



Published by Denver City Councilman Charlie Brown

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# The E-mail Express



December 2011

## Occupy Denver continues to damage historic Civic Center park



Protesters leave their mark on the Balustrade Wall at Civic Center park. Photo: Civic Center Conservancy, November 2011

Occupy Denver's three-month presence is taking a toll on downtown Denver's historic Civic Center park. Graffiti, damage to turf and irrigation systems, and the impact of long-term camping and unsanitary conditions have had an unmistakable effect on this iconic community and cultural hub.

"Civic Center has always been — and should continue to be — a haven for free speech," said Civic Center Conservancy Executive Director Lindy Eichenbaum Lent. "But vandalism and the wasting of taxpayer dollars is not free speech. While the Civic Center Conservancy has stayed out of the Occupy Denver conversation to date, the ongoing property damage in Civic Center park is more than we can bear to watch silently."

*(continued on page 2)*

**"Vandalism and the wasting of taxpayer dollars is not free speech."**

—Lindy Eichenbaum Lent, Executive Director, Civic Center Conservancy

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The conservancy's concern is understandable. Work to improve the park has been going on since 2007, when Denver voters approved \$9.5 million in Better Denver bond funds to rehabilitate the park after decades of deferred maintenance. Denver Parks and Recreation completed the restoration in 2011 and the result was widespread public accolades.

"Thanks to the strong partnerships between the city and county of Denver, the Civic Center Conservancy, the Downtown Denver Partnership, VISIT DENVER, RTD, local neighborhood organizations and numerous community partners, Civic Center was finally becoming a safe, clean and welcoming place for all," said Lent. In fact, the restoration won honors, this year earning Lent's group a Downtown Denver Award for making "a significant contribution toward creating a unique, diverse, long-term positive impact on the downtown environment."



Markings by protesters near the Seal Pond Entrance.

Photo: Civic Center Conservancy, November 2011

### Reclaiming an urban oasis

The conservancy and the Downtown Denver Partnership have even invested a combined \$107,500 in private funds, using the money for power-washing and litter and graffiti removal. This came on top of the taxpayer-funded services that Denver Parks and Recreation already provides. Park beautification, increased policing, and free conservancy programs like Civic Center EATS, Independence Eve and Bike-In Movies have dramatically improved Civic Center's image and helped the community reclaim the historic urban oasis as a vibrant public asset.

But today, public progress is threatened. What began as a group of activists exercising their First Amendment rights as part of a national movement has become a magnet for everyone from drug dealers to anarchists.

"Recent media coverage has begun to discuss the impact in terms of policing costs, but has not focused adequately on the impact to



Sleeping bags and tarps line the sidewalks on Broadway

Photo: DPD

downtown Denver's historic Civic Center Park and those related costs," Lent said. "Whether we like it or not, long-term habitation in a public park is a welcoming opportunity to individuals who are seeking to wreak havoc. While vandalism and infrastructure damage is undoubtedly an unintended consequence of well-intentioned demonstrators, it is a consequence nonetheless that everyone – the protestors and the general public – should take into account."

### An honorable past

Civic Center park has a long history of events, demonstrations and community gatherings. Most organizers play by the rules. They obey park curfews, obtain permits for sanitation and safety, pay security deposits and are held accountable for clean-up and damage. In recent years, City Council has conducted public hearings on whether to allow long-term permits that were shorter than the current Occupy Denver habitation. But none of this is happening in the Occupy Denver situation, and local taxpayers will be left with the bill.

This is intolerable. Our park needs protection and liberation, a fact understood in November, when Civic Center park was honored by the national City Parks Alliance as a "Frontline Park." The designation recognizes the park as a "leading example of urban parks creating economic, environmental and social capital through innovative partnerships." This national honor is a reminder that we, as a community, have an asset worth protecting and we all must advocate for its care.

On Nov. 30, city crews from Public Works and Parks and Recreation began cleaning part of the park of graffiti, trash and debris. Their goal was to address public safety and health concerns that had developed both in the park and on the adjacent right-of-way. It's welcome work, and it's very possibly a first glimmer of hope.

# Council bans texting at public hearings

On Nov. 14, Council President Chris Nevitt added the following language to his scripted comments before a public hearing:

**“Audience members, please understand that council members use electronic devices of various kinds to access the materials relevant to the public hearings before us. Be assured, however, that, by mutual agreement and common practice of this City Council, these devices are not being used for texting, e-mailing, or other communications during public hearings.”**

Councilman Brown led the effort to ban texting at public hearings. He wrote about it in last month’s newsletter as well as The Denver Post and Cherry Creek Chronicle. Public support for the ban was overwhelming.



Cartoon originally appeared in Nov. 2011 E-mail Express

## Women’s Bean Project mixes up hope

The Women’s Bean Project is a lot more than cornbread and soup. It’s about hope and the chance at a new future for women who need help — felons, the chronically unemployed, recovering addicts, and mothers whose children have been taken away. They come to the program in need but leave in bloom.

At its essence, the bean project is a social enterprise that offers a transitional job in gourmet food manufacturing and jewelry-making. It provides income, help overcoming barriers to employment and the chance to learn essential job skills in a safe work environment.

Food products made by the Women’s Bean Project include mixes for bean soup, chili,

cornbread, cookies and brownies. A variety of spices for dips, salsas and rubs round out the product list. Every product is assembled by hand.

Beans are scooped into 3-by-14 inch bags, weighed and adjusted for consistency, and topped with a spice packet that was previously packaged on a separate production line. The bag is sealed and hand-tied with a tag that identifies it as “Lovingly Handmade by” a woman in the program.

Each necklace, pair of earrings or bracelet is conceptualized by a professional designer and assembled, bead by bead, by the women in the program, then packaged with similar tags. The limited-edition, handmade jewelry is priced affordably and is refreshed

with new selections twice a year. Last year, women in the program helped the Bean Project sell nearly \$2 million in gourmet food products and jewelry. Women’s Bean Project products are available online at [www.womensbeanproject.com](http://www.womensbeanproject.com), all King Soopers supermarkets and about 100 Safeway stores in Colorado. In addition, products can be found in more than 500 stores throughout the nation.



## Economic Impact of USA Pro Cycling Tour



The inaugural USA Pro Cycling Challenge attracted more than one million spectators from around the world in late August and brought \$83.5 million to the Colorado economy, according to VISIT DENVER. More than \$67 million came in the form of direct spending by spectators on lodging, food, transportation and entertainment. The remaining economic impact came in the form of team, staff, sponsor and vendor spending, employment created by the event, and the resulting tax effects of the race.

## Noel Cunningham, relentless humanitarian

Friends, family, restaurateurs, and community leaders were shocked to learn of the death Dec. 1 of Noel Cunningham. Cunningham owned and operated Strings restaurant in Denver for 25 years and was well known as a community leader and humanitarian. “He was a close friend of our family. For several years on Memorial Day, my son Nick and I would plant a vegetable garden on the west side of Strings,” Councilman Brown said. He was a VISIT DENVER board member for 16 years and was well known and respected for his personal work on international human causes. He will be greatly missed.



## Boeing's new 787 dreamliner lands at DIA



The new Boeing 787 made a stop at Denver International Airport recently as it flew around the country performing various flight tests. The company chose Denver as a place to perform various engine tests in a high-altitude environment. The aircraft entered commercial service earlier this year and is currently operated by All Nippon Airlines in Japan. United will be the first domestic airline to take delivery of the aircraft in 2012.

With the capacity and ability to fly long-haul routes, the Boeing 787 is the aircraft of DIA's future and the key to Denver's international growth. A mid-size airplane with a big jet range, the 787 will provide airlines with unmatched fuel efficiency and will be capable of traveling at speeds similar to today's fastest wide-body aircraft.

Boeing's new 787 makes a stop at DIA.  
Photo: DIA

### Colleague Profile: Judy Montero, District 9

**Council Service:** I was elected in 2003 to represent District 9 and recently elected to another four-year term. I serve on the Health Safety, Education and Services committee, co-chair of Land Use, Transportation and Infrastructure, and chair of the National Western Stock Show Special Issues Committee

**Bio:** A resident of District 9 almost my entire life, I grew up in Northwest Denver and went to North High School. I graduated from Adams State College in the San Luis Valley and earned a master's in social work from the University of Denver. I began my career with the city of Denver working as a council aide to then-Councilwoman Debbie Ortega. In 1997, Mayor Webb appointed me as the Parks & Rec Department's public information officer and city council liaison. I served in that capacity until I was elected to Denver City Council.

**Family:** I have a loving husband and daughter, as well as a special black lab rescue dog named Stella.

**Policy Interests:** Creating and preserving healthy and sustainable neighborhoods. Also, ensuring all of our communities have convenient and direct access to fresh, healthy and affordable food.

**What issues concern your constituents the most?** Graffiti abatement, sidewalk repairs, trash in alleys, the need for more grocery stores, continued build-out of FasTracks, the future of the Stock Show, and preserving hours and services at libraries and recreation centers.

**What are your proudest accomplishments?** The Denver Union Station Redevelopment Project. It's the largest transportation pro-

ject currently underway in the United States. I am most proud of our ability to fundamentally change people's lives for the better — that's the true meaning of public service.

**What has been your greatest frustration?** Working with the overwhelming bureaucracy you see at almost every level of government.

**What has surprised you the most?**

The true grit and commitment of so many of our residents to get things done. The passion and drive of our constituents is what pleasantly surprises me.

**What's one thing you would change about Denver?** It would be great to see even more trails, bike routes, and transit to get people where they need to go without always having to use a car every-day. We need communities and infrastructure that are more oriented and designed for people.

**If you were mayor for a day, what one thing would you do?** I would do everything I could to bring a major entity or company to the heart of Denver and put people back to work.

**What do you do for fun?** I really enjoy getting outside and pretending as if I was a tourist in my own council district. I take the time to walk and bike our trails from shop to shop and, more importantly, I like to spend money at all the vibrant and exciting local businesses in my council district and the city of Denver.



## New events at the upcoming National Western Stock Show

**Denver** — The 2012 National Western Stock Show, Jan. 7-22, will feature many new, exciting events,” Paul Andrews, president and CEO, recently announced, “while still remaining true to our 106-year tradition of serving agriculture producers and consumers throughout the world and preserving our Western heritage.”

### New for 2012:

**Super Saturday: Jan. 7, 2012: Colorado vs. The World** The richest one-day rodeo in Colorado history with prizes totaling \$100,000 features Century Link’s Colorado team vs. National Champions in bareback riding, barrel racing, saddle bronco riding, steer wrestling and bull riding. Winners will be selected at every stage of the competition until the final championship, in which winners of each event will compete for the first national title.

**Hispanic Heritage Day: Sunday, Jan. 8, 2012** Featuring two performances of the Mexican Rodeo Extravaganza as well as many special events and performances that celebrate Hispanic heritage.

**Military Day: Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2012** What’s more American than a day at the rodeo? It’s a day to welcome our troops back home and thank them and their families for their service to our country. (The event is supported by a fundraiser held by 92.5-KWOF Radio to help purchase tickets for our men and women in the armed forces).

**Pink Rodeo: Saturday, Jan. 21, 2012 11a.m.** Our first rodeo in support of the Susan G. Komen Foundation. A portion of the ticket price will be donated to the Komen Foundation.

### Returning favorites:

19 Pro Rodeos; PBR Bull Riding Denver Chute-Out Touring Pro Finale; Martin Luther King Jr. Heritage Rodeo; An Evening of Dancing Horses®; National Western’s New Wild West Shows; \$15,000 RAM Invitational Freestyle Reining; \$10,000 Gamblers Choice Open Jumper Stake; 9NEWS Super Dogs; \$40,000 Grand Prix Draft Horse Performances; Coors Western Art Exhibit and Sale; the largest trade show in Colorado; activities for kids; and more.

### To order tickets:

ONLINE: [NationalWestern.com](http://NationalWestern.com) Phone: 1-888-551-5004

In Person: National Western Box Office

4655 Humboldt St. (I-70 and Brighton Boulevard) Denver



## Meeting of the Minds



Councilman Brown joins Cory-Merrill President Don Tressler and UPCC Board Member Diana Helper at the monthly Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC) meeting at Kirk of Bonnie Brae Church on Saturday, Nov. 12.

Photo: Ray Ehrenstein

## Cowboy Up!



Sam Stratton, son of Mike and Sally, demonstrates what it’s like to be “cowboy tough” in a recent game on the blue turf at Boise State. Stratton turned down Harvard to play for Wyoming head football coach Dave Christensen. The Cowboys are bowl-bound this year.

The Strattons attended the wedding of the Browns nearly 30 years ago where Mike helped roll out the red carpet. “It was the last time I saw him do manual labor,” Brown said.

Photo: Chris Bulter/Idaho Statesman

## Tidbits and Outrages

### Coffee nation politics

Howard Schultz, the chairman and CEO of coffee king Starbucks, “has suddenly become a political activist, announcing that because he was disgusted with Washington’s dysfunction, he would cease making campaign contributions to incumbents in either party.



“Deploing a system that has ‘chosen to put partisan and ideological purity over the well-being of the people,’ Schultz asked fellow corporate executives to join him in a boycott. More than 140 quickly did, including the CEOs at Pepsi, Disney, Intuit, Whole Foods, J. Crew, AOL, NYSE and NASDAQ.”

David A. Kaplin  
“Strong Coffee”  
*Fortune* 12/12/11

(Note: Fortune named Howard Schultz its 2011 Business Person of the Year.)

### Turn out the lights, the party’s over

“Declare victory. Participate in the electoral process. Just quit sticking 100 percent of taxpayers with your babysitting bill.”

Editorial, “Occupy somewhere else”  
*The Denver Post* 11/30/11

### Hold your nose

“Have you been down there lately? Did you smell it? Forget Occupy Denver, forget the Tea Party. This is now the Pee Party.

Councilman Brown  
“Tuesdays with Charlie”  
*KNUS radio* 11/29/11

### Put up your dukes, Councilmen

Roberts: “I wrote it.”  
Hackworth: “I was there, too.”  
Roberts: “Well, do you want to go to court or do you want to go outside?”

A heated exchange between Councilmen Bill Roberts and Ted Hackworth over minority and women-owned businesses.

“Right to hike city’s pacts for minorities sparks feud”  
*The Denver Post* 3/21/85

### A color-blind America?

“Affirmative Action is a policy that could be justified at its start, but has now become yesterday’s solution to yesterday’s problem. Yet it endures as if nothing has happened in the past 50 years.”

Ward Connerly  
“What Happened to Post-Racial America?”  
*The Wall Street Journal* 10/4/11

### There are other issues

“It’s important that the GOP be for something, and not just campaign as the anti-illegal immigration party.”

Marco Rubio  
Freshman U.S. Senator, R-FL  
*Newsweek* 12/5/11



Marco Rubio, R-FL

### Shelterless in Moab

“There are only four truly homeless people in Moab. I am one of them. We are homeless by deliberate choice. We don’t want a homeless shelter in Moab as it would attract undesirable outside elements to our fine community. The desert and the canyons are our home and we don’t need anybody’s roof or anybody’s pity. This will be my 26th winter outside and I wouldn’t have it any other way. I’d rather be poor in Moab than rich anywhere else.”

Carey Jones  
A letter to the *Moab Times Independent*  
10/6/11

### Read this, John Elway

“Despite all these issues, people still like Tim Tebow, which is mystifying. It’s as if they can’t recognize his flaws. They are blinded by hype. They’re willfully ignorant. They want to believe in a myth.



“Tebowing”

“One day they will see all of Tim Tebow shortcomings. How he never once sang ‘O Canada’ at a Vancouver Canucks game. How he’s never captured a live dinosaur. How he’s too chicken to run for president.

“Tim Tebow never, ever makes everybody happy. He can’t really do anything besides win football games. Since when did anyone care about that?”

Jason Gay  
“What Tim Tebow Can’t Do”  
*Wall Street Journal* 12/1/11