



News

Winter 2011

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You and Teller School

By Lisa Evans

Want to help maintain the value of your home and help your community? Donate to or volunteer at Teller Elementary!

This may seem an odd (and remarkably easy) first step, but it is critical. The State of Colorado spends \$1,400.00 less per pupil in grades K through 12 than the US national average*. For the 2010/2011 school year and the anticipated 400 students at Teller Elementary, this means Teller receives \$560,000.00 less. Public schools rely substantially more now than when we were kids on private funding to offer a high quality education for our children.

Below are some other important statistics Coloradoans should be aware of:

- In our national K-12 rankings:
 - Colorado is 38th in pupil/teacher ratios
 - Colorado is 40th in school technology
 - Colorado is 43rd in teacher compensation (as compared to similar professions)
 - Colorado is 40th in per-pupil funding
- In higher education, Colorado ranks 48th nationally in per capita financial support

Investing in your neighborhood public school helps you for a number of reasons - whether or not you have children at the school. The investment in your local school benefits:

- Your property value by making your home more desirable to more potential buyers (i.e., families with children or adults wanting to start a family)

- Your neighborhood by attracting homeowners who care about their community
- Your community by long-term households routinely investing more in their homes.

As the tough economy continues to challenge families, many of us living in Congress Park know someone who is underemployed or unemployed. So as Colorado works to create jobs and attract new companies, employers need to be able to recruit from an educated population. Colorado's under-funded public education system is struggling, which can thwart potential employers considering locating here. To maintain and grow diverse and vibrant employment opportunities, we must invest in Colorado's public education.

Why Teller? First, it's your neighborhood DPS elementary school so its success will directly and positively impact your property value and quality of life. Second, Teller has grown from the threat of closing ten years ago for failure to perform, to a high-achieving school today. With the hard work of the neighborhood, staff and students Teller has taught high-risk children to read and learn, and challenged the gifted and talented and the student population at large to achieve their academic greatness. Test scores are now high and on the rise, and Teller offers small class sizes, art, music, P.E. and after-school enrichment programs, (just to mention a few hallmarks of a great school.)

For more information on donating your time, talent and/or funds to Teller Elementary,

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*Congress Park's Vision
(1995 Neighborhood Plan)*

Congress Park is a traditional city neighborhood with a small-town atmosphere. Here, people of diverse cultures, ages, colors and economic backgrounds share a sense of community, value older homes and mature trees, and enjoy the convenience of city living amid the stability of a thriving neighborhood.

Congress Park News is a quarterly publication of Congress Park Neighbors, Inc. A network of volunteers produces and distributes it to a circulation of more than 4500 residents and businesses within the area bounded by Colfax Avenue, Sixth Avenue, York Street and Colorado Boulevard.

www.CongressParkNeighbors.org

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Your articles, letters and advertisements are always welcome.

We need you to help produce and distribute the newsletter. If you can volunteer a few hours every quarter to help your neighbors get the news, please call Wendy or Julie.

This newsletter is printed on 100% recycled paper with soy-based ink by Barnum Printing, 303-936-2345.

You and Teller School

Continued from page 1

please visit the school website at <http://teller.dpsk12.org/> (click on the big Simply Giving link). Teller's *Simply Giving* program is an easy way to make a one-time or recurring donation to the school, and the website provides other ways you can help too. As an added bonus, please know your donation is tax deductible!!

This article also appeared in Cherry Creek Living Magazine, March 2010.

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Parks for Sale?

By Kathleen Hynes

In September, Denver Parks and Recreation adopted an Admission-Based Events Policy for city parks after long and heated debate for over two years. The policy will allow groups to hold private, ticketed events in the city parks. Opponents say this constitutes closing the parks to the public for those occasions.

The Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC) representing more than 85 registered neighborhood organizations, voted to oppose the paid event policy. Congress Park Neighbors, Inc. (CPN) is a member of the INC.

CPN voted to support the INC's decision to oppose this Paid Event Policy. Articles on pages 3 and 4 in this issue give some history about this controversy and identify a few of the ongoing issues.

Your Congress Park Neighbors 2010 Board of Directors

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And we thank these committed neighbors:

Michael Sutherland and Bill DeMaio—Denver Botanic Gardens Liaison

Carolyn VanSciver—Congress Park Historic Preservation Committee
303-377-4913

Lots of other neighbors help with communications, membership, and more, and generally make Congress Park a great place to live—you know who you are and how much we depend on you—Thanks!

Your Congress Park Board invites you to attend the open Board meetings at National Jewish Hospital on the third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in Heitler Hall.

Park's Paid Event Policy Adopted

By Arthur Rosenblum, *Greater Park Hill News* (www.gphc.org), September 2010

On September 10th, Denver Parks and Recreation Manager Kevin Patterson adopted the Admission Based Events Policy that has been the subject of planning and heated debate for almost three years. Patterson's act came one month after a divided Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) made a non-binding recommendation to adopt the policy.

The policy, which goes into effect in 2011, allows the parks department to issue permits to hold paid, private events in eight of Denver's parks, including City Park, where festivals and special events are already permitted.

The policy allows the permitting of events that can be held a maximum of four days per 30-day period at each park, with no two paid events occurring at the same time. No single event can be held for more than four days, including set-up and clean-up and maximum attendance will be 7,500 people at any one festival-type event; "rest periods" are built into the policy to minimize impacts on the parks; the sale of alcohol will be permitted at the events in accordance with the Parks Department's recently adopted alcohol policy; and admission-based events may not occupy more than 20 percent of a park's area or five contiguous acres, whichever is smaller. Permit fees will be charged and the parks are authorized to collect the city's 10 percent seat tax. Park staff project the city could raise up to \$500,000 a year, which would go to the parks department general fund and the specific parks where events are held.

While the policy allows paid events in City Park, Civic Center, Confluence, Skyline, Central Park - Stapleton, Sloan's Lake, Parkfield and Ruby Hill, no paid events will be scheduled in City Park and Sloan's Lake Park in 2011 because of construction.

After a public hearing in August, during which numerous opponents criticized the policy, the board voted 10-to-7 to accept a rewritten policy which would limit the number and length of events.

Life on Capitol Hill newspaper reports: "There has been strong community opposition to the policy, as exemplified by the public comments taken at the board's August hearing. About 25 of the 30 people who made statements before

the board's final vote were against approval of the policy, or against holding such events anywhere but in a new park especially designed for such events. Approximately 100 people packed the meeting room at the Webb Building." (www.lifeoncaphill.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1752&Itemid=118)

The primary argument against the policy continues to be that public parks should be free and open at all times and should not be used as sources of revenue. Opponents have established a web site, www.parksareforpeople.org, to raise objections.

Patterson admits that revenue is not the primary motivation for admissions based events. He

Continued on page 14

CPN Monthly Meetings Need You

The best part about the monthly CPN, Inc., Board meetings are the discussions that bloom between neighbors. Only you know what's happening on your block. Your seeds of information combined with your neighbor's may add up to something that, with cultivation, can nourish the whole neighborhood.

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Mayor Supports Paid Event Policy

By Kathleen Hynes

CP News asked then-Mayor Hickenlooper why he supports fee-based events in our City parks, but promised not to support fee-based events in our State parks, should he be elected governor.

Mayor Hickenlooper emailed this response:

“Denver Parks and Recreation is responsible for maintaining and managing the Denver park system for all its users in a reasonable and responsible way.

“After receiving numerous requests for admission based events, from small nonprofit fundraisers to large for-profit music concerns, the City embarked

on a four-year process to determine the best way to allow for these types of events.

“By permitting these events – same as we permit ball fields, picnic areas and free events – we can activate our parks in new ways, encourage additional usage by those who may not otherwise visit their local parks and create a new revenue stream for the City.

“Finally, it is difficult to do a side-by-side comparison of City Parks and State Parks, as the State Park system already charges a gate fee. In addition, the State has a concession agreement with a concert promoter to produce a number of free concerts, however, the state receives a percentage of all concessions – Food & Beverage, as well as merchandise sales.”

CP News asked the Mayor to document that the number of requests to adopt a paid event policy in the parks outweighed the number of opponents to such a policy. By press time, no response had been received.

Originally, Sloan’s Lake was on the list of parks that could be purchased for events but now has been removed because Paula Sandoval, City Councilwoman, went to Kevin Patterson and presented a case showing Sloan’s Lake land surface was much smaller than the other designated parks.

The remaining parks can be reviewed each year but this review requires the councilperson, in whose district the park resides, present the case for removal to the Parks management. The new process also gives the Parks Manager permission to add parks to the list of those open to admission-based events without public input.

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Thematic Districts

By Kathleen Hynes

Congress Park Neighbors continues to learn about Thematic Districts, Denver's Landmark Preservation Commission tool for designating historic homes. A thematic district is one in which your home shares a theme, trend, or historic pattern.

Thematic Districts have no physical boundaries and are comprised of properties whose owners "opt-in" because they want to preserve their structures which are representative of a particular theme. The thematic context may reflect historic events, significant persons, architectural styles or characteristics to which the structures as a whole relate. Homeowners whose properties qualify to belong to historic thematic districts receive State tax credits for work done to both the home's interior and exterior. Design review is only required for changes made to the exterior. Because all homes included in thematic districts are submitted by the owners themselves, applications are not contentious and the approval process less arduous than Historic District applications.

According to Planning and Development Senior Preservation Planner, Savannah Jameson, the benefits of Thematic Districts include;

* Providing neighborhoods that have significant redevelopment (pops and scrapes) with a means of protecting remaining historic resources even when a typical historic district is not appropriate.

* Providing neighborhoods that have significant political opposition to designation with a tool to protect deserving properties without creating a no-win situation at City Council.

* Reducing the potential for opposition because only contributing structures would be listed in the designation.

Please visit <http://www.congressparkneighbors.org/history.html> for more details. Please contact cpnnotify@congressparkneighbors.org if you are interested in learning more about Thematic Historic Designation for your home.

Mark Your Calendar

Congress Park Neighbors, Inc. will host its annual All Neighborhood Meeting on February 16, 2011, 6-8 p.m., with free pizza, pop and updates from local officials. The meeting is held at Teller School. Updates will be sent via CPN email broadcast so if you want to be "in the know" go to www.congressparkneighbors.org and sign-up to join our email broadcast list.

Volunteer Opportunity Community Board Caretaker

Tend the community board on 12th Ave. at Madison St. (next to WildFlowers)

Approximately once a month: Keep postings up-to-date

Sometime during the year: Clear the wood panels of postings and staples/tacks/nails, lightly sand and brush with stain/sealer (provided by CPN)

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Community Garden's Potluck

CPN Events On Web

Once again, CPN's wondrous webmaster Maggie has outdone herself. The neighborhood website now has an events calendar. Go to www.congressparkneighbors.org and look. If you have a CPN event that needs to be added in (block party? garage sale? alley clean up?), contact the webmaster or any CPN Board member at cpnboard@congressparkneighbors.org. And you can find a list of Congress Park merchants on our website. Thank you, Maggie!

First Annual Community Garden's Potluck lunch and Scary Vegetable contest was enjoyed by folks from Congress Park and the Denver Botanic Community Gardens located in Congress Park.



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Looking forward to as great 2011!



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CPN's Historic Speakers Series

Another outstanding year for CPN's Historic Speakers Series concluded with the ever-popular "Researching the History of Your Old House". This hands-on session is conducted in the Western History Section of the downtown library. Perhaps some of the folks discovered their homes had "themes" which could be used in Thematic Historic designations?

Carolyn Van Sciver is the outstanding CPN volunteer who organizes the historic speakers series. She is always looking for suggestions for new topics and you can email your ideas at cvansciver@earthlink.net.

Old house lovers do not have to wait until next year to learn more about their wonderful homes.

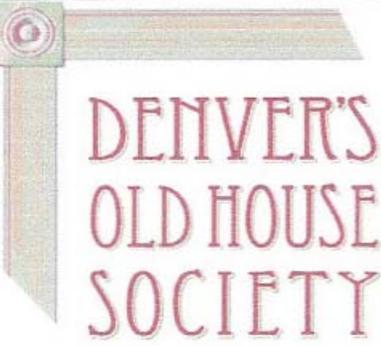
Denver's Old House Society's Old House Fair, scheduled for Saturday, February 5, 2011 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Tivoli Turnhalle, 900 Auraria Parkway, is the only one of its kind west of the Mississippi River, offering information, resources and workshops specific to homes over 50 years old.

Starting at 9:30 a.m., one-hour workshops will be presented, including: Caring for Your Historic Windows, Maintaining the Wood Floors in Your House, Landscaping for Old Houses, Period Details for Kitchens in Old Houses, and Maintaining The Masonry in Your Old House. Each workshop will be offered twice.

Numerous exhibitors will be on hand to showcase products and services that are specific for houses built from 1860 to 1961. Tours of the historic Tivoli (landmarked since 1866) will be given at 10 a.m. and at 2 p.m.

Denver's Old House Society is a nonprofit organization; dedicated to educating owners of old houses (50+ years old) about the care and restoration of their homes and helping them protect their neighborhoods. It is the only one of its kind in Colorado and one of only a few in the nation. Denver's Old House Society, Inc. is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes and works, in conjunction with local people and organizations, through educational and advocacy efforts.

The \$10 tickets for Denver's Old House Society's Old House Fair are now available at King Soopers stores throughout the Front Range, on-line at TicketsWest, <http://ticketswest.rdlm.com>, and at select retailers, <http://denversoldhousesociety.org>.



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DenversOldHouseSociety.org

Great News to Share

Phase I of the East High School Entry Plaza is Complete...

By Susan Bardwell

As students returned to East High School this August, they were greeted with a new Entry Plaza to their historic and storied institution. East High Principal John Youngquist calls the Entry Plaza "The Gateway to Learning." Youngquist describes the plaza as a "gathering place for students; it is where they connect. With its renovation and expansion, the plaza creates an atmosphere of welcome for students and visitors alike."

Bricks and pavers with thoughtful quotations grace the redesigned entrance to this historic Denver Public School. Nearly \$300,000 were raised

by Project Angel Pride to fund the design and construction of this project.

The money raised came from gifts of \$10 to \$25,000. Nearly 900 families, individuals and organizations have purchased more than 800 bricks and 70 pavers of various sizes to date. A number of graduating classes and sports teams are participating in group pavers, enabling them to share their pride and commitment.

Project Angel Pride will continue to add engraved pavers and bricks to the plaza, providing future opportunities for individuals and organizations to participate, and creating an ongoing source of funds for East High School. Phase II construction is scheduled for the Summer of 2011. If you would like to purchase a brick or a paver, please go to: www.ProjectAngelPride.org.

If you have questions regarding this project, please contact: Susan Bardwell at 303-399-1155 or SusanBardwell@msn.com.

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Diary of a Fourth Grader (or Calum's Column)

By Calum Abeywickrema, 4th Grader, Teller Elementary School

The leaves are falling. Fall is here. It's too bad summer's over because that means all the fun stuff is coming to an end, like soccer and wearing shorts to school and playing outside after dinner.

I got to play on two soccer teams this season, which is really cool. I got to play on my team, the Buffs, and I got to play on my brother's team too. It was real fun playing with my brother's team 'cause those are the big kids and they're really good and the coach is from Ireland. He says "tree" for "three." It's cool listening to him talk.

Fourth grade is going pretty good. And my new homeroom teacher Miss Hoffman is awesome. She lets us do whatever we want in writing and I got to write a story about Abraham Lincoln playing soccer with George Washington. I like the other 4th grade teacher, Miss Sackett too because she is always nice to me and she can do a back walkover. My favorite subject is math because we get the answers when we miss a question. I also really like art. I like drawing and right now we're working on making paper moales. They are from Panama. We will show our paper moales at the Teller Art Show on the special street, Colfax. Everybody is invited, so come and see our great art in November. My other favorite teacher is Miss Chris. She's the gym teacher. We always get to play fun games and go running, which is my favorite thing to do. There are these giant sheets of paper in the hallway near the gym where we keep track of how far we run. Some kids have already run a whole marathon. Some of the best runners in school are, like, in kindergarten and first grade. Go figure.

I have some new friends this year, too. One is named Joey. And he has the coolest red glasses ever. He always does his school work when all the other boys don't. Eli is another kid at school who I like a lot. He wants to be a boxer when he grows up and I do too.

This year we have a brand new, really great playground at Teller, and the field does not have very many dry spots. Plus, there's a running track and in the spring we get to plant a garden.

My brother is pretty good when he is not beat-

ing me up. Sometimes he's nice like when he plays on the trampoline with me. My brother started middle school so it's a little weird to be at Teller without him. But it's kinda good, too, because I get to be in school without him!

The good thing about winter coming is that means it will snow soon. We can have snowball fights and go sledding and then Christmas and then my birthday. I can't wait. So I guess it's not all bad that summer's over.

Thanks for reading Calum's Column. Catch ya next time!

Thanks to all who volunteered to distribute newsletters.

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Community "Frog" Projects

*"The Congress Park Crime Action Committee is committed to coordinate efforts to rid our neighborhood of crime, thus helping to ensure personal safety for all."
CPN Crime Action Committee Mission Statement*

Congress Park Neighbors is looking for a volunteer to attend the District 3 monthly crime meetings and report to the CPN board the details of those meetings. If you are willing to help, please send us an email at cpnnotify@congressparkneighbors.org

Our new District 3 Community Resource Officer is **Cari Jimenez**. Her phone is 720 913-1175.

By Charlotte Bentley, Former Congress Park Crime Action Committee Chairperson

When offenders have a sense of purpose, they are less likely to get involved in criminal activity, whether it's in prison or in the community," said Acting Prisons Director Dan Pacholke, of the Cedar Creek Corrections Center, in Washington state. Realizing most criminal offenders will re-enter our communities after serving their time, it behooves us to raise their sense of purpose, for the benefit of our community.

The WA Department of Corrections (DOC) is learning this first-hand, with an unusual project. They received a moderate grant from the Oregon Zoo to rehabilitate an endangered species of frog that lives in the Pacific Northwest. As it turns out, the staff and offenders at Cedar Creek Corrections Center have had a higher success rate at rearing the Oregon spotted frog than zoos and nature centers around the area (News release from the WA DOC and the Corrections Reporter).

The frog rehabilitation is part of the Sustainable Prisons Project, a partnership between the DOC and The Evergreen State College. The

project is designed to reduce operational costs by developing sustainable practices and connect criminal offenders to nature.

Prison administrators credit participating offenders in scientific projects as one of the reasons prison violence has dramatically decreased the past two years. "It's a remarkable achievement for a prison to receive a scientific grant," but, "when an offender has researchers and biologists coming up to them and asking for their input on scientific projects, it gives the offender a sense of pride and accomplishment," Pacholke said.

This year the WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife expects to release about 83 of the Oregon spotted frogs from this DOC into marshes, about the same as last year. "They are truly making a difference in the recovery of this endangered species," said Kim Smith, Oregon Zoo Director.

Who would have thought a little spotted frog could play such an important role in altering criminal behavior and giving purpose on a

biological and scientific level to offenders before they re-enter our communities? If perhaps this kind of directional interest could have been introduced to them early, just maybe... they wouldn't have found themselves in a prison facility later in life. It makes one ponder what positive activities we might encourage our young people to participate in.

Continued on page 13



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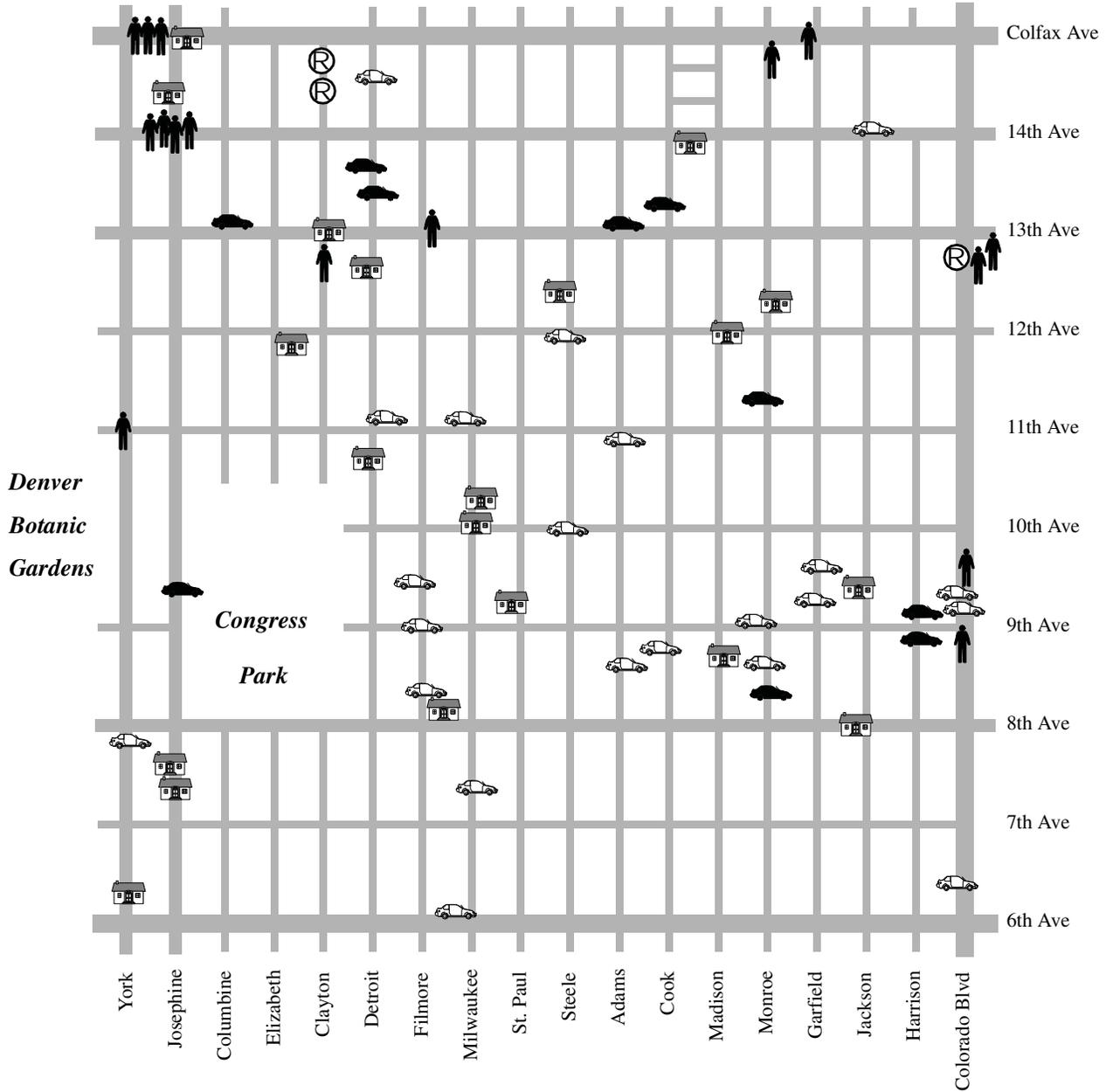
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CONGRESS PARK NEIGHBORHOOD CRIMES JULY - SEPTEMBER, 2010

East High



-  **Sexual Assault**
-  **Assault/robbery**
-  **Burglary**
-  **Auto Theft**
-  **Theft from auto**

This map shows a compilation of all serious crimes reported to police within Congress Park in the third quarter of 2010. Crime mapping is provided by the Congress Park Crime Action Committee using City and Police Department statistics relayed through Council District 10.

Looking East

By Jess Lindimore



Jess Lindimore is in her junior year at East High and offering a Congress Park highschooler's perspective to the Congress Park News.

The leaves are changing as is everything at East. The students returned from summer break refreshed and pleasantly surprised by new, beautiful, water-saving bathrooms. High school is a wonderful time in every student's life because the opportunity to change or try new things is constantly presenting itself. Maybe you started off high school as a scared freshman but by junior year (or sooner) you will have discovered many new things about yourself. You may be interested in basketball now but after starting high school or meeting some new people you may discover your real love is something else.

I came to this conclusion about high school after trying literally fifteen different clubs and sports. I tried cross country, volleyball, girl's golf, Green Club, Key Club, Drama Club, Amnesty International, Angels Against Abuse, and so many more. By the time I was done, my head was spinning. The key to enjoying high school is not knowing who you are, but instead, figuring out who you are. If you go into high school with an image of who

you are you will more than likely end up being disappointed. When you are young, your mind changes constantly.

When I began high school I was sure the only thing that would make me happy was being on the volleyball team. Well, as it turns out, volleyball wasn't where my heart was, in fact it wasn't anywhere near it. It was not until this year that I really discovered what I love. I love the arts! I have always been artistic but until I started attending East, I had never really seen myself as someone who could be expressive without feeling judged. East is a wonderful place because not only does it embrace the athletes but also the artistic and everyone in between.

This year I joined stagecraft and I switched from being a staffer in yearbook to being a photographer. I have never in my life been this happy. In all honesty, I get to go to school every day and do something that I not only love, but I'm actually really good at. Stagecraft lets me use my artistic

abilities to design sets. Photography for yearbook does the same while combining my love of writing and publishing.

Things are always changing when you're in high school and instead of trying to live up to an image you should really be trying to figure out what you really love, even if it takes until your junior year. It's going to be a beautiful year at East and, as always, I feel lucky just to be a part of it.

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Denver Film Society's New Home in Congress Park

The Denver Film Society (DFS), a Denver Film institution since 1978, officially opened its doors on 2510 E. Colfax on November 4th, 2010 during the second night of the 33rd Starz Denver Film Festival. Year-round DFS film programming will begin at the Denver FilmCenter/Colfax location on November 15, 2010.

DFS signed a lease agreement with an option to purchase the site from Tavern Hospitality Group because the property provides the best opportunities for its future growth and stability.

The Denver FilmCenter/Colfax will feature three screens, leather stadium seating, state-of-the-art sound, as well as a full bar and restaurant with seating for 80 in the theater lobby.

"Our new home is in an incredibly vibrant neighborhood and is within walking distance of 50,000 potential customers," said David Charmatz, DFS board chair. "We're looking forward to the opportunities this location will present in terms of educational and cultural programming with our neighbors, especially the students and staff at East High School."

More information is available at www.congress-park-neighbors.org/denver.film.society/CPN_DFS_overview_Oct_10.pdf

Community "Frog" Projects

Continued from page 10

How many alternatives can we provide to enable our youth to reject potentially criminal behavior?

Considering the difficulty young people have these days finding employment, let's consider what kinds of "little frog" projects we have in our community. How can we help young people nurture their own community pride and contribute to the betterment of Congress Park and Denver? Think community "frog" projects!

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Park's Paid Event Policy Adopted

Continued from page 3

claims the department is responding to what people have said they wanted in city parks. And yet, in response to a Colorado Open Records Act request, department officials said they were unable to document any specific requests for commercial events.

Opponents to the policy are undaunted by the formal adoption of the policy. They continue to hold to their belief, in spite of an opposing opinion by the City Attorney, that the City Charter expressly prohibits the leasing of public park land without a vote of the citizenry and call for a referendum on the issue.

"The fundamental principle is the same today as it was when the discussion started almost three years ago," says Dave Felice, GPHC Board Member. "Tax money paid for the public parks. Commercial enterprises have absolutely no prerogative to usurp public property for profit. Parks must be free and open to the public. It is wrong to close park property and exclude those who do not, or cannot, pay admission. This is a classic case of the 'rip it out of the ground and sell it' philosophy of management. Just because you have something does not make it right to sell it."

Opponents (www.parksareforpeople.org) continue to voice concern about the impacts of large paid events on the parks and neighboring communities, and they continue to request that Patterson share the documents his department claims they have showing a demand for paid events.

Dave Felice contributed to this article.

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-Eric Hoffer

Congress Park Neighbors Membership Form

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