



Larkspur Sentinel

Serving Perry Park, Larkspur, and the surrounding community

February 2022

Happy New Year, here comes February!

Well, that was quite the holiday season - between the holiday itself, wildfire, snow, and Omicron, there was a lot to navigate! Personally, our carefully-made plans for family time were turned upside down due to Covid - but we adjusted and improvised. Being nimble and flexible became our approach. I hope you each were able to have some time with family and friends and enjoy the spirit of the season. And then came January! We've had snow, haven't we?!! And we're about to get some more - thank goodness.

I've given some thought, lately, to how the increased uncertainty of the past two years has made some folks feel powerless, at loose ends, wanting things to "get back to normal." And many want to know how they can have a helpful impact, when the issues in the world seem so huge. So I did some reading about kindness - how it's currently not very prevalent, and that we can all have impact with just a few simple acts: waving to those walking in the neighborhood, letting someone go ahead of you in line, acknowledging other drivers in a friendly way. . .paying it forward. I've also read that there is GREAT value in being kind to yourself as well!

We have a new writer this month: Lesli Fritts has written a thoughtful and informative article about the proposed development, Dawson Trails, that is likely to have a major impact along the west frontage road between Tomah and Castle Rock. And all of our favorite columnists are back to entertain and inform us (except for Beary Bear, who is in hibernation, I'm told).

Please, remember to be kind,

Margot Patterson

Editor

larkspursentinel@gmail.com



ELIZABETH OWENS



THE RE/MAX COLLECTION[®]

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6641 APACHE PLACE | PERRY PARK | JUST SOLD! | \$960,000



9630 PERRY PARK ROAD | ABBE HILLS | SOLD! | \$1,250,000



8034 BANNOCK DRIVE | PERRY PARK | JUST LISTED! | OFFERED AT \$595,000



950 COTTONWOOD LANE | SAGE PORT | SOLD! | \$870,000



6188 APACHE DRIVE | PERRY PARK | SOLD! | \$675,000



8100 BANNOCK DRIVE | PERRY PARK | SOLD! | \$837,000

ELIZABETH OWENS has a reputation centered on residential, high-end and acreage properties in Larkspur, Castle Rock and throughout Douglas County. For the past 18+ years, Elizabeth and her team, the Elite Group, have been providing *Top-of-the-Line Service with Bottom-Line Results* to both Buyers and Sellers. Elizabeth Owens is a Master Certified Negotiation Expert, Certified Residential Specialist, Certified Luxury Home Marketing Specialist and is a graduate of the Realtor Institute. Elizabeth Owens is a Broker/Owner at RE/MAX Alliance in Castle Pines. View the virtual tours for these homes and all Elizabeth's listings at ElizabethOwens.net

Castle View High School Expansion Wins Innovation and Design Award

Years of planning and construction work paid off in August 2021, when the F-Pod (4000 Wing) building addition was completed at Castle View High School. The wing opened its doors for a wealth of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming space for journalism, bio-tech, and engineering students. While students are reaping the benefits of the new space, the team behind the F-Pod is receiving accolades for excellence in design and collaboration.

The project, green-lit by Douglas County citizens who voted to approve additional local funding for capital projects through a Bond in 2018, recently won a “Peak Merit” award for new construction design from the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE). A4LE is an organization that celebrates innovation in learning environments.

The F-Pod team’s work was selected among 23 other project finalists in the Rocky Mountain Region. Judges for the award evaluated each project on the planning process, the learning environment, physical environment, and community involvement.

“The process for the design and realization of the Castle View F-Pod expansion was tremendous in so many ways,” says Castle View High School Principal Dr. Rex Corr. “I feel that the Design Advisory Group - made up of parents, students, teachers, administrators, and our construction partners, and facilitated by Eidos Architects and NV5 - was instrumental in crafting the spaces and environments that best fit the needs of our school community.”

The F-pod addition was a collaborative effort between Eidos Architects, Adolphson & Peterson Construction, and NV5, the DCSD Bond Owner’s Representative. Mae Ann Saas, Director of Client Relations at Eidos Architects, submitted the write-up for the award on behalf of the F-Pod Project Team. Saas



says the award reflects a team that worked with one common goal in mind: providing an excellent learning environment for students.

“I really hope this shows taxpayers that their tax dollars achieve so much more than they realize,” says Saas. “They haven’t just bought floors, walls and a roof. They have invested in the lifelong learning of the students in their community.”

Victoria Horn, who served as the NV5 Project Manager on the F-Pod project, echoes the sentiment and gives a lot of credit to one particular person on the team for ensuring the project came together as smoothly as it did.

“It was our job to make sure taxpayers were getting their maximum value,” says Horn. “Rex did an amazing job with that while making sure that students were at the forefront of the work.”

The Castle View High School project broke ground in 2020 after more than a year of planning by the Design Advisory Group. It’s an \$11.9 million project that provided the Sabercats nearly 28,300 square feet of much-needed additional space that now serves as a crown jewel for Castle View High School.

“The expansion is a great source of pride for our school, as it addressed capacity needs and expanded programming opportunities,” Corr adds. “Castle View has always committed to providing an excellent education in the optimal environment.

“For our teachers and students, this project has enabled us to do the great work we’ve always done - but at an even higher level. I congratulate Eidos Architects and all of the stakeholders involved on this prestigious award.”

Learn more about the Castle View High School F-Pod Project, from planning to ribbon cutting, and take a tour with DCSD Superintendent Corey Wise and Castle View High School Principal Dr. Rex Corr in the videos [here](#).



Perry Park Metropolitan District

The Special District For Perry Park Ranch

by Sean King, Secretary, PPMD

Want to have impact in your community? 2022 Call for Nominations

Here's your chance to be part of a dynamic group of individuals who are working for the betterment of our community. The official details are outlined below:

The Perry Park Metropolitan District Board's functions are governed by a set of Bylaws approved by the Board of Directors. The Board's areas of responsibilities are defined by a Service Plan authorized by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners.

Members of the board are each elected to a term of 4 years. Elections to the Board are held in May of odd numbered years, beginning in 2023. Board applicants must be a registered Colorado voter, and must either own property within the Metropolitan District's borders or reside within the Metropolitan District. A regular election will be held on Tuesday, May 3, 2022, between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm. At that time, three (3) directors will be elected to serve a three-year term.

Self-Nomination and Acceptance forms are available from Kurt C. Schlegel, the Designated Election Official for the District, at 2370 Antelope Ridge Trail, Parker, CO 80138, or email at kurt@specialdistrictsolutions.com. Self-Nomination and Acceptance forms must be filed with Kurt at the above email address not less than 67 days prior to the election (Friday, February 25, 2022).

Applications for absentee ballots may be filed with the Kurt Schlegel at the above address during normal business hours, until the close of business on the Tuesday immediately preceding the election (Tuesday, April 26, 2022). All absentee ballots must be returned to the Designated Election Official by 7:00 p.m. on election day.

If you'd like to reach out to the PPMD Board with your questions, or input, please email info@perrypark.org.

The PPMD Board of Directors

- Randy Johnson – President (thru May 2022)
- Craig Van Doorn – Vice Pres. (thru May 2022)
- Bonnie Schwam – Asst Vice Pres.(thru May 2022)
- Joe Brickweg – Treasurer (thru May 2023)
- Sean King – Secretary (thru May 2023)



Do you have **Pine or Spruce trees or other evergreens?**

Evergreens are beautiful to look at, and they create privacy, shade and soil erosion protection. But along with all the benefits, they need special care as they're under constant attack from numerous insects such as IPS beetles, which when not caught in time can be lethal to these beautiful trees. Tree replacement is expensive and time consuming - Preventative treatments are the best way to protect these beautiful trees, and we can help with that. Please call for a free evaluation of your trees.

Consider Knothead your personal arborist expert (*everyone needs one*).

Call us today at **303-885-3800** for a free estimate on all your tree and lawn needs.

Knothead Tree and Lawn Care is a TCA member with an ISA certification and an Arborist Certification. Find more information about us at knotheadtree.com



NEWS FROM THE WATER DISTRICT

by Brian Arthurs

“Climate change is a global problem. The planet is warming because of the growing level of greenhouse gas emissions from human activity. If this trend continues, truly catastrophic consequences are likely to ensue from rising sea levels, to reduced water availability, to more heat waves and fires.” - Malcolm Turnbull



Fire and Water Facts:

At the height of the Marshall fire, some fire crews on the front lines, trying to get water onto burning houses, ran into a nightmarish scenario: fire hydrants with no water pressure, and no water caused by a series of sudden events.

- Power was knocked out to the Town of Superior's water treatment and pumping plant.
- Sprinkler fire suppression systems in some major commercial businesses had been activated resulting in a massive drain on the water system.
- Superior's massive water tanks (over 3 million gallons) were down to about 100,000 to 200,000 gallons at one point.
- The decision was made to release raw, untreated water through the system to keep the fire hydrants from running dry.

Analyzing how those Water Districts dealt with this crisis can help provide steps to prepare for future catastrophic events, providing all Water Districts with beneficial planning information. This crisis has emphasized the importance of water system maintenance, ongoing collaboration with other agencies, and the ability of management and operations to make essential decisions in emergency situations.

The Board met for the regular meeting on January 19, 2022 at 2:00pm including an Executive Session.

Minutes of the December Regular Board Meeting and Budget Hearing were reviewed and approved.

The disbursements of \$439,993.27 were reviewed, discussed, and approved by the Board.

The Board reviewed the District's Monthly Staff Report. District Manager Diana Miller provided detailed information to all questions and other inquiries made from the Directors.

The Board reviewed the District Systems Report.

Information concerning the water main break on Red Rock Drive near the Big D was requested and provided by Will Parker, the President of Semcor, Inc.

Resolutions designating a posting location for notices and meeting agendas, and the 2022 regular Board elections were read, discussed, and approved.

There are three Board positions open for the May election. For more information, please contact Diana Miller, dmiller_ppwsd@comcast.net.

Consultant billings for 2021 were selected and analyzed by the Treasurer. These were incurred for the Gove Ditch water measurement location selection and design within the borders of Sandstone Ranch. The billings are for engineering, as well as US Fish and Wildlife and US Army Corp. of Engineers permitting. These expenses are in line with the project challenges that occurred including government regulations, environmental requirements, and the discovery of Indigenous artifacts at the original location. Representatives from the Perry Park Metropolitan District (PPMD) attended the Board Meeting to discuss a potential water lease for water to sustain the Gateway Pond and for an extension of the Gravel Pit Lease. Members from both Boards discussed their respective understanding of the water lease effort and each board's unique concerns, and agreed on a path to move forward. The PPMD District Manager advised that the Gravel Pit Lease will be executed at their February Board Meeting.

A motion to enter an Executive Session to receive specific legal advice regarding easements within Sandstone Ranch Open Space that may affect the District's necessary current and future access to the property was approved.

There being no further board member discussions nor audience participation the meeting was adjourned. Further information is available on the district website, www.ppwsd.org.

DAVE GARDNER'S *Results* Team

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FOR SALE
\$624,900



8977 Spruce Mountain Road --- Larkspur

Totally Renovated Ranch-Style Home is located on the main street of the Town of Larkspur only 1-mile from I-25. Zoned "Business". Many Commercial Uses Allowed. Live here, Work here or BOTH. Right across the street from the Larkspur Community Park.

FOR SALE
\$649,900



8975 Spruce Mountain Road --- Larkspur

1.2-Acre Lot - Zoned "Business" with many Commercial Uses Allowed. 3 Total Lots being Sold together. Centrally located between Denver and CO Springs. Easy 30-minutes commute to TWO major economic centers.

SOLD
\$480,000



6301 Perry Park Blvd. #20 --- Echo Hills

Super Rare 3-Bdrm 3-Bath Ranch-Style TownHouse (end unit) with Finished Walkout Level overlooks the Perry Park Golf Course and Lake Wauconda! Located in Echo Hills only 15 minutes from I-25 with an easy drive to Castle Rock.

PENDING
\$450,000



8077 Eagle Road --- Perry Park East

RARE 5-Acre LOT with Breath-Taking Mountain Views! This lot is fully "Ready-To-Build" with utilities at the Paved Road in front of the lot including Public Water Line, Natural Gas, Electric & Phone.

SOLD
\$782,000



14227 Furrow Road --- True Mountain Estates

SPECTACULAR CUSTOM 2-Story on 5.5-Acres with Walkout Basement. Zoned for horses and livestock! Small Barn and a well that is approved for livestock. Views of True Mountain and Best Butte.



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The New Proposed Community of “Dawson Trails” Coming Your Way...

by Lesli Fritts

Some of you may have heard about the newly proposed “Dawson Trails” development, currently going through stages of public input and meetings. This large parcel of ground, once rural, was annexed into the Town of Castle Rock as a flag lot back in 1984. At that time, some of the roads and infrastructure were installed, but soon fell into disrepair as the developer became bankrupt due to a huge economic crash and other factors. Since that time, the parcel has sat unchanged, home to cattle, deer, elk, pronghorn, prairie dogs, and even a pair of roosting eagles.

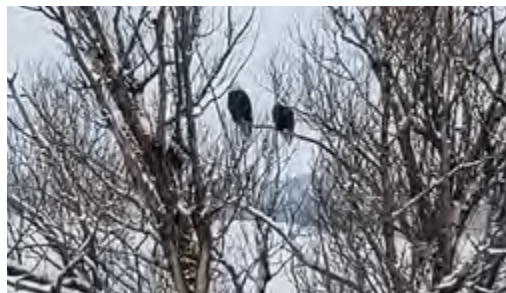
Dawson Trails is located to the west of the I-25 frontage road which many of you drive each day. This large parcel of land is 1883 acres of residential use, and 339 acres for commercial/industrial use. The residential portion will be south of Territorial/Crystal Valley, and stops just north of Tomah, at the few existing rural properties (where the turquoise toilet was). The community will border existing rural properties on the north, west and south sides. Westfield Trade Center, the commercial/industrial park, will begin at Territorial/Crystal Valley, continuing north, almost to Plum Creek Parkway.

How does this new community affect you? The biggest change for Larkspur residents will be the use of the west frontage road. The current proposal includes moving the existing frontage road to the west side of the railroad tracks, beginning at the new interstate exchange, and then winding southbound through commercial areas

and the front of the community, dealing with a few roundabouts, then intersecting with Tomah, straight across from Bear Dance. The new name for the frontage road will be “Dawson Blvd” and it will be 4 lanes wide. This new frontage road will eventually continue to the north of the new interstate exchange on the west side, its name changing to Prairie Hawk Drive, winding northbound through commercial and industrial areas, connecting to Plum Creek Blvd, across from the new “Miller’s Landing,” just to the west side of I-25, and the east side of the MAC. The frontage road southbound from Tomah, will continue to be “as is” in the current plan, still to be maintained by CDOT.

Right now, funding is not available to extend the frontage road north of the new I-25 exchange to Plum Creek, (the new Prairie Hawk Drive) so the west frontage road (Dawson Blvd) will end at the new exchange and drivers will be forced to get on I-25 north or south bound. Coming home will be the same thing. You will exit at the new exchange, Crystal Valley, and wind around on Dawson Blvd through the roundabouts and commercial area, stopping at Tomah Road, where a planned traffic signal will be placed for Dawson Blvd, Bear Dance Blvd and Tomah Road. The plan is currently showing 2 to 3 traffic signals at the I-25 exchange. The existing frontage road will be blocked off at Tomah, and at Territorial.

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly - Here are the good things: Eventually, there will be new schools built, and this will be a much closer location and a shorter bus ride for students. There is a large sports complex/park planned, along with other parks and trails, and possibly a recreation center. The developers are planning on a large grocery store and other retail chains, so shopping and dining will be closer. The Bad – 5850 residential units, at 2 vehicles per household, this means there will be 11,700 more cars on the road. That is a lot of vehicles for this one area all being serviced by Dawson Blvd. Imagining the intersection at Dawson Blvd, Bear Dance Drive and Tomah, along with the train is a quandary. This will certainly increase drive times for the local rural residents. Many have concerns as to water supplies, wildlife, traffic, light pollution, noise, and fire evacuation. The Ugly – The zoning includes multi-story levels of residential, commercial, and industrial. The I-25 intersection will be



continued on next page

elevated. It certainly isn't going to be pretty. If you have enjoyed watching our local elk herd in the area and the pair of roosting eagles along the frontage road, chances are they will be no more.

Since this community, originally named Dawson Ridge, was fully approved back in the 1980's, all that needs to be approved by the Castle Rock Town Council is the new zoning request, amending the number of units from 7900 to 5850 residential units. This is a downzone from the original approval. However, many feel they would like to see the community further downzoned or repositioned in placement of the units to protect open space bordering against rural communities and keeping wildlife corridors open. There are many jurisdictions involved, such as the Town of Castle Rock, Douglas County, CDOT, and Burlington Northern.

At this point public meetings and input are still being accepted. The Castle Rock Town Planner assigned to this project is Sandy Vossler. You may send any comments in to Sandy at svossler@crgov.com.

The next public meeting is scheduled for February 7th, 2022. Typically these meetings are two-fold – live participants invited along with zoom participants. The number of questions and time is limited in these meetings. Here are more links regarding Dawson Trails.

The Town of Castle Rock's web site regarding Dawson Trails: Link [HERE](#)

Facebook Group regarding Dawson Trails Information: Link [HERE](#)

Dawson Trails Conceptual Plan: Link [HERE](#) and the I-25 New Interstate Exchange Information: Link [HERE](#)



FROM THE LARKSPUR FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

by Cindy Applegate Secretary-Board of Directors

Yearly Call Review: Between January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021, we ran a total of 1,059 calls compared to 911 calls for the same timeframe in 2020: an increase of 148 calls.

Monthly Call Review: Between December 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021, we ran a total of 77 calls compared to 71 calls for the same timeframe in 2020: an increase of 6 calls.

Fires: Total of 4 calls (4 in-district, 2 mutual-aid)

EMS: Total of 34 calls

- Medicals: 31 (26 in-district, 5 mutual-aid)
- MVA's with Injuries: 3 (3 in-district)

Alarms: Total of 1 call:

- Fire alarm system malfunction: 1 (1 in-district)

Other: Total of 38 calls (31 in-district, 7 mutual-aid)

Please call Fire Marshal Johnson at 303-880-4724 to set up an appointment for a review of your property to assess your wildfire hazard/risk. Recommendations to reduce your risk from wildfire will be given, as well as helping you to prioritize the work that needs to be accomplished. There is no charge for this service.

Fire Protection District Board Meeting

Thursday, February 10th

6:00 PM at Station 161

The meetings are open
to the public.

This may be a virtual meeting.

Check the website for details.

larkspurfire.org



What are your neighbors saying about Wolfe Realty Group?

Feedback received from Rob Bowe

“Ben has been helping me to buy and sell homes since I relocated to Colorado 8 years ago. In each instance, Ben has always gone above and beyond. He is both professional and personable. He will watch out for your interests and protect you thru every step of the process. I truly feel that, with Ben, I have a good friend in the real estate business. With the way the housing market is now, you need Ben's integrity, sincerity, and experience on your side!”

Feedback received from JP and Karen Hulett

“We had used several local agents prior to engaging Wolfe Realty Group. After our first experience with Ben Wolfe, we never even considered using anyone else! I am just sorry that our last move took us out of state. I doubt we will ever find a realtor as wonderful to work with again.”

Feedback received from Charles and Debra Nienburg

“Need a great realtor? You need Ben Wolfe. Ben lives in the neighborhood and is an expert on our local market. He sold our house for a lot more than we would have dreamed of asking. He was very confident in his valuation of the house and was right on. He held firm when we were ready to drop the price. He is incredibly thorough, explaining his methods and array of tools in detail and always keeping us informed of status. He was on site for all inspections and was able to recommend local contractors to get needed work done quickly. Ben is a pleasure to work with and he made the whole process as smooth, efficient and as painless as selling your home can be.”

Feedback received from Greg C. and Donna H.

“Donna and I recommend the Wolfe Realty Group unconditionally. Ben is without question the best broker we've ever dealt with, in addition to being a fine human being. If I had to describe him in just a few words, those words would be honest, personable, smart, diligent and experienced. He really knows the market and always was impeccably prepared. Had we remained in Colorado, it is inconceivable that we would ever use anyone other than Ben for real estate transactions.”



Ben Wolfe
Managing Broker & Owner
Larkspur Resident

Wolfe Realty Group, Inc.

Office: 303-681-3553 • Cell: 303-667-7995

Fax: 303-681-0678 • Home: 303-681-0679

Ben@DiscoverLarkspur.com

If you have any real estate needs call Ben Wolfe,
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Interested in trying a new restaurant for Valentine's Day? Here are some Dining Tidbits!

by Mary Ann Fonken



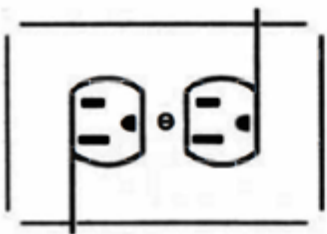
If you are up for a field trip, there are several very good eateries worth consideration. The first one is in Aurora on Havana and is called "Seoul Korean Barbecue". While there are many great ethnic restaurants in this area, this particular one is outstanding offering all the popular, traditional Korean dishes as well as the "hotpot;" spicy dishes for those of you that love hot spices. They also boast at least seven small private rooms off to one side of the restaurant that are available – great for a family celebration.

If you happen to be near Swedish Medical Center and want to grab a bite nearby, please try "El Tepehuan" Mexican Restaurant at the corner of Broadway and Hampden. It's a cute vintage storefront café, with a very colorful interior, and it's open all day. Their huge menu is reasonably priced; one of my favorites is "Huevos a la Mexicana" (eggs with jalapeños, fresh chopped tomatoes, chopped onions served with a side of beans, rice, and tortillas).

Now, back to Castle Rock! Amazingly, several of you were surprised to hear me mention one of our favorite Mexican restaurants in the South area of Castle Rock as it had gone unnoticed. It's called "El Meson" and is in the large strip mall between Safeway and Tuesday Morning. This little gem has wonderful lunch specials. There is a list

of eleven choices, and all are priced at \$8.95 and come with a basket of warm tortilla chips and a small bowl of homemade salsa that is excellent! The head waiter is always very courteous and efficient; his name, surprisingly, is Igor! And, this restaurant has the best margaritas I've ever tasted! Their dinner menu is quite extensive with all the traditional Mexican entrees in huge portions. A particularly wonderful special is the yummy dessert "Tres Leches Cake" which is a type of sponge cake soaked with three kinds of milk: evaporated milk, condensed milk and heavy cream and often topped with fresh berries. It is so delicious and is comparable to Italian tiramisu. Give it a try, and you will fall in love! Bon Appétit!





Pete Dunbar

electric

6123 County Road 106
Elbert, Colorado 80106
303-681-3809
Cell 303-638-6762

AGING RESOURCES of Douglas County

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES HELP AT HOME FOR SENIORS

*by Karie Erickson,
Executive Director of ARDC*

As the calendar turns over, many of us are thinking about fresh starts and setting goals for the new year.

If you're looking for ideas, I've got one for you - volunteer for Aging Resources! Most people want to stay in their own homes as they age, but it can be challenging without help. Our supportive programs provide the assistance needed to remain independent and in your home. As a volunteer, you can commit as much or as little time as your schedule allows. Not only are you lending a helping hand to folks in our community, but you're guaranteed to feel good about it, too!

Our HELP AT HOME program provides light housekeeping, help with chores, grocery shopping, and yard work to seniors who want to stay in their homes as they age. A little extra support around the house makes a big difference.

Volunteers help out with dusting, vacuuming, changing lightbulbs, and installing grab bars.

When you have mobility issues, these types of services make staying in your home much more of a reality.

Take it from our member Carmela S., who recently wrote to us to thank her volunteer, Dave:

"Dave was so wonderful and did a great job adding handrails and grab bars. It makes going up the stairs much safer for me."

When Spring rolls around, another service you might consider is light yard work help.

This is a great volunteer opportunity for the whole family, and kids love helping too!

Janna M.'s writes of her volunteers;

"Jeff and his sweet family helped me so much in my garden.

They were a joy to work with!

They all helped out with weeding and laying down landscaping fabric. I will never forget their kindness and the children who worked alongside their parents. A wonderful gift!

Blessings to you and all of your wonderful volunteers!"

If you're interested in becoming a volunteer or know someone who might benefit from our services, please reach out.

From all of us at Aging Resources, we hope that your 2022 will be filled with health, happiness, and a whole lot of fun!



303-814-4300 www.agingresourcesdougco.org

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Take a Hike!

by Elizabeth Taylor, DLC Board Member

Photos - DLC Staff and Curt Frankenfeld



It is a new year, and Douglas Land Conservancy (DLC) and Douglas County Open Space (DCOS) invite you to get outdoors and take a hike!

Most of you are familiar with at least one of the Douglas County Open Spaces that are in the Larkspur area. When driving in our neighborhood, it is hard to miss the prominent trailheads for Dawson Butte (on Tomah Road, between Highway 105 and the Frontage Road), Spruce Mountain (south of Larkspur on Spruce Mountain Road, 1 mile past the intersection with Noe Road), or Sandstone Ranch (.6 miles south of the intersection of Highway 105 and Perry Park Avenue).

Many of you may have hiked on one or more of these nearby open spaces or explored other open spaces that are farther afield. However, if you haven't, the good news is that all of Douglas County's Open Spaces (DCOS) are accessible for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding throughout the year except in the worst weather. You can read more about each of the Douglas County Open Spaces at <https://www.douglas.co.us/dcoutdoors/openspace-properties/>.

So when would be a good time to start planning your first outing? How about now?

If you are an experienced hiker, mountain biker, equestrian, snowshoer, or cross-country skier, all it takes to have an enjoyable experience is selecting a Douglas

County Open Space you would like to explore, checking the weather, ensuring you have the proper equipment and clothing for the weather and trail conditions, and choosing a time for your adventure. Besides the online information mentioned above, each open space trailhead has information showing routes and amenities available.

If you would like to take a guided hike with a small group to learn more about these open spaces, DLC, in partnership with DCOS, offers many guided hikes throughout the year and you are invited! (In 2021, DLC offered 33 guided hikes.) You can read more about individual events at <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/upcoming-events/>.

Each hike is led by experienced guides who are familiar with the trail and can answer your questions along the way. Some of these hikes are designed to familiarize you with a particular open space and give you an opportunity to meet and hike with other people from our area. It is a great way to make new friends! Other hikes are focused on specific topics such as beginning birding, signs of spring, native wildflowers, animal signs, geology, fall colors, or history. On some hikes your leashed canine family member is invited to participate, while on others, all participants are asked to travel on two legs.

Scheduled hikes are all advertised on the DLC website at <https://douglaslandconservancy.org/upcoming-events/>. Each hike posting includes the location and focus of the hike, the difficulty of the route, the starting time and expected duration, and information about the guide(s) who will be leading the hike. You are also encouraged to join the DLC mailing list to receive announcements by email (<https://douglaslandconservancy.org/get-involved/join-our-email-list/>). All hikes require advance



continued on next page

registration on the DLC website, and registered hikers will receive an email with additional details about the hike including directions to the location, what to bring, where to meet, and other information to enhance your hiking experience.

The DLC hiking groups are generally kept small, to allow for social distancing and give everyone a chance to ask questions and hear information provided by the guides. Usually there is a maximum of 12 participants in a group, although occasionally more hikers may be invited to participate in an event, and they will be divided into smaller groups at the site. Since most of our hikes reach the maximum number of registrants rather quickly, we request that registered hikers let us know as soon as possible if they will be unable to participate so people on the wait list can fill those spaces.

Do you have a schedule that makes it hard to commit to a hiking date far in advance? If so, our guided pop-up hikes may be perfect for you. These are small hikes (no more than 12 participants) that are advertised only through the DLC mailing list (<https://douglaslandconservancy.org/get-involved/join-our-email-list/>) just a couple of days in advance of the hike.

All hikes are free and open to the public. DLC does suggest a small donation from each person attending a DLC hike to help us continue our mission of protecting open space in our region of Colorado. However, there is never any pressure to donate. Since we are hiking on Douglas County Open Space property, a Douglas County waiver must be signed by each participant.

For more information about DLC hikes, or to inquire about a specific upcoming hike, email info@douglaslandconservancy.org. DLC is a nonpolitical, nonprofit land trust dedicated to the protection and conservation of the natural character, habitats, ecosystems, and open space of Douglas County and other areas along the Front Range region of Colorado. For more information about DLC, go to <https://douglaslandconservancy.org>.

Well, now that you are making plans to get outdoors to explore a Douglas County Open Space either on your own or on a guided hike, we look forward to seeing you out on the trail!

Happy trails to you in 2022!



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Tribute to Don Korinek Firewise Program Champion

by Keith Worley

Donald E Korinek died on March 14, 2021, in Sioux Falls, SD. He was 68.

Although very few of you knew Don, he was a key player in establishing Perry Park as one of the early communities in the U.S. that recognized it had a wildfire problem. He also predicted in 2001 the insurance companies would eventually have a major impact on our ability to obtain affordable home insurance due to wildfire possibility.

Don was my co-chair of our fledgling Firewise Committee- one of the first twelve Firewise Communities USA in the nation. His style was to work in the background providing guidance as we all learned more about our wildfire risks. My plan was to train firefighters to assess homeowner risks and send them into the community to scare some sense into everyone. Don's prediction was this will backfire. And it did.

So, we tried it Don's way which was to survey residents on why they live in Perry Park. The resounding response was "It's the trees!" As a forester and arborist, this was the epiphany I needed to help us re-tool our message toward the positive action of protecting our trees and forests from catastrophic wildfire.

Don took a business approach to setting up our Firewise program. In partnership with his wife, Barbara Williams, we applied for and received numerous grants that served as seed money for our Firewise education, planning and implementation efforts. These also laid the groundwork for us to obtain even larger grant funding. Before we knew it, we were called upon to share the Perry Park story around the country as part of focus groups, videos, seminars, and conferences.

Don loved the wildlife and beauty of Perry Park. But alas, his yearnings for a lake, dock, and boat were too compelling. The fish were calling him. When Barbara was transferred to Sioux Falls, S.D., he was able to find all three at his Big Stone Lake property.

Don leaves behind his wife, Barbara Williams, who is very grateful to have shared 30 years with this amazing man. I know his kids, grandkids and great grandkids will miss him. So will I.



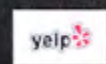
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A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE...

by Susan Peters

Is it Spring? . . Leave it to the Beaver. . Short Takes. . Weird Happenings. . .

Finally, after an autumn that was too warm, the snow started falling, the temperatures dropped, and then vacillated.

One day after a brief snowfall, I saw a brilliantly yellow goldfinch – really? And then next it was a House Finch in his dating waistcoat of red. OK, dudes, you are a little early to the dating game. Even the flickers have not ramped up their drumming. Is climate warming messing with our local birds?

The Beaver – Nocturnal or Diurnal, Environmentally Beneficial or Not?

First, some beaver basics to understand the tougher questions. Beavers build dams of logs, sticks, and mud, crossing streams or rivers. No, they do not call the dams Home Sweet Home. But they do dig tunnels in them to allow for easy access to other areas for food and building supplies. It is also a place to store extra food or to avoid predators or a fast-moving storm. The dams greatly reduce the downstream water flow. The water backs up above the dam forming a pond or lake. The beaver then builds its lodge in the middle of the pond starting on the bottom, working upwards until the lodge is above the water level, and includes a dry shelf for the youngins. The builder also puts in at least two underground entrances.

Now, all of this hard work has huge benefits for the beaver. Its lodge is like a castle surrounded by a moat, so its predators of bears, wolves, river otters, and



wolverines have difficulty reaching them, particularly when the beavers can swim underwater to the lodge. (So, hey, when is the



last time you saw a wolverine in Colorado?)

Beavers possess many features desirable to humans. Their fur is luxurious from the cold water and is waterproof, which makes for nice clothing, particularly hats. Their castoreum from their castor sacs is biologically used for a female to attract a male. It is also used for medicines, and perfumes. (Well, ladies, I bet you will be shocked to suddenly have beavers showing up at your door.) And their meat is said to be delicious, very nutritional, and tastes like shredded pork. However, you will not see it at the local grocery, as beaver hunting is banned.

So, when man entered the picture about 2 million years ago, the diurnal beaver was up against the diurnal man, who hunted them to near extinction. What was a beaver to do? Stay up later! And eventually become nocturnal and maybe also crepuscular – active in twilight. Since they are vegetarian, they can eat in the day or at night. Millions of years later, they are still nocturnal. Rarely do you see them during the day. I have been fortunate to see two of them: one on a trail next to a stream at Chatfield Reservoir; the other in a pond at East Beaver Creek southwest of Colorado Springs. My lab-wolf mix, who was an excellent swimmer decided to take on the beaver. A slap of its tail to warn other beavers, a quick swim across the pond to its lodge, and my pup was foiled, leaving him with a quizzical look on his face.

So, now comes the second near-extinction. Europeans started coming into North America. The earliest fur traders in North America were French explorers and fishermen who arrived in what is now Eastern Canada during the early 1500s. Trade started after the French offered the Indians kettles, knives, and other gifts as a means to establish friendly relations. The Indians, in turn, gave pelts to the French. Already man had been using traps, so they no longer had to hunt during the day. The beavers, in the rest of the world, were showing signs of declining population.

continued on next page

Wild Side continued from previous page

For the U.S., New England was the first to report the scarcity of beavers. Trappers moved into the Rocky Mountains and by the mid-1800s, the beavers were once more barely in existence. Then, miracle of miracles, silk became the favorite material for hats versus beaver. And the demand for beaver plummeted. Also, by 1900, traps were declared illegal and controls were put into place. Today, the beaver is off the endangered species list and numbers more than one million in the US. The numbers have also come back in places like the UK and Germany.

As for the beaver, they are not meant to be nocturnal. They have poor eyesight. They are most active when the moon is full. They also lose on retaining body heat, as it is colder at night. Maybe eventually there will be a reversal to be diurnal again.

With all these beaver dams impeding water flow and causing diversion of creeks and rivers, along with the loss of trees used to build the dams and the lodges, are beavers beneficial or detrimental to the environment?

Consider these issues on the negative side for certain regional areas where large populations of beaver exist:

- Their dams may interfere with fish migrations, meaning that they cannot get to their areas for spawning, thus reducing fish populations.
- The dams may cause flooding.
- The temperature downstream of the dams may be 5 degrees cooler affecting wildlife in those areas.

Now, on the positive side:

- The dams create new wetlands attracting more animal and plant diversity.
- The dams can prevent flooding by collecting large amounts of water and slowing down what is lost in runoff.
- The dams result in woodland diversity, as the biodiversity is greatly increased with easy access to water.
- The dams filter the water, in particular sediment and debris like leaves (and McDonald's wrappers). So, I would say, if you are hiking or backpacking, get your water below a dam. However, beavers do carry the parasite giardia, so you would still need to purify the water.
- The dams reduce erosion.
- The ponds store carbon, releasing it slowly, which is good for the environment.

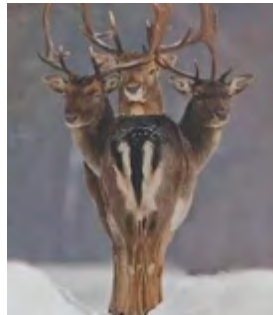
So, what do you think? The naturalists overwhelmingly weigh in on the side of the beaver. And they really are so cute.

Short Takes

Yes, the housing market here is crazy with low inventory. Some polar bears in north Russia were fortunate in easily obtaining housing. They were observed living in (previously) vacant houses where the weather is obviously balmy. See this guy greeting the naturalists through his window. What? No curtains? Or welcome mat?



And how about the winners of the wildlife comedic photos?



That's all folks for this month. Gotta run. The snow is falling and the jays are demanding their ration of peanuts. Watching them stalk the peanuts, going from one to the next to get the proper one is great entertainment. Occasionally, one scores two peanuts at one time and will try to go for a third. Silly bird.

How to Contact Me: Email is best at susan@larkspurconsulting.com. Alternatively, call my cell phone at (303) 725-6868.

Wildfire Preparedness -- Your “Go Box”

By Randy Johnson, Larkspur Fire Marshal



On December 30, 2021, the Marshall Fire occurred in Boulder County and became the most devastating wildfire in the state’s history. According to the Denver Post on 01/06/22, the number of burned homes was 1,084 with fire damage to another 149 homes. The residential damage costs are estimated by the Boulder County Assessor at over \$500 million. Seven commercial buildings were destroyed with an additional 30 receiving fire damage. One human fatality has been confirmed and another suspected, but not confirmed. Both were residents who lived in the path of the fire.

This fire caught the residents and businesses within the communities of Superior and Louisville off guard due to a combination of factors: the time of year, the surrounding fuel type, and the extraordinary wind conditions that day. Wildfire preparedness and mitigation are not common water cooler topics five days after Christmas.

The term “fire season” used to be reserved for the hot, dry months of the summer. The reality along the Front Range of Colorado is we are in “fire season” whenever the fine fuels, such as grasses, are dry and there is no snow on the ground. Within the Larkspur Fire Protection District, we have had a grass fire that burned around the remaining patches of snow on the ground, as the temperature rose and the wind picked up a couple of days after a winter storm event.

Folks living in a subdivision or town that was a scraped, graded, built, and landscaped environment that is surrounded predominantly by a high plains grass ecosystem may be under the illusion that they are not in danger from wildfire. As became horribly evident, that is not the case.

High winds are common along the Front Range and Boulder County has had numerous occasions when wind speeds have exceeded 100 mph. In January 1971, the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder clocked a 147 mph wind gust. The day of the Marshall Fire, a 115 mph wind gust occurred at the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge located just 5 miles south of the Marshall Fire. Hurricane force winds were recorded near the fire.

Dry fuels, high winds, and unprepared communities were the perfect storm for disaster. The sudden fire onset, proximity to communities, and speed of the fire created an evacuation process that forced most to flee with the clothes on their backs and they lost all their possessions. These type of fire evacuations are why it is important to have an emergency supply kit or “Go Box” prepared in advance and ready to put in your vehicle as you evacuate.

Examples of what to have in your Go Box can be found at:

- The Douglas County Office of Emergency Management website: <https://www.dcsheriff.net/emergency-preparedness/have-a-plan/>
- The Ready, Set, Go! Website: <https://www.readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/get-set/emergency-supply-kit/>
- FEMA website: <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210318/how-build-kit-emergencies>



WALTSWORDS By Walt Korinke

February 2022

LARKSPUR – Larkspur’s “The **Spur** of the Moment,” has faithfully served the community with fine food and beverage for almost a century. For the past 27 years, Barb Sheldon has welcomed patrons with a smile and a beer, but the time has come to pass the spatula, and Barb, with mixed emotions, is selling the establishment. I was there that fateful day in 2010 as the wrecking ball took down the old, and



some what shaky Spur, to be replaced by the fine new 4,368 sq. ft. bar & grill we know today. It is rumored that the ghost also moved on that day to its new home. Barb will be missed, but the Spur lives on (hopefully for another century). The new owner will be, **Mindy Kazurova**, who has changed her plans of opening a coffee shop in the old house she purchased two doors north of the Spur and is planning on incorporating breakfast (my favorite meal) into the Spur menu. Looking forward to seeing what Mindy has in mind for the look and operation of the Spur. Congrats Mindy!

Another local restaurant, the **Depot**, in Palmer Lake, is in the sale closing process to a local lady and her son who plan to bring life back to this good eatery. Former owner, Alicia Gatti, lives next door to the Depot, and has recently purchased second home in Arizona – after many years of running the Depot, she is ready to enjoy the fruits of retirement. We’ll be watching to see the plans are going forward, and if the popular Saturday night “Bingo” will remain a feature.



CASTLE ROCK – An exclusive **M. Vince Nail Spa** will be opening in the upper-level shops of the Promenade adjacent to Maurice’s. With spas in ten midwestern states including two in



Denver, M. Vince Nail Spa brings trendsetting, advanced nail care and beauty treatments to the area in an exclusive setting. Their menu of services is extensive and falls under the captions of manicure, pedicure, nail enhancement, waxing, facials, massage, eyelash extensions, and a special list for “kid services.” They stress high standards in hygiene and sanitation, sterilized equipment and single use products all performed in a luxurious setting. Appointments required – open 7 days a week.

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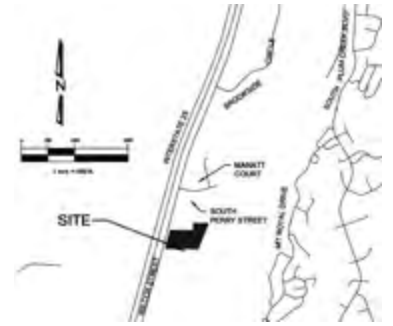
Thanks to a government grant, the **Spotlight Theater** will be reopening in the former Burley Brewing Co. buildings at 680 Atchison Way. The 5,000 sq. ft. space will provide for 100 audience member theatrical presentations, training classes, and rehearsals for the youth musical theater.



Light industrial continues its growth south along the I-25 frontage road towards the Crystal Valley Pkwy. Planned for the **Sanders Business Center** are four “flex” buildings totaling 51,500 sq. ft.



plus 17,400 sq. ft. of mezzanine space, and a screened yard. It is anticipated that space within the buildings will be sold as condominiums. Potential uses are office, retail, showroom, storage, or light manufacturing.



Located in the Promenade restaurant collection (Mod Pizza, Smashburger, etc.) former **Zoe’s Kitchen** converted to **Cava**, a fast-casual Mediterranean restaurant. The 11-year-old chain acquired the Zoe’s chain in 2018 for \$300 million. Starting as a single restaurant in Rockville, Maryland, the combining of the two companies makes Cava the largest Mediterranean restaurant category operator in the U.S. with 326 units across the country and 7 in Colorado. They have begun converting the Zoe’s into Cava’s in 2021 with 12 units in the first half of the year and will continue converting the remainder. Their chef-crafted dips and spreads are sold in over 250 Whole Foods Markets and specialty grocery stores.



Opening soon is the new **Dos Santos** restaurant on the ground floor of the new **Encore** condominium complex at **20 S. Wilcox St.** downtown. The menu looks very appetizing, and I can’t wait for Mary Ann (Dining Tidbits) to do a Sentinel review. In 2015, Dos Santos opened its first restaurant in Denver, expanded to downtown Colorado Springs in 2018 in the Trolley Building, and is in the process of opening a spin off, **Dos Dos**, in a former Subway, also in downtown Colorado Springs.



MONUMENT – There’s a lot more activity coming for the **Jackson Creek corridor**. The Monument Board of Trustees approved a \$966,000 design contract for the continuation of expanding Jackson Creek Blvd’s remaining single lane portion between Higby Road and Hwy 105. They currently have about 1/3 of the estimated \$10 million cost and a start could be imminent. Pushing for the expansion is the **Monument Junction development**, an 84-

continued on next page

acre development planned for both sides of Jackson Creek Blvd. at the Hwy 105 entrance. With 44 acres on the west side paralleling I-25, and the



remaining 40 acres on the east side of Jackson Creek, a two-phase development is planned. The Phase One updated plan for the east side has four different single family detached homes and townhomes for a total of 204 dwelling units, plus a 3 acre, centrally located park with trails. The second phase to the west, includes single and multi-family dwellings, 5 acres of mixed use and 4.6 acres of commercial/office.



Another Jackson Creek development in its infant stage is **The Village of Jackson Creek**. Just north of Walmart and across from the Jackson Creek Senior Living, paralleling I-25. The mixed-use development would provide a “shop, work, live and play” environment – a mini-village in itself. The current industrial zoning for this highly visible parcel goes away and is being replaced with apartments, senior housing, restaurants, and retailers. A park and possibly a library are also under consideration. Facing many challenges in Board meetings, it has received conditional approval and is slowly progressing. The former height maximums have been reduced from 90 to 75 ft and could end up seeing a 50’ max applied. The mix of residential to commercial remains a hot topic and to grow or not to grow is also an issue.



COLORADO SPRINGS – Approved in 2019 and Covid-delayed, a new downtown three-story **YMCA** recreation and wellness center development has returned to life. Several stories of apartments would top the building with the intent to provide less expensive housing for the workforce, teachers, public safety workers, and others. The location of the block at Nevada and Platte is expected to commence construction by mid-year with completion by early 2024. The existing “Y” would remain in use, then be demolished when the new building opens. The remainder of the block is also owned by the “Y” and its future is undecided at this point.



Operating in its 23-year-old 145,000 sq. ft. furniture warehouse at Filmore and I-25, **American Furniture** has decided it’s time to expand in Colorado Springs. A much larger, 355,000 sq. ft. showroom/warehouse is planned on a 25-acre parcel near Powers Blvd and Woodmen Road on the fast-growing northeast side of town. Construction start is planned for later this year with a late 2023 opening. American Furniture Warehouse was founded in 1975 when Jacob Jabs purchased the struggling, 90-year-old American Furniture store at 58th and Bannock in Denver, changed the name to American Furniture Warehouse and brought in fresh marketing ideas and new business philosophies making it today’s giant of Colorado furniture stores.



Since 2016, nearly 600 apartments, lofts and condos have opened downtown; another 2400 are either under construction or about to break ground this year, and another 2100 are planned or announced. Colorado Springs is well on the way to becoming a 24-hour world-class city as all the new downtown living is enhanced by such new endeavors as the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Museum and the hockey Switchbacks Weidner Field. Developer

Narrate Companies has just announced a seven-story, 131-unit apartment building to break ground this spring. It replaces a closed used-car lot and the former Bench bar and restaurant that occupied the northwest corner of Nevada and Cimarron Avenues. The site was acquired last July for \$2.2 million. The building will consist of one- and two-bedroom units, a gym, community room, outdoor plaza, a seventh-floor amenity deck and a three-level (partially below ground) parking garage. Plans call for a summer 2023 opening.



Chicago developer, Jackson Dearborn Partners is also joining the downtown apartment building frenzy, purchasing the **Meininger Art Supply** building (Weber and Cucharras) for \$3 million and a portion of the adjacent Midtown Apartments for an additional \$900,000. All will be razed for the development of a 168-unit six-story and basement Avian apartment building and a 220-stall parking facility. They also have plans for two, 300+ unit suburban projects for a total of 892 Springs units.

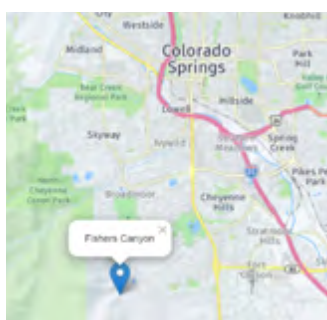
The “**Burger Battle**” continues in the Springs with the recent opening of the 2nd **In-N-Out** @ the First & Main Center (Powers and Constitution) while the first of several **Whataburgers**, adjacent to the 1st In-N-Out at Victory Ridge has just opened. Two more Whataburgers are in the works; one on Garden of the Gods and another at Powers and Dublin as they crisscross the city. With a plan for even more stores, Whataburger has purchased a small office building @ Powers and Constitution for remodeling into a training center and regional office. Lines should become shorter at both chains as the volume of stores grow. These are two good burger choices and additions to the many other brands in town. Locally, the Castle Rock In-N-Out is moving rapidly towards a summer opening. Our other eye is on the variety of new chicken establishments coming to both the Springs and Denver.



The Colorado craze for **roundabouts** has found another site as an entrance to **Garden of the Gods Park**, Gateway Road and 30th. A two mile stretch of 30th is being revamped with the round-about being the highlight of the change. All going well, the work should be done by late next year. Designated a national park in 1971, a walk, ride, drive thru visit to its amazing sandstone rock formations and incredible views is easy to get to in the heart of the city, and not to be missed.



The City has teamed up with the Conservation Fund to acquire the 343-acre open space rising above Broadmoor Bluffs known to locals as the **Fisher Canyon**. Preserving the amazing view from the city and providing a new major park with trails (as it ties into the Cheyenne Mountain State Park to the south and Pike National Forest to the west) was the key objective. The 2-stage purchase for a total of \$4.2 million will undergo major planning review for its uses, trails, and accessibility before the public gains access.



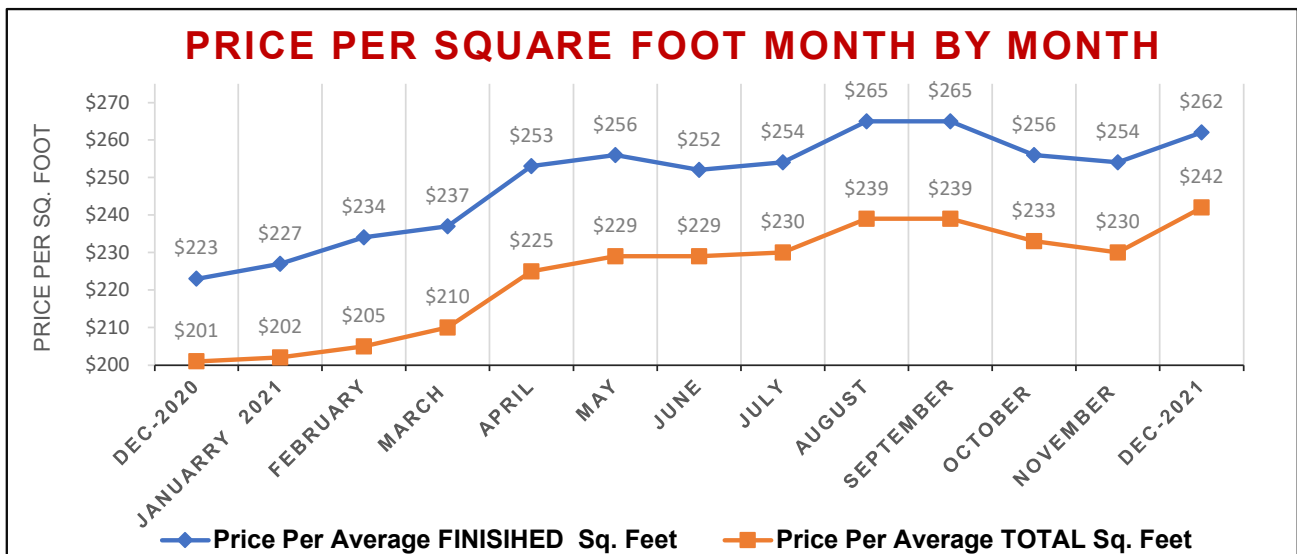
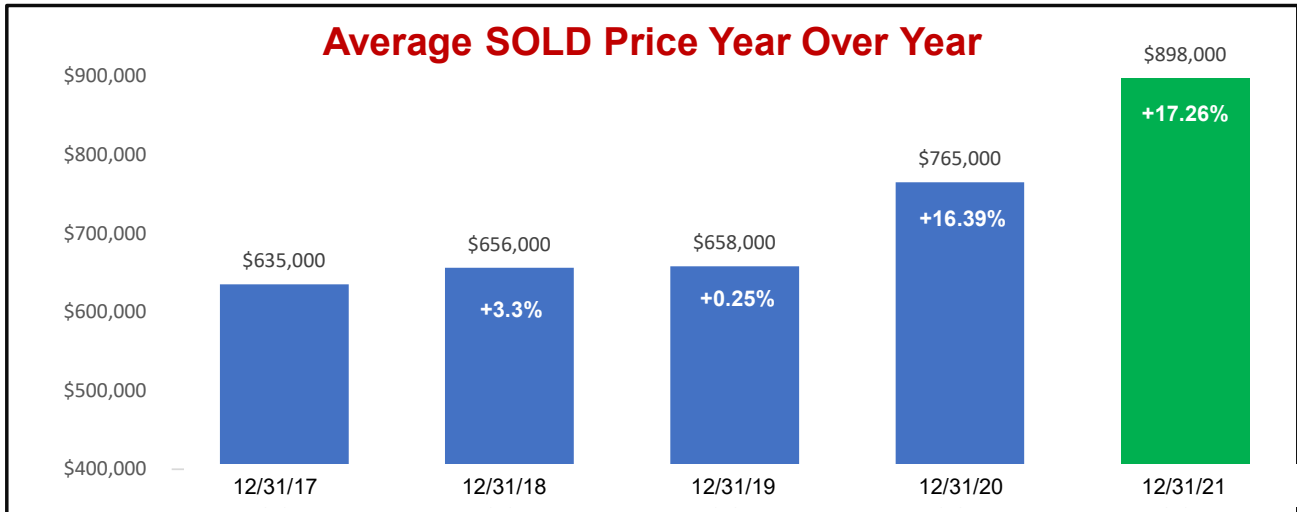
Larkspur Area Real Estate Stats – HOMES SOLD

Homes Currently For-Sale (1/17/2022) --- 8 (\$400,000 to \$4,350,000) --- Median \$974,950

➔ Average Days on Market --- 34

Homes Currently “Under Contract” --- 14 (\$585,000 to \$4,495,000) --- Median \$1,237,500

➔ Average Days on Market --- 53



---The charts above represent a 6-month study of home sales ending on the last date of the month indicated. Also, the top 2 and bottom 2 figures have been removed/deleted from each study. Very unusual properties can skew the factors that reflect actual market conditions. For example, a property with 100 acres but having a small 600 Sq. Foot house would be something that is simply not “typical”. Just because one property sells for over \$4 million does not mean that all other properties have gone up in value. Likewise, a property selling under \$250,000 does not mean that all others have gone down in value.

---The above information has been researched from the Metro Denver MLS System (www.REcolorado.com) by Dave Gardner of Results Realty of Colorado, located in the Town of Larkspur, CO. It is believed to be accurate but is NOT guaranteed. Every property will have unique factors affecting value such as location, condition, acreage, quality, size, age, upgrades and features. A thorough in-person assessment by an experienced real estate broker or licensed real estate appraiser is recommended to determine the actual current market value on an individual property

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Articles/Letters/Ad Artwork/Classified Ads
20th of each month

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Ad requests after the 20th are subject to a 10% charge

TEENS FOR HIRE!!

AJ: My name is AJ and I am 17 years old. I live in the Sage Port area and I specialize in yard work. I rake pine needles, mow lawns and weed wack! Call or text me at 720-483-5442.

Antonino "T": Very responsible, honest, hard-working 15 year old. Willing to help with walking dogs, raking lawns, shoveling snow, outdoor work, help around the house, etc. Restrictions: school schedule and sports practices.
480-209-9003

Mya: I'm 13 years old. I live in Perry Park. I am available to take care of your kids, house, plants or pets. References available upon request. Very reliable. 720-244-1111

Sydney: Responsible teen, age 15, available to watch your plants, house, garden, or kids. I have completed my babysitting class and have references. 720-244-1111

Taylor: I am 17 years old. I live in the Sage Port area, I do yard work, babysit, and pet sit. The best place to reach me is to text 720-480-5441.

Do you have a teen who would like to advertise here? Please email larkspursentinel@gmail.com

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