

THE

MONTCLAIRION

Our Neighborhood

Annexed by the City of Denver in 1902, Montclair incorporated in 1888 as a Denver suburb. One of Denver's 78 statistical neighborhoods, its borders include Colfax Ave. to the north, 6th Ave. to the south, Quebec St. to the east and Holly St. to the west.

Formed in 1907 as a not-for profit corporation, the Historic Montclair Community Association, Inc. (HMCAI), is the oldest neighborhood association in Denver. Officers and at-large board members serve without pay. HMCAI is a Registered Neighborhood Organization and is a member of Denver's Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation. West of Monaco, we overlap with Mayfair Neighbors, Inc.

Dedicated to innovative educational, civic and social activities, we offer all Montclair residents quarterly newsletters, flyers and public announcements. We inform members of important zoning issues, historic preservation, construction and planning activities, elections and other activities impacting the neighborhood. HMCAI frequently collaborates with schools, churches and other local organizations for the common good. Interested in being a part of the community? Join today.

HISTORIC
MONTCLAIR
COMMUNITY
ASSOCIATION

2025
1st Quarter

HistoricMontclair.org
HistoricMontclair@gmail.com



HISTORIC
MONTCLAIR
COMMUNITY
ASSOCIATION
INC.

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President's Note

By Judy Baxter

"Uncertainty is the refuge of hope"

— Henri Frederic Amiel

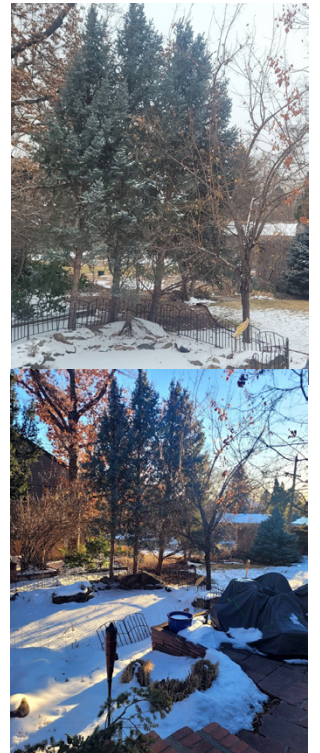
I, maybe like many of you, am wrestling with the change and uncertainty that dominates our world. These are not new conditions; uncertainty and change are two things you can ALWAYS depend on, yet this seems to be a wild ride on a rollercoaster, whiplash is a constant potential and I am looking to find ways to stay grounded, present and engaged.



That is where you all are my medicine. Being in community, in this community is good for my soul and I hope for yours. We have diversity of lived experience and views; we can choose if we have it divide us or enrich us. What we can do is work together for common purpose, stay connected, stay curious, and be kind.

HMCAI, formed in 1907, is the oldest neighborhood organization in Denver. Think of the backdrop of history, both local, national and global that this neighborhood and its residents have witnessed and participated in over the last 117 years. HMCAI is dedicated to supporting our community to be in community, by providing innovative educational, civic, and social activities. In living this mission, it is our goal and hope to provide you with opportunities to connect, to learn about each other and contribute to something bigger than ourselves. Working with the HMCAI Board and being with you all at events, is the connection that keeps me grounded and I hope it does you as well.

Since the 4th quarter, 2024 newsletter your HMCAI board put up the lights on the Molkery and had a great turnout at the annual Treats with Santa event. We hope the holidays and start of the New Year was a time for connection and reflection for all. As we say goodbye, at least for now, to the cold spell that has had its grip on our mood, let us hope that this bodes well for the spring. These pictures of my back yard capture the change that is on its way. Gray sky-Cold; Blue Sky-Colorado Sun.



On February 28th, we had our 7th Annual History Night with Bill Hansen and company telling the story of "Murder at the Castle". March is slow, then in April we will have the Easter Egg Hunt on the 19th. Come rain or shine, the eggs will be out and ready for all the hunters. It is a fun time and we welcome anyone who would like to volunteer. I invite you to address change and uncertainty by staying in community with connection and kindness.

"To extend yourself in kindness to anybody is an extension in kindness in the world." - Oprah Winfrey

Be well. Be safe. Be in Touch with us: historicmontclair@gmail.com.

HMCAI 2025 Board

President: Judy Baxter
1st Vice President: Carrie O'Shea
Secretary: Lynn VanderWielen
Treasurer: Gail Barry

At Large Board Members:

Jennifer Bolda	Brian Narber
Meg Goos	Merritt Pullam
Wendy Ho-Schnell	Anne Canon
Toni Ann Kuper	Ryan Stevens
Jim LeDuc	Marika Rietsema

HMCAI Events Calendar 2025

Feb. 28	Wine & History Night	6:30 - 8:30 pm	Molkery
Apr. 19	Easter Egg Hunt	10:00 am	Montclair Park
Jul. 4	July 4 Picnic	10:30 am -2:00 pm	Montclair Park
Sept. 26	Beer & Wine Reception	6:30 - 8:30 pm	Molkery
Oct. 15	Annual General Meeting	7:00 pm	Molkery
Oct. 26	Halloween Party	3:30-5:00 pm	Molkery
Dec. 6	Treats with Santa	10:00 am - Noon	Molkery

The Molkery, aka Montclair Civic Building is located at 6820 E. 12th Ave. in Montclair Park

HMCAI Membership Form

Two ways to become a supporting member: 1- Please print legibly on form and mail with check to: **HMCAI Treasurer, PO Box 200125, Denver, CO 80220** 2. Or, pay securely online with Square:

Annual dues per household: \$40 (\$20 seniors, ages 65 and older)

Voluntary donation:\$ _____ Total amount of check:\$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone(s) _____

Email _____

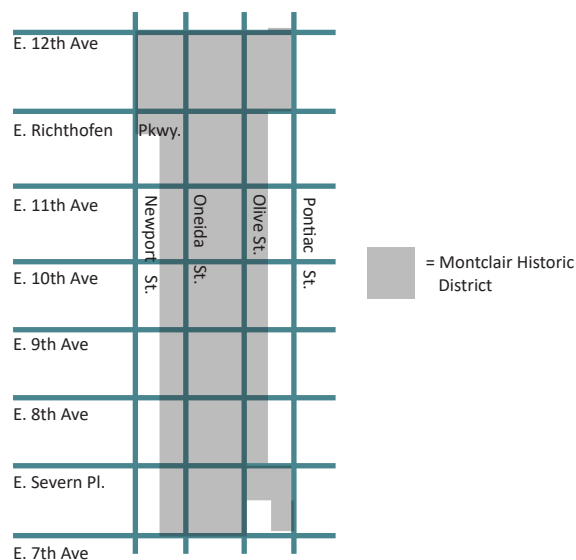
What would you like to help with? _____

Possibilities include: Treats with Santa, July 4th, Easter Egg Hunt, Cocktail Party, Halloween Party, Board Member, Other (please specify)



Important Information

If you live in the designated Historic District (see map to the right) within the Montclair neighborhood and you'd like to build an addition, second story, porch, garage, retaining walls, add solar panels, replace windows, roof, sidewalks, or demolish the house and build new, you must first contact Denver's Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) and receive approval. Your proposal must meet the design guidelines for historic districts. This is mandatory for residents of all historic districts in the City of Denver. To schedule an appointment for a pre-application meeting, discuss your building project, or ask questions contact the LPC at 720-865-2709 or landmark@denvergov.org



Questions? Suggestions? Article ideas? Contact your HMCAI Board at HistoricMontclair@gmail.com

City Council District 5 Updates

By Councilwoman Amanda Sawyer, District 5



Spring is on the way, and we're thrilled to share updates on the exciting developments in Montclair. Please stay tuned to our social media and newsletters for the latest in District 5, and read on to discover the most recent happenings in Montclair!

Renovations to the Montclair Park Playground

In 2022 the Montclair Park playground was damaged when a storm blew down large tree branches, so the entire playground has been prioritized for replacement! The community feedback and design stage is happening throughout 2025, and construction of the new playground will occur in 2026. This playground redesign involves community input, and we hope you had an opportunity to participate in the survey that was sent to residents in February. There will be additional upcoming community meetings so please check our newsletter and social media as that information becomes available. You can find more details at <https://bit.ly/ParksProjects>. And don't forget to join us for our annual Community Cleanup Day on Sunday,

April 27th from 8:30am-11:30am at Montclair Rec Center. You can sign up to volunteer at <https://bit.ly/2025SpringCleanup>.

Join the Denver Police District 2 Community Meetings

Did you know that our District 2 Police Department holds monthly community meetings? They are a fantastic opportunity to hear about crime trends and statistics, as well as have your questions answered by our community safety experts. Across the city, crime is down over 20% in 2025, which is great news, but we know our community members continue to have questions about community safety. This meeting is the best place to find those answers. District 2 Commander's Advisory Board (CAB) meetings occur on the first Wednesday of every month at the District 2 station, which is located at 3921 Holly St, Denver, CO 80207. You can find the schedule of meetings at <https://bit.ly/DenverPolice2>. We hope to see you there!

Updates on Colfax Bus Rapid Transit (Colfax BRT)

The East Colfax Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project has finally launched! Construction began in October 2024 on the western end of the project near Broadway, and will move east towards Yosemite as the work is completed. Most importantly, the BRT project included a study of 13th and 14th Avenues to determine how to make these streets safer now and into the future. You can read the traffic study results and recommendations at: <https://bit.ly/13and14Ave>. The next step is for the Department of Transportation & Infrastructure to identify funding to implement the recommendations.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to our office with any questions! You can reach the Council District 5 Team at:

Phone 720-337-5555

Email denvercouncil5@denvergov.org

Website www.denvergov.org/District5

[instagram.com/denvercouncil5](https://www.instagram.com/denvercouncil5)

[Facebook.com/DenverCouncil5](https://www.facebook.com/DenverCouncil5)

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2025 Late Winter and Spring Gardening

By Gail Barry

I'm wishing for spring, as I write (in February), but the ground is frozen or I would be out digging and planting. Despite the frozen ground, one can still work in the garden, cutting down ornamental grasses, spent perennials, broken branches, overgrown shrubs, and unruly vines. You can also plan for the coming season. I have a map of my garden spaces and I update my annual plantings yearly, rotating crops based on companion planting principles as well as height and sun exposure.

By early March, I have started seeds for tomatoes, peppers, and basil. I do this because I like to grow heirlooms and many of the good ones are not commonly available in the stores. As the seedlings get more mature, I transplant them to larger individual pots and hold them until planting time. Closer to planting time I also start things like cucumber, squash, corn, and pumpkins. The varieties I like are also not commonly available in the stores. Because our growing season is rather short and unpredictable, I like to get a head start on the tender frost sensitive plants. All plants need to be "hardened off," before planting in the ground. This process involves exposing plants to the outdoors starting with an hour or

two and increasing the time outdoors until they can stay out for the whole day and night. Bring them in if weather is too cold or inclement. Tender plants must wait to be planted until after danger of frost is past. Combining flowers and vegetables together is another way to add interest to the garden and I think both do better that way. Using flowers as low border plants, or planting taller flowers to the back of shorter vegetables works well.

As soon as the ground can be worked you can enhance your soil and plant all kinds of cold hardy plants. If using seeds, most will come up with a little moisture and sun, when they are ready. I find it better to start (or buy) developed plants for broccoli, kale, cabbage, cauliflower, and the like. They seem to do much better. Other cold hardy plants, particularly greens, peas, carrots, and beets, do just fine from seed.

Consult CSU extension for any garden subjects you may have questions about. Their information is oriented to our specific Colorado requirements

Happy 2025 Gardening!



ANNE MCWILLIAMS: YOUR MONTCLAIR REAL ESTATE EXPERT 4TH GENERATION DENVER NATIVE

Curious about the spring and summer real estate market in Denver? Let's discuss what 2025 is going to look like in your area.

Anne McWilliams

Broker Associate

312.320.8219

AMcWilliams@kentwood.com



The Montclair School of Academics and Enrichment

By Merritt Pullam, Parent, volunteer, neighbor, HMCAI Board Member

Help Wanted: Are you interested in forging stronger bonds with your kid's teachers and the school administration? Do you like to write about your kid's adventures and experiences? How about joining the creators at the Montclarion? We are looking for a Montclair School of Academics and Enrichment community member to take over the quarterly school article. It has been six years since I took over this article and I am sad to know my time is almost over. My two children both attended Montclair from K thru 5th grade, and our time is coming to an end. They have made life-long friends and created strong connections with many of their teachers. Writing for the Montclarion has provided me partnerships with teachers and staff that I did not anticipate, and for which I am grateful. You too can forge bonds with the school and staff by submitting this article four times a year to the HMCAI board to appear in the Montclarion. Please reach out to me for more information. merrittpkw@gmail.com or 303-419-2622

I would be remiss if I didn't once again thank the community for all your gifts and donations to the 2024 Giving Tree. You helped many celebrate the holidays with joy and love from our community. Thank you!

School Choice Round 1 results will be completed around the publication of this issue. Round 2 of School Choice is on a first-come, first-served basis, within school priority groups, and is for families who missed Round 1, took part in Round 1 but want to re-explore their options, or are new to DPS for next school year. Please create a new account or use your current Parent Portal login at www.dpsk12.org. You may also call the Choice Hotline at 720-423-3493 for assistance submitting a Round 2 application. Round 2 applications begin Tuesday, April 8th and are accepted until Friday, August 29th. Don't delay if you didn't get your preferred school via Round 1. Montclair is an excellent choice and worthy of your consideration.

Schedule Alerts:

- **Spring Break:**
Monday, March 24th – Monday, March 31st
- **Teacher Appreciation Week:**
Monday, May 5th – Friday, May 9th
- **International Night:**
Friday, May 9th – Doors open at 5 pm
- **Last day of school for 2024-2025:** Monday, June 2nd
- **First day of school for 2025-2026:** Monday, August 18th

If you are looking to help with our community school or DPS in general, please visit Montclair.dpsk12.org and or www.dpsk12.org. These are the best methods to stay connected to the latest news within the DPS community and at Montclair. Also, you are welcome to call the Montclair front office at (720) 424-5380 with any questions. For many of you in our community who have attended, or your children have attended Montclair, the week of May 5th is a special opportunity to come back and give back to our teachers during teacher appreciation week. Reach out to me or the front desk to find out more about how you might make a teacher feel appreciated.

If you or someone you know would be a good fit to help support our school community via PEAK (Parents, Educators, and Kids) please reach out to Devin Lopez at (720) 424-5385 or devin_lopez@dpsk12.net. You can help make a difference with the kids, staff, and other parents. We are always looking for those that can help in a PEAK leadership/support role or with donations. Go to Montclair.dpsk12.org and select the support us tab at the top of the page and find out how to donate to our school. PEAK is continuing to look for new opportunities to raise funds. We are pursuing partnerships with local restaurants, scheduled craft creating days at the school, and advertising along our fencing. If you or anyone you know is interested in participating, please reach out to the front office or visit our website.

Thank you! Go Cougars! Montclair Rocks Woohah!!!



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Important Numbers

DPD non-emergency help (burglary or auto theft not in progress, after hours loud music complaints)
720-913-2000. For emergencies, crimes in progress call 911

Crime Stoppers Hotline
720-913-7867 (STOP)

Gang Hotline
720-913-1339

Report Graffiti
720-913-1311 or 311

Report Trash and weedy yards
311

Sex Offenders Hotline
720-913-6511

Hate Crimes Hotline
720-913-6458

Report Animal Abuse

Denver Animal Protection at 720-913-2080. For emergencies in progress, call 911. Denver Dumb Friends League animal neglect or cruelty hotline: 303-923-0022.

Report Street Racing

9-1-1 and reportstreetracing.com

Report Broken Street Lights

XcelEnergy.com

DPD District 2 Community Resource Officer

Officer Cervantes- Isabella.Cervantes@denvergov.org

The Denver Police District 2 Station is located at 3921 Holly Street. The station phone number is 720-913-1000 and the station email is 2.Dist@denvergov.org.

Councilwoman Amanda Sawyer, City Council District 5
DenverCouncil5@denvergov.org, 720-337-5555

From the Archives

Jersey St. Shop-ete at 9th & Jersey, 1975. Spears Chiropractic Hospital (1943-1993) across Jersey St. to the west, Texaco station to the north on 10th & Jersey. How many neighbors recall dining at La Bola?



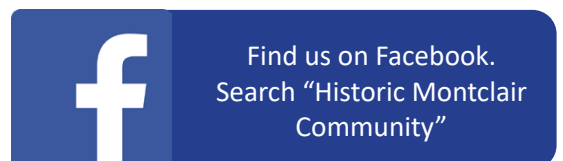
Photo credit: Save the Signs

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The Short-Lived Montclair Molkery and Hotel

By Bill Hansen



At the Molkery

From its very beginning in 1885, the promoters of Montclair, including the Baron von Richthofen, had hawked the suburb as a “home for invalids”. Consumption, or Tuberculosis, was the leading cause of death and infirmity in the nineteenth century. In the late 1880s, Colorado was being ballyhooed as both the “World’s Sanitarium” and the “Switzerland of America” to encourage health tourism for those “lungers” “chasing the cure” to the state’s high altitude, sunny skies, and fresh air.

Baron had just completed his castle in 1887. In early 1888, he bought 160 acres south of the castle for further development. The property soon became embroiled in prolonged litigation over title and ownership rights. During the interim, the Baron began amassing a herd of expensive pedigreed Jersey dairy cattle to graze on the disputed range.

In March of that year, the Baron retained the services of the castle’s German-trained architect, Alexander Cazin, to design a \$4,000 three-story stone “milkery” downhill from the castle. The basement would serve as a barn, the main floor would be both a processing plant and a gathering place for retail sales and congenial assembly, and the third floor would serve as a hotel with six furnished rooms and a bathroom for invalids. The west side would include a porch for relaxation. As the building neared completion, the Baron named it the “Molkery”, combining the term milkery with the German term for a dairy, “molkerei”, to complement the Swiss chalet design of the façade.

With great fanfare, the Montclair Molkery and Hotel opened on September 15, 1888. “Designed on the Swiss system... now so popular in Europe”, the “Milk Cure Sanitarium” boasted “the curative properties of milk in various forms and preparations is the basis for cure of all pulmonary complaints”. Another ad claimed “the Molkery

has been located at Montclair on account of its overlooking altitude, the salubrity of its climate, its picturesque views and its genial skies.” Dairymen for milking the cows and churning the butter (above) were sought, together with someone to take charge of the hotel boarding. D.E. Chase was a perfect choice as he proclaimed that “Pure Jersey milk is better than beer and don’t you forget it!” Stories abound today that invalids would convalesce on the west porch enjoying Montclair’s fresh air and mountain vistas while drinking penny mugs of warm milk, fresh from the udder, while inhaling the “barnyard effluvium” wafting up from the stables below through grates in the flooring- a sure cure, it was said.

The “Swiss Milk Cure” was all the rage in Europe, especially in the alpine health resorts such as Davos in Switzerland. There, Dr. Alexander Spengler, who many considered mad, had developed a luxurious health spa primarily based on the “Swiss Milk Cure”, augmented by a “Cowshed Cure”. After consuming large quantities of dairy products in an open-air setting, consumptives were encouraged to stay for hours in confined stables, inhaling the breath, body vapor, flatulence, and ammonia-filled urine from the cattle as a further healthy balsam for all lung afflictions. Both “cures” were a health hoax. Tuberculosis was incurable until the advent of antibiotics many years later.

The Molkery was short-lived. In October 1889, the Baron sold the property to Dr. Bernard Tauber for \$12,000. Efforts to continue it as a hotel sanitarium quickly failed. The Baron’s cattle herd was sold off and, in early 1890, title was finally cleared and Richthofen’s Montclair was platted, developed and offered for sale. Despite its short duration, the Baron’s 1898 obituary gushed that “while the (Swiss Milk Cure) was hardly new, hundreds of recovered invalids bear testimony to the value and efficacy of the cure.”

Montclair Community Garden

Thank goodness gardening season is on the horizon!

Would you like to grow organic vegetables, fruits, herbs or flowers and be part of a friendly neighborhood project? Do you dream of growing your own zucchinis, tomatoes, peppers, lettuces, kale, radishes, herbs and flowers? The Historic Montclair Community Garden is just the place to fulfill your horticultural ambitions and meet new neighbors. Our garden members love to swap seeds, seedlings, produce, and growing tips. We also donate any extra produce to the Greater Park Hill Community Free Farm Stand, so if you grow too much it's easy to share the abundance with the community. Tucked off-street in the 1400 block of Niagara Street, our community garden has 29 plots available, shade trees, a pollinator garden, pumpkin patch, compost bins and a community picnic table.

The fee for each 6x8' plot is \$35 a season which covers water, compost, some garden supplies and repairs. We have a couple plots opening up, so reach out to secure a plot or get on our waiting list.

Contact Idelle at HMCgarden@gmail.com to find out more and possibly join our community garden.



From the Desk of Matt Ball, State Senator

District 31



Dear Montclarions,

Happy New Year! I hope that your 2025 is off to an excellent start. I'm incredibly honored to introduce myself as your new State Senator, and I am committed to improving our community through my work

at the State Capitol. Since the session began in January, my colleagues in the Senate and I have taken on several important issues for Coloradans, for you and your families. For my personal legislative agenda, I hope to work on mental health legislation that improves access and quality of care for everyone. I also hope to make our communities safer by focusing on the intersection of mental health, substance use, and criminal justice. In addition, I will fight for a greener Colorado to ensure that we preserve our communities for our children.

For some background, I'm a fifth-generation Coloradan living in Capitol Hill, the same neighborhood where my grandfather used to deliver groceries. My wife Giselle and I are proud to be raising our three young children here and sending them to Denver Public Schools. After college, I turned down a job on Wall Street to join the Army, where I served in the elite 75th Ranger Regiment, deployed overseas four times, and received two Bronze Stars. After attending Stanford Law School on the GI Bill, I worked at a firm in Denver before joining the City as the Director of Policy.

I have the pleasure of serving on three committees here at the State Capitol to serve you and improve Colorado every day:

- The Judiciary Committee addresses issues related to civil and criminal proceedings, courts, judges, civil liberties, Colorado's constitution and statutes, the state's correctional system and prisons, homeland security, and juvenile justice. We also have oversight over the Department of Corrections, the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Law, and the Judicial Branch.
- The Senate State Affairs Committee considers matters regarding elections, campaign finance, military and veterans affairs, and other subject areas related to our state. We have legislative oversight responsibility for the departments of State, Military and Veterans Affairs.
- The Statutory Revision Committee does valuable work examining the statutes of the state and current judicial decisions to discover inconsistencies in the law and recommend needed reforms to ensure clarity and consistency for our citizens.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve you and the community I care so deeply for in this session. Your feedback and comments throughout the year are appreciated and influential in the policy making process. You can reach me at matt.ball.senate@coleg.gov or 303-866-4861.

Thank you for your trust as I represent our community in the State Senate.

Annual HMCAI Easter Egg Hunt

April 19, 10 a.m. at the Molkery

Small children and their parents are invited to:

HMCAI's Annual Easter Egg Hunt at 10 a.m.

Saturday, April 19th at the Molkery,
6820 E. 12th Ave., and Montclair Park

Coffee, cookies and juice served to all in the Molkery after the hunt.

This is a free event for Montclair neighbors. Just bring a basket, bag or box to carry your goodies home (we will recycle the plastic eggs, so all eggs are emptied and left in designated boxes at the event)

Rain or snow the egg hunt is on!

We need volunteers to help scatter eggs throughout the park, serve snacks, and clean up. It will only take one hour of your time to help us pull off this fun event for the kids! Please consider volunteering and contact Judy Baxter at baxterj.jb15@gmail.com.

Meet Your Neighbor

Jay Mead, Richthofen Parkway

How long have you lived in Montclair?

We moved to our home in Montclair in 2012, but lived nearby on Krameria Street in Mayfair since 1986.

What do you like most about Montclair?

I like especially that Montclair is a quiet and friendly “village” within the larger city, and maintains its own identity. And it’s easy to get to know neighbors: just take a morning walk, or hang around the Montclair Park, or come to the July 4th extravaganza, and you’ll inevitably meet great people.

How has the area changed since you moved in?

We’ve lived here only just over a decade--which of course is far less than many of our more venerable neighbors--but we’ve walked and biked around here for decades. Change in buildings is slow, which is the way I like it: we have a handful of new and heavily renovated homes, which is fine, but people respect the varied, quality architecture built up over the last century and work to preserve it. Hence we have an interesting built neighborhood--always enjoyable to walk, with neighbors always satisfying to meet and get to know.

Do you have a particularly good memory or funny anecdote of the neighborhood?

Fourth of July in the Park is our best neighborhood celebration, and my annual task, it seems, is to join Steve Usick in stringing up all the red, white, and blue flags--mostly that means I let him figure it out and tell me what to do, a very satisfying arrangement! I’ll be doing this pretty much the rest of my life, I would think.

Is there a neighbor who has made a positive impact on your life?

We are much blessed with our next-door neighbors the Hook family, who moved in after Bob and LeAnn Knickrehm passed on after their nearly 60 years in that house. The Hooks are a perfect fit for the neighborhood: always friendly and welcoming and always fun to hang out with, and with two terrific kids and a dog named Piper who loves me when I lean over the back fence. What could be better?

I can’t stop at just one family--I need to mention Andy and Beckett and their kids on Niagara, in their home in the old Gunning House (check your copy of Tom Noel’s



Richthofen’s Montclair: A Pioneer Denver Suburb for details--this book is a vital Montclair resource you should always have on hand). They are co-sponsors of our Niagara Street block party and wonderful hosts for that annual gathering.

And I also must mention Tom and Vi Noel, whom we’ve known for many decades and whom we see often: friendly, interesting, and, of course, as our resident historian (see the Richthofen’s Montclair reference above) full of neighborhood information--great people!

And Chris and Ulcca Hansen and their kids--so many great neighbors to mention!

What are your favorite businesses in the area?

We eat at several great restaurants that are near neighbors of Montclair: The Delectable Egg for breakfast; pizza at Ester’s; Bistro Vendome (special suppers) and Cake Crumbs (a coffee shop full of Park Hill neighbors) and Neighbors (a very pleasant wine bar); La Fillette for the best banh mi sandwiches--the list goes on.

How do you like to spend your free time?

We read a good deal; walk in the Arsenal; bike around Cherry Creek; take frequent field trips to interesting Denver sites. I myself am quite busy with a couple of local nonprofit boards that I serve on: St. Martins Chamber Choir and the Denver Friends of Chamber Music (ask me about tickets to either, please). I sing with the choir at Montview Presbyterian, and of course we attend many performances here in Denver: there’s always much to do.

Do you have a favorite spot in Colorado?

Right here!

Create Kitchen & Bar

By Lynn VanderWielen

Looking for a fun family activity or date night? I might have just the thing!

My family is always on the lookout for activities that are enjoyable, not too crowded, and offer a chance to learn something new. We recently had a wonderful experience at a cooking class at the Create Kitchen & Bar in the Stanley Marketplace. My two kids (both under 8) and I made delicious empanadas completely from scratch.

Each of the four families had our own cooking stations with premeasured ingredients and plenty of space to work. The instructor demonstrated each step, and then we got to work! We started by making our empanada dough, which needed to chill for 15 minutes. This gave us time to prepare the filling for our ham and cheese empanadas. While we regularly cook as a family, the instructor encouraged the kids to safely use new tools and techniques that we've now adopted at home.

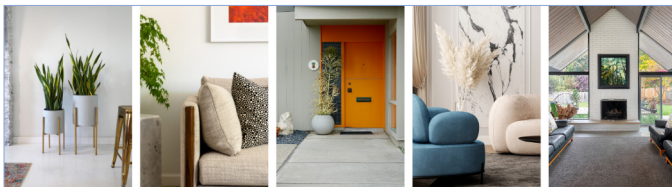
While our savory empanadas were in the oven, we took a drink break. The kitchen has a full bar with fun drinks for both adults and kids – we enjoyed Shirley Temples served in cute honey-bear glassware.

As the empanadas cooled, we moved on to make our sweet apple filling, which included a step to deglaze the mixture with orange juice. My oldest was in charge of sautéing, while my youngest rolled out the dough. Everyone was busy and working together, and I didn't even have to clean up much!

Once finished, we all enjoyed our ham and cheese creations, followed by the apple empanadas. We had a wonderful time and will definitely be back.

I bought our tickets a few months in advance (it's Denver, after all) and have been checking the online calendar for newly available slots. They have several date night options as well, including Japanese ramen, classic French fare, paella, and a Taste of Thailand. While the classes aren't exactly cheap, I found the experience to be worth it.

Maybe we'll see you there on our next cooking class adventure!



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News from George Washington High School

Speech & Debate

George Washington Speech & Debate recently hosted three tournaments, welcoming 73 schools, approximately 650 students, and 250 judges. These included teams from Colorado as well as other states and even a few from Vietnam. Together, we ran an impressive 800 individual rounds of competition. In lieu of trophies, we donated to the LA Fire Relief in each winner's name.

GW Food Pantry

In conjunction with our generous donors and in partnership with Food Bank of the Rockies, the GW Food Pantry continues to provide weekly access to nutritious food for community members experiencing food insecurity. We are currently serving between 60 and 80 families per week. The GW Food Pantry is open to all students, faculty, and staff. If you are interested in volunteering, please see our signup page on the GW website under Patriots Care: George Washington High School Food Pantry. Cash donations are always appreciated and can be made via our Colorado Gives page:

GWHS Food Pantry |

www.coloradogives.org/story/Cgdfoodpantry

Mean Girls – the Musical

Our GW Theater students – Patriots Players - are presenting Mean Girls, March 13 – 16. Ticket information will be posted on their social media: [gwhspatriotplayers](#). We hope to see you there for this great production.

GW After Prom

The annual event is immediately following prom at GW, providing a fun (and safe) place for our students to go. Hosted and supervised by volunteer parents, it is always one of the highlights of the year. The theme? We're going "beachy" and are looking for donations including inflatable pools, pool noodles, decorations, bean bags (pillow size or larger), collapsible beach chairs, etc. Have anything you'd like to share? Email gwhsafterprom@gmail.com for donation drop off or questions.

Volunteering at GW

We are always looking for volunteers. If you are interested, go to gwhs.dpsk12.org and click on the latest issue of the "Weekly Roundup" newsletter to see the current opportunities. In particular, we have AP and IB exams in April and May and are looking for proctors. Your help is invaluable as our students complete these important exams.

GW Future Center

As college acceptances are rolling in, we are pleased to share that we have students attending over 140 different universities, including three military academies, HBCU's, a couple of Ivy's, a few international, and a great representation of public, private, liberal arts, and specialty schools all over the country. Congrats to all!



Baseball in Denver

By Erick Stragand, Montclair Resident and Baseball Nerd

As much of a baseball nerd as I am, I stunk at actually playing the game. I was born in Pittsburgh and had early memories of the 1970's "We Are Family" Pittsburgh Pirates. Yet when I moved out to the suburbs of Denver with my family, baseball was suddenly forgotten and seemed "old" to me. I wanted to get in on playing football or even the "new" sport of soccer. I found out early; probably around 2nd grade; that I wasn't made for soccer. Probably due to the constant running. So in 3rd grade I tried football and baseball. Football became my favorite, but I played baseball out of obligation. Mostly because my big brother played, and a lot of my football teammates also played baseball.

Like a lot of kids, I was scared of the ball hitting me. Not just at the plate, but in the field. Every time I'd jog out to left or right field (or the rare instance of third base), my constant thought was "please don't hit it to me! Please don't hit it to me!" Then, when I'd get a chance to swing the bat, I'd think: "please don't hit me!" The fear of getting plunked by the actual baseball gripped me. I soon found out I could get on base with something called "a walk". Awesome. So my hitting approach became: "just stand there, avoid getting hit, and don't swing. You'll get on base". Not exactly inspiring thoughts for any baseball player. Ted Williams and Hank Aaron would've hated me.

However, in 4th grade I apparently overcame my fears. For one Saturday afternoon, at least. I was playing for the Arapahoe Youth League's (AYL) "Warriors" team in DeKoevend Park in Littleton (now Centennial). I made an absolutely amazing play in the outfield, that day, as I finally caught the elusive "Routine Fly Ball" for an out. Wow. I caught the ball. Then, later in the game, I actually hit a home run. There were no fences at this particular field, so I just hit the ball really far and made some kid chase it. I couldn't believe it. My coach and teammates couldn't believe it. Best of all, my dad couldn't believe it.

We had to stop at Skagg's drug store, on the way home, and my dad wanted to celebrate by taking me over to the electronics counter. He bought me TWO Atari video game cartridges: Activision's "Pitfall" and "Pitfall II". I was blown away. That was about \$50-60 in 1984 funds! I had lost or broken my original "Pitfall" cartridge and "Pitfall II" had just come out. The sequel was an amazing game and, for my money (and my dad's), was probably the best game ever made for the old Atari 2600. My friends, family, and I played that thing constantly for months, even creating a hand-drawn map of its many caverns and ladders. When I got older, I would come to learn about professional

ballplayers with their incentive laden contracts and signing bonuses. I didn't realize it, at the time, but the Pitfall games were my bonus and I could not have been more ecstatic. When guys like Kevin Brown and Roger Clemens signed crazy MLB contracts that included personal plane transportation for their families, I thought: "amateurs. They should've asked for both Pitfall games."

As it turned out, that spring day in 1984 was the pinnacle of my baseball playing career. After 4th grade, I moved to a new neighborhood, and stopped playing baseball because AYL rules dictated that I would've had to join a new team. I didn't want to play with a bunch of "new" kids. So I passed on playing baseball in 5th grade. I made friends in my new neighborhood and decided to play in 6th grade. However, AYL rules again directed me to a completely new team, where all the kids attended a different school and had been together for years. More significantly, I had just started to wear glasses at that time and my vision was declining. I had the nifty "photo gray" glasses; the kind that automatically tint to become sunglasses when outside. Known as "transition lenses" nowadays. In the 90's, wearing sunglasses in baseball was cool, but in the 80's it was odd. Particularly for a kid. The other players, and even the new coach, didn't seem to understand. The coach insisted I take off my glasses when I was playing. Something about "safety" and how the reflection could throw off the opposing pitcher or...gasp...the ball could hit me in the head and I'd get shards of glass in my eyes! With hampered vision and uncomfortable feelings, I went the entire season without getting a single hit or catching a fly ball. Even my back-door strategy of getting a walk didn't work, that year. Thus, I left baseball and it hibernated inside my head until 1990.

In 1990, I got back into baseball and especially the history of it. Mostly due to discovering a shoe box of my dad's old baseball cards. I was still a teenager, but I was comfortable with being a fan and not a player. Ten years later, I started getting into softball. I enjoyed hitting and wasn't worried about getting plunked, yet when I got out into the field, my immediate thought was, once again, "please don't hit it to me! Please don't hit it to me!"

I don't regret not playing baseball more. I had my ups and downs...but especially those unforgettable Pitfalls.

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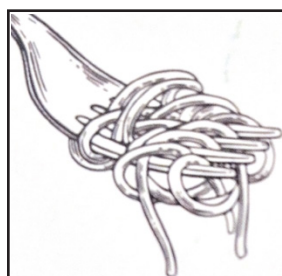
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