

PLATT PARK *Post*

May/June 2023

Fighting for a Greener Platt Park

by *Dave Eyvazzadeh*

In early April, my wife and I attended a public online meeting regarding the East Louisiana / South Pearl Street storm sewer improvement project. A project providing a much-needed upgrade to how our stormwater is captured and diverted in attempts to limit flooding, which has been a problem in the area for years.

We joined the meeting as most construction projects and traffic diversion in this area directly impacts my family and neighbors on the 1200 block of South Pennsylvania, this project included. When our traffic related anxieties subsided after the DOTI (Dept. of Transportation and Infrastructure) project manager fielded our first questions, we shifted excitedly to questions about what to expect at the northern — and most visible — gateway to the heart of the Platt Park neighborhood; our vibrant collection of businesses and restaurants. This intersection is currently about as welcoming as the top-deck of a downtown parking garage on a July afternoon, directly contrasting with the picturesque haven of South Pearl Street. Needless to say, this intersection desperately needs a facelift. Trees and vegetation would go a long way. The DOTI representative braced us, “You’re not going to like my answer.”

Concrete. Concrete. Concrete. Nary a tree (existing or new) planned for the intersection from alley-to-alley along Louisiana. More of the same, extending similar distances north and south along Pearl Street. This baffled me. Perhaps the red flags would not have flown if I were not married to a talented landscape architect and self-described “tree nerd” who co-penned the very guidelines for the Denver Forester’s Greener Denver initiative. Mind you, the Denver Forester always gets their way when new construction occurs. In fairness, the design confused even the DOTI project manager who graciously helped amend the design to save the existing viable (3) trees. But this was not good enough; we still needed more trees.

While we appreciate the consideration of future protected bike lanes, trees bring immeasurable value to our community—especially when the Denver Metro area has ranked sixth in the nation for the worst air pollution. Trees are our neighborhood’s greatest asset to mitigate Denver’s increasing heat island effect and help lower carbon emissions. Trees have also been statistically proven to reduce crime, increase retail visitation time, and increase property values; and in case you haven’t noticed, many of the trees that make up our beautiful canopy are ailing.

With a projected project start date of June 2023, time was of the essence. With the help of City Councilman Jolon Clark, we worked with DOTI and the Denver Forester to determine how we arrived at all this concrete. As it turned out, plans for a protected bike lane along Louisiana interfered with stormwater-fed tree planters.

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Official Newsletter of the



PLATT PARK
PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION
3PA.ORG

The Platt Park People's Association, a city of Denver Registered Neighborhood Organization, serves more than 3,000 homes and businesses in the neighborhood bounded by Broadway on the West, Downing on the East, I-25 on the North and Evans on the South. 3PA membership is open to all neighbors and business owners who live and own property within these boundaries. Have a voice in your neighborhood and with the city: Join 3PA.

Check out our website. Stay informed, learn about upcoming events, and more!

www.3pa.org

For all 3PA and Platt Park Post communications email: board@3pa.org

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Neighborhood Notes



by Tom Snyder

Great to have summer back in full swing and it seems the life and energy of our little neighborhood is back to full strength after the Covid years (remember Covid?). Hopefully by the time you read this we've made it through the spring rainy season without any garden pulverizing hail storms and window-well filling downpours of biblical proportions. Fingers crossed—it is after all still Colorado!

Nowhere is the summer more visibly in full swing than the weekly **Farmers Market**. We wandered up the first Sunday just to check out this year's offerings hoping to get ahead of any crowds by hitting it a bit before opening time. Wow, totally a-buzz by 9:00 am. Well, it was nonetheless great to see all of you and it appeared that you invited a thousand of your best friends.

This year's version extends for two full blocks, from Iowa to Arkansas and every space is filled with vendors. Fun but almost a little overwhelming as my brain couldn't quite process all the choices of salsa let alone decide who I should hit up for a breakfast snack. Fortunately, we have a glorious summer to sample all the options. Good thing.

Have a new favorite yet? Too early to say for sure but mine might be **La Montagne Des Saveurs** which translates to The Mountain of Flavors aka., the French cheese stand. OMG, they have good stuff. Dropped \$60 bucks there before I could swallow the samples. Black Truffle Gouda—need I say more? I'm still addicted to the smoked salmon guy's stuff—maybe it's just the aroma but gets me every time. Glad he's back. Shout out to Platt Park's own master of cookie baking as Marsha of Marsha's Cookies was back for another year!

As we headed out there was a line a block long trailing down Iowa. Pretty sure the front of the line was queuing up to buy bread and the other 200 people thought it was a line to get into the market. Note to future self you don't have to wait in line to get in. Social distancing is delightfully a relic of the past.

By now you've probably noticed the "Grand Opening" banner over **Ototo Den** at 1501 S Pearl. If you're like me you are thinking, didn't there used to be Ototo Den here and so shouldn't it be "Grand Re-Opening" but perhaps I'm bogging down in the semantics. Either way it is good to see one of the last remaining Covid casualties open once again. To re-open Toshi Kizake, owner along with his brother Yasu of the Den empire, traveled to Japan to



hand-select Japanese chefs to run the kitchen of Ototo Den illustrating the brother's commitment to authenticity.

So, what exactly is the difference between Ototo Den and the other Dens? Is this just baby-den or something (Ototo does mean "little brother" in Japanese)? There is some menu overlap as there are in the other Dens but you won't find a sushi menu or elaborate catch of the day items. The heart of the menu centers around tapas sized offerings of various delicacies like pan-fried mochi wrapped in crispy bacon; Tako Yaki, or fried wheat balls stuffed with octopus; and Buta Kimchi, a Canadian Mugi-Buta pork wok-seared with spicy Korean kimchi. If none of that makes any culinary sense then just roll on over between 4:30 and 10 pm any day but Monday and Tuesday. You won't be disappointed. Welcome back little brother!

The owners of La Chiva Colombian Restaurant at 1446 S Broadway have opened a fun new café across the street in their old location called **LaTinto Café** located at 1417 S Broadway. I dropped in the other day inadvertently right at their closing time, 2:00 pm, but no matter, the super warm staff was more than happy to extend closing for a little bit just to entertain me. Thanks! The heart of everything here is in the Colombian roots of the ownership and staff. All the coffee served comes directly from specialty independent farms in Columbia who harvest in small batches which are then roasted locally. The coffee was excellent I might add.

The café serves all sorts of breakfast offerings as well as a fun array of pastries and breads. The staff told me that all the recipes come from their grandmothers as they relayed stories of visiting grandma and always being filled with delectable delights. I tried the Patel Gloria which was a

Neighborhood Notes, *cont.*

puff pastry filed with a wonderful sweet and savory blend of guava and caramel—was it dessert or breakfast food? Who knows but it was delicious! Can't wait to go back for a full breakfast. Broadway continues to become more and more of an international food court and LaTinto is a great new addition.

Couldn't resist after visiting LaTinto to cross the street and pop my head into a new store that has caught my eye ever since its opening a few months ago, **Aural Hifi** located at 1438 S Broadway. Back when I was in college owning a stereo system was sort of a status symbol and I'm not talking about something you can bring home for a few bucks from Best Buy. I'm talking huge speakers that looked themselves like pieces of artwork, amplifiers that glowed when turned on, turntables that were technological marvels of precision—yes that kind of stereo. When I stepped into Aural, I instantly felt a connection to that slice of nostalgia.

Owner Jeremy Irwin gave me a tour of his passion project which displays both exquisitely restored equipment as well as new very high-end audiophile gear. Their website accurately says, "We're on a mission to rescue, restore and sometimes add our design touches to midcentury audio gear. Gear that was made in a time when quality of sound, materials and design were all equally important... when your stereo was an experience—designed as functional art to be displayed proudly, not hidden away in a cabinet"

If you want a taste of a stereo experience that will blow the roof off your best earbuds then drop in and take a tour but be warned you might find yourself saving up for a pair of JBL studio monitor speakers paired with a Macintosh power amp with which you will rattle the windows and scare the squirrels at your next summer block party!

**Enjoy summer in all its glory.
See you around the neighborhood!**

Tom



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Non-watered trees were a non-starter. As the Platt Park People's Association (3PA) dovetailed in, we brought in the South Pearl Street Association, which represents businesses we know and love along Pearl Street. We all understood that water and care for any trees was the linchpin for our plan and the South Pearl Street Association stepped up in a big way helping secure a watering solution for new trees as part of this construction project.

The outcome? We are getting more trees! A very big, heartfelt thank you goes out to the South Pearl Street Association for committing to the care and watering of an additional (5) trees at the intersection!

I can hear it now, "That's awesome! Now...what about the derelict Hanson's building and the 7-Eleven building?" While we still are not certain about the future of the old Hanson's at the southwest corner, the 7-Eleven building on the northwest corner (and more than half the block northward) is planned for a large development starting late 2023 bringing a radical facelift to the northmost block of South Pearl Street. And with it more of my construction and traffic related anxieties. (Sigh.) But that new development will be grounds for several more trees! Woohoo!

While Platt Park used to feel like the best kept secret just outside the bounds of Wash Park, the secret is obviously out. Platt Park is growing. Attempting to guide and direct that growth while maintaining the neighborhood feel we all fell in love with, stands to be one of the biggest and most important roles that we on the 3PA board serve.

We are all passionate about advocating for all of you, our neighbors, and our community as a whole. While there are many factors we consider — the population, health, and maturity of our tree canopy remains amongst the most critical to our future enjoyment of Platt Park.



**South Pearl
Farmers
Market**

9am-1pm Every Sunday
May through November

southpearlstreet.com

Getting the Lead Out **A Water Safety Update for Platt Park**

*by Donna Douville, Platt Park Neighbor &
Gianna Lombardi, Community Relations Sr. Specialist,
Denver Water*

A few years ago some of you in the neighborhood might have remembered when Denver Water notified us about a Lead Reduction Program that would affect not only our little slice of Denver, but the whole City. As a part of this program, we also all got our very own Brita® pitchers and filters to be used until our lines were deemed safe from lead.

Recently, I noticed Denver Water doing work on Clarkson Street and replacing water lines to the homes adjacent to the street. As such I thought perhaps it was our turn to get our lines replaced. Well - we are not quite on the schedule yet to "get the lead out." But, I was able to get the update from Denver Water which we have shared with you below. At this time it sounds like we just need to be patient and continue using our filters.

"Denver Water recently replaced an underground water pipeline on South Clarkson Street in Platt Park. During that work, Denver Water crews replaced any customer-owned lead services lines, which connect from the water pipeline to individual properties, as they were identified.

This main replacement project is separate from Denver Water's Lead Reduction Program. Platt Park residents who have a suspected lead service line but do not live along South Clarkson Street in the completed pipeline project area are still in the Lead Reduction Program, and, if a lead service line is confirmed, will have their line replaced by Denver Water at no expense to the customer.

In the next few months, Denver Water's contractor is expected to be in the Platt Park neighborhood to conduct investigative potholing, which will help determine how many lead service lines need to be replaced. That said, Denver Water does not yet have an anticipated start date for Platt Park lead service line replacement work to begin. Denver Water identifies work areas by the fall of each year for the following year.

Several factors drive when and where service lines are replaced. Denver Water prioritizes communities who are most vulnerable and at-risk from lead exposure, particularly infants and children. Areas with large numbers of facilities that serve these populations, such as schools and daycares, are also prioritized.

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Once work areas are identified, Denver Water will determine the timing for individual properties in that work area. Once a property has been identified for a service line replacement, Denver Water will send additional information about the replacement process and next steps. This notification typically comes a month or two before the anticipated replacement date.

For questions, neighbors can contact Denver Water Customer Care at 303-893-2444, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., or visit denverwater.org/lead.

Decker Branch Library Summer Programs

by Quetzalli Cortez

With the school year finally over, we at the The Decker Branch Library are excited to share with you some of our upcoming Summer of Adventure programs to keep kids busy and engaged over the summer.

For those who are not aware of Denver Public Libraries Summer of Adventure, Summer of Adventure is our summer reading program that provides kids and teens with a variety of opportunities for informal learning and activities to help retain academic and social skills throughout the summer months. And best of all, it's FREE! The Summer of Adventure program runs from June 2nd to August 12th; the first day to register is June 2nd. Along with our Summer of Adventure, we also have our Maker Challenge which begins June 3rd. The Maker Challenge encourages kids and teens to get creative. To participate in the Maker Challenge, kids and teens can share what they're making at home with us and automatically enter to win a gift card to an awesome local business! Winners will be notified at the end of the program.

We are kicking off our Summer of Adventure on Friday June 2nd from 11:00 a.m to 1:00 p.m, with our Decker Duck Duck Party. Join us as we celebrate all things ducks! We'll have snacks, rubber duckies to decorate, play pin the beak on the duck and duck duck goose, and have a face painter from Snappy Face Painting to turn everyone into little ducks. Feel free to come dressed up and get ready to duck duck party!

Friday June 9th from 1:30 p.m to 2:00 p.m., magician Ann Lincoln will be stopping by to perform her Work Together: Comedy, Magic, and Juggling Show. Anything can happen when the kids work with Ann, her live rabbit, and dove, to create some awesome entertainment. Ann will also explain

how books helped her learn how to use kindness to teach her animals their tricks. The kids have an opportunity to pet the live animals after the show!

Wednesday June 14th from 1:00 p.m to 2:00 p.m, join us for Pokemon Bingo. We will have snacks and Pokemon themed prizes for each bingo winner to take home with them. Regardless of whether or not you win at bingo, everyone who comes will have something to take home with them.

Friday June 16th from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m, join us for a Dance Party. Children and caregivers will have the opportunity to show off their moves and enjoy different music styles while they discover the importance of movement when developing early learning skills.

Wednesday June 21st from 2:00 p.m to 3:30 p.m., Anita Bohrer from Hummingbird Henna will be teaching us about henna and the Tree of Life. After a brief introduction to both topics, we will then construct our own tree of life and Anita will draw henna tattoos on all of the participants. This program is best for kids 12-17.

On Friday June 30th from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., join us for a Tie-Dye Palooza. Have some old clothes that are in need of some color? Bring them over and join us for an hour of tie-dye fun! We will have shirts available, while supplies last, to tie-dye if you don't have a t-shirt of your own to bring. This program is best for kids 12 to 17.

Along with our Summer of Adventure programs, we will continue to offer our recurring programs such as Baby Storytime every Tuesday from 10:30 a.m to 11:00 a.m., All Ages Storytime every Wednesday from 10:30 a.m to 11:00 a.m., and Afterschool Kids Maker Club every Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Stay on the lookout for more Summer of Adventure programs coming in July! We'll have a teen clothing swap, animals, and so much more.

We understand that the end of the school year can be a busy time for many, but if you find yourself in need of something to do, we hope that you join us for one of our many programs and spend the day at the library. Happy reading!



Dandelions: The Spring Weed Invasion

by Jen Grauer

The grass is greening, and the days are warming. As responsible neighbors, we want to maintain our property, including culling the weeds. But, did you know that some weeds can be beneficial?

Did you know:

1. Dandelions bring nutrients to surrounding trees via their deep roots, which helps make for healthier trees.
2. Dandelions are the first food source for bees and butterflies, helping to preserve the pollinators, which in turn helps our gardens grow more abundantly.
3. Dandelions are safe for kids and pets. You can even pay to buy dandelion greens at Whole Foods! These dark green leafy veggies contain vitamins A, C, K, and E, plus folate, iron, calcium, magnesium, and potassium. Dandelion greens are a powerhouse of nutrients in a salad, smoothie, or stir-fry.

I love dandelions and even have a large dandelion print framed in my living room! They bring color to mountainsides, parks, and lawns. However, not everyone is in love with the hardy dandelion.

To prevent dandelions from finally realizing their dream of world domination, try these healthy and compassionate options:

1. Use a stand-up [weed zinger](#) for popping them out without bending over. Have an elderly neighbor? Burn a few extra calories and pop their weeds out while singing, “It’s a beautiful day in the neighborhood...”
2. Use a small, [hand-held weed popper](#) while getting your hands dirty and sitting close to the earth to increase feelings of well-being.
3. Mow your lawn before the dandelions go to seed.
4. [Over seeds](#) with grass seed to create a dense lawn that prevents dandelions from growing.
5. Create a yard of wildflowers, vegetables, or xeric plants, and use a mulch to cover the dirt between plants.
6. Pull dandelions early for less work later.
7. Hire a lawn service, neighbor kids, or someone from Nextdoor to pull them for you.
8. Go urban foraging (where you know the dogs don’t roam and spray or weed and feed hasn’t been used) and snap off those yellow flower heads into your basket (before they go to seed). Go online to look up your favorite way to use them in tea, wine, battered and fried, jellied, pickled, and more! Note: Skip consuming dandelions if you have allergies to them.

9. Check out: “[10 Non-Toxic Natural Ways to Kill Weeds.](#)”

All weeds — not treated with chemicals — can go directly into your green city compost bin! Hooray!

Remember, all the chemicals we spray directly on weeds or apply as “weed and feed” to kill the weeds also kill our pollinators, pollute our drinking water and air, and negatively affect our health.

If you are a chemical-free property, reach out to our neighbor Joyce at joyce@peopleandpollinators.org with [People & Pollinators](#) to receive a sign for your yard for a donation of \$10. It’s a friendly reminder for us as we walk the neighborhood that pollinators are important and that we care about each other.

Taking a Break

Jen Grauer, the Platt Park Post’s environmental columnist, is taking a well-deserved break from her column for the summer. THANK YOU Jen for your interesting and environmentally enlightening columns that have been running for three years!

Opportunity Knocks

The hiatus for Jen’s column creates an opportunity for other neighbors to offer individual stories of neighborhood interest to appear in the Platt Park Post. Do you have an interesting neighbor? Do you frequent a local business that deserves recognition? What do you love about our neighborhood? Do you have a favorite photo that is “So Platt Park”? Do you have a child that is a budding writer? The Platt Park Post is your newsletter. We welcome offerings for consideration to publish. Please email your questions, ideas, and submissions to Board@3PA.org.

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Platt Park Pick-Me-Up

by Listy Lehman

A HUGE THANKS to more than 75 neighbors who came out on Saturday, May 13 for the Platt Park Pick-up! A special thank you to Sheri Mounter for helping us organize such an awesome event. Our neighborhood feels a little cleaner and it is always nice to see your neighbors gather for the greater good of the community. Thank you to Kaladi Coffee and Duffeyroll for donating a delicious breakfast to power our volunteers throughout the morning. We would also like to thank Dos Luces Brewery, Kaos Pizza, Lincoln's Roadhouse, Nixon's Coffee House, Que Suerte, Second Star to the Right, Sexy Pizza, and Snarf's for donating prizes to our volunteers as well. These incredible businesses and neighbors are a big reason that I'm proud to be a Platt Park resident.



Thank You Mark!

Mark Newton has generously and effectively been the Platt Park Post's editor since January 2021, including five issues in 2021 that he co-edited with neighbor Gretchen Healey. Alas, the March-April 2023 issue was Mark's final issue as editor, despite the generous pay provided by 3PA – consisting entirely of the appreciation of his neighbors and 3PA Board members. As he retires, his Golden Parachute is a HUGE THANK YOU and best wishes for his next endeavors.

"It was a pleasure and honor to serve the Platt Park neighborhood as editor of The Platt Park Post for a few years," Newton said. "I appreciated the opportunity and, most importantly, I appreciated working with Greg Pulliam, Ginger Mattson, and Gretchen Healey. They are the best."

In the interim, 3PA Board member Listy Lehman has offered to take on the editing role.



Opportunity!

Mark's retirement as Platt Park Post editor leaves a Big Opportunity for another neighbor to step into that role. If you would like to help your Platt Park People's Association continue production of our neighborhood newsletter, or if you know of someone who would embrace the role, please let us know at Board@3PA.org.

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Update: Grant Beacon Middle School

Grant Beacon Middle School is ready to finish the 22-23 school year strong! We recently raised over \$30,000 at our annual Enriching Lives fundraiser to support enrichment programs for our students. Thank you to our neighborhood sponsors and supporters: Conover Realty, Snyder Team Realty, Pearl Wine Co, Platt Park Brewing Co., and Washington Park Chiropractic.

So much has been happening in this last quarter. Our student musicians have been invited to perform at both the Wash Park Band Festival and the Canon City Music Festival. Each grade level celebrated their accomplishments from the year and completed CMAS assessments with a trip to Skate City! There are multiple enrichment classes planning fun excursions: Aerospace and Rocketry will visit Centennial Airport, New Treks will go paddling at Sloan’s Lake, and the Ancient Art class will visit the Denver Art Museum. We had a fun and successful book fair with our friends at Second Star to the Right. We will celebrate the mothers of our school community with a Dia de las Madres assembly, and all of our teachers and faculty during National Teacher Appreciation Week May 8 - 12.

We have over 300 students enrolled to attend GBMS for the

23-24 school year. We are looking forward to welcoming them into our school community and celebrating with them at our Spring Showcase and Carnival on Wednesday, May 17 beginning at 5:15pm.

And finally on May 31, we will come together with a Continuation to send our 8th graders off to high school. It’s so hard to believe these were the little faces we first met virtually during remote learning and now we are sending them off filled with Leadership, Integrity, Character, Kindness and Perseverance.



Update: McKinley-Thatcher Elementary

by Ingrid Hoff

McKinley-Thatcher Elementary is celebrating the success of their largest annual fundraiser, the PTA's live auction. On Friday, April 14, McKinley's staff, families, and community members gathered at Moss Denver for the school's first live auction since the pandemic. The PTA set an ambitious goal of raising \$50,000, more than double the prior year's online auction profits. Happily, the school community exceeded that goal by 183%, raising over \$90,000!

These funds will directly benefit the school by helping to fund a librarian position, adding a health office aide position, and much more. McKinley-Thatcher offers a heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone in the community who donated time, energy, and auction items, to all of the online and live auction attendees, and especially to their auction committee!

McKinley-Thatcher would also like to extend a warm welcome to their incoming families for the 2023-2024 school year! School placements for Round One of the Denver Public Schools SchoolChoice process were made in late April and McKinley is welcoming more than 70 students in ECE through 5th grade. Kindergarten and ECE-4 families joined the school for Kindergarten and ECE welcome events in May, and all families are invited to the August 2023 Open House.

McKinley-Thatcher wrapped up the 2022-2023 school year with some of its most treasured annual events. They hosted their Teacher & School Staff Appreciation Week from May 1 to May 5, as well as their annual Field Day on May 19 and the school-wide Talent Show on May 26. McKinley families also joined Denver Parks and Rec at Wash Park on May 13 for a Family Fitness & Fishing Day organized by their Physical Education teacher, Mr. J. With the last day of school on June 2, the school wishes all families and community members a safe, fun, and restful summer break!



Update: Ashbury Elementary

by Jeanna Doung

What a school-year 2022/23 has been! As we celebrate another year in the book, I want to share a few thoughts on behalf of the staff here at Ashbury.

Here are some things we can celebrate about this year:

Project Based Learning: We have had so much great learning, including laying down our 5th grade legacy mural project, the famous Great Guinea Pig Race and the 3rd grade Living Wax Museum (just to name a few)!

Field Trips: We went to so many fun places this year, including the zoo, DU, the walking field trips, Rockies Game, and many more places!

Community Events: We had so much fun at the Carnival this year! We had fun games, great food and lots of laughter. (A huge thanks to PTSO, parent volunteers and teachers who made this event come to life again). In addition, we brought back Dish a Story and started an amazing practice of Student Led Conferences!

This list shares just a few things that we did and we want to thank you for your continued partnership as our community continues to work together! We are amazed by our staff, students and community at Ashbury Elementary!

With that, I want to share out some important dates as we close out this school year and look forward to next school year.

- **August 1-4:** In Person Registration at Ashbury from 11-3
- **August 21:** First day of school
- **September 29:** Hold for Carnival





CAROLINE MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY

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