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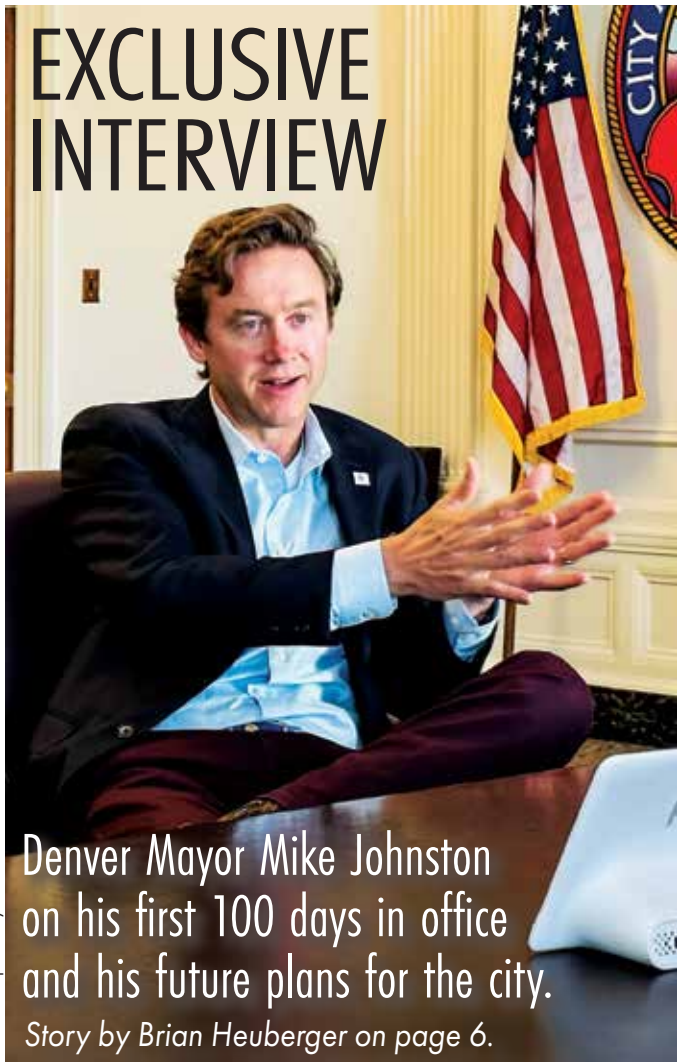
NOVEMBER 2023



Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

Electric Bike Use Accelerates in Denver

Central Park resident Nick Oyler uses his electric cargo bike to take his two children to school and then commute to work. A transportation consultant, Oyler says Denver is going to continue to see a huge increase in the use of electric bikes.



Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Denver Mayor Mike Johnston
on his first 100 days in office
and his future plans for the city.
Story by Brian Heuberger on page 6.

New Mayor, City Council, Elections Division
Clash Over City Budget Proposals

Story by Brian Heuberger on page 8.

Denver’s “wildly successful” e-bike rebate program has helped more than 7,000 residents buy electric bikes and has helped those cyclists avoid 150,000 vehicle miles per week. But the increase of these speedier bikes on shared pathways raises safety concerns for some pedestrians. *Story by Mary Jo Brooks on page 14.*



Photo courtesy of JEWISHcolorado

War in Israel and Gaza Sparks Strong Emotions

Israel supporters gathered at the State Capitol on Oct. 15 in a rally organized by the Colorado chapter of the Israeli American Council. In response, the Colorado Palestine Coalition organized the Palestinian March to Stop the Killing of Palestinians in Gaza which drew hundreds to the Capitol on Oct. 21. *Story by Martina Will, PhD on page 4.*



Bird Sightings

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Adult Green Heron:
Length: 16.1–18.1"
Weight: 8.5 ounces
Wingspan: 25.2–26.8"

Left: a Green Heron flying along Sand Creek.
Above: a juvenile Green Heron in Westerly Creek near the Rec Center.

Green Heron

For the last two years, the Green Heron, a small heron of the eastern United States has been a vagrant in Northeast Denver during Fall migration. I first encountered this bird in 2018 when a Green Heron hung around Bluff Lake Nature Center for the entire summer. In Fall 2022, I saw two Green Herons, an adult and a juvenile, passing through.

This year, the sighting of another Green Heron happened along Sand Creek and caused unanticipated delight among birders. The Green Heron is a short and stocky bird with broad wings and a daggerlike bill. The crown

feathers are raised at times to show a short crest. The color is a deep blue green on the back with a rich chestnut breast and neck. The wings are dark gray and the legs yellow. It hunts by standing very still in shallow water to wait for a fish to swim by. Then it lunges and darts its head, grasping the fish in its beak.

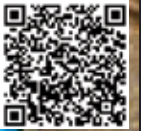
Other herons have appeared in *Front Porch*: the Great Blue Heron, the Black-crowned Night Heron, and the Yellow-crowned Night Heron. Search “Heron” at www.FrontPorchNE.com to learn more.

Bird Walks: Nov. 4. & Dec. 2; two-hour walk starting at 8am. Free but must RSVP at blufflake.org/birdwatching. All are welcome. Bring your own binoculars, or borrow a pair from your guide. 11255 MLK Blvd.

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War in Israel and Gaza Sparks Strong Emotions

By Martina Will, PhD

Since Hamas’ Oct. 7 attack on Israeli citizens, the violence has escalated dramatically and painfully, memorialized in brutal photos. Each new atrocity and violation of our common humanity seems to eclipse the one before it with no end in sight. This conflict began when Hamas extremists attacked several Israeli communities near the Gaza border, killing 1,400 Israelis and taking over 200 hostages. As Israel mounts a response to retaliate against Hamas and retrieve the hostages, many people are concerned that innocent civilians in Gaza are being put in danger by the violence.

It is difficult to imagine an outcome that does not leave everyone bereft. Grief, trauma, and fear for their communities at home and overseas unite two Denver spiritual leaders. Both have congregations informed by the trauma of their forbears and their own encounters with anti-Semitism and Islamophobia here in Denver.

“Nobody’s well. We are all traumatized. Not in the same way as those in Israel are, but there’s no one who has any connection to their Judaism who doesn’t know someone who is impacted directly or indirectly by this tragedy,” says Sr. Rabbi Joe Black, of Temple Emanuel. Previously an outspoken critic of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s “fascistic and fundamentalist” leanings, the assault on Israeli citizens has him firmly supporting the Israeli leadership now.

“We need to address the underlying causes of the conflict to bring a permanent end to the violence.”

—Alex Boodrookas, Assistant Professor of History at MSU

Imam Muhammed Kolila, spiritual leader of the Downtown Denver Islamic Center says, “Our grief is renewed every day.” Thousands of Palestinian citizens have been killed by the Israeli military since this recent conflict began. He says, “It’s not a number. It is our friends and families. They are actually people our community members know.”

Different Outlooks

Kolila, Black, and Alex Boodrookas, Assistant Professor of History at MSU, all strongly condemn the targeting of civilians. They all acknowledge that most Palestinians do not support Hamas. They differ on what should happen next in long-occupied Gaza, which is about the size of Las Vegas but is “one of the most densely populated places on earth,” according to NPR.

Boodrookas and Kolila emphasize the historical context of the war in Gaza, populated largely by refugees from the 1948 war and their descendants. Almost half of Gaza’s population of 2.2 million is under the age of 18, and many worry that further assaults will lead to more children dying. They want to see a cease-fire.

“We need to address the underlying causes of the conflict to bring a permanent end to the violence” says Boodrookas. Kolila echoes this and worries that “bombing and smashing Gaza to the ground will not make Israel happy or safe. Violence brings violence. Trauma brings hate.”



Front porch photo by Christie Gosh

Hundreds turned out on Oct. 21 for the Palestinian March to Stop the Killing of Palestinians in Gaza and Free Palestine at the State Capitol in Denver. The march was organized by the Colorado Palestine Coalition.

Black’s outlook differs. “This isn’t just a war against Israel. Hamas has said it’s a war against the Jewish people....We grieve for those who are impacted directly by Israel’s response, which I believe to be essential but horrific.” Black takes issue, however, with those who “equate Hamas’ barbarism with the Israeli Army’s response to protect its citizens.”

“This is not a symmetrical conflict,” says Boodrookas. He also emphasizes the historic role the U.S. has played in the conflict. Whereas some believe the U.S. should support Israel as an ally in a time of crisis, Boodrookas contends that the U.S. should focus on bringing about a lasting resolution. “Unconditional support for Israel has never worked. We need broader reconsideration.” Unless the U.S. leverages its aid to Israel to force a compromise, the Israeli government has no geopolitical incentive to bring about a just resolution.

Demonstrations on all sides of the issue have been held at the Auraria campus, the State Capitol, and elsewhere in metro Denver. Anger, trauma, and grief are common to those on all sides. Despite the shared emotions, however, polarization seems to be growing. Nuanced discussions informed by a deep

understanding of history don’t garner headlines. Social media rarely allows for thoughtful dialogues of the context of any crisis.

A Glimmer of Hope?

When asked what gives them hope in light of the mounting violence, the answers vary:

—Rabbi Black: “I find hope in the unity I see in Israel, a country very divided two weeks ago. I find hope in the statement by our president that the U.S. stands squarely behind Israel. I find hope in the bravery of people who fought off terrorists.”

—Imam Kolila: “This is not about politics. You need to see these people dying before you as brothers and sisters in humanity. The Palestinians have been seen as subhumans by Israel. I hope that this trauma, this suffering right now, becomes an opportunity for people to see the humanity of the Palestinians.”

—Prof. Boodrookas: “I find hope in those who have experienced the death of a loved one but who are still asking for peace and equality.”

To learn more about the history of the conflict, Boodrookas recommends “Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict” at the website for the Middle East Research and Information Project: <https://merip.org/palestine-israel-primer/>

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Students and parents were greeted by Mayor Mike Johnston on Oct. 3 when he stepped in as a guest crossing guard at Bill Roberts K-8 school in Central Park.

By Brian Heuberger

Denver Mayor Mike Johnston has enjoyed the plethora of activities he has been fulfilling during his first three months in office. He has been hiring staff members to fill cabinet positions, hosting town halls to connect with Denver residents, determining the priorities of his first budget, and implementing the details of his homelessness initiative. “I love that we’re moving at break-neck speed on the city’s toughest problems,” says Johnston. “We go from working on community economic development in Northeast Denver, to public safety in Southwest Denver, to the revitalization of downtown, to finding a new home for the Broncos stadium.”

On Oct. 25, as Mayor Johnston reached the pivotal 100-day milestone, he spoke to *Front Porch* about the plans he implemented, the challenges he faced, the goals he achieved, and the issues he will prioritize next year.

The Homelessness Initiative

After his July 17th inauguration, Johnston immediately established the homelessness issue as a top priority and focused

on the House1000 initiative as a primary goal. “We knew that homelessness was the biggest crisis the city was facing,” says Johnston. “It’s certainly a humanitarian crisis for the folks that are living on the streets and who are at risk of being taken advantage of or dying every day. And we know the encampments that exist around the city are placing a real burden on businesses that are struggling and on neighbors that don’t feel safe.”

The Neighborhood Engagement Effort

On July 31, Mayor Johnston kicked off the Neighborhood Engagement Effort by hosting town hall forums in every district to explain the details of his plan and to receive feedback from the residents.

“We learned a lot from the 40 town halls we’ve had,” says Johnston. “A lot of people believe this is a crisis, are glad we’re focusing on it, and appreciated us coming out and talking about the issue because there’s never been this kind of community outreach effort from the Mayor’s office. Yes, some people had fair questions or reasonable concerns, and a

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Denver Mayor Mike Johnston o

lot of people gave us suggestions for other sites. But at every meeting at least one person would raise their hand and ask about how they can help, and that’s been very inspiring.”

Wraparound Services

Providing services for the micro-communities is a crucial feature of the homelessness initiative. On-site services for showers, laundry, and kitchens offer individuals comfortable living conditions, and wraparound services for mental health, substance abuse, and job placement are designed to help individuals eventually obtain meaningful employment and permanent housing.

“Offering wraparound services is a key part of the plan that people sometimes miss,” says Johnston. “Yes, the initiative is about getting people off the streets and into housing, but it’s really about providing the ground services that can help them succeed on those sites. We know once you get into a place where you are safe, stable and secure, then you’re far more likely to accept the services than you would be when you’re living in tents every night. We’ve already seen that people taking those services goes up dramatically so we’re really excited about that.”

Preliminary List of Micro-Community Sites

Identifying sites for the micro-communities was an especially difficult challenge for the Johnston administration. Several criteria needed to be met, including access to utilities, proximity to transit, requirements for zoning, distance from schools, and distribution throughout every district. Certain flaws hindered the efforts to establish ideal locations, but on Aug. 24 Mayor Johnston announced a preliminary list with the first 11 sites.

“The critical challenges were often components of site preparation,” explains Johnston. “It might be that we couldn’t

get a deal with their private landowners or the amount of remediation to do a site was too much. You had to dig up, you had to flatten, you had to level, you had to remove, and it would start to get too expensive. So we instead looked for places where we had great opportunity, great connections, and sites that were much closer to being ready than some of those others.”

Moving the Encampment at 8th and Logan

Moving the unhoused individuals from a large encampment at 8th and Logan to a former hotel in the Central Park neighborhood was a significant achievement for the Johnston administration and a new development for the entire city. This marked the first time officials conducted an encampment sweep while bringing the individuals to an indoor shelter.

“That was definitely one of the proudest days of the administration,” says Mayor Johnston. “That day fundamentally proved that our strategy works because two things happened. One is that 100 percent of the unhoused people that we contacted all said ‘yes’ to our housing. 100 percent! That thwarts the belief that people wouldn’t take housing or wouldn’t go there. And the reason our strategy worked is because these were actual hotel rooms, tiny homes, and leased apartments where you’ve got an individual protected space, you’ve got lock and key, you’ve got your own address, you’ve got a place to store your stuff, and you’ve got a bathroom, shower, and kitchen. Then you have what it takes to have all those wrap-around services. Our belief was always that if we provided those features, people would come, and that worked out overwhelmingly well.”

While this demonstrated that unhoused individuals could embrace moving to indoor shelters and benefit from utilizing on-site services, Mayor Johnston was also encouraged by another positive development from the 8th and Logan move.

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n His First 100 Days in Office

“The second goal of the initiative is to keep neighborhoods closed to camping. Since we moved it, there have not been any people camping there. It’s open to the neighborhoods, businesses are thriving, and people are walking out of restaurants. So it also showed us the second part of the model really works because getting people into housing can also help keep those neighborhoods free from future camping.”

Breaking Ground on Micro-Communities

On the week of Oct. 9, the city broke ground on the first new micro-community site on Santa Fe Drive. Since then, construction on three other sites has also begun and the micro-communities are expected to be open by the end of the year.

“We’re figuring out how to get every utility line done, the water put in, and the fences put up,” says Mayor Johnston. “People forget that when you’re getting 50 tiny homes on a site, it’s almost like 50 different homes because each one needs an electric line, its own grounding, and its own structure. So our team is working around the clock on that.”

Mayor Johnston is still striving to reach the ambitious goal of providing shelter for 1,000 unhoused individuals by the end of the year.

“We’re pushing really hard and we’re still optimistic that we can find a way to get there,” says Johnston. “People on the streets of the city deserve it, people trying to run their businesses deserve it, and people who want their public spaces back deserve it. That’s why we’re not afraid to set ambitious goals. Could we fail? Of course we can, but we owe it to the city to deliver on a solution that’s big enough to make a dramatic impact on the need that’s there.”

Getting to Know City Employees

Trying to meet city employees to better understand how the city operates has also consumed much of Mayor Johnston’s first

100 days. “There’s 13,000 city employees that I’m trying to get to meet,” says Johnston. “I’m working with departments, getting updates every day, and starting to do ride-alongs where I’ll spend a couple hours with the city employee in their job every day to figure out what they’re seeing, what’s working, and what’s not working.”

Policy Priorities for the New Year

Mayor Johnston also spoke about the issues he plans to prioritize for the city and the policies he intends to implement next year while he continues his plan to end homelessness on the streets.

“We will tackle every issue with the same degree of ambition, so that’s just the pace the city’s going to move all the time now,” says Johnston. “But in 2024 we are really focusing on public safety all across the city, affordable housing at all incomes across the city, and economic revitalization by helping to make sure that businesses and small entrepreneurs can grow here, move here, and stay here. So those are going to be our big four efforts in 2024, and we will go after them with all of the same tenacity, grit, and heart that we are on this first one.”



Front Porch Wins Eight Colorado Press Association Awards

The Colorado Press Association held its annual awards ceremony on Sept. 23, and we are happy to announce that *Front Porch* won a total of eight awards with five first-place finishes. The awards won are listed below in the order received. We would like to thank our staff for their excellent work, our readers for their loyal support, and our advertisers for their valued partnership.

Best Business News/Feature Story

First Place: Courtney Drake-McDonough—*Aviation Inspired Brewery Has Landed*

Best Crime & Public Safety Reporting

First Place: Brian Heuberger—*Auto Theft and Car Crimes Soar in NE Denver*

Second Place: Brian Heuberger—*Will More Police Reduce Rising Crime Rates?*

Best Public Service Project

First Place: Brian Heuberger—*Guns to Garden Tools*

Best Investigative Story Package

Second Place: Mary Jo Brooks, Brian Heuberger, Judah Freed—*Three Sweeping Court Decisions Impact Denver*

Best Sports or Sports Event Story

First Place: Mary Jo Brooks—

Pickleball Fever, Fastest Growing Sport in the Country

Best Social Justice or Equity Reporting

Second Place: Tracy Wolfer Osborne—

Addressing Past Injustices: How is CO Doing?

Best Informational Graphic

First Place: Christie Gosch—

How Will Roe’s Reversal Affect Colorado Women and Healthcare Clinics?



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Councilmember Shontel Lewis asks a question of a Salvation Army representative about one of the organization's city-run shelters. Seated to the left of Lewis are Councilmembers Amanda Sawyer and Darrell Watson.

By Brian Heuberger

This fall, Denver Mayor Mike Johnston submitted his first budget proposal, which he described as a “moral document” that reflects the issues that are prioritized by his administration and the services that are provided for the residents. Several City Council members quickly lamented what they said were shortcomings in funding for rental assistance and other social programs, while Denver Clerk and Recorder Paul Lopez said the proposed budget lacks critical spending to safeguard election security. The clashes are expected to escalate during the upcoming budget amendment process in November.

Mayor Johnston's Initial Budget

The Mayor's 2024 budget for Denver was \$4.04 billion, which breaks the previous record-high of \$3.76 billion from last year. The general fund is slated to receive \$1.7 billion, and the revenue for the city is projected to increase by 4 percent.

Housing is a significant focus on the 2024 budget. Johnston proposed providing \$39.2 million to house another thousand homeless individuals next year and \$12.6 million to prevent vulnerable residents from being evicted from their homes. “That's a 500 percent expansion on rental assistance to prevent the pipeline of folks from entering homelessness,” says Mayor Johnston.

The initial budget also devoted \$242 million for the Department of Housing Stability, including \$100 million to supply 3,000 affordable units and \$365,00 to expedite the permitting process. “We're making a significant investment in affordable housing,” says Johnston. “Like our House1000 target for 2023, we're now going to reach for the

goal of 3,000 permanently affordable units for working families in 2024 and we need to have more affordable rent across the city.”

Safety was another theme in the 2024 budget. The initial budget provided \$8.2 million for DPD to hire more officers, \$7.2 million to enhance the STAR units, and \$1.8 million to support the Wellness Winnie program.

“Safety has to be the utmost consideration for every Denver resident.”

—Councilmember Shontel Lewis

New Mayor, City Council, Election

“We have a historic expansion to public safety,” says Johnston. “We're going to put 167 more officers on the street to meet the needs there. But we're also focusing on sending the right responder to the right incident at the right time, so we expanded our STAR program to send mental health workers to people in crisis, and we expanded our co-responder program to send officers and mental health workers together.”

The budget also addressed environmental issues and transportation improvements. The budget gave \$2 million to replace old city vehicles with electric vehicles, \$1.5 million to distribute more EV charging stations throughout the city, and \$15 million for bike lanes, pedestrian crossings, and traffic calming measures. Additionally, other budget areas included \$20 million to shelter migrants and \$58 million to revitalize downtown.

City Council Proposals

In early October, the Denver City Council submitted proposals to make changes to the 2024 budget and to increase funding for certain programs. Proposals that received a majority of votes were sent to the mayor, and the Johnston administration decided whether to accept the changes or reject the proposals.

The City Council voted on 28 total proposals. Nine of those were submitted by Councilwoman Shontel Lewis, who represents the District 8 neighborhoods that include Central Park, East Colfax, and Northeast Park Hill.

Rental Assistance was an especially high-profile proposal sponsored by Lewis and several other Councilmembers. Although Mayor Johnston provided \$12.6 million in the budget for rental assistance, the proposal sought to supply an additional \$17.5 million for this program.

“We wanted to prevent homelessness, and with the predictions for the number



Denver City Councilmember Shontel Lewis.

of folks who would become unhoused, we felt like it was a crisis,” says Councilwoman Lewis. “We wanted to provide real sustainable relief, so we worked with community partners and housing experts to identify how much money we needed to keep people housed and prevent that flood of downstream impacts.”

Other proposals submitted by Lewis included more funding to eliminate medical debt, boost the Basic Income Project, and add \$15 million for Denver Health.

The City Council also proposed increases for many crime programs, including STAR, youth violence prevention, and an Office of Neighborhood Safety. Transportation proposals included more funds for speed tables, sidewalk improvements, and Vision Zero.

“Safety has to be the utmost consideration for every Denver resident,” explains Lewis, who sponsored the Vision Zero proposal. “Whether people walk, bike, drive or take transit, traffic injuries and deaths are unacceptable and preventable.”



Denver City Councilmember Darrell Watson.

District 9 Councilmember Darrell Watson—who represents North and South Park Hill—was one of the only Councilmembers to vote against many of these proposals, including rental

assistance, STAR, and Denver Health. “The City Council has a responsibility to be fiscally responsible and to maintain our balanced budget requirement,” says Councilman Watson. “We wound up providing \$80 million of spending without defining where those cuts will come from, I viewed that as a miss, and so I voted against quite a few of those items.”

However, all 28 proposals passed through the City Council and 25 received a super-



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Elections Division Clash Over City Budget Proposals

majority of at least nine votes. After sending the proposals to the Mayor's office, the Council waited in suspense to learn the fate of their proposals and the decisions of the Mayor.

Response from the Mayor's Office

On Oct. 13, the Johnston administration sent a letter to the Council and responded to the proposals. Of the nearly \$81 million of additional funding requested by the Council, Mayor Johnston approved \$10.6 million for the proposals. In the letter, Johnston said, "Your funding proposals totaled \$81 million in proposed changes, that is a 450% increase in funding requests compared to the last fiscal year while the overall budget only increased 3.7%."

In many cases, the Mayor's office approved the proposals but reduced the funding. For instance, the revised budget provided \$3 million of the \$17.5 million requested for rental assistance, which ignited a dispute with many City Councilmembers who have threatened to address that funding level in the amendment process. The revised budget also gave \$3 million of the \$15 million requested for Denver Health, and \$1 million of the \$10 million proposed for transportation improvements.

The Johnston administration also rejected some proposals while contending that they were already sufficiently funded or could be addressed through other methods, including proposals for expanding STAR and eliminating medical debt.

Councilwoman Lewis had mixed reactions to these results. "I thought it was great that the Mayor approved a lot of our proposals and I appreciate him understanding that these are important," says Lewis. "But the funding levels were disappointing. We allocated those specific dollar amounts to address the problems based on our consultations with experts, so we need to do some work to ensure that we're providing adequate funding levels to benefit the entire city."

Elections Division Funding Dispute

Another contentious dispute during the budgetary process occurred with the Elections Division. The budget increased its annual funding by 25 percent to accommodate the

additional resources needed during a presidential election cycle. But Denver Clerk and Recorder Paul Lopez also submitted a one-time capital request to fund security upgrades for the election system.



Denver Clerk and Recorder Paul Lopez.

so we have to mitigate them for the upcoming 2024 election."

As a result, Lopez asked for \$942,000 in the capital request for security upgrades, of which \$175,000 was granted. "It was a surprise to see our security upgrades request for the budget get reduced by 81 percent, and we didn't have any communications or warnings" says Lopez.

A statement provided on behalf of the Mayor's Office asserts, "Election integrity and security is always a priority in our city.... The Clerk's 2024 budget already includes a 25% increase in the operating budget for the Elections Division and \$175,000 in security improvements."

Lopez contends that the annual funding pays for equipment and staffing, but that the full capital request would be needed to fund the security system upgrades. "We don't set the costs—the vendors do," says Lopez. "It's for installing cameras, ensuring we have complete control of our buildings, and ensuring our election workers are safe while they're working long hours and doing their civic duty."

Lopez is currently negotiating with the Mayor's Office to resolve the conflict, but he also has another option to receive the funding. "The city charter states that the City Council has an obligation to fully fund my ability to do my job, so I'm working with three Councilmembers as sponsors to amend the budget if needed."

"All around the country, we've seen threats to elections officials, threats to poll workers, and threats to disrupt the elections process with sabotage," says Lopez. "These threats are very real,

The next steps involve the City Council proposing amendments on Nov. 6, the Mayor's office accepting or vetoing those amendments on Nov. 10, and the Council voting on the Final Passage of the budget on Nov. 13.

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...NE News Updates

Time IPA, the company's

most commercially successful beer, and Pump Action Imperial Pumpkin Ale, a gold-medal winner at both the Great American Beer Festival and World Beer Cup. With 32 taps, the Park Hill brewery and taproom will serve rotating offerings from their brand as well as from their Wild Provisions Beer Project in Boulder. "We are thrilled for 4 Noses Brewing Company to join the Park Hill community with our brand new taproom and brewery," said Tommy Bibliowicz, CEO of 4NB Holdings, the parent company for 4 Noses. "This new chapter will allow us to expand our production, push innovation, and continue improving quality."

2 FlyteCo Brewing Offers Tours of Former Air Traffic Control Tower

After being closed for nearly 30 years, the former air traffic control tower for the Stapleton Airport will be open to the public beginning Nov. 15. FlyteCo Brewing, which has a restaurant and entertainment center in the adjoining building, will conduct tours every Wednesday at 2pm and 4pm. Visitors must be at least 16 years of age and be able to climb up and down 11 stories. The reward is unparalleled views of the surrounding area and a shot of beer when guests successfully make it back down. Tickets are \$10 per person plus taxes and fees and must be reserved in advance online at <https://flytecotower.com/tower-tours>.

3 Camp Christmas Returns to Stanley Marketplace

Camp Christmas, one of the holiday season's quirkiest and "campiest" traditions, is returning to its original location at Stanley Marketplace after being shut down in 2020 due to the pandemic. Featuring the best of the holidays wrapped into an all-out sparkly experience, Camp Christmas immerses visitors in a 15,000-square-foot, 360-degree kaleidoscope of yuletide cheer, nostalgic scenes, and playful winterscapes. Handcrafted by Camp director Lonnie Hanzon and his Denver-based artistic team, the spectacle runs from Nov. 26 through Dec. 24. "We're eagerly looking forward to the return of Camp Christmas, a magical holiday experience that truly embodies the spirit of the season," says Ally Fredeen, general manager of Stanley Marketplace. "With plenty of holiday programming to accompany the spirited experience, we're excited to welcome back families to one of our favorite hol-

iday traditions, where they can come together to celebrate, share laughter, and create cherished moments that will last a lifetime." Tickets start at \$12, with VIP experiences up to \$74; children under age 2 are free. Camp bonuses such as VIP guided camp director tours, VIP drag queen tours, and visits with Santa can be added to any Camp Christmas ticket. Visit stanleymarketplace.com/events/camp-christmas/ to reserve a timed-entry or flexible ticket.

4 New Mural on Sand Creek Trail in Central Park

A new mural depicting the natural world that surrounds Denver has been completed along the Sand Creek Trail in Central Park. It is the third mural sponsored by the Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership with five more planned in the coming years. Artist Brian Ray Simmonds says he hopes his mural will inspire people to "explore, steward, and connect with nature in Colorado."

The painting of the mural was kicked off at a September mural festival underwritten by Little Man Ice Cream that included food, music, and the chance for nearly 300 participants to help paint the base of the mural. The murals cost approximately \$30,000 each to install, with most of the funding coming from individual donors.

For more information about the Sand Creek mural project, visit sandcreekgreenway.org/artwalk.

5 Cheluna Brewing Wins Gold Medal

The Great American Beer Festival awarded Cheluna Brewing the 2023 gold medal for best collaboration. Located in Stanley Marketplace, Cheluna was the first Latin-owned Mexican brewery in Colorado and is known for its unique recipes and high-quality flavors. Cheluna collaborated with Prost Brewing Company to produce Luna Nueva and win the 2023 gold medal. Cheluna's Orizaba Cold IPA also won a silver medal in the India Pale Lager or Cold India Pale Ale category.



A patron at 4 Noses Brewing enjoys a cold one at the bar. The company is the 9th largest craft brewer in Colorado.

By Mary Jo Brooks, Brian Heuberger, and Sarah Huber

1 4 Noses Brewing Expands to Park Hill

Beloved for their innovative flavors and award-winning craft brews, 4 Noses Brewing Company celebrated the grand opening of its Park Hill location in October. The new brewery and taproom, located at 4040 Dahlia Street, accommodates 4 Noses Brewing Company's increased production demand and enables the expansion of 4 Noses' original taproom in Broomfield. Founded in 2015, 4 Noses Brewing Company gained national attention with its 'Bout Damn



Artist Brian Ray Simmonds puts the finishing touches on his 280-foot mural along Sand Creek in NE Denver.

Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

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est Native American tribe—abruptly decided to censor their own free press. With an election looming, the tribal government was facing a slew of corruption-related stories and subsequently voted to just repeal the nation’s Free Press Act overnight.

This enthralling documentary follows a doggedly stubborn journalist, Angel Ellis, who refused to bow to powerful forces and took up the fight for press freedom. While it tells a fairly straightforward and conventionally structured story, it plays out like a nail-biting political thriller and we find ourselves on the edge of our seats. You’ll be riveted while rooting for the gutsy protagonist who utters the shuddering line that opened this review. A warning for all?

Friday, Nov. 3 @ 6pm and Saturday, Nov. 4 @ 1:30pm at the AMC CO+

King Coal

This haunting, elegiac documentary about the Appalachian coal industry constantly surprises. The filmmaker, Elaine McMillion Sheldon—a West Virginian from a multi-generational mining family—expressly set out to explore the “psychology of coal,” rather than its economic, social, or environmental impacts. Consequently, you’ll find very little here in the way of sooty, coal-smothered faces or black lung disease. The format and content meet wonderfully in this unique documentary.

Thursday, Nov. 9 @ 7:15pm and Friday, Nov. 10 @ 2:30pm at AMC CO+

Going to Mars: The Nikki Giovanni Project

Directors Joe Brewster and Michele Stephenson have produced an exquisite, impressionistic, and visually beautiful film, which differs from the typical documentary format but tracks nicely with its subject: the wonderful poet and activist Nikki

Giovanni. Giovanni has been writing from the Civil Rights era to the Black Lives Matter movement, and she offers insightful perspectives on both and everything in between. A fascinating journey.

Saturday, Nov. 11 @ 4pm and Sunday, Nov. 12 @ 12pm at the Sie Film Center

Hard Miles

Starring Matthew Modine, this film tells the true story of a committed social worker who led an extraordinary cycling journey—consisting of a group of directionless, abandoned youth and violent teenage offenders—from Denver to the Grand Canyon. This has Colorado scenery, an inspiring story, and the type of content that we need right now.

Sat, Nov. 11 @ 3:30pm at the Denver Botanic Gardens.



White Plastic Sky

Killers of The Flower Moon

I include this because it is the new film from Martin Scorsese, whom I consider to be one of the greatest filmmakers of all time. We don’t know how many more films he will make, and at age 80, we can only hope he gives us more gems such as this one. I make it a point in this column to give you reviews that you may not easily access elsewhere, but I make an exception for Martin Scorsese. It is another gorgeous, sweeping, important film about an ugly episode in our nation’s history—the Osage murders of the 1920s.

The film is a sparkling epic covering ground that Scorsese has examined throughout his career: greed, violence, venality, masculinity, and bigotry. I could go on, but that’s a good start. The direction is kinetic, the editing from longtime collaborator Thelma Schoonmaker is energetic, and the music from the late, great Robbie Robertson is inspiring. The acting is flat-out wonderful: Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert DeNiro give fantastic performances, but the revelation is Lily Gladstone as the gritty, intelligent Native American who bears the brunt of the patriarchy. She stands out among a sea of giants. This is brilliant filmmaking by a brilliant filmmaker.

I also mention this film because it will be on the big screen for only a short time before it lands in its home on Apple TV. Go out and see it on the big screen!

Opened Oct. 19 at theaters across Denver.

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](https://frontporchne.com).



Killers of The Flower Moon

It is once again time for the Denver Film Festival. Last year was one of the best-attended festivals in its history, and the Denver Film Society now looks to repeat that performance. The festival runs from Nov. 3–12, and you can find the entire program and ticket information on its website: <https://denverfilm-festival.eventive.org/welcome>. I preview several of the films here and give short reviews of a few that caught my eye; just take note of all the locations because they vary. Get your tickets soon, and I hope to see you there! I end with a new film from one of the greatest directors of all time.

White Plastic Sky

I put this first only because I will be introducing the film and hosting the Q&A with my colleague, astrophysicist Dr. Ka Chun Yu from the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. The film is wonderful sci-fi/cli-fi from Hungarian directors Tibor Bánóczy and Sarolta Szabó, and it is set exactly 100 years in the future where climate change has wiped out most societies and the few remaining survivors live under giant domes. With scarce resources, everyone has a strict limit on how long they are allowed to live. A love story is where the plot finds its footing, and the end result of that story is quite touching and extremely human.

The film uses rotoscoping (the technique where animators trace over real footage to create realistic-looking action), and the effect is quite brilliant. The net effect adds an interesting layer of meaning because it (literally) paints a world that seems both futuristic and yet believable. It is human and a creation at the same time. Finally, this film does what all great sci-fi does: it makes important points about the world we live in today. Are we headed toward this society? Perhaps, but we can also take measures to combat the outcome we see. Come join us to discuss the film and the issues therein.

Friday, Nov. 3 @ 7pm and Saturday, Nov. 11 @ 3:45pm at the Sie Film Center. Tickets are limited, so get them soon!

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AFTER

LOCAL EVENTS

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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.

Please double check event dates and times using contact info provided.

12/5 Tuesday—Colorado Gives Day. Donate to those institutions you care about the most. coloradogives.org

SEASONAL/HOLIDAY EVENTS

11/4 Saturday—Santa's Welcome and Drone Show. Starts at 4pm. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive at 5pm, drone show begins at 7pm. Bass Pro Shops parking lot at The Shops at Northfield, shopsatnorthfield.com

11/6 Monday—Día de los Muertos. Celebrate our community's rich diversity and unique cultural traditions. Stanley Marketplace, 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

11/10 to 12/23—The Polar Express™ Train Ride. Take a magical journey and rekindle the Christmas spirit. Colorado Railroad Museum, 17155 W. 44th Ave. coloradorailroadmuseum.org/polar-express

11/11 Saturday—Denver Veterans Day Parade & Festival. City Park. 10:30am-1pm. denerveteransday.com

11/16 to 12/24—Camp Christmas. Immerse yourself in a 15,000 square-foot, 360-degree kaleidoscope of yuletide cheer. Stanley Marketplace, 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. denvercenter.org

11/17 Friday—Winter Welcome. Join us as we flip the switch on our holiday lights, live entertainment, vendors, and more. 5–8pm, 29th Ave. Town Center. mca80238.com

11/17 to 11/18—L'Esprit de Noël Holiday Home Tour. First time this event is set in the Park Hill neighborhood. 10am–4pm. centralcityopera.org/project/tickets-2023-lesprit-de-noel

11/17 to 11/18—The Hip Hop Nutcracker. A holiday mash-up for the whole family. Buell Theatre. denvercenter.org

11/17 to 12/24—A Christmas Carol. Denver's beloved holiday tradition returns. Wolf Theatre. denvercenter.org

11/17 to 1/7/24—Blossoms of Light. A dazzling and ever-changing display of light and color. Denver Botanic Gardens, 1007 York St. botanicgardens.org

11/18 Saturday—Pumpkin Pie 5K/10K Run/Walk. City Park. Benefiting the Food Bank of the Rockies. Register or volunteer at pumpkinpie5k.com

11/25 Thursday—50th Annual Mile High United Way Turkey Trot. Washington Park. Register to run or volunteer at unitedwaydenver.org/turkey-trot

11/25 to 12/24—Colorado Ballet Presents The Nutcracker. Sensory-friendly adaptations on Nov. 26. 1385 Curtis St. coloradoballet.org

12/2 Saturday—YouthBiz Holiday Marketplace. Young business owners sell their unique products—all handmade by them. Young Americans Center 3550 E 1st Ave. yacenter.org

12/2 Saturday—Parade of Lights. A beloved family event that celebrates holiday magic in Downtown. Starts at 6 pm at Denver's City and County Building. winterindenver.com/parade

12/2 to 1/7/24—Zoo Lights. 60 acres of lights, entertainment, and treats. Denver Zoo, 2300 Steele St. denverzoo.org

NE DENVER/NW AURORA EVENTS

11/3 Friday—Nature Wonder Walks. Enter the wonder by slowing down, breathing, and reconnecting. Bluff Lake Nature Center. 1pm. 11255 E. MLK Jr Blvd. Free but must RSVP at blufflake.org/events

11/4 Saturday—Friends of Chamber Music: Lirios Quartet. Free family concert. 11:30am–12:30pm. No tickets/reservations required. Stanley Marketplace, 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

11/4 Saturday—The Art of Powwow. Starts at 3:15pm, performance at 5pm. The Cube, 8371 Northfield Blvd. mca80238.com

11/4 & 12/2—Bluff Lake Bird Walks. 2-hour walk at 8am. 11255 E. MLK Jr Blvd. Free but must RSVP at blufflake.org/birdwatching

11/5 Sunday—5K Dragon Dash. Family-friendly 5K dragon-themed run/walk is open to the community and all fitness levels are welcome. Costumes encouraged. 8801 MLK Jr Blvd, www.runsignup.com/race/co/denver/isabellabird



11/9 Thursday—Active Minds Presents Veterans Day. Learn the significance of this holiday. 1–2pm, Free. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. activeminds.com

11/9 Thursday—Holiday Wine Tasting. 70+ wines for you to try before you buy. 5:30–8:30pm, The Cube, 8371 Northfield Blvd. mca80238.com

11/9 Thursday—Holiday Fashion Show. Guests mix and mingle while local merchants show their “wares”. Doors open at 6pm. Stanley Marketplace, 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

11/11 Saturday—Cockpit Demo Day. Get an up close look inside select aircraft. 10am–2pm. Veteran's enjoy free admission all day. 7711 East Academy Blvd. wingsmuseum.org

11/15 Wednesday—Building Tools to Stop Financial Exploitation. Explore connections between financial decision making, cognitive health, and overall well-being. 3–4pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. activeminds.com

11/16 Thursday—United Against Hate Panel Discussion. Featured speaker is Phil Weiser, Colorado Attorney General. 6–8pm. Aurora Municipal Center, 15151 E. Alameda Pkwy. Free but must register at auroragov.org

11/17 & 11/24—Goatflix and Chill. With Rocky Mountain Goat Yoga. 6pm. 8246 Northfield Blvd. The Shops at Northfield. Space is limited, pre-register at shopsatnorthfield.com

11/18 Saturday—Chelsea Iversen Author Event. Local author's debut novel: *The Witches At The End of The World*. 2–3pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. denverlibrary.org

11/18 & 11/25—Goat Yoga. 10am, 12pm, and 2pm. 8246 Northfield Blvd. The Shops at Northfield. Space is limited, register at shopsatnorthfield.com

11/25 Saturday—Family-Friendly Silent Disco and More. 11am–2pm plus many more holiday events all day celebrating Small business Saturday. Stanley Marketplace, 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

11/30 Thursday—Active Minds Presents Switzerland. Journey to the Alps to understand the Swiss. 1–2pm, Free. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. activeminds.com

METRO EVENTS

11/3 & 12/1—First Friday Art Walks. Art District on Santa Fe. 5:30–9:30pm. denver.org/things-to-do/denver-arts-culture/denver-art-districts

11/3 to 11/11—Denver Arts Week. Celebrating The Mile High City's arts and culture scene with hundreds of events around the city. More info at denver.org/denver-arts-week

11/9 Thursday—Art & About Tours. For visitors with early-stage Alzheimer's or dementia and their care partners. 1–2:45pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org

11/9 Thursday—Feel the City. A pop-up exhibition featuring plein-air watercolor paintings by Ed Natan. 4–7pm. Tom's Starlight, 601 E. Colfax Ave. bell-projects.com

11/17 & 11/18—Kicker Monster Truck. Adrenaline-charged, family entertainment. National Western Complex. kickermonstertruck.com

11/18 Saturday—Women's History Symposium. Undergarments: Revealing the Past. Keynote speaker Juana Bordas. 8:30am–4pm. Reserve tickets by Nov. 6. 1200 North Broadway. Tickets at historycolorado.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

Through 12/23—Little Red. A charming, song-infused retelling of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Randy Weeks Conservatory Theatre. denvercenter.org

11/9 Thursday—Create Playdate. An early-childhood program for families with children ages 3–5 (siblings welcome). 10am–12pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org

11/11 Saturday—CSU Spur 2nd Saturdays. Free. Lots of family-friendly programming. 10am–3pm. 4817 National Western Dr. csuspur.org

11/11 Saturday—Maker Mornings: Paper Studio. Look closer at paper and all it can do. 10:30am–12:30pm. 1250 Bannock St. clyffordstillmuseum.org

11/11 Saturday—Monkey Butler Improv Show. A family friendly show at the Roaming Gnome Theatre. \$10. Starts at 6pm and runs approximately 2 hours. 10255 E 25th Ave, Ste 5, Aurora. roaminggnometheatre.com

11/11 & 11/12—Family Make and Take: Harvest Wreaths. Materials provided are appropriate for families with children ages 5 and up. 11am & 1pm both days. 1007 York St. Register at botanicgardens.org


11/12 Sunday—Foxy and Shmoxy: Art Detectives. Foxy and Shmoxy help young children access and experience artworks in unique ways. 10:30am–12pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org

11/16 Thursday—Kids Book Club. A monthly book celebration for kids in kindergarten–5th grade. 4–5pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. denverlibrary.org

11/17 Friday—Elementary Kids Art Club. This month's theme: sense of community. Ideal for ages 6–9. 4:30–5:15pm. Schlessman Family Library, 100 Poplar St. denverlibrary.org


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11/18 Saturday—Family Volunteer Day. Benefit your community and have fun! Free admission for all volunteers. 10am–12pm. 1200 N. Broadway, historycolorado.org

11/8 Wednesday—Youth Gaming Night. Play Xbox and Wii Games with friends! Snacks will be provided. Ages 5–17. 5:30–7:30pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. denverlibrary.org

11/19 Sunday—Spanish Storytime at Tattered Cover Kids. 5pm. Stanley Marketplace, 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. stanleymarketplace.com

11/19, 11/22 & 11/25—Art Crawl: Little Landscapes. 10:30–11:15am. For caregivers with infants–14 months. Registration required. 1250 Bannock St. clyffordstillmuseum.org

11/26 Sunday—Teen Jam. Learn to better express yourself through music while forming relationships with peers. Youth-led. Free. 11am–1pm. Tuft Theatre, 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. Bloom early learning space (newborn–age 3) now open. Reservations recommended at mychildsmuseum.org

Clyfford Still Museum. Free Night at the museum Nov. 4, 5–10pm. SCFD Free Day Dec. 3. Children 17 and under always free. 1250 Bannock St. clyffordstillmuseum.org

Denver Art Museum. Free Night at the Museum Nov. 4, 5–10pm. SCFD Free Day Nov. 14. Youth 18 & under always free. 100 W 14th Ave. Pkwy. denverartmuseum.org

Denver Botanic Gardens. SCFD Free Day Nov. 24. Must reserve tickets in advance. 1007 York St. botanicgardens.org

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

Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Free Night at the Museum Nov. 4, 5–10pm. SCFD Free Day Dec. 4. 2001 Colorado Blvd. dmns.org

Denver Zoo. Free Night Nov. 4, 5–10pm. Lottery for free events at denverzoo.org. 2900 E 23rd Ave.

The Forney Museum of Transportation. 4303 Brighton Blvd. forneymuseum.org

Four Mile Historic Park. SCFD Free Day Nov. 24. Open Wed–Sun, 10am–4pm. 715 S. Forest St. fourmilepark.org

History Colorado. Free night at the museum: Nov. 4, 5–10pm. Free membership for 4th graders. 1200 Broadway. historycolorado.org

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–5pm. 1340 Pennsylvania St. mollybrown.org

Museo de las Americas. Free 1st Fridays and always free for 13 and under. Tue–Fri, noon–6pm. Sat, noon–5pm. Closed Mon & Sun. 861 Santa Fe Dr. museo.org

Museum for Black Girls. Now open! Hours: Wed. 11am–6pm (half price), Th–Sun, 11am–7pm. 500 16th Street Mall. Tickets at themuseumforblackgirls.com

Museum of Contemporary Art Denver. Always free for kids 18 and under and healthcare workers. 1¢ admission 1st Sat. of the month. 1485 Delgany St. mcadenver.org



Little Red—A family-friendly retelling of Little Red Riding Hood

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

The Urban Farm. Open to the public Saturdays only from 9am–1pm. 10200 Smith Rd. theurbanfarm.org

Wings Over the Rockies Museum. Veterans enjoy free admission all day on 11/11. SCFD Free Day 11/12. 7711 East Academy Blvd. wingsmuseum.org

PERFORMANCE/THEATRE

11/4 to 11/5—Kim Robards Dance – Reignite. Choreography by Artistic Director Kim Robards; and virtuoso live music by the Boulder Symphony. 1755 West 48th Ave. kimrobardsdance.org

11/5 Sunday—Extremely Artificial Intelligence. Do we have a fighting chance? A Buntport collaboration. 2pm. Su Teatro, 721 Santa Fe Dr. storiesonstage.org

11/8 Wednesday—Foolin' Around With Leiney & Nick Rigg. Mature content. 7:30pm. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St, Aurora. vintagetheatre.org

11/10 Friday—Denver Philharmonic: The Sounds of Change. Step into a world of transformation and evolution. Central Presbyterian Church, 1660 Sherman St. denverphilharmonic.org

11/11 Saturday—Prakriti. 5th annual South Asian dance festival. Highlighting the impact of Climate Change. Tickets \$2. Aurora Fox Arts Center, 9900 E Colfax Ave, Aurora. aurorafoxartscenter.org

11/11 to 12/9—Letters of Suresh. A moving and engaging play of second chances. Curious Theatre Company, 1080 Acoma St. curious theatre.org

11/17 Friday —Paul Reiser: Live Stand-Up Special. Paul Reiser is one of Hollywood's most prolific creatives. 7:30-9:30pm. 2344 E. Iliff Ave. newmancenterpresents.com

11/17 to 11/19—ReelAbilities Film Festival. 13 films and shorts celebrating those with disabilities. JCC Mizel Arts Center, 350 S Dahlia St. jccdenver.org

11/18 to 12/17—The Odd Couple. Our favorite 'Odd Couple' is getting even more odd. The John Hand Theater, 7653 E. 1st Pl. firehousetheatercompany.com

Through 11/19—Sondheim on Sondheim. Experience the wisdom and wit of Jewish composer Stephen Sondheim. JCC Mizel Arts and Culture Center, 350 S Dahlia St. jccdenver.org

11/19 to 12/23—Ballet Ariel Presents The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe. Three Denver area locations. Tickets at balletariel.org

11/21 to 11/26—Annie. The best-loved musical of all time is set to return in a new production. Buell Theatre. denvercenter.org

11/24 & 11/25—Home Alone in Concert. Watch the movie while the symphony plays. Boettcher Concert Hall. coloradosymphony.org

11/24 to 12/31—Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella. A stylish, contemporary take of the fairy tale classic. 6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada. www.cli.re/44806-rodgers-and-hammersteins-cinderella

Through 11/26—Clyde's. You'll become a fly on the wall of Clyde's, a roadside sandwich shop. Kilstrom Theatre. denvercenter.org

Through 11/26—Cadillac Crew. Will the world be ready to embrace women in all their capacity? For mature audiences. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St, Aurora. vintagetheatre.org

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

College Access Mentor with Minds Matter Colorado. Two hours a week during the school year. Info at mindsmatterco.org/volunteers

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

Denver Rescue Mission. To find volunteer opportunities, go to: denverrescuemission.org/volunteer/#opportunities

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. Email contact: Pil, 201 I @partnersinliteracy.org.

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

Ronald McDonald House Charities Volunteer. Info at ronaldhouse.org under "How You Can Help".

Sand Creek Greenway Volunteer Opportunities. Nov. 4 workday, 10am–12pm. Info or to register to volunteer at sandcreekgreenway.org/volunteer

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

Spark the Change Colorado. Direct service programs that leverage the talents and expertise of skilled volunteers in fields like mental health and empowering aging. sparkthechangecolorado.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/

GREEN AND SUSTAINABILITY EVENTS

11/1, 11/7 & 11/14—Shop Safety & Certification Class. Don't buy tools, borrow them at the Denver Tool Library. 555 Santa Fe Dr. Register at denvertoollibrary.org

11/4 Saturday—Used Book Pop-Up Sale. Children's books and adult titles will be available at bargain prices. 10am–2pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. denverlibrary.org

11/12 Sunday—U-Fix-It Clinic Hands-on Repair. Bring any appliance, device, toy, clothing, or broken thing you want to learn how to fix. 1–4pm. Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave. calendar.boulderlibrary.org/event/10399739

11/17 Friday—City and County of Denver Solarthon. Learn to install a solar system at Denver International Airport for a day. Meet at the Montbello Rec Center, 15555 East 53rd Ave. 8:30am–4:30pm. Free, reserve your spot at www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-city-and-county-of-denver-solarthon-tickets-714797768367?aff=ALLEVENTS

11/30 Thursday—From Waste to Fashion. Turn waste into fabulous fashion and discuss the importance of our fashion choices. 5:30–8pm. Suggested donation \$10, also collecting winter clothing. Fashion Factory at Stanley Marketplace 2501 N. Dallas St, Aurora. womeninsustainability.org

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13

November 2023



MacKenzie Hardt owns a cargo e-bike store and repair shop in Northwest Aurora and leads families on monthly bike rides throughout the city.

By Mary Jo Brooks

They seem to be everywhere: electric bikes of all shapes and sizes speeding along roads, bike lanes, and shared pedestrian pathways. Some look like regular bikes, some like small motorcycles, and still others appear as strange contraptions with pedals, handlebars, and enormous cargo platforms in front or back that are designed to carry children, groceries, and packages. The e-bike revolution has firmly taken hold in Denver, to the delight of many who want to see fewer

more observations than when they're riding in a car." For Oyler, e-bike commuting is more than a personal passion—it's also his profession. He works for Toole Design Group, a planning and engineering company that advises cities (including Denver) about how to encourage more human-centered transportation, such as walking, biking, or public transit. Prior to moving to Denver last spring, he was the bicycle and pedestrian manager for Memphis.

Oyler says he first became interested in encouraging cities to provide more bicycle-friendly infrastructure during college, when he studied in Europe and saw how those urban areas were better equipped for safe bicycle commuting. "I was captivated by what I saw and realized I wanted to work in a career that helped cities become safer for commuters." He says Denver is like most American cities—fairly car-centric—but says that officials are working to change that. "There's been more investment in making streets safer for cyclists and pedestrians. More needs to be done, but Denver is moving in the right direction." Oyler says the growth in e-bike use will continue to dramatically rise in the coming years and predicts Denver will soon see a substantial increase in the number of e-bikes that are used for food and package delivery. He says it's already commonplace in New York City to see Amazon deliveries done by cyclists with large cargo trailers.

McKenzie Hardt agrees that e-bikes will become even more ubiquitous—and that the city must do more to accommodate them. He says it's a chicken and egg problem. "City governments don't want to spend money on infrastructure unless they see there's enough users, but people don't want to ride bikes on busy streets if they think they'll

Electric Bike Use Accelerates in Denver

gas-guzzling cars on the road and to the consternation of some pedestrians who worry about safety on pathways.

Central Park resident Nick Oyler is a big e-biking proponent—for health and climate benefits but also because it's more fun. On most mornings, he uses his cargo e-bike to drop his two children off at school. "They love seeing the world from the back of the bike. They make many

die. The e-bike rebate program has helped promote more e-bicycle use, but now we have this huge egg that's starting to hatch and we have to deal with it," says Hardt.

Hardt owns Hardt Family Cyclery in Northwest Aurora and has helped advise city and state officials about their e-bike rebate programs. The Denver rebate program started in April 2022 and has given out more than 7,000 rebates totaling more than \$6.5 million. Mike Salisbury, who leads the city's Office of Climate Action, Sustainability, and Resiliency, says the program has been "wildly successful and has greatly exceeded our expectations." According to a survey by his office, Denver cyclists are replacing 3.4 vehicle trips every week with e-bike trips, which totals about 150,000 vehicle miles avoided per week. Salisbury says that "significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector."

A second rebate program implemented by the state of Colorado was launched in August. It is geared exclusively for low-to-moderate income households and will spend \$6.6 million over the next six months with the goal of helping 7,000 people buy e-bikes.

To meet the burgeoning e-bike use, Salisbury says that Denver has installed 137 miles of bike lanes over the last five years and will continue to add more. Still, some Denver pedestrians worry that these faster bikes pose a danger to walkers and joggers on shared pathways.

Hardt says he thinks that Denver has good laws governing e-bike use, but that not enough people know or follow the rules. "Our bike paths do have speed limits. There are restrictions on what bikes can ride on different paths. Bikes with throttles are not supposed to be on any kind of path—they're supposed to be

on the road. But not everyone follows the rules." He wishes that there was a better system of educating young and old cyclists alike, and concedes that the current 15 mph speed limit on pathways should probably be lowered to 10 mph. Still, he says it comes down to courtesy. "We could prevent most problems and injuries if more people used common sense and courtesy when interacting with others on these paths." Improving biker education is one of the reasons Hardt leads monthly family bike rides designed to show families how to safely navigate Denver streets. "Our rides typically connect two or three neighborhoods. We'll go from playground to playground or stop at coffee or ice cream shops along the way. We are teaching safety but we also have a lot of fun."

For more information about the family bike rides, visit www.hardtfamilycyclery.com. For information about Denver's e-bike rebate program visit www.denvergov.org and for Colorado's rebate program, email ebikescolorado@aptim.com.

"There's been more investment in making streets safer for cyclists and pedestrians."

—Nick Oyler



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November 2023

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NEWS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

MASTER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NOVEMBER 2023

THE ART OF THE POWWOW WITH RED FEATHER WOMAN FEATURING ART MARKET AND TOCABE FOOD

Saturday, November 4th, The Cube, 8371 Northfield Blvd.

3:15pm Art Vendors Open
4pm Tocabe Food-Free for the first 70 orders
4:45pm Doors open for the performance
5:00-6:45pm performance

WINTER WELCOME

Friday, November 17th, 5-8pm, 29th Ave. Town Center

Join us as we flip the switch on our holiday lights at the 29th Ave Town Center on Friday, November 17th. There will be live performances from the Denver Dolls & Yuletide Carolers, vendors selling goodies and a Winter Welcome bar selling hot chocolate and adult beverages!

The tree lighting ceremony will begin at 6:00pm!

Additionally, there will also be Girl Scouts selling s'mores, MCA partners giving away special treats and pictures with Santa beginning at 5pm.

*We will close 29th Avenue from Quebec to Roslyn Street at 8am to set up for the event.

HOLIDAY WINE TASTING

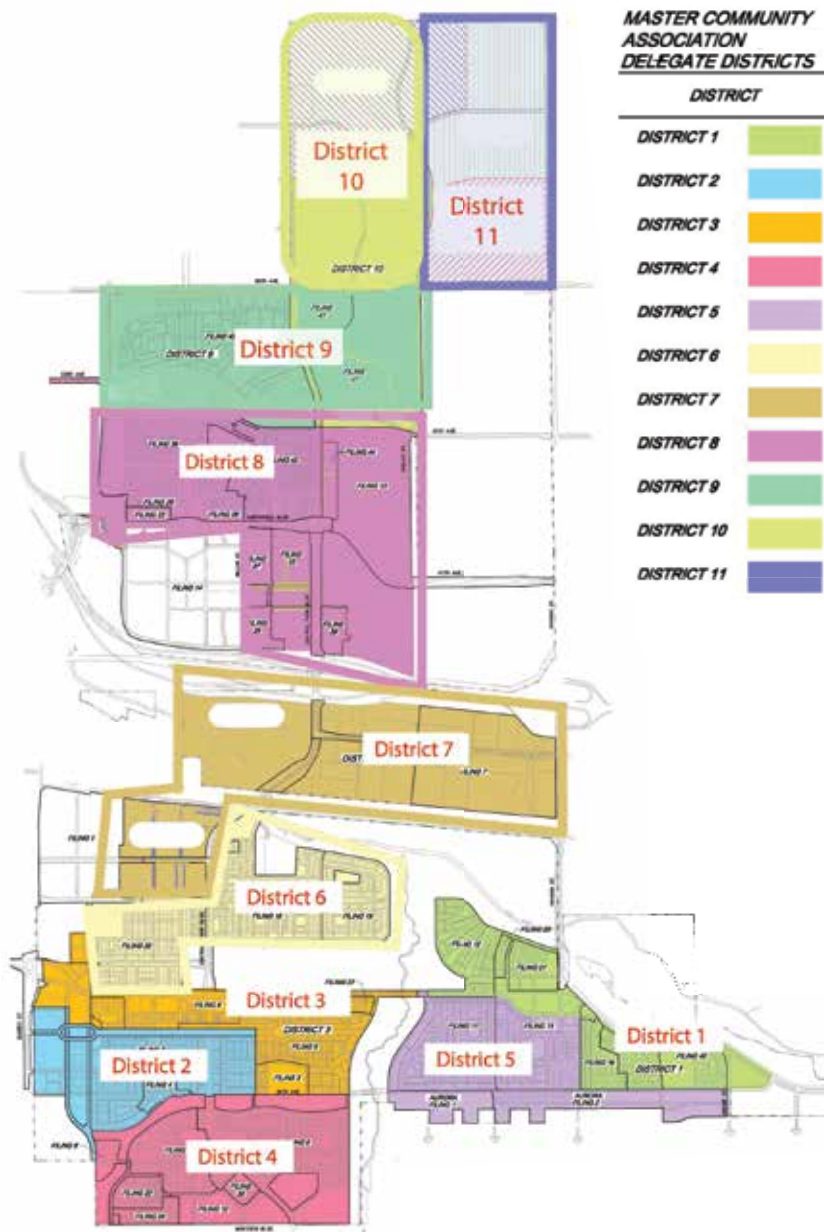
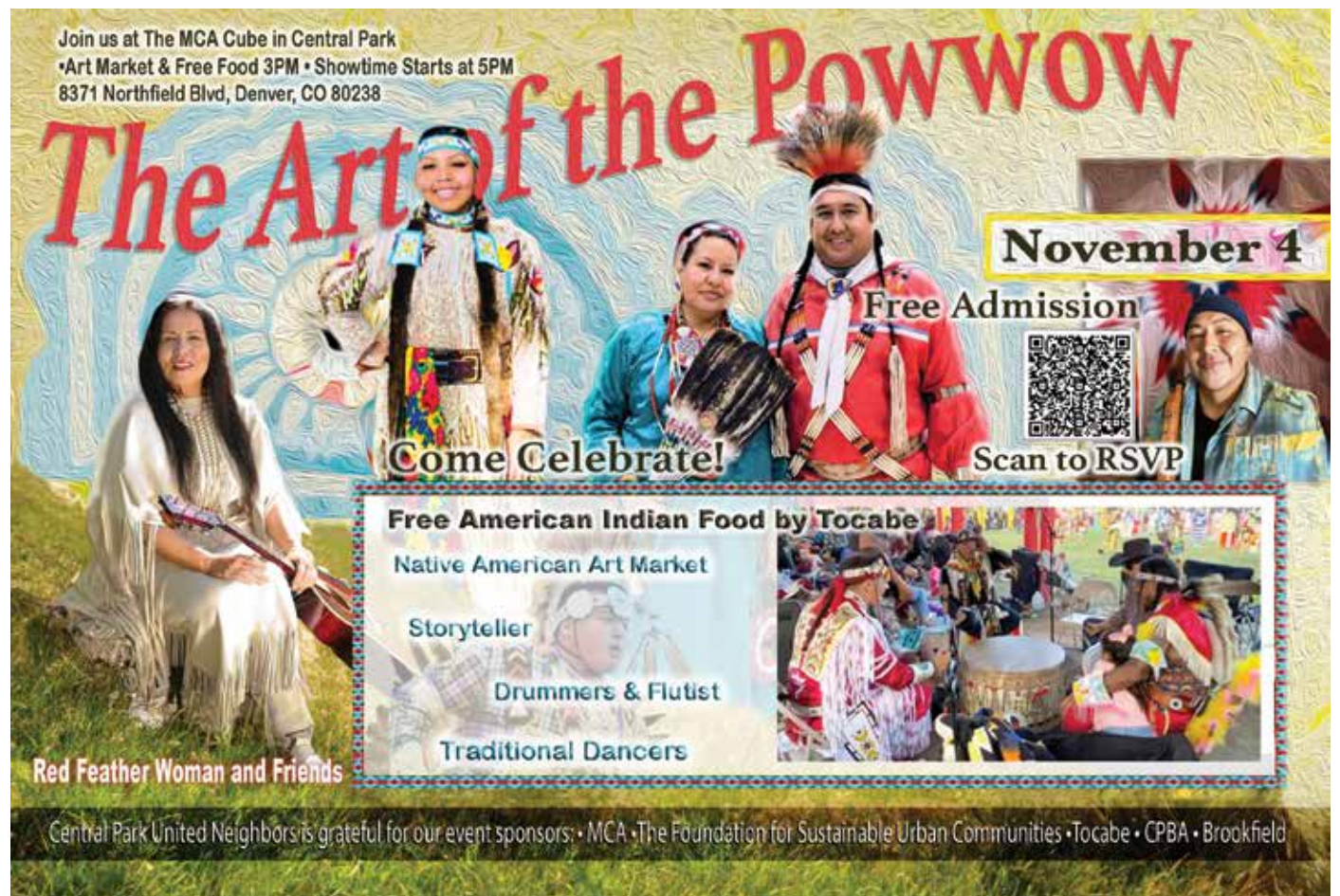
Thursday, November 9th, 5:30-8:30pm, The Cube, 8371 Northfield Blvd.

Pearl Wine Company, The Women's Wine Guild, and the MCA are teaming up for a special Holiday Wine Tasting. This event will feature over 70 wines available for you to try before you buy for the holidays! The event will feature a walk around tasting hosted at the MCA Cube. Tickets will go on sale October 1st and will be limited to 150 people. Proceeds to benefit the Women's Wine Guild and orders will be fulfilled and delivered by Pearl Wine Company.

About WWG: The Women's Wine Guild is a non-profit dedicated to creating an inclusive, education-based environment where women in the Food, Wine and Hospitality industries can flourish and grow in Colorado.

About Pearl Wine: Pearl Wine Company is a boutique bottle shop that opened in 2015 in Platt Park. They will be opening a location in North Central Park, combined with a European Style Grocer called Pearl Market.

Visit mca80238.com to purchase tickets!



MCA DELEGATE NOMINATIONS OPEN

Calling for Community Delegate Nominations: All nominations should be received by November 10th to be included on the official ballot as part of the Annual Members Meeting Mailing. Any district with one or more nominations at the printing of the annual meeting notice will be listed as "Contested" and all the voting for that seat will occur up through the annual members meeting in December. If a quorum of the district is not present by ballot, proxy or attendance at the annual members meeting then voting will continue till the following delegate meeting scheduled on the 3rd Wednesday of January. Any member can nominate themselves for any DISTRICT SEAT in which they reside or operate a commercial business.

ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING AND DELEGATE ELECTION

Wednesday, December 13th, 6-8pm, The Cube, 8371 Northfield Blvd.

Jennifer Olsen
Communications Manager
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