

# Front Porch

COLORADO

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AUGUST 2019

NORTHEAST DENVER

## Will Denver Be the New Seattle... *or a city where everyone can live?*



Will Denver find a way to have homes that are affordable to middle class families and workers that the city depends on? Or will Denver suffer the fate of other “desirable cities” where only the wealthy can live? The City has undertaken a process to solicit residents’ visions for what kind of neighborhoods they want to have in 20 years—and their recommendations for how to get there.

How do we allow more people to come live in our neighborhoods while minimizing impacts on those already living here? This question was at the heart of Denver’s recent City Council races—and at the heart of the recent Lakewood vote to limit growth. “Most of the cities I’ve seen with growth caps have exponential increases

in the cost of housing because it’s a supply and demand issue,” says Mayor Michael Hancock. “It tends to exacerbate the social and economic challenges cities are trying to avoid. Quite frankly it’s a way of saying we don’t want anybody else coming to live in our city.”

*Story by Carol Roberts and Martina Will, PhD on page 6.*

## New Public Art: Sculptures in Beeler Park



Three distinct sculpture arrays, The Wind Gate Art Suite, are now installed in three separate areas in the Beeler Park neighborhood of Stapleton north of E. 56th Ave. The largest array, *First Light* (above), is composed of nine 12-foot-tall weathered steel sculptures. Story on page 26 by Public Art Consultant Barbara Neal.

## Immigration Reform Needed



Pedro Hernández, a Honduran asylum-seeker, adjusts a vase he crafted from candy wrappers while in detention. Some community members are providing humanitarian aid to detainees like Hernández, while others protest detention policies—and our local lawmakers are working toward a national policy. Stories by Martina Will PhD on pages 8 and 9.

## Lilac Ash Borers & Tree Resources

*Story by Martina Will, PhD on page 25.*





Sunset at City Park Lake on July 2, one of the first days visitors could walk around the lake without stepping in goose poop. In the controversial roundup, more than 1,600 geese were killed in an effort to control the population, and the meat was given away through a food bank.

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### Announcement of Outcome of the Stapleton Name Vote

The auditor of the election will announce results at the MCA Board meeting Wed., Aug. 21, 12pm, at 7350 E 29th Ave, 3rd floor. The announcement is open to the public. When the third quarter Executive Board meeting commences, non-MCA members will be asked to leave, as the quarterly Executive Board meeting is for members only.

### Denver Animal Protection Reminder: Don't Leave Pets in Cars

Leave pets at home in hot weather. Temperatures inside a vehicle can reach 120F in a matter of minutes—and leaving your pet in an overheated car could result in a summons for animal cruelty, a fine of up to \$999 and/or 300 days in jail.

### Is the Front Porch arriving on your front porch regularly?

If you're not getting it every month, if it's wet, if it's on the sidewalk or in the grass and landscaping, we'd like to know. Our delivery contract is to have papers delivered to your front door. Email Carol@FrontPorchNE.com.

### Letters to the Editor

We welcome your letters. Send to Carol@FrontPorchNE.com

### Pick up the Front Porch in local grocery stores.

We now have papers in both King Soopers in Stapleton and in the Mayfair King Soopers. Papers are also available at the Safeway stores in Lowry and Mayfair. Feel free to take several to share in local businesses and organizations.

**Freelance writers:** Let us know your areas of interest and expertise. We'd like to expand our list of writers to include more NE neighbors.



#### MoJaBlu Concert Series: Ron Ivory's One on One & The MilesApart Band

*Thur., Aug. 1, 6:30–8:30pm, Conservatory Green*  
Ron Ivory's one-of-a-kind ensemble, composed of the One on One quartet feat. Linda Styles and The MilesApart Band, flourish with their breathtaking harmonies & impeccable rhythmic timing. This must-see concert will combine old school R&B, funk, classic soul, and dance to deliver an unforgettable performance for the entire family.

#### Summer Wine Tasting

*Friday, August 2, 6–8pm, The West Crescent*  
Relish in another beautiful summer evening by joining us outside at our next summer wine event! The tasting will feature a diverse selection of red and white wines from around the globe. Registration is \$15 for residents and \$20 for non-residents. Day-of tickets can be purchased for \$30 when available. You must be 21+ to attend this event.

#### Active Minds Seminar: Tuskegee Airmen

*Thursday, August 8, 1pm, Sam Gary Library*  
The issue of race in the military extends from colonial times to the present day. Join Active Minds as they explore a chapter of this story from World War II: the Tuskegee Airmen. These African American pilots were the first black military aviators in the U.S. armed forces. We will tell their story of struggle and triumph and bring this issue into a current context.

#### MoJaBlu Concert Series: Wash Park Band

*Thur., Aug. 8, 6:30–8:30pm, Conservatory Green*  
Voted as Denver A-List's #2 Band in the state, Wash Park is one of Colorado's most sought-after musical groups. Setting this band apart is its authentic and powerful reproductions of the horn-band-era dance music from the '70s interspersed with top 40 hits from today and a fully choreographed show.

#### Summer Film Series: *Incredibles 2* (PG)

*Friday, August 9, Sundown, Founders' Green*  
Everyone's favorite family of superheroes is back! This time a new villain hatches a sinister plot, and these forgotten heroes must find a way to work collectively to save the day. With animation that maintains the original style, as well as improves on it, characters that still hold up, and a legitimately intriguing story, *Incredibles 2* is a must-watch.

#### Summer Theatre: *The Phantom Tollbooth*

*Thursday–Saturday, August 15–17, 6:30–8:30pm, Conservatory Green*  
We are thrilled to have The Three Leeches Theatre Company back at the Conservatory Green amphitheater with their 2019 stage

production of *The Phantom Tollbooth*! Based on Norton Juster's beloved children's novel, this extraordinary tale of Milo comes to life like never before. Join us for a journey to the Lands Beyond! You just might discover that with humor, good friends, and a little bit of courage, anything is possible. Show runtime is approx. 60 minutes.

#### Active Minds Seminar: Climate Change

*Thursday, August 22, 6:30pm, Sam Gary Library*  
Scientists are predicting a global average temperature increase of 2.5 to 10 degrees over the next century. Likely impacts include more droughts and heat waves as well as stronger and more frequent hurricanes. Sea levels are predicted to rise 1–4 feet by 2100, submerging vast areas of land. Examine the alarming projections for the future of climate change and the consequential politics associated given the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris climate accord.

#### Summer Concert Series: Denver Municipal Band

*Saturday, August 31, 6–8pm, Founders' Green*  
As the oldest unremitting professional concert band in the U.S., the Denver Municipal Band has played for several dignitaries, including former President Teddy Roosevelt. The group is made up of some of the best musicians in Colorado. Many of them have performed with other distinguished ensembles such as the Colorado Symphony, Colorado Ballet, and the Central City Opera.

#### August Farmers Markets

*August 4, 11, 18, & 25, 8:30am–12:30pm, Founders' Green*

At the weekly Farmers Markets, you'll find produce that is locally harvested, picked fresh, and always in-season. The availability varies each week as new items are still becoming available.

#### How much pool time can YOU squeeze in before the last day of the season?

We can't believe it either, but the end of summer is just around the corner.

The last day of Family Nights and Adult Lap Swim is August 1st.

Modified pool schedules will be implemented later this month.

The last day of the season is Labor Day, September 2nd!

Check out our website at [www.stapletoncommunity.com](http://www.stapletoncommunity.com) for real-time pool statuses and other important updates.

Lawrence Uhling | Administrative Assistant  
[luhling@stapletoncommunity.com](mailto:luhling@stapletoncommunity.com)  
303.388.0724

\*All summer concerts, theatre, and movies are free of charge and open to the public!

Get the latest on

Master Community Association

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# Front Porch

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The Front Porch – NE Denver distributes more than 28,000 free papers during the first week of each month. Papers are delivered to doorsteps and/or racks in Stapleton, Park Hill, Lowry, Montclair, Mayfair and NW Aurora.

The Front Porch is printed with soy-based ink and the paper contains 30% post-consumer waste. We contribute monthly to replant trees equivalent to the amount of paper used in each issue.



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# Denver Will Grow What's the Plan?

By Carol Roberts and Martina Will, PhD

Mayor Michael Hancock says balancing the desires of existing residents with an increasing population and having a city that is equitable and socio-economically diverse is one reason he ordered the comprehensive plan for the city. “Comp 2040 is about directing that growth where it makes sense, like transit corridors, while allowing neighborhoods to have greater say in the character and design of their communities.

“Density is the only way we’re going to meet the growth demands of our city,” says Hancock. “We have untapped capacity [in our transit corridors] that allows us to continue to accommodate growth.”

Denver’s Comp 2040 plan, just approved by city council in May, states what Denver residents want the city to be like in 20 years. Through a two-year process of surveys and community meetings, the plan identified major areas of importance to residents, including health, safety, environment and economics. And two aspects of housing emerged as priorities in the 25,000+ “touch-points” of information collected: “equitable, affordable and inclusive” and “strong authentic neighborhoods.”

The problem Seattle, San Francis-



co and other appealing cities have experienced is they lost the “equitable, affordable and inclusive” factor that gives cities a balanced population. The homes middle class and lower income people used to live in are no longer affordable.

### Area Plans

Residents in sub-areas of Denver are now having conversations about what they want their own neighborhoods to be like in 20 years—and what policy recommendations will help them achieve their vision.

Merritt Pullam and Monica Martinez have spent the past two years serving on the East Area

“I’ve heard people say, ‘I pay property taxes. I should be listened to and weighted more.’ I understand that, but I also understand not everyone can purchase a house. This whole process and learning experience on the task force has taught me we also need to pay attention to the renters... Who do you listen to more?”  
—Merritt Pullam



Plan steering committee talking to residents and listening to their concerns. High priorities along the East Colfax corridor are preserving

transportation becomes easier than driving, over time some people will start choosing to fore go having a car. David Gaspers, also a

“Historically speaking, Denver and other cities had a mix of housing types in our cities. It was only after World War II that we started to formalize the idea of the primacy of single family neighborhoods.”  
—David Gaspers

Denver planner, points out that current zoning does still require parking.

Haddock and others at the meeting listened to planners’ talk about getting input from bus riders, bike riders, renters and minority communities and expressed a concern that single family homeowners’ views had not been represented. Gaspers and Weigle say the initial survey responses were significantly weighted

toward a more affluent, white population—so they reached out to get a wider range of responses. They say it’s still not fully representative of the broader community.

Martinez points out, “Single family homes are subsidized by the government in our mortgage deduction. We think that’s just sacrosanct, but that’s a policy decision that the government has. We are subsidizing our homeowners in a way that we’re not doing for our renters.”

BACK

2

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Denver residents have been sharing their vision for a plan that addresses what their communities will be like 20 years from now. These photos were taken at the June 27 meeting of the East Area Plan Steering Committee.

Far Left: A neighbor expresses concern that her views about the plan in a social media discussion had not been received with an open mind by a steering committee member. Behind her (to left) is newly elected Councilwoman Amanda Sawyer.

Near left: Merritt Pullam, steering committee chair, gestures for quiet so attendees can listen to speakers' views one at a time. Pictured behind him are Planners Brad Segal, PUMA; Cheney Bostic, Studio Seed; and Liz Weigle, Denver Planning. At left are steering committee members Monica Martinez and Mina Goldstein.

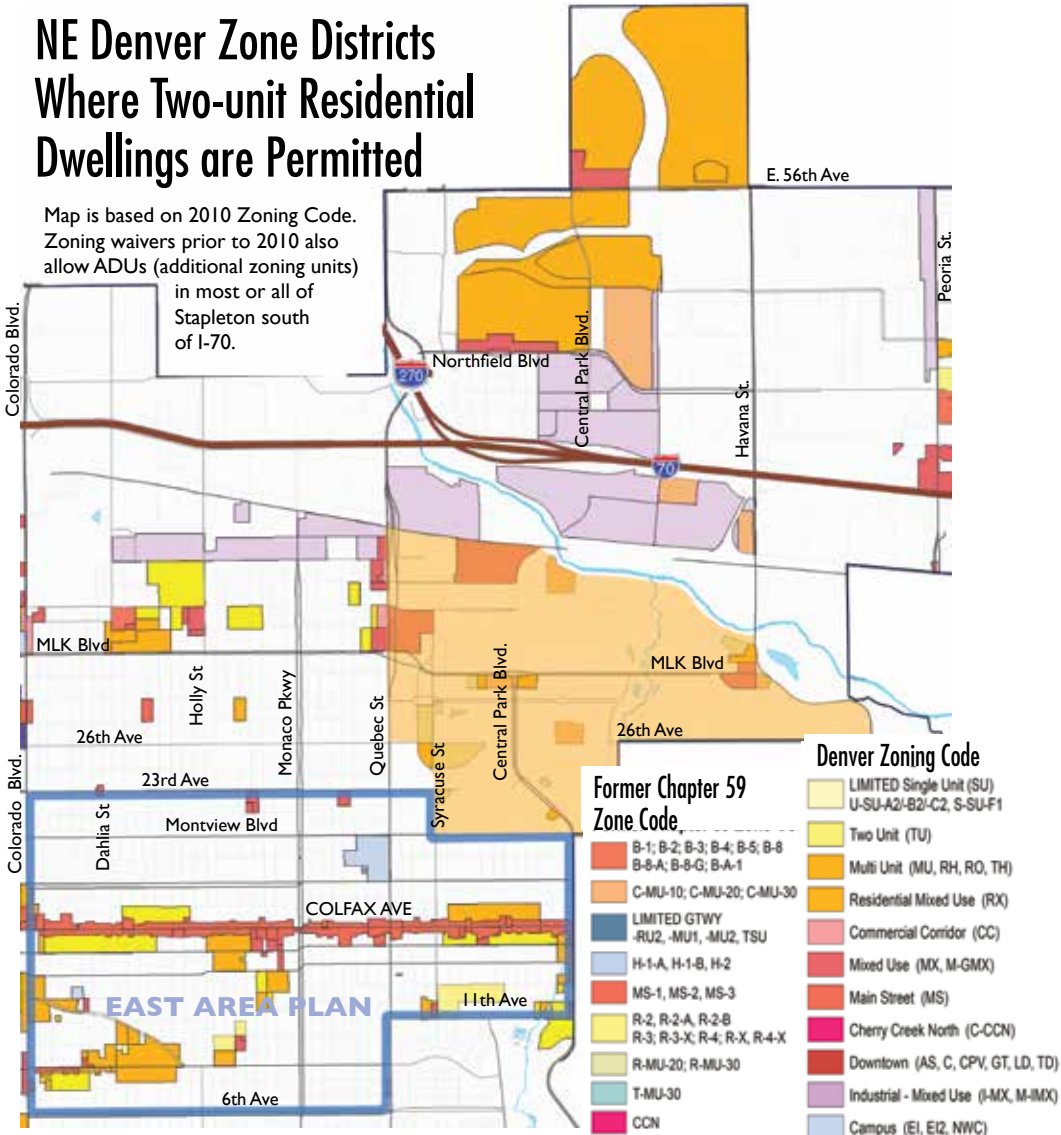


Denver Planner Liz Weigle talks about the six elements of Comp Plan 2040, Denver's Plan for the Future. Based on that vision, sub-areas of Denver are making recommendations for their own part of the city.

Planners from Progressive Urban Management Associates (PUMA) worked with the City of Denver and the steering committee on the process of gathering neighborhood feedback. Above, JJ Folsom of PUMA notes comments made at the meeting.

# NE Denver Zone Districts Where Two-unit Residential Dwellings are Permitted

Map is based on 2010 Zoning Code. Zoning waivers prior to 2010 also allow ADUs (additional zoning units) in most or all of Stapleton south of I-70.



## Adding Housing with ADUs

Denver is roughly half homeowners and half renters (53% - 47%) but much of Denver is single-family zoning or other zoning that doesn't allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs—additional dwelling units at the same address). Currently, just 27.6% of Denver is zoned to allow accessory dwelling units.

“How do you achieve a community that has accessible housing if we don't have more housing than we have now?” asks Martinez. Among the recommendations the East Area Plan is considering now is to allow homes west of Quebec to add one additional dwelling unit. To maintain the character of the neighborhood, the exterior façade of the house would have to remain unchanged.

For East Colfax homes where lots are

On the map, all the white areas are single family or other types of zone districts where ADUs are not allowed.

The East Area Planning Committee will meet August 22 at 6pm at the Art Gym, 1460 Leyden St. to add recent comments. The group hopes to have a draft East Area Plan for public review by late summer. The recommendations will be sent to the Denver Planning Board, then to City Council for a vote. For more information or to comment online, search for East Area Plan at [Denvergov.org](http://Denvergov.org)

bigger, up to two accessory dwelling units may be recommended.

While East Area neighbors are debating the impact of allowing ADUs in their area, Stapleton residents may be surprised to learn that all of Stapleton is already zoned for ADUs.

Both Martinez and Pullam believe their hours spent listening to the community and working out compromises has been worthwhile and will help

Denver grow into a more equitable, affordable and inclusive city and avoid the fate of San Francisco and Seattle. And they hope more people will contribute to the process.

In the next planning phase for Denver's area plans, North Park Hill and Northeast Park Hill will participate with Clayton and Skyland in planning recommendations for the “Near Northeast Area.” In future years, Lowry and the Windsor neighborhood will make recommendations for the “Southeast Area.” And Stapleton, due to its size, will work on a plan for the “Northeast Area.”



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# Immigration Reform:

## A National Problem in Our Backyard

Hundreds of individuals asked to dress in black and white demonstrate outside of the GEO detention center on June 21, part of a national day of action protesting the Trump administration's treatment of

immigrants and refugees. The shoes represent those who have died in detention and while attempting to cross the Sonoran desert that straddles a section of the U.S.-Mexico border.

By Martina Will, PhD

**F**rustration with Congress' longstanding failure to pass comprehensive immigration reform is mounting across the country and in our own community.

### Community Responses

"What would it be like to have to leave your home, where your family is, and take everything with you, knowing you might not survive? Why would you do that willingly?" Park Hill's Nancy Johnson reflects on her family history of migration when she addresses the present crisis—her Irish ancestors arrived in Denver in the 1860s. She says when she learned of the federal government's treatment of immigrants in 2015, she and her husband began volunteering at Casa de Paz to make an impact locally.

The Metro Denver Sanctuary Coalition, a coalition of 12 religious congregations and the American Friends Service Committee, started organizing during the Obama administration, when deportations began to rise. In 2014, First Unitarian

Society of Denver (FUSD) became the first Colorado faith community to offer sanctuary to prevent an individual's deportation. Today, Jeanette Vizguerra, a national figure in the immigration reform movement, lives in sanctuary at FUSD. FUSD's Rev. Mike Morran, a Stapleton resident, says, "If you have eaten food or stayed in a hotel or... [engaged in] any number of other economic activities, these people are already part of your community. There is no us and them."

Ellen Graham, who hosts a political podcast and serves as communications director for the Denver Republican Party, has a very different response, repeating President Trump's calls for a wall along the southern border. She believes people should stay in their home countries and reform or overthrow their corrupt systems of government. "If you look at them you think, 'Oh these poor people'...but they couldn't get their own act together in their own country and do their own thing."

Those who differ with this view have

come together to protest the jailing of asylum-seekers in particular. They have broken no laws and must be on U.S. soil to petition for asylum. In July, Lights for Liberty organized a candlelight vigil at Aurora's detention center run by The GEO Group, a company that owns multiple private detention facilities. Close to 2,000 people gathered peacefully; a small minority, however, garnered negative national attention after raising a Mexican flag on the GEO flagpole and setting a U.S. flag on fire. Protesters, who were dispersed by police an hour before the vigil was to end, expressed dismay that a fringe group had not only derailed the event but also distracted media attention from the substance of their concerns—among them, human rights violations in detention centers.

### Congressional (In)Action and Reform

Though community members offer differing views on the current immigration crisis, there seems to be agreement on the need for a pro-active approach from Congress, though views differ on what the focus

of a policy should be: to address U.S. labor needs, provide a haven for those seeking refuge, or construct a wall.

GEO sits in Rep. Jason Crow's district (CO-06), and he has been intent on holding ICE and GEO accountable for their treatment of detainees. In a July 8 statement, Crow called for the abolition of private, for-profit immigration detention centers: "We have an immigration detention system that is driven by corporate greed. This system has allowed corporations like GEO Group to cut corners on necessary medical care and safety to benefit their bottom line. It is not enough to demand transparency, we must demand accountability." Crow and his staff in June began weekly inspections of GEO, using ICE's own standards as a guide. An Inspector General's report earlier this year cited this facility as falling short of those standards on numerous counts. At Crow's July 22 inspection, he brought Colorado's Congressional Reps. DeGette, Perlmutter and Neguse.

In the June presi- (continued on page 14)

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By Martina Will, PhD

Every weeknight, volunteers gather to ferry people released from Aurora’s GEO detention facility to the Casa de Paz (“House of Peace”), an all-volunteer non-profit that since 2012 has served 2306 people from 30 countries. Volunteers help them with travel plans to reunite with family in the U.S. Nancy and Chris Johnson have been volunteering since 2015, when founder Sarah Jackson ran it out of her one-bedroom apartment off of Peoria Street, close to their Stapleton home. They felt compelled to act after learning about the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley,

Casa de Paz volunteers ferry people released from GEO to the Casa, where they make travel arrangements to reunite with family while awaiting court dates. The white board fills with destinations and departure times as plane reservations get finalized. Volunteers Nancy Johnson, Jen Schwem and Oliver, the home host, talk with released detainees as they enjoy a home-cooked meal. Within a few hours of their release, most of the former detainees are on their way to family around the U.S. Left: Alexander Piedrahita of Cuba uses the Casa computer to search for flights to see family in Florida.

# Casa de Paz: A Helping Hand for Detainees

TX, where their son volunteered as an interpreter for the ACLU. He was appalled by the conditions. “Our son called and said ‘I am so angry at the president I worked so hard to get elected.’” It was 2015. The Obama administration. The current administration’s more bellicose rhetoric and aggressive policies have raised awareness, as more people are being detained in the nation’s for-profit detention centers. “I am grateful for this president [Trump], who ripped the Band-Aid off. We can’t unknow what we know,” says Nancy. For Park Hill’s Jen Schwem, it was this administration’s more strident rhetoric and draconian approach to immigration that moved her to volunteer. “I was feeling helpless for a

really long time,” she says. When she learned about busloads of people coming to Denver from other detention centers, she reached out to Jackson, who suggested that she might visit someone in detention, reducing their sense of isolation. The young man she was paired with had fled gang violence in El Salvador, fearing for his life. Proving that “credible fear” is extremely difficult, however, especially without forensic medical and legal documentation. [See May *Front Porch* story on GEO.] Most asylum cases take over a year to process, and the majority are denied. Denial rates have risen steadily since 2012, according to Syracuse University’s Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC), a nonpartisan, nonprofit data research center. In 2018, 65%

of asylum seekers lost their cases compared to 42% in 2012. Schwem attended her friend’s hearing, where his petition for asylum was denied. He was deported two weeks ago. The Casa volunteers concur that the profit motive drives current policies, which benefit private companies like GEO, who hold lucrative government contracts. “We are spending \$150 a day to hold adults at these detention centers and \$750 a day to cage children. What is the motivation to release them or spend money on their care?” asks Nancy. “I don’t believe anyone wants to spend \$750 a day to treat people like this....as taxpayers, as Americans, is this OK?” asks Schwem. “It didn’t start with this administration....Why can’t we smart, compassionate Americans figure this out?”



Above: Pedro Hernández of Honduras shows a vase he crafted while in detention using small food wrappings. Below: Volunteer Chris Johnson gives Hernández a new backpack with overnight toiletries for the journey.



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# What happens...



Above: Breakthru Beverage, located at Central Park Blvd. and E. 40th Ave., is the biggest single warehouse building in Denver. It sits on 15 acres, is 450 yards long, and has gorgeous wide-open views of the mountains from its west-facing windows. Breakthru moved to Stapleton in May 2017 from Aurora where they'd been for 39 years.

Right: Many restaurants order by the bottle, not by the case. Specially designed lifts move workers between aisles where they listen to recorded orders and pull 11,000 individual bottles a day. In another area, 40,000 cases a day are pulled. The warehouse is arranged just as Breakthru recommends to stores—the most popular items need to be easily viewed and reached. In stores, eye level means more sales. In the warehouse, bottles arranged on lower shelves can be pulled faster than those that are 35 feet up.



Above: Breakthru's automated system tags and routes bottles and cases on conveyor belts so they will end up with other items for the same customer and in the truck with orders going to the same geographic area. And they are sorted so the last delivery gets loaded first and the total weight won't exceed the truck's limits.

Right: At the end of the conveyor belt journey, the code for any given truckload is displayed on the digital screen. The belt is pulled out to the back of the truck where the driver loads the truck—distributing the weight so bottles don't shift and break.

By Carol Roberts

We all take for granted that we can easily pick up wine, beer and spirits at a liquor store or order

these drinks in a restaurant. What we don't think about is all that happens before a drink reaches our hand.

First, a little history. During Prohibition,

bootlegging and other illegal activities proliferated in the alcoholic beverage industry, says Breakthru Executive Vice President, Jeremy Tostrup. When Prohibition ended, states

wanted to regulate alcohol for safety and for collecting taxes. The regulations dictate a three-tier system: the producer, the distributor and the seller. "We're the middle tier," says Tostrup. "We don't own anything, we don't make anything. We're a logistics company. A sales and marketing company. And we're a consulting company."

Alcoholic beverage consultants know the trends. "If rosés are hot and a

restaurant has only one rosé and none by the glass, we use analytics and education to go explain to the customer what's hot right now. We have several people whose job it is to help customers rearrange their shelves to maximize profit using data and analytics.

"Things at eye level in liquor stores sell three or four times better than things on the top or the bottom. Trends are constantly changing and the store has a finite amount of space. We have each store's actual sales data, and using market analytics, we can say, 'We know cordials are declining, so we can take some space [for more popular items] there.' That prevents out-of-stocks, and it promotes high velocity brands.

"We set up most of the new stores based on market data. Some people buy a liquor store and don't know how to set it up. Long before they get their liquor license, we're



"This is a fun business," says Executive Vice President Jeremy Tostrup (above), adding that the building design, with attractive, bright and open work spaces reflects their commitment to make the workplace pleasant for their employees.



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Mayor Michael Hancock praises NE Denver Housing Executive Director Gete Mekonnen (seated in the foreground) at the opening event for the 180-unit Moline Apartments.

By Carol Roberts

One hundred eighty units of affordable housing, The Moline Apartments, officially opened on July 10.

“The work to get this apartment built will have a long-term effect on a lot of lives,” said Gete Mekonnen, executive director of NE Denver Housing, at the opening event.

“With almost 200 3-person households living here, 600 people will be served every year. With a 100-year life span of the building and 600 people served each year, the cumulative impact

on lives is significant. That is the achievement of the partnership that got this facility built. We work with the developer to be sure the units are placed close to shopping,



A large modern community room offers a place for residents to hang out and get acquainted. The over-sized kitchen provides a place for cooking classes and shared meals that might include food from a shared garden.



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# 181 Affordable Apartments Open



Above: The entry/parking side of the U-shaped building faces south; the front faces Martin Luther King Blvd. at Moline St.



Above right: The children's area has soft-surface mounds and climb-in spinning playground equipment.

transportation, job opportunities, open space, and good schools. The impact on the youth, in the long run, is very significant,” says Mekonnen.

Mayor Michael Hancock compared the completion of this project to a battle won, and says the city will continue working with partners who share his view of Denver: “...the city that is home for all people, without judgment, without prejudice. We want folks to have the audacity to believe if they want to stay in this great city, we have a place for them.”

The Moline Apartments building is located on the currently-under-construction portion of Martin Luther King Blvd. at Moline St. It looks like three structures, but they are connected, forming a U-shaped complex.

Project Manager Robert Guererro points out the attractive wood and brick on the front of the building that faces MLK—architectural details soon to be viewed by thousands of cars passing by on the new MLK extension to Peoria, scheduled for opening in November. The new road will also bring wide sidewalks with access to Bluff Lake and the Peoria light rail station.

The building does not have elevators, but does have accessible units on the ground floor. Apartments are clustered around multiple stairwell entries, reducing the amount of building space used for interior hallways.

Mekonnen says a core value of his organization is healthy living, and that encompasses multiple aspects of residents’ lives. To encourage community, the facility features multiple shared areas: a large kitchen/gathering area with adjoining smaller spaces; a program room with a garage style glass door that opens to the outside for homework help, exercise and other classes; “a zen garden” outdoor seating area; a children’s play area; and a garden where fresh local produce can be grown and shared. The big kitchen in the central gathering place will be used both for cooking classes and for shared meals.

NE Denver Housing has built 464 units of affordable rental and for-sale housing in Stapleton; construction will start soon on an additional 56 for-sale townhomes along MLK Blvd. near the Moline Apartments.

**Apartment Rental:** At the time this paper went to press, some two-bedroom units were still available. To inquire about units and eligibility, call the Northfield Apartments at 303-477-4394 or stop in at 4900

Trenton St. (at Northfield Blvd.) to fill out an application. The income verification and eligibility process takes about 72 hours after all required information has been submitted.



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# Immigration

(continued from page 11) dential debate, Colorado’s Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO) pointed out that the last time Congress came close to passing meaningful immigration legislation was in 2013. Bennet was part of the “Gang of Eight,” a bipartisan group of lawmakers who passed the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act in the Senate. Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO) co-sponsored the bill in the House of Representatives, but the measure was never brought up for a vote by then Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH).

Rep. Jason Crow co-sponsored the Dream and Promise Act, which offers a path to citizenship for immigrant youth and those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) status. Thousands of Coloradans (and people throughout the country) who are living in legal limbo under these statuses would benefit from this bill that passed the House on June 4, 2019. If present patterns hold, however, it’s not likely to even be given a vote in the Senate.

### There Is Only Us

Rev. Morran says, “Offering sanctuary, attending protests, writing letters, helping asylum seekers, ministering to scared and traumatized families, visiting elected officials and getting out the vote is about much more than helping individuals or individual families. For me, part of the reason for doing sanctuary and all those other things is to do it publicly, very publicly, to put real faces, real people, real stories in people’s minds, so we can put pressure on Congress to do its damn job and relieve the suffering....There is only us. All of us. And the fate of the immigrant community, which you are already a part of, is the fate of us all.”



Korey Wise speaks to CU law students who volunteer at the Korey Wise Innocence Project.



Photos courtesy of the Korey Wise Innocence Project

## Korey Wise Innocence Project

By Martina Will, PhD

“When They See Us” [see page 16 movie review] devotes a full episode to Korey Wise, referred to as “a walking miracle” by the other men whom the media dubbed the “Central Park Five.” Though the five boys-turned-men-in-prison continue to live with that moniker, all were exonerated in 2002. The oldest of the defendants, Wise was tried as an adult though only 16 and learning disabled. He served over a decade in prison among an adult population, and his experience was “particularly horrific,” according to Anne-Marie Moyes, J.D., Director of the Korey Wise Innocence Project (KWIP), housed at the University of Colorado (CU) School of Law. KWIP is one of many “innocence projects” nationwide that offer pro bono legal representation to the wrongfully convicted.



Korey Wise

Moyes, a former Stapleton resident, worked as a public defender in Tennessee before coming to Colorado in 2017, and

began her role with KWIP this year. Although CU’s Innocence Project began in 2001, until Wise made a generous contribution in 2015, it was exclusively volunteer-run. “We screened cases, we processed applications, identified cases that we thought warranted some attention and then tried to find lawyers in the community that we thought would agree to take the cases and fully investigate and litigate.” With Wise’s gift came a new name and KWIP hired a full-time director to oversee the work of investigating applications, creating a database, and training students. “Now we are at the point where we are ramping up cases and beginning litigation.” KWIP presently has about 300 open/pending applications at some stage of review.

“In screening we try to identify cases where we feel both there is a credible case of innocence and viable avenues for exposing it...those two things are not always both true.” says Moyes. “The hope

is as you expose some wrongful convictions you are able to shed some light on the deeper problems in our criminal justice system, and be part of a movement for reform.”

KWIP only works on cases resulting from a conviction in Colorado. To be eligible, an individual must have exhausted their appeals and no longer be eligible for an attorney. The oldest conviction KWIP has reviewed dates to the 1970s. Unlike some innocence projects, KWIP does not exclusively deal with cases centering on DNA evidence.

A change Moyes would like to see in the criminal justice system is the practice of using “jailhouse snitch testimony.” “If you look at wrongful convictions, a high percentage involve that incentivized testimony...that’s an area where Colorado would benefit from passing some legislation where there would be some control over when [testimony from] incentivized witnesses, particularly people in custody who are profiting off their testimony....can be used.”

For more information about KWIP, to donate, or to learn about criteria for consideration, go to: [colorado.edu/law/academics/clinics/korey-wise-innocence-project](http://colorado.edu/law/academics/clinics/korey-wise-innocence-project)



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Another  
**Pedestrian  
Fatality at  
CPB Station**

*Are Bells, Lights, Gates  
and Signs Not Enough?*

By Martina Will, PhD

Passengers returning from the July 3 Rockies game on RTD's A-line train witnessed the second accidental train-pedestrian fatality at Central Park Station (and system-wide); in April a distracted passenger crossing the tracks was hit by a train. RTD's Chief Safety and Security Officer Mike Meader says video reveals the man hit by the train on July 3 saw the incoming train before choosing to cross the tracks. "He went to the first set [of gates]... looked in the direction of the train coming and...thought he could beat the train...he hesitated for just a second and then started running." Though first responders arrived within minutes, Meader confirms that the man died the following day.

Stapleton resident and daily A-line commuter Jessica Plante McGraw was on the train that hit the man. "I was thrilled when the A-line opened," she says. "But I was shocked that you have to walk across the

tracks to catch the train." She appreciates that personal responsibility is a factor in safety, but feels that not having train horns combined with the visual barrier created by the ticket kiosk make the station unsafe. "You see the train approaching, and you hear the crossing signals going, but the train itself is not that loud....at



the west side of that platform is the ticketing station. And so if you're approaching and you see your train in front of you and you hear and see the signals you think 'those lights and sounds are for the train that I'm staring at.' You're not thinking of the train that is coming from the opposite direction, that you can't see or hear....and you have that

ticketing station obstructing your view." Meader counters that visibility is not an issue. "If you walk...to where the pedestrian gates are, there is a very clear line of sight if you stop at the gate." He adds that bright flashing signs with the crossbuck symbol, bells sounding at an uncomfortable 86 decibels, and a sign that says, "second train coming" all alert people to incoming trains. Meader says RTD is always evaluating safety and is

considering some systems that will result in "behavioral modifications" to boost safety, including a "Z-gate" that funnels pedestrians in a Z-shape so they have to see oncoming trains. Pedestrian behavior, however, is critical to safety around trains. Even the best systems do not work if people choose to ignore them. "If your intention is to get across the tracks, be it a good idea or not, you're going to get across those tracks," he says.

Sam Goldsmith, who commutes to his Larimer Square office daily using the A-line, says he sees a lot of people racing for the train. Although he describes himself as "a pretty cautious individual," he admits that the rush to catch the train sometimes supplants caution. "As a matter of fact, today, if I had been with my wife or kid, I would have been yelled at because of how aggressive I was. I stood right by the train as it passed, and then literally opened the gate within a millisecond of it passing to catch it."

Goldsmith does see RTD security on site, however, trying to curb dangerous behaviors. He recalls staff recently

Left: A passenger running to catch his train stepped in front of an oncoming train after he passed through the gate pictured at left. RTD says the signals were working properly. With a ticket booth to the west, passengers need to step right up to the gate to fully view the tracks to the west. Below, passengers cross the tracks to exit. Below left: Flowers left on a gate in memorial to the man who died in July.



reprimanding a man skateboarding on the platform. He wonders if more tourists than locals are being unsafe, and suggests something like an audio or video loop to educate people, similar to the audio DIA tram riders hear, might reduce accidents. Goldsmith works in an industry that centers on risk mitigation and emphasizes the importance of effective education to change behavior.

RTD's Tina Jaquez says the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) mandates the creation of a Safety Management System (SMS) for certain rail operators receiving federal funds. According to the FTA website, "...the rule calls on agencies to

report their Safety Management Policy and processes for safety risk management, safety assurance and safety promotion." RTD has begun implementing SMS, which is a data-based, pro-active approach to safety that includes observing pedestrian behaviors system-wide. Central Park and Peoria St. stations, which have the most near-misses and are among the busiest stations, were among the first to be studied.



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### *When They See Us* (2019)

New York City of the 1980s was a turbulent and

tumultuous place, especially when it came to race relations. The Eleanor Bumpers case in 1984, the 1986 Michael Griffith incident, and the 1987 Tawana Brawley fiasco left the city tense and polarized. As a teenager growing up there at the time, I witnessed these events (and many others) firsthand. The worst of the decade, however, came at the end, with the case of the Central Park Five.

Ava Duvernay’s Netflix miniseries tells the unbelievable and heartbreaking story of five boys—four black and one Hispanic—who were falsely accused of raping a white woman on April 19, 1989. Trisha Melli, out jogging in Central Park that evening, was beaten, raped, and left for dead (itself a horrific story). Police arrested Kevin Richardson, 14; Raymond Santana, 14; Antron McCray, 15; Yusef Salaam, 15; and 16-year-old Korey Wise. The boys were interrogated, tried, found guilty, and sentenced to prison. Wise was sent directly to adult prison because he was 16, while the other boys first went to

juvenile detention. The polemical, divisive trial and subsequent conviction was front page news, and even NYC citizen Donald Trump took out a full-page ad in *The New*



*York Times* urging the death penalty for the boys. The boys always maintained their innocence, however, and the trial brought out wild inconsistencies and accusations of police coercion. In 2002, a confession by the actual assailant (along with conclusive DNA evidence) exonerated the boys and secured their release; later, they received a settlement from NYC. The actual story is intensely sordid and highlights the shocking callousness and racism of everyone involved—a pitch that Hollywood may have laughed at due to its implausibility. Duvernay’s docudrama injects much needed humanity into the *milieu*—it is an emotional, dense, hard-hitting, and beautifully made treatise to truth and injustice that exposes the sickening innards of the NY justice system. It is difficult to watch at times, and it dredges up all of the ugliness and division that was New York of the period. It is also an intensely visceral experience, and it made me sick.

The series itself is masterful in both its technical aspects as well as the acting, directing, and storytelling. I felt transported back to the period, and the pervasive realism and attention to detail were astonishing. Duvernay’s direction is flawless, especially the way in which she handles the young actors. And those young actors’ performances are astonishing—they inhabit their roles with a grit and tenderness rarely seen in such performances. More than anything, we sense the urgency in the characters. The entire production from top to bottom is nothing less than a revelation.

Beyond the production, the series has proven to be influential since its release in late May. Linda Fairstein, who led the Sex Crimes Unit at the time of the case, went on to be a successful author (and is ironically played by fresh felon Felicity Huffman). She is portrayed as

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racist and ruthless. Since the show aired, she was dumped by her publisher amid an outcry to investigate her entire record. Lead prosecutor Elizabeth Lederer (Vera Farmiga) is afforded more sympathy, although she prosecuted the case with vigor. Even though she still works for the D.A., she left her position as a Columbia University Lecturer amid protests against her. It seems as though at least *some* justice has been served. The one remaining person left in the universe who still does not admit to the boys' innocence, however, currently resides in the White House.

You will like this series if you enjoyed Ken Burns' documentary on the Central Park Five, *Chernobyl*, and/or *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Now playing on Netflix.

*The Mountain* (2018)

This interesting film from director Rick Alverson is a contemplative, slow-burn piece that features subtle and nuanced performances from an immensely talented and experienced cast. Alverson is known for thoughtful films that do not follow an



You will like this film if you enjoyed *The Sweet Hereafter*, *Martha Marcy May Marlene*, and/or *The Witch*.

Opens August 9 at the  
Sie Film Center.

*Vincent Piturro, PhD, is a Professor of Film and Media Studies at Metropolitan State University of Denver. He can be reached at [vpiturro@msudenver.edu](mailto:vpiturro@msudenver.edu).*

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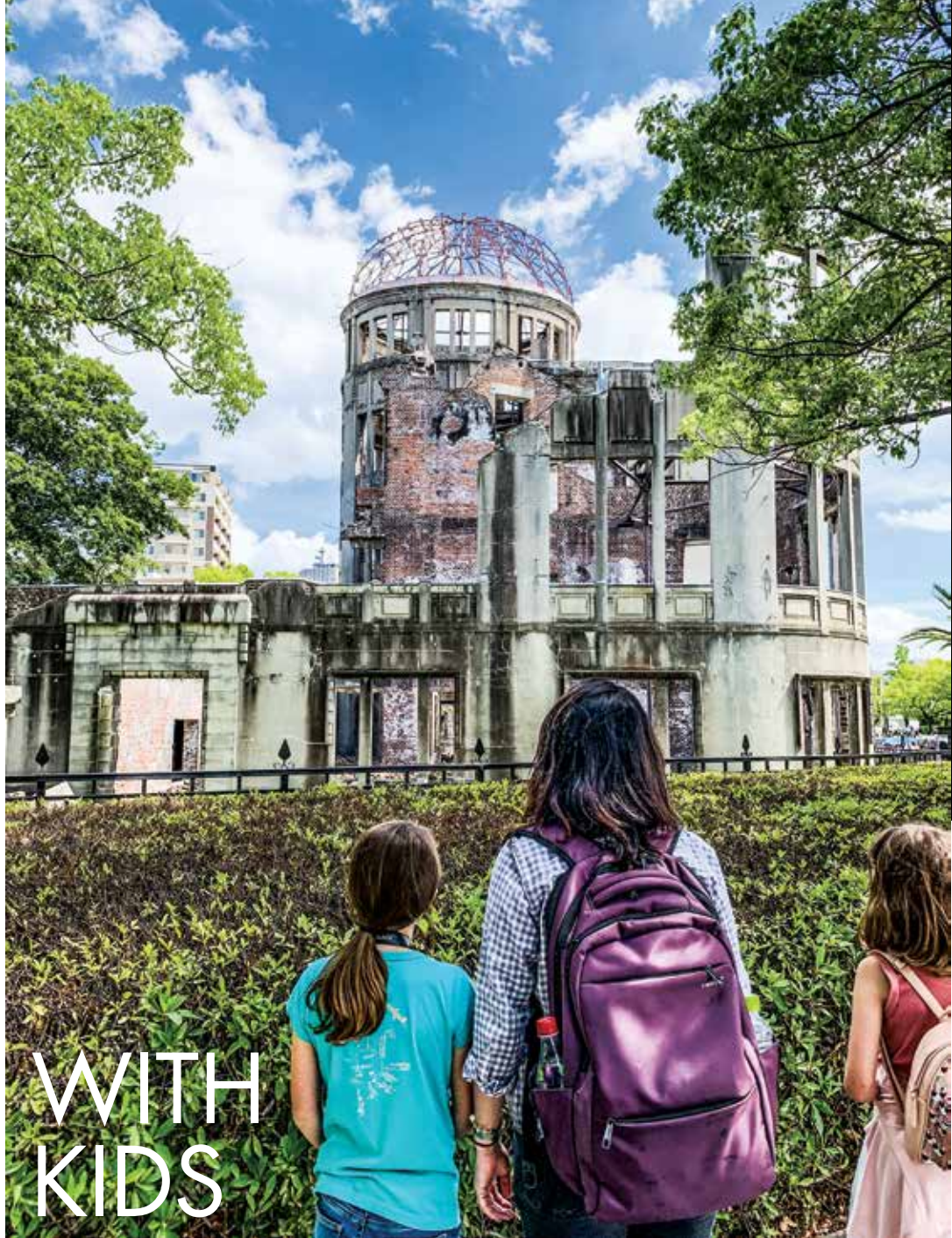


## CULTURAL TRAVEL

*Left:* My children, who typically flit through exhibits, deliberately read each panel describing stories and artifacts at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. Some may be too intense for children under 10.

*Right:* The walk from Hiroshima Station to the museum takes you past the Atomic Bomb Dome, the only structure left standing in the area where the first atomic bomb exploded on August 6, 1945.

Photos by Sara Blanchard



# DESTINATION JAPAN

## WITH KIDS

Japan, the land of sushi, anime, and kimonos—and so much more.

This summer, we decided to go beyond our usual visits to my Japanese mother's relatives, and take the children (ages 10 and 8) on a bit of a history tour.

### Hiroshima

With North Korean and Iranian nuclear escalation threats in the news, the main stop was Hiroshima. For my history buff daughter,

the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum moved her book knowledge about the horrors of nuclear warfare from her head into her heart. Her thoughts after visiting the museum: "The photographs of the children and the stories of survivors—describing the explosion, looking for relatives, seeing dead bodies in the river—were horrible. It was just a normal neighborhood like any of ours, and once the bomb was released, nobody could take it back. People need to know

about nuclear war because if something like this is going to happen again, I want people to fight it."

All of the exhibits have signs in English, and the children peppered us with questions during the walk to dinner. Hiroshima Station, like many major train stations in Japan, has a sophisticated food hall and array of restaurants. Hiroshima is known for its okonomiyaki (or, a Japanese savory pancake); it's a thin layer of batter and a lot

of cabbage over yakisoba noodles, with toppings including oysters, squid, and cheese. The adults loved the meal; the kids stuck with side helpings of fried noodles.

### The Floating Shrine

The day after the museum, we boarded a boat from the south end of Hiroshima to Miyajima, a small island less than an hour outside of the city. A designated UNESCO World Heritage Site, it's famous for Itsukushima shrine and its torii

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A view of the floating torii gate—the boundary between the human and spirit worlds—in low tide. Built originally in 1168, the great torii is undergoing renovations as of June 2019.



A snapshot of one course of our meal at a ryokan, where we wore traditional yukata; cooked fish, soup, rice, and pickled vegetables as palette cleansers, are just some of the staples.



The job of a maiko, or apprentice geisha, is to perform songs, dances, and play the shamisen for visitors; they are mainly located in Kyoto and Western Japan. We learned that as Japan has modernized, instead of beginning training in this honorable profession as youth, many maiko aren't starting until 18 years old; there is a risk that this ancient tradition may disappear if more young women do not choose this as a way of life.

gate, which are built over water and appear as if they're floating during high tide. Deer roam wild and were amenable to being petted as we walked along a street lined with souvenir shops to the spotless aquarium. There, we were wowed by the frequency of events including watching performing seals, holding starfish, and petting penguins—again, with easy access in English. The ocean breeze and wider, less crowded roads made it a wonderful break for all of us from busy city life in Japan.

### Traditions by the Sea of Japan

A night in a ryokan, or a traditional Japanese inn, while expensive, is worth it to experience traditional Japanese culture. Sleeping on a futon laid for you on a tatami floor, soaking in a communal hot spring bath onsen (though some ban people with tattoos), and eating artfully arranged, flavorful meals are just the ticket to unwinding from the bustle of life. We stayed in a ryokan by the western shores along the Sea of Japan, but there are plenty closer to Tokyo that are just a bullet train ride away and may have more tourist-friendly attitudes.

While in that western area—shaken the following week by a magnitude 6.5 earthquake—we took in a showing of maiko dancers. The maiko gracefully emerged onto the tatami flooring and, accompanied by a



shamisen player, performed three dances. Witnessing such living history firsthand impressed upon us the artistry and attention to detail that permeates Japanese culture. It takes maiko nearly two hours to dress in

layers of colorful silk kimonos, apply their heavy makeup, and decorate their hair—and they dress nearly every day for lessons and performances.

### Less History, More Fun

A visit to Japan offers more than its ancient history. The food and energy of Tokyo; the unique twist to the Disney franchise with Tokyo Disney Sea next door to Disneyland; and the summertime firework displays and festivals offer travelers a look at modern Japanese culture.

*Sara Blanchard is co-host of the Dear White Women podcast. If you have a story, or know of a NE Denver neighbor involved in interesting or surprising endeavors, please send a brief note to me@sarablanchard.com.*



Left: When entering a shrine, rinse both hands using the ladle at the purification fountain; transfer water into your hand to rinse your mouth and spit out beside the fountain and dump remaining water outside the fountain. Right: Japanese friends arranged for shuji, or calligraphy, lessons for us in Tokyo.



Front Porch – NE Denver

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# ...NE News Updates



By Martina Will, PhD and Carol Roberts

## 1 New Pizza Restaurant Coming to Stapleton's E. 29th Ave. Town Center

Pizzeria Locale, owned by Chipotle Mexican Grill, Inc. and Locale Boulder, is coming to the corner of E. 29th Place and Roslyn St, on the ground floor of The Mint Apartments. Notice is posted at 7505 E. 29th Place that Pizzeria Locale applied for a liquor license on June 21, 2019, and the hearing will take place August 5, 2019.

The restaurant has two other Denver locations, one on W. 32nd Ave. in the Highlands neighborhood and one at 550 Broadway. The menu offers individual red, white and build-your-own pizzas, along with salads, sides, wine, beer and other beverages. The website shows the hours for the other two Denver restaurants are 11am to 10pm daily and brunch is served Saturdays and Sundays from 11am to 3pm.

## 2 New Italian Restaurant Coming to Stanley Marketplace

The space vacated by Sazza at Stanley Marketplace earlier this year will soon have a new look and menu with a yet-unnamed Italian eatery. Chef Paul Reilly, Aileen Reilly, and JP Taylor, JR, who are the owners and operators of several Denver businesses, including beast+bottle, Coperta, and Pizzeria Coperta, recently announced their newest venture. No official opening date is set, but the restaurant will offer a diverse menu with pasta, Roman-style pizza, salads, panini, and antipasti. They will also offer home chefs the opportunity to purchase pizza dough and sauces, and will include a full bar menu. "We're incredibly excited to join a

great community, along with all of the possibilities the space has to offer," says Aileen Reilly.

## 3 New Chinese Dumpling Restaurant To Be Located on Montview in NW Aurora

Construction is underway on Mason's Dumplings, which will bring hand-rolled dumplings to the corner of Montview and Dayton in Aurora. The 3000-sq. ft. property will be at the site of the former Del Norte Bar. Owner Ker Zhu says that he hopes to finish construction and open the first metro area location of his family's dumpling business in December.

Zhu's family owns Luscious Dumplings, a Los Angeles favorite since 2001. Mason's, named for Zhu's 4-year-old son, will specialize in homemade dumplings, with a large variety of meat, vegetarian, and vegan options, as well as buns and rice dishes. The Aurora location will have a liquor license and a small bar. Its kitchen will eventually support two satellite locations.

"People want better food, and it's a good time to introduce more diversity into the Denver area," says Zhu, whose Denver family will manage the restaurant. "Dumplings are meant to be eaten on the spot, when they are fresh," he says. Mason's Dumplings is located at 9655 E. Montview.

## 4 Application for Medical Marijuana Cultivation near Stapleton

The Department of Excise and Licenses has notified Stapleton's registered neighborhood organization (Stapleton United Neighbors) that a medical marijuana cultivation business has a pending application to operate within 200 feet of Stapleton's boundaries. Vertical Investment Group LLC submitted the application for a business located at 5200 E. Smith Rd, Unit 100. If this application proceeds after initial review, a public hearing will be scheduled and SUN will be notified of the date and time. Any objections or comments to these types of applications must be presented in person at the scheduled public hearing. The Denver Revised Municipal Code does not require any kind of posting on the property for these types of businesses. The department will either approve or deny these types of applications based solely upon the ordinance criteria.



Mason's Dumplings



Mason's Dumplings

## 5 Nourish Co-op Dissolves

Nourish Co-op Members have voted to dissolve the venture and donate the funds that remain to the Denver Foundation. The Co-op, established in 2014, was unable to find a site for the proposed cooperative grocery store and lacked sufficient volunteers to serve on the board over the long process.

## 6 Park Hill Golf Course Sold to Developer

Clayton Early Learning, which has used revenue from a lease on the Park Hill Golf Course to support its program, determined they could best serve the needs of their program by selling the property. The sale to Westside Investment Partners closed July 11. That company says they will listen to stakeholders in the community about future use of the land. Mayor Hancock told the *Front Porch*: "The community had some discussions around this... I believe there was a consensus it would be a mixed use involving an appreciable percentage left for open space...we have the leverage to create or maintain some open space and we plan to do so."

## City/State Updates

### Women's Equality Day and Procession Aug. 26

Colorado women were the first in the nation to possess the right to vote after an 1893 referendum granted them that right; women in other states had to wait until 1920, when the 19th Amendment was passed. Colorado and the rest of the nation will celebrate 100 years of woman suffrage in 2020. History Colorado and the Center for Women's History at Byers-Evans House invite community groups and individuals to honor the bold women who marched for suffrage with a Woman Suffrage Procession around the Colorado Capitol on August 26.

According to History Colorado, "This modern-day procession will be the kick-off to our national centennial of woman suffrage in 2020 where we not only aim to highlight Colorado's suffrage contributions but how the movement is also a story about race, class, citizenship, gender, immigration, political identity, and values, and the intersections where those meet in our country's history." While celebrating women's suffrage, the voting rights of other populations also merit consideration. Native Americans did not possess U.S. citizenship until 1924 and were therefore unable to vote; even after 1924, restrictive state laws disenfranchised many Native people. Likewise, African Americans confronted poll taxes, literacy tests, and violent threats that kept them from voting for generations. These practices only began to end with the 1965 passage of the Voting Rights Act.

To participate in the procession, gather between 8:30-9:30 am at the Center for Colorado Women's History at Byers-Evans House, 1310 Bannock St., on Aug. 26th. Marchers will move to the Capitol and end at 11 am with a lecture, performances and more. For more information: <https://www.historycolorado.org/2020-womens-vote-centennial-colorado>

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# August and Early September Events

Events were submitted online. Please double check dates and times using contact info provided.

## NE DENVER/NW AURORA EVENTS

**8/1 Thursday—Denver Burger Battle.** Denver Burger Battle has one simple goal: Determine the BEST burger in Colorado. denverburgerbattle.com. 2501 Dallas St., Aurora

**8/2 to 8/30—Swingin' Friday Nights.** Join Eastbridge Town Center and Swingin' Denver on Fridays. Free Swing Lessons 7–7:30pm. Live Music 7:30–9:30pm. eastbridgetowncenter.com. 10155 East 29th Dr.

**8/3 Saturday—Councilman Herndon's Family Bike Parade.** 9–11:30am. Starts at The Green at 29th & Roslyn in Stapleton. Ends at Smiley Campus, 2540 Holly St. with food, music, games and more! 720-337-8888

**8/3 Saturday—Northfield Safety Expo.** 10am–2pm. Located at 7950 Northfield Blvd. on Main Street. Bringing the community together to promote police-community partnerships. 720-913-1417

**8/3 to 8/4—Summer Sidewalk Sale at Stanley Marketplace.** 2nd annual Summer Sidewalk Sale at Stanley Marketplace. 2501 Dallas St., Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

**8/4 Sunday—City Park Jazz.** City Park Pavilion, 1700 N. York St. 6–8pm. Last concert of the season.

**8/7 Wednesday—Paint Your Own Masterpiece at the Sistine Chapel Exhibition.** A how-to-paint exercise inspired by Michelangelo's frescoes. The Hangar at Stanley, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

**8/8 & 8/22—Knitting Circle.** 5:30–7:30pm Bring your knitting or crochet project and join other crafters in conversation. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

**8/9 Friday—Denver Days Community Resource Fair and Ice Cream Social.** 3:30–5:30pm Celebrate the end of summer with ice cream, games, photo booths and a scavenger hunt for the kids! denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

**8/9 to 8/10—Holy Opera! in the Sistine Chapel.** A sonic experience fea-

turing some of Denver's greatest opera singers. Musical selections ranging from classics to popular favorites. The Hangar at Stanley, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

**To 8/13—Sistine Chapel Reproductions.** Open daily at The Hangar at Stanley. \$16 for general admission; \$12 for seniors, active military, and students with valid ID; and \$10 for groups of 10 or more. Same-day tickets available. chapelsistine.com. 2501 Dallas St., Aurora.

**8/13 Tuesday—Greater Stapleton Business Association Monthly Meeting.** 8am. An association of businesses in the Stapleton area whose purpose is to support each other and our neighbors. stapletonbusiness.com, Sam Gary Library 2961 Roslyn St.

**8/16 Friday—Willow Elementary Naming Event.** High Tech Elementary School renaming ceremony 5–5:30pm. 8499 Stoll Pl. amy\_gile@dpsk12.org

**8/18 Sunday—Sam Gary Literary Book Club.** 2pm. August Title: Just Mercy. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

**8/22 Thursday—"Where'd you go Bernadette" – Moms' Movie Night Out.** Tickets \$25 - \$8 donated back to the school of your choice. Includes swag bag & drawings. 5:30pm & 8:00pm showings. momsnightoutproductions.com. Harkins Theaters Northfield 18, 8300 E. Northfield Blvd.

**8/21 Wednesday—Kindness Club.** 4–5pm. Our inter-generational, all-ages club will focus on kindness to teacher by making them thank-you treats. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

**Every Thursday thru 8/29—Park Hill Farm & Flea.** A Thursday Night Market featuring local makers, food purveyors and more. Every Thursday this Summer in the Oneida Park. 4–9pm. parkhillfarmandflea.com, 2231 Oneida St.

**Every Thursday thru 8/29—Free Summer Music Series at Stanley.** On the West Patio from 7–9pm. stanleymarketplace.com

Visit our online calendar to view more events. Events submitted by the 17th of the month are considered for printing as space allows. [FrontPorchNE.com](http://FrontPorchNE.com) > Events

**Every Friday thru 8/30—Stanley Farmers Market.** 9am–1pm. In the South-east Plaza. stanleymarketplace.com

**9/7 to 9/8—Stanley Arts Festival.** 90 national juried artists, family activities, live performances and interactive art. Free admission. stanleyartsfestival.org. Stanley Marketplace, on the border of Stapleton and Aurora.

## METRO EVENTS

**8/2 Friday—First Friday Art Walks.** Santa Fe Arts District, Tennyson Art Walk, River North (RiNo) Art District, Golden Triangle Museum, Navajo Street Art District. denver.org/things-to-do/denver-arts-culture/denver-art-districts

**Weekends thru 8/4—Colorado Renaissance Festival.** Larkspur. coloradorenaissance.com

**8/6 Tuesday—National Night Out.** 5–8pm at Silverman Park located, 12875 E Andrews Dr. Bringing our community together to promote police-community partnerships. 720-913-1417.

**8/10 Saturday—Hops in the Hangar.** Annual beer festival with unlimited tastings from 20+ local craft breweries & live music. wingsmuseum.org. Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum.

**8/10 Saturday—Daughters of the American Revolution Workshop for Prospective Members.** 1:30–3:30pm. Please RSVP to: Ella Margaret Cron: 303-771-7476 or Cheryl Vogtman: drags59@yahoo.com. Montview Presbyterian Boulevard Church, 1980 Dahlia St.

**8/12 Monday—Movie Madness at Infinity Park.** Free, gates open 6:30pm, movies start at 7:30. Princess Bride. Infinity Park, Glendale. Details at: infinityparkatglendale.com

**8/21 Wednesday—Moms Demand Action meeting.** 7pm to discuss school safety for the upcoming school year. momsdemandaction.org. 430 W 9th Ave.

**8/24 Saturday—Arts and Ales.** 10am–6pm at the Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities. arvadacenter.org

**8/25 Sunday—Affordable Arts Festival.** ALL art \$100 or LESS! 9am–3pm, Arapahoe Community College in Littleton. \$10 to attend, proceeds support ACC Foundation Scholarship Program. affordableartsfestival.com

**9/7 Saturday—Havana Nights.** The Rocky Mountain Children's Law

Center invites you to Havana Nights, an event that will make you feel like you're in Havana. havananightsdenver.com. 4001 Forest St,

**To 10/12—Free composting classes.** Wednesdays and Saturdays thru mid-Oct. Classes at Denver Compost Demonstration Site, Gove Community Garden, 13th Ave. and Colorado Blvd. Sign up: 303.292.9900 or dug.org/compost.

## HEALTH, WELLNESS, FITNESS

**8/3 Saturday—Run for the Ring 5K & Kids Fun Run.** Supporting The Guild of the Children's Diabetes Foundation. childrensdiabetesfoundation.org. Anschutz Medical Campus, 1775 Aurora Ct, Aurora

**8/3 to 12/31—Yoga en Español—Yoga, delivered in Spanish.** All levels Vinyasa class, entirely instructed in Spanish. Meets weekly on Saturdays at 1:15pm, \$15 drop in, Free for CorePower Yoga Members. 7485 E 29th St. corepoweryoga.com. (continued on page 22)

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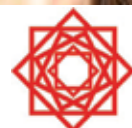
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HEALTH, WELLNESS, FITNESS  
(continued from page 21)

**8/11 Sunday—Puppy Yoga at Stanley.** Join Kindness Yoga on the west lawn of Stanley Marketplace for Moms and Mutts: Colorado Rescue for Pregnant and Nursing Dogs. stanleymarketplace.com

**8/16 to 8/18—Wellness Your Way Festival.** Work out with fitness experts, get tips from chefs, learn what wellness means for you. \$10/day, kids under 12 free. wellnessyourwayfestival.com. Colorado Convention Center, 700 14th St.

**To 8/27—Learn To Row Youth Program.** 13-18 years. Mile High Rowing is offering Learn to Row Programs morning & afternoon sessions available for 13-18 at Cherry Creek Reservoir. MileHighRowing.org, Creek Reservoir, Greenwood Village.

**Wellness Wednesdays thru 8/28—Summer@DEN.** A different class each week from 11:30am-12:30pm. On the Denver International Airport open-air plaza, between the terminal and the Westin. flydenver.com, 8500 Peña Blvd.

KIDS AND FAMILIES

**Every Tuesday—Tattered Tales Storytime.** 30 minutes of stories, activities and snacks. 10:30am,

2526 East Colfax Ave. tatteredcover.com

**Every Thursday—Star K Kids.** 9:30 and 11am; kids 5 and under. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E. Smith Rd., Aurora. auroragov.org

**Storytimes! At Bookies.** Every Tues. 10:30am, Sat. at 4pm. Free. The Bookies Bookstore, 4315 E. Mississippi Ave. 303.759.1117, thebookies.com

**8/3 Saturday—Home Depot Kids Workshop.** 9am-12pm. FREE how-to clinics first Sat. monthly, ages 5-12. Get Home Depot apron, wooden project and project pin. Metro-area Home Depot stores. homedepot.com

**To 8/10—Denver Public Libraries Summer of Reading.** Free activities, suggestions for summer reading, incentives for Denver kids, 3 age groups. FREE.. summerofreading.org

**8/11 Sunday—Bully Prevention Workshop, Kids Ages 8-12.** Combining bully prevention with self defense, students will proactively work through different scenarios. 3-6pm. \$60/person. 2831 Hanover St. campbell@momsnightoutproductions.com

**8/11 Sunday—Jr. Rangers.** 9:30-11am; kids 6-12. Learn all about bats. Morrison Nature Center, 16002 E. Smith Rd., Aurora. auroragov.org

**8/11 Sunday—Weekend Family Tour at Clyfford Still Museum.** For children ages 5-10

and their caregivers. Every tour features games, interactive looking, and an art project to take home. 1250 Bannock St. clyffordstillmuseum.org

**8/14 Wednesday—Create Playdate at the Denver Art Museum.** Ages 3-5. Meet up with other tots and their grownups for story time, art making, and more. denverartmuseum.org. 100 W 14th Ave. Pkwy.

**8/15 Thursday—Family Film Night at the JCC Denver.** An "incredible" night of Pixar magic with family and friends. Everyone welcome. jccdenver.org. Staenberg-Loup Jewish Community Center, 350 S. Dahlia St.

**8/17 Saturday—PB&K – Pregnancy, Baby & Kids Community Event.** Meet local doctors, dentists and family friendly businesses at Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children. 2001 N. High St. denverpbk@gmail.com

**8/20 Tuesday—Little Wings: Let's Be Pilots.** 9-10am. Kids 2-4 with adult. Learn the difference between flying and gliding. Wings Over the Rockies Museum. wingsmuseum.org

**8/23 Friday—Baby Yoga.** 10:30-11am. Learn how to do yoga with your babies and toddlers. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library 2961 Roslyn St.

**To 8/24—Denver Puppet Theater.** The Day It Snowed Tortillas. 3156 W. 38th Ave. denverpuppettheater.com

**8/25—Fourth Sundays at Four Mile Historic Park.** Explore and enjoy story time and a craft for the youngsters. Adults \$7, youth (7-17) \$5, under 6 free. Get here early! 715 S Forest St. fourmilepark.org

**To 9/29—SummerSkate Outdoor Roller Skating Rink.** Open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings. bceproductions.com. 47th & Verbena.

LECTURES, CLASSES, INFORMATIONAL EVENTS

**8/2 or 8/9—Women-only Self Defense Class.** Learn practical techniques using effective strikes to defend yourself in close and mid-range attacks. These techniques will prepare you to recognize and prevent potentially dangerous situations. 6-8pm. \$55. buytickets.at/rep. The Bar Method, 8370 Northfield Blvd. Ste. 1760.

**8/4 Sunday—Mother & Daughter Self Defense Class.** Learn practical techniques using effective strikes to defend themselves in close and mid-range attacks. 4-6pm. Recommended ages for daughters 8+. \$40/person. buytickets.at/rep. Aviator Park East, 8054 E. 28th Ave.

**8/6 Tuesday—Active Minds presents: Climate Change.** Examine the climate predictions and the politics given the US withdrawal from the Paris climate accord. 10-11am. activeminds.com. Jewish Community Center, 350 S Dahlia St.

**8/8 Thursday—Active Minds: Tuskegee Airmen.** 1-2pm. These African American pilots were the first black military aviators in the U.S. armed forces. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

**8/15 Thursday—Active Minds presents: Japan.** Trace the evolution of the modern Japanese state from its ancient roots to the present. 2-3pm. activeminds.com. Windsor Gardens, 597 S Clinton St.

**8/15 Thursday—Financial Empowerment: Financial Planning.** 6:30-7:30pm. Investment-driven aspirations are unique from one person to the next. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

**8/22 Thursday—Active Minds: Climate Change.** 6:30-7:30pm. Examine the climate predictions and the politics given the US withdrawal from the Paris climate accord. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

**8/24 Saturday—For Beginners Art Collecting And American Fashion Museums.** Presented by Denver fashion designer Maggie Burns and J. Paul Getty Museum educated Emzy Yeazy. Ross-University Hills Branch Library, 4310 E. Amherst Ave. oilwells3@hotmail.com

**8/25 Sunday—Ukulele Workshop (No Experience Required).** 2-3:30pm. Your ukulele or ours, we will teach you how to play. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

**8/26 Monday—Advanced Directives: Workshop.** 2pm. Interactive learning experience that creatively approaches the difficult questions that we all need to answer about our end-of-life healthcare wishes. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

**8/31 Saturday—Enhancing Mobility with Denver B-cycle.** 2-3pm. Learn about Denver B-cycle, a 501(c)3 non-profit with the mission of enhancing mobility while promoting sustainability, quality of life, equity, and the environment. denverlibrary.org. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St.

MUSEUMS

**8/1 Thursday—Colorado Day at History Colorado Center.** Celebrate Colorado's birthday with music, dancing, food and free admission. historycolorado.org

**8/2 Friday—Cultural First Fridays: Native Americano.** 5-9pm. Museo de las Americas. museo.org

**To 8/4—Our Senses: Creating Your Reality.** Free with general admission. Denver Museum of Nature and Science. dmns.org

**8/8 Thursday—Art & About at the Denver Art Museum.** Tours designed for visitors with early-stage Alzheimer's or dementia and their care partners. denverartmuseum.org. 100 W. 14th Ave. Pkwy.



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**To 8/9—Beer Here! Brewing the New West.** More than just a tale of ale, this is a story of Colorado—told over a few beers. History Colorado, 1200 Broadway. historycolorado.org

**8/10 Saturday—Cockpit Demo Day.** 10am–2pm, Wings over the Rockies Museum, Lowry. wingsmuseum.org

**8/14 Wednesday—Insiders Tour: Death in the Dining Room.** Molly Brown House Museum, 1340 Pennsylvania St. Register at mollybrown.org

**8/16 Friday—Unplugged: Meditation at the Denver Art Museum.** Join the Kadampa Meditation Center in an hour-long guided meditation in the exhibition “Jordan Casteel: Returning the Gaze.” denverartmuseum.org. 100 W. 14th Ave. Pkwy.

**8/20 Tuesday—Mindful Looking at the Denver Art Museum.** Explore light, the American West, and humankind’s relationship with nature in this unusual desert landscape by Colorado painter Don Stinson. denverartmuseum.org. 100 W. 14th Ave. Pkwy.

**To 8/25—Serious Play at the Denver Art Museum.** Presenting the concept of playfulness in postwar American design as a catalyst for creativity and innovation. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/serious-play

**To Labor Day—Kids Free Summer!** Kids 18 and under get free admission. History Colorado Center, 1200 Broadway. historycolorado.org

MUSEUM FREE DAYS

**Monday—Friday—The Money Museum.** Closed weekends and bank holidays. 1020 16th St. kansascityfed.org

**Tuesday—Sunday—Aurora History Museum.** 15051 E.Alameda Pkwy,Aurora, auroragov.org

**8/3 Saturday—Urban Farm SCFD Free Day.** Open to the public for self-guided tours. 10am–1pm. theurbanfarm.org. 10200 Smith Rd.

**8/3 Saturday—Denver Art Museum Free SCFD First Saturday.** Free general admission tickets are available on-site starting at 10am. Free for kids 18 and younger every day. Denver Art Museum, 100 W 14 Ave Pkwy. 720-865-5000, denverartmuseum.org

**8/3 Saturday—Clifford Still Museum SCFD Free Day.** 1250 Bannock St. cliffordstillmuseum.org

**8/6 Tuesday—The Children’s Museum Free Evening.** 4–8pm. mychildsmuseum.org

**8/6 Tuesday—Chatfield Farms SCFD Free Day.** 8500 W Deer Creek Canyon Rd., Littleton. botanicgardens.org

**8/9 Friday—Four Mile Historic Park SCFD Free Day.** 715 S. Forest St. fourmilepark.org

**8/10 Saturday—Denver Firefighters Museum SCFD Free Day.** 1326 Tremont Pl. denverfirefightersmuseum.org

**8/15 Thursday—Plains Conservation Center SCFD Free Day.** Noon–4:30pm. 21901 E. Hampden Ave., Aurora. botanicgardens.org

**8/26 Monday—Denver Museum of Nature & Science SCFD Free Day.** 2001 Colorado Blvd. dmns.org

**9/3 Tuesday—Botanic Gardens SCFD Free Day.** Free until 9pm. 1007 York St. botanicgardens.org

PERFORMANCE/THEATRE

**8/4 Sunday—Law and Disorder.** One Night Stand Theater, 7pm at Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St. in Aurora. onenightstandtheater.org

**To 8/4—Crowns.** A gospel musical. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St,Aurora. vintagetheatre.org

**8/8—In Transit: A Free Event Presented by Miners Alley Playhouse and The Curious Theatre Company.** An entry point to conversation around LGBTQ+ issues. curious-theatre.org. At the Miners Alley Playhouse, 1224 Washington Ave.

**To 8/17—William Shakespeare’s Richard III.** By Lost and Found Productions, at the John Hand Theater, 7653 E 1st Pl. facebook.com/LostnFoundProductions/

**To 8/18—Emma.** A romantic comedy. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St,Aurora. vintagetheatre.org

**8/31 to 9/28—Edward Albee’s Three Tall Women.** Friday/Saturday 7:30pm, Sunday 2pm. John Hand Theater, 7653 E. 1st Pl. firehousetheatercompany.com, 303-562-3232

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**8/3—Sand Creek Greenway Volunteer Work Days.** For more info, email cgarwood@sandcreekgreenway.org or to

sandcreekgreenway.org/upcoming-volunteer-opportunities/

**Mentoring high-performing, low-income students.** Minds Matter is recruiting our next class of college access mentors to help high-performing, low-income high school. mindsmatterdenver.org

**Volunteers Needed at Ronald McDonald Family Rooms at Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children.** At Presbyterian/St. Luke’s Hospital. Seeks volunteers for once-a-week commitment, 6-month minimum. 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

**Reading Volunteers Needed.** For students in K-8 grade. 1 hour, 1 student, 1x week. During school hours. julie@partnersinliteracy.org or 303.316.3944 ext. 241.

**Project Worthmore.** Nonprofit organization of committed community members give, volunteer, mentor, befriend refugee neighbors. 1609 Havana St., St. 720-460-1393

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**08.07**  
Paint Your Own Masterpiece | 7 p.m.

**08.09 & 08.10**  
Holy Opera! Curated by Leah Podzimek | 7 p.m.

**08.10**  
Tour of the Sistine Chapel for Children | 8:30 a.m.

**08.13**  
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By Amanda Allshouse, President,  
Stapleton United Neighbors

What can SUN do for you?

Stapleton United Neighbors (SUN) is a Registered Neighborhood Organization (RNO) regulated by Chapter 12 / Article III of the Revised Municipal Code of the City of Denver. Any owner of real property and/or any resident located within the neighborhood boundaries are considered to be SUN members; there are no membership dues.

Members of the SUN board want to hear from individual residents – what can Stapleton United Neighbors do to make this community an even better, healthier, socially responsible, good neighbor in northeast Denver? Suggestions could include a topic for discussion at a monthly meeting or for a special speaker. Ultimately, SUN seeks to improve its presence, representation of all residents, and resident awareness of all things neighborly.

Please consider attending SUN's next monthly meeting: August 20, 2019, 6:30-8:30pm, at Central Park Recreation Center. All SUN meetings are open to the community, and participation is welcome.

# The SUN Spot

The independent voice of Stapleton

Brought to you by Stapleton United Neighbors

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)

August SUN News

SUN has had many successes since being established in 2005. SUN organizes annual community meetings in May along with Brookfield/Forest City, the Master Community Association (MCA) and the Stapleton Citizens' Advisory Board (CAB) to present updates on residential and commercial/retail development. SUN's Sustainability committee has sponsored programs for a greener community, more recently with program support from the Sustainable Neighborhoods Program with the City of Denver. SUN's Transportation committee works with Brookfield/Forest City and the City of Denver on many traffic and transportation issues. SUN's Education committee advocates for strong public schools, plans to host a second annual school board candidate forum this fall,

and historically helped gain approval for Swigert International School in 2009, and Isabella Bird Community School in 2013. SUN's Inclusivity and Diversity committee has hosted two annual days of reflection, and this fall will work with student government at Northfield High School to promote a culture of inclusivity and diversity across schools in the community. Historically, SUN's Block Captain Network has been a working grass-roots neighborhood communication tool, however in the era of social media and Nextdoor, and as the community has expanded, management of the block captain network has been a challenge. SUN is currently seeking to reemphasize the importance of the Denver Police Neighborhood Watch program, which also utilizes block captains. SUN

also historically sponsored an annual charity community kick-ball tournament which, over the years, has supported The Urban Farm, Sand Creek Greenway, Bluff Lake Nature Center, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Colorado Children's Hospital, Stapleton Schools, and Station 26 firehouse. SUN holds a voting seat on the Citizens' Advisory Board (CAB) of Stapleton Development Corporation (SDC), the nonprofit entity created by the Denver City Council in 1995 to oversee the disposition of the former Stapleton International Airport. SUN board members are represented on the Parks Advisory Group, the Zoning and Planning Committee, the Housing Diversity Committee and the Greater Stapleton Business Association. SUN is coordinating a speaker at a fall SUN meeting to describe ongoing work of the Westerly Creek Metropolitan District. What other involvement of SUN board members would improve Stapleton and Northeast Denver? [www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.com](http://www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.com) [StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com](mailto:StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com), *Language in this article was contributed by former SUN board president Steve Lawrence, and current SUN board members Tally Lawing and Amanda Allshouse.*

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Theo Sam, 9, checks out the dried skin left in a tree by a lilac ash borer.

By Martina Will, PhD

Theo Sam, an inquisitive 9-year old, has many ideas and questions about the world around him. When he spotted holes in a tree near his mailbox, he puzzled over them briefly before beginning to investigate. In fact, that distinctive 1/4 inch round hole Sam observed was the exit hole of the lilac ash borer. The larvae tunnel through and feed on the ash tree before emerging and leaving their pupal skin.

Sara Davis, a forester with the City of Denver Parks and Recreation says that this insect differs from the more notorious emerald ash borer. “It’s a native pest, and there are controls,” she says. Davis notes that about 15% of Denver’s trees are ash trees, but that the city hasn’t allowed planting of ashes in over 10 years, since the emerald ash infestation first hit the Midwest. The lilac ash borer is common in Stapleton and Northeast Denver trees, however, which tend to be young (15-20 years old) and more susceptible to the pest. Infestation does not mean that a tree will die, and provided it is discovered early enough, professional treatment can save these trees. Older, more established trees can typically fight off the infestation.

The emerald ash borer, says Davis, is from Asia and is a far more destructive species. She points out that in Asia, its natural predators (a small breed of wasp) prevent the beetle from wreaking havoc on trees the way

# Lilac Ash Borers



it has since finding its way to the U.S. in 2002. First found in Detroit, the Arbor Day Foundation estimates it has destroyed 40 million ash trees just in Michigan since then. Emerald ash borers leave tree bark looking like it is splitting, and you will typically see “wavy galleries where larvae have chewed thorough the bark,” according to Davis.

Though the emerald ash borer has been detected in Boulder County, it remains about 15 miles from Denver’s northern border at this time. Davis recommends that homeowners who love their trees hire a licensed tree care professional to determine if their trees need to be treated to prevent or cure these and other infestations. She reminds homeowners, too, that trees in the public right of way (“tree lawn”) are public property and the adjacent homeowner is responsible for care and maintenance of these trees. Removal of trees in the public right of way require a city permit.

“We live in an engineered forest,” says Davis, who talks about Denver’s trees as part of an ecosystem most residents probably take a little for granted. Davis, who holds degrees in environmental horticulture and urban forestry, says that

urban foresters like herself “look at the whole of a city as a forest...the tree canopy is connected and creates corridors for people and wildlife.”

For Sam, the world around him is intriguing, but he shares that he is really more interested in “prehistoric underwater creatures...not dinosaur times but before; I like land creatures too...but underwater was one of the first places life evolved.” He hopes to become a paleontologist so he can study Colorado’s prehistoric life.

## Questions About Trees?

Enter your property address in Denver’s tree inventory to learn what trees live on your public right of way: <https://denverco.mytreekeeper.com/>

If you have space in your public right of way, you can see if you are eligible for a free 15-gal. tree from the city: <https://beasmartash.org/>

The nonprofit organization The Park People offers low-cost trees: [www.theparkpeople.org](http://www.theparkpeople.org)

Approved Street Tree List for Denver’s Public Right-of-Way: [http://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/747/documents/forestry/Street\\_tree\\_guide.pdf](http://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/747/documents/forestry/Street_tree_guide.pdf) (Note: There is a column in the tree species list labeled “Water Quality Area.” Trees with an “x” in this column are trees that are good at improving water quality).

For general information on common diseases or pests contact the Denver County CSU Extension office: Colorado Master Gardener Help Line; [envermg@ext.colostate.edu](mailto:envermg@ext.colostate.edu) 720.913.5278

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# Public art roams the prairie “Wind

Left: Artist Rodrigo Nava prepares to expand the weathered steel elements of his sculpture.

Above: Nava welds seams on the expanded sculpture.

Below: Installation of the First Light array.



By Barbara Neal

The Wind Gate Art Suite by Rodrigo Nava, from Putney, VT, consists of three distinct sculpture arrays installed in Stapleton’s new neighborhood north of 56th Avenue. The arrays are: *First Light*, *The Five*, and *Beyond the Plains*.

*First Light*, a series of nine dramatic shapes striding to the east northeast is the

first component of this public artwork commissioned for these new neighborhoods. Look for them between 56th Drive and 59th Place near Dallas Street. The largest of the sculpture arrays, “First Light” is composed of a series of 12-foot-high weathered steel sculptures that traverse a 100-foot long trajectory. They cut a bold swath across the landscape,

bringing attention to the site. Installed in March, in spite of the “bomb cyclone,” *First Light* has already become a focal point for the site.

In order to accommodate soil conditions and weather constraints the installation of the second and third sculpture arrays occurred in June.

*The Five*, a series of five sculptures, each

six feet tall and arranged in a semi-circle, support complex compositions of folded and expanded weathered steel forms. The grouping of shapes leaning upon one another evokes the notion of community, a core concept in Stapleton. *The Five* is sited in the The Bluffs north of 57th Drive.

*Beyond the Plains* in the North Commons lawn, north of 59th Place, features three

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in newest Stapleton neighborhood

# Gate”

Right: The *First Light* array is located between 56th Dr. and 59th Pl. near Dallas St.

Below: *The Five*, a circular grouping of five sculptures

Below Right: One of the three sculptures in the grouping of *Beyond the Plains*

six foot high zigzag forms that are composed as a herd. This grouping, by giving the impression of energy and motion alludes to the bison in the nearby Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.

Each of the sculptures was welded together in Nava’s Vermont studio and then transported to Denver. Then, as indicated in the photos, the artist expanded the forms to achieve these



robust shapes. The beautiful, multicolored patina characteristic of the weathered steel sculpture relates to the landscape in both obvious and subtle ways. Each of the three sculpture arrays features distinct geometries in form and composition at each site creating unique shadows within the landscape. The Wind Gate Art Suite is harmonious in the landscape, aptly enhancing the prairie identity of this location.

Park Creek Metropolitan District awarded the \$300,000 commission for this artwork on the recommendation of an art selection committee composed of artists, engineers, landscape architects, representatives from Denver Parks and neighbors from this area. The funds for this commission come from the Denver Urban Renewal Authority. Thanks also go to the many engineers, designers and architects who assisted Rodrigo with technical knowledge of this site and installation of the three components of sculpture arrays that comprise this unique artwork.

For more information about this sculpture or the Public Art Collection at Stapleton, please contact Barbara Neal, Public Art Consultant for Stapleton at [barbneal@mindspring.com](mailto:barbneal@mindspring.com).

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