



Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

Parents and Students Demand School Safety

Danny Foster, flanked by East High School students Kayden Robinson (left) and Isreal Blake, speaks to a reporter outside a Denver Public Schools board meeting held at Emily Griffith High School on April 17. Foster is on the steering committee for Resign DPS, a group that is asking for all school board members to resign.

Two recent incidents of gun violence at East High School, which left one student dead and two faculty members wounded, has mobilized thousands of students, parents, teachers, and administrators. They are demanding that Denver Public Schools swiftly enact significant changes to make schools safer. One group of parents thinks the current school board is so dysfunctional that all members should immediately resign. *Story by Mary Jo Brooks on page 4.*



Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

Mayoral and City Council Runoff Election

Following a debate by city council candidates at the New Hope Baptist Church in Northeast Denver on April 22, Mike Johnston and Kelly Brough engaged in a mayoral candidate debate. Each candidate was asked one question by each member of a Black leaders panel and had two minutes to elaborate on their platforms and ideas for leading Denver as the next city mayor. *Story by Brian Heuberger on page 6.*



Photo courtesy of the Lockwood family

Semi-Nomadic Lifestyle Suits this NE Denver Family

The Lockwoods travel year-round to explore new sites and experiences, such as on this long-tail boat in Thailand. *Story by Martina Will on page 10.*

Insurance Rates Rising due to Increased Car Crimes

Story by Mary Jo Brooks on page 18.

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Bird Sightings

Generously donated by George Ho

Welcoming Spring

Daylight has been lengthening since the Winter Solstice of Dec. 21, 2022. March 20, 2023 marked the Spring Equinox. Spring signifies renewal, awakening, and the beginning of new lives. Birds exhibit behaviors that welcome spring, such as singing, courtship, and migration. The songs of the American Robins become ubiquitous, Western Meadowlarks sing, and the Red-winged Blackbirds join in the chorus. Spring reveals the vibrant colors of their plumage: the rich rufous breast of the robin, the bright yellow of the meadowlark with the black V on the neck, and the vivid red and yellow on the blackbird's wings.

Even the drab Song Sparrow welcomes spring with constant singing.

Western Meadowlark

Male Red-winged Blackbird

Song Sparrow singing continuously

Above: American Robin

Left: Great Horned Owl sitting in nest

Left: Great Blue Herons nesting and mating

Bird Walks

May 6 and June 3. Two options: 8–10am or 7:30–10am (choose a 2-hour or a 2.5-hour walk.) Both walks are free but you must RSVP at www.blufflake.org/birdwatching. All are welcome. Bring your own binoculars, or borrow a pair from your guide. 11255 MLK Blvd. Search FrontPorchNE.com for “Bird Sightings” to see all the past bird stories and photos from George Ho.

May 2023

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Front Porch – NE Denver

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Parents and Students Demand School Safety



Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

At the April 17 DPS board meeting, Brian Fun, a registered nurse at East High School, talks about how he and his assistant were the first on the scene to treat the bullet wounds of two colleagues who had been shot by a student as they were searching his backpack on March 22.

By Mary Jo Brooks

Kayden Robinson, a junior at East High School, has been doing all he can to raise awareness about violence and gun safety issues that have been plaguing Denver schools. He signed a petition asking school board members to resign. He lobbied for gun safety legislation at the state Capitol. And he protested outside a recent school board meeting. “I hope to help create change so we can feel safe at school again.” He says the school board has been too politicized and never should have removed the Safety Resource Officers (SROs) from schools. “That was a huge mistake.”

Anger has been growing after two recent incidents of gun violence at East High School, which left one student dead and two administrators wounded. Thousands of students, parents, teachers, and administrators are demanding that leaders at Denver Public Schools (DPS) take action to make schools safer.

One newly-formed group called “Resign DPS” thinks the current school board is so dysfunctional that board members should resign. Formed by a group of East parents, including Heather Lamm, the group collected 1,600 signatures within 36 hours of forming and now has active members from dozens of DPS schools. They hope to have at least 15,000 signatures in the next few weeks. “We want the board to realize they’ve lost the confidence of people in Denver,” says Lamm. “The board is not keeping kids safe.”

While she acknowledges it’s unlikely that board members will resign en masse, she hopes a few will—or at least some might not run for re-election. She also hopes the petition drive will increase awareness so voters understand why school board elections matter. “This board has violated open meeting laws. They haven’t had any conversations with the community about new safety protocols. Perhaps most importantly, they aren’t even listening to their own principals and teachers about what needs to be done.”

Dozens of parents and students flocked to an April 17 school board meeting to express their dissatisfaction. At the meeting, DPS Superintendent Alex Marrero announced the timeline for developing a long-term safety plan. He says he will release Version 1.0 on May 1, solicit public feedback through May 21, and release a final plan by the end of June. DPS communications director Scott Pribble says the superintendent will engage with parents, students, and teachers. “Nothing is off the table. He’s going to listen to all ideas and then find out what works, what doesn’t work. What’s feasible, and what’s not.” On April 20, Marrero emailed a survey to all DPS parents and students asking their thoughts on violence in schools and what should be done to reduce it.

East High School parent Steve Katsaros is unimpressed. He formed the Parents Safety Advocacy Group (P-SAG) to get parents, teachers, and principals involved in researching and advocating for specific safety initiatives. “There’s no easy solution. This is complicated. So we’ve created working groups to research solutions.” He doesn’t believe that Marrero or the board will actually listen to parent groups like his. “They are just trying to improve the optics of the very broken system they have,” says Katsaros.

One of the biggest problems Katsaros points to is the discipline matrix that DPS uses. “It’s shocking all of the

things kids can do at school and staff are not allowed to call the police. If kids come to school high or are drunk. If a kid steals something worth less than \$5,000. If they are bullying kids or there’s mutual fighting—staff is blocked from calling the police. It makes my blood boil,” says Katsaros. “Our students aren’t safe when there are these kinds of policies in place.” Pribble says the discipline matrix is reviewed every year and is put in place to make sure DPS is following state guidelines.

The policy that has particularly galvanized many parents is the fact that students with serious crime records can be placed in large, mainstream schools and the administrators’ hands are tied. The student shooter who wounded two East deans had been expelled from a Cherry Creek school and had to have his backpack searched every day at East for weapons because of a past offense. It was during such a search that he pulled out and fired a gun. Katsaros understands that troubled kids shouldn’t be denied an education, but he doesn’t think kids with a record of violence should be in mainstream schools. DPS’s Pribble concedes that opening an alternative school for young offenders could be an idea worth exploring, and says, “Dr. Marrero is looking at all options.”

Katsaros doesn’t believe that either Marrero or the board has demonstrated any leadership since the two shootings. “They don’t have anyone competent driving the bus and they don’t even know where the bus is going.” He says real leadership is what McAuliffe Middle School principal Kurt Dennis is demonstrating.

On April 14, Dennis sent a letter to McAuliffe parents, outlining “near-term” safety solutions while the school awaits further guidance from the District “of a more comprehensive safety plan.” One of those short-term plans is to have adult volunteers on campus during the school day to help check

IDs and to provide additional supervision. The school will no longer sell hoodies as part of the school uniform since the hoods make it difficult to recognize students and the front pockets can be used to keep items out of sight from staff. Dennis is also hiring another half-time school psychologist and hopes to hire an additional social worker for the 2023-2024 school year. He’s also requesting money from the McAuliffe at Smiley Foundation for more security cameras.

When asked about these McAuliffe protocols, Pribble said that any additional plans that school leaders enact should be approved by leaders at DPS or the Northeast Innovation Zone (which governs McAuliffe). “We don’t want people implementing things that seem like valid solutions but may cause additional problems,” says Pribble. “For example, if you’re going to have more parents in schools, they all need to go through background checks.”

While parents, teachers, and administrators wait for the safety plan from Superintendent Marrero, student Kayden Robinson says he’s going to focus on finishing up his classes in honors chemistry and pre-calculus. Robinson says he hopes to go to college to study criminology. “I want to learn more about why people are doing what they’re doing. And I’d like to put a stop to the violence that’s going on.”

For more information about the petition effort, visit ResignDPS.org. For information about the Parents Safety Advocacy Group (P-SAG) visit Facebook.com/groups/east80206.



Columbine High School, which experienced a mass shooting in 1999, sent this banner to East High School after the March 22 shooting. Photo by Nora Lukavic

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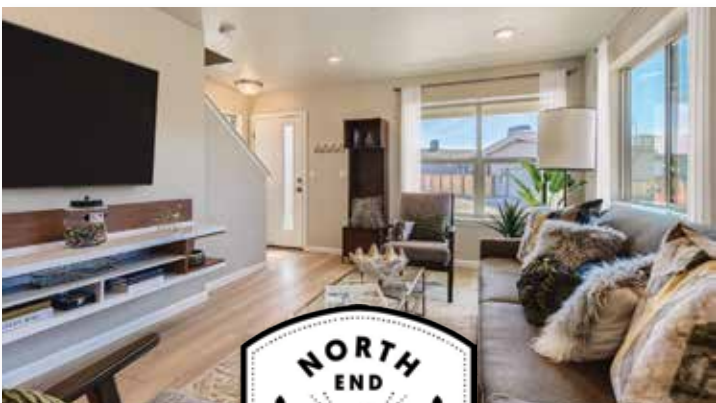


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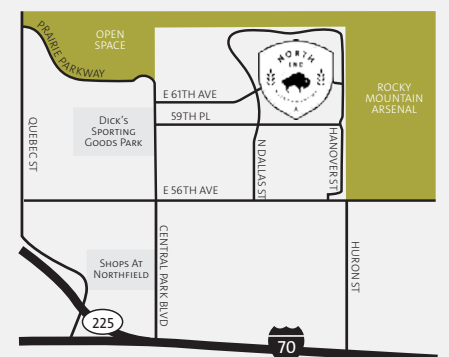
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Election Winners and Runoffs set



Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

Kelly Brough, a mayoral runoff candidate, addresses the crowd at a campaign event at FlyteCo on April 15.

By Brian Heuberger

On April 4, Denver residents cast their votes in the contest for the mayor's office and the races for the city council seats. The results of Election Day have determined the outright winners of some races, the remaining candidates in the runoff contests, and the voting patterns of the first round.

Mayoral Results

The results in the mayoral race narrowed the field of 16 candidates down to the final two contenders. Mike Johnston finished in first place with 24.5 percent of the votes, Kelly Brough earned second place with 20 percent of the votes, and now Johnston and Brough are squaring off in a runoff election on June 6. With Johnston and Brough both representing the moderate wing of the mayoral field, voters demonstrated a preference for moderate candidates in the mayoral contest.

Money in Politics

In 2018, Denver passed the Fair Elections Fund to match small donations with tax-payer money. The public program intended to reduce the influence of wealthy donors on the elections and enable more grassroots candidates to run for office. This was the first cycle the Fair Elections Fund was utilized, and both winning candidates met the terms of the program. However, outside PACs and third-party groups wound up raising substantial funds to support their preferred candidates. As a result, Johnston and Brough each raised over a million dollars in campaign funds, independent PACs spent millions more, and the two top-funded candidates were able to get the most votes.

Voter Turnout

The turnout among Denver voters was lower than other recent elections. About 38 percent of active voters submitted ballots, and this is lower than statewide elections that happen in the fall and the last municipal election that occurred in 2019. Election

experts speculate that the low turnout could be attributed to the timing of the springtime election, the large field of 16 mayoral candidates, or the likelihood of a runoff election. In a change from prior voting patterns, only 20 percent of ballots were cast with early voting, and an unusually high number of voters cast their ballots on Election Day.

Progressive Comebacks

At the end of Election Day, most progressive candidates for city council seats were losing in their respective races. But the same-day voters leaned heavily progressive, and over the next two days the counting of those later votes elevated several progressive candidates into leads, including in the Northeast districts. For District 9, incumbent Candi CdeBaca made a comeback to finish first and will now face challenger Darrell Watson in the runoff election. In District 8, Shontel Lewis came from behind to take the lead and will square up against Brad Revare in the runoff contest.

Outright Winners

City Council At-Large: Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez and Sarah Parady



Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez

Both at-large city council seats went to the candidates that were backed by progressive groups. Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez handily won the first at-large seat, but the second-place seat was very competitive. Though progressive-backed Sarah Parady was in fourth place on Election Day, in the following days the push among later voters lifted Parady up into the second place position and allowed her



Sarah Parady

to secure the final at-large seat. "I was clear with people about my values, what I see as the biggest challenges facing the city, and what I see as the solutions so people could be certain of what they were voting for," says Parady. "I know what I'm being

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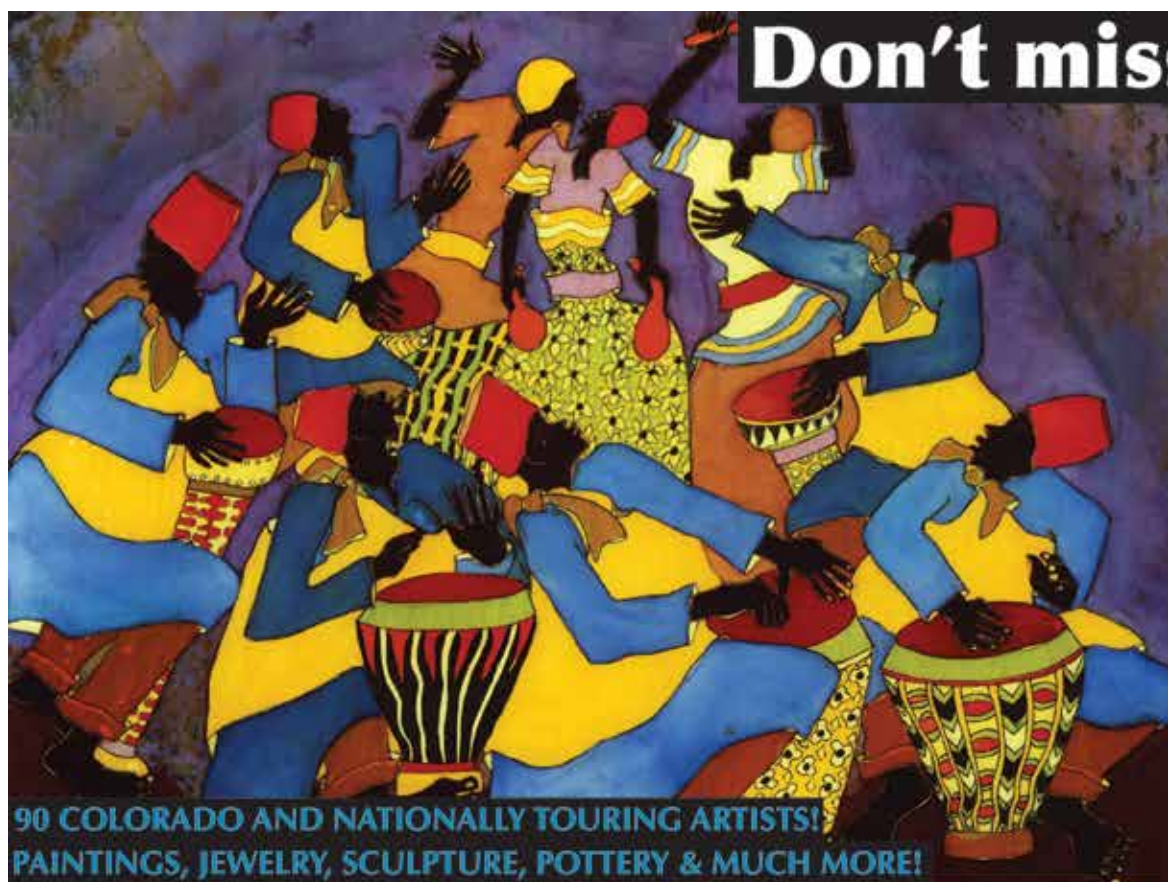


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City Council District 5 (Mayfair, Montclair, and Lowry): Amanda Sawyer



Amanda Sawyer

In a two-person race, incumbent Amanda Sawyer received 65 percent of the vote in District 5 to earn a second term on the City Council. "It was really gratifying to see that two-thirds of the people who voted in District 5 are happy with the job that I'm doing," says Sawyer. "It really gave me confidence moving forward to continue with those plans and to continue the work that we're doing."

Park Hill Golf Course: No on Question 20

Denver decisively rejected the ballot measure for the Park Hill Golf Course. Westside Investment wanted voters to approve the ballot measure and lift the conservation easement so the company could develop the land and implement its project. But Question 20 was soundly defeated, as 60 percent of Denver voters chose to reject this development plan and retain the conservation easement. Westside says they have no intentions of attempting another ballot measure, and many residents want the City to purchase the land and convert it into a park.

Runoff Candidates

On June 6, voters in Denver will cast their final ballots to decide the winners of the runoff elections. All voters will help determine which mayoral candidate offers the best solutions to our problems, strategies for our city, and qualities as a leader. Northeast residents in districts 8 and 9 will also be able to cast votes in runoff elections for their city council seats. The ballots will be sent out on May 15, and the last day to vote by mail is May 30.

Front Porch spoke to the remaining candidates for the Denver mayoral election and the Northeast city council races. Each candidate was asked the same questions, and the following guide provides their perspectives on the issues facing our communities and the policies they would implement to overcome our challenges.

Since the order of the ballots has not yet been decided, *Front Porch* presented the candidates for each race in alphabetical order. The questions from the interviews are listed below, the responses from the candidates are provided in the story, and the contenders in the races were granted equal word counts.

Affordable Housing: What strategies do you think can most effectively increase the supply of affordable housing?

Homelessness: What is your position on the concept of encampment sweeps, and what are your plans to reduce the homeless population?

Crime Rates: What aspect of public safety do you view as the most prevalent problem, and what would be your solution to alleviate that issue?

City Council District 8: Central Park, Northeast Park Hill, and East Colfax



Shontel Lewis
Affordable Housing:

We can talk about tenant protections, partner with

DPS to turn closed schools into workforce housing, and purchase motels to use for social housing. We should also use metrics and track the social determinants of health to understand why folks are unstable in their housing and connect them with services.

Homelessness: We shouldn't sweep folks and their possessions. It's ineffective, it's inhumane, and it's a bad use of our resources. But we should put those resources into a fund that purchases hotels, apartments, or existing affordable housing units to invest our dollars into keeping people housed and providing folks with services.

Crime Rates: We need to root our public safety in public health. We should give youth and adults access to resources, such as food banks, jobs opportunities, or summer reading programs. For police, we can expand the STAR program and prevent police from responding to situations that they're not trained to handle.



Brad Revare
Affordable Housing:

We need to find ways to use city

dollars and land trusts to buy existing housing or lots and make permanently affordable housing. We should also have the community at the decision-making table to decide which amenities, assets, and levels of affordability they would like to see with the housing.

Homelessness: People experiencing homelessness want supportive housing units and ways to get off the street. We need to build enough housing and provide compassionate services so people don't need to have encampments out there because that isn't good for the people living on the streets, the surrounding neighborhoods, or small businesses.

Crime Rates: We need to define the police so they're well-trained, they're held accountable, and they have the resources they need to responsibly fight crime. Then we need to continue growing our alternate response units to help people in crisis and make sure the right professionals are responding to the right situations.

City Council District 9: South and North Park Hill, North Denver, and Five Points



Candi CdeBaca
(Incumbent)
Affordable Housing:

We need to invest more in

affordability. About two percent of our city budget goes toward affordable housing, and it's mostly going towards higher brackets of affordability. We need to devote more of our budget to our top is-



Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

Mike Johnston listens to an attendee at a mayoral runoff debate hosted by New Hope Baptist Church on April 22.

sue, demand more of developers, and mandate the deepest levels of affordability.

Homelessness: The sweeps are more about government waste than anything else. The only solution to homelessness is housing. The sweeps are expensive, we're doing them almost on a daily basis, and so we could be using those dollars to put people under physical roofs instead of sweeping them around the city. (continued on page 8)

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Front Porch – NE Denver

7

May 2023



At a Coffee with Kelly event, mayoral candidate Kelly Brough took questions from participants, including 5th grader Sylvia Plavnick (right) who is running for Ameritowne Mayor of her school class.

Runoff Election Coverage

(continued from page 7)

Crime Rates: We've criminalized poverty. When you have desperate people with nothing to lose, you have a situation that fosters crime. Getting tough on crime hasn't worked. We need to get smart on crime regarding what we call crimes, how we can intervene before crimes occur, and in many cases it's poverty.



Darrell Watson
Affordable Housing: We have to prioritize funding for rental assistance for folks dealing with increases that are not sustainable based

on jobs in the working class. Then we can incentivize development by getting the permitting process done more quickly and by reducing the permitting turnaround time from 18 months to three months.

Homelessness: Having folks dying in unsanctioned campsites is not acceptable. Sweeps are moving folks around, so it's not cost-effective and it doesn't change the lives of folks in unsanctioned campsites. I will focus on having transitional housing, tiny homes and motel purchases, and do it regionally by partnering with other cities.

Crime Rates: It's important to fully fund the police and hire the officers that we've been short of in the police and sheriff's departments. We also need to hire folks for those police departments from within the community's high schools or junior colleges because outcomes are better when they know the community.

Denver Mayoral Candidates

Kelly Brough

Affordable Housing: I'd speed up the city's permitting process by creating one department with all the permitting, development, contracting, and inspection teams working together with one manager. We can lower rent with a master leasing program where the mayor leases units to give landlords a guaranteed payment and prevent increases for a period of time. For



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ownership, I would look at publicly owned surface lots and form partnerships to build homes for sale that families can afford.

Homelessness: I would end unsanctioned camping by providing safe and sanctioned outdoor locations with running water, bathrooms, trash receptacles, and support services. Then I would work on prevention because it's more expensive to help someone deal with the trauma of being unhoused than to keep people housed in the first place.

Crime Rates: Sending the right responders improves outcomes where we need mental health professionals and frees up officers for other critical issues. I would also recruit more officers, provide the support they need to be proactive on crime, and reduce the drivers of crime by focusing on recreational programs and economic opportunities.

Mike Johnston

Affordable Housing: I got the chance to work on this and help pass Proposition 123 to provide \$300 million a year for affordable housing. I would use those resources to build

25,000 units of permanently affordable housing. Anybody who makes \$100,000 or less would be eligible to live in one of these units, you would never pay more than 30 percent of your income on rent, and the rent can't go up unless your income goes up.

Homelessness: When you sweep people there's no place for them to go. That's why I proposed an evidence-based plan for micro communities and tiny homes to give folks the access to the housing they need. We can provide the communities with wraparound services, mental health support, addiction treatment, and workforce training.

Crime Rates: We have a shortage in police officers and so we need 200 more first responders. We also want community-based policing with officers walking neighborhoods, talking to residents, and building relationships. I also want to convert pods in the county jail for a mental health facility and an addiction-based treatment center.

To read the full interview of each candidate, go to www.FrontPorchNE.com.



Mayoral runoff candidate Mike Johnston takes questions from Frank and Jerry Gold about his housing and homeless policies during Johnston's tour of all 78 Denver neighborhoods before the April 4th election.

Photo courtesy of Mike Johnston for Mayor campaign

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May 2023

Semi-Nomadic Lifestyle Suits this NE Denver Family

By Martina Will, PhD

When the pandemic arrived in Colorado, the Lockwood family decided they would “lockdown” near the beaches of sunny Coronado Island, California, rather than stay confined to their home in Central Park. Phil’s virtual office, the kids’ remote schooling, and an existing vacation home in Coronado made the move fairly seamless. It also inspired what the family now calls their “semi-nomadic” lifestyle. Though travel restrictions limited their adventures to

bimonthly excursion is now a lifestyle that has them on the road about every other week with travels that Erin chronicles with beautifully produced videos on the family’s YouTube channel.

As pandemic restrictions eased, the Lockwoods traveled further afield and more frequently. They have traveled to many continents—including Europe and Asia—while seeking to connect to global cultures and offer their three children (Reagan, 16; Brooklyn, 11; Colt, 10) a different kind of education than that found in books and television. They keep

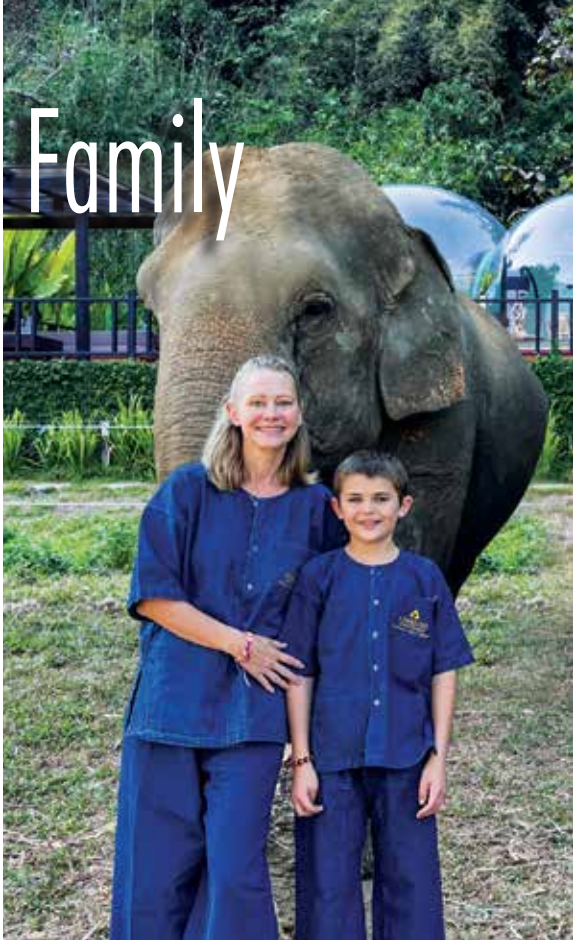
family where to go, refueling in Denver and then repacking for the next trip.

Travel as Teacher

For the Lockwoods, travel is not just about the destination. The journey itself is valuable. As with all travel, flights get abruptly canceled and travelers get food poisoning. These setbacks engender resilience and prompt reflection. Recalling a missed flight in the Philippines, Colt says “If something goes wrong, it’s not all over. It’s a new path.” The more they travel, the more adventurous their housing has become, expanding from mansions to a houseboat in the Philippines and a robot hotel for their upcoming trip in Japan.

As far as learning, Erin says her awareness of consumerism and the environmental impact of plastics has really grown through the family’s travels. She notes that the family “doesn’t check off a box” after visiting a country. In fact, the opposite is true, as each trip opens new doors to enter and suggests new possibilities to explore: “The more you travel the bigger the world is.” Excursions may include visiting marketplaces to sample local gastronomy or traipsing through churches to better understand a culture. The family also prioritizes natural wonders, swimming in cenotes in Mexico, and freediving with sharks in Hawaii.

Food seems to be a special passion. Sometimes the homes they rent include a private chef, but on most



Visiting the elephants in Chiang Rai, Thailand is among one of

occasions the family peruses street vendors’ stalls and open-air markets to find lunch. In Mexico, cricket tacos are on the menu, and in the Philippines “balut,” or fertilized duck eggs, offer a new experience and are “much better with vinegar,” says Colt. Tamer tourist fare like poke and Leonard’s malasadas in Honolulu make their menu, and pastries often take center stage for the family.

The Lockwoods eat, walk, snorkel, paddleboard, kayak, and otherwise wind their way through the places they



Trying local cuisine features prominently in the family’s travels. Here, Erin samples Thai cuisine in Bangkok.



Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

The Lockwoods (L to R: Erin, Brooklyn, Phil, Colt, and Reagan) contemplate their many journeys marked by pins on the globe in their Central Park home.

North America, they began traveling consistently while staying in private homes. “We would take an empty flight, go through an empty airport, and get a home we would stay in by ourselves for a week,” says Phil. What began as a

their trips to three weeks to ensure they can return to their Central Park home, maintain their connections with friends and family, love on their geckos Dexter and Lila, and reflect on their most recent travels and adventures. They decide as a

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the many highlights of the Lockwood family's trips.

Challenges on the Road

Phil says the family has “tried to evolve our strategy to make it less stressful.” Longer stays in a country with less frequent moves between cities seem to agree with the kids more than the trips where they had to unpack and repack every three days to switch towns. They also acknowledge the importance of engaging the kids in the destinations before they leave Denver, such as watching a cooking show that discusses a country’s particular specialties.

Reagan traveled extensively with her family during Covid, but admits that it was challenging to participate in synchronous online school. She is a student at Northfield High School and lives with her mother (from Phil’s previous relationship) when the rest of the family travels. Currently, Reagan is lobbying to add Greece to the family’s itinerary during her school break. In contrast, Colt and Brooklyn have not attended a brick-and-mortar school in years. They are enrolled in an asynchronous online school, Ignite Learning Academy. They can work ahead in the curriculum and meet academic

goals prior to a trip and then spend their travel days fully engaged with activities at their destination.

Homeward Bound

Though the Lockwoods plan some of their trips a year in advance, their faces light up when asked about returning home. For the kids, this means connecting with neighborhood friends. For Phil

and Erin luxuries like showers and a home office beckon. Phil cites television

visit, exploring a range of cultural sites along the way. While Reagan is a student of Spanish, the rest of the family is essentially monolingual and relies on local guides to take them to diverse sites in the region and introduce them to unique flavors in the culture. The language of food also seems to connect them in many cases. In India, they dined with a family that had invited them to share a meal in their home; “it was like a language of love,” says Erin, reflecting on breaking bread together.



Colt, who wants to become a herpetologist, is charmed by the snake in Jaipur, India.



Reagan likes to snorkel. Here, she explores a shipwreck in the Exumas, Bahamas.

host and world traveler Josh Gates’ words as he reflects on the semi-nomadic lifestyle and its relationship to home: “Travel does not exist without home...If we never return to the place we started, we would just be wandering, lost. Home is a reflecting surface, a place to measure our growth and enrich us after being infused with the outside world.”

Erin recommends this type of travel for families where the primary wage-earner

can work remotely. The family will not visit conflict zones, but that appears to be the only limit to where this semi-nomadic lifestyle will take them. In the coming months, they will visit Japan, Maui, Bali, and South Africa.

To follow the Lockwoods’ adventures, go to their website at <https://followabc.com/> or check out their YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/c/AlwaysBeChanging>



One of the family’s favorite Mexican destinations is San Miguel de Allende.

Travel photos courtesy of the Lockwood family

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Patrick Crawford, who co-founded Denver Beer Co. with Charlie Berger in 2011, opened a fourth location this spring. The Denver Beer Co. Lowry Taproom offers a food menu and craft brews unique to Lowry.

By Sarah Huber

Denver Beer Company’s newest location in the Lowry neighborhood might be closest to the founders’ hearts. “It’s about a mile from our house, and it represents what we love and value, from our brews, to the fun for kids, to environmental sustainability,” says co-owner Patrick Crawford. The large, modern taproom showcases the craft of beer brewing, with 11 tanks operating behind the bar, and expands into two sprawling patios, with fire pits, a grill for the Taproom chefs,

hot-weather misters, a grassy area for outdoor games, and a space for live bands. Thanks to these community-tailored features, the Lowry Taproom aims to deliver a fun experience for patrons and provide a neighborhood hub for events. Since Crawford and his business partner Charlie Berger opened their flagship Denver Beer Co. on Platte Street in 2011, “We’ve always believed beer is serious fun,” Crawford says. A former engineer who quit his job at Lockheed Martin just before launching the brewery, Crawford

Craft Beer & Community in

explains, “The serious part is that we care about the ingredients we’re using, and we put in a lot of effort to make the best beer we can.” The team’s brewers travel to the Pacific Northwest for fresh hops, and 95 percent of the malted barley utilized in all four Denver Brewing Co. locations hails from Colorado. Crawford continues, “The fun part is easy—drinking beer at a German beer garden table, sitting with friends on a summer afternoon.”

He notes that Denver Beer Co. has grown “as we’ve asked what’s important to us and where would our friends want to hang out?” The new Lowry taproom is kid-friendly, which reflects not only the surrounding neighborhoods but also Crawford and Berger’s own growing families. “This is a place where mom and dad can grab a beer while the kids play,” Crawford says. The menu includes crowd pleasers such as the bacon jam double cheeseburgers, brisket street tacos, duck fat fries and buffalo cauliflower, alongside gluten-free and vegetarian options, sparklers, and non-alcoholic drinks. Of course, the craft brews are the highlight of any visit to Denver Beer Co. Unique to the Lowry Taproom are the Low-Fi India Pale Ale (IPA), a nod to

“Lowry Field,” and Citrus Tricks, a hazy IPA with notes of Key lime and Sicilian lemon. Crawford and Berger have been brewing in small batches from the beginning, when they experimented in their garages, and they’ve maintained the tradition to “ensure that a few old favorites are always on tap, but new goodies greet visitors each month,” Crawford says. Since Denver Beer Co.’s brewers draw inspiration from Old World beer styles as well as innovative techniques and local

ingredients, beer selections change seasonally, “like a farmer’s table,” he says.

The new brewhouse provides “an incredible opportunity for experimentation,” Crawford adds. “Our brewers get to know the community and its preferences. Designing beers around and with our food menu is a great opportunity for our brewers to get creative.”

Community is a core value of Denver Beer Co.,

especially evident at the Lowry location. Based in the Exchange at Boulevard One, the Lowry Taproom patios are adjacent to a community playground and within short walking distance of residences and shops. “We are looking forward to hosting fun events such as community block parties, outdoor movie nights, and even yoga in the park,” Berger says.



Guests can check out the brewing system, with five fermenter and six serving tanks, behind the bar.

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a Family-Friendly Location

Crawford says the Lowry Taproom has quickly become a central gathering place. “People come out for moms’ nights, book clubs, and birthday parties,” he says. A running club wraps up their weekly workout with a brew, and the Geeks Who Drink club holds regular trivia events. “We welcome everyone for a good time. Dogs, dirty shoes, bikes, they’re all welcome.”

Welcoming everyone is the inspiration for Denver Beer Co.’s many outreach projects. Each June, Denver Beer Co. donates a portion of the sales of their fruity sour Berry Proud to a nonprofit supporting Colorado’s LGBTQ community. Likewise, in October, a portion of sales of their pink beer, the Princess Yum Yum Raspberry Kolsch, is bookmarked for the American Cancer Society’s Colorado chapter.

Last month the Lowry Taproom hosted its first Neighborhood Hop Swap,

in which Crawford and Berger gave hop rhizomes to neighbors to grow at home. Crawford explains that after gardeners harvest their hops, the Lowry Taproom specialists will brew an IPA “with local flavor” to share with the community.

Finally, Denver Beer Co. has put its commitment to sustainability on display at the Lowry Taproom. The beer garden’s efficient design, recycling program, and EV chargers “are important to us because they’re the right thing to do,” Crawford says. Denver Beer Co.’s main brewery is powered by solar, and a carbon dioxide reclamation unit and hot water reclamation system minimizes the environmental impact of the brewing process. Spent grain is sent to Front Range cattle farms.

“We care about our community,” Crawford says. “We love the Denver lifestyle, so we created a brewery to match our city’s personality.”



The Lowry Taproom is located in Lowry’s newest mixed-use development, the Exchange at Boulevard One, and has quickly become a popular gathering place for community groups, impromptu meetings, and local families.



The Lowry Taproom includes a bar, large dining area, two patios with fire pits, and a stage for live music. Kids love the summertime misters, grassy area for outside play, and adjacent playground.

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NE DENVER/NW AURORA EVENTS

Thursdays—Ageless Grace - Body and Brain Workout. Designed for all ages and abilities. 2–3pm. Schlessman Library, 100 Poplar St. denverlibrary.org

Saturdays starting 5/13—City Park Farmers Market. 100+ local producers, live music, donation-based yoga and a run club. 2551 E Colfax Ave, cityparkfarmersmarket.com

5/6 Saturday—Colfax Mayfair Market. Food and drink specials, an outdoor market, and prize drawings. 11am–3:30pm. 6035 E Colfax

5/6 & 6/3—Bluff Lake Bird Walks. Sat: 2.5-hour walk at 7:30am or 2-hour walk at 8am. Free but must RSVP at blufflake.org/birdwatching

5/6 & 5/7—Central Park Community Garage Sale. To register or for maps, go to centralparkgaragesale.com

5/6 & 5/7—Second Annual Asian American & Pacific Islander Festival. A day of multicultural dance, music, art, and informative workshops. 10:15am–5pm. 2900 E 23rd Ave. denverzoo.org

5/11 Thursday—Active Minds Presents Marie Curie. Examine the remarkable life of physicist Marie Curie. 1–2pm, Free. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. activeminds.com

5/12 Friday—Jigsaw Puzzle Swap. Swap your gently used puzzles for new-to-you puzzles. 3–4:30pm. Pauline Robinson Library, 5575 E. 33rd Ave. denverlibrary.org

5/13 Saturday—Cockpit Demo Day. Get an up close look inside select aircraft. 10am–2pm. 7711 East Academy Blvd. wingsmuseum.org

5/13 Saturday—Night Market at Stanley. Food, live dance, makers, musicians, and DJs from our AANHPI community. Stanley Marketplace, 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

5/19 & 5/20—The Urban Farm Plant Sale. Veggies, herbs, and beneficial pollinators for your garden. 9am–1pm. 10200 Smith Rd, theurbanfarm.org

5/20 Saturday—Forest Bathing. Open your senses and engage with nature. Bluff Lake Nature Center. 9–11am. 11255 E. MLK Jr Blvd. blufflake.org

Mini Golf Classic Sunday, May 21st

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Live music, prizes and more. Three tee times at FlyteCo Tower, 3120 Uinta St. Tickest at centralparkbusiness.com

5/20 Saturday—Gracie & Blue Concert. A variety of music, from jazz classics, to blues, Latin, and a few R & B favorites. 11am–12pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. denverlibrary.org

5/20 Saturday—A Discussion with Alan Prendergast. *Gangbuster, One Man's Battle Against Crime, Corruption and The Klan*, a nonfiction account in 1920s Denver. 3–4pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. denverlibrary.org

5/26 Friday—50+ Tech: Aging in Place. Learn to use technology for a variety of tasks. 2–3pm. Schlessman Library, 100 Poplar St. denverlibrary.org

5/27 Saturday—Film on The Field. This month: *Ant Man and The Wasp: Quantumania*. Movie starts at dusk. Stanley Marketplace, 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com



Asian American & Pacific Islander Festival at the Denver Zoo May 6–7.

5/27 to 5/30 —Central Park Pool Season Begins. Members only weekend, reservations required. Open to the public June 2. mca80238.com

5/27 to 5/28—Denver Arts Festival. Conservatory Green, Stapleton. Wine and beer garden, kids' art zone, live music. denverartsfestival.com

5/28 Sunday—Qigong and Mindfulness Walk. Gentle mind/body practice followed by a contemplative walk. 7:30–9am. Bluff Lake Nature Center, 11255 E. MLK Jr Blvd. Free. blufflake.org

6/2 Friday—Concert on The Green- Darling Revival. The Green (29th Ave & Roslyn St.) Begins at 6–8pm. mca80238.com

6/3 Saturday—Free Trigger Lock Giveaway Event. Evidence suggests that locked firearms reduces the risk of accidental injury. 10am–3pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. denverlibrary.org

6/3 & 6/4—The 10th Annual Park Hill Art Festival Outdoors at The Park Hill Masonic Lodge. 10am–5pm. Painting, sculpture, jewelry, metal, wood, & ceramics. 4819 Montview Blvd. parkhillartfestival.com

METRO EVENTS

5/5 & 6/2—First Friday Art Walks. Art District on Santa Fe. 5:30–9:30pm. denver.org/things-to-do/denver-arts-culture/denver-art-districts

5/6 Saturday—Denver Recycles Annual Mulch Giveaway. 8am–2pm. Five dig-your-own sites including the Havana nursery location. 311 (720-913-1311) or denvergov.org/mulch

5/6 to 5/7—Cinco de Mayo Festival. Live entertainment, parade, exhibits, food and more. Civic Center Park. Free. cincodemayodenver.com

5/6 to 5/13—Denver Fashion Week. A week of spring runway shows at The Brighton in the RiNo Art District. 3403 Brighton Blvd, denverfashionweek.com

5/8 Monday—Pen & Podium Series. Author, Publisher, and Literacy Advocate Dave Eggers. 7:30–9:30pm. Newman Center, Gates Concert Hall. newmancenter-presents.com

5/11 Thursday—Art & About Tours. For visitors with early-stage Alzheimer's or dementia and their care partners. 1–2:30pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org

5/11 Thursday—1340 Penn After Hours: Sex, Murder, and Scandal in the White City. Hear chilling tales and explore taboo topics while sipping cocktails. 7–9pm. Molly Brown House Museum, 1340 Pennsylvania St. historicdenver.org

5/12 to 5/13—Colorado Chocolate Festival. Music, kids' activities, wine tastings, cooking demos. Crowne Plaza DIA Convention Center, 1-70 at Chambers Rd. cochocolatefests.com

5/13 Saturday—Full Bloom Mother's Day Tea. Join us for a cup of tea and a tour of our historic home. 1310 Bannock St. historycolorado.org

5/13 & 6/2—Denver Municipal Band Concert. 5/13, 1–4pm. 6/2, 6:30–8pm. City Park Pavilion and bandshell, 1700 N. York St. denvermunicipalband.org

5/14 Sunday—Music in the Galleries: Mariama Alcántara on Violin. Included with admission. 11am–2pm. 1250 Bannock St. clyffordstillmuseum.org

5/15 Monday—Nat Geo Live: Life on the Vertical with Mark Synnott. Learn about legendary first ascents of some of the world's tallest, most forbidding walls. 7:30–9:30pm. Newman Center, Gates Concert Hall. newmancenterpresents.com

5/24 Wednesday—Bold Women. Change History: Lisa Sasaki. Hear from the Interim Director, Smithsonian American Women's History Museum. 7–8pm. 1200 North Broadway, historycolorado.org

May & Early June Events



View and add local events FREE at FrontPorchNE.com/events. Submissions by the 17th will be considered for printing in the upcoming month's issue.



5/29 Monday—Commerce City Memorial Day Parade. 64th and Newport, Commerce City, 9:30am. c3gov.com/parade

5/30 Tuesday—Map May-hem 2023: Maps of the American West. This lecture will examine the first maps of Denver, from 1859 to 1860. 6pm. Free, tickets at historycolorado.org.

6/3 Saturday—Denver Day of Rock. 4 stages of live music in the LoDo District of Denver. denverdayofrock.com

6/4 Sunday—City Park Jazz Kick-Off Concert. Sarah Mount and the Rushmores, 6–8pm at the City Park Pavilion and Bandshell, 2001 Steele St. cityparkjazz.org/

KIDS AND FAMILIES

Tuesday–Friday—Local Library Storytime. Different age groupings and locations. Info at denverlibrary.org

Wednesdays—Mornings at the Museum. Ages 3–6, 10:30–11:15am. Free. New programs every week. Aurora History Museum, 15051 East Alameda Pkwy. Register at auroragov.org

Fridays—Magic the Gathering Club. 4:30–5:30pm. Ages 12–18. A teen-run magic club. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. denverlibrary.org

Saturdays—Bluff Lake Nature Center Family Events. No event on 5/27. 11255 E. MLK Jr Blvd. Free, check times and programs at blufflake.org

Saturdays —Chess Club for 18 and Under. 3:30–4:30pm. Ideal for ages 5–18. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. denverlibrary.org

5/6 Saturday—Shrinky Dink Jewelry. Create jewelry from shrinky dinks. Registration is not required, but materials and space are limited. 10–11:30am, Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. denverlibrary.org

5/7 Sunday—Sensory-Friendly Morning. For kids with neurodiversity or sensory processing disorders and their families. 9am–12pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org

5/12 Friday—Create Playdate. For families with children 3–5 and their siblings. Included with admission. 10am–12pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org

5/13 Saturday—CSU Spur 2nd Saturdays. Free. Lots of family-friendly programming. 10am–3pm. 4817 National Western Dr. csuspur.org

5/13 Saturday—Family Program: Museum Jobs. Enjoy a storytime, making art, and learning about museum jobs. 10:30am–12:30pm. For toddlers to 8yrs old. 1250 Bannock St. clyffordstillmuseum.org

5/14 Sunday—Foxy and Shmoxy: Art Detectives. Join two witty foxes who solve mysterious cases involving artworks in the galleries. 10:30am–12pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org

5/21 Sunday—Spanish Storytime at Tattered Cover Kids. 5pm. Stanley Marketplace, 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

5/24 & 5/27—Art Crawl: Ready. Set. Grow! 10:30–11:15am. For caregivers with infants–14 months. Registration required. 1250 Bannock St. clyffordstillmuseum.org

5/27 Saturday—ideaLAB Sensory Friendly Maker Hours. Create in an environment that is quieter and less overwhelming than typical lab hours. Register to reserve your spot. 10–11:30am, Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. denverlibrary.org

5/28 Sunday—Teen Jam at Swallow Hill. Monthly jam is youth-led and free for musicians aged 13–18. 11am–1pm. 71 East Yale Ave. swallowhillmusic.org

MUSEUMS, ETC.

American Museum of Western Art. Open M, W & F from 10am–4:30pm. Admission is \$5. 1727 Tremont Pl. anschutzcollection.org

Aurora History Museum. Admission is free. Closed Mondays/holidays. 15051 East Alameda Pkwy. auroragov.org

The Byers–Evans House Museum. Operated by History Colorado as the Center for Colorado Women's History. History Colorado members are free. 1310 Bannock St. historycolorado.org

The Children's Museum. Reservations recommended at mychildsmuseum.org

Clyfford Still Museum. SCFD Free Day May 31. 10am to 5pm. Children ages 17 and under are always free. 1250 Bannock St. clyffordstillmuseum.org

Denver Art Museum. SCFD Free Days May 9 and 14. Youth 18 & under always free. 100 W 14th Ave. Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org

Denver Botanic Gardens. SCFD Free Day Jun. 6. Tickets and member reservations required. 1007 York St. botanicgardens.org

Denver Firefighters Museum. Hours: Tues–Sat, 10am–4pm. 1326 Tremont Pl. denverfirefightersmuseum.org

Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Open till 9pm on Fridays. 2001 Colorado Blvd. Timed tickets required. dmns.org

Denver Zoo. Check out the daily schedule at denverzoo.org. 2900 E 23rd Ave.

The Forney Museum of Transportation. Mon, Th–Sat, 10am–5pm; Sun, 12–5pm. 4303 Brighton Blvd. forneymuseum.org

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Four Mile Historic Park. Open Wed–Sun, 10am–4pm. 715 S. Forest St. fourmilepark.org

History Colorado. Free membership for 4th graders. 1200 Broadway. historycolorado.org



The 10th Annual Park Hill Art Festival at the Park Hill Masonic Lodge Jun. 3–4.

Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art. Tue–Sat, 11am–5pm; Sun 12–5pm. Ages 13+ welcome. 1201 Bannock St. kirklandmuseum.org

Molly Brown House Museum. Tue–Sun, 10am–4:30pm. 1340 Pennsylvania St. mollybrown.org

Museo de las Americas. Tue–Fri, noon–6pm. Sat, noon–5pm. Closed Mon & Sun. 861 Santa Fe Dr. museo.org

Museum of Contemporary Art Denver. 1¢ admission 1st Sat. of the month. 1485 Delgany St. mcadenver.org

National Ballpark Museum. 1940 Blake St. Check for days/hours at ballparkmuseum.com

The Urban Farm. Open to the public from 9am–1pm, Wed–Sat. 10200 Smith Rd. theurbanfarm.org

Wings Over the Rockies Museum. SCFD Free Day May 4. 7711 East Academy Blvd. wingsmuseum.org

PERFORMANCE/ THEATRE

Through 5/6—A Shayna Maidel. A family conveys the aftermath of the Holocaust through an examination of one divided family's experience. The John Hand Theater, 7653 E. 1st Pl. firehousetheatercompany.com

5/6 to 6/10—On the Exhale. Visceral. Powerful. Necessary. Curious Theatre, 1080 Acoma St. curioustheatre.org

5/6 to 10/15—Miss Rhythm – The Legend of Ruth Brown. Before Etta James, Aretha Franklin and Tina Turner, there was Ruth Brown. Galleria Theatre, denvercenter.org

5/7 Sunday—Confessions of a Wedding Singer. Virtual options also. Su Teatro Cultural and Performing Arts Center, 721 Santa Fe Dr. storiesonstage.org

5/7 Sunday—DYAO Presents: Ode to Joy. The DYAO presents Beethoven's Ninth Symphony featuring the Colorado Symphony Chorus. 2:30pm. 1000 14th St Unit 15. coloradosymphony.org

Through 5/7—The Color Purple. The musical adaptation of Alice Walker's award-winning novel. Wolf Theatre. denvercenter.org

Through 5/7—Damn Yankees. Devilishly funny and full of classic showtunes. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd. arvadacenter.org

5/10 to 5/21—Les Misérables. Epic, uplifting story has become one of the most celebrated musicals in theatrical history. Buell Theatre. denvercenter.org

Through 5/14—The Inheritance. After the AIDS epidemic, three generations of gay men grapple with the tragedy. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St. vintagetheatre.org

Through 5/18—The Book Club Play. A book club really starts reading between the lines. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd. arvadacenter.org

5/18 & 5/19—A Tribute to John Williams. Scores from films such as Star Wars, Harry Potter, Jurassic Park, and more. 7:30pm. 1000 14th St Unit 15. coloradosymphony.org

5/19 Friday—Nina de Freitas & Lonely Choir. Nina wrote her first song at five and hasn't stopped. 8–10pm. 71 East Yale Ave. swallowhillmusic.org

5/19 to 6/11—Best Town. About stars, isolation, the magic of libraries, and Laura Ashley curtains. Name your price tickets. Buntport Theater, 717 Lipan St. buntport.com

Through 5/21—Treasure Island: A New Musical. Perfect for the entire family. Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E. Colfax Ave. aurorafoxartscenter.org

Through 5/21—Our Town. A small town is a portrait of the universal experiences. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd. arvadacenter.org

5/25 Thursday—Rachel Baiman & the Tall Poppy String Band. 8–10:30pm. Tuft Theatre, 71 East Yale Ave. swallowhillmusic.org

5/31 to 6/4—Riverdance 25th Anniversary Show. A powerful and stirring reinvention of this beloved favorite. Buell Theatre. denvercenter.org

6/2 to 7/9—Driving Miss Daisy. Poignantly explores the transformative power of friendship. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St. vintagetheatre.org

6/3 to 7/1—A Mexican Trilogy: Charity. The story of the Moraleses, a Mexican-American family over a period of 100 years. The John Hand Theater, 7653 E. 1st Pl. firehousetheatercompany.com

Through 6/18—The 39 Steps. Where Hitchcock meets hilarity. Singleton Theatre. denvercenter.org

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Denver Public Schools. Numerous volunteer opportunities with our students and schools. equity.dpsk12.org/get-involved/volunteer-services

Food For Thought Denver. Providing food for students and their families. Sign up to volunteer or donate at foodforthoughtdenver.org

Project Worthmore. Help bag and deliver fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy, and household necessities to refugees. projectworthmore.org

Reach Out and Read Colorado. Help sort and pack gently-used children's books for underserved families. Email info@reachoutandreadco.org for details.

Reading Volunteers Needed Read

with students in grades K–8. One hour a week. No experience necessary. Contact: Pil, 2011 @partnersinliteracy.org.

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) For volunteer opportunities, email Cathy Law at claw@voacolorado.org

Ronald McDonald House Charities Volunteer. Go to ronaldhouse.org under "How You Can Help" for info.

Sand Creek Greenway Volunteer Opportunities. For more info go to sandcreekgreenway.org/upcoming-volunteer-opportunities

Single Volunteers of Greater Denver. Not-for-profit singles group to meet others and assist nonprofit organizations for events/activities. Info at svgd.org

Village Exchange Center A non-profit formed to serve immigrants and refugees in Aurora & Denver. villageexchangecenter.org

Volunteers of America Colorado Branch For volunteer opportunities go to voacolorado.org/volunteer-opportunities/



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Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

Keturah Fleming-Hall, owner of La Fillette Bakery, sits at the bar of their new location at 14th and Krameria.

By Brian Heuberger

1 La Fillete Opens in Montclair

French bakery La Fillette has moved into the historic Montclair neighborhood. La Fillette previously operated a small space on 8th and Colorado, but in April the bakery moved into a much bigger space on 14th and Krameria and instituted several changes to the restaurant. Whereas the previous space was take-out only, now it offers customers a sit-down restaurant that fits 65 people in the bakery and on the outdoor patio. La Fillette also added new French items to the menu. While the bakery still serves its classic pastries—such as eclairs and macarons—it now also provides omelettes and French toast. Additionally, La Fillette obtained a liquor license for the new location and is now serving alcoholic beverages for its brunch customers.



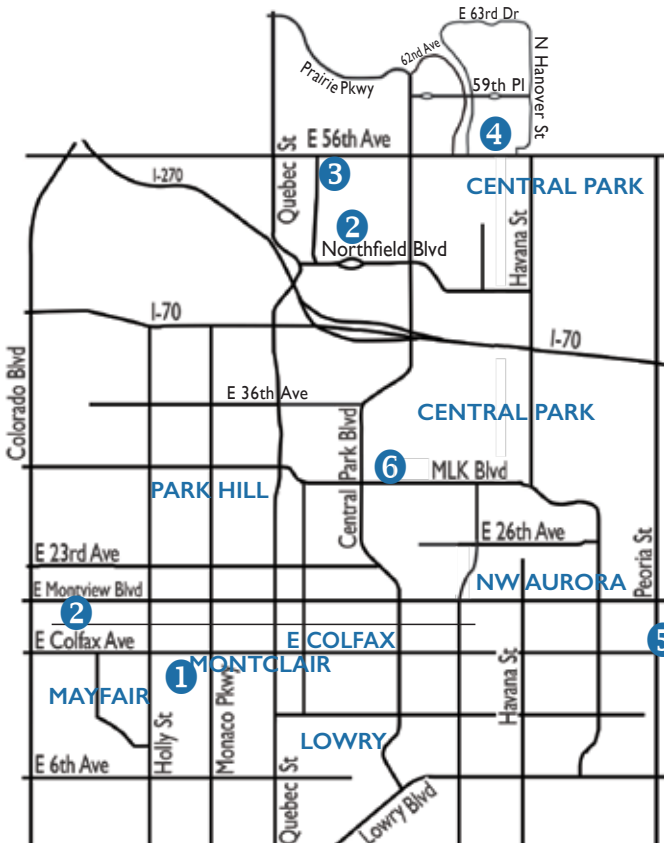
The Denver Arts Festival will again set up its tents in the Conservatory Green neighborhood on Memorial Day weekend, May 27 and 28.

2 Two NE Denver Arts Festivals

Northeast Denver is preparing to host two arts festivals during the spring. The Denver Arts Festival will be held in Central Park during Memorial Day weekend on May 27 and 28. The art booths will be located in the Conservatory Green Park at 49th and Valentia. The space south of 49th will provide a Kids Art Zone, while the area north of 49th will feature art exhibits, liquor venders, and a stage for live music. The festival is free for all visitors, and the event will be open from 10am-6pm on Saturday and 10am-5pm on Sunday.

The Park Hill Arts Festival will host its event the following weekend on June 3 and 4. The festival is cele-

...NE News Updates



brating the 10-year anniversary of its annual event, and the booths will be positioned in front of the Park Hill Masonic Lodge at 4819 Montview Blvd. The festival will feature over 100 artists and numerous booths that exhibit diverse crafts, including paintings, sculptures, photographs, woodwork, glasswork, and jewelry items. The event will be open on Saturday and Sunday from 10am-5pm, and this is the first year in which the event will also livestream on the Park Hill Arts Festival Facebook page.

3 Northfield High School Developments

Northfield High School is undergoing some changes: it has begun training a new principal and it is preparing to leave the Northeast Denver Innovation Zone. The search for a new leader began earlier this year when current principal Amy Bringedahl announced her impending retirement, and in March the school selected Jessica Rodriguez Bracey as its next principal. Bracey has over 20 years of experience in P-12 education while working as a classroom teacher, assistant principal, and athletic director. Bracey has worked at Northfield High as a Principal Resident since 2020, and she will now spend the next year serving as a co-principal while Bringedahl helps Bracey prepare for the new role and facilitates a smooth transition for the school. Bracey will co-principal with Bringedahl through the 2023-2024 school year and will then take over as the principal of Northfield High.

The school is also undergoing another transition after voting to exit the Northeast Denver Innovation Zone (NDIZ). Prior to the vote, NDIZ consisted of four schools, including McAuliffe International, McAuliffe Manual, Swigert International, and Northfield High School. But in April teachers at Northfield expressed concerns that a new plan for NDIZ would cause disorganization for the school and curtail union rights for the staff. This led to 70 teachers at Northfield filing a petition with DPS and holding a vote to exit the zone. A majority of votes from the teachers is required for a school to exit an innovation zone, and 73 percent of Northfield teachers voted to leave NDIZ.

This has implications for NDIZ and Northfield. For NDIZ, this is the third school to exit the zone in the recent years, as Willow and Montclair voted to sever ties with NDIZ in 2021. With Northfield being the largest school in the zone, its departure could reduce

the amount of funds that NDIZ receives and the types of plans that it can implement. Northfield will keep its innovation status and the autonomy afforded to innovation schools, but the school will now be responsible for developing its own plans regarding school calendars, budget priorities, and staff structures.

4 New High Plains Bike Park

Northfield's new pumptrack opened in April and its features are now being enjoyed by bikers. Located in High Plains Park on 57th Ave and Elmira Ct, the 15,000 square-foot park is constructed with an asphalt surface and was designed by the Velosolutions pumptrack company. The long track wraps around in a loop, and the cyclists can ride along the track while cruising at a calm pace or flying at blazing speeds. Frequent curves enable bikers to showcase their technical skills, periodic jumps permit them to get massive air, and a deep bowl right beside the track is ideal for performing exciting tricks.

5 Modern Market at Anschutz Campus

A Modern Market restaurant recently opened across from the Anschutz Medical Campus. This location on Colfax and Peoria makes it convenient for staff or visitors on the Anschutz campus, residents living in the neighborhood, or drivers passing along the corridor. The checkout counter in the restaurant enables customers to quickly get various meals, including salads, bowls, sandwiches, and pizzas. All items are free from antibiotics, hormones, additives, trans fats, or artificial flavors.

The "Mini Market" is a unique aspect of the NW Aurora restaurant. This is the first location that has shelves beside the checkout counter offering food and lifestyle products that are exclusively made by local companies and Colorado brands. For instance, the Mini Market offers energy bars and health drinks made by the Colorado company Skratch Labs, and the market sells organic hair and soap products that are made by the Boulder company Alpine Provisions. Modern Market Brand Director Sarah Attid says that this new concept of selling products created by local companies has been so popular in the NW Aurora location that the company is now planning to also implement these Mini Markets into all future restaurant locations.



The Mini Market, at the Modern Market across from the Anschutz Medical Campus in NW Aurora, is unique to this new location.

6 Central Park Playground Nears Completion

The Central Park Playground is nearly complete and preparing to open. The renovation project that began last year cost \$2 million, and the new design will include new slide features, swing options, and climbing areas. Kids can also jump on trampolines, run through mister arches, spin on merry-go-rounds, or roll down sloping hills. Additionally, kids can cool off while playing in the winding river features, and families can relax while sitting in the many gathering areas.

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Local References



The Indie Prof

Film reviews by Vincent Piturro

This month, I rectify an omission from the March Oscars column, and I add in a Best Documentary nominee as well. To follow the theme, I include a timely short book review that tracks along with the film reviews. Enjoy.

Women Talking (2022)

Sarah Polley is a phenomenal writer-director. Her last two films, *Women Talking* and *Stories We Tell* (2012) show incredible talent, and we can only hope her next feature is not 10 years away. Better known as an actress, she was on the screen for 25 years before she gave it up to move behind the camera. We are all better for it.

Women Talking tells the complicated story of a group of Mennonite women who are making the difficult decision whether to stay or leave the compound after uncovering a devious plot by the men of the group.

This is where the wonderful ensemble cast takes over as each woman gets a chance to voice their opinion and engage in real conversation. The plot device here is interesting since we don't see the action, but rather, the reaction, and to put it more succinctly, the *discussion about the reaction*. Hence the title.

The "complicated" part is the mix of voices in the room, the different stances taken by the women, the role of the one

male in the mix, and the interplay between all of the women from different social stations and age groups. Polley has fashioned a screenplay wherein the women portray a symbolic group outside the film and it

can be a metaphor for many things. The performances are incredibly tight and fierce: Claire Foy, Rooney Mara, Jessie Buckley, Michelle McCleod, Judith Ivey, and Frances McDormand are just a few of the women talking, and aside from a refreshing view "inside the room," it is also a testament to the talent of the women talking. This is an ensemble cast worthy of an Oscar nomination for the group dynamic.

I have read several interesting reviews of this film, and many focus on the lack of action, or how we don't see the actual crimes perpetrated by the men of the collective. The inference is that "we don't see and therefore understand the motivation of the women." My reaction to that was simple: *Isn't that the point?* We see such stories in our lives all-too-often: women are abused on so many levels, and the story is told from the violent frame, or to

put it another way, from the perspective of the men. The framing of this film takes away that agency and gives it to the women. We don't need to see what the men did;

we see that every day. We do need to see women talking, and the women acting. That is the win here.

You will enjoy this if you liked *Martha Marcy May Marlene*, *Little Women*, and/or *Prophets Prey*.

Streaming now.



Women Talking

A House Made of Splinters (2022)

"Life has always been hard here. The war made it worse."

It is with great trepidation that I (highly) recommend this wonderful documentary. I say that because this film will break you. It is so incredibly sad and heartbreaking, and since it is a documentary about a children's shelter in contemporary Ukraine, there is certainly no happy ending. There will only be more heartbreak. Much more.

A House Made of Splinters tells the story of children from an orphanage in Lysychansk, Eastern Ukraine. The children are temporarily housed in the orphanage until a family member claims them, or they are transferred to a permanent orphanage, or they go to a foster home. Most of the children have lost their fathers to the (first Russia-Ukraine) war and their mothers are unable to care for them (alcohol, drugs, abuse), creating heartbreak after heartbreak as the kids of all ages talk to their mothers and come away disappointed. We come away disappointed and enraged. The world comes away disappointed.

The Danish/Finnish/Swedish production is directed by Simon Lereng Wilmont, who spent two years in the war-ravaged area and chronicled the efforts of the women who run the shelter. The war is a backdrop to the individual stories, but this film tells the story of another war—one we wage with ourselves and with our children. The war that could be in the middle of a battlefield or the middle of a city or the middle of a suburb. Wherever it takes place, the kids suffer.

Wilmont filmed from April 2019—October 2020, and therefore finished before the more recent Russian invasion of February 2022. As a postscript to the film, the current war forced the evacuation of the shelter on Feb. 24, 2022, hours before a Russian bomb crashed into the house. Staff evacuated everyone safely, and the bomb lay unexploded, wedged into the broken splinters of the roof. This final episode of the story may be the unkindest cut and the ultimate metaphor—not only were the children taken from their



A House Made of Splinters

homes, but then they had to be taken from what little refuge they had left in the world. It is a brutal indictment of our world: the bomb is still unexploded, but still *there*.

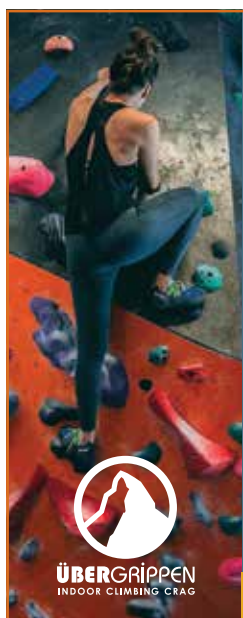
You will like this if you appreciated *Born Into Brothels*, *Klondike*, and/or *Atlantis*.

Streaming now.

Kick the Latch, by Kathryn Scanlan.

In honor of the Kentucky Derby and horse racing's Triple Crown, a short review of a short book about horse racing is in order. This book was recommended by a prominent racing commentator, and although it may not be for everyone, it is a stirring, poetic work of art. The story is about a young woman who finds her way into the horse training/racing business, and it details her challenging life in that difficult world. There is a smattering of violence—some toward humans and some toward animals—but it is authentic and earnest and never forced. Beyond the story, the writing is poetic and ethereal, qualities we don't often associate with the business of horses (but always associate with the regal animals themselves). Scanlan's prose is found somewhere inside the nexus of poetry, short story, and novel. It is bizarre at times and yet as honest as a rusty nail. And then, it can be as colorful as upstate New York in fall. Give it a minute and it blossoms in unexpected ways.

Vincent Piturro, PhD., is a Professor of Film and Media Studies at MSU Denver. Contact him directly at vpiturro@msudenver.com or follow him on Twitter. For more reviews, search The Indie Prof at FrontPorchNE.com.



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Insurance Rates Rising Due to Increased Car Crimes

By Mary Jo Brooks

In January 2022, Ara Nenninger had just returned from a trip to Missouri visiting her mother. She parked her Sprinter van on the street outside her home in north Central Park, but when she came out two days later to clean it out, the van was gone. “I couldn’t quite believe it. It had vanished.” Unfortunately, her experience is becoming all too common in Colorado.

Last year, more than 48,000 vehicles were stolen in the state, with an estimated value of more than \$468 million, according to AAA Colorado. Colorado, in fact, leads the nation in vehicle theft on a per capita basis. “We have had a huge influx of people into the state and a widening gap between the haves and the have-nots, and that is a big part of why thefts are up,” says Jeff Magoon, an insurance and risk management expert who lives in Central Park. He says Northeast Denver is particularly vulnerable to car theft. “We’re close to I-70 and I-225. One reason thieves target the area is that they have access to get out quickly.”

Magoon and other insurance experts say that those thefts have led to skyrocketing auto insurance rates. “Colorado has some of the fastest ris-



It's not uncommon to find mounds of broken glass at the Central Park RTD parking lot. Smash and grab crimes, car theft, and catalytic converter theft have led to a sharp spike in auto insurance rates. The riskiest place to park is at Denver International Airport.

Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch



Ara and Mark Nenninger were very excited about “van life,” but all that changed when their van was stolen from in front of their Central Park home.

ing premiums in the country,” says Skyler McKinley with AAA Colorado. “Insurance companies pay out between \$150 million and \$300 million annually for car theft—and that’s not even including catalytic converter theft. That’s a significant cost to insurers. And, of course, the way insurance works, that’s then a significant cost to motorists.”

McKinley is quick to point out that the rising car insurance rates are also due to other Colorado-specific factors: hail damage, icy roads, and an increase in crashes and fatalities. Still, car theft and catalytic converter theft is a pernicious problem, especially for working class families. Insurers only cover auto theft if owners have purchased comprehensive coverage, which many lower-income motorists can’t afford. And in general, thieves don’t target high-end luxury cars but instead they take older, more modest cars that tend to be driven by motorists of more modest means. More than 85 percent of stolen vehicles are valued at under \$25,000.

In addition, some insurers won’t even offer comprehensive coverage for Hyundai and Kia cars, since they represent seven of the top ten models of cars that are stolen, according to the Colorado Auto Theft Prevention Authority (CATPA). McKinley says older versions of those cars are targets because they don’t have as advanced

anti-theft technology. Rounding out the list of the top ten most stolen vehicles are Chevy Silverados, Ford F-250s, and GMC Sierras.

There are some common-sense precautions that motorists can take to try to prevent theft. McKinley says that at the top of the list: don’t park at Denver International Airport (DIA). “Three to five percent of all cars stolen in the state are stolen from DIA.” He also recommends parking your car in a garage or in a well-lit area, buying anti-theft technology, or installing a steering wheel lock.

Catalytic converter thefts have also been soaring. Thieves steal the auto parts because they contain precious metals. Replacing a catalytic converter can cost car owners anywhere from \$1,500 to \$3,000. The Colorado Legislature recently increased funding to provide marking kits that motorists can install to deter thefts or make it easier for police to track the part if the catalytic converter is stolen. For information about how to receive a kit, email cdps_catpa@state.co.us.

Ara Nenninger says she has definitely changed her behavior since her car was stolen. “I’m hyper vigilant now on all fronts. I know this area is ripe for crime so you have to be on high alert. I always park my car in the garage and I make sure to always close the garage door.”

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NEWS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

MASTER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MAY 2023

FIRE AT PUDDLE JUMPER POOL

On January 23rd there was a fire at Puddle Jumper Pool that caused excessive damage. Puddle Jumper pool will be closed indefinitely. This was an unfortunate incident, but if we can open the facility at any capacity this summer we will do so. The pool building and pool are owned and insured by the Park Creek Metro District (PCMD), not the MCA. The MCA is only the operator of the facility. We are working with PCMD board to expedite the needed repairs. We are working together on a number of creative solutions that will allow the pool to operate in some capacity this summer, if possible.

Although the pool systems were not damaged in the fire, the pool cannot be used until the building is reconstructed or a suitable access plan can be identified and approved by the City and County of Denver. The one item that we have been able to establish is that the metal in the roof structure is still viable which will help the timeline.

The insurance company completed their reconstruction scope and have estimated the repairs. We currently have bid packages out to three interested construction companies with bid deadlines scheduled for 4/14/2023. Upon that bid deadline date, PCMD will select a contractor and then submit for permits and finalize any options for operating parameters during reconstruction. We are being told that City and County of Denver permits are taking ~ 4 to 6 months for the city to review. When we are able to have a more confirmed timeline, we will let the neighborhood know.

DENVER ARTS FESTIVAL

Saturday, May 27th, 10am-6pm & Sunday, May 28th, 10am-5pm, Conservatory Green

The Denver Arts Festival is back on Memorial Day weekend! The Denver Arts Festival is a fine arts and crafts festival that continues to be dedicated to showcasing Colorado artists and a select group of national artists.

For more information visit www.denverartsfestival.com.

CENTRAL PARK BEER FESTIVAL

Save the date! Tickets for the Central Park Beer Festival go on sale Thursday, June 1st. The Central Park Beer Festival will be held on Saturday, July 15th on the South Green from 4-8pm. For more details about the Beer Festival and to purchase tickets please visit mca80238.com.

CONCERT ON THE GREEN SERIES

Join us at the South Green located at 29th Ave & Roslyn Street for our summer Concert Series! The first concert will be on Saturday, June 3rd featuring the band, "Darling Revival"! The concerts start at 6:00pm and are free and open to the public!

POOL SEASON STARTS MAY 27TH!

Members will be required to reserve their opening weekend visits to the pool. All pools open to the public (early season schedule) May 31. Reservations will only be required opening weekend and holidays (July 4th and Labor Day).

Important Dates:

- May 01: Pool Reservations/Party Pads Open
- May 27-30: Member's Only Weekend (reservations required)
- May 30: Open Swim (early-season schedule)
- June 2: Regular Season Hours Begin

Scan the QR code find the most up-to-date information on our Aquatics Updates page!



ACTIVE MINDS: Marie Curie

Thursday, May 11th, 1-2pm. Sam Gary Library

Born in Warsaw, Poland in 1867, Maria Sklodowska would become one of the greatest scientists of her era. After emigrating to France, Marie (as she was known there) would work with and eventually marry another scientist, Pierre Curie, with whom she would be awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for their research on radioactivity. Over a decade later, she would be awarded a second Nobel Prize for discovering the elements radium and polonium (named for her country of birth). Join Active Minds as we examine the remarkable life of Marie Curie.

ACTIVE MINDS: Chicago: Biography of a City

Thursday, May 25th, 6:30-7:30pm, Online

Join Active Minds for the story of the Windy City. We will begin with the French explorers, missionaries, fur traders and Native Americans that inhabited the region in the early 1800s. We will cover the Great Chicago Fire and how it impacted the development of the city. And as we bring things all the way up to the present, we'll cover the politics, crime, food, culture, and architecture of the "City of Broad Shoulders." It's the next best thing to being there!

Join the Active Minds webinars by visiting https://www.activeminds.com/events_denver.html.

Jennifer Olsen
Communications Manager
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facilities

All outdoor pool facilities will be open for Memorial Day weekend and close for the season after Labor Day weekend.

Aviator Pool Hours

8054 E. 28th Avenue 720.941.3414

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Puddle Jumper Pool Hours

2401 Xenia Street 303.393.0018
Under Construction, Reopening TBD

Jet Stream Pool Hours

3574 Alton Street 303.296.0884

Open Swim
Monday-Thursday 11am-6pm Friday-Sunday 11am-7pm

F-15 Pool Hours

2831 Hanover Street 303.355.5078

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8863 E. 47th Avenue 303.371.8701

Open Swim
Monday-Thursday 12pm-5:30pm Friday-Sunday 12pm-7pm

Maverick Pool Hours

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Open Swim
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