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SEPTEMBER 2025



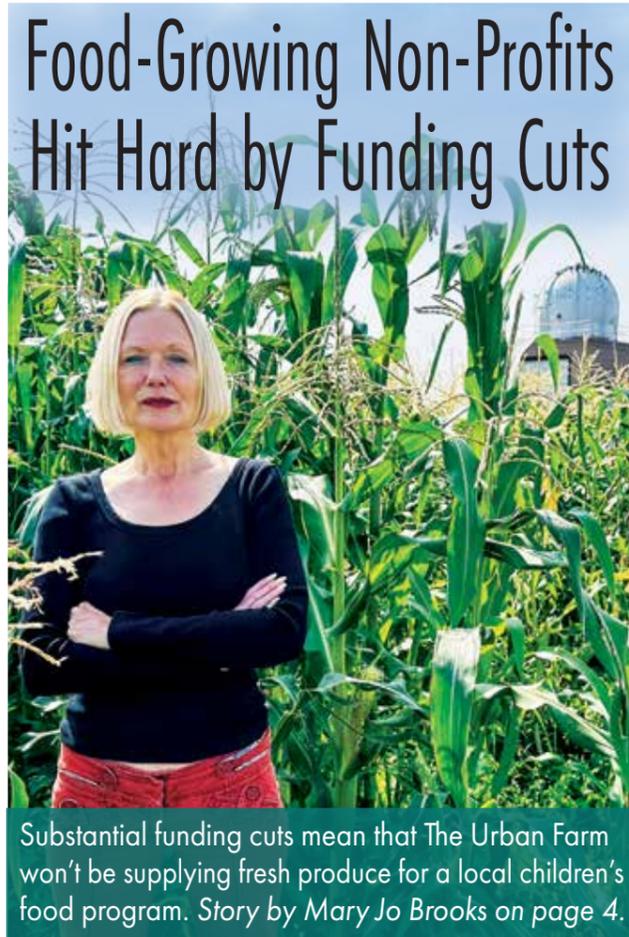
## Isabella Bird Selected as DPS Gifted and Talented Magnet School

Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

The Friday before the start of the new school year in NE Denver was a busy time for dropping off supplies, checking classroom lists, and sharing summer stories.

Isabella Bird Community School, located at the east end of Central Park, draws students from throughout the neighborhood and beyond. The school was recently selected as a magnet site for highly gifted and talented students, joining three other new DPS magnet sites. The program will officially kick off in the fall of 2026. *Story by Sarah Huber on page 9.*

## Food-Growing Non-Profits Hit Hard by Funding Cuts



Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch

Substantial funding cuts mean that The Urban Farm won't be supplying fresh produce for a local children's food program. *Story by Mary Jo Brooks on page 4.*



Rendering courtesy of Stockdale Capital Partners

## Changes For The Shops at Northfield

The Shops at Northfield sees 8.5 million visitors a year. Since its opening in 2006, the shopping area has watched stores come and go. In the next few years, there are big changes ahead with national retailers like Wayfair joining the northeast Denver shopping destination. The area will also feature more areas for families and better ways for pedestrians to get around. *Story by Linda Kotsaftis on page 2.*

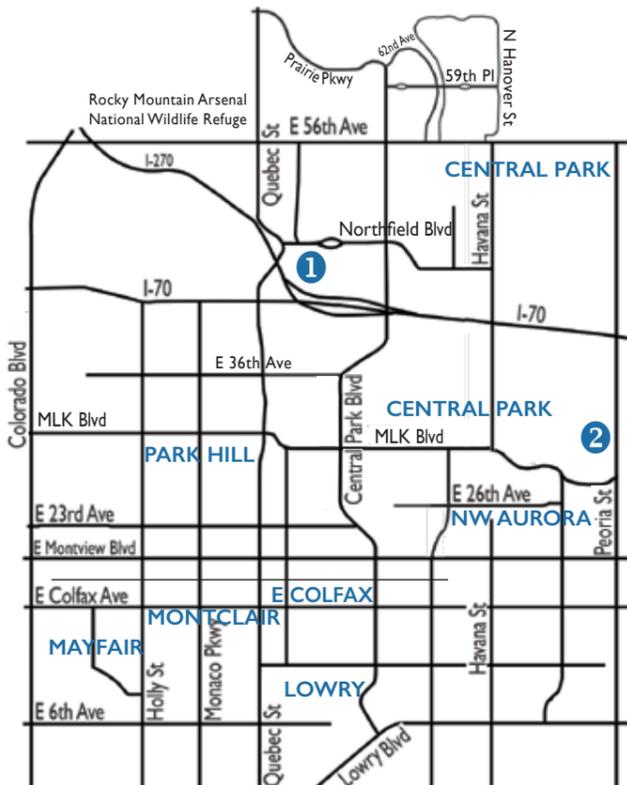
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# ...NE News Updates



By Linda Kotsaftis

## 1 Two Decades Later, The Shops at Northfield Evolves with the Community

There are some big changes coming to The Shops at Northfield. Some plans are known, like the 140,000-square-foot Wayfair retail space that will replace the closed Macy's store. The retailer, which is known primarily as an online marketplace, will feature 19 departments, including furniture, appliances, and décor. And Life Time, a 103,000-square-foot luxury athletic club, will go into the former JCPenney location.

What remains unknown is the soon-to-be-named specialty grocery store planned for the area. *BusinessDen*

has reported that Trader Joe's is coming. But Don Cloutier, general manager of Stockdale Capital Partners, which owns The Shops at Northfield, said there's only so much he can and will say about it.

"It'll be a new building, and it'll be on the east side. Short of that, we're still not able to say much. We're in the planning and permitting stage. We have a signed lease, and so that's where we need to leave it for now," Cloutier said. He added that it's up to the grocery owner to make the announcement.

But that's not happening yet. When asked, Nakiya Rohde, public relations manager for Trader Joe's, said: "We are actively looking at hundreds of neighborhoods across the country as we hope to open more new neighborhood stores each year. At this time, we do not have a new location confirmed in Denver."

"I think patience is going to be key," Cloutier said about the changes and work ahead. "We will be thrilled to see construction begin in both of the anchor stores, Wayfair and Life Time. There's permitting ahead along with design and work on both exteriors and interiors. It's a very fundamental change of use from JCPenney to Life Time. That's a big lift. Wayfair will move along quite a bit quicker, and so we'll be very excited to see activity there."

In addition, Cloutier said more announcements are on the way. "There are a few more in the hopper that I can't really share right now. We'll be shortening timelines between announcements. It all kind of culminates in 2027, with everybody open and operating and thriving," he said.

The changes are a long time coming for the shopping area, which opened in 2006. Back then, Cloutier said, "you looked around and the homes weren't there. They were all on the south side [of Central Park]. You had the retailers open up, but they didn't quite have the community there to serve."

Stockdale Capital Partners purchased The Shops at Northfield in 2022 and have since been working on deals behind the scenes to bring in new businesses. There



A rendering of what The Shops at Northfield will look like in the future with more trees, new businesses, and pedestrian friendly areas.

was also work on the infrastructure, including roofs and parking lots.

"We're just a mile north of the light rail," Cloutier said. "We've worked very hard to try to curate this 15-minute kind of walkable, livable community and city in the hub of what is a massive master planned community itself. We're a microcosm of Central Park, and we're going to bust our butt to make sure that everybody sees and feels that, and we provide just the most relevant stores and opportunities to enjoy."

It's a time of transition for the shopping area, and one that Cloutier hopes will help meet the needs of the area and solve the shopping puzzle. People are excited about it, too. He said every restaurant opening brings enthusiasm from the community.

There are also people who express disappointment when they don't get what they want, if social media traffic is any indication. The rumor that Dick's Sporting Goods would go into the Macy's space—a rumor that turned out to be unfounded—left some people disappointed. Many others, however, were excited about the Wayfair store.

The management team pays attention to all of the reactions through the Facebook group postings and online comments from people who think they know what's coming, Cloutier said.

The community input helps management stay relevant with the right mix of stores and public spaces for families. Families are at the center of the project that next year will begin transforming a portion of the shopping complex's Main Street into a pedestrian-only park with a green central lawn.



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Events will still be there, including the Denver Century Ride cycling tour, the Halloween festival, and ice sculpting. They'll go alongside new outdoor dining patios, common consumption areas, and communal seating zones.

And also planned are The Shops at Northfield Apartments: three multi-family residential buildings along with green space in the area from Northfield Blvd. to 47th Ave, and Verbena St. to Willow St. The project has zoning approval from the City, but there's a lot of work ahead.

Those apartment residents will be part of the customer base, but Cloutier knows the new stores will also bring in people from across the metro area. The Shops at Northfield sees 8.5 million annual visitors a year.

Many of those visits come from current residents of Central Park. Cloutier lives in the neighborhood, too, and has spoken at Central Park United Neighborhood (CPUN) monthly meetings. Residents are always welcome to ask questions and get information.

Liz Stalnaker, CPUN president, said she appreciates The Shops at Northfield "being a good partner in the neighborhood who is listening to the community."

metro Denver—Diana DeGette, Joe Neguse, and Brittany Pettersen—on the tour of the ICE facility, operated by contractor GEO Group Inc.

"I can personally say after my 10th visit, this has been the most difficult visit in terms of getting information, getting answers out of the facility, out of the employees, and being obstructed from conducting oversight that I've had in over six years, which is unacceptable," Crow said. "We won't stand for it, because transparency and oversight matter a lot, and we will not bow down from our constitutional obligation to do that duty."

DeGette said the seven days' notice required for the visit made things difficult. "I've been in a lot of correctional facilities in my life, and if you have seven days' notice, they clean up pretty good," she said, and added the entire population was on lockdown during the visit.

The congressional members did speak with one detainee and visited the health care area but were told they could not be given a specific count of how many people are in the facility. They were told that information requests would need to be funneled through the ICE main office in Washington, D.C.

DeGette said there's also been a lack of access to legal information at the facility. She was able to see Jeanette Vizguerra, one of her constituents. The longtime Denver immigrant rights advocate has been in custody at the facility since her March 17 arrest. DeGette has filed a private bill in Congress, seeking to release Vizguerra and allow her to stay in the country while her immigration case proceeds.

"I wanted to hand deliver a copy of the bill to Jeanette. She was grateful for that, and she told me she is not going to stop fighting for immigrants' rights, and so, we're going to keep up our oversight here," DeGette said.

Both Crow and Neguse have previously attempted unannounced visits to the ICE facility and were denied access. They have joined a lawsuit with other lawmakers across the country suing the Trump administration, saying it's a violation of federal law granting members of Congress the right to conduct unannounced oversight visits of federal immigration detention facilities.



Front Porch photo by Linda Kosoff

U.S. Rep. Jason Crow (at the podium) spoke to the press after his tour of a local ICE facility.

## 2 Rep. Jason Crow Has Questions After ICE Facility Tour

U.S. Rep. Jason Crow led a scheduled oversight visit to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facility in northwest Aurora August 11, which he said led to "many, many more questions."

Crow (D-Aurora) was joined by three other Democratic members of Congress from

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# Denver Food-Growing Non-Profits Hit Hard by Federal Funding Cuts

By Mary Jo Brooks

Over the past several months, non-profits across the country have been hit with federal funding cuts that have led to curtailed services, employee layoffs, and big questions about how some organizations will survive.

Denver non-profits are no exception. Denver Urban Gardens and The Urban Farm—two long-established organizations that focus on growing food; building community; and promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion—now find themselves struggling to fulfill their missions.

Denver Urban Gardens has taken the most direct hit. Over the past 40 years, the organization has created more than 200 community gardens and food forests on public land across the metro area. (Food forests are small areas where Denver Urban Gardens installs trees and bushes in public spaces where anyone can harvest the fruit, berries, or nuts that are produced).



Front Porch photos by Christie Gosch

The Urban Farm's Paige Heydon said funding cuts threaten the future of its gardening program.

Last year, the organization was awarded \$1.2 million in grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Forest Service. The money was to be used to install six community gardens and nine food forests in an area of west Denver that is considered a food desert because it is difficult for residents to access affordable fresh produce.

This summer, the EPA and the Forest Service announced they were withdrawing \$850,000 of the grant money. Denver Urban Gardens Executive Director Linda Appel Lipsius said she's had to drastically cut back the plans for west Denver.

"We are now doing just two gardens and three food forests," Lipsius said. "And that's just the beginning of the snowball." She said she will have to restructure the organization, lay off employees, and curtail any other expansion of gardens in the near future.

"It's just so heartbreaking," she said. "When we got the grants, we thought it was a new era, that people finally understood how community gardens have all sorts of health benefits. So this has been a tremendous blow."

Lipsius said she knows that her organization was denied the grants because its mission is environmental justice.

"The letter [rescinding the grants] said it was because of our 'woke' agenda," she said. "We're talking about building gardens in neighborhoods that don't have grocery stores. That's radical?" Her organization protested the funding cuts, but she's not optimistic they will be restored.

Compounding the problem is all of the economic uncertainty: City budgets have been slashed and philanthropic donor organizations are worried about



Denver Urban Garden volunteers harvest produce that will be donated to local food banks. A food forest is pictured at the back of the garden.

the economy. "Everybody is hedging their bets right now," Lipsius said.

That ripple effect also impacts The Urban Farm, located at the edge of Central Park. While the organization didn't receive some EPA grants that had been all but assured to help restore some pastureland, the bigger issue is the loss of local government money.

"We typically get a lot of money from the City, but they are cutting way back this year because the City itself has lost federal funding for food programs," said Paige Heydon, The Urban Farm's executive director.

The farm's mission is to provide an opportunity for urban youth to participate in sustainable food systems by offering programs in organic gardening, animal husbandry, land conservation, and food security. Almost all of the food grown at the farm was sold to the City through a program called Healthy Food for Denver's Kids.

"This year we were expecting \$200,000 from that program. Instead, we're getting just \$50,000," Heydon said. She is working with her board of directors to figure out how to restructure so

the garden can continue. And she knows there will have to be layoffs.

"This is really hard on the staff," she said. "They've put their blood, sweat, and tears into this farm and they're doing everything they're supposed to be doing, but the money is just going away."

Heydon has also seen local private funding dry up. "I don't blame those funders. They are being asked to provide money to help homeless youth and provide basic services. They have to go where the most need is right now," Heydon said. "Donors are scared about their own situation. They're less willing to give until the world makes sense again."

To try to keep the garden in operation, Heydon is thinking about partnerships with other food organizations. But she knows they are all struggling.

"I've been in the non-profit world for 25 years and I've never seen a year like this where you just don't know where your next dollar is coming from," Heydon said. "Most of our partners have already laid off staff, so it's a pretty painful process. All of this means that thousands of people won't get healthy food next year."



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# Remembering Martina Will

**Editor's note:** *Martina Will was a force in the community. She was an award-winning writer for Front Porch for many years, always focusing on issues that impacted the people of our city. She was a friend to many and a loving mother to her children. Her daughter Isabella wrote about her mother's impactful life.*



Photo courtesy of the Will family

By Isabella Chaparro Will

How does one put into words the death of a woman whose presence surpasses the physical limitations our worldly bodies bind us to? It would feel inauthentic to label Martina Will's death as a departure, a passing, a transition; she always hated euphemisms.

Martina Elaine Will didn't know it, but at the time of her birth, August 3, 1967, the world became a brighter and more just place. Born in Bonn, Germany, she soon moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where she would complete grade school. Her academic endeavors culminated in an impressive BA from the University of Virginia, an MA in Latin American Studies from the University of California at San Diego, and her PhD in History from the University of New Mexico.

As a Professor and Doctor of History and Latin American studies, Martina's love and devotion for her field yielded thorough research and published books exploring death and dying in colonial South America. Martina provided support for nonprofits through grant writing, spent countless hours volunteering at local organizations such as Casa de Paz, and crafted stories for her community newspaper, *Front Porch*, oftentimes highlighting stories about underserved populations, polarizing political issues, and all the while fostering meaningful community connections.

Martina's commitment to advocating for the GIST cancer community has left an irreversible impact on medical research. Even as she navigated her own prognosis, she never failed to advocate for others. In her final months, she devoted her energy to creating an SDH-deficient support group, bridging connections between individuals from all walks of life.

From her days working on a cruise ship, teaching tacky line dances and hosting bingo nights, to diligently sifting through forgotten records in Spanish archives, Martina has done it all. She has completed spiritual pilgrimages, lobbied on Capitol Hill, swam with sharks, danced salsa in Cuba, and reached new heights in 4-inch heels.

And while motherhood is not the most interesting part of her identity, it is one of the most important. Martina dedicated the past 21 years of her life to raising three children who will carry forth her legacy.

Words will never suffice in expressing the everlasting void that will forever remain in the lives of her children, siblings, parents, and friends. Her ability to evoke wonder sparked inward reflection in all those who knew her.

Whether known as Martina, Mausie, or a Wonder Twin counterpart, her legacy extends beyond her published books, delicious red-lentil soup recipe, and impassioned jigsaw puzzle skills. She will be fiercely missed by her children, Isabella, Sofia, and Luka; her siblings Christopher Will, Stephanie Will Ching, and Dominic Will; and her parents Leonard and Wilma Will.

Martina never faltered in embodying the infamous line: "Start by admitting from cradle to tomb, it isn't that long a stay. Life is a Cabaret." Martina never settled for the ordinary. She lived admirably with tenacity and a fierce desire to connect, explore, and learn.

Martina viewed life as a dress rehearsal for the spirit and its counterpart as the beautiful unknown. May this next chapter bring Martina peace and everlasting bliss. She will live on forever in our hearts.

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**Q.** What is the Front Range's most pressing air quality problem?

**A.** Ground-level ozone is an odorless and invisible pollutant. It forms when volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides, mostly from fossil fuel emissions, combine with heat and sunlight.

**Q.** Why does this matter?

**A.** Ozone levels peak yearly during the summer, often on sunny days when Coloradans love to be outdoors. It impacts our health and environment, and is a leading cause of respiratory issues.

**Q.** What about the ozone layer?

**A.** Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) is a gas molecule composed of three oxygen atoms. High up in the atmosphere, the ozone layer is key and offers protection from the sun's ultraviolet radiation. But breathing in ground-level ozone irritates throats and lungs, increases the susceptibility to respiratory infections, and exacerbates ailments like asthma.

**Q.** Who is most impacted?

**A.** People most impacted by this air pollution are the elderly, those with respiratory conditions, outdoor workers and athletes, and especially children, whose lungs are still developing and are more likely to be active outdoors.

**Q.** What can you do?

- A.**
1. Reduce emissions to help keep ozone levels low, supporting your health and your community's.
  2. Actively protect your health by avoiding heavy outdoor exercise or exertion between noon and 8pm, especially on ozone alert days.
  3. Know when ozone is bad by signing up for summer ozone alerts.

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# Front Porch Wins Six 2024 Colorado Press Association Awards

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**Best Public Service Project—Second Place**

Christie Gosch, Sarah Huber, Linda Kotsaftis, and Mary Jo Brooks—*Concerned about the Climate Crisis? Move from Anxiety to Action!*

**Best Education Story—First Place**

Sarah Huber—*Ashley Elementary Welcomes Migrant Students, Names New Principal*

**Best Business News/Feature Story—Second Place**

Courtney Drake-McDonough—*Doubling Down on Business at Stanley Marketplace*

**Best Sports or Sports Event Story—First Place**

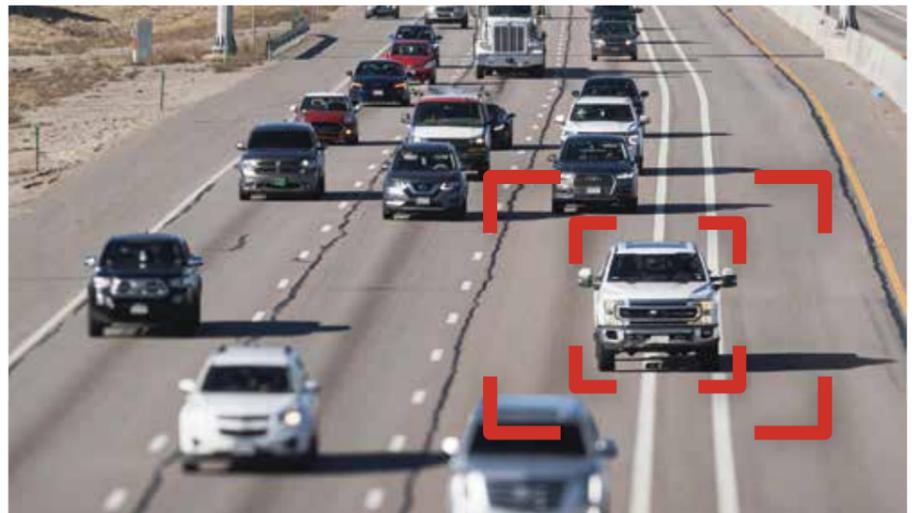
Martina Will—*Team Venezuela Offers a Chance to be Children Again*

**Best Feature Photograph—First Place**

Christie Gosch—*Beloved Teacher Retires After 53 Years*

**Best Informational Graphic—First Place**

Christie Gosch—*Area Dumpling Shops Wrap Up Culinary Artistry*



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Front Porch photo by Christie Gosch



Christiane Papé works on *The Giving Garden* in the basement of her daughter's home in Central Park.

By Linda Kotsaftis

Artist Christiane Papé's work has been seen around the world: Rome, Paris, Geneva, and New York City, including in the windows of Saks Fifth Avenue. Her latest piece now has a home in Central Park at The Village Farms at Stanley.

Papé's paintings are inspired by nature—colorful flowers reminiscent of a summer garden.



Artist Christiane Papé (right) receives a bouquet of fresh flowers at the unveiling of her painting.

"When I start my canvas, it's white and everything explodes from me. I don't have a model or anything to relate it to. I love flowers. I admire them. I always look at them and I have a very good photographic memory. I never copy anything," Papé said.

As she finished work on her painting in the studio in the basement of her daughter's northeast Denver home, Papé talked about her beginning as an artist. "I remember all my teachers would keep my drawings. They would say, 'You should do this, and you should do that.'" She said school didn't help her learn what she has inside. Everything, she said, "comes from here," pointing to her heart.

The 89-year-old artist recently moved to Denver from Lugano, Switzerland, where she lived with her husband until his death.

# An Artist's Journey from Switzerland to Central Park

"She had a studio full of paintings in Lugano in a two-bedroom apartment," Papé's daughter, Marina Kortekaas, said. "One of the bedrooms was basically a storage space. It had about 150 canvases, and then there were prints, and it was crazy. We sold them all before coming to Denver."

Kortekaas is a volunteer at the farm and works in professional organizing, staging, and design. When she was asked to help with design at the new farm location, the timing of her mother's move was a perfect fit.

They needed a painting for the empty wall in a trailer, so she asked her mom, "Will you do this?" The answer was "yes," and Kortekaas said her mother dove right into the project, working six to eight hours a day in the basement studio.

"She is so happy," Kortekaas said, adding that she needed to remind her mother to come upstairs and eat. The timing of the project was also right for Papé, who stopped painting for six years while her husband was ill. "I was so happy to start again," Papé said. "It's my life. Even if I have a problem, I come and paint. I love painting."

Papé said the work also helped with the transition of moving to Denver. After living in cities around the world, she's still acclimating to life in Central

Park. She has a few pieces being commissioned, which she planned to work on next, and a project with a publisher in Poland pairing art with poetry.

In August, the artist was at the unveiling of her painting inside the farm's trailer in a new sitting area for visitors and volunteers. A group of family, friends, and farm staff were there to see the donated piece, titled *The Giving Garden*.

"I love the purples and the pinks and the blues. Those are some of my favorite colors. It's amazing. We will treasure it forever," said Sydney Quynn, program director for Village Farms.

For Papé, it's a connection to her new home and neighborhood, far away from Switzerland.

"I am honored to give to the Village Farms for the appreciation of all that it brings to our community," she said. "I hope it adds beauty to this space, as a lasting thank you to everyone for helping this special place grow."

See more of Papé's work at [www.chpape.com](http://www.chpape.com)

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The red-tailed hawk is the most common hawk year-round.

Length: 17.7–25.6 inches  
Weight: 24.3–51.5 ounces  
Wingspan: 44.9–52.4 inches



Swainson's hawk

Only common from April–Sept., the Swainson's hawk returns to Argentina during the winter months. Length: 18.9–22.1 inches  
Weight: 24.4–48.2 ounces  
Wingspan: 46–54 inches



Mississippi kite

The Mississippi kite is smaller and less common. Nesting in Denver, it will return to South America for winter. Length: 13.4–14.6 inches  
Weight: 7.6–9.5 ounces  
Wingspan: 36 inches

# Bird Sightings

Generously donated by George Ho

## In the Skies Over Denver

Common and uncommon raptors circling the skies over Denver during the summer months include the red-tailed hawk, the Swainson's hawk, the Mississippi kite, the bald eagle, and the turkey vulture.



Bald eagle

Length: 27.9–37.8 inches  
Weight: 105.8–222.2 ounces  
Wingspan: 80.3 inches



Turkey vulture

Length: 25.2–31.9 inches  
Weight: 70.5 ounces  
Wingspan: 66.9–70.1 inches

**Bird Walks** September 6 & October 4, 7:30am & 8am. Walks are free but you must RSVP at [www.blufflake.org/birdwatching](http://www.blufflake.org/birdwatching). All are welcome. Bring your own binoculars, or borrow a pair from your guide. 11255 MLK Jr. Blvd. Search [www.FrontPorchNE.com](http://www.FrontPorchNE.com) for "Bird Sightings" to see all the past bird stories and photos from George Ho.

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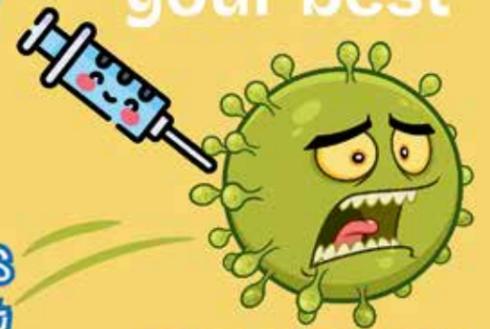
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# Isabella Bird Selected as DPS Gifted and Talented Magnet School



Parents and students drop off school supplies and look for their names on class lists.

By Sarah Fuhrey Huber

After a lengthy application process, Denver Public Schools (DPS) has selected Isabella Bird Community School as a magnet site for highly gifted and talented (HGT) students. The Central Park elementary school will continue to serve as a community school, even as it reserves seats in each classroom for students throughout the district who have been identified as HGT.

“Especially since we have been offering intentional support to our gifted students for years, we are thrilled to

become a formal magnet program,” said principal Rebecca Mercer. Isabella Bird was one of four schools in DPS to receive magnet status this year, the first time in more than a decade that magnet sites for HGT students have been added within the district.

Students are generally identified as eligible for a magnet program if they score 95 percent or higher on a nationally normed cognitive test. Within DPS, universal screening is offered in the fall, and parents of rising kindergartners may request advance testing. During the school choice process, families of those who qualify for a magnet school will be able to apply for a HGT seat at Isabella Bird.

In 2016, Mercer, then a special needs and gifted education teacher at Isabella Bird, traveled to Arizona to dig deeply into the “research-based schoolwide cluster model” that has revolutionized gifted education. “In the cluster model, students are clustered together with their peers in classrooms instead of being pulled out of class a few hours a week, which can be very disruptive,” she explained. “Gifted kids are gifted all day long.”

Parents have gravitated to the cluster model, which has been proven to “lift every student up,” Mercer noted. Ashley Williams, an Isabella Bird mom who serves as president of the school’s Parent Teacher Community Organization, said of her two children, “My students

have different strengths and weaknesses, but they both have really thrived at the school. It is a testament to Izzy B.’s commitment to well-rounded support, an approach that serves all students and is intentionally inclusive.” In fact, for Williams, the “beauty of our school is that diverse learners are celebrated.”

The school’s commitment to inclusivity includes providing tailored support to twice exceptional students, or students who might have a disability that masks their giftedness. “The myth is that gifted students are simply high-performing and high-achieving,” Mercer said. “Gifted learners are vulnerable learners with unique social and emotional needs.” Isabella Bird weaves social and emotional learning throughout the curricula, and the school psychologists offer support that targets challenges common to gifted learners, such as emotional intensity, perfectionism, and anxiety.

The 2025–26 school year is a planning period for new DPS magnet sites, with programs officially kicking off in the fall of 2026. Dr. Meryl Faulkner, director of the DPS Gifted and Talented Department, said, “We are launching these new programs with purpose, equity, and long-term planning.”

With their updated status as a magnet school, Isabella Bird “will do what we’ve been doing while always aiming to improve and grow,” Mercer said. Each teacher holds or will complete their gifted education certification this school year, and as a magnet school, Mercer and her team will have the opportunity to collaborate with other GT sites within the district. For families, the school’s magnet status will expand access to gifted education. “Our goal is to take what we find to be the most successful and equitable way to do gifted education and then extend and refine what we’re doing,” Mercer said.

The other DPS schools that were recently named magnet sites for HGT students are Beach Court Elementary, Carson Elementary, and Florida Pitt Waller ECE–8.



Ashley Williams, Parent Teacher Community Organization president, greets a new student.



Principal Rebecca Mercer talks to a family prior to the start of school.

*The community is growing and so are we!*

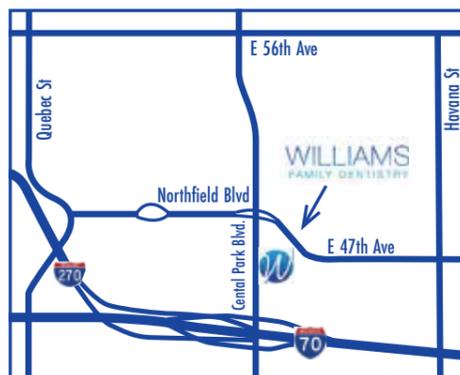
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# Green Simple Living *Coloradoscaping*

By Christina Foust, PhD

As we close out the growing season, I wanted to say thank you to *Front Porch* readers for their enthusiastic response to July's column. We received much inspiration to redo tree lawns.

Mickey Siegel suggested keeping weeds out with clover and large pavers, while Anne Hazelton found success with creeping thyme, a groundcover that produces purple hues.

Kelsey Myron-Karels used the "garden in a box" program through Denver Water to help spruce up the family's tree lawn, using mostly native plants. And Beverly Morlock used a vibrant mix of xeric plants that includes such Colorado natives as coneflower, little bluestem grass, and pentstemon.

The feedback we've received led me to focus on a practice that, if taken up throughout our neighborhoods, would have a notable impact on the climate: growing native plants.

My own introduction to native plants began a few years ago in early spring. I noticed European honeybees flocking to the dandelions that had popped up in our yard and posted my appreciation for the weed on social media. I expected to stir a little controversy but wanted to encourage folks to avoid spraying pesticides. My former colleague, Jonathan Sciarcon, kindly noted that early bloomers like pasque flower or chokecherry would be more nutritious, and would sustain many pollinators.

The Front Range chapter of Wild Ones, a volunteer-run advocacy group and a tremendous resource, defines a native plant as a species that naturally occurs in a particular region, ecosystem, or habitat that was present in North America prior to European colonization. Key to defining native plants is the idea that they *evolved* in an area for a very long time.

Sciarcon, the inaugural host of the Front Range Wild Ones podcast, *Coloradoscape*, explained that native plants offer a more "nutrient dense" option for supporting pollinators without intensive water use: "They can fill every local ecosystem need and not just a few."

Take one of the few trees native to our area, the cottonwood. Fossilized leaves of cottonwoods dating back 47 million years have been found in Utah's Uinta

mountains. The tree hosts hundreds of caterpillar species, which Sciarcon said, are crucial to birds' ability to rear young. In fact, cottonwoods provide habitat for 82 percent of Colorado's bird species. Cottonwood trees—like the grand grove lining Greenway Park—provide not only shade and beauty but anchor a web of life through food and shelter.

As the Audubon Society explains, the continental U.S. has lost 150 million acres of farmland and habitat to urban development, a process that has converted diverse plants evolved in their area to landscapes dominated by non-native plants (like butterfly bushes or Asiatic pear trees that may grow fast, but do not sustain the food web as well as rubber rabbitbrush or cottonwood).

Along with restoring the food web of our area one patch at a time, native plants save precious resources. Because their ancestors have lived through lots of climatic ups and downs, many native plants require less water and upkeep.

Sciarcon shared several ideas for Coloradoscaping your tree lawn, including the Colorado state grass, Blue Grama, which survives on eight inches of precipitation per year. Narrow-leaf coneflower is a shorter, more drought-tolerant option than its cousin (purple coneflower). And Sciarcon suggests planting common blanketflower, which blooms from June through September. Check out the Colorado Native Plant Gardening Facebook group, as well as the Colorado Native Plant Society and Denver Audubon Society for more information on Coloradoscaping and the High Plains Environmental Center for locally-sourced native plants.



From top left, clockwise: Anne Hazelton's creeping thyme groundcover; Beverly Morlock's mix of coneflower, little bluestem grass, and pentstemon; Mickey Siegel planted clover to choke out weeds; and Kelsey Myron-Karels' tree lawn consists mostly of native plants. Photos courtesy of the home owners

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Fall arrives this month and the best movies of the year will soon fill our theaters. Over the coming months—some call it “Awards Season,” but I just call it “Movie Season”—this page will be filled with such jewels, as well as independent and international film gems, local films, documentaries, and a rundown of the Denver Film Festival in November.

We’re also beginning a new monthly film series at The Cube in Northfield, where we will screen films followed by interactive discussions on the 2nd or 3rd Friday of the month. Doors open at 6:30pm and films start at 7pm. Stay tuned to this column every month for information on dates and specific films, and buy tickets on the MCA website: [www.mca2038.com](http://www.mca2038.com).

I hope to see you there!

**Film Series:** Friday, September 12, 6:30pm. The Cube in Northfield, 8371 E. Northfield Blvd.

**Psycho** (1960)

Whether or not you have seen this classic from director Alfred Hitchcock, you probably know something about it. You may know the famous shower scene and the brilliant score by Bernard Herrmann, but did you know that it was actually a small-budget, independent film? Or did you know it was one the films that “saved” the movie business at its lowest point? Or that it changed the way we went to the movies? Join us at The Cube for a discussion of these questions and more as we kick off our monthly series. I will be there to introduce the film, followed by a Q & A afterward.

**Chief of War**

(Now streaming on Apple TV)

This passion project from producer, writer, director, and star Jason Momoa tells the true story of a great Hawaiian chief who unified the islands in the late 18th Century. I was extremely impressed



with every aspect of this production. There is a *Game of Thrones* feel to some of it, and while there are some violent battle scenes and Momoa is perfectly cast as a principled warrior, it goes beyond the gore and fighting and gives us great characters (with superb performances) and complicated, layered storylines. It also provides quite a few surprises, twists, and turns in what turns out to be a wholly immersive experience.

The fascinating story is one thing, but this show begs us to go beyond the curtain to fully appreciate it. Filmed in Hawaii and New Zealand, it strives to faithfully represent Hawaiian culture, tradition, and language. That language is what jumps off the screen: the majority of the show is spoken in Hawaiian with English subtitles. After a few episodes, we get English sprinkled in—thanks to some clever plotting—but the actors went through rigorous language training to give an authentic rendering of the linguistic history of the islands. I found myself mesmerized with the actors displaying breathtaking linguistic skills in addition to the professional acting itself. If you are a fan of language and/or authenticity, this show will delight you.

The settings are lush and gorgeous, the cinematography is mesmerizing and enveloping, the sound is expressive and beautiful, and the rest of the technical

aspects are as professional as it gets for a streaming show. Apple TV obviously spared no expense, and thanks to Momoa, co-producer and co-creator Thomas Pa’a Sibbett, and the rest of the cast and crew, we are immersed in a land and time that most know little about. By press time, there will be six

episodes available. Trust me, you’ll binge those and then anxiously anticipate the last three episodes. They won’t disappoint.

Vincent Piturro, Ph.D., is a Professor of Film and Media Studies at MSU Denver. Contact him directly at [vpiturro@msudenver.com](mailto:vpiturro@msudenver.com) or follow him on X. For more reviews, search The Indie Prof at [FrontPorchNE.com](http://FrontPorchNE.com).

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# LOCAL EVENTS *September thru early October*

View/add events at [FrontPorchNE.com/events](http://FrontPorchNE.com/events). Submissions by the 17th will be considered for the upcoming month's issue.

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

## NE DENVER/NW AURORA EVENTS

**Saturdays—City Park Farmers Market.** 100+ local producers, live music, yoga, and more. 8am–1pm. 2551 E. Colfax Ave. [cityparkfarmersmarket.com](http://cityparkfarmersmarket.com)

**Sundays—Central Park Farmers Market.** Produce, baked goods, specialty meats, gourmet food items, and more. The South Green, 29th Ave. & Roslyn St. 8:30am–12:30pm. [mca80238.com](http://mca80238.com)

**9/3 & 10/1—Qi Gong.** All levels and abilities are welcome. 11am–12pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**9/5 Friday—Pours in the Park: Wine Tasting.** Wine and food. 6–8pm. Buffalo Wallow, 5545 Valentia St. Tickets \$35, must be 21+. [mca80238.com](http://mca80238.com)

**9/5 & 10/3—First Fridays.** 60 local artists, music, and entertainment. 6–9pm. 2501 N. Dallas St., Aurora. [stanleymarketplace.com](http://stanleymarketplace.com)

**9/6 Saturday—Denver Police Department Safety Expo.** Free safety expo from 10am–2pm. The Shops at Northfield's Main St. [shopsatnorthfield.com](http://shopsatnorthfield.com)

**9/6 Saturday—Denver Municipal Concert Band.** Sounds of Summer free concert. 6–7:30pm. The South Green, 29th Ave. and Roslyn St. [mca80238.com](http://mca80238.com)

**9/6 & 10/4—Bluff Lake Bird Walks.** Walks at 7:30am and 8am. 11255 E. MLK Jr. Blvd. Register at [blufflake.org/birdwatching](http://blufflake.org/birdwatching)

**9/10 Wednesday—Film Screening: Driveways.** The film invites reflection on memory, identity, friendship, and growing up. 5:30–7:30pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**9/10 Wednesday—Trust in Science: The Future of Vaccines.** Neil Halloran's new documentary, *The Plea* and panel discussion. 6:30pm. 2001 Colorado Blvd. Tickets at [dmns.org](http://dmns.org)

**9/11 Thursday—Active Minds Presents: U.S. National Parks.** 1–2pm, Free. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. [activeminds.com](http://activeminds.com)

**9/12 Friday—The Cube Cinema Series.** Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* hosted by the Indie Prof. 7pm. MCA Cube, 8371 Northfield Blvd. [mca80238.com](http://mca80238.com)

**9/13 Saturday—Nature Wonder Walks.** Bluff Lake Nature Center. 7:30am. 11255 E. MLK Jr. Blvd. Register at [blufflake.org](http://blufflake.org)

**9/13 Saturday—Rescue Puppy Yoga.** Stretch, breathe, and wag your tails. 8:30–9:30am. South side of Stanley Marketplace. [stanleymarketplace.com](http://stanleymarketplace.com)

**9/13 Saturday—Sand Creek Mural Festival.** Put the first coats of paint on the new mural. 9am–1pm. Sand Creek Park, 2700 Peoria St. [sandcreekgreenway.org](http://sandcreekgreenway.org)

**9/13 Saturday—You Pick Bouquet.** Pick your own bouquet and enjoy a light breakfast. 10am–12pm. 26th Ave. and Beeler St. [villageexchangecenter.org](http://villageexchangecenter.org)

**9/13 Saturday—Northfield Street Fair.** An artisan market series. 11am–6pm. On Main St., The Shops at Northfield. [shopsatnorthfield.com](http://shopsatnorthfield.com)

**9/13 Saturday—Six Tasks of Healthy Mourning.** Approach loss in a healthy, healing way. 2–3:30pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**9/13 Saturday—Pours in the Park: Cider Tasting.** 6–8pm. Conservatory Plaza, E 49th Pl. & Valentia Ct. Tickets \$35, must be 21+. [mca80238.com](http://mca80238.com)

**9/13 & 9/14—Park Hill Arts Fall Fest.** 100 Colorado and national artists. Sat. 10am–5pm, Sun. 10am–4pm. 4819 E. Montview Blvd. [coloradoartweekend.com](http://coloradoartweekend.com)

**9/14 Sunday—Bird Walk with Denver Field Ornithologists.** 8:30–10am. Sand Creek Park, 2700 Peoria St., Aurora. Register at [sandcreekgreenway.org](http://sandcreekgreenway.org)

**9/14 Sunday—Pacific Nations Cup.** PNC finals: one ticket, three rugby games. Dick's Sporting Goods Park, 6000 Victory Way. [go.usa.rugby/pnc2025](http://go.usa.rugby/pnc2025)

**9/16 Tuesday—DPS Board Candidate Forum.** For District 4 and the At Large positions. 6:30–8pm. MCA Cube, 8371 Northfield Blvd. [mca80238.com](http://mca80238.com)

**9/19 Friday—The Denver Brass 5.** From classical to jazz, patriotic to pop. 6:30–7:30pm. The Eisenhower Chapel, 293 Roslyn St. Tickets at [lowryfoundation.org](http://lowryfoundation.org)

**9/20 Saturday—Boulevard One Farmers Market.** Music, produce, and crafts. 9am–1pm. Clark's Market, 7059 E. Lowry Blvd. 303-647-3500

**9/20 Saturday—Cockpit Demo Day.** 10am–2pm. Wings Over the Rockies Museum. 7711 East Academy Blvd. [wingsmuseum.org](http://wingsmuseum.org)

**9/20 Saturday—Fall Equinox Farm to Table Dinner.** Come for food, stay for an experience. 21+ event. 5–8pm. 10200 Smith Rd. [theurbanfarm.org](http://theurbanfarm.org)

**9/22 Monday—Death Café.** Normalize conversations around death. 2–3:30pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**9/25 Thursday—Active Minds: India.** 1–2pm, Free. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. [activeminds.com](http://activeminds.com)

**9/27 Saturday—Water Bugs.** Collect and identify bugs that live in the Sand Creek. 10am–12pm. Sand Creek Park, 2700 Peoria St. [sandcreekgreenway.org](http://sandcreekgreenway.org)

**9/27 Saturday—Food Justice Festival.** Local produce, free food, activities & more. 10am–2pm. 1635 Paris St., Aurora. [foodjusticenwaurora.org](http://foodjusticenwaurora.org)

**9/27 Saturday—15th Annual Denver Century Ride.** Ride headquarters at 8210 Northfield Blvd. Register at [denvercenturyride.com](http://denvercenturyride.com)



Drag Story Time

**9/27 Saturday—Drag Story Time.** With Shirley Delta Blow. 2–3pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**9/27 & 9/28—Central Park Artists Open Studios Tour.** 25 artists in 13 locations in Central Park. 11am–5pm. Info at [centralparkartists.org](http://centralparkartists.org)

**9/28 Sunday—Qigong and Mindfulness Walk.** Bluff Lake Nature Center. 7:30am. 11255 E. MLK Jr. Blvd. Register at [blufflake.org](http://blufflake.org)

**9/28 Sunday—Park Hill Home Tour & Street Fair.** Free fair at Forest Pkwy between Montview Blvd and 17th Ave. 11am–5pm. Tickets at [parkhillhometour.org](http://parkhillhometour.org)

**9/28 Sunday—Inclusive Family Fun Day.** For families of all abilities. 12–3pm. 2501 Dallas St., Aurora. [lubirdslight.org/events](http://lubirdslight.org/events)

**10/4 Saturday—Farm Fest.** Family-friendly event. Music, activities, food trucks, and more. Free admission. 9am–1pm. 10200 Smith Rd. [theurbanfarm.org](http://theurbanfarm.org)

**10/4 Saturday—Read Between the Stars Book Fair.** Meet local sci-fi and fantasy book authors. 11am–4pm. 2501 N. Dallas St., Aurora. [stanleymarketplace.com](http://stanleymarketplace.com)

**10/11 Saturday—Community Voice Tasting.** Chef Troy Guard will prepare and share the winning recipe. Free admission, food, and prizes. 11am–1pm. 2501 N. Dallas St., Aurora. Please RSVP at [aurora@alpinebank.com](mailto:aurora@alpinebank.com)

## METRO EVENTS

**Wednesdays—Cats on Mats.** Yoga class with roaming, adoptable kittens. 5:30–6:30pm. 241 W. Bayaud Ave. [denvergov.org](http://denvergov.org)

**Historic Denver Walking Tours.** 90 min. walking tours in LoDo, Capitol Hill, Five Points, and more. For specific dates, go to: [historicdenver.org](http://historicdenver.org)

**9/5 Friday—Focus Points Benefit Fiesta.** A cultural evening of live music, dancing, and Lotería—a Mexican game of chance for all ages. 6–10pm. McNichols Civic Center Building. [focuspoints.org](http://focuspoints.org)

**9/5 & 10/3—First Friday Art Walks.** On Santa Fe. 5:30–9:30pm. [denver.org/things-to-do/denver-arts-culture/denver-art-districts](http://denver.org/things-to-do/denver-arts-culture/denver-art-districts)

**9/5 & 10/3—Friday Five Points Jazz Hop.** 5pm, Free. Five Points neighborhood. [fivepointsbid.com](http://fivepointsbid.com)

**9/5 & 10/3—First Friday Films.** Screenings from local filmmakers and community members. 6–8pm. 2101 Arapahoe St. [denvercommunitymedia.org](http://denvercommunitymedia.org)

**9/5 to 9/13—Colorado Mineral and Fossil Fall Show.** Denver Coliseum and The Delta Hotels Denver. [rmgmpromotions.com](http://rmgmpromotions.com)

**9/6 Saturday—Guns to Garden Tools.** Safe firearm disposal. 10am–12pm. Aurora First Presbyterian Church, 1585 Kingston St., Aurora. [gunstogardensdenver.org](http://gunstogardensdenver.org)

**9/6 Saturday—36th Annual Friendship Powwow.** Music, dance, artmaking, Native foods, and vendors. Free admission. 10am–5pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. [denverartmuseum.org](http://denverartmuseum.org)

**9/6 & 9/7—Dragon Boat Festival.** Boat races, food, performances, Asian marketplace, and more. Sloan's Lake Park. More info at [cdbf.org](http://cdbf.org)

**9/10 Wednesday—SPARK.** For visitors with early-stage Alzheimer's or dementia. 1–2pm. 1007 York St. Register at [botanicgardens.org](http://botanicgardens.org)

**9/11 Thursday—Art & About Tour.** For visitors with early-stage Alzheimer's or dementia. 1–2:45pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. [denverartmuseum.org](http://denverartmuseum.org)

**9/13 Saturday—Dementia Friendly Tour.** History Colorado, free but limited space. 9:30–10:30am. 1200 N. Broadway. [historycolorado.org](http://historycolorado.org)

**9/13 Saturday—Architecture Tour.** Starts in the lobby of the Hamilton Building. 11am–12pm. 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy. [denverartmuseum.org](http://denverartmuseum.org)

**9/17 Wednesday—Cultural Threads of the San Luis Valley.** Enrique Lamadrid will discuss centuries-old Indio-Hispano musical traditions. 1pm & 7pm. 1200 N. Broadway. [historycolorado.org](http://historycolorado.org)

**9/18 Thursday—Immigrant Narratives through Food.** Film, food, and discussion. 6:30–8pm. 1200 N. Broadway. [historycolorado.org](http://historycolorado.org)

**9/19 Friday—American Flyers 40th Anniversary.** See Kevin Costner in one of his very first films. Historic Elitch Theater, 7pm. [bicyclecolorado.org](http://bicyclecolorado.org)

**9/19–9/21, and 9/26–9/28—Oktoberfest.** Larimer and 21st St., in the Ballpark District. [thedenveroktoberfest.com](http://thedenveroktoberfest.com)

**9/20 Saturday—Give5: The Greenway Foundation.** Beautify the park. 10am–1pm. Johnson Habitat Park, 610 S Jason St. [denvergov.org](http://denvergov.org)

**9/26 Friday—Creeporado: An Evening of the Strange & Unusual.** See some of the oddest artifacts. 6–11pm. 1200 N. Broadway. [historycolorado.org](http://historycolorado.org)

**Through 10/5—Bright Nights at Four Mile.** Four Mile transforms into a luminous wonderland. 715 S. Forest St. Tickets at [fourmilepark.org](http://fourmilepark.org)

**10/10 & 10/11—Aurora Borealis Festival.** Experience the magic of the northern lights. 4–10pm. High Prairie Park, E. 59th Pl. and N. Orleans St., Aurora. [auroraborealisfestival.com](http://auroraborealisfestival.com)

## KIDS AND FAMILIES

**Monday–Saturday—Local Library Storytimes.** Different age groups and locations. Info at [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**Wednesdays & Sundays—Storytime at Tattered Cover Kids.** Wed. at 11am, Sun. at 2pm. 2501 N. Dallas St., Aurora. [stanleymarketplace.com](http://stanleymarketplace.com)

**Wednesdays—Mornings at the Museum.** Ages 3–6, 10:30–11:15am. Free. Aurora History Museum, 15051 East Alameda Pkwy. [auroragov.org](http://auroragov.org)

**Saturdays—Kids' Matinees.** A variety of interactive shows with live music. \$6.45 with fees. 11:30am open, show at 12pm. 1080 14th St. [dazzledenver.com](http://dazzledenver.com)

# WHO NEEDS A POOL WHEN YOU HAVE A JURASSIC OCEAN?



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**9/6 Saturday—Children and Family Workshop:** Pressing plants. 6–8pm. 1007 York St. Register at [botanicgardens.org](http://botanicgardens.org)

**9/10 Wednesday—Tween Chess Club.** Learn new chess moves. Ideal for ages 9–13. 4–5pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**9/13 Saturday—CSU Spur Family Programming.** September theme is Colorado food showcase. Free. 10am–3pm. 4817 National Western Dr. [csuspur.org](http://csuspur.org)

**9/13 Saturday—Maker Mornings: Art and Emotions.** Gallery time & crafts. 15mo–8yrs. 10:30am–12:30pm. 1250 Bannock St. [clyffordstillmuseum.org](http://clyffordstillmuseum.org)

**9/13 Saturday—Low Sensory Morning.** The museum will be closed to the general public. 8–10am. 1200 N. Broadway. [historycolorado.org](http://historycolorado.org)

**9/17 Wednesday—Twins Game.** Board games and video games. Ideal for ages 9–13. 4–5pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**9/18 Thursday—Kids Book Celebration.** A musical retelling of *The Steadfast Tin Soldier*. 4–5pm. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**9/20 Saturday—Family Nature Adventure Day.** Bluff Lake Nature Center. 10am–1:30pm. 11255 E. MLK Jr. Blvd. Register at [blufflake.org](http://blufflake.org)

**9/21, 9/24, & 9/27—Art Crawl: ABC's of Curating.** 10:30–11:15am. For infants–14 mos. 1250 Bannock St. [clyffordstillmuseum.org](http://clyffordstillmuseum.org)

**9/23 Tuesday—Kids Lego Club.** Build, engineer, and design. 4:30–5:30pm. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

**9/28 Sunday—Kids Create.** Explore open-ended art, craft, and building materials. 10:30–11:15am. Sam Gary Library, 2961 Roslyn St. [denverlibrary.org](http://denverlibrary.org)

## MUSEUMS, ETC.

Listings at [www.FrontPorchNE.com](http://www.FrontPorchNE.com) → Events (tab) → Ongoing Events

SCFD Free days at [www.scfd.org](http://www.scfd.org)

## PERFORMANCE/THEATRE

**9/4 to 9/21—The Israeli-Palestinian Conversation.** Interactive play and conversation. Buntport Theater, 717 Lipan St. [buntport.com](http://buntport.com)

**9/5 to 10/12—The Mousetrap.** Story by Agatha Christie. Arvada Center, 6901 Wadsworth Blvd. Arvada. [arvadacenter.org](http://arvadacenter.org)

**9/6 to 10/5—Eureka Day.** Parents. Policy. Privilege. Curious Theatre Company, 1080 Acoma St. [curioustheatre.org](http://curioustheatre.org)

**9/11 to 9/20—The Princess and The Goblins.** Based on the classic fantasy novel. The People's Building, 9995 E Colfax Ave. [thepeoplesbuilding.com](http://thepeoplesbuilding.com)

**9/11 to 9/28—Cannibal! The Musical Live.** The story of the only person convicted of cannibalism in America. Gates Concert Hall, 2344 E. Iliff Ave. [newmancenterpresents.com](http://newmancenterpresents.com)

**9/12 to 10/19—Merrily We Roll Along.** Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St. [vintagetheatre.org](http://vintagetheatre.org)

**9/12 to 9/14—Denver Silent Film Festival.** A feast for lovers of classic films and live music. Sie FilmCenter, 2510 East Colfax Ave. [denverfilm.org](http://denverfilm.org)

**9/19 Friday—The Denver Moth – StorySLAM.** Have a story that didn't fit a Moth theme? This month is themeless. 7:30pm. 71 East Yale Ave. [swallowhillmusic.org](http://swallowhillmusic.org)

**9/20 Saturday—La Mezcla.** Rooted in Chicana, Latina, and Indigenous traditions. Manos Sagrados, 9975 E Colfax Ave. [manosagrados.com](http://manosagrados.com) (continued on page 14)



**September  
13th 10am-5pm  
14th 10am-4pm**

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ON THE GROUNDS OF THE  
PARK HILL MASONIC LODGE**



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Jewelry by Dante Perozzi,  
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Photo by McLeod9 Creative

# LOCAL EVENTS

(continued from page 13)

**9/21 Sunday—Latin Jazz Fiesta.** Rhythms of South America & the Caribbean. Muse performance space, Lafayette. coloradojazz.org

**9/25 Thursday—Latin Beats: Sonidos de las Américas.** Boettcher Concert Hall, 1000 14th St. coloradosymphony.org

**9/25 to 9/27—Peruvian Film Festival.** The People's Building, 9995 E Colfax Ave. thepeoplesbuilding.com

**9/27 to 10/26—Alabama Story.** Inspired by true events in Montgomery. The John Hand Theater, 7653 E. 1st Pl. firehousetheatercompany.com

**9/28 Sunday—Stories on Stage presents Enslaved by Ducks.** 2pm. Su Teatro Cultural and Performing Arts Center, 721 Santa Fe Dr. storiesonstage.org

**9/28 Sunday—Twilight Dreams.** Denver Young Artists Orchestra. 2:30pm. Boettcher Concert Hall, 1000 14th St. coloradosymphony.org

**9/29 Monday—Freak Train.** Denver's longest-running open-stage variety show. 8–10pm. Bug Theatre, 3654 Navajo St. bugtheatre.org

**9/29 to 10/23—First Date.** Blind date newbie Aaron is set up with serial-dater Casey. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St. vintagetheatre.org

**10/5 Sunday—Witches Brew.** A cabal of weird and supernatural plays from our feminine side. Vintage Theatre, 1468 Dayton St. onenightstandtheatre.org

**Through 10/5—Sweet & Lucky: Echo.** A new work of immersive theatre. DCPA Off-Center at Broadway Park, 407 S. Broadway. denvercenter.org

**Through 11/2—The Happiest Man on Earth.** A story of survival, revealing a paradox of joy built on a foundation of grief. Singleton Theatre. denvercenter.org

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

To find volunteer listings and charitable opportunities, go to [www.FrontPorchNE.com](http://www.FrontPorchNE.com)



Front Porch photos by Linda Kotsaftis

Forestry Specialist Joseph Burton discusses tree identification and care with Joe Robustelli at Moorehead Park in Aurora. Robustelli recently moved to Colorado and wanted to learn more about trees in the area.

## GREEN & SUSTAINABILITY EVENTS

**Wednesdays—Free Gardening Classes.** A different subject every Wednesday evening from 6-7:30pm. Arvada Community Garden, 9195 W 57th Ave. arvadagardeners.org

**9/5 Friday—Art Supply Swap.** Learn about upcoming programs and bring art supplies you no longer need to swap with other students. 5:30–7:30pm. 1007 York St. Free with registration at botanicgardens.org

**9/6 Saturday—Aurora Blooms.** Reinvesting in Aurora's urban canopy for social equity and climate resilience. Plant and learn how to care for the city's trees. 9am–12:30pm. Montview Park, 1901 Chester St., Aurora. auroragov.org

**9/12 Friday—Knowing Your Home Basics.** 5:30–8pm. 555 Santa Fe Dr. Register at denvertool-library.org

**9/13 Saturday—Coffee with Conservation.** 8:30–10:30am in the Aurora Water-Wise Garden, 15151 E. Alameda Pkwy. Free, bring a coffee mug. auroragov.org

**9/13 Saturday—Transitioning your Garden from Summer to Fall.** Learn to maintain and harvest warm-season crops, revitalize soil, select cool-weather crops, and more. 9–11am. The Posner Center, 1031 33rd St. Pay what you can. dug.org

**9/13 Saturday—Go Native! Landscapes Made for Colorado.** Step-by-step xeriscaping process with an experienced, Front Range landscape expert. 9:30am–12:30pm. 1007 York St. Register at botanicgardens.org

**9/13 Saturday—Puzzle & Game Swap.** Bring a puzzle or game, take a puzzle or game. Complete sets only. 10:30–11:30am. Park Hill Library, 4705 Montview Blvd. denverlibrary.org

**9/20 Saturday—Learn to Compost.** Learn the basics of composting in community gardens or in your own backyard. 9–11am. 1325 Colorado Blvd. Bilingual classes available. Register at dug.org

**9/20 Saturday—Preserving the Season: Jam Edition.** Making jams and jellies, using water-bath canning for the final product. 9:30am–12:30pm. 1007 York St. Register at botanicgardens.org

**9/27 Saturday—EcoAction Lab.** This workshop supports youth in developing conservation skills and empowers them to take real action for the planet. 1–4pm. Girl Scout DreamLab, 63 N. Quebec St. eventbrite.com/cc/girl-scout-dreamlab-1653829

**9/27 Thursday—Youth Climate Action Day.** Community service projects 9am–1pm, climate action plan 1–3pm. Ages 15–25. Fort Collins. sustainablelivingassociation.org

**9/28 Sunday—Free E-cycling at the Park Hill Home Tour & Street Fair.** Computers and computer related items accepted. Drop off at 2823 Fairfax St. 11am–5pm.

**10/1 Wednesday—Discover Water-wise Plants.** Learn the top recommended trees, shrubs, perennials, and grasses for Colorado growing. 10–11:30am. Aurora Water-wise Garden, 15151 E. Alameda Pkwy. auroragov.org

**10/6 to 10/17—Electronics Recycling Drop-off Event.** M–F, 8am–4:30pm, Sat. 10am–2pm, closed Sun. Pedal Point LifeCycle Solutions (formerly Techno Rescue), 3251 Lewiston St., Aurora. \$5 car/individual for small load (one standard grocery bag). More pricing at auroragov.org

**10/9 Thursday—Apple Preservation: Cider to Fruit Leather.** 6–8pm. The Posner Center, 1031 33rd St. Pay what you can. dug.org

## 'Aurora Blooms' Program Aims to Create Greener Communities

By Linda Kotsaftis

The City of Aurora is investing in the urban canopy and is asking for help from residents and neighbors to join the environmental community effort.

Aurora declared August 2 “Keep Your Tree Healthy Day.” The city invited people to Moorhead Park in northwest Aurora to learn more about tree care: planting, watering, trimming, and identifying common tree diseases.

Hector Barrantes leads the initiative behind the event, “Aurora Blooms: Greener Communities, Brighter Futures.” A grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture funded the program, which is a joint effort of Aurora's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs and Aurora Parks, Recreation and Open Space.

Program leaders hope to plant 2,000 trees by 2028, targeting “so-

cially equitable neighborhoods.”

“We want to do what is best for the community,” Barrantes said. “You want a tree, perfect. We love somebody that has a tree. Those who don't want a tree, it's OK. But still, the effort also goes into engaging people, so they will learn benefits about having a tree.”

The Moorhead Park gathering was one of a series of planned events created to bring people together in environmental action.

The public is invited to the next event on September 6, from 9am to 12:30pm at Montview Park, 1901 Chester St., Aurora. It's open to residents and Denver neighbors.



Hector Barrantes, Community Engagement Coordinator.

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# NEWS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## MASTER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION SEPTEMBER 2025

### DENVER MUNICIPAL CONCERT BAND

*Saturday, September 6, 6–7:30pm, South Green*

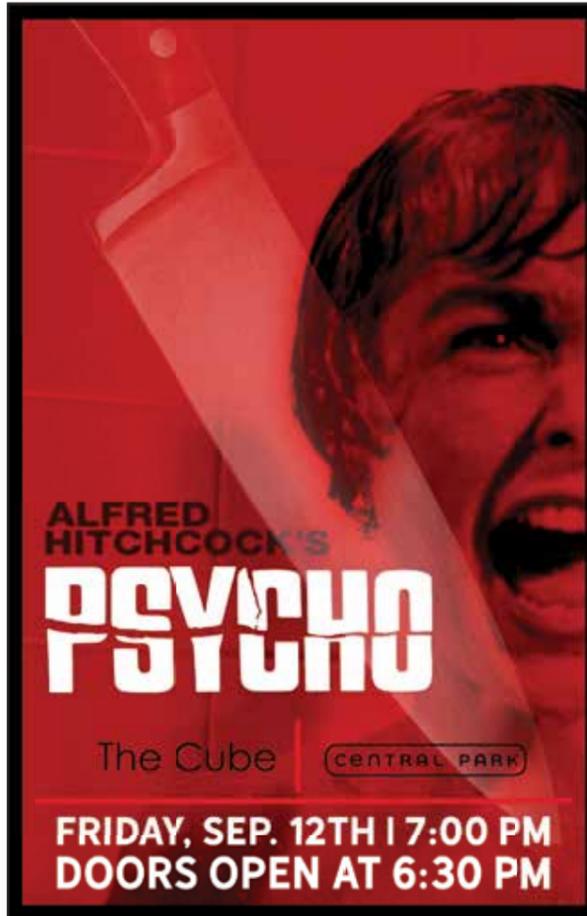
The Denver Municipal Band's "Sizzling Sounds of Summer" concert is the last free concert in the summer series and will include tunes from around the world including pieces by Chick Corea, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Clifford Brown, and more. Guest soloist, steel drum virtuoso Tom Miller, will share a taste of the Caribbean in his solo works, and Shane Endsley, renowned Denver-based jazz trumpeter, will play a newly commissioned arrangement of a famous jazz ballad "I Remember Clifford" as a tribute to Shane's mother, Pamela Endsley. Pamela played principal flute in the Denver and Colorado Symphonies and in the Denver Municipal Band for 40 years. She passed away this past February.

Bring a blanket, a picnic, and community spirit for this finale to summer with a lively, feel-good evening filled with music from across the globe. The concert is free and open to all. It will be held at 29th Ave. and Roslyn St., in the South Green.

### FARMERS MARKET

*Every Sunday, 8:30am–12:30pm, South Green*

Local vendors provide Colorado-grown produce, tasty baked goods, specialty meats, gourmet food items, and more! We strive to support and enhance the surrounding communities by providing an experience where fresh and wholesome products can be found.



### THE CUBE CINEMA SERIES

*Friday, September 12, 7pm (doors open at 6:30pm), The Cube*

Step into the suspense this September as The Cube launches its brand-new monthly **Cinema Series** with Alfred Hitchcock's legendary thriller, *Psycho*. Join us on Friday, September 12 for an unforgettable evening of cinematic tension, iconic imagery, and a story that redefined the genre.

Hosted by **Vincent Piturro**, Film Studies Professor at Metropolitan State University of Denver and writer of the *Indie Prof* column in *Front Porch*. Each month's screening will include engaging insights and discussion.

The Cube Cinema Series will take place on the second Friday of every month\*, featuring a curated selection of films both classic and contemporary. Come for the movie, stay for the conversation and be prepared for a night that will keep you on the edge of your seat...and maybe make you think twice about your next shower.

Tickets are available at [mca80238.com](http://mca80238.com).

\*Unless otherwise posted.



Save the Dates, You're Invited



### Plan Your Tour Party:

*September 13, 12–4pm, The Cube, 8371 Northfield Blvd.*

Get a head start! Two weeks before Open Studios Tour, join us for a special afternoon to preview the art, meet the artists, and plan your perfect tour. Whether you're a seasoned art enthusiast or a curious newcomer, this is the perfect opportunity to get inspired for the creative weekend ahead.

### What to expect:

- Sneak peeks of artists work
- Printed maps & tips to plan your visit
- Cocktails, mocktails, & light refreshments
- Drawings & giveaways

Bring a friend (or two), can't wait to see you there!

*Saturday, September 27 & Sunday, September 28, 11am–5pm*

We are excited to invite you into the vibrant world of 25 local artists showing in 13 different locations right here in Central Park.

With this self-guided tour you will have a unique opportunity to step inside the artists world, explore their creative spaces, and witness the magic behind their art making process.

Our annual Open Studios Tour brings neighbors together to celebrate the vibrant creative spirit that makes our community special. More info. at [CentralParkArtists.org](http://CentralParkArtists.org)

### POURS IN THE PARK—WINE TASTING

*Friday, September 5, 6–8pm, Buffalo Wallow*

Indulge in a delightful summer evening under the stars at Buffalo Wallow (5545 Valentia Ct.) from 6–8pm.

Savor a curated selection of wines paired perfectly with an array of artisanal charcuterie. Let the soothing sounds of live music set the perfect backdrop as you relax and unwind with friends and fellow wine enthusiasts.

Don't miss out on this enchanting evening of great wine, delectable food, and wonderful company. We look forward to seeing you there!

Tickets are \$35 and available on [mca80238.com](http://mca80238.com). This event is strictly 21+.

### POURS IN THE PARK—CIDER TASTING

*Saturday, September 13, 6–8pm, Conservatory Plaza*

Cider tasting extravaganza at Conservatory Plaza!

As summer winds down, join us for a refreshing and fun-filled end-of-summer cider tasting. There will be live music, great food, and crisp cider.

Tickets for pours in the park are \$35 and available on [mca80238.com](http://mca80238.com); this event is strictly 21+.

### ACTIVE MINDS: U.S. National Parks

*Thursday, Sept. 11, 1–2pm, Sam Gary Library*

The world's first national park, Yellowstone, was created by an act of Congress in 1872. Today, the national park system includes over 400 units (63 national parks), over 84 million acres of land, and hosts over 300 million visitors per year. Join Active Minds as we tell the story of the development of our national parks system and highlight other notable parks and their stories.

### ACTIVE MINDS: India

*Thursday, Sept. 25, 1–2pm, Sam Gary Library*

In the aftermath of the 2024 general elections in India, "the world's largest democracy" finds itself at an inflection point. The country has been led since 2014 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a controversial but widely popular leader from the BJP, a Hindu Nationalist party. His policies have alienated the Muslim minority within India, particularly in the disputed Muslim-majority region of Jammu and Kashmir. Join Active Minds as we explore this current situation as well the political and historical backdrop against which it is set.

Jennifer Olsen  
Communications Manager  
[Jolsen@mca80238.com](mailto:Jolsen@mca80238.com)



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