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**ELIZABETH OWENS** has a reputation centered on residential, high-end and acreage properties in Larkspur, Castle Rock and throughout Douglas County. For the past 20+ 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 is a Larkspur resident and is Broker/Owner at RE/MAX Alliance in Castle Pines. View the virtual tours for these homes and all Elizabeth's listings at ElizabethOwens.net.



SCAN HERE FOR AN AUTOMATED HOME VALUATION! CALL FOR A MORE IN-DEPTH VALUATION!

## A note from the Publisher and Editor

Larkspur Sentinel

### Join our Earth Day Challenge: Make 80118 shine!

As Earth Day approaches (April 22...mark your calendars!), we find ourselves reflecting on the natural beauty that surrounds us in Larkspur.

We've been busy reviewing the great feedback submitted by our readers about what they'd like to see in the Larkspur Sentinel (take the survey here by April 15!); one key theme that has emerged is a desire to celebrate the beautiful spaces that make Larkspur unique. So, we present to you...the first Larkspur Sentinel Earth Day Challenge!

How can you participate? Just snap a selfie of yourself (include your friends or family, if you like) picking up trash in a public space anywhere in the 80118 zip code.

Submit your photo to larkspursentinel@gmail.com along with your name and the location where the photo was taken. Your photo will not only serve as your entry into our Earth Day Challenge but will also be a powerful testament to our community's commitment to environmental stewardship (photos will be featured in the May edition of the Larkspur Sentinel).

#### The best part? One lucky contributor will be randomly selected to win a \$25 credit to spend at a Larkspur business of their choice.

Let's team up as a community this Earth Day to make a tangible impact for the land that gives us so much. It's time to make 80118 shine!

Stay wild,

Kindly,

Kate Wessels

Kate Wessels, Editor

Stephanie J. Deininger,

Stephanie Y. Deininger, Publisher

# What's Going On?

April 4: Larkspur Town Council Meeting INFO 7-9 p.m. at Town Hall

April 6: Community Firewise Meeting 9-11 a.m. at Perry Park Country Club

April 8: Food trucks return on Mondays! 3-8 p.m. at Larkspur Community Park

April 9: Larkspur Town Planning Commission Meeting INFO 5-6:30 p.m. at Town Hall

**April 9:** Larkspur Chamber of Commerce Monthly Mixer INFO 5:30 p.m. 6220 Apache Dr. Music in the Park.6pm at Larkspur

April 9: Larkspur Water & Sewer Meeting **INFO** 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Town Hall

April 10: Larkspur Parks & Recreation Board Meeting INFO 1 p.m. at Town Hall

April 11: Perry Park Metro District Meeting INFO 6 p.m. at Perry Park Country Club

April 11: Larkspur Fire Protection District Board Meeting INFO 6 p.m. at LFPD Station 161

April 18: Larkspur Town Council Meeting **INFO** 6-8 p.m. at Town Hall

#### SAVE THE DATES:

June 7. 8. 9: Larkspur Community Wide Garage Sales & Flea Market Weekend

2nd & 4th Fridays in June, July & Aug.: Community Park

Sept 21-22: Larkspur Autumn Craft Festival

\*All dates are 2024 unless otherwise noted

Interested in adding your upcoming event? Email larkspursentinel@gmail.com with the subject "LARKSPUR EVENT." All events must be open to the public and community-focused.

## Town of Larkspur update

Sherilyn West, Mayor Town of Larkspur



The Town of Larkspur has hired a new director of public works and park maintenance and an assistant who will be busy getting the park ready for a full summer season. If you have events coming up this summer and are looking for a place to hold an outdoor event, keep us in mind. Depending on the event size, there are three different pavilions to choose from. There is a great playground for the kids and several bathrooms available. If you live within the 80118 zip code, you have a discounted rate. Click here to view rates and make a reservation: Park Reservation Application Packet

Food trucks are starting back up April 8 in the Larkspur Community Park. We hope to have two food trucks and one dessert truck each Monday from 3-8 p.m. Plan a night out in the park with something different each week to choose from. The list of weekly trucks will be posted on the Town of Larkspur Facebook page.

The Farmer's Market will start in June, and is moving to a more centralized area of the park, closer to the restrooms and playground. There will be a good array of vendors this year!

### Backyard posers Mike Riebau

Thanks to Mike Riebau for submitting this stunning wildlife photography!



# Share your best Larkspur photos!

Submit your photo to larkspursentinel@gmail.com for a chance to see it on the front cover.

#### Photo needs to:

- Be taken somewhere in 80118.
- Be of a landscape, wildlife, or another unique Larkspur feature (no people in photos, please).
- Selected submissions will be up for a neighborhood vote on the Larkspur Sentinel Facebook page every month. Winner gets their photo featured on the cover!
- Submit your photo to larkspursentinel@gmail.com by the 15th of each month for consideration for the following month's contest.

# Subscribe

Join our email list to receive the monthly issue right to your inbox!

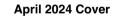
#### larkspursentinel.org

#### Rules:

- Inappropriate pictures will not be showcased.
- The Larkspur Sentinel management team chooses which images will be featured for voting.
- There is no limit to how many photos one person may submit for consideration. An individual person may only have one winning photo per year.
- The cover is a 8.5in x 11in (or approx. 8.5:11 ratio) vertical. If your picture is horizontal we may have to adjust it.
- Black and white or color photos only.
- Upon submission, submitter gives the Larkspur Sentinel management team the right to feature the image in the Larkspur Sentinel publication and on any owned platform (including but not limited to social media, website, etc) in perpetuity with full credit to the photograph's creator. Credit will be placed as a water mark on the picture.

#### Prize:

• Bragging rights and a really nice print out of the cover for you to hang!





Cover Picture: Mike Riebau

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# **Social Security and finance**

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Gilad Shwartz, CRPC™ Financial Advisor 8520 Spruce Mountain Road Suite 106 Larkspur, CO 80118 720-381-6252

PLEASE SEE IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES ON PAGE 2.

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### Join us

Wednesday, May 15, 2024 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Hosted by: Gilad Shwartz

Spur of the Moment 8885 S Spruce Mountain Rd Larkspur, CO 80118

Dinner will be served.

Page 6, Larkspur Sentinel, April 2024

# Travel center update: Town of Larkspur considers adding criteria to town code regarding travel centers

Kate Wessels, Editor Larkspur Sentinel

Should travel centers or truck stops be permitted within the Town of Larkspur zoning districts? The Larkspur Town Council held a special meeting with a public hearing on March 27 to discuss just that.

The purpose of the meeting was to set town policy regarding the definition of travel centers as well as to discuss whether the town should permit travel centers within its zoning districts. Current municipal code does not have a definition for travel centers or truck stops.

There is currently a proposal for a travel center within the town district off of the I-25 exit; California-based developer Mass Equities, Inc. is proposing the construction of a TA Travel Center at Upper Lake Gulch and Spruce Mountain Rd. The town attorney clarified that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and set criteria for truck stops and to determine whether they are appropriate in Larkspur in general--not to discuss specific pending proposals. A legal complaint has been filed against the town by the developer of the proposed travel center; the lawsuit is pending and no updates have been made available.

During the meeting, the Town Council reviewed a memo it received from the Town of Larkspur Planning Commission on February 21. In that memo, the commission made two recommendations:

- 1. Add a definition to the Town of Larkspur Municipal Code that would define what the town considers as a travel center or truck stop to clear up ambiguity.
- 2. Prohibit travel centers or truck stops in all town zoning districts.

The proposed definition of a travel center would be:

"Travel center, a.k.a. truck stop, means a business that engages primarily in the sale of fuel, accessories, and equipment for semi-tractor trailers or similar heavy commercial vehicles, provides parking spaces for semi-tractor trailers or similar heavy commercial vehicles, and may include one or more of the following accessory uses: convenience store, restaurant, overnight parking, vehicle maintenance, shower facilities, vehicle scale, vehicle wash, and/or laundry facilities."

During the public comment portion of the meeting, many community members spoke in support of the commission's recommendations to create a definition for travel centers and to subsequently prohibit their use in all zoning districts.

#### continued from previous page

Many shared concerns about the potential negative impacts a travel center would have, including increased traffic, detrimental effects on the environment, and illicit activity. Some community members noted that any money generated by a travel center would never be enough to offset the negative impact that a development like that could bring.

"Don't worry about pending proposals," one community member said. "Put the policies in place that you want to put in place."

Others agreed that the town should adopt a definition for travel centers as a definition would make regulation easier, but encouraged the town to first consider amending the definition to add specifics regarding height of canopies, number of gas pumps, and number of parking spaces available.

During the meeting, a letter from the landowner and developer of the current travel center project was read aloud. The authors cited past collaborative efforts with the town and suggested that the developer is open to making reasonable changes to the current proposal. The landowner also spoke during the meeting, encouraging the town to negotiate with the developer to make revisions to the project instead of adopting policies that could slow down or prohibit development.

After the public comment period, the council voted to adjourn the meeting to conduct further research into existing definitions within town code over the coming weeks, citing a desire to make an informed decision prior to adopting a new definition.

Looking to stay informed on what's happening with the Town of Larkspur? Meeting minutes are posted on the **town website**.



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# Preparing for wildland fires

### Wayne Moore, Member–Board of Directors Larkspur Fire Protection District

The grassland fire in our fire district on February 23 burned 153 acres and required 100+ firefighters from eight agencies to extinguish, reinforcing that wildland fires can happen at any time and location. Please consider how we, as residents living in forest and grassland settings, can prepare for wildfires.

Attend the Firewise Community meeting on Saturday, April 6 from 9-11 a.m. at the Perry Park Country Club. There will be presentations by the Larkspur Fire Protection District (LFPD), Douglas County Sheriff's Office (DCSO), Douglas County Office of Emergency Management, and Colorado State Forest Service on wildland fire preparation. This is an excellent venue to have your questions answered by highly knowledgeable sources.

Mitigate vegetation within 50 yards of structures and which line access roads onto your property. It is also important to heavily mitigate ladder fuels, such as Gambel oak, tall grass, and branches less than six feet above the ground, allowing fire to climb from ground level into the pine trees. <u>csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation</u>

Harden your home against fire embers. During the Black Forest fire, >80% of the homes destroyed had ignited by embers far in advance of the flame front arrival. Vent screens into attics and eves should have a mesh opening of <1/8th inch. Caulk seams and cracks that embers could lodge into. Places where snow accumulates in a blizzard are where the embers will accumulate. Remove flammable material from these spots e.g. gutters and roof vents. <u>nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa</u>

Discuss wildfire threat with your neighbors. What measures could be taken collectively within the neighborhood to reduce the risk to your homes? Develop trust with your neighbors so that you are looking out for each other should you need to evacuate. Conducting outdoor open fires within LFPD requires a permit. Contact LFPD at 303-681-3284 to request receiving a permit. And let your neighbors know when you will have a permitted outdoor fire.

Register for CodeRED emergency notifications from DCSO. CodeRED alerts you by phone, email, and text about emergencies in your area including wildfires, police activity, lost children, and other emergencies nearby. During Red Flag fire warning days, monitor your phone for calls and text messages from CodeRED. Verify that your home address number is marked when seen from the road. You can also register your property gate code at: <u>dcsheriff.net/sheriffs-office/divisions/support-services/gate-codes</u>

If you are concerned about your safety or believe you are in danger, do not wait for an official evacuation order–leave immediately. Be prepared year-round to evacuate on short notice. Know your primary and secondary evacuation routes so well that you can follow either of them at night or in dense smoke conditions.

Have a pre-packed "Go Bag" containing essential personal belongings, i.e. medications, irreplaceable documents, special dietary items, infantcare items, and cell phone chargers. Always have at least a half tank of fuel in your vehicle when at home.

You should also ensure that:

- · Everyone in the household knows the evacuation meeting point
- You have accommodations planned for pets and livestock
- · You have arranged for transportation or other mobility assistance as necessary

Call 911 if you have an emergency and require immediate help; however, calling DCSO or LFPD for non-emergency matters during fire events diverts their attention during this extremely busy time. These sites are the best way to stay informed:

- dcsheriff.net
- Iarkspurfire.org
- Larkspur Fire Protection District Facebook page

Meet with your insurance agent to review and update your policies. Refer to the <u>August</u> <u>2022 edition of the Larkspur Sentinel</u>, page 10, article by LFPD for detailed information regarding fire-relevant insurance coverage. It is important to have documentation of items within your home and the exterior. Make a video or take pictures showing everything of significance that you own.

To request a home fire mitigation review, contact Fire Marshal Diershow at 303-681-3284.



Community Meeting Saturday, April 6 9 a.m. Perry Park Country Club

Firewise

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# News from the Perry Park Metropolitan District

Steve Ostrowski, Director & Secretary Perry Park Metropolitan District

Hello Perry Park Metropolitan District residents,

To help you stay updated on meetings and activities with the district, we now have a calendar available at the top of our homepage on our website (<u>perrypark.org</u>). You can view committee meetings there and future activities. This is a Google Calendar, so you can also add it to your own account calendar by clicking the "+" on the bottom of the calendar widget. We hope this will help to increase engagement with the district. If you have an event you'd like to include, such as a volunteer group, please contact us to get it added.

On April 6, we are holding a Firewise Community Symposium for the public from 9-11 a.m. at the Perry Park Country Club. Come learn about fire mitigation and ask any questions of the trained presenters that you may have. One benefit of the recent heavy snowstorm was that we were able to burn our slash pile at the back of the park, which had accumulated to a large size. We thank the fire departments who were present to make sure the fire was controlled, and the volunteers that helped. We also now have a 5-year plan for fire mitigation of district-owned properties; we plan to continue applying for grants as well as using our own funds for mitigation efforts.

Speaking of fire, our traditional Fourth of July fireworks show is at risk this year and in future. Our fireworks provider for the last 16 years notified us that several launch crews have retired and that they do not have a crew available for us. After reviewing seven other companies, their costs are \$30,000-\$45,000, which is double what we have ever paid and is beyond our budget. Without substantial fundraising, we may not have a show this year or in the future. The committee is discussing other options, and has set a date for April 20 to raise \$18,000 to preserve the 2024 show. If you would like to contribute, please see the <u>Perry</u> <u>Park Community Fund</u> tax-deductible donation form on our website

We also recently partnered with the University of Colorado at Denver to assist in the Revitalization and Master Plan for Wauconda Park. We expect to have a community event soon during which residents can discuss ideas for the park. Nothing has been decided regarding what will be included at the park, only that we would like to create a plan.

Residents have complained about dog waste being left in our open areas and trails. PPMD does not have a service to pick up waste, so we rely on our residents to be responsible and clean up after their pets.

We also recently reviewed the legacy Architectural Control Committees which exist in various formats in the neighborhood. The board voted to request that Douglas County stop including ACCs in its building permit review for various reasons, primarily because their reviews are unenforceable.

Other updates from the Perry Park Metropolitan District include:

- Entryway improvements: We continue to explore plans for entryway improvements. In the meantime, you can help by contacting CORE to ask them to include undergrounding of their power lines at the entrance to our neighborhood. We are advocating that CORE bury lines to reduce fire hazards.
- **Gilloon Pond improvements:** Neighbors are organizing a group to mow and maintain a trail around the pond.
- **Cellular service improvements:** Private landowners are discussing options for building towers to add to our services; we are monitoring progress.
- Committees: We need volunteers to improve our community. There is an Independence Day Planning Committee, a Firewise Committee, an Entry Design Committee, and a Parks and Open Space Committee that can always use help. Contact us at <u>info@perrypark.org</u> to get involved.

Our April board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 11 at 6 p.m. at the Perry Park Country Club and on Zoom. You can see the meeting schedule and documents, as well as other neighborhood information and contact forms, at <u>perrypark.org.</u>

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# Securing our water future: Solutions for Douglas County

Brian Arthurs, Director Perry Park Water and Sanitation District

"I have always been a big advocate of tap water, not because I think it harmless, but because the idea of purchasing water extracted from some remote watershed and then hauled halfway round the world bothers me. Drinking bottled water relieves people of their concern about ecological threats to the river they live by or to the basins of groundwater they live over. It's the



same kind of thinking that leads some to the complacent conclusion that if things on earth get bad enough, well, we'll just blast off to a space station somewhere else."

#### -Sandra Steingraberls

Here at the Perry Park Water and Sanitation District (PPWSD), we understand the importance of ensuring long-term water availability for our community. While there's no single solution, a multi-pronged approach that combines responsible water use, innovative technologies, and strategic resource management offers the most sustainable path forward.

**Conservation through everyday actions:** Simple changes in our daily routines can make a significant difference. Implementing low-flow fixtures in our homes is a great place to start. Thankfully, Colorado has already taken a proactive stance by mandating efficient toilets and sprinklers, further promoting water conservation efforts.

**Empowering homeowners:** A recent Colorado law empowers homeowners to choose water-wise landscaping alternatives, even if their HOA previously discouraged them. This allows residents to create beautiful yards that require less water, promoting both aesthetics and sustainability. Additionally, rain barrels are now permitted, allowing residents to collect rainwater for outdoor use, further reducing reliance on traditional water sources.

**Sustainable groundwater management:** While groundwater remains crucial, relying solely on depleting aquifers isn't sustainable. Managed aquifer recharge offers a promising solution. During periods of high seasonal flows, excess water can be treated and injected back underground, replenishing these vital reserves for future use.

**Closed-loop systems for the future:** Looking ahead, closed-loop systems present an exciting innovation. These systems combine rainwater harvesting, treated wastewater return flows, and responsible water management practices to create a self-sustaining water cycle.

#### continued from previous page

**PPWSD as a model:** The PPWSD serves as a model for our county. The water supply strategy utilizes a combination of surface water, treated wastewater, and aquifer storage, demonstrating a reliable and sustainable approach.

**Planning for the long term:** The Douglas County Water Commission is actively developing a comprehensive water plan by 2050. This plan will integrate existing water provider strategies, guaranteeing a secure water future for generations to come. The PPWSD Board of Directors will be updated on the commission's progress monthly.

By working together, implementing responsible regulations, utilizing innovative technologies, and fostering collaborative planning, we can ensure a sustainable water future for Douglas County.

We encourage you to visit the PPWSD website (<u>ppwsd.org</u>) for minutes of previous board meetings, more information on the district's water conservation efforts, updates on water rates and their comparisons to local surrounding communities, and to learn how you can get involved.



Page 14, Larkspur Sentinel, April 2024

# DCSD teachers and staff receive pay raises thanks to the voters of Douglas County

Erin Kane, Superintendent Douglas County School District

In January, Douglas County School District's educators and staff received their much anticipated and well deserved pay increases. This was made possible by you - the citizens of our community who voted yes on 5A (Mill Levy Override) this past November.

Pay raises from the MLO were paid retroactively back to the start of the school year. We were so happy to see this come to fruition and our employees have shared with us some incredible stories about what this additional pay has meant to them. As a result of the pay increases, some of our teachers have been able to quit their second (in some cases third) jobs and spend more time with their families. Others



have been able to put a down payment on a much needed second vehicle for their household or use the money to help pay for their own children's college education.

We have even received inquiries from teachers and staff that left us for other districts, because they can now afford to come home. Due to 5A, our starting teacher salary moved from \$45K to about \$51K for next school year, allowing us to at least have the opportunity to compete with our neighbors (who have starting salaries from \$50K to about \$65K) as we recruit new teachers.



While we have not fully addressed our salary challenges, the passage of 5A has been a HUGE step in the right direction! It goes a long way towards reinforcing our appreciation and support for our teachers and staff and encouraging them to stay here in DCSD where they belong.

Beyond compensation increases, funding from the MLO (as outlined in the ballot language) is enabling us to further increase safety and security in our schools via additional personnel such as School Resource Officers and Campus Security Specialists. Hiring is in the works for these positions and many Campus Security Specialists are already in place at elementary schools. The rest will be in place for the start of the 2024-2025 school year. We also want to express our sincere gratitude to our law enforcement partners, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Castle Rock Police Department, Lone Tree Police Department, and Parker Police Department, for their support of additional School Resource Officers (SROs). The Douglas County Commissioners recently voted 3-0 to contribute additional funds to maximize the SROs we are able to hire with the passage of 5A. We are so grateful for our community's dedication to the safety of our schools, students, and staff.

Being able to take better care of our teachers and staff so that they can continue to care for our students is a huge relief and we truly cannot thank our community enough. Of course, we still have work to do especially in this environment of ever-increasing costs. We are currently working to tackle the challenge of how to invest in our buildings and make sure we are able to provide safe, adequate, and comfortable learning environments for our students and staff. With 111 buildings across our large school district there is always something needing repair or replacement - especially in the winter months we face heating and cooling issues, frozen pipes, roof leaks (and resulting water damage), and more. We accumulate \$35M in capital maintenance with each passing year and continuing to defer this maintenance only costs our taxpayers more in the long run. Additionally, we are temporarily supporting growth with overflow schools and mobile classrooms - without the ability to place schools in our school voids, we will eventually have to reboundary existing neighborhoods away from their closest school in order to accommodate the overflow from committees with no schools. We will be reaching out in the coming months to work together in finding solutions to ensure that all of our students and communities have access to thriving school buildings and learning environments.

In the meantime, I hope you take a moment (using the QR code) to hear directly from our teachers and staff. There were many tears of joy and gratitude on November 8 throughout our district.

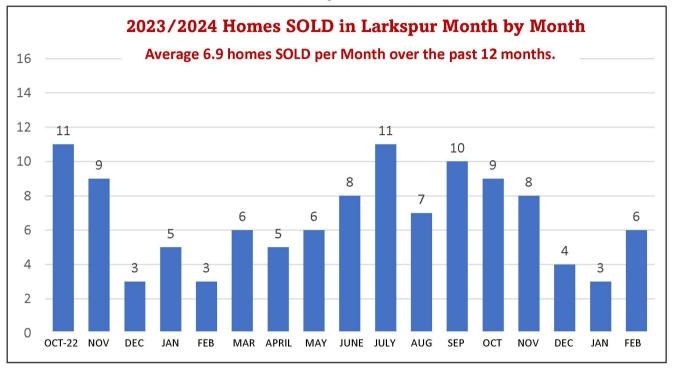
Thank you again from the bottom of our hearts for saying yes to 5A and making it a priority to care for our teachers and staff here in DCSD!





# Larkspur Real Estate Stats

### 80118 Zip Code Area



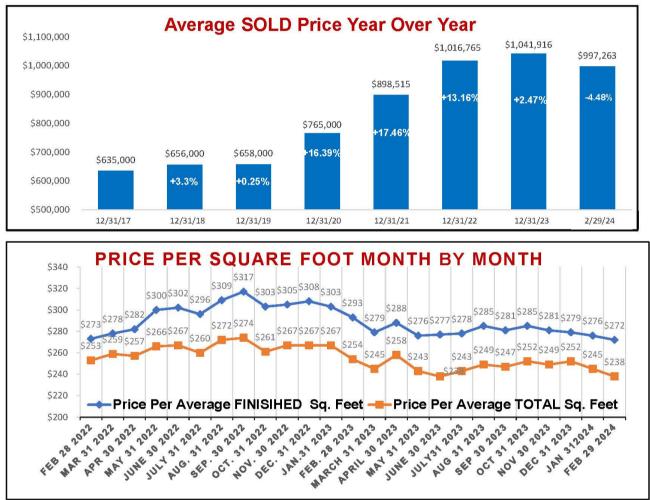


Results Realty of Colorado is Located on the Main Street of Larkspur 9164 Spruce Mountain Rd., Larkspur, CO 80118 <u>303-681-1000</u> <u>DavesResultsTeam@yahoo.com</u> <u>www.DaveGardnerRealEstate.com</u>



#### Homes Currently For-Sale 3/20/2024) ---21 (\$570,000 to \$1,600,000) --- Median \$1,050,000 <u>Average Days on Market --- 43</u>

#### Homes Currently "Under Contract" --- 12 (\$775,000 to \$1,450,500) --- Median \$1,154,500 Average Days on Market --- 91



---The charts above represent a 6-month study of home sales ending on the last date of the month indicated. The top 2 and bottom 2 sales have been removed/deleted from each study. This is because 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". And 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 inperson 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.

Dave Gardner's Results Realty of Colorado

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4473 Echo Dr. - The Retreat at Perry Park One-Of-A-Kind Top-Quality CUSTOM "Paired Home" at The Retreat in Perry Park. BREATHTAKING MOUNTAIN VIEWS! Former "Model Home. Main Floor Master. Extensively updated and remodeled, this home shows like a brand-new home!



#### 7749 Inca Rd. - Perry Park

READY-TO-BUILD South-Facing 1-Acre LOT in Perry Park. Beautiful Rock Formation ON-SITE!! Will make a gorgeous backdrop for your new Dream Home. All utilities and paved road are here!! Gorgeous Mountain Views!



**1100 Silverheels Dr. - Perry Park East** READY-TO-BUILD 5-Acre Lot with WONDERFUL MOUNTAIN VIEW on County Maintained PAVED Road with Public Water and Natural Gas!



**1065 Buttermilk Rd. - Perry Park East** Custom Ranch-Style Home on 5-Acres with Finished Walkout Basement. VERY PRIVATE and Quiet Location on a Douglas County PAVED and Maintained Cul-De-Sac. Magnificent Mountain Views This home has been LOVED! Move in ready condition.



691 Poncho Rd. - Sage Port

READY-TO-BUILD 1-Acre lot in Sage Port only 1-mile from the Bear Dance Golf Course. Soaring Ponderosa Pines and gently rolling South-Facing topography. Water & Sewer tap fees have been pre-paid. \$60K LID Assessment PAID IN FULL!



1025 Tenderfoot Dr. - Sage Port

"Ready-To-Build" 1-Acre lot located in Sage Port Nice FLAT topography makes for an Easy Build. A beautiful slice of Colorado. The paved roads are plowed and maintained by Douglas County.

LARKSPUR AREA SPECAILIST! 303-681-1000 www.DaveGardnerRealEstate.com



Page 19, Larkspur Sentinel, April 20244

# **Senior Hunger Awareness Month**

Amy Pfister, Community Engagement Coordinator Aging Resources of Douglas County

April is National Senior Hunger Awareness Month, and at <u>Aging Resources of Douglas</u> <u>County (ARDC)</u>, food insecurity among seniors is a topic we're very familiar with.

Being food insecure means a lack of access to the necessary foods and nutrients needed to live a healthy lifestyle. A food-insecure senior may have enough food to keep them full, but the food they have may not be up to the recommended nutritional and dietary standards needed for an older adult. Food insecurity among older adults is on the rise nationally. Seniors often face challenges that make access to nutritious food difficult. Challenges related to health, lack of transportation, fixed incomes, and rural living, like Larkspur, can make access to food difficult for an older adult.



At ARDC, we mitigate the realities of food insecurity among older adults in Larkspur and local communities. Here are a few of the ways we help!

- Weekly, ARDC delivers multiple freshly made and nutritious meals to older adults in Larkspur. These well-balanced meals include a fruit and breakfast sandwich.
- Monthly, our partners from the Help and Hope Center in Castle Rock host a free food pantry at the Larkspur Church. Geared toward older adults, this pantry provides individualized custom boxes of food for ARDC seniors. The wonderful volunteers from the Ladies of Larkspur assist older adults in loading these groceries into their cars.
- ARDC routinely provides transportation for Larkspur seniors to community food banks.
- Through our Resource Navigation program, ARDC provides access to other resources that help navigate the waters of food insecurity.

If you are, or you know an older Larkspur adult who may be struggling with food insecurity, please call ARDC at 303-814-4300. Together we can work to ensure older adults have access to the quality foods and nutrients needed to help them thrive.

## Dawson Butte Open Space provides easy, pleasant enjoyment

Rich Bangs, Member–Board of Directors Douglas Land Conservancy

To combat the stresses of everyday life--or to just satisfy that hunger for a taste of the area's natural beauty--take a pleasant and easy walk through the meadows, scrub oak and forests of one of Douglas County's most convenient and accessible public open spaces.

You will also have the chance to see deer, elk, bear, and a variety of seasonal wildflowers. It's all available at Dawson Butte Open Space, managed by the county's Open Space and Natural Resources Division. At 1753 Tomah Road between Castle Rock and Highway 105, Dawson Butte was created through a joint venture with the landowner, the county, and Great Outdoors Colorado which provided some of the funding for the county's purchases.

Five miles of winding, flowing hiking and equestrian trails make a big circle at the base of the butte, with a mix of sunny and shady areas. There are also shorter hiking routes available which can be seen on the Dawson Butte trail map at the trailhead. The top of the butte is not accessible to the public as some of it is privately owned and other areas contain sensitive wildlife habitat. The base of the open space is 7,474 in elevation and the prominence rises another 711 feet.



Photo: A walk through Dawson Butte Open Space will give hikers a good look at the varied terrain, plants, and animals of Douglas County.

#### continued from previous page

At the trailhead are picnic tables, restroom facilities, a map of the trail system and a large parking lot that can accommodate horse trailers. The area is open one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset.

While hiking the trails in April, people are likely to see an abundance of wildflowers, including such species as sand lily, salt-and-pepper, lamb's tongue ragwort, Oregon-grape, prairie bluebells, golden banner, Rocky Mountain spring beauty, pasque flower, and Nuttall's larkspur.

Uses include hiking, mountain biking, trail riding and some equestrian jumps. Dogs are allowed on leash. The publicly accessible portion of the open space covers 828 acres.

The open space was created in a deal between Douglas County and the Dawson Butte Land Company owed by the Young family.

Douglas Land Conservancy (DLC) accepted conservation easements in four phases beginning in 2004 and extending through 2007. After the land in each phase was protected with an easement, that land was sold to Douglas County. Once all of the phases were sold to Douglas County, the conservation easements were amended and consolidated into one conservation easement. DLC monitors the open space annually to ensure conservation values are protected. There is a parcel of land in the middle of the property for the personal use of the Young family which ends after the death of the last surviving family member.

Dawson Butte was named after an early Plum Creek area settler, Thomas Dawson. The butte is part of the local geologic formation, the Dawson Arkose.

Dawson Butte Open Space is just one of the county's large public open spaces spread throughout the county. Those large open spaces include Sandstone Ranch and Spruce Mountain, along the Highway 105 corridor; Lincoln Mountain in the Cherry Creek drainage; and Hidden Mesa between Parker and Castle Rock. The county has several other smaller public open spaces which can be found on its website. DLC has conservation easements on all of these open spaces and in addition to monitoring the properties, conducts invitation only events such as hikes, wildflower viewing, stargazing, snowshoeing and other things. For more information on Dawson Butte and the county's open spaces, visit the county's website at <u>douglas.co.us/dcoutdoors/openspace-properties</u>.

DLC is a non-profit land trust based in Castle Rock. It was founded in 1987 and now holds easements on nearly 27,000 acres in Douglas, Elbert, and Jefferson counties. For more information on DLC or to get involve in the land trust, visit <u>douglaslandconservancy.org</u>.

# LARKSPUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY



# Walking Back in Time



It is time to mark your calendar for May 18 to *walk back in time* into the 1920's and 30's along Spruce Mountain Road from the Town Hall area to the Library and back. The approximate 1 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hour walk is moderate

with refreshments provided. The walk starts here at the **History Information Cabin** (#2 Cabin south of Town Hall) on MAY 18, 2024, 10:00AM



Sorry, No Dogs Allowed On Walks! RSVP: Call Nancy Page-Cooper, 720.849.0718, for History Walk



Larkspur look a century ago, 1924? 100 years ago, Larkspur was the most active and economically strong small town in Douglas County. The population of Larkspur in 1924 was 200! Larkspur hosted a wide variety of businesses including the *Larkspur Hotel*, the *Frink Creamery Company* (selling creamery products, coal, and cement), the *Rio Grande Depot* (a busy place: 12 trains a day plus the Larkspur Post Office), 2 general *Merchandise and Farm Stores* (Saare's and Riggs), *Jones' Grocery Store, Buck's Garage*, a *Confectioner and Bakery*, the Welch & Crowe Sawmill (selling custom cut dimension lumber), and *Leeuween's Truck Transportation*. During 1924, Larkspur rolled out the red carpet for the inaugural celebration of the *American Federation of Human Rights* and hosted the Colorado Holstien Breeders.

LARKSPUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

... the voice of history of southern Douglas County and Divide Country



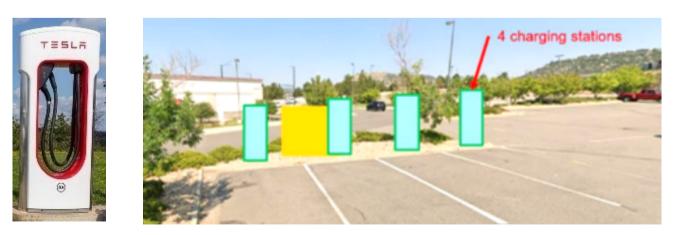
WALTSWORDS By Walt Korinke Commercial Real Estate April 2024

#### **Castle Rock**

EV charging pumps are coming to the Town of Castle Rock. Not one, but two applications are in the town's planning department to install charging pumps for electric cars. The centralized location is the Kohl's - Walmart Center located at Founder's Pkwy and Front St. on the north side of town. The first site will be four convenience pumps near the entrance to the Kohl's store and does not name the service provider at this time. The second site is a TESLA site with 16 pumps to be located in the **PetSmart parking lot** near the existing drainage pond at the front of the parcel. The Tesla units will be 480-volt fast charging units (45-90 minutes) allowing for some guick shopping while you "fill-up." They will be available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Both locations are out of the way for shoppers who



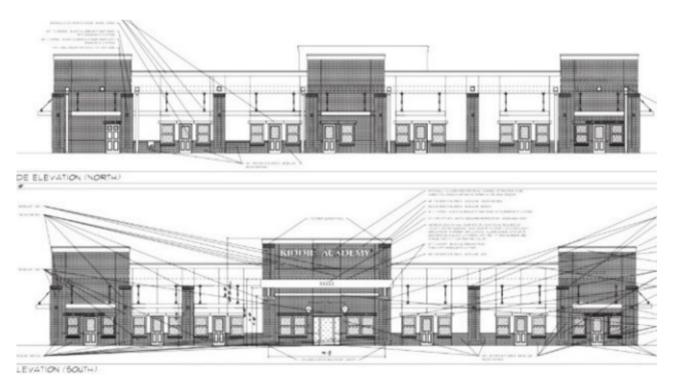
need general parking, while still being convenient for EV customers.



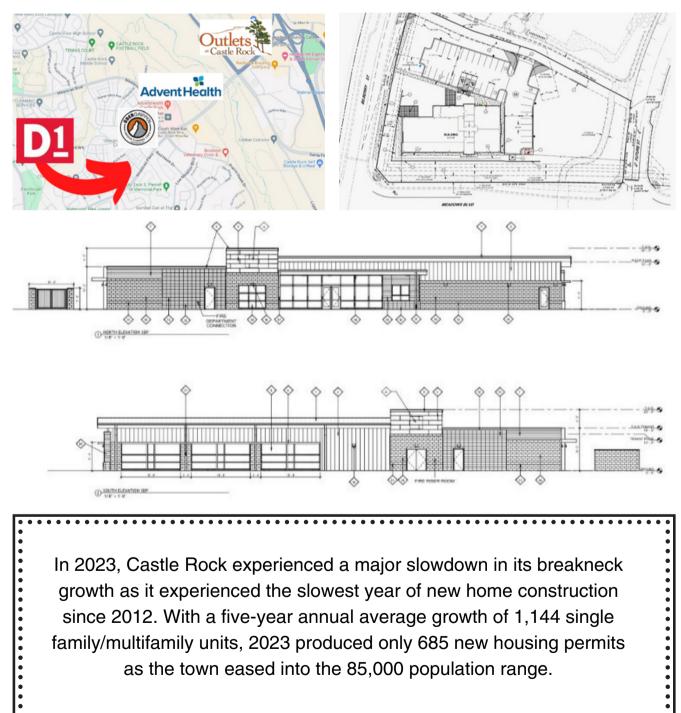
Founded in 1981, the 43-year-old **Kiddie Academy** educational child care group has over 300 franchises located in 33 states. They plan to open their 10th Colorado franchise in Castle Rock just off Meadows Parkway behind the Kum & Go service station midway between Advent Hospital and the Outlets.



There will be a 10,000 sq. ft. day care building on the 1.45-acre site. Three outside play areas designated as preschool, infant/toddler, and school aged totals about 9,000 sq. ft. of fenced playground area. Open five days a week, 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., they will accept children from 6 weeks to 12 years old offering full-time care, before-and after-school care, and summer camp programs.



**D1** is the personalized training program founded in 2001 by former NFL player Will Bartholomew to provide one-on-one personalized athletic training from ages 7 to adult. With 100+ locations in operation and another 150 performance centers in development, Castle Rock is about to join the trend. Just west of the Meadows Town Center, adjacent to the Ubergrippen rock climbing facility, a 9,450 sq. ft. single story training center will be built. Now you can whip that lethargic winter body into true athletic form.



#### Monument

Politics and development continue to be at odds in this rapidly growing town. The Planning Department has burned through five planning directors in five years including two this year and they have shut down development applications until this summer while they are seeking a new director. The planning staff has all served less than a year. Developers are tearing their hair out with millions at stake. Something has to change.



#### Denver

Former Chicagoans rejoice: Last October, the well-loved **Portillo's** Chicago-style hot dog and Italian beef sandwich emporium announced plans to come to Colorado. Founded 60+ years ago, Portillo's has over 70 locations in Illinois, Indiana, Arizona, California and is just opening in Texas. The first Colorado location has just been announced at the



northwest corner of 57th Ave. and Tower Road in Green Valley Ranch near DIA. A bit of a drive (about 45 minutes) from Larkspur but hopefully we will get one in our area in the next group of openings as they expand in the state. The 6,250 sq. ft. restaurant will be on a 2 acre parcel in the "Link 56" center being developed to be anchored by a Target. The restaurant will include a 500 sq. ft. patio and a 2-lane drive-through along with parking for 98 cars, which will probably be full most of the time.



# The bulletin board

Larkspur Sentinel

An informative bulletin of events from our local non-profits and local community groups.





# **CLASSIFIED ADS**

SECURITY DOORS & RETRACTABLE SCREENS: for

sale along with screen repair in the Larkspur area. Call Jack Hoyt **719-231-1719**.

**COLORADO MASTICATION:** fire mitigation, scrub oak removal, lot and brush clearing. **719-400-9104** 

NOTARY SERVICES available

in the Perry Park/Larkspur areas. Dakota Hoyt **719-671-3720**.

**SPRAYTECH:** preventive beetle spraying, noxious weed control, tree spraying for insects & diseases, tree deep root watering & fertilizing. **720-248-0000** 

#### ADVERTISING RATES

Pricing is for Camera Ready Art

Classified Business Card (scan only) Quarter Page Ad(3-1/2"w X 5"h) Half Page Ad (7-1/2"w X 5"h) Full Page Ad (7-1/2"w X 10"h) \$5/line (\$10 min) \$40.00 \$50.00 \$62.50 \$87.50

Submit ad art to larkspursentinel@gmail.com

DEADLINES

Articles/Letters/Ad Artwork/Classified Ads

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

The Larkspur Sentinel, LLC volunteer staff reserves the right to refuse any article or advertising submission.

The Larkspur Sentinel invites your letters, comments, and ideas for columns. Because of space limitation and legal ramifications, we reserve the right to edit any submitted material and cannot assure that submissions will be printed verbatim or unedited. The Larkspur Sentinel will correct all errors that occur. If you find a problem with a story - an error of fact, or a point requiring clarification, please email larkspursentinel@gmail.com

The opinions expressed in the Larkspur Sentinel are not necessarily the opinions of the staff or its advertisers.



#### It's time to spray your

## Pine or Spruce trees or other evergreens!

Evergreens are beautiful and provide many benefits. However, they need special care because they're under constant attack from insects. If they are not managed, they can be lethal to the trees. Preventative treatments are the best way to protect your trees. *We can help with that*. Please call for a free tree evaluation and estimate.

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 TCIA member and an ISA certification Arborist. Find more information about us at KNOtheadtree.com

### A walk on the wild side...

Susan Peters

# YES!!!!!...Helping injured wildlife...non-progress report on eagles...short takes Spring? Really?



The recent warm, sunny days in March elated one's senses including Moi's. The sounds! The smells! Our fields turning green! The aspen trees budding! The over-wintered koi coming to the pond surface with serious sleep in their eyes. My, how they have grown! Even with diminished appetites and only algae to subsist on. Yessiree! It is time to break out the Hawaiian shirts! I was looking forward to writing this article in such a garb, while the sun beamed on my shoulder. And then, WHAM! The heavy March snowstorm hit and we are trudging out in nearly three-feet of snow to put out much-needed bird seed and peanuts. So, I am huddled next to the woodstove in my jams with a heated throw on my lap.

One year a number of years ago, we had a very serious drought. No spring snows. That year absolutely no trees had pinecones and the scrub oak, nary an acorn. The bears, whose diet is 70% vegetation were starving. So, yes, bring it on.

Even before the snow clobbered the place, the mating season was underway. Our resident flicker was continuing his drumming on various parts of the house and deck. The robins were taking bird baths in hopes of a hot date. Other birds were practicing their scales to warm up for serious mating calls. The coyotes were pairing off and were doing howling duets. The does are sporting round bellies that protect and nourish their fawns until the wee one's appearances in June. Look for the clumsy newborn calves in the fields.



It's time to update Merlin, your phone app for identifying birds. It is so prolific, that it is very difficult to tell the birds apart. But Merlin could do that! I am so impressed that it can tell one species of hummingbird from another. The house finches are belting out their melodious songs. Hubby Dave turned to see one singing, only for it to be a Stellar's jay, the great mimic. Twice we have gone down

into the woods behind our house hearing a baby cry in there. Nope. It was a Stellar's jay.

Back to the house finches in their mating brilliant red waistcoat...they are not to be confused with the Cassin's finch, which has a ruffled-feather-looking top knot. The latter is not as prolific as their cousins around here.



With all the migrating birds, it's a good time to witness the seldom-seen birds. We missed out on one very distinct and unfamiliar bird call. Merlin was not with us. It will be until next winter.

#### continued from previous page

Speaking of, in mid-April you should be putting out a hummingbird feeder for migrating hummers and the early-to-arrive scouts (not that kind – the cookies are all gone anyway.) A solution of one cup of WHITE sugar to four cups of boiling water will do the trick. None of that store-bought mix with the red dye. AND, if you can buy a feeder that has a source of heat, like a lightbulb, it would really help these little guys, particularly placing in a sheltered place, like under an eave where the wind is not at hurricane force.

#### Infirmary for the injured?

And speaking of spring realities, this is the time of year where wildlife young-uns appear and often get themselves into trouble, requiring medical help – yeah, those skunks can be a bit dicey to deal with. But their scent sacks are not fragrant until they have matured. It would be best to call animal control for the stinky ones.

Squirrel Creek Wildlife Rescue will take injured and orphaned animals. They are located at C-470 and Santa Fe. Squirrelcreekwildlife.org or 303-791-0500. They will take drop-offs, but please call first. They always welcome volunteers to help with their many needy critters.

#### Eaglet watch

Sob. The bald eagles at Big Bear Lake, Jackie and Shadow, in the southern California mountains, who dedicated their lives recently to nesting their three eggs, have appeared to be losing the battle. This clutch is now well over the usual 35 days when a pip should appear - the small break in an egg when the chick uses its egg tooth to begin to escape its confinement. Friends of Big Bear Valley who maintain the webcam says, "[The birds] continue to care for the eggs, switching places, arguing over whose turn it is and being gentle and tender both with the eggs and with each other." Their other duties are keeping the nest tidy. Dang housework. Recall that Jackie sat on the eggs for 62 days straight through snowstorms and a mouse jumping on her back.



What happens next? They will continue to care for the nest for another week to a month before they desert it. The eggs may be absorbed into the nest or predators may take them.

So, what happened? That mystery is not known. Altitude and/or weather may be factors. Big Bear is at 6,700 feet. Barr Lake has at least a pair of eagle nesters every year and it sits at 5,100 feet.

The pair at Big Bear have been successful parents in the past. They may or may not return to their nest. If not, they have a big job in front of them. It takes from one to three months for nest construction with Mom doing the supervision and Pop helping out as directed.

#### Short takes

By now the bluebirds have produced their first brood out of usual two for the season. So, in the next couple of weeks, the young-ins will be fledging. Fortunately, the fledglings will still be fed by the parents with – yum, regurgitated worms. If, you can do it, put up a bluebird feeder and fill it with meal worms, freeze-dried or fresh. The parents train their babies to come to feeder, too. Something fun to watch.

The bears now are expanding their territory for grub and your bird feeders do the trick. So, please be sure to bring them in at night to deter bears.

An alert birder Emily Tornga videoed a red-headed woodpecker yanking a European starling out of its nest in a tree. Both bird species are cavity nesters. The starlings are invasive and very bratty – they frequently take over other birds' nests. They were introduced in 1890 in New York City's Central Park for a Shakespeare Festival, which brought in all birds mentioned in the play for the occasion. Now, they are ubiquitous. Once one even tried to carry off a soaker hose in our garden. Silly bird. You can watch the short video at: <u>yahoo.com/lifestyle/watch-woodpecker-evict-starling-stole-164459217</u>

Or see these extracted photos.



The New England Aquarium spotted a gray whale in the north Atlantic. "So what", you say? It is the first time in 200+ years that the whales have been in this ocean. So, how did it get here, and in the Mediterranean? The ice melt in the Arctic explains it. The Northern Passage is now open so ships can transverse it between the Pacific and the Atlantic.

The gray whale is mid-sized in whale world being about 49 feet long and weighing about 40 tons. It is called the "devil whale" because it is so feisty. It also has two blow holes, resulting in a heart-shape spouting. But, get this, it is a bottom feeder. Today it is probably overwhelmed by microplastics, like we all are. Blah.

And Ryan Stalker took the grand prize at the British Wildlife Photography Awards for his photo of a soccer ball with a mass or ball of goose barnacles hanging off it.

That's all folks for this month. Gotta run...the blowing snow has buried some birdfeeders that are in high demand.

Get in touch! Email: <u>susan@larkspurconsulting.com</u> or phone: 303-725-6868.



"I am a Larkspur resident and have been specializing in selling Larkspur real estate for the past 17 years. I am the managing broker and owner of Wolfe Realty Group, an independent residential real estate brokerage firm. By choosing to specialize in thereal estate market, I can provide you with the highest level of knowledge and insight when buying or selling your Larkspur or Perry Park home or land. If you have any questions about Colorado real estate, please contact Wolfe Realty Group Inc. at 303-681-3553 or go to www.DiscoverLarkspur.com"



Ben Wolfe Managing Broker & Owner Larkspur Resident & Larkspur Real Estate Expert



#### **Under Contract!**

7091 Fox Circle Perry Park, Larkspur \$1,295,000

4 Bedroom/4 Bathrooms

1 Wooded Acres

Stunning views overlooking all of beautiful Perry Park



Enjoy breathtaking views of Red Rock formations and Pike National forest from every window in this fully renovated home. The great room features picture windows with views of the red rocks & towering pines. The updated kitchen is perfect for the chef in your family with top of the line Wolf & Subzero appliances. The entire upper level is a master retreat including a relaxing bedroom with a fireplace, private wrap around deck and stunning panoramic views overlooking all of Perry Park.



We Brought The Buyer! 3673 Champagne Avenue The Meadows, Castle Rock \$477,500 Consistent Winner Of

> 5280 For Outstanding Customer Service



Just Sold! 1851 Gore Drive Sterling Pointe, Larkspur, \$1,140,000

# CLIENT TESTIMONIALS



"Ask yourself what you would want from a relationship with your realtor. We did and got that plus more from Ben Wolfe with Wolfe Realty Group. We needed someone flexible to our schedule and highly responsive as we were trying to locate a

home or land while still living in Chicago. We needed someone who was willing to understand what we really wanted and sometimes that takes a good deal of time to discover. We needed someone who was a skilled and fair negotiator. Thanks Ben! We love the land we bought, the builder you recommended and have already benefited greatly from all of your advice about Colorado. Nice to do business with someone who is genuine and goes above and beyond." *Feedback from George and Corrine Miller*  This majestic 4 bedroom, 4 bathroom home features the rare combination of an extremely private 2.3 acre heavily wooded lot along with stunning views of the front range while being surrounded by towering pines. The entire home has been completely renovated. Enjoy a relaxing evening in this mountain paradise on the expansive decks and patios.

Wolfe Realty Group, Inc. Office 303-681-3553 Cell 303-667-7995 Ben@DiscoverLarkspur.com www.DiscoverLarkspur.com