” is built into TABOR: if revenues decline from one year to the next, the new, lower revenue becomes the revenue cap limit thereafter. Thus, with each economic down cycle, government revenue shrinks with no provision for catching up during better economic times. However, Referendum C eliminated the permanent ratchet down effect for the state. The same thing has happened many times at the local government level in “De-Brucing” elections, so-called in recognition of the TABOR author, Douglas Bruce.

# TABOR. Love it or hate

By John Fernandez

Colorado newcomers still learning the difference between the Front Range and the kitchen range may already have figured out that something called “TABOR” largely determines Colorado politics, tax policy and funding. Colorado is the only state in the nation with a Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR), an amendment to the Colorado Constitution passed in 1992 that mandates revenue caps, among many other requirements related to revenue and taxation. TABOR was a response to taxpayer concerns over growth in government and increased taxation. Twenty-five years later, even long-time Colorado residents still grapple with understanding TABOR and its impacts.

Similar laws have been considered in at least 30 states and TABOR proposals reached the ballot in five other states, including Maine, Nebraska and Florida. All were voted down.<sup>1</sup> Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, a conservative Republican, vetoed a TABOR proposal in 2011, explaining, “We should learn from the state of Colorado that experimented with a similar measure, and failed.”<sup>2</sup> TABOR has succeeded in its goal of limiting revenue growth and size of government—but parents of school children may be seeing its impacts: Colorado was 41st in the nation for pupil-teacher ratio in 2014-15,<sup>3</sup> nonmandatory programs like early childhood education (ECE) have been cut back<sup>4</sup>; and with teacher wage competitiveness at 49th in the nation,<sup>5</sup> Colorado districts are facing teacher shortages. [See orange box on school funding.]

Of course, the impact of TABOR extends beyond schools. Colorado's general fund revenues are 4.2 percent below 2007-2008 levels (when adjusted for population and inflation). The Bell Policy Center reports that Colorado now ranks 37th among states for highway spending when measured against per capita personal income.

### Most Recent Legislative Fix Fails

In late March, a bipartisan proposal (HB1187) to change the TABOR revenue limits failed when it was sent to a Republican-controlled committee, where it died on a 3-2 party-line vote. With voters showing an increased

interest in legislators' positions and votes, even though this bill has died this year, we hope *Front Porch* readers will find this TABOR explanation useful. TABOR-related legislation is likely to resurface in future years.

### TABOR History

The campaign for TABOR in 1992 focused on a mandate to have citizens vote on tax increases. (It is worth noting that traditionally in Colorado, most units of government voluntarily put such measures to a public vote). TABOR, however, turned out to contain many other requirements that have had wide-ranging implications for the state. Those include revenue caps at all levels of government that are tied to the prior year, votes on many fiscal-related issues, a mandated flat (not progressive) state income tax, and a complete prohibition of certain kinds of taxes. [See blue box on TABOR.]

The amendment is so complicated legislators and lawyers have been studying it for years, and the courts have made numerous interpretations and rulings on it. [See green box on court rulings.]

TABOR reflects the voters' search for a balance between representative and populist, direct-democracy forms of government, says former State Sen. Pat Steadman who served as chair of the Colorado Legislature's Joint Budget Committee. “Most people really have no desire to get into the weeds of tax policy—and yet they're the ones who insisted that they be placed in the driver's seat. It's a power that most voters were quick to take for themselves but were loathe to exercise for themselves.”

Steadman says the amendment couldn't make it to the ballot today because after voters approved TABOR and the legislature realized the breadth of its impact, they referred to the voters a measure requiring that initiatives amending the Constitution be limited to a single subject. Voters handily approved that change in election law in 1994. That, combined with the 2016 Amendment 71 requirement for 55 percent of the vote to amend the Constitution, means TABOR will never be changed all at once.

Future changes will have to happen piecemeal

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through individual, single-subject amendments. In the meantime, the legislature can refer TABOR override measures to the voters as they did in 2005 with Amendment C [see gold box] and might have done this year with HB1187.

### Changing the TABOR Revenue Cap Formula?

HB1187 would have changed the current TABOR revenue cap from population growth plus inflation [as explained in blue sidebar] to a rolling five-year average of personal income growth. Proponents believe personal income growth is a better measure of economic activity than the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a measure of inflation that gauges changes in the cost of goods and services that individual consumers buy (e.g., housing, transportation, and food), rather than the services that state government pays for like education and health care. In addition, Colorado has rapidly growing numbers of senior citizens and children, two segments of the population that require the most state services. Another rationale is that a rolling five-year average will smooth out the effect of economic cycles and create more stability in state budgeting.

Estimates were that HB1187's revision to the state's revenue cap would have generated an additional \$342 million in revenue over the next two years.

Steadman notes that HB1187 is only a "tweak to a calculation under TABOR," leaving the TABOR framework intact. Such proposed changes in tax policy are allowed under TABOR. If approved by the legislature, the item would have been referred to the voters for a decision at the November election. This statewide vote would be similar to votes on tax increases or "mill levy overrides" proposed by Colorado cities and school districts, which are also subject to TABOR.

### Sales Tax Increase for Transportation?

The General Assembly is considering at least one other measure (HB1242) that requires a TABOR vote: a sales tax rate increase of 0.62 percent (from 2.9 percent to 3.52 percent) for 20 years beginning in 2018, to generate \$677 million annually for highway and transit projects. Passage is uncertain as the parties clash over whether to

create an entirely new revenue source (Democrats) or offset the new tax with cuts elsewhere in the state budget (Republicans).

### Hospital Provider Fee? Probably Not.

In prior years, re-classification of the hospital provider fee (HPF) was proposed but rejected as a partial solution to the state's budget constraints. The HPF, created in 2009, is essentially a per hospital bed charge used to fund expansion of eligibility for the state Medicaid program. Democrats have wanted to locate those revenues within a state "enterprise" fund to remove the estimated \$700 million from the state's revenue cap. TABOR allows such government-owned businesses that are primarily funded through fees to be separated from government functions that are paid through general funds. City utility functions (water, wastewater, drainage) or golf operations are typical examples of enterprise funds. Republicans have opposed this reclassification of the HPF in prior sessions and it appears unlikely that the issue will be revisited in the current session of the General Assembly.

1. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [www.cbpp.org/](http://www.cbpp.org/)

2. *Arizona Capitol Times*, "Brewer vetoes bill to limit state spending," by Caitlin Coakley Beckner, April 28, 2011, <http://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2011/04/28/brewer-vetoes-arizona-bill-to-limit-state-spending/>

3. National Center for Education Statistics, 2014-15: "Selected Statistics From the Public Elementary and Secondary Education Universe: School Year 2014-15"

4. From Brian Eschbacher, DPS: "ECE-3 and ECE-4 are not guaranteed since there is very limited state funding and it is not a mandatory program. We have to prioritize classrooms for students attending K-12. This is the case in most neighborhoods across the city."

5. Great Ed National Comparison Chart—compares teachers to non-teachers with similar education, experience and hours worked. "Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card," sixth edition (January 17), Education Law Center, Rutgers Graduate School of Education. [www.schoolfundingfairness.org](http://www.schoolfundingfairness.org)

### TABOR COURT RULINGS

TABOR's length (nearly 2,000 words) and complexity (multiple subjects, undefined terms) has forced considerable litigation and interpretation through the courts, peaking in 1995 with seven cases decided by the Colorado Supreme Court. The Colorado Municipal League believes the "winning streak" experienced by cities and other government entities in these cases is what has avoided an all-out crippling of government. Court decisions favorable to government have included:

- Allowing exclusion of federal grants from a jurisdiction's fiscal year spending base
- Allowing mill levies for prior bond issues to float as needed to retire the bonds
- Flexibility in how and when refunds are to be made to taxpayers
- Allowing extension of expiring taxes to be voted on without the label that these are "tax increases," and
- Exempting multi-year lease-purchase agreements and refinancing of bonded debt from the need for a public vote.

### TABOR OVERRIDES — AMENDMENT C and OTHERS

There have been hundreds of local votes on tax increases and mill levy overrides. CML estimates that 90 percent or more of such municipal votes for overrides have been approved. By contrast, since 1993, statewide voters have approved only five tax increases out of 17 ballot questions.

TABOR allows for flexibility in the way refunds are returned to taxpayers. Cities tend to provide them as utility bill credits. Only one community has offered

a cash refund (Larkspur). The state has settled on a refund of sales tax by filing a claim on income tax returns.

The first state TABOR refund occurred in fiscal year 1996-97 and amounted to \$139,026. By fiscal year 2004-05, refunds had totaled almost \$3.3 billion. Then the recession hit and voters approved Referendum C, a five-year TABOR time-out. Since 2010, refunds have been relatively small to nonexistent.

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## Park Hill Commons



The Studios at Park Hill Commons, micro apartments with shops below at street level

By Anne Hebert

A full “face-lift” is planned for the 2800 block of Fairfax in Park Hill. The redevelopment project, Park Hill Commons, is currently in the permitting process with the city of Denver and opening is anticipated for spring/summer 2018. Situated outside of the proposed Park Hill Historic District, the project will initially include the entire east side of the block. City Councilman Chris Herndon says he’s excited about the redevelopment. “The look is a definite improvement over what exists there now,” says Herndon, adding it creates a new neighborhood “sense of place” and an affordable housing option in Park Hill.

Touted as “A Gathering Place,” the project will include 22 micro apartments, 21 townhome units, 10,000 square feet of space for small office suites, 6,200 square feet of retail space and 8,500 square feet of restaurant space. To complete the live/work/play/shop concept, the project also includes a 15,625-square-foot park. Addressing



neighbors’ concerns about parking, space is available for 96 cars within the new development and an additional 80 cars on the street.

“The park is designed to be a focal point for residents, shoppers and office tenants. Adults seated on the patio of a restaurant can enjoy their meal and supervise their children playing in the park at the same time,” says HM Capital’s Ben Maxwell, project lead.

In addition to the grassy area, the park will feature amenities like stroller and bike racks, a water feature, a climbing rock for kids, plenty of bench seating and a sandbox.



The Square at Park Hill Commons

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Fairfax St.



Renderings courtesy of Ben Maxwell, HM Capital

Park Hill Commons, a new mixed-use development at 28th and Fairfax, will break ground in June 2017. Anchored by a park, the residential micro apartments and townhomes will offer a live/work/play/shop lifestyle.

This is a long-term project, emphasizes Maxwell, with careful consideration given to supporting local, community-based businesses, which he hopes will consider locating at Shops at Park Hill Commons. “We’re not going to build out too quickly—we want to take time to consider what we’ll do after this first phase,” says Maxwell. “Engaging the surrounding NE Denver neighborhoods, including Stapleton and City Park, is all part of the plan.”

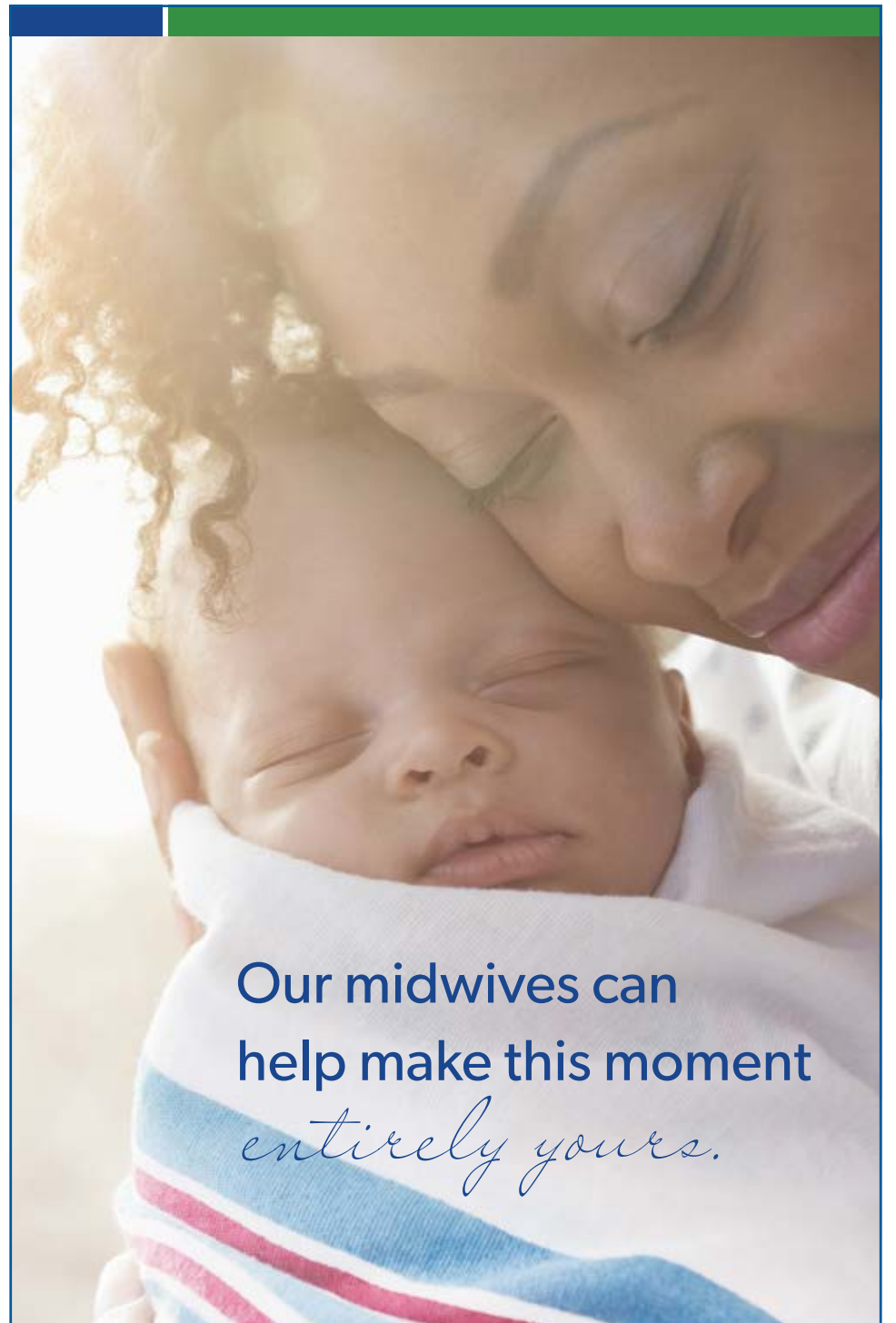
Sandy Thompson of the Zaga Neighborhood Design architecture firm and landscape architect Ariel Gelman of Connect One Design are working with Maxwell on this project.

The Studios at Park Hill Commons micro apartments, for those who don’t require a large living space, are expected to rent for \$850 to \$950 per month. Townhomes at Fairfax Row will be available for rent or sale, yet to be determined. A two-story design ranging from 1,400–2,000 square feet includes a garden-level garage, an outdoor rooftop deck, nine-foot ceiling heights and solid mahogany doors imported from Brazil.

Maxwell says the response has been overwhelmingly positive following a neighborhood meeting of about 100 people in early February 2017.



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By Melinda Pearson  
The newest horse in the Denver Police Department's Mounted Patrol Unit is awaiting a name. The 5-year-old horse, currently being called "Blue," visited the neighborhood last month with his 18-year-old big buddy, "Jackson." In an event scheduled for April 18, students at Isabella Bird Community School will get a chance to suggest permanent names for Blue, according to Lt. Ian Culverhouse of District 5, who recommended the school for the unique honor. The final selection of a name will occur on May 2.

The two horses and their officers, Kim Quintana and Matt Peltier, were a welcome sight to neighborhood kids and parents alike



Officers Matt Peltier on "Jackson" and Kim Quintana on "Blue" (left) rode through the Eastbridge neighborhood of Stapleton, much to the excitement of Bea Farrell, 4, and her mom, Brenna Farrell (below).

The height of an officer on a horse is useful in neighborhood patrols because they are able to see over fences, and the horses can travel on bike paths and off-road areas that patrol cars can't reach during their four- to five-hour shifts.

Quintana is worried about the future of the unit, though. While the city supports aspects of the program such as equipment and maintenance, the mounted patrol relies upon private generosity. Their longtime benefactor is retired schoolteacher Betty Robertson, who has personally

## Putting the 'Neigh' in Neighborhood Patrols

in their recent circuit of the Eastbridge neighborhood. But the patrol can be found virtually anywhere in the city, according to Officer Quintana, a veteran of the unit. "We go everywhere. It used to be just downtown,

but now we cover the whole city."

Comprised of three officers and six horses, the patrol is adept in crowd control situations and has worked a variety of events—from protests by Occupy groups to the jubilant celebrations of the Broncos Super Bowl parade, where they got to ride right behind "Thunder." They also participate in many public relations events—senior citizens' centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, holiday events and the annual Stock Show.

They look forward to patrolling neighborhoods—in the Eastbridge neighborhood of Stapleton, Officers Quintana and Peltier found, unsurprisingly, a number of open garage doors on their recent visit.

ly bought the last 10 horses—all geldings—for the Mounted Patrol. The 89-year-old entered assisted living recently, however, and the future of the program is uncertain. "We would love more community support," said Quintana. Robertson will personally attend the naming ceremonies at Izzi B, and perhaps her example will inspire others.



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# Sound Art Arrives at Eastbridge Town Center

Barbara Neal, public art consultant for Stapleton, listens to the sounds coming from a newly installed parking meter, one of three in Eastbridge Town Center created by artist Jim Green (right) and assisted by electronic artist Ryan Elmendorf.

By Barbara Neal

Visitors to the new Eastbridge Town Center will find *Talking Parking Meters*, a public art installation by Denver artist Jim Green.

Three ordinary looking parking meters are curiously placed in specific gathering areas in the plaza. Ordinary meters they are not; they contain motion sensors that, when activated, trigger greetings or familiar sounds

not associated with a plaza. They don't require coins and they don't count down minutes.

This artwork is emblematic of Jim Green's approach, which is to engage the public with humor and surprise. He wants to humanize public space by playfully introducing unexpected sound into the environment and to serve a broad audience, facilitating interaction and community.

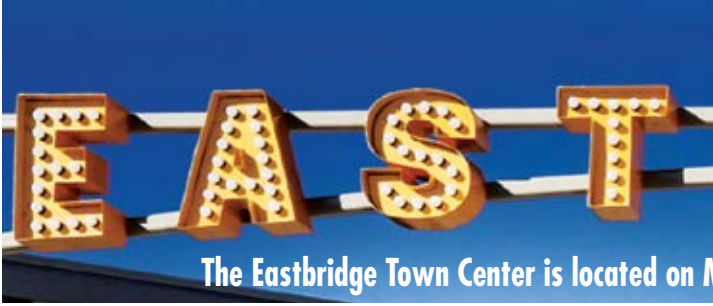
Jim's other artwork in Denver includes: *Laughing Escalators* at the Convention Center and the early installation of *Singing Sinks* in the lobby restrooms at the Ponti Building of the Denver Art Museum. He has been commissioned for sound art installations all over the country. Jim was assisted in this installation by Ryan Elmendorf, an electronics artist whose

company is re:engineering.

How do the parking meters work? The parking meters, which house a sensor and a speaker, have a capacity for multiple sounds per meter and their soundboards can be programmed individually. The final programming will be determined through on-site testing and experimentation. Once a sound starts to play, it cannot be interrupted until its program is finished. They are expected to be live by late April.

Late spring and summer will see three new public art additions to the Stapleton Public Art Collection. Watch for the announcements of these North Stapleton installations.

Barbara Neal is the public art consultant for Stapleton. For more about public art in Stapleton, contact Neal at [barbneal@mindspring.com](mailto:barbneal@mindspring.com).



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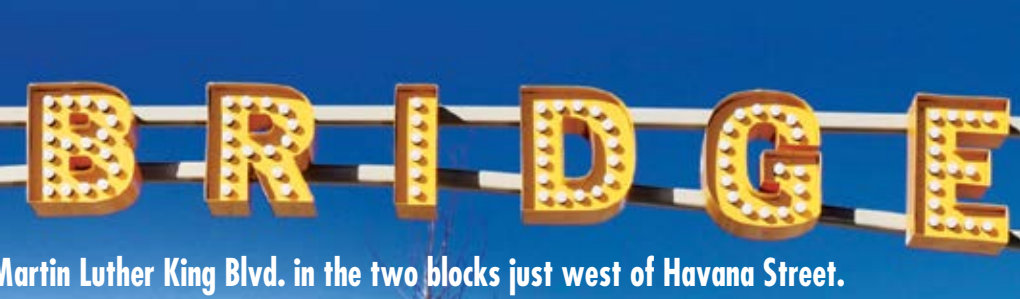
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## “Food You’ll Feel Good About Eating”

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

Merlin Verrier has a 45-second commute to work as culinary director for Next Door, a restaurant opening this month in Eastbridge that’s part of The Kitchen Restaurant Group. He says it’s a double-edged sword. “The good news is I am 45 seconds from work and the bad news is I’m 45 seconds from work!” The best part, he says is that “it creates a little more ownership because it’s my friends and neighbors going, so there’s a lot of pride for me.”

It’s the same situation for Verrier’s colleague, fellow Stapleton resident Colin Ness, who is the director of operations for Next Door, which will have four locations with the Eastbridge opening. From the start, Ness was excited about the possibility for the Eastbridge restaurant because he felt there was a lack of independent, chef-driven restaurants in his neighborhood.

Next Door’s concept is an American eatery. “America is a melting pot and an American eatery allows latitude to experiment with different flavors from around the world because America has a little bit of everything,” Ness says. Examples include Thai Butternut Squash Soup, Meatballs on Polenta, a vegetarian Beet Burger and Greek Salad.



Merlin Verrier, culinary director, (left), Chris Calcaterra, GM, and Colin Ness, director of operations gather at their about-to-open Eastbridge restaurant, Next Door, which is a part of The Kitchen Restaurant Group. Verrier and Ness live nearby in Stapleton.

The restaurant looks close to home when it comes to sourcing. “If it can be harvested in the morning and delivered to us for evening service, it’s considered local,” says Verrier. They make everything from scratch except bread, which they get from Boulder’s Izzio Artisan Bakery. “Everything is better when it’s made from scratch,” says Verrier, “because then you’re in complete control of the ingredients you use.”

Although Next Door will be suitable for adults for date night or an outing with friends, both Ness and Verrier

are parents and understand the challenges of dining with kids. “There’s nothing worse than when you go to a restaurant and the kids are hungry and that stopwatch starts and you know they’re going to have a meltdown if they don’t get something in their stomachs,” says Ness. To that end, a free small dish of hummus, carrots and celery will immediately be brought out for kids. “We provide some sustenance and then mom and dad can relax,” says Ness who adds that kids’ menus will have activities to do so families can interact with each other.

Verrier and Ness will be joined by general manager Chris Calcaterra, who most recently lived in Chicago. Having grown up in the restaurant industry, he’s looking forward to opening a new restaurant with the team who, he says, care as much about the food they

serve as the communities the restaurants are in. Ness is looking forward to the sense of community that will be created through the project, and feels the fellow restaurants are unique enough that they aren’t competition to each other and can, instead, be supportive.

For Verrier, the food is the core. “Our big focus is to put together dishes that you’re going to feel really good about eating. Obviously, there’s a domino effect afterward, which is better performance in life, feeling better about yourself and feeling happier. That’s the ultimate goal for what we do.”

## FOR KIDS (cont’)

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# A Neighborhood Eatery with “Some Big City Flair”

By Courtney Drake-McDonough

As he tours around his newest restaurant, Concourse Restaurant Moderne, slated to open mid- to late-April in Eastbridge, chef and restaurateur Lon Symensma points out the layout of the kitchen that offers better flow for staff. The layout also gives the dining room more space and nicer views for guests because of the angles of the tables. “You learn a thing or two with each new restaurant and figure out what works best,” he says.

This is the first non-Asian-inspired restaurant Symensma and his partner, Chief Operating Officer Christopher Massey, have opened. They describe Concourse as being progressive American with European techniques and local ingredients.

The name Concourse is inspired by Stapleton’s history as Denver’s first airport, but Symensma also cites the definition: “A large, open area inside or in front of a public building as in an airport or train station. Or, a crowd or assembly of people.” You could almost add the word ‘restaurant’ in there and have the same definition—it’s an area where people gather together.”

Executive Chef and co-owner Luke Bergman moved from New York to work with Symensma on this project.

Now a Stapleton resident, they met while working in 4-star Manhattan restaurants, perfecting classical French cooking techniques. “We figured if we opened a restaurant in Colorado with all of the beautiful produce and such that was available, we’d base it on our back-grounds,” says Bergman.

Concourse will be open all day, with fast-casual breakfast items served from the

pastry counter at the front of the restaurant. Lunch, dinner and weekend brunch will be full-service. “The idea in the morning is to grab a pastry and some coffee, read the paper, catch up with the locals,” says Bergman. “At lunch, we’ll tend to feed more of the people strolling the area or coming from the CrossFit gym or Pilates studio, serving a more healthy fare. Then at dinner, we transition into requiring reservations (but some walk-ins) where entrees are

served family-style so everyone can order different things and share if they want.” Bergman says brunch will be a time to relax on a day off enjoying bottomless mimosas, Bloody Marys, sandwiches and egg dishes.

Everything will be made from scratch, in-house including pastas, sauces, bread and fresh-pressed juices. Many items can be adapted to address gluten-free and allergen needs of guests.

The father of two, Bergman is keenly aware of making Concourse’s menu approachable for families with a kids’ menu available all day. While breakfast, lunch and brunch are most appropriate for families, kids are welcome at dinner too.

Although Symensma and Massey are the driving force behind Concourse, diners will primarily see Bergman and General Manager Jose Rodriguez on a day-to-day basis. Rodriguez, who has worked at Symensma’s other restaurants says, “Luke and I are going to be the glue putting it all together every day.”

Symensma feels Concourse Restaurant Moderne will bring something different to Denver. “You need chefs like this to come in from a different city where they already made a name for themselves and elevate things without coming in and saying, ‘We’re going to charge you inflated prices.’ We’re bringing in some big city flair!” Feeling Stapleton has been underserved in terms of restaurant options, he adds, “We want to be a neighborhood eatery. It’s starving out here for something like this.”



Left to right: Christopher Marrey, COO/owner; Lon Symensma, chef/owner; Luke Bergman, executive chef/owner; and Jose Rodriguez, general manager, are shown at Concourse Restaurant Moderne in Eastbridge, which is expected to open in April.

## FOR KIDS (continued)



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Elise Wiggins has been cooking in her own wood-fired oven at her Stapleton home while waiting for the completion of her new restaurant, Cattivella, expected in mid-April.

## Woodfired Italian Cuisine

By Anne Hebert

Owner and chef, Elise Wiggins, has a lot to look forward to. Her new restaurant, Cattivella, will open its doors in the Eastbridge Town Center in mid-April.

Wiggins' specialty is wood-fired—all her food is cooked on a wood-fired oven or grill. She says, "Everything is slow food, kissed around a wood fire at various levels of the life of the fire."

In addition to wood-fired Italian cuisine, Cattivella will offer programs certain to tempt wine lovers in the metro area. "We want customers to have the opportunity to sample beautiful, expensive wines at a fraction of what they would pay for a bottle," says Wiggins. "Our restaurant manager will help feature a new wine on 'Magnum Mondays' by offering diners table service with a glass of really fine wine at

a reasonable price. It's an interactive, showy and fun way to try something new without breaking the bank."

A chalkboard at the restaurant entrance will list wines that are new in the rotation. Restaurant patrons can purchase a "flight" to try a sampling of several—a great way to choose a new favorite. Cattivella will also feature a liqueur that is brand new to the U.S. "L'Apertivo by Galliano is a refreshing spirit that's delicious anytime of the year," says Wiggins. "We'll be serving it during Happy Hour and at brunch."

Visit [www.cattivelladenver.com](http://www.cattivelladenver.com) for more information and to view the menu. To read an August 2016 *Front Porch* article about Wiggins, visit [FrontPorchStapleton.com](http://FrontPorchStapleton.com) and search for Cattivella.

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March 2017



# Southern-style Soul Food Rolling into Stanley



Even before the restaurant opened, Rolling Smoke BBQ put on their first crawfish boil at Stanley Marketplace, which they plan to make a monthly event. Their restaurant in Stanley is expected to open in April.

By Laurie Dunklee

Rolling Smoke Bar-B-Que celebrated its pre-opening at the Stanley Marketplace with a New Orleans-style crawfish boil, a new monthly event. “New Orleans has my favorite foods,” said Terry Walsh, co-owner of Rolling Smoke. “We fed more than 300 people on 500 pounds of crawfish that we flew in from Louisiana overnight.”

The Oh Hey Crawfish Boil was a preview of the down-home Southern cooking to be served at Rolling Smoke when it opens in early April. Rolling Smoke will be a 382-square-foot space in the middle of the Stanley, between Miette et Chocolat confections and The Juniper Pig butcher shop.

Walsh and his partner, Wade Williams,

had planned to open their takeout kitchen at the Stanley earlier this year, but a minor change in the construction plan caused a month-long delay. “There was no work on our space for 26 days in February and March because we needed to move a hand sink and submit the change to the city for approval. It will be great when it’s done, but what a hassle,” Walsh said.

Walsh grew up in Tulsa, Okla., where he learned to cook “Southern-type soul food,” influenced by Memphis and Kansas City barbecue. The restaurant will serve ribs, brisket, sausage and pulled pork, as well as homemade macaroni and cheese, collard greens and baked beans. Walsh said his specialties include burnt ends and bacon candy. “Burnt ends are pieces cut from the point



end of the brisket, called the ‘fat cap.’ You melt the fat into the meat and it’s tender like pot roast. Bacon candy is thick-sliced bacon rolled in sugar and spices, and smoked until it caramelizes.”

Walsh started Rolling Smoke in 2014, with two food trucks in Denver. The Stanley is his first brick-and-mortar location. “We’ll go from a 60-square-foot kitchen in the trucks, to a 382-foot kitchen. We’ll have room to expand the menu and get creative.

“We’ll try pastrami beef ribs, tri tip beef and smoked prime rib. We’ll do fried chicken twice a month and fried catfish on Fridays during Lent. We’ll make about 30 side dishes, including Cajun dishes like red beans and

rice, sweet potato casserole and smoked cheesy grits. We’ll offer a couple of them each day so it’s always different.”

Walsh said the secret to good barbecue is “low and slow.” “Everything we do takes a long time. It’s 225 degrees for as long as it takes. Our brisket smokes for 20 hours and our pulled pork smokes for 10 to 12 hours. The secret to good collard greens is to simmer them overnight with smoked ham hocks.”

Walsh moved to Denver in 2002 and worked in finance for Lehman Brothers. He lost his job when the economy collapsed, so “I decided to do my own thing,” he said. “It sure beats sitting in a cubicle. I have no regrets. I never look back.”

Reach Rolling Smoke at [rollingsmokebbq.co](http://rollingsmokebbq.co) or on Facebook.



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Belly Bliss owner Lauren Williams gathers with moms and kids at her new studio in Stanley Marketplace. Belly Bliss offers mom and child classes and a place for new moms to meet other new moms.

By Laurie Dunklee

Belly Bliss is a resource for women as they experience pregnancy, childbearing and early motherhood. “It’s amazing to support women through this transition,” says Lauren Williams, owner of Belly Bliss, now open in the Stanley Marketplace. “Some of our moms are having their third or fourth child. It’s really beautiful to go through this process with them.”

Belly Bliss opened in the Cherry Creek neighborhood in 2008 and offers prenatal fitness classes, “mommy and me” classes and toddler play. Childbirth education and parenting workshops are also offered, as well as services including massage, acupuncture and chiropractic.

Williams says creating connection is most important. “We create a community where women meet each other and discuss their experiences and feelings. Pregnancy and having small kids can be isolating because it’s harder to get out. Here women talk about the changes they are going through, like changes in their relationships with their partner and people at work. By sharing, they realize the changes are normal. First-time moms say the whole reason they come

to class is to connect with other women.” Williams began as a personal trainer and became interested in how women’s bodies change during pregnancy and the growth of their babies. She became a Lamaze educator and a *doula*, a Greek word meaning “woman helping woman.” A *doula* who takes care of a woman in labor is a “mother to the mother,” helping her emotionally throughout childbirth. “For me it’s about my love for women and families,” says Williams, the mother of two boys.

“What I’ve learned is there’s no right way to go through this. Moms put pressure on themselves to do everything perfectly, but there are many ways to get it done. Every woman and every child is different.”

Belly Bliss occupies 800 square feet on the second floor at Stanley Marketplace, across from the community work space. The Stanley location offers classes and workshops but not one-on-one services since the space is smaller than at Cherry Creek. Memberships and package prices are good at both locations.

For more information, visit [www.bellybliss.org](http://www.bellybliss.org).

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# Every Student Deserves A Beautiful Prom Dress



Left: Volunteer Deborah Neff helps Daiana Bilbao, who attends Kennedy HS, select a prom dress.

Above: Tia Hunsperger founded Bella Boutique.

Right: Starr Temple-Nienaber helps Sabrin Mohamed, North HS, select accessories to complete her outfit.



By Anne Hebert

After moving to Colorado from Seattle five years ago, Tia Hunsperger founded Bella Boutique in Denver's City Park neighborhood. "Having worked for a

similar program in Seattle, I felt that Denver was a great place to replicate the idea," says Hunsperger.

Bella Boutique is the area's largest provider of free prom dresses, accessories and shoes to Colorado teens in financial need. Hunsperger notes the average teen spends approximately \$1200 on prom-related clothing and activities. Through the boutique's referral-based system, low-income teens can work with a stylist to coordinate an entire prom look at no cost. "Finances shouldn't be a barrier to kids looking forward to attending their school's celebration," emphasizes Hun-

sperger. "Every student who wants to should be able to take part."

To qualify, teens must be referred by an educator, coach, pastor or other community leader or be qualified for reduced lunch. Last year, Bella Boutique helped provide outfits, shoes and accessories for 200 girls planning to attend their school's Homecoming and Prom dances.

Community members can help by refer-

ring a qualifying teen and encouraging them to make an appointment to shop. The boutique also needs volunteers who can work directly with a teen to help them find and complete their look. Donations of gently worn dresses, shoes and jewelry are also welcome.

For more information about Bella Boutique, visit, [www.bellaboutiquedenver.org](http://www.bellaboutiquedenver.org) or call 303.656.9665.

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Each month the Indie Prof reviews films in theaters or on DVD or streaming services. Follow “Indie Prof” on Facebook for updates about film events and more reviews.

April brings us the Women+Film mini-fest, a wonderful compilation of films from around the world, by women and about women.



As described by the Denver Film Society: “The Women+Film Festival is a six-day showcase of documentaries, narratives and short films celebrating the best in women-centric programming. The Festival includes panel discussions, in-person guests and receptions while highlighting thought-provoking, inspirational stories of women from around the world. The festival is a part of the Denver Film Society’s year-round Women+Film program, the mission of which is to promote films for, by, and about women to engage with the audience, build community, educate and inspire.”

What follows are short reviews of three of

the Festival offerings, but please see the Film Center website for a full list of films and showtimes.

### Sticky Notes (2016)

There is a wonderful *jouissance* to a first-time filmmaker’s debut. You can fast forward and see the themes fully formed, a style developed to the point of ease, and the marriage of theme and style flowing seamlessly. When you look back at Martin Scorsese’s *Mean Streets*, you see the seeds of *Goodfellas*; when you look back at Kathryn Bigelow’s *Near Dark*, you can see *Zero Dark Thirty*. Sometime in the future, we will look back at *Sticky Notes* and see the seeds of Amanda Sharp.

The story concerns a young woman (Leslie Rose) in L.A. trying to make it as a dancer when she finds out her father (Ray Liotta) is dying of cancer (in Florida). She returns to help him but is ill prepared to take care of him nor the young daughter she left with him (or so it seems). They share a close but unemotional relationship—neither one able to express real feelings/emotions—and both tend to drown their sorrows in various vices/activities. It is a well-acted and well-directed film (with a twist!) that is extremely engaging and watchable. It also shows great promise and ability as a filmmaker.

See it at the Sie Film Center on Sunday, April 9 at 6:30pm. Director Amanda Sharp will be in person at the screening.

### Unrest (2016)

Jennifer Brea was an active Harvard Ph.D. student when a mysterious illness rendered her semi-comatose and unable to move. She is eventu-

ally diagnosed with ME, commonly known as chronic fatigue syndrome, or what many call an illness that is “all in your head.” In this fascinating film, she documents her own pain, the plight of others who share her situation, and the difficulties the people in their lives encounter (including her husband, Omar). It is a sad and difficult position for everyone.

This is a raw, difficult, powerful, and personal film that is at times hard to watch and at other points potentially uplifting. But this is real life, and all progress is tempered by setbacks. The tense and personal atmosphere is highlighted through the filming, which is mostly home video that gets you up close and personal with everyone. Filming in close quarters, in minimal light, and in mostly static compositions forces you to live with each person—in their world—for a short period of time. It is very effective and very affecting.

See it at the Sie Film Center Saturday, April 8 from 6:30–8:30pm. Skype Q&A with Jennifer Brea post-screening.

### Little Wing (2016)

This debut feature film comes from Finnish director Selma Vilhunen, a former Academy Award nominee in the shorts category. It tells the story of 12-year-old Varpu, a young girl on a quest to find the father she never knew while managing the



Little Wing

life of an interstitial pre-teen. She lives a life “between”: between young girl and teenager, between adolescent and adult (between her and her mother, she is the more mature), and between worlds—the horse-riding camp of her upper-class schoolmates and the “other side of the tracks” apartment in the lower-income section of town where she lives with her mother. She is a girl who wants to be a girl but is being forced into the cruel realities of the adult world, too soon.

One juxtaposition tells the story nicely: Varpu riding horses at her camp while later, her friends from the neighborhood steal a car and Varpu finds that she is a natural at driving (even though her mother has failed the driving test four times). The



Unrest

images of her riding a horse and then driving a car tell the story of her world, wonderfully and visually, as only a poetic film can do.

To call it a “coming-of-age” story would be unfair to the film, since it is such a nuanced, non-stereotypical (dare I say not-American), and intimate portrait.

See it at the Sie Film Center on Wednesday, April 5 at 7:30pm.

Vincent Piturro, Ph.D., is an associate professor of Cinema Studies at Metropolitan State University of Denver. He can be reached at [vpiturro@msudenver.com](mailto:vpiturro@msudenver.com).

## FOR YOUR HOME (cont')



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# Just the Facts

## Colorado's Mass Extinctions

by James Hagadorn



Colorado's full of rocks. Some bear gold, diamonds or silver. Others burble oil, gas and water. A rare few record death itself.

These geological gallows occur in sedimentary rocks that dot some of our most inconspicuous scenery. Striped layers in such strata built up one-by-one as sediment accumulated

at the bottom of valleys, lakes and oceans. As they were laid down, the layers recorded the changing conditions in ancient landscapes, often preserving signals of events that transpired. Geologists tease these clues out of rocks just like a dendrochronologist reconstructs ancient variations in rainfall from tree rings.

Such rocks aren't economically useful. But they're important because they allow us to un-



The K-T extinction occurred when a giant asteroid hit Earth. The photo shows the K-T boundary between the Cretaceous and Paleogene periods.

as well as land-going ones. The cause was a one-two combo where oceans lost nearly all their oxygen, transforming them into something that might have stank like the black lagoon. Evidence of this mass extinction has been hiding in plain sight for millennia. Geologists recently identified the extinction in 360-million-year-old rocks exposed in Glenwood Canyon, on the Flat Tops, and along the stony battlements surrounding Ouray.

And the behemoth of extinction? It's the P-T, which occurs at the boundary between the Permian and Triassic periods, 252 million years ago. It wiped out about 95 percent of the planet's creatures. During the P-T our continents were rendered into barren, dusty Mars-looking landscapes. The oceans barely lapped onto continents, and when they did, they likely looked like an aquarium gone bad after a summer's vacation. Slime and bacterial fuzz covered the seafloors. Salt was everywhere, making places like Colorado look like the original Dead Sea. Few creatures could tolerate these conditions, and those that did gave rise to the era of dinosaurs.

The cause of this "Great Dying?" We don't know. It might have been from eruption of giant Siberian volcanoes, or it could have been from strange natural gas that gushed from the seafloor. New evidence about this event is forthcoming from Colorado, as geologists work to constrain the P-T in rather ugly rocks exposed along the Front Range and in mountainsides from Meeker to Aspen.

Extinction is a natural part of life. It brings balance to evolution. Studying it isn't stressful, especially when it occurred long before we walked the planet.

Yet when extinction impacts us, we worry.

Imagine scads of plants and animals going extinct. It's actually happening right now. And not just in faraway rain forests, in bleached reefs, and in collapsed fisheries. It's also happening in our beetle-ravaged forests and on our bison-less prairies.

How do we know if, when, or how these ecosystems will recover? One of the best ways to figure this out is to go back to times where critters endured cataclysmic events. By studying ancient extinctions, we can figure out how the survivors made it through their deathly gauntlet and what fostered re-establishment of new communities.

Unlike these ancient creatures, we can imagine the future. More importantly, we are like the Once-ler in Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax*. We have the ability to learn from the past, to alter course, and to change our future.

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



Triceratops near Brighton, CO.

derstand how our planet responds to cataclysmic events, like massive kill-offs of the earth's biota. And how ecosystems recover from them.

Colorado's geology has something few other states have: evidence of the three biggest mass extinctions the earth has ever witnessed. During these intervals, our planet went from vibrant to nearly lifeless.

Every kid knows the third-biggest of these events. It's the one in which a giant asteroid blasted our planet—launching a massive tsunami, causing acid to rain from the skies, and catapulting shards of volcanic glass across the globe. Oh, and it killed off the dinos as well as many of their seafaring brethren. This event, known as the K-T extinction, occurred 66 million years ago. It marks the boundary between the Cretaceous and Paleogene periods.

Colorado was the first place the K-T boundary was documented on land. Near Golden a geologist found a horn core from the latest Cretaceous dinosaur, Triceratops. Directly above it the dinosaur fossils disappeared, but the rocks bore early Paleogene plant fossils. This change signaled a radical turnover in the earth's biota—early evidence of a massive terrestrial extinction event. This global wipeout was followed by another cool event—the diversification of mammals and blossoming of plants that ushered in our modern habitats.

The second-biggest mass extinction primarily impacted the oceans. It was a doozy—snuffing out corals, sponges, armored fish, and all the seafood that a time traveler to the Devonian period might have eaten. Here in the west, this end-Devonian event snuffed out marine communities the size of the Great Barrier Reef,

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# CHOICE OUTCOME IN N.E.

By Melinda Pearson and Carol Roberts

SchoolChoice in Denver Public Schools offers families the option to select the public school they feel is the best fit for their child. Though lauded as one of the top choice programs in the country, understanding SchoolChoice and its outcomes can be complicated. We hope the information and charts below help our readers in Northeast Denver understand the process and outcome.

All DPS students are guaranteed a spot in their neighborhood boundary school or zone. Students in zones who do not fill out choice forms are assigned to a school within their enrollment zone. But as shown here, many families use SchoolChoice to select a school *outside* of their home boundary or zone schools. Zone or boundary students have first

priority in their own boundary or zone, non-zone DPS students are next, and non-DPS students have last priority. The charts below show the first round choice results for the main middle and high schools in NE Denver and for the elementary schools in Stapleton.

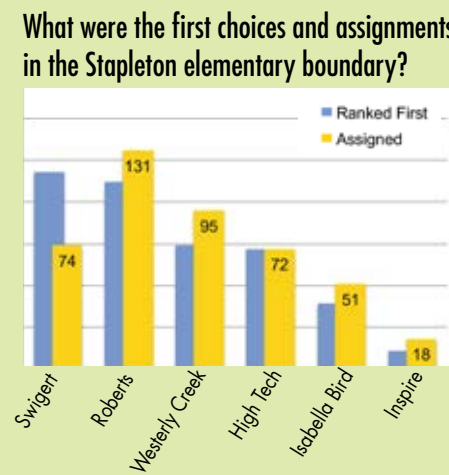
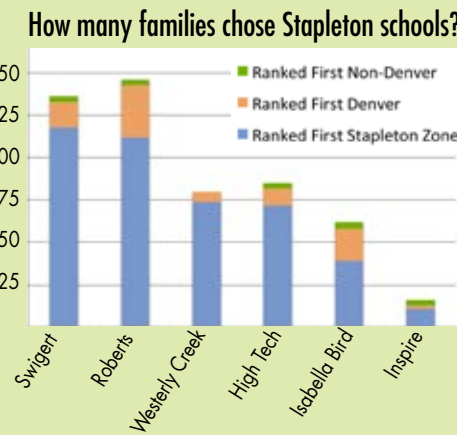
**Second Round Choice and Final Outcomes**

Families who have changed their minds, or who only recently moved to the area can participate in a second round of choice that opened on March 20 and goes through August 31, 2017. Families on waitlists for their first choice schools should stay there. For more information about second round choice call 720-423-3493, email SchoolChoice@dpsk12.org or visit <http://schoolchoice.dpsk12.org/schoolchoice-round-2/>.

Stapleton residents are assured placement in one of six schools in the Stapleton shared enrollment zone, but do not have an assured seat in any one of the schools.

Among Stapleton families, 87% received their first choice, 97% received their first or second choice, and 99% received their first, second, or third choice. This year there were 478 zone kindergarteners, down from 531 last year. Districtwide, Bill Roberts had the greatest

total of first choices of any Stapleton school, while Swigert was the top choice among families living in the zone. Roberts was assigned the greatest total number of students at 131. Inspire was chosen first by 11 families and only 18 students were assigned this year, but as the school moves into its new building and establishes its program, this will likely change. Historically, Stapleton has seen this trend with every new school.



# N.E. Middle Sch

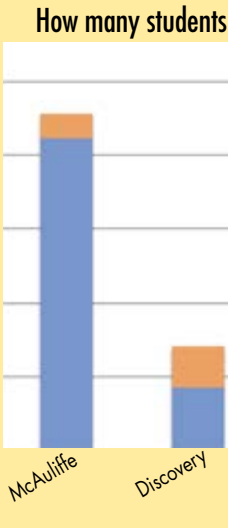
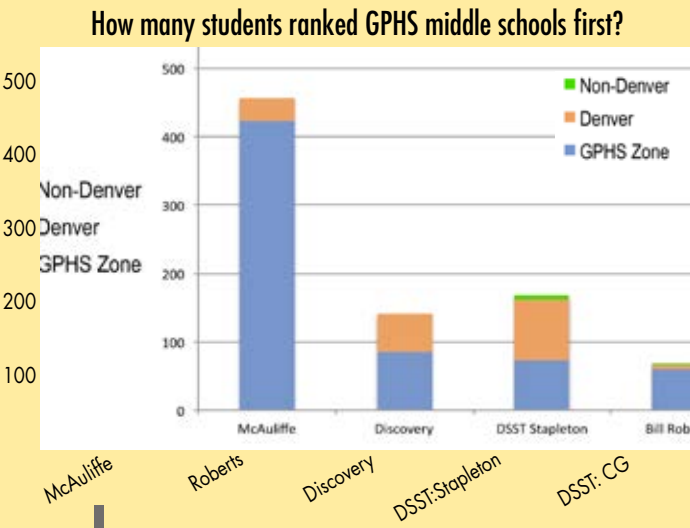
**GPHS Zone**

In the Greater Park-Hill Stapleton (GPHS) zone that includes five middle schools, 756 students participated in SchoolChoice, up from 647 last year. Those who don't complete a Choice form are assigned to a school in their zone.

This year, 93% received their first choice and 99% got their first or second choice. The enrollment size for next year's 6th graders in

GPHS is expected to be about the same size as this year's, according to DPS.

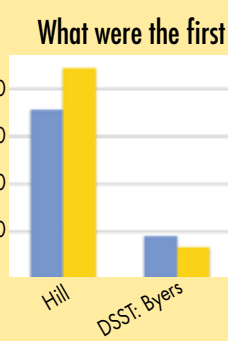
This high acceptance rate is partly a result of McAuliffe's 6th grade class being expanded by about 90 students, to a total of 456 for next year. Districtwide, McAuliffe had the most first choice requests, at 516; and DSST:Stapleton had the sixth most at



**Hill Zone**

Of the 222 students in the Hill Middle School boundary, 85 chose Hill first and 93 without submitted forms were placed there, for a total of 178 first choices. Two DSST schools were second and third most popular, but overall, Hill boundary student choices were broadly spread out. The chart shows their top first choices and their assignments.

\*Many students in the Hill boundary do not submit SchoolChoice paperwork, instead opting to be assigned to Hill, their boundary school. On the chart at right, those students are considered to have made Hill their first choice.



# ECE-3 and ECE-4

Many families this year expressed dismay at not getting a seat at a DPS ECE-3 or ECE-4 program. Early Childhood Education (ECE) Placement is not guaranteed since state funding is limited and ECE is not mandatory. Classrooms have to be prioritized for

students attending K-12, so the number of pre-school rooms has been reduced in order to serve all K-12 students, according to DPS. There are many fewer ECE seats than Kindergarten seats, not just in northeast but throughout the city. Many parents of 3- and



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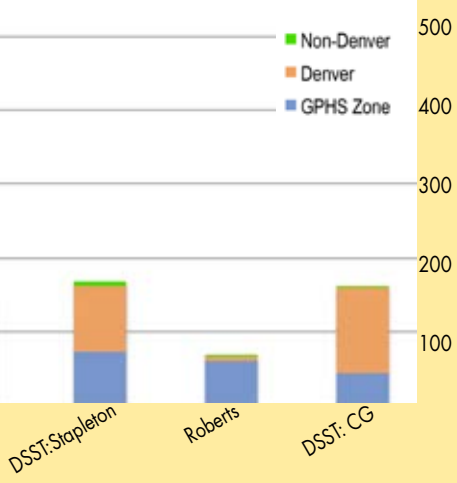
# ools

193 first choices. The only school in GPHS to carry a waitlist is Bill Roberts, where 22 students are still hoping for admission.

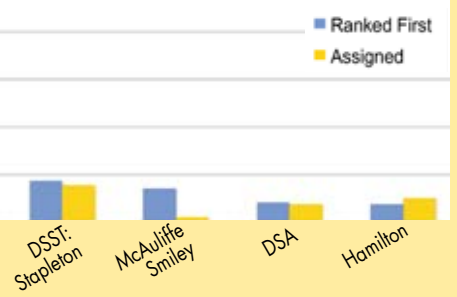
In the 222-student Hill Campus of Arts & Sciences boundary, 78% received their first choice.

In the district overall, 81% of upcoming 6th graders got their first choice.

were assigned to GPHS middle schools?



choices\* and assignments in the Hill boundary?



4-year olds end up selecting one of the private preschool options in the area instead.

To learn more about the complexities of school funding in Colorado, please see the explanation of TABOR and other amendments on page 10 of this issue.

# N.E. High Schools

East was the top choice in the district and the top choice in the NHS boundary.

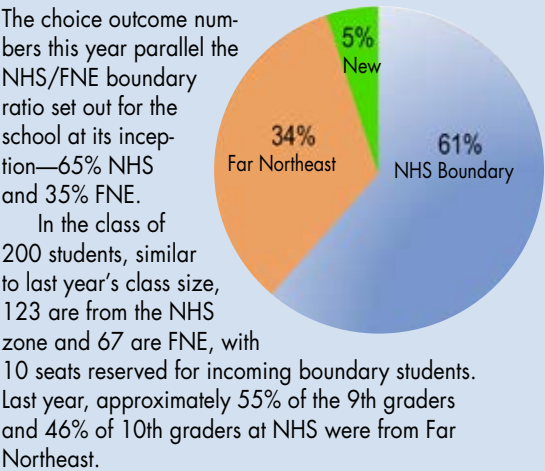
East was the top choice district-wide, with 852 students selecting it first—and among them were almost half of the 297 students in the Northfield High School (NHS) boundary. Perhaps that’s not surprising, considering that through all the years of planning for a new high school, the overwhelming request of the community was for a comprehensive high school like East. In terms of placement, however, less than half of the NHS boundary students who chose East first were assigned there.

At the same time NHS boundary families were speaking out for an East-like high school, a large number of Far Northeast (FNE) boundary families were looking for a new high school option and wanted access to the new NHS. The strong interest from Far Northeast made NHS the third most popular school in the district with a total of 238 students making it their first choice.

The DPS board made a decision to set aside 35 percent of seats at NHS for FNE students. Superintendent Boasberg made a commitment to expand NHS as needed to accommodate all NHS boundary students who want to attend and keep the 65-35 ratio.

NOTE: DSST or DSA students who remain enrolled in their 6-12 schools are not included in the boundary total number.

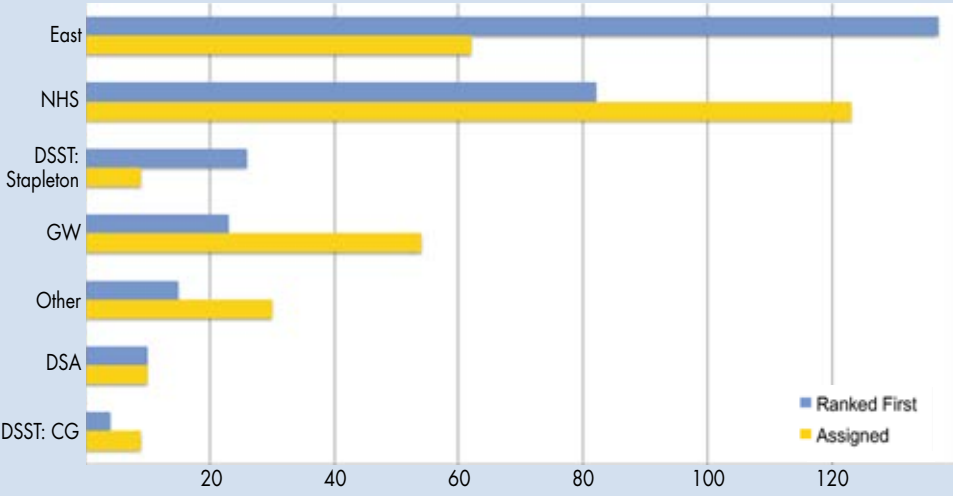
What is the ratio of NHS boundary students to Far Northeast students in the upcoming class?



The choice outcome numbers this year parallel the NHS/FNE boundary ratio set out for the school at its inception—65% NHS and 35% FNE.

In the class of 200 students, similar to last year’s class size, 123 are from the NHS zone and 67 are FNE, with 10 seats reserved for incoming boundary students. Last year, approximately 55% of the 9th graders and 46% of 10th graders at NHS were from Far Northeast.

What were the first choices and assignments in the NHS boundary?



What percent of high school boundary students in NE Denver chose their own school first?

Despite being the third most requested DPS high school overall, just 19% of NHS boundary students chose it first—not including 24 additional students who did not participate in choice and were therefore assigned to NHS by default. With those numbers added back in, the percentage grows to 28% choosing NHS first.

East had the most boundary students select their own school first, at 70%—not including students who did not participate in choice and were assigned to East by default.

GW had 15% of boundary students choose it first—not including 109 students who did not participate in Choice and were assigned to GW by default.

These outcomes are largely similar to years past, according to Brian Eschbacher, executive director of planning and enrollment services for DPS.

Will the number of students in the NHS boundary be bigger next year?

There are approximately 120 more students residing in the NHS boundary in 7th grade than in 8th grade this year, so next year’s round of SchoolChoice will likely show greater demand.

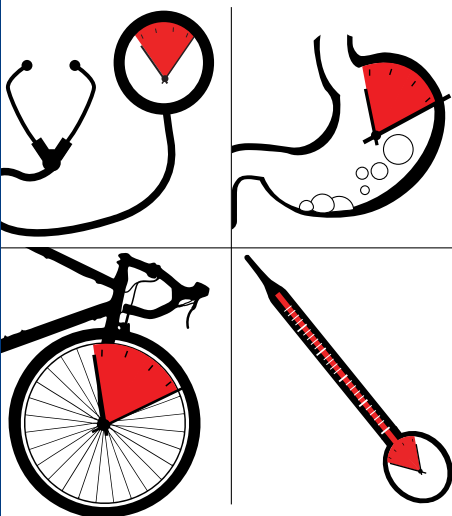
What are the main feeder schools for the students assigned to NHS?

McAuliffe	43
Denver Discovery	35
Roberts	30
New to DPS	19
Omar D. Blair	12
Waller	11
DSST CG	6
DSST Stapleton	3
Others - Estimated	41
Planned Size	200

In which boundary did the most students get their first choice?

For East boundary students, 95% got their first choice; for GW it was 84%; and for NHS it was 70%. In the district as a whole, 79% of ninth graders got their first choice, down from 86% last year.

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Members of the newly combined realty teams gather near the TJC office in Stapleton's 29th Ave. Town Center. From left, Damon Knop and Rhonda Knop of Distinctive Properties and Tom and Kari Cummings, owners of TJC Real Estate & Management Services.

By Melinda Pearson  
 Stapleton residents and realtors Damon Knop and Tom Cummings had long run in the same circles. Both were among the earliest residents of Stapleton in the early 2000s. But despite working at different brokerages, they viewed one another as colleagues, not competitors. In fact, over drinks at The Bistro two years ago as they discussed affordable housing, a specialty of Knop's, they offhandedly entertained the thought of joining forces.

Fast forward to 2017, and Knop's firm, Distinctive Properties, has become a team working under the brokerage license of TJC Real Estate &

still running a business. Cummings and Knop say the merger has been a boon to both operations. "It's a way for us to grow quickly with experienced realtors," said Kari Cummings. "It gives us another part of the metro Denver area in which to have a stronger presence." And Damon Knop, who has been recognized for his expertise in affordable housing transactions, brings to TJC his years of knowledge and experience that are essential in affordable-home sales and purchases in Stapleton (or elsewhere in Denver or Colorado). For Knop and Distinctive Properties, becoming part of TJC offered a way for their team to focus on what they like to do best – selling properties, not managing the staff and the paperwork, said Rhonda Knop, Damon's mother and an owner of Distinctive Properties. And TJC Management's many years of property management adds a new area of expertise to Distinctive Properties' focus on residential sales.

Management Services, owned by Cummings and his wife Kari. "We put it together in about two weeks," said Tom Cummings. And the transition has been smooth, according to both groups, with a natural fit of culture, philosophy and office practices. Both teams agreed the only real challenge has been logistics—dealing with real estate board regulations and attending to all the organizational details of a merger while

The merger "checked a lot of boxes for both companies," said Rhonda Knop. The new company will operate legally under TJC's brokerage license, but the TJC and Distinctive teams will continue to use their existing logos. The combined teams have 18 real estate agents and a 10-person property management staff working in two offices – TJC's 29th Ave. Town Center location in Stapleton and Distinctive Properties' Golden Triangle office.

# Stapleton Realties Merge

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By Anne Hebert  
**C**elebrating their fourth 3A District Basketball Championship win in five years, the DSST: Stapleton boys' Knights moved on to the regional quarterfinal game where they lost a "nail biter" to the Lions from Colorado Springs Christian School with a final score of 57-53.

DSST Basketball Coach Wondame Davis was inspired by his team's effort. "It was a disappointment to lose, but I'm really proud of the way the team played this season," says Davis. "One game doesn't define a team or the individuals. We respect the learning process and plan to build on what we've learned next year."

Davis is celebrating his 10th year at DSST. Says Davis, "I feel we all play a part in building a tremendous legacy here at DSST. We've had great success, particularly over the last four years." He emphasizes the importance of taking what the team has learned over the season and using those experiences to formulate a plan for the upcoming months. Stressing that the work during the off-season is an integral part of the team's future success, Davis says both the positive and less-than-ideal experiences shape the toughness of a team. "We started out in the beginning just trying to be competitive—now we work to win every game."

This is the second outing for the Knights at a regional quarterfinal match. Next year they hope to advance to a title win. "We have a good, strong team," says Davis. "We've built a great system and we're looking to capitalize on that next year."

Upper left: Michael Brooks drives to the hoop against the Colorado Springs Christian School's Lions.

Below left: Enthusiastic Knights fans cheer on their team.

Below middle: Coach Wondame Davis calls out to a player.

Below right: Blake Pullen shoots from the free throw line.

## DSST Wins District—Falls in Quarterfinal



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DSST Mock Trial team members, left to right: Ruja Parikh, Epsam Hourani, Isabella Horton, Erin Clark, Benjamin Kitchen, Mary Yoder, Gregg Maxwell.

## NHS and DSST: Stapleton Students

By Anne Hebert

Preparation, debate, public speaking and dramatic acting are some of the key skills honed by northeast Denver high school students at the annual Colorado Bar Association's High School Mock Trial Program. More than 100 high school teams and approximately 1,500 students take part as attorneys and witnesses in the event held annually at the Denver City and County Building. Working in groups, students prepare their case with the assistance of mentors, culminating in a presentation before a judge. Student performances are scored on knowledge, use of the Rules of Evidence, trial procedures, character portrayals, and conviction of argument.

Each year, the Colorado Bar Association creates and releases a case problem. Alternating yearly between civil and criminal cases, students this year were presented with *Kyle Roberts v. Productions of THC, Inc.*, a civil case involving improperly labeled marijuana edibles and the resulting damages sustained by an adult and a child. Each participating team created a case for the prosecution and the defense to establish liability.

Peter Wright, facilitator for the Northfield High School (NHS) team says, "While some of these kids have an interest in the law,



NHS student Asha Mohammed presents her case.



DSST's A Team de-stresses before the last round of competition: Maeve Marley does a backbend; Ben Kitchen lies on the floor; Isabella Horton and Erin Clark watch with amusement from the bench.

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During the competition, a DSST team member questions her witness before a judge.



Photos courtesy of NHS and DSST

NHS Mock Trial team, front row left to right: Asha Mohammed, Annette Leyva, Layshaianae Howard, Lamise Witt, Kaylea Chidester, Hunter Swenson; back row: Jack Seward, Ben Chew, Krystal Wortham, Caroline Carranza, Daniel Roman-Giles.

# Compete in Mock Trial

others just enjoy the debate and the acting required to play a role.” NHS students received mentoring from Holland & Hart attorneys CiCi Cheng and Tom Gordon. Cheng and Gordon provided professional guidance in preparing their cases, public speaking and “bringing life” to each part they played.



At the night-before-competition prep session, DSST's Eesam Hourani hands out papers to Ruja Parikh, Isabell Horton, Erin Clark, Maeve Marley (on the couch), and Max Gregg (in the chair).

Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) Stapleton. “This year, the complexity of the case was a surprise,” she noted. “There were a lot of layers to this case and the students had to grasp several important legal concepts pertaining to liability law and consumer misuse.”


DSST took two teams to the competition. Their “A” team won second place overall and their “B” team won fourth place

honors for professionalism. DSST students, Max Gregg and Ruja Parikh won the Best Witness and Best Attorney awards respectively. “It’s a nice break from my law practice to volun-

teer with these kids,” says Pollick. “It’s fun to watch them have a creative and enthusiastic learning experience and it gives me a real energy boost.”

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Stapleton Front Porch

31

March 2017



# Audience is Part of the Show in DCPA Performance at Stanley



3-D glasses create the effect of an “interdimensional journey,” as the audience/participants set out to experience *Travelers of the Lost Dimension*.

By Carol Roberts

*Travelers of the Lost Dimension* comes to Stanley Marketplace from Off-Center, an arm of Denver Center for the Performing Arts (DCPA) that “focuses more on connecting people and upending expectations than on adhering to tradition.”

The brief but descriptive language about the

show raises high expectations for an unusual experience: “the immersive nature of the mission,” “discover the fantastical in the realm beyond,” and “brave an inter-dimensional journey.” The retina scan by greeters in white lab coats heightens our curiosity, as does the shoulder bag with an odd assortment of stuff for the journey. We check out

the contents of the bag as we wait with 44 other “travelers” for the show to begin. The association with quality performances at DCPA adds to our expectation that an exciting experience lies ahead. The curiosity and mystery about *Travelers*



The explorer/actors in *Travelers* take participants through Stanley Marketplace for a series of skits and activities as shown in the photos at left.

apparently tweaked the imaginations of many—its initial run sold out before it opened—and Off-Center extended the schedule until May 21 even before the first show had been performed. DCPA Events Manager Hope Grandon says DCPA has never done that before.

The show is advertised as family friendly and appropriate for kids 10 and up (though a somewhat younger child who can walk for an hour and not be disruptive would likely do fine). It was probably *most* enjoyed by the youngest participants in our group. The skits are more silly than sophisticated humor. It’s a fun outing, but at \$160 – \$180 for a family of four, it may not be the most economical family entertainment.

Off-Center has already announced their next production at Stanley. *The Wild Party*, which was nominated for seven Tony Awards when it appeared on Broadway in 2000, will run from Oct. 12 – 31. Also an audience interactive experience, this performance will be held in the Hanger at Stanley.

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# Neighborly Response to Noise at Dick's



The proximity of newly built Stapleton homes to Dick's, which opened in 2007, has led to an uptick in noise complaints.

By Melinda Pearson

The first hints of spring are in the air, which means the summer season of sporting events and concerts at Dick's Sporting Goods Park in Commerce City is just around the corner. Last year, the noise from concerts such as Bassnectar and Luke Bryan carried as far south as Montview Blvd., drawing a slew of complaints from Denver residents.

One of the problems in this situation has been the cross-jurisdictional nature of it—the noise originates in Commerce City yet bothers Stapleton residents in Denver. According to Paul Riedesel of Denver's Office of Environmental Health, the city of Denver has no authority to act on complaints. "As soon as the noise source is outside of the city or county of Denver lines or borders, that's pretty much where my authority ends," said Riedesel.

But in practice, Riedesel has addressed noise complaints from outside Denver that have originated within Denver, and luckily, that is the approach that neighboring Commerce City is taking as well. In fact, the Commerce City Police Department has been working behind the scenes to mitigate the effects of noise and vibrations from the venue since last summer.

Commerce City Police Commander Ken Evans, himself a recent Texas transplant, reached out for advice to a sound enforcement officer from Austin, Texas, home to a vibrant music scene. Officer Cory Ehler flew to Colorado and consulted with Commerce City

on the subtleties of sound monitoring and control.

From Ehler, Evans and his officers learned about measuring sound at the mix, communicating directly with sound engineers during events, and that the number and placement of speakers at an event can dramatically affect how sound carries. Commerce City hopes to implement a new, tiered permitting system that would allow greater lead time for the police to prepare for big events.

Commerce City is also working closely with Kroenke Sports & Entertainment, owner of Dick's, who "agreed that they will start talking to promoters to make sure none of their speakers are angled above the walls of the venue." Kroenke and the police discussed having direct access to the sound engineer during concerts so "we can immediately call there," said Evans, should neighborhood complaints rise.

Evans noted that Commerce City and Kroenke might partner to contract for a sound study, a pricey undertaking that could cost up to \$50,000. But the sound study could further elucidate just how and where sound carries from the venue and what additional measures can be taken to mitigate noise while preserving the music experience for concert-goers, said Evans.

Evans and Riedesel plan to be at the Stapleton United Neighbors meeting on April 18 to brief Stapleton residents on the issues involved with noise from Dick's.



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<b>April 9</b> Palm Sunday Worship 8 a.m. • 10:30 a.m.	<b>April 13</b> Maundy Thursday Worship 11 a.m. • 7 p.m.	<b>April 14</b> Good Friday Worship Noon • 7 p.m.	<b>April 16</b> Easter Worship 8 a.m. • 9:30 a.m. • 11 a.m.
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## MORE EVENTS

### Thursday, April 13—Screenagers, Growing Up In The Digital Age

*Screenagers* is a one-hour documentary that covers internet, video game and social media use by pre-teens and teenagers and how parents can empower kids to best navigate the digital world. The movie reveals how tech time impacts kids' development and also offers solutions on how adults can empower their kids to best navigate the digital world to find balance.

The April 13 showing will be at DSST: Conservatory Green, 8499 E. Stoll St. in North Stapleton. Doors open at 6:30pm, the film starts at 7pm. Concessions are available for purchase. A facilitated discussion will be held after film. Tickets are \$5. To purchase, visit <https://impactflow.com/event/presented-by-dsst-conservatory-green-2122>

### April 22—Dress for Success Denver Power Walk 5K at Central Park Stapleton

Dress for Success Denver (DFS) will host its 7th Annual Power Walk 5K at Stapleton's Central Park on Saturday, April 22 beginning at 10 a.m. The walk brings women from DFS programs together with the Denver community that supports them in moving their lives out of poverty. DFS Denver helps 1,400 women each year and has helped 11,000 local women since 2006. Registration and pre-event festivities begin at 9 a.m. Mary Louise Lee, wife of Denver Mayor Michael Hancock will sing the National Anthem to kickoff the 5K event. During the walk/run, participants have the opportunity to learn about the work DFS Denver does and how they can get involved.

The Power Walk for DFS Denver benefits the organization's Professional Women's Group, a job retention program that helps women get the job, keep the job, and grow in their careers. Registration is \$25 for adults (\$75 for a team of 4); \$10 for dogs and kids; 12 year-olds and under are free. Prizes for the best dressed team and best dressed dog! To learn more about the Power Walk, visit <https://www.crowdrise.com/denverpower-walk2017>.

### Starting April 28—Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble: Romeo and Juliet and Selections from Porgy and Bess

Cleo Parker Robinson Dance presents six performances of these two iconic tales of love and tragedy.

Excerpts from *Porgy & Bess* by George Gershwin, which premiered in 1998, will be performed with live music. The setting is Charleston, S.C., in the 1930s.

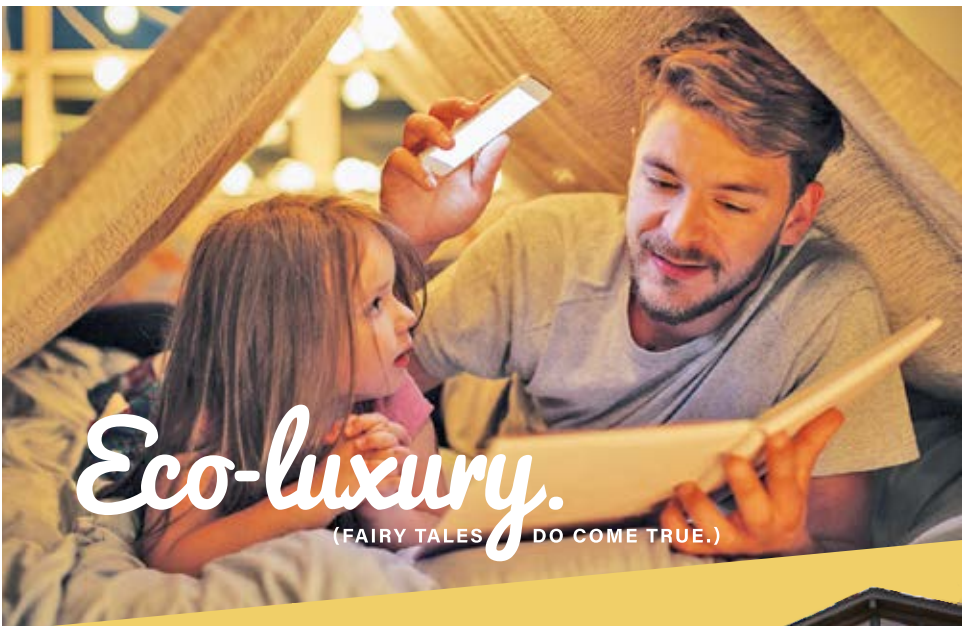
In a dramatic retelling of Sergei Prokofiev's "Romeo & Juliet," the star-crossed lovers' story is set against the backdrop of New Orleans exuberant Mardi Gras celebration at the end of 19th century. The work explores a clash of cultures and spiritual traditions, with Romeo's Roman Catholic faith set up in stark contrast to Juliet's traditional Yoruba beliefs.

Performances will be held April 28, 29, and 30; and May 5, 6, and 7. Times will be 7:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays and 2pm on Sundays. The theatre is at 119 Park Avenue West (corner of 20th Street and Park Avenue near Washington Street) in the Shorter AME Building in Denver. Tickets: \$40/adults; \$35/seniors; \$30/children/youth/students; \$35 groups of 8 or more. Visit [cleoparkerdance.org](http://cleoparkerdance.org) or call 303.295.1795 x13. Parking is free on the street and the nearby Safeway parking lot.

### May 20 & 21—Annual Stapleton Community Garage Sale

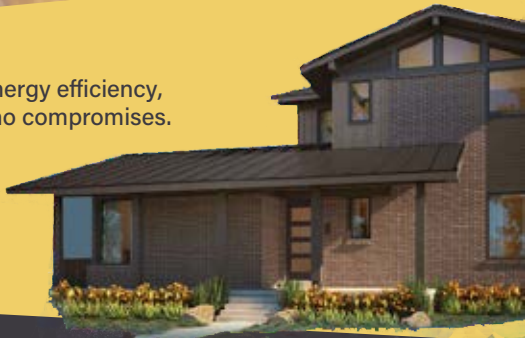
Start clearing your garage and closets to get ready to sell—or make a list of what you want to buy. The community garage sale, sponsored by Diana and Michael Kearns, The Kearns Team, RE/MAX Alliance, is happening May 20 & 21 from 8am til 12pm both days. Approximately 400 Stapleton homes are expected to participate in the annual community event. Registration will begin in early April at <http://www.buildingstapleton.com/Community-Info/Stapleton-Community-Garage-Sale>. There is no cost to register.

Registration for the 2017 Sale will begin in early April 2017, and details will be posted here.



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Z.E.N. 2.0 at Beeler Park	from the Upper \$500's	303.665.6100
Panacea at Beeler Park	Join Our Interest List	303.665.6100



## DENVER METRO EVENTS

**4/3 Monday—League of Women Voters Education Briefing.** 5:30 pm. How to get the schools our children deserve. Montview Presbyterian Church, 1980 Montview Blvd. [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

**4/4 to 4/9—6th Annual Women + Film Festival.** Denver Film Society. [www.denverfilm.org](http://www.denverfilm.org)  
**4/5 to 4/9—Denver Auto Show.** Free-\$12. Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th St. [www.paragonexpo.com](http://www.paragonexpo.com)

**4/6 Thursday—Inside the Orchestra for Adults 2017.** 6-9:30pm, McNichols Bldg. Wine/beer, auctions, food; orchestra immersive performance. Benefits kids' music education programs. <http://insidetheorchestra.org/iso-for-adults>

**4/7 Friday—First Friday Art Walks.** Santa Fe Arts District, Tennyson Art Walk, River North (RiNo) Art District, Golden Triangle Museum, Navajo Street Art District. [www.denver.org/things-to-do/denver-arts-culture/denver-art-districts](http://www.denver.org/things-to-do/denver-arts-culture/denver-art-districts)

**4/7 Friday—First Friday Chocolate Tasting at Chocolate Crisis Center.** LoDo. [www.chocolatecrisiscenter.com/blogs/news](http://www.chocolatecrisiscenter.com/blogs/news)

**4/7 Friday—Rockies Home Opener.** Coors Field. 2:10pm. Rockies vs. Padres. [www.coloradorockies.mlb.com](http://www.coloradorockies.mlb.com)

**4/8 Saturday—Denver Lantern Festival.** Dacono, Colorado National Speedway. 3pm, music, vendors, kid's activities. Chinese lantern release at sundown. [www.thelanternfest.com](http://www.thelanternfest.com)

**4/8 to 4/9—Button Show/Sale.** Colorado State Button Society presents U.S. dealers' vintage/contemporary buttons. <http://coloradobuttons.com>

**4/14 to 4/15—Rodeo All Star Weekend.** National Western Complex. [www.rodeoallstar.com](http://www.rodeoallstar.com)

**4/15 Saturday—Reflections Titanic Dinner.** 7-courses modeled on 1st-class Titanic dining. 16+ \$120-\$130/person. [www.mollybrown.org](http://www.mollybrown.org)

**4/20 Thursday—Thirsty Thursdays-Titanic Murder Mystery.** Molly Brown House. \$15. 6-8pm. Ages 21-45. Reservations required. [www.mollybrown.org](http://www.mollybrown.org)

**4/21 Friday—Earth Day Denver 2017.** Skyline Park, Downtown Denver. 10am-2pm. [www.denvergov.org](http://www.denvergov.org)

**4/22 Saturday—Colorado Children's Chorale Presents Spring with Children's Chorale.** Ages 4+. Boettcher Concert Hall, Denver Center for Performing Arts. [www.childrenschorale.org](http://www.childrenschorale.org)

**4/22 Saturday—Congress Park Earth Day Festival.** 1-5pm. FREE. Capitol Hill Heights

Faith Communities, 1100 Fillmore. Music, food, games, art, prizes. [www.congressparkneighbors.org/earth-day](http://www.congressparkneighbors.org/earth-day)

**4/22 Saturday—Earth Day Kickoff Event 2017 Cherry Creek Trail Clean-up.** 9am. Cherry Creek Bike Path and Wynkoop St. 1400 Wynkoop. [www.lodo.org/2017-cherry-creek-clean-up/](http://www.lodo.org/2017-cherry-creek-clean-up/)

**4/29 Saturday—Afternoon Tea on Titanic.** Molly Brown House. Sittings 12:30 and 2:30. Reservations required. [www.mollybrown.org](http://www.mollybrown.org)

**4/29 to 4/30—Doors Open Denver.** Behind-the-scenes look at iconic buildings. Free; fee-based tours available. Locations: [www.doorsopendev.org](http://www.doorsopendev.org)

**5/5 Friday—First Friday- Cinco de Mayo Celebration.** 5-9pm. Museo de las Americas. [www.museo.org](http://www.museo.org)

**5/6 to 5/7—30th Anniversary Cinco de Mayo Festival.** Civic Center Park. [www.cincodemayodenver.com](http://www.cincodemayodenver.com)

**5/13 Saturday—Denver Bacon and Beer Classic.** Sports Authority Field. 1-4pm and 7-10pm. Games, contests, tastings, etc. Tickets: [www.baconandbeerclassic.com](http://www.baconandbeerclassic.com)

**5/13 Saturday—Wash Park Home Tour.** 5 Wash Park homes. 10am-4pm. Tickets: [washparkhometour.org](http://washparkhometour.org) or [www.facebook.com/WashParkHomeTour](http://www.facebook.com/WashParkHomeTour)

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

**4/1 to 5/20—9News Health Fair.** Various locations. Convenient, affordable health screenings. [www.9healthfair.org](http://www.9healthfair.org)

**4/15 Saturday—Hippity Hop Easter Trot and Kids Cottontail Fun Run.** Stapleton Central Park. [www.featonthestreet.com](http://www.featonthestreet.com)

**4/22 Saturday—Dress for Success Denver Power Walk and 5K.** 10am. Stapleton Central Park. [www.dressforsuccess.com/denver](http://www.dressforsuccess.com/denver)

**4/23 Sunday—Cherry Creek Sneak.** 10- and 5-mile runs, 5K and 1.5-mile sprint; half-mile kids' fun run ages 8 and under. [www.cherrycreeksneak.com](http://www.cherrycreeksneak.com)

**4/27 Thursday—Monthly Moon Monograph Study.** In-depth look at an herb, recipes, myths; create take-home supper with chosen herb. All knowledge levels welcome. Also: 5/25, 6/22. 6-7:30pm; \$20/person. MoonDance Botanicals, 601 Corona St. Reservations: 303.263.7275, [MoonDanceBotanicals@gmail.com](mailto:MoonDanceBotanicals@gmail.com), <http://MoonDanceBotanicals.com/classes/>

**5/3 Wednesday—Medicare 101.** Free seminar for Medicare beneficiaries/caregivers.

## View more events or submit events

[FrontPorchStapleton.com](http://FrontPorchStapleton.com) > Events

9-10am. Chaundra Glenn, 303.324.0951. lora Primary Care, 4100 E. Mississippi Ave., Ste. 110.

**5/6 Saturday—Denver Dumb Friends Furry Scurry.** Wash Park. Register: [www.furryscurry.org](http://www.furryscurry.org)

**5/14 Sunday—Mother's Day 5K and Brunch.** City Park, 9:30am. \$30/person; \$90/family. [www.mothersday5k.com](http://www.mothersday5k.com)

## KIDS AND FAMILIES

**To 4/30—Denver Puppet Theater.** The Emperor's New Clothes. [www.denverpuppettheater.com](http://www.denverpuppettheater.com)

**To 5/31—Unparalleled Excellence- Automobiles of Rolls Royce and Bentley.** Forney Museum; free with admission. 4303 Brighton Blvd. [www.forneymuseum.org](http://www.forneymuseum.org)

**4/1 Saturday—Home Depot Kids Workshop.** 9am-12pm. FREE how-to clinics first Sat. monthly, ages 5-12. Home Depot apron, wooden project and project pin. Metro-area stores. [www.homedepot.com](http://www.homedepot.com)

**4/2 Sunday—Boulder Tulip Fairy and Elf Festival.** 1-5pm. Pearl Street Mall, Boulder. Performances, face painting, kids' activities, Tulip Fairy Parade. Dress as fairy or elf. [www.downtownboulder.com](http://www.downtownboulder.com)

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

**4/4 to 4/25—Tuesdays in April Four Mile Historic Park Small Settlers.** Ages 2-5 with parent/caregiver. 9-10am. \$5/child, adults/members free. 715 S. Forest St. Advance register: 720.865.0814 or [education@fourmilepark.org](mailto:education@fourmilepark.org), [www.fourmilepark.org](http://www.fourmilepark.org)

**4/7 Friday—Four Mile Historic Park Hay Bales and Tall Tales.** 12-1pm. Free with admission. 715 S. Forest St. [www.fourmilepark.org](http://www.fourmilepark.org)

**4/8 to 4/22—Lowe's Build and Grow Workshops.** Kids build FREE wood project: Monthly, 2nd and 4th Saturdays. Free apron, goggles, project-themed patch, merit certificate. 10am. [www.lowes.com](http://www.lowes.com)

[buildandgrow.com](http://buildandgrow.com)

**4/21 to 4/23—Just Between Friends of Denver.** National Western Complex, 4655 Humboldt St. Kids clothes/gear, 50-90% off retail. Times/costs: 720.252.8858, <http://denver.jbfsale.com>, <http://facebook.com/jbfsale>

**4/22 Saturday—Earth Day Celebration at Children's Museum.** Included in admission. 2121 Children's Museum Dr. [www.mychilds-museum.org](http://www.mychilds-museum.org)

**4/22 Saturday—Make Your Own Fairy (or Farm) Garden.** The Urban Farm at Stapleton, 10200 Smith Rd. 303.307.9332. 1-2pm. Basic design (and magic) elements for own tiny garden. Adults/kids (age 12+) \$30/person. Register: <https://theurbanfarm.wufoo.com/forms/fairyfarm-garden-registration/>

## LECTURES AND CLASSES

**4/3 to 4/17—Italian for Travelers.**

8-hour, 3-week basic courses. Italian Institute. 6-8:40pm. Materials included. Enroll: [www.italianinstitute.com](http://www.italianinstitute.com), 303.733.4335, [info@italianinstitute.com](mailto:info@italianinstitute.com). \$199. Also 9-week beginner class 4/6-6/1, 6-8:20pm. \$429. Native speaker teacher.

**4/3 to 4/24—Survive the Open Mic: Intro to Stand-Up Comedy.** 4-week class to try comedic skills. Mondays: 6:30-9:30pm. \$161 or \$149/CFU members. [www.freeu.com](http://www.freeu.com), 303.399.0093. Colorado Free Univ., 7653 E. 1st Pl.

**4/4 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Charlie Chaplin and Silent Film Era.** 10-11am. Jewish Community Center, 350 S. Dahlia St. 303.316.6359. [www.ActiveMinds.com](http://www.ActiveMinds.com)

**4/4 Tuesday—Getting Started with WordPress: Content Management.** Hands-on computer class for open-source publishing platform. 1-day, 9am-4pm. \$174 or \$159/CFU members. [www.freeu.com](http://www.freeu.com), 303.399.0093. Colorado Free Univ., 7653 E. 1st Pl.

**4/13 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—Oil.** 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. [www.ActiveMinds.com](http://www.ActiveMinds.com)

**4/13 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—Oil.** 6:45-7:45 pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. [www.activeminds.com](http://www.activeminds.com)

**4/23 Sunday—Zen Meditation.** Meditation and short talks on Zen practice. 9-10:30am. \$71 or \$59/CFU member. 303.399.0093, [www.freeu.com](http://www.freeu.com)

(continued on page 36)

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(continued from page 35)

**4/25 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Philippines.** 5-6pm. Tattered Cover, 2526 E. Colfax. 303.322.7727. [www.ActiveMinds.com](http://www.ActiveMinds.com)

**4/27 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—The United Nations.** 6:45-7:45pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. 720.865.0325. [www.ActiveMinds.com](http://www.ActiveMinds.com)

**4/27 Thursday—Active Minds (Free)—Take a Bite of The Big Apple.** 9:30-11:30am (reception/program). Rosemark at Mayfair Park, 833 Jersey St. 303.770.7673. [www.activeminds.com](http://www.activeminds.com)

**5/2 Tuesday—Active Minds (Free)—Iran.** 10-11am. Jewish Community Center, 350 S. Dahlia St. 303.316.6359. [www.ActiveMinds.com](http://www.ActiveMinds.com)

**5/6 Saturday—Four Mile Class Series: Composting.** Basics to develop garden compost pile. 10am-12pm, Four Mile Historic Park, 715 S. Forest St. \$13/FMHP members, \$15 nonmembers. Register: [www.fourmilehistoricpark.eventbrite.com](http://www.fourmilehistoricpark.eventbrite.com), [info@fourmilepark.org](mailto:info@fourmilepark.org), 720.865.0800

**MUSEUMS—DENVER ART MUSEUM** [www.denverartmuseum.org](http://www.denverartmuseum.org)

**To 4/9—Star Wars and the Power of Costume.** Original movie costumes; exhibit ticket required.

**To 5/28—Shock Wave: Japanese Fashion Design, 1980-90s.** Works of Japanese designers who started Paris fashion revolution in 1980s-90s. <http://denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/shock-wave>

**To 8/31—Then, Now, Next: Evolution of an Architectural Icon.** North Building history. Free: 18 and under. <http://denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/then-now-next-evolution-architectural-icon>,

**4/28 Friday—Untitled Final Fridays.** 6-10pm. Adult evening out final Fridays thru Oct.

**4/30 Sunday—Día del Niño.** Family-friendly programs. FREE admission for all. Performances 12-4pm. Info: [cricciardi@denverartmuseum.org](mailto:cricciardi@denverartmuseum.org) with DDN 2017 in subject line, 720.913.0072. <http://denverartmuseum.org/calendar/dia-del-nino-celebration-2017>

**MUSEUMS—DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURE & SCIENCE** [www.dmns.org](http://www.dmns.org)  
**To 6/15—IMAX.** Extreme Weather (ends 4/13); Wild Africa 3D; Dream Big 3D; Engineering Our World.

**To 8/13—Vikings: Beyond the Legend.** Special exhibit, separate ticket required.

**4/1 to 4/30—Planetarium Shows.** Black Holes: The Other Side of Infinity; Cosmic Journey: A Solar System Adventure; Destination Solar System; One World One Sky, Big Bird's Adventure; Space Tours Live.

**4/12 Wednesday—Indigenous Film.** Free monthly films/discussion. 6:30pm. Titles: website

**4/13 Thursday—Digital Earth: Pompeii.** Gates Planetarium, 7pm. \$8 member/\$10/nonmember. Follows ancient Pompeii aqueducts.

**4/30 Sunday—Dia Del Nino.** Free admission, family-friendly activities. Reduced admission to "Vikings: Beyond the Legend."

**4/20 Thursday—Science Lounge-Cannabis.** Adults: cocktails, science, entertainment. 3rd Thursdays, 6:30-9:30pm. \$10/members; \$12/nonmembers.

**MUSEUMS—FREE DAYS**

**4/1 Saturday—Denver Art Museum.** [www.denverartmuseum.org](http://www.denverartmuseum.org)

**4/2 Sunday—Denver Botanic Gardens.** [www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org)

**4/2 Sunday—Denver Museum of Miniatures, Dolls and Toys.** [www.dmmtd.org](http://www.dmmtd.org)

**4/4 Tuesday—Children's Museum Target Tuesday.** 4-8pm. [www.cmdenver.org](http://www.cmdenver.org)

**4/10 Monday—Denver Museum of Nature & Science.** (Earth Day). [www.dmns.org](http://www.dmns.org)

**4/14 Friday—Four Mile Historic Park.** 2nd Friday, 12-4pm. [www.fourmilepark.org](http://www.fourmilepark.org)

**4/28 Friday—Clyfford Still Museum.** Last Fri. monthly all day. Free Fridays 5-8pm. 1250 Bannock St. [www.clyffordstillmuseum.org](http://www.clyffordstillmuseum.org)

**4/30 Sunday—Denver Museum of Nature & Science.** (Dia del Nino). [www.dmns.org](http://www.dmns.org)

**5/2 Tuesday—Children's Museum Target Tuesday.** 4-8pm. [www.cmdenver.org](http://www.cmdenver.org)

**MUSEUMS—HISTORY COLORADO CENTER** [www.historycoloradocenter.org](http://www.historycoloradocenter.org)  
**4/5 Wednesday—Storytime at History Colorado Center.** 2-5-year-olds with adult. 9:30-10am, Destination Colorado exhibit. **4/30 Sunday—Dia del Nino.** 10am-5pm. Free admission, performances, activities.

**MUSEUMS—WINGS OVER THE ROCKIES** [www.wingsmuseum.org](http://www.wingsmuseum.org)

**4/1 Saturday—DaVinci Machines Exhibition Opening Ceremony.** Opening and performance of "DaVinci & Michelangelo: The Titans Experience." 5-9pm. 65+ handcrafted inventions built from 500-year-old designs, film, interactive kid's area, audio/docent-guided tours. Hors d'oeuvres/wine cash bar. Dress: black tie optional. Tickets: <http://wingsmuseum.org/events/purchasetickets/>

**4/4 to 4/6—Senior Day.** Tues., Wed. and Thurs. ages 65+ \$5 admission. <http://wingsmuseum.org/event/senior-day/2017-03-01/>

**4/4 to 4/25—Little Wings Club.** Tuesdays in April, 11-11:45am. Kids 11 and under, story and craft with parents.

**4/29 Saturday—Star Wars After Dark.** 6-10pm. Ages 18+ only. Music, re-creation of Mos Eisley Cantina from Episode IV A New Hope. Meet Lucasfilm modeler Colin Cantwell, creator of Death Star. Star Wars caricatures \$5. Disney artist oil painting demo. Interactive games. Light appetizers. Limited tickets available <http://wingmuseum.org/events/purchasetickets/>

**4/30 Sunday—Star Wars at the Hangar.**

**NORTHEAST DENVER/AURORA EVENTS**

**4/6 Thursday—Happy Hour Re Merger of TJC and Distinctive Properties.** Stapleton full-service real estate team. 7476 E. 29th Ave. 303.324.6988.

**4/6 to 4/27—Star K Kids.** Thursdays, 9:30 and 11am; kids 5 and under. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E. Smith Rd., Aurora. [www.aurora.gov/nature](http://www.aurora.gov/nature)

**4/8 Saturday—The Urban Farm Town Hall Meeting.** 12:30pm. 10200 Smith Rd. 303.307.9332. Update on programs and Q&A period. Snacks/beverages provided. <http://theurbanfarm.org>

**4/9 Sunday—Palm Sunday Justice Breakfast.** Exec. director of Colorado Council of Churches on "Setting a Welcome Table" at Annual Palm Sunday Justice Breakfast. Montview Blvd. Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St. Buffet: 9:15am; program: 9:40am. Free (donations for breakfast). <https://montview.org/2017/03/15/palm-sunday-justice-breakfast/>

**4/22 Saturday—Free Estate & Financial Planning Workshop.** By Wills and Wellness Estate Planning and Kuhn Advisors. Sam Gary Library. Register by 4/18, [willsandwellness.com/stapleton](http://willsandwellness.com/stapleton).

**4/18 Tuesday—League of Women**

**Voters Presents A Discussion on Investigating Gentrification.** McCollum Rm., Montview Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St. 5:30pm coffee/networking, 6pm presentation. [www.lwvdenver.org](http://www.lwvdenver.org)

**4/28 Friday—Colorado Symphony Guild's Fundraiser with Serioz Pizzeria at Lowry.** Denver East Chapter, Colorado Symphony Guild with Serioz Pizzeria at Lowry benefits symphony. 20% of lunch/dinner order donated to Guild. Mention "Colorado Symphony Fundraiser" to server; no coupon required. Lunch 11am-3pm; happy hour 4-6pm. 200 Quebec St., Lowry Town Center. Serioz: 303.366.5777. [www.coloradosymphonyguild.org](http://www.coloradosymphonyguild.org), <http://seriozpizza.com>,

**4/29 to 4/30—Rikki-Tikki-Tavi.** Ballet Ariel with original ballet based on The Jungle Book. 4/29 7pm and 4/30 2pm. Lakewood Cultural Center. \$26 adults; \$23 students/seniors; \$20/kids. [www.Lakewood.org/Tickets](http://www.Lakewood.org/Tickets), 303.987.7845; box office, 470 S. Allison Pkwy, Lakewood. <http://www.balletariel.org>, <http://www.Lakewood.org/Tickets>

**5/6 Saturday—Denver Recycles Mulch Giveaway and Compost Sale.** Details: [denvergov.org/denverRecycles](http://denvergov.org/denverRecycles), 720.913.1311

**5/6 Saturday—Denver Kentucky Derby Mini Derby.** 1pm. Viewing party and miniature derby with mini horses. Indoor/outdoor; projectors show Kentucky Derby live, DJ, Best Hat/Best Suit/Cutest Couple contests, corgi race/costume contest (only corgis), lawn games, mint juleps, themed cocktails, etc. Tickets only in advance. Options: GA tickets (\$69) include viewing party, miniature horse race, contests, 2 drink tickets. VIP tickets (\$139) has additional VIP-only dessert section, open bar, unlimited bar-becue. <http://www.denverminiderby.com>, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/denver-mini-derby-tickets-32138036733>

**5/7 Sunday—Aurora Symphony Orchestra Uncorked Benefit Fundraiser.** 25 wine tastings, food bites, live musical performance by ASO musicians. Wine-tasting challenge, silent/live auctions. Must purchase tickets by Fri., 4/28, 12pm. <http://asouncorked2017.brownpaper-tickets.com>, <http://www.aurorasymphony.org>

**5/13 Saturday—Denver's Daddy Daughter Dance.** Formal/semi-formal ball for dads and daughters to celebrate father- and daughterhood. Stanley Marketplace, 6-10pm. [www.denverd3.org/](http://www.denverd3.org/)

**NORTHFIELD EVENTS** [www.harkinstheatres.com](http://www.harkinstheatres.com)

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**4/7 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release.**  
Going In Style, Smurfs: The Lost Village.

**4/14 Friday—Harkins Theatres 18 New Release.**  
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[www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky\\_mountain\\_arsenal/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/)  
**4/1 Saturday—9th Annual Fishing Frenzy.** 9am-12pm; check-in 8am. Fishing derby for kids ages 3-15. Prizes/giveaways. Poles provided or bring your own. RSVP Commerce City Parks and Rec 303.289.3789,

**4/8 Saturday—Falcon Frenzy Presented by Nature's Educators.** 10:30-11:30am. Learn about falcon habits, anatomy, diet, role in ecosystem. 4 live falcons.

**4/15 Saturday—2017 Fishing Season Opens.** Catch and release fishing allowed at Lake Mary and Lake Ladora on Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sundays sunrise to sunset. Wading allowed in Lake Ladora after Memorial Day. \$3 refuge daily permit and Colorado State license for anglers 16 and older required. Artificial bait and barbless hooks only.

**4/15 and 4/22 Saturdays—Wildlife Viewing Tours.** Naturalist-led bus tour thru refuge to view bald eagles, bison, coyotes, deer, raptors. Call for times. RSVP required.

**4/29 Saturday—Hike-N-Bird.** 1-3:30pm. Novice to expert birders. Explores woodland, wetland, prairie habitats. Must be comfortable hiking up to 3 miles. RSVP required.

**4/29 Saturday—The Masked Bandit.** 10-10:45am. Naturalist-led program features Refuge's black-footed ferret exhibit.

**THEATRE/PERFORMING ARTS**

**To 4/7—Chinglish.** Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E. Colfax Ave. [www.aurorafoxartscenter.org](http://www.aurorafoxartscenter.org)

**To 4/8—An Act of God.** Garner Galleria Theater, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. [www.denvercenter.org](http://www.denvercenter.org)

**To 4/15—Bus Stop.** Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada. [www.arvadacenter.org](http://www.arvadacenter.org)

**To 4/11—Oddville.** Avenue Theater, 417 E. 17th Ave. [www.avenuetheater.com](http://www.avenuetheater.com)

**To 4/16—Jesus Christ Superstar.** Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd. [www.arvadacenter.org](http://www.arvadacenter.org)

**To 4/23—Travelers of the Lost Dimension.** Intimate (45 seats per performance) Denver Center production at Stanley Marketplace. Tickets include 1 beer coupon from Stanley beer hall. [www.travelersofthelostdimension.com](http://www.travelersofthelostdimension.com)

**To 4/30—The Baby Dance.** Cherry Creek Theatre, Shaver-Ramsey Gallery, 2414 E. 3rd Ave. [www.cherrycreektheatre.org](http://www.cherrycreektheatre.org)

**To 5/19—A Year with Frog and Toad.** Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd. [www.arvadacenter.org](http://www.arvadacenter.org)

**To 5/21—The Drowning Girls.** Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd. [www.arvadacenter.org](http://www.arvadacenter.org)

**To 5/21—The Intelligent Life of Jenny Chow.** Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St, Aurora Cultural Arts District. [www.vintagetheatre.org](http://www.vintagetheatre.org)

**4/1 to 4/29—Crimes of the Heart.** Fire House Theater Company at John Hand Theater, Lowry. [www.firehousetheater-company.com](http://www.firehousetheater-company.com)

**4/11 to 4/16—Mamma Mia!** Buell Theater, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. [www.denvercenter.org](http://www.denvercenter.org)

**4/14 to 4/22—The Male Intellect: An Oxymoron.** Avenue Theatre, 417 E. 17th Ave. [www.avenuetheater.com](http://www.avenuetheater.com)

**4/21 to 5/28—The Desert.** Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E. Colfax Ave. [www.aurorafoxartscenter.org](http://www.aurorafoxartscenter.org)

**4/21 to 5/28—The Secret Garden.** Stage Theater, Denver Center for the Performing Arts. [www.denvercenter.org](http://www.denvercenter.org)

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**Ronald McDonald House** —Volunteers needed in family rooms at Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children. Presbyterian/St. Luke's Hospital is seeking volunteers for once-a-week commitment, 6-month minimum. [www.ronaldhouse.org](http://www.ronaldhouse.org) under "How You Can Help" for info.

**Single Volunteers of Greater Denver.** Volunteer, not-for-profit singles group to meet others and assist nonprofit organizations for events/ activities. [www.svgd.org](http://www.svgd.org)


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## Eastbridge North Expands New Town Center's Options



Construction has started on Eastbridge North, a nearly one-acre lot on the north side of Martin Luther King Blvd. at Geneva Court (across the street from the new Eastbridge Town Center).

Eastbridge North contains four suite spaces. A Supercuts hair salon and a Pacific Dental Services office will open in two different spaces, and negotiations are underway for the remaining two spaces.

The development is being built by Evergreen Devco, Inc. and City Street Investors. Spokesman Tyler Carlson says they are also working on a second Eastbridge North building based on tenant interest.

## Service Districts Continue Dispute over Legal Services

By John Fernandez

Tom Downey, chair of the Westerly Creek Metro District (WCMD), came to last Thursday's meeting of the Park Creek Metro District (PCMD) expecting PCMD approval of a joint resolution that would enable WCMD to pay an attorney it has engaged since January. Instead, PCMD Chair King Harris took it upon himself to remove the item from the March 23 agenda and direct further negotiations between PCMD's attorney, Paul Cockrel, and WCMD's attorney, Jennifer Tanaka of the law firm White Bear Ankele Tanaka & Waldron.

Downey asked Harris what provisions of the draft resolution he was objecting to. Harris declined to cite any specifics, saying only that the resolution is not consistent with the master intergovernmental agreement between the two districts. Downey

said he was "dumbfounded" at Harris' decision and complained that WCMD has been stymied since last June in its efforts to obtain independent legal and financial advice.

Harris' action was all the more surprising given that his own board member, John Moyer, had recommended to the PCMD board at its March 2 meeting that Westerly Creek be allowed to hire its own attorney and to set up a system for payment of the law firm's invoices.

At its March 15 meeting, the WCMD board approved a revised 2017 budget that increases its potential legal expenses from \$15,000 to \$40,000 and sets aside smaller amounts for a "financial advisor" and board member expenses. WCMD has been incurring expenses from Tanaka since January and has been unable to pay them because of PCMD's inaction.

The two service districts are charged with financing and constructing Stapleton's in-

frastructure. WCMD is referred to as the financing district because it imposes the metro district mill levy that pays for "local" or non-trunk infrastructure. Those tax dollars are then passed on to PCMD to pay for the construction of roads, alleys, drainage, landscaping, water and sewer lines, pocket parks and pools. In 2016, for the first time, all members of the WCMD board are Stapleton residents while the PCMD board, in its service plan, is mandated to be comprised of two developer representatives and three members selected by the Stapleton Development Corporation.

The dispute, in some sense, reflects changing circumstances in Stapleton as the massive redevelopment nears build-out. When redevelopment began 17 years ago, no one was living in Stapleton and as a result, membership of the two service districts' boards was dominated by representatives of the developer, Forest City. Now, the resident property owners on the WCMD board believe their fiduciary responsibility to district taxpayers requires that they obtain legal and financial advice separate from that provided to PCMD. While the PCMD attorney, Paul Cockrel, has, until recently, also served as legal counsel to WCMD, Cockrel told the WCMD board at a joint meeting in January that his first allegiance is to PCMD.

## Five Party Agreement Reached

By John Fernandez

A complicated, five-party agreement has been reached that will allow full development of Stapleton's last large parcel to proceed. The so-called "five-party finance proposal" awaits formal Denver City Council approval and is scheduled for a final vote on April 10. At a Finance and Governance Committee meeting March 21, councilmembers indicated their support. The other parties to the agreement have already signed on: Forest City, Denver Public Schools (DPS), the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) and the Park Creek Metropolitan District (PCMD).

The agreement addresses "trunk infrastructure" required to allow development of the entire Section 10, the nearly square-mile parcel located north of 56th Ave. between Central Park Blvd. and Havana St. (extended). Currently, residential development is occurring on the western third of the site. The required improvements include grading and drainage (\$7 million), completion of trunk open space improvements (\$12.5 million) and a fire station (\$9.4 million).

These are among a slew of infrastructure projects identified in the earliest days of Stapleton redevelopment for which there was inadequate funding. See below for a listing of these projects totaling \$51.8 million. The agreement does not address the second- and third-tier projects shown in the graphic. However, with agreement reached on the fire station and trunk open space, full build-out of Section 10 and its estimated 2,800 dwelling units can proceed. The agreement also allows DPS to finance its acquisition of a second elementary school site in Section 10.

### Remaining Trunk Infrastructure

A new agreement between four government agencies and Stapleton developer Forest City assures funding for the first tier projects listed in this graphic provided by the city of Denver. The agreement does not address the second and third tier projects shown in the table. These projects were all identified when redevelopment of the former Stapleton airport was being planned.

**Section 10 Grading and Drainage**  
\$7M

**Parks Maintenance Facility**  
\$1.4M

**Sand Creek Unit**  
\$1M

\*Total Project cost is \$29M  
Numbers shown are in 2015 dollars and do not include Central Park Boulevard not listed as funding



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## Leadership Changes at CAB/SDC

By John Fernandez

The two citizen boards charged with overseeing the redevelopment of Stapleton have appointed new leadership even as they evaluate their long-term roles. At its March 23 meeting, the Stapleton Development Corporation (SDC) named long-time member Pat Teegarden as chair. He replaces Kevin Marchman who remains on the board. Marchman was recently elected chair of the city's new Housing Advisory Council and said he was too busy to head up both groups. Appointment of a new vice chair will be considered at SDC's April meeting.

Jim Wagenlander has accepted his nomination as co-chair of the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB). He will serve alongside newly appointed board member, Gary Gordon.

SDC is an arm of Denver city govern-

ment and generally manages the transfer of the former Stapleton airport land from Denver to the developer, Forest City. CAB advises SDC on Forest City's performance, particularly in relation to the goals set forth in the Stapleton Development Plan, aka the Green Book.

SDC President and CEO Tammi Holloway told the SDC board she will begin preparing a "conceptual wind-down plan" for SDC now that it appears all of the Stapleton land sales to Forest City may be complete as soon as next year. She will bring a "matrix of obligations" to an upcoming SDC meeting to facilitate discussions on whether SDC should continue as an entity or dissolve.

Wagenlander reported that CAB has decided to remain active through the final stages of Stapleton redevelopment and has formed an ad hoc group to explore what its role might be after build-out.



# Scheduled for Section 10 Financing

## Key features of the agreement include:

Forest City will impose homebuilder fees on Section 10 home sites to ensure \$12.5 million is available to finish improvements to pay for trunk open space in Section 10. (Forest City declined to provide any details about those fees, saying they “involve an agreement between Forest City and our builders”). Total earth-moving and drainage improvements in Section 10 are relatively high because of a long-standing agreement with the federal government that stormwater drainage would be contained on-site and not flow onto the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, formerly a contaminated Superfund site.

DPS will use certificates of participation (COPs) to finance \$16.45 million of public infrastructure including the North Fire Station (\$9.4) and the school site acquisition (\$7.05 million).

Forest City will apply all acquisition proceeds from the DPS site to grading and drainage of the site. DURA will agree to repay from future tax increment revenue (TIF) the DPS COPs and, by 2025, the city’s 2017 budgeted expense of \$8.4 million for the widening of the Central Park Blvd. bridge. That project is slated to begin late this fall with an expected construction duration of one year. The widened bridge will be built by the PCMD, the special district created to oversee construction of trunk infrastructure throughout Stapleton. This repayment of Denver’s up-front payment for the bridge widening is consistent with one of the fundamental assumptions about Stapleton redevelopment—that it would pay for itself. The five-way agreement also lowers financing costs for the infrastructure because it takes advantage of public agency borrowing costs (2.5-3.5%) rather than having to rely on Forest City “advances,” i.e., loans (8.5-10%).

## Infrastructure Needs

North Fire Station  
\$9.4M

Trunk Open Space  
North of 56<sup>th</sup> Ave  
\$12.5M\*

Smith Road  
Extension  
\$6.5M

Havana: Florence  
to Smith  
\$9.5M

Southwest Entry  
Park  
\$500K

South Sports  
Complex Site Prep  
\$4M

\*not include financing costs.  
\$ was appropriated by City Council in the 2017 budget

Graphic courtesy of the Denver Department of Finance



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# The SUN Spot

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

## March SUN Meeting Review; SUN Forum & Board Election Coming in May

By Amanda Allhouse, President Stapleton United Neighbors Board of Directors

### Walk Denver Vision Zero

Building on Mayor Hancock's declaration at last month's SUN meetings that streets in Denver will be safe and multimodal, Shontel Lewis from Walk Denver presented on Vision Zero and the goal of eliminating all traffic accidents and serious injuries on Denver streets. Lewis's presentation emphasized the importance of pedestrian safety over driver convenience in planning, engineering and enforcement, and charged our local government with the onus of safe street design. People navigating streets are responsible for their behavior, but when humans make mistakes, careful design can help prevent those mistakes from resulting in a fatality for him/herself or others on the road. Read about the 10 principles of Vision Zero on Walk Denver's website: [www.walkdenver.org/vision-zero](http://www.walkdenver.org/vision-zero).

Participate in the Denver Vision Zero Map-based Survey to provide your feedback about streets, sidewalks, intersections and all transportation-related locations in Denver. Places that either concern you or you think deserve positive recognition for transportation and safety can be reported: <https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/transportation-mobility/vision-zero/feedback-map.html>.

### NE Denver Leadership Week

Councilman Chris Herndon shared a beautiful video about Northeast Denver's Leadership Week, which he will host June 12-16. Community members available to volunteer for a day are requested for assistance with the budgeting skills day. Last year's youth participants reported feeling dismayed when they learned of the expenses associated with running a household and raising children in a hypothetical family. Other community members, business owners, and members of volunteer organizations who could participate in NE Denver Leadership Week are encouraged to reach out to the councilman's office to discuss participation.

### 2017 General Obligation Bond

Councilman Herndon also described the ongoing Denver 2017 General Obligation (GO) Bond process. GO bonds secure funding to restore, replace, and expand infrastructure and capital assets across the

city. Committee meetings will begin soon to prioritize projects to be funded by the GO bonds. Denver residents will be voting on GO bonds in the fall of 2017. <http://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denver-department-of-finance/2017-go-bond/2017-meetings-and-events.html>

### SUN Education Committee and Partnership with Northfield High School

In a separate committee meeting, Advocates for Northfield High School (NHS) met on March 14 for an initial session to collectively examine the commitments DPS has made to ensure the development of NHS. NHS is the boundary high school for the students in Stapleton, with 35 percent of its seats reserved for families from adjacent neighborhoods. NHS is halfway through its second year open. During the meeting, the group identified a mission, priorities, and action items to inform future work.

**Mission:** Support DPS in implementing the NHS Resolution and their efforts to maintain transparent communication with community stakeholders. (An article with a link to that resolution was covered in the January 2017 *Front Porch* and can be viewed at [frontporchstapleton.com/article/discussion-sandoval-campus-sharing/](http://frontporchstapleton.com/article/discussion-sandoval-campus-sharing/).)

#### Priorities:

- (1) Ensure committee representation from all catchment area elementary and middle schools, including Bill Roberts, Denver Discovery, Denver Language School, DSST, High Tech, Inspire, Isabella Bird, McAuliffe, Swigert, Westerly Creek, and current NHS families. The committee came very close to achieving this goal at the first meeting. The only schools not represented at the meeting were Denver Discovery and Inspire. The committee is reaching out to those campuses to promote active engagement. It will also engage neighboring communities who have a vested interest in the success of NHS.
- (2) Provide a forum for communication across schools in the community. The committee identified SUN as the best way to achieve this goal as it aligns with the organizational mission. "Our mission is three-fold: to provide a forum for our residents; to maintain a communication network between ourselves, our neighboring Denver residents, and the city of Denver; and to act on issues of importance to the community as a whole."

**Action Item:** SUN will focus the Sept. 19, 6:30pm SUN-block captain/Outreach meeting on NHS's continued growth and development. A draft agenda for September includes:

1. School Choice Data Overview
2. NHS Leadership Update
3. Status update from DPS on the NHS Resolution

### May 16 SUN Annual Forum and Board Election—6:30 to 8:15pm at Central Park Recreation Center

Forest City will present on current development updates in Stapleton. Denver Police Department District 5 will address community safety issues. A representative from Denver Parks and Rec will describe plans for open space. The Stapleton MCA will describe community programming. Northeast Transportation Connections will provide a status update on both the I-70 project and multi-modal street goals for the remainder of the community. City of Denver representatives will address projects being completed with city funding; representatives from Councilman Chris Herndon's office and Denver Public Schools Board of Education will be available during Q/A.

### New SUN Board Members

The 15-member SUN board serves in staggered two-year terms, with a slate of board members proposed each year at the Annual SUN Forum for a community vote. The May 2017 slate will include board members continuing on to another term, Erin Jones and Greg Calderon (for whom bios are available online at [www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.com](http://www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.com)); and for returning board member Mark Mehringer and two new board members, biographical sketches follow:

#### Geoff Horsfall

A Denver resident since 2006, I moved to Stapleton in 2015 with my wife, Jaime. As the parents of two young daughters, we

chose Stapleton for the community it offers our family and I'm grateful for the opportunity to help support and advance all of the things that make our neighborhood unique. I joined the SUN Board in February 2017 and I'm particularly interested in sustainability and education initiatives as well as opportunities to represent our goals to city officials. I have an MBA from CU-Boulder and experience as a small-business owner. I've spent my career in educational publishing and technology, developing content and software for K-12 students and educators as well as post-secondary and career-oriented learners. Our family loves taking advantage of Stapleton's great parks, the quick access to a growing list of restaurants, and getting together with other families in the neighborhood. (Geoff began a brief interim appointment to the board Feb. 2017.)

#### Ben Whitney

My wife and I moved to Stapleton in November of 2012. We were looking to start a family and were drawn to this neighborhood by the schools, parks, and general sense of community that we knew would make it a great neighborhood to raise kids in. We have two kids now, a 4-year-old son and a 2-year-old daughter.

Although my favorite job is dad, I spend most of my days working as a lawyer. I am a Chief Deputy District Attorney at the Weld County District Attorney's Office in Greeley. I have been a prosecutor there for 10 years. In that role I have prosecuted every kind of case from traffic infractions to first degree murder. I enjoy the work, and the feeling that I get knowing that my job every day is to do justice and do what I can to make the community safer.

As a prosecutor I work very closely with the police and others who work in the area of public safety. My time in prosecution has given me a solid understanding of both the possibilities and challenges of police work in the area of community safety. I believe that my experience in these areas would enable me to be an effective liaison between the Stapleton community and the police and those in government. I am very excited about the possibility of getting to work for my fellow neighbors through SUN.

#### Mark Mehringer

I moved to the South End of Stapleton with my wife in 2005, and volunteered to serve as a SUN Block Captain soon after. Over my last 12 years in Stapleton, I have opened my own public opinion consulting firm and become a parent to two great kids, Leah and Maddox. I previously served as SUN President and on the Education, Outreach, and Sustainability Committees and look forward to returning to the SUN Board.

*If you are interested in becoming involved with the SUN board, please refer to the March 2017 SUN spot for a more detailed description of the role, and email [StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com](mailto:StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com).*

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# Letter to the Editor

## Storm Water Benefits from North Denver Projects

Storm water management is something that everyone needs to understand and appreciate. Storm water is runoff from impervious surfaces that includes rooftops, driveways, sidewalks and roads. A thunderstorm that stalls over a neighborhood like Park Hill can generate an enormous amount of water. Many curbed streets and storm drains can't handle the sudden burst of rain. Storm drains are directly connected to our rivers and streams. There is no treatment plant to clean the rainwater once it enters the storm sewer system.

Platte-to-Park Hill is one of those projects that can both reduce storm water and help keep it clean. Park Hill and North Denver were hit with gully washers in June of 2015. The aftermath included soggy carpets, a stranded fire truck, and people

demanding that something be done. The Platte-to-Park Hill will help slow down the storm water to reduce flooding.

Storm water can be dirty. It carries away anything in its path—dirt, mulch, cigarette butts, sand, leaves, car fluids, fertilizers and pet waste. This cocktail of urban runoff eventually enters the South Platte River. The Platte-to-Park Hill will be designed specifically to help clean the water. The Platte-to-Park Hill improvements will need to be done no matter what happens with the North Denver area.

Everyone will pay for storm water treatment. We all benefit from solid roads and watertight roofs. Storm water is created by everyone. Storm water impacts everyone.

*Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir Watershed Association, Amy Conklin, Watershed Coordinator, [www.barr-milton.org](http://www.barr-milton.org)*

## New at the Zoo DOBBY



Dobby, a reticulated giraffe calf made his debut on Feb. 28, 2017 at the Denver Zoo. Born weighing 73 lbs. and measuring 5 feet tall, Dobby was an unexpected surprise to zoo staff—his mother, Kipele, was on birth control when she conceived. In his first two years of life, Dobby will grow to reach a height of 12 feet.



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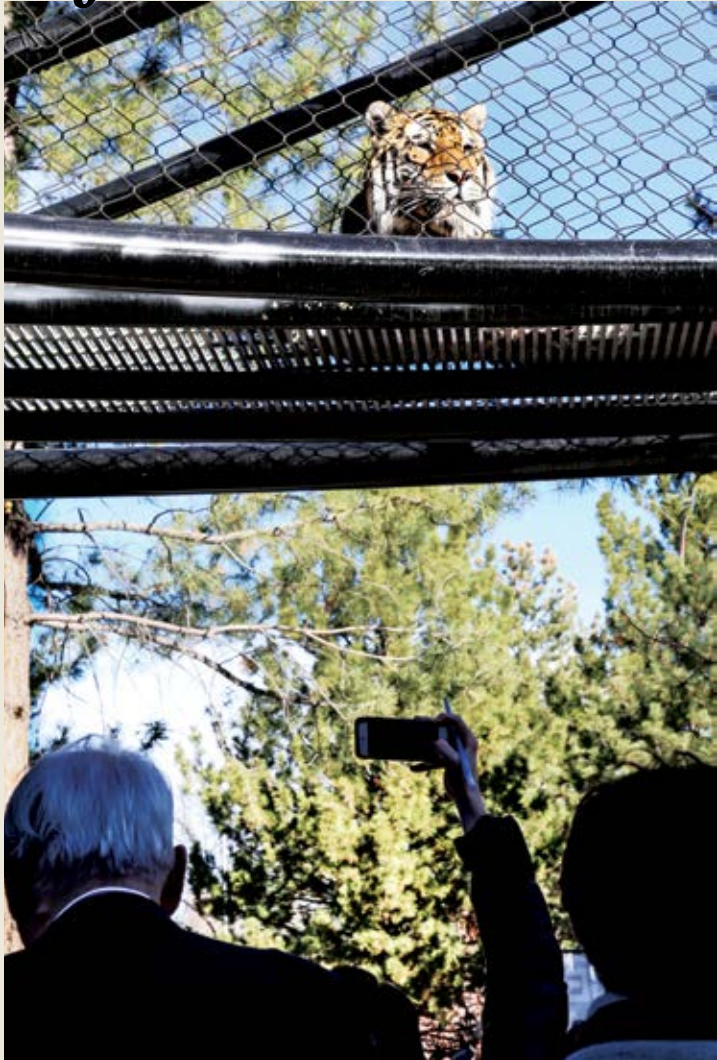
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# Amur tigers are on the edge of extinction



The Edge offers the tigers, like male Nikolai, a highly enriched and stimulating environment (upper left, above and below), while promoting an engaging and interactive experience for zoo guests (right).

(continued from page 1)

areas, depending on keepers' schedules and the cats' motivation, according to Sean Andersen-Vie, public relations manager.

The tigers, born and bred in zoos, seemed at ease in their new digs, unfazed by the throng of eager visitors. As Nikolai strutted above the crowd and frolicked in his play pool, amber eyes flashing, Nikita kept her distance, calmly watching the assembled spectators while basking in the late winter sun.

Zookeepers hope that Nikita, who is related to Nikolai and Thimbu, will be bred with a third male tiger that will soon arrive from Russia. Trainer Kim Pike says Amur tiger gestation is



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## Growing families.

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approximately 103 days—about 3½ months—and females are generally in estrus year-round. With some luck, it seems likely that the zoo will welcome tiger cubs before too long.

**Exhibit Design**

As regular visitors to Denver Zoo can attest, the tigers have long appeared to be in need of a new habitat. “We felt very passionate about it as well,” said George R. Pond, senior vice-president/vice-president for design and campus management. “It rose to the top of a very long list of priorities” that the zoo developed after the passage of the city’s 2007 Better Denver Bond, which provided \$2.2 million in funding for the zoo.

Nearly twice the size of the previous tiger space, The Edge was largely built and designed in-house by zoo staff in conjunction with CLR Design, a process that took nine



months of planning and 19 months of execution. One of the design priorities was “creating great habitat for the tigers, opportunities for them to be in different positions, high and low, water features,” said Pond, while simultaneously “putting people in a new relationship” with the animals.

To that end, most of the outdoor enclosure is made of woven metal mesh, allowing for sights, sounds and smells to pass freely. Zoo staff designed a unique perforated wall that allows visitors and tigers to come within six or eight inches of one another, noted Pond. It is possible to hear the “chuffs” of the tiger and even smell its breath from that distance.

**The Edge of Extinction**

Once inhabiting much of Siberia, fewer than 400 of the species, formerly known as Siberian tigers, are now alive in one small area of eastern Asia along the Amur River. Poaching and habitat loss through logging have contributed to the species’ decline, and Amur tigers are currently classified as endangered.

Block suggests several ways to help the tigers, including supporting Denver Zoo and its anti-poaching efforts, buying sustainably and responsibly sourced wood, and purchasing tiger ear headbands, which help sponsor the Amur tigers at the zoo.



Zoo President and CEO Shannon Block (above) welcomed guests and explained the importance of conservation efforts for Amur tigers. Purchasing ears like those pictured on her daughter, Addie Block (right), will help support these endangered animals that are on the brink of extinction.



The new tiger enclosure appears to be on the edge of the forest, part of the inspiration for its name.



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