

PLATT DOST

SPRING 2025

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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES BY TOM SNYDER

I don't know about you, but the past few months have felt a bit crazy. From the wacky political universe, to the good ol' Colorado weather that always keeps you guessing, life is certainly not dull. I'm glad we have the confines of our wonderful little neighborhood where the biggest news is (well, the stuff we write about at the Platt Park Post). It's fun and interesting perhaps, but not world-altering or worth losing sleep over. Let's get to it!

This is kind of a big deal... on November 18, 2024, the Denver City Council passed the Citywide ADU measure that allows Accessory Dwelling Units (think small apartments built in the back of a lot or over a garage) in ALL residential areas of the city. The measure went into effect on December 16th. Prior to this, ADUs could only be built in about 30% of the residential areas of Denver. That restriction is now lifted. ADUs still must adhere to Denver building codes but zoning no longer restricts them. As for Platt Park, ADUs have only been allowed on streets west of Clarkson (more or less) since 2011. Now they can be built anywhere in Platt Park. In addition, the restriction was removed that an owner had to live on the property (either the home or ADU) for an ADU to be rented out. So now, a homeowner can live elsewhere and rent out the primary home and ADU to separate unrelated parties.

The primary goal of this measure is to add housing units throughout the city to help eliminate the housing shortage. Since 2011, many homeowners in Platt Park have built new ADUs or converted existing garages into one. For the homeowner, ADUs can bring added income or provide space for extended family. The new ADU rules will gradually increase population density, which seems to be the unavoidable future of Platt Park and all the Denver metro area. To find out more, go to this City webpage (click button below).

LEARN MORE

The old Hanson's building is coming down at 1301 S Pearl St.

It is official! The chain-link "fence of death" is up and the building, which has sat vacant since 2019, is finally coming down (maybe by the time you read this). Doug McKinnon purchased the 12,500 square foot property in December for \$2.6 million, beating out a dozen interested buyers. The new owner is not sure what will replace the building, but the site is zoned for up to three stories. Stay tuned on that.

The old structure was originally constructed in 1911 as an

apartment building. Somewhere along the way it became a neighborhood bar and restaurant. One of the more colorful occupants was the Oak Alley Inn in the 1980s that Denver's Westwood magazine described as attracting "an eclectic mix of University of Denver students, Gates Rubber Company workers, and the odd coke dealer. All were drawn there by the cheap beer, cheaper ambience, and really cheap companionship." I'm guessing the new occupants will be a bit less colorful.

How about a beer with those new skis? Well not exactly, but close. The Denver Ski Company (denverskicompany.com) at 1350 S. Broadway opened its doors in December. In a few months a new bar will open right beside it, both are inside the old Veterans of Foreign Wars building.

Before launching his pet project, owner Bob Sullivan previously worked for for 35 years at Christy Sports (a local ski and outdoor retailer). His passion is to help people enjoy the sport without having to spend a small fortune to get equipped. They carry current equipment, but also specialize in clearance inventory from last year's gear at 40 to 70 percent off. They have everything you need to get on the mountain... skis, snowboards, boots, helmets, goggles and clothing. Their professional staff can help with questions and fit you with the proper gear. They also provide ski and snowboard rental equipment and top-tier ski tuning services.

As for that beer... **Pouring With Heart** has leased the space adjoining Denver Ski. Look for that to open later this winter or early spring. You will be able to go buy that new board and then go have a little après-ski brew right next door - perfect!

Platt Park Veterinary Hospital will be opening this summer in the old Kolacny Music building at 1900 S. Broadway. New owner Mary Sare wants the neighborhood to know that "We are an independent and locally owned business that is dedicated to providing personalized, knowledgeable, and compassionate care for your pets. We look forward to becoming part of the Platt Park community!"

And finally, the building at the southwest corner of Evans and Downing (most recently Devour The 303) has been sold to a developer. If you've been in the neighborhood a long time, you know this location has been something of a revolving door of restaurants that never really seemed to take hold. The new owners say that part of the issue is that the building historically has been occupied by only one tenant. His plans are to subdivide the property into three units, with just one dedicated to a restaurant operator. We'll be keeping an eye on this and will get back to you with future developments.

That's it for now. Spring is right around the corner. Look carefully, and you might find your first weeds poking through the snow. Look for the Farmers Market to be up and going on May 5. Till then, I hope life is good for you and your loved ones.

See you around the neighborhood!



By Parry Burnap

Concerned about climate change but not sure what you can do? Meaningful action can begin in your backyard, your home, your business and right here in your neighborhood.

Platt Park Neighbors for Climate Action (PPNCA) launched October 26 last fall at the Fleming Mansion in Platt Park, where 25 neighbors gathered to learn about the Climate Crisis and develop a plan to implement solutions together. Participants selected 5 teams to work on for the first year.

The Climate Educated Community team plans to survey our community to understand baseline and interests and to establish a network through which to gather and disseminate information.

The Scorecard team plans to design a tool to track our progress using publicly available data.

The Climate Clearinghouse team plans to create a website for neighborhood collaboration and for connection to other organizations and resources.

The Energy Strategy team plans to host a clean energy resources fair, as well as install a neighborhood solar demonstration project.

The Climate Smart Landscaping team plans to host gardeners' picnics in the spring and fall, to share approaches and lessons, to offer a summer tour of climate-friendly landscapes and to create a demonstration garden.

If you want to join one of these teams, learn more, share ideas, or follow our progress, send an email to **plattparkclimate@gmail.com**. Include your name & email. Share your cell phone number if texting is the best way to reach you.

The Platt Park Climate Café is a facilitated space to listen to and support each other as we navigate the current multi-layered reality in our world and our neighborhood. The Cafés are hosted by Paddy McClelland. Please join us!



PLEASE FILL OUT OUR CLIMATE ACTION SURVEY

Help PPNCA build a learning network between households and support collective climate action. We want to know where we are starting, so we can measure how far we go together. We want to learn what you are already working on and what you want to learn more about. Your responses will inform work plans for each of our teams and the development of a clearinghouse of information with details about how we can individually and collectively make a difference. Click the button below:

CLIMATE ACTION SURVEY

Monthly Climate Cafes

Every 2nd Wednesday from 11:30am - 1:00pm

The Back Room in Hoja (1284 S Pearl St.)

Thank you to Hoja for continuing to provide us with this great space!





The Platt Park Postcard is a series created by neighbors Barbara Lewis and Sharon Withers to highlight the colorful history of our community. What are you curious about? Email us at catalystbel2@gmail.com

In renovating the space, Housley discovered a treasure, a bar and fireplace made of petrified wood. Built in 1937 by a man from New Jersey, the panel above the fireplace includes quartz, hematite and magnetite plus a couple of pieces of 40-million-year-old petrified poop.

Photo Credit: Sharon Withers



Platt Park Marches to its **Own Beat**

In 2025, Platt Park Postcards will focus on our neighborhood's rich musical history. This is the first in a four-part series.

What spot in Platt Park was visited by Dan Aykroyd, Peter Fonda and the Railbenders?

If you guessed Lincoln's Roadhouse, you are "spot" on.

Lincoln Roadhouse's storied history goes back to 1999 when owner Jimbob Housley opened it with his partner Dave Stickney.

Built in 1911, the building has been home to several establishments, including a 3.2 beer joint and an illegal gambling operation. Despite rumors to the contrary, it was never a brothel and is not haunted.

It was the music that launched Lincoln's Roadhouse. "Within six weeks [of opening] I had bands contacting me," said Housley. Born and raised in Arkansas, Housley had Blues and Rockabilly in his blood. "I was just a normal kid who liked loud music," Housley said, while confessing he cannot play well. "I do know music, though. And I just wanted to get people dancing."

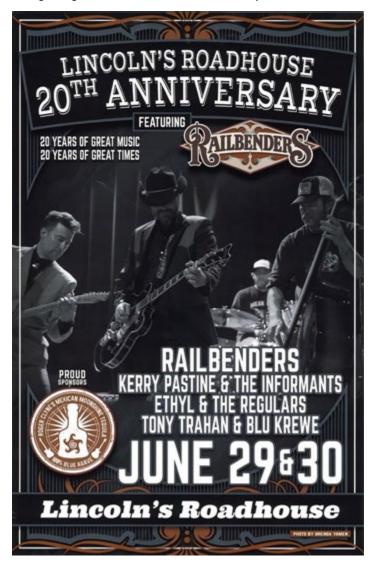
In 2010, Dan Aykroyd (aka Elwood Blues from the Blues Brothers) dropped in unannounced (to all but Housley who had agreed to keep it a secret) and brought down the packed house singing a couple of songs with the band Dear Marsha.

Over the years, our neighborhood dive bar has landed local and national accolades for best Blues bar, notably by Westword, 5280 and Jim Beam in Rolling Stone Magazine. In 2022, The Colorado Blues Society awarded Housley a Lifetime Achievement award for his years of dedication and service to the Blues.



Housley and Lincoln's have survived many ups and downs over the years: TREX construction, two recessions, COVID and high inflation. Through it all, Lincoln's has dished up good music, good Cajun food and good company.

"We will continue to do what we have always done. We're here doing things better than ever," said Housley.



From the beginning, Housley has believed in making space for new bands. In 2000, he took a gamble on a local kid's band, as a favor to the lead singer's dad. Housley recalls, "They killed it, and the Railbenders played monthly at Lincoln's for almost five years." As shown here on a poster from 2019, the Railbenders also headlined Lincoln's 20th Anniversary celebration.



DISTRICT 7 UPDATE

Hello, Platt Park neighbors!

As we kick off 2025, here is an exciting update: We are wrapping up the Elevate Denver Bond Program, which has funded key infrastructure improvements across the city. This year, District 7 will see the benefits of these investments, including the Jewell Bridge, Iowa Underpass, and Alameda Underpass improvements. These long-awaited projects will enhance mobility, safety, and connectivity for our community.

Looking ahead, we are beginning the process to get a new bond measure on the November ballot. This is another opportunity to invest in our neighborhoods, and I want to hear from you! What improvements would you like to see in Platt Park? Whether it's infrastructure upgrades, park enhancements, or pedestrian safety improvements, please share your ideas by emailing district7@denvergov.org. Your input will help shape our priorities for this initiative.

Another exciting initiative we're working on is our River Committee, where we're exploring ways to better care for the South Platte River. The river is one of our city's greatest natural assets, but it requires ongoing stewardship to improve water quality, restore habitat, and enhance public access. If you're interested in getting involved or have ideas on how we can preserve and improve our urban waterways, we'd love to hear from you!

In other news, I supported Mayor Johnston's veto of the needle exchange zoning expansion, which would have allowed these programs in more parts of the city without a broader conversation about balancing harm reduction with public health and safety. While I believe in compassionate solutions for those struggling with substance use, we must also ensure we have resources for recovery, treatment, and public safety.

From our last newsletter, some major takeaways include our continued efforts on neighborhood beautification, community-driven zoning reforms, and mobility improvements, as well as advocating for seniors and small businesses. Please stay informed and engaged by subscribing to our newsletter below. We rotate between a District 7 newsletter, which covers community events and neighborhood updates, and a Policy newsletter, which dives into citywide issues, legislation, and major policy decisions.

Councilperson Flor Alvidrez

NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP

newsletter

Monthly poetry newsletter from a fellow Platt Park resident

When We Danced

and alive.

Our feet moved together and our smiles spun 'round in circles and how lucky we are to have shared a dance, moving together as two blips in the fabric of everything where the air turns soft, warm,



AN AUTHENTIC MIX OF REAL PEOPLE, LOCALLY-OWNED ONE-OF-A-KIND SHOPS,



















UTH ARL

DENVER'S HOTTEST RESTAURANTS, AND FUN SEASONAL EVENTS ALL YEAR LONG



HOLIDAY TREE DECORATING ALONG SOUTH PEARL









WINTERFEST WAS PURE MAGIC! If you were anywhere near South Pearl Street in December, you probably felt the holiday spirit in full force! Winterfest was an absolute blast... hayrides, live music, festive vendors, Olde World Santa, roasted chestnuts, and of course, cozy hot toddies made for the perfect kickoff to the season.

And for the second time ever, we added a little extra sparkle... a holiday tree lighting ceremony! We lit up the tallest pine tree in Platt Park (a whopping 60 feet!) and kept it glowing all through January, keeping the neighborhood warm and festive even after the holidays wrapped up.

HOLIDAY TREE DECORATING FUN! For the first time, all 60 of South Pearl's potted pine trees were decorated for the holidays by local merchants and residents. It was a fierce competition to gather the most votes for bragging rights and \$100 South Pearl bucks, but the Taylor Swift themed tree came out victorious! There were so many creative trees that the whole 6 blocks glowed in holiday cheer!

WELCOME OUR NEW MERCHANTS!
Let's show them some South Pearl love!
Bellissima brows, lashes & skin
Dentists on Pearl for bright smiles
Angel Love facials, waxing & peels
Food Lab (coming 2025!) cooking classes
Twin Rivers IV therapy and wellness
Sage Physical Therapy pelvic health
Dainty Permanent Jewelry jewelry studio
The Pearl modern boutique apartments
Sweat Den fitness and strength studio
Three Cutters Aveda + Oway salon
Reunion Bread (coming 2025!) bread co.
Happy Gym youth fitness studio

Spend some time on South Pearl as we celebrate spring!!! The countdown to

Farmers Market has begun!

ASBURY ELEMENTARY

By Kim Soko Schaefer



The first week of March is always an exciting time at Asbury Elementary School because of our annual Read-A-Thon! Students, teachers, and staff — join together for a week-long celebration of reading, coinciding with National Read Across America Day, March 2.

Read-A-Thon will kick off with a book swap on the playground, and we really see our students' love of reading in action. Classmates recommend books to each other, friends make promises to share their finds with one another, and everyone goes home with a heavier backpack. This year, we have another special kick-off event: Author Mina Javaherbin will visit to share her incredible new book, *My Father's House*.

Once they're armed with new reading material, our students hunker down. They log their daily reading hours on feathers (a nod to our mascot, Barry the Eagle), and all the hours are tallied at the end of the week. The top readers in each grade get a prize, such as a gift certificate to a local bookstore, and receive special recognition at our Community Circle gathering that month. It's a friendly competition, and one our Eagles take it very seriously!

Reading is a big part of Asbury's culture. Students take weekly trips to our school's library. Our classrooms are always full of books and opportunities for moments to read, either silently, in groups, or even on students' Chromebooks, where they access books online through our Sora library. Our amazing team of teachers and paraprofessionals work hard to make sure all our kids get the literacy support they need, whether it's extra help or extra challenges.

Crack open a good book this first week of March, and join our Asbury community for a week of reading!

GRANT BEACON MIDDLE SCHOOL

By Alex Magaña

Grant Beacon Middle School is alive with energy and opportunity. We're thrilled to share exciting developments happening in our school community! From our Spring Carnival to innovative enrichment programs and community partnerships, Grant Beacon continues to provide students unique experiences.

In May, join us for our annual Spring Carnival as our school grounds transform into a festive celebration space. Our dedicated parents, teachers, and students organize this event to celebrate current students' achievements and welcome incoming 6th graders. Families can enjoy activities, take guided tours, and experience the community spirit that makes Grant Beacon special.

Did you know we have a tennis committee that is working on revitalizing our tennis courts, which need major renovation? Through our exciting partnership with Denver Tennis Park and Denver Public Schools, we'll transform this space into safe, beautiful courts where students can learn tennis—creating a valuable resource for the entire Platt Park community. **Support this initiative using the button below**.

Grant Beacon's enrichment programs go beyond traditional academics by partnering with community experts who share their passions with our students. These dedicated professionals along with our educators expose our students to exciting opportunities they might not otherwise experience, from robotics, sports, drumline, arts, and academics.

Help us continue making a difference! Support Grant Beacon by attending our April Fundraiser, donating to our programs, purchasing a banner to hang on the fence, or promoting school events. See our website for information: **bnsk12.org/gbms**

TENNIS INITIATIVE DONATION LINK



Grant Beacon Middle School orchestra performing at the school's Winter Enrichment Showcase, December 4, 2024

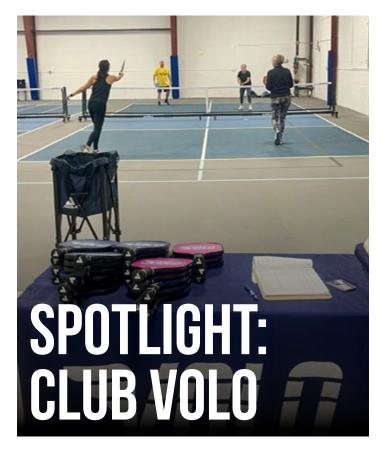
DECKER BRANCH LIBRARY SPRING UPDATES

By Quetzalli Cortez

In 2025, Decker Library plans to offer five Create to Learn programs. These fun, playful programs are specifically designed to strengthen children's early language, cognitive and social development. These programs will be in addition to our many seasonal activities. Some of our family programs include weekly storytimes for babies and toddlers and our dynamic Summer of Adventure programs. We also plan to expand programming for older adults by offering two book studies in summer and fall.

Check out the Upcoming Events page on our website to learn more about our programs (click button below).

LIBRARY UPDATES



Have you heard about the new indoor pickleball courts? Club Volo SoBo is new to our neighborhood and hosted a free community play event on Friday December 13th. Friends new and old gathered to show their skills. Thanks to all who came out to play! Click below for more information and upcoming events.

CLUB VOLO INFO & EVENTS







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HEADWAVES SAYS GOODBYE

By Walker Knight

After 38 years on South Pearl Street, owner Frank Seibert closed his Headwaves salon at the end of February 2025. "I am so grateful for the support we have received from the Platt Park neighborhood over the years," he said. "We always tried our best to stay consistent, with great stylists who offered stability. Two of our stylists, Evelyn and Lynn, were with us for 34 years, and others from 10 to 15 years. I like to say we were a family, going through so many things together. We worked with each other longer than we've been with our spouses or second spouses!"

Frank started his salon on Groundhog Day in Aurora in 1982. Five years later he moved to 1284 South Pearl, where HOJA is now. He says, "... we outgrew that space and moved to 1306 S Pearl in 2005."

Headwaves fostered a family feeling, as longtime customers brought their children in for hair styling. The longevity of Headwaves is rare in the industry and is a testament to the hard work, consistency and responsiveness of Frank's team.

Running the business was requiring too much time and money for Frank, so he decided to close Headwaves. His stylists have found other salons, some in the neighborhood. Frank plans to continue to work three days a week himself. Frank will keep the Headwaves phone number active for a while (303-777-7706); so give him a shout if you want to know where he or a stylist have landed.



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: HOJA

A conversation with Ben Susnick. Owner HOJA Garden Café

By Walker Knight

Ben Susnick considers HOJA ("Leaf" in Spanish, say "Oh-Ha") a neighborhood diner. "Our regulars range in age from one to nearly ninety," he says. "We have crayons, margaritas, salads, smothered burritos full of ground beef and cheese, and entirely vegan and gluten-free smothered burritos. We have traditional Mexican specialties like Pozole and Chilaquiles; wild creations like the Farmers Burrito loaded with cucumbers, cabbage, and tahini sauce; or the Matcha Latte with agave and lemon. I claim we have the only lox breakfast burrito in existence, so anyone who has enjoyed a bagel with lox and cream cheese needs to try it!"

Ben's culinary background began as a roller-skating beverageserver outside Beijing's New World Center. He then worked the tandoori station at Todai Beijing, before stints in several locations in South Korea for Todai. An unpleasant time at a Nebraska slaughterhouse rounded out his meat education. Ben then attended culinary school in Denver, before working at Pete's Fruits & Vegetables helping with their newly acquired butcher shop/deli, and their gyro food truck, Mythos.

"In 2014, I was working at the Plimoth, which I helped open," he says, "and I bought an old ambulance. That was the start of Basecamp Provisions food truck, which became HOJA after we moved into our space on Pearl Street. You can still see us at the Farmer's Market."

What is your cooking philosophy? "We're not fancy or stuffy," Ben says, "but we proudly make our food from scratch when that is uncommon. Beyond some canned tomatoes or frozen corn here and there, our food comes from fresh ingredients.

With your work in Asia, how did you become a fan of Mexican flavors? "When I went to Guanajuato and ate chilaquiles the first time, that was it. My introduction to Mexican culture was the same day I joined the professional kitchen" Ben explains, "because in the U.S. they are essentially the same. The people I worked with shaped me, accepted me, taught me, encouraged me, and helped me. The Latino chefs and cooks treated me like a brother in and out of work and pushed and dragged me to the top."

What is your most popular offering? "Burritos, of course," Ben continued. "Some like it classic, some smothered, some fully loaded. We take pride in our Denver style breakfast burritos: eggs, potatoes, and cheese, with a ladle of green or red chile. For purists, we have red chile that we make with whole N.M. red chile pods and stick to a traditional recipe. My wife is New Mexican, and I know red chile is not to be monkeyed around with."

Tell me about the space. "HOJA is small," Ben says, "with most of our seating on our back patio. We cover, enclose, and heat



our patio all winter. It's comfortable, and one of the only spaces in Denver where you can dine with your dog year-round."

What else is popular? "Our Pozole and Matzo Ball Soup are big sellers at this time of year," Ben says. "Our chef is from Guerrero, the home state of pozole, and he knocks it out of the park with every batch. We have five secret ingredients in that recipe! Our Matzo Ball Soup draws a crowd," Ben says. "I love when this soup is on the menu, because it's a bowlful of memories to all my Jews and one of the few dishes that comes from my past."

What keeps you going? "The neighborhood and our team," Ben says. "If you live in the neighborhood, we want to meet you. And if you have a dog, we want to meet them even more. If you are hungry or tired, we want to feed and nourish you. If you're thirsty, we want to have a little drink with you. If you have a picky kid, we want to make them something special. We are a local family, and we don't have investors. We keep the lights on and pay our staff one burrito at a time. Come join us."



ON THE COVER:

The Grasso Family in Washington Park, photographed by Platt Park resident, Talia Kite. <u>taliakitephoto.com</u>



Thank you to Highlands Church for hosting 3PA's quarterly meetings!



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highlands church

hchurchdenver.com Sundays at 10:30 AM at the comer of Mexico & Grant

JOIN YOUR PLATT PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Do you enjoy the neighborhood you live in?
Want to help maintain our neighborhood character?
Want to meet your neighbors through fun events and neighborhood forums? The Platt Park People's Association is a registered neighborhood organization with the City and County of Denver. The 3PA is notified directly by the city of various activities in the neighborhood.

LEARN HOW TO BE A MEMBER TODAY:

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM











WANT TO ADVERTISE IN THE PLATT PARK POST?

Contact at board@3pa.org for sizing specifications and rates.