

# The Email Express



February 2010

Published by Denver City Councilman Charlie Brown

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## Denver, state take action on medical marijuana



Councilman Brown recently was interviewed for the "PBS News Hour with Jim Lehrer" about Denver's new law that regulates medical marijuana.

Six months ago Denver and Colorado were the Wild West of medical marijuana, with unregulated and untaxed dispensaries opening almost daily and the number of registered patients soaring.

In January, the Denver City Council took unprecedented action on the issue. Now, state legislators are considering two proposals to regulate medical marijuana.

### Denver action

Acting on a proposal sponsored by Councilman Brown, in January the City Council passed a medical marijuana dispensary licensing ordinance. Dispensary owners could get license applications beginning Monday, Feb. 8. Those seeking licenses must apply by March 1.

Here is what's required:

An applicant for a dispensary license must submit a lease or deed for their businesses, a description of products and service, a floor plan, a security plan and an area map.

**"It was like trying to pick your teeth with a rattlesnake."** Councilman Brown on working with the many constituents on the medical marijuana ordinance.  
*PBS News Hour, Feb 1, 2010*

A dispensary has to have a zoning permit, a sales tax license and a burglar alarm license.

Fees include a non-refundable application fee of \$2,000 and a permit fee of \$3,000, which must be renewed annually.

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Medical marijuana debate far from over

(Continued from page 1)

Fingerprints are required from dispensary managers and from anyone who holds a 10 percent or larger ownership interest in a dispensary.

Licenses cannot be issued to anyone convicted of a felony or who has served a felony sentence within the previous five years.

Dispensaries are prohibited in residential zones and within 1,000 feet of schools, childcare centers and other dispensaries. (Businesses that held sales licenses prior to Dec. 16, 2009, are exempt from the spacing requirements.)

## At the Statehouse

Two bills pending in the legislature propose to set new rules both for medical marijuana patients and for dispensaries. The prime sponsors of both measures are Sen. Chris Romer, D-Denver, and Rep. Tom Massey, R-Poncha Springs.

Here's what each bill proposes to do:

Senate Bill 10-109 would require the state health department to issue regulations for issuing medical marijuana cards, impose various rules on doctors who issue the cards, forbid doctors from having business relationships with caregivers or dispensaries and create a



*A city worker takes fingerprints as part of the new medical marijuana licensing process.*

medical marijuana board to rule on applications from people younger than 21.

House Bill 10-1284 has generated more controversy. It would allow dispensaries to remain open but require them to be licensed non-profit marijuana centers, put an 18-month moratorium on new centers, restrict who can grow marijuana and create legal distinctions between small-scale caregivers and marijuana centers, which could be broadly regulated or even banned by local governments.

The bill also includes the provisions of SB 10-109.

The proposed legislation has been criticized from both ends of the medical marijuana spectrum.

Republican Attorney General John Suthers sent a letter to legislators on Feb. 4, saying he believes the 2000 constitutional amendment legalizing medical marijuana does not allow commercial sale of marijuana or commercial dispensaries or clinics. Suthers urged lawmakers to be careful about passing any legislation that would seem to legalize dispensaries.

From the other side, organized medical marijuana advocates blasted the second bill and have begun organizing for a new ballot measure that would set more lax rules for dispensaries.

It's clear that medical marijuana issues are far from resolved, regardless of recent government moves.

### Medical Marijuana Legislative Public Hearing March 4

HB 10-1284, Medical Marijuana Regulations, sponsored by Rep. Tom Massey will be heard by the House Judiciary Committee on Thursday, March 4, at 1:30p.m. in the Old Supreme Court Chambers.

To listen to the committee hearing on your computer go to Colorado General Assembly Home Page and click on Audio and then click on Old Supreme Court Chambers or the link is: <http://www.leg.state.co.us/clics/clics2009a/cslFrontPages.nsf/Audio?Open Forum>

## City extends decision calendar for new zoning code

Last fall when the council approved a non-binding calendar for the new zoning code, Councilman Brown reminded his colleagues that the schedule could change. "We 'opened' DIA four times and while it is good to have a schedule it is more important to get it right the first time," he said. And sure enough the schedule has changed for the third time. Here is the revised schedule:

- Feb. 17 - Planning Board begins information sessions.
- March 18 - Zoning Code Task Force transmits draft code to Planning Board and Council.
- March 23 - Staff report submitted to Planning Board, hearing notice published.
- March 10 or 24 - Blueprint Denver Committee begins information sessions.

- April 7 - Planning Board public hearing
- April 28 - Blueprint Denver Committee begins formal review process
- May 17 - 1st reading at Council
- June 21 - Council public hearing

The schedule could change yet again if the Planning Board or the Blueprint Denver Committee decide they need more time.

## Bonnie Brae residents beautify their alleys with artistic mosaics

The Bonnie Brae area of District 6 is providing a great example of neighborhood beautification through the artistic efforts of some creative residents.

The Bonnie Brae Alley Art Consortium was featured in a page 1 Denver Post article on Feb. 8.

The artistic neighbors already have created six mosaics that are mounted on fences and garages in area alleys, beautifying often-neglected areas. More mosaics are in the works.

“We’re trying to get it in every alley in Bonnie Brae,” Wendy Lesko, who got the project rolling, told The Post.

The mosaics, some as large as three feet wide by six feet tall, depict subjects from cows to desert and Hawaiian scenes.



*Bonnie Brae resident Jayne Russell is hard at work on another mosaic to beautify the historic Denver neighborhood. The latest artistic addition is expected to be unveiled in a few weeks.*

You also can see photos and learn how to get involved at [www.bonniebraealleyart.com](http://www.bonniebraealleyart.com), or call (303) 860-7075 for more information.

## Test your civic savvy

Do you ever wonder how much various civic and non-profit officials make? Test your knowledge by matching the annual salary with the office.

- \$78,173
  - \$90,000
  - \$128,598
  - \$142,708
  - \$145,601
  - \$180,000
- Denver City Council member
  - Denver Mayor
  - District Court Judge
  - Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice
  - President of Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
  - Colorado Governor

You’ll find the answers on page 6, but don’t peek until you’ve made your choices.

## Colleague Profile: Michael Hancock—District 11

*With this issue, the Email Express begins a new series profiling members of the Denver City Council.*

**Council service:** Hancock was elected in 2003, re-elected in 2007 and is eligible to run in 2011. His district includes northeast Denver, including DIA.



**Bio:** A native of Killeen, Texas, he graduated from Manual High School and Hastings College. He holds a master’s degree in public administration management from CU-Denver. He was president and CEO of the Urban League of Metropolitan Denver for five years.

**Family:** He and wife Mary Louise Lee-Hancock have three children.

**Policy Interests:** Education, safety, neighborhood standards, economic development and investment in public infrastructure.

**What issues concern your constituents the most?**

Job creation and stabilization of the housing market.

**What are your proudest accomplishments?**

Helping to design the 2007 bond election and co-chairing the effort to pass the preschool tax.

**What’s been your greatest frustration?** Easy, the bureaucracy!

**What’s surprised you most?**

How many people actually watch us on Channel 8.

**What one thing would you change about Denver?**

Nothing!

**If you were mayor for a day, what one thing would you do?**

Try to meet with as many global companies to convince them to move their operations to Denver.

**What do you do for fun?**

Spending time with my family, playing golf, catching a good movie or catching a Broncos’ game.

## SnowSports show draws 19,000 to Denver

The four-day SnowSports Industries America Snow Show, Jan. 28-31, brought a record 19,000 retailers, manufacturers and decision-makers to Denver, generating an economic impact of \$30 million. The event will be in Denver for the next 10 years.

That run “makes this the largest convention booking in Denver’s history. Even better, it comes in January, traditionally one of the slowest months,” said VISIT DENVER President and CEO Richard Scharf. “Delegates will spend more money in Denver over the next decade

than the original cost of expanding the Colorado Convention Center.”

The group had met in Las Vegas for 37 years.

VISIT DENVER, the city, the Downtown Denver Partnership and Colorado Ski Country U.S.A. staged “The World’s Largest Après Ski + Ride Party.” The event

was open to attendees and residents and included events at more than 60 bars, restaurants and other



*The SnowSports show brought scores of colorful exhibits to the Colorado Convention Center, enough to fill the equivalent of 14 football fields.*

venues, as well as activities ranging from a live feed of ESPN’s Winter X-

Games to “Wear Your Ski Wear to Work Friday.”

## Brown names Fenton to parks advisory panel

Seeking someone with professional business and financial experience, Councilman Brown has appointed Michelle Fenton to the Denver Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, representing District 6.

Since the day she moved from her home state of Montana 16 years ago, Michelle has lived in or around the Washington Park neighborhood.

Married with two young children, Michelle can often be found in one of the city’s parks. Whether it be running, watching her kids play soccer, or swimming at the rec center, Michelle is a frequent user of all that Parks and Recreation has to offer. So, when offered the opportunity to join the Advisory Board, she jumped at the chance!

Michelle will bring significant business and finance experience to the board. As a chartered financial analyst, Michelle



*Michelle Fenton, Councilman Brown’s new appointee to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.*

served as a portfolio manager and partner at INVESCO, where she managed one of the largest technology funds in the country. More recently, she started her own consulting practice, helping

start-up companies flourish. Michelle acts as an advisor for numerous start ups, helping design and implement business and financial strategies to move their companies forward.

Michelle also serves as board president of The Delores Project, a homeless shelter for women, and she also sits on the board of the Byrne Urban Scholars, a tuition and mentoring program that works to assist Denver’s at-risk youth. She also serves on the Investment Committee of The Colorado Health Foundation.

Over the years, Michelle has been interviewed and/or featured in numerous magazines and newspapers, including Barron’s, The Wall Street Journal, the Rocky Mountain News, MSN Money, the Dallas News, and The New York Times.

Welcome Michelle!

# Habitat kicks off project in District 6

**H**abitat for Humanity last month started construction of a green, transit-oriented town home development in District 6, south of Interstate 25 and east of South Colorado Boulevard in the Virginia Village area.

The 24 units are being built by volunteers, as is the practice with Habitat projects, and construction is expected to take nine months. Between 75 and 100 volunteers are needed daily.

When finished, the Bails Townhomes will house more than 100 people and are being built with green techniques intended to reduce the project's impact on the environment and to reduce utility costs for owners. The units will feature tankless water heaters, programmable thermostats and energy-efficient appliances.



*Habitat for Humanity's new 24-unit townhome project is going up in the Virginia Village area south of Interstate 25 and east of South Colorado Boulevard.*

Residents will be able to purchase their homes with zero-interest loans from Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver.

The community sponsor is Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, and other partners include Anadarko Petroleum Corp., Cisco Systems & Partners, Future Faith Network and St. Mary Land and Exploration.

The project is being built with corporate and individual sup-

port. If you want to learn more about Bails Townhomes and to volunteer, go to Habitat's website, [www.habitatmetrodenver.org](http://www.habitatmetrodenver.org).



## ***Elfenbein, Gass appointed to Cherry Creek Steering Committee***

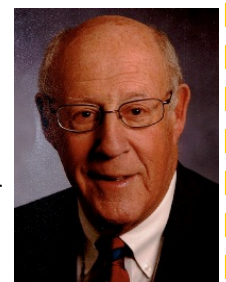


***Alan Gass***

**C**ouncilman Brown has appointed two members to the Cherry Creek Steering Committee. The committee is a neighborhood association that monitors issues and concerns in the Cherry Creek area.

The appointees are Alan G. Gass and Bill Elfenbein

Gass, a fourth generation Denverite, is an architect who's served on the committee since 1993. He's been active in various civic projects and study groups on transportation issues and downtown planning. Gass holds bachelor's and architecture degrees from Harvard.



***Bill Elfenbein***

Elfenbein is a local businessman and former board chair of the Regional Transportation District. He's served on a variety of transportation groups and also has been active in downtown planning and housing organizations.

# Spring's coming, time to think about trees

Thanks to The Park People organization, the annual Denver Digs Trees program is again offering low-cost "street trees" to city residents.

But, you'll need to act quickly; the deadline is Feb. 15.

Street trees are trees planted close to the curbside, often in the "tree lawn" between the sidewalk and curb.

Go to [www.theparkpeople.com/denverdigs.php](http://www.theparkpeople.com/denverdigs.php) and click the Spring Street Tree Application in the middle of the page.

In addition to the application form and instructions, there is information and images about the trees available this year.

The cost per tree is \$25.

After you submit your application, a Denver Digs Trees Site Inspector will visit your property to verify that your potential tree site meets city spacing requirements. If it does, the inspector will issue approval and mark the best planting sites, and you will receive a confirmation letter in April.

Residents who are approved for street trees are responsible for having utility lines checked prior to planting. Trees must be picked up

on Saturday, April 17 (pick-up location information will be included in your confirmation letter).

If your block needs a few more trees, think about doing your part to fix that.



Spring 2010  
*Street Trees*

## Concerned about coyotes? Try classes

District 6 and southeast Denver are rich in parks and natural areas from Washington Park to the paths along Cherry Creek.

Regular users of such areas or those who live nearby may have encountered the coyote, that hardy wild canine.

If you're concerned about your personal safety and that of your children and pets around coyotes, the Department of Parks and Recreation is offering free training in "coyote hazing," techniques to maintain a coyote's fear of humans.

Here's the schedule for hazing sessions in southeast Denver:

- Feb. 18 – Bible Park, north lot
- Feb. 25 – Cook Park Rec Center
- March 3 – Washington Park Rec Center

- April 1 – Eisenhower Rec Center
- All sessions run from 10 to 11:30 a.m.



## Answers to salary quiz

- \$78,173—Denver City Council member
- \$90,000—Colorado Governor
- \$128,598 —District Court Judge
- \$142,708—Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice
- \$145,601—Denver Mayor
- \$180,000—President of Colorado Commission for the Homeless\*

\*Denver Daily News, Jan 5, 2010

## Museum gets biggest gift

Thanks to the leadership of George Sparks, President and CEO, the Denver Museum of Nature & Science has received an \$8 million grant from the Morgridge Family Foundation for a new Science Engagement Center on the south side of the museum.

It's the largest donation in the museum's 109-year history.

Way to go George!