

March

capitol Business

COLUMN & PHOTOS BY J. L. SCHULTHEIS PRICE

Openings

Yes, they are lovely and undoubtedly worthy of the name. I speak of the cupcakes you'll find at **Lovely Confections**, 1489 Steele. Although the address is Steele, the property fronts on E. Colfax in the Chamberlin Heights building.

This is yet another bakery for the city's newest premier strip and the inspiration of a grand baker, Porche (Porch-ee) Lovely, who chose an area she thinks needs a few good treats.



THE GLASS CUPCAKE CASE AT LOVELY CONFECTIONS reflects the passing traffic that zips by their location at Colfax & Steele in the Chamberlin Heights building.

"I wanted to have a sense of neighborhood. I decided to do a bakery that specializes in cupcakes because I think really good cake makes people feel good. Cake is served at celebrations. It's one of those desserts that makes any event special... even a non-event," said Lovely.

During my first visit the offerings included plump rounds in roughly eight flavors plus a small selection of beverages, including that must-have, milk. Plans include adding 8" three-layer cakes in addition to the cuppies.

The cream, milk and eggs come from Morning Fresh Dairy, a family farm that has operated since the late 1800s in Ft. Collins. Lovely wants only the best for her pretty little delights.

"We really believe in using as many whole ingredients as possible, and organic ingredients. The cupcake represents all the good ingredients in there as well as a treat," said Lovely.

Their slogan? You guessed it, "Let them eat cake."

The number is 720-524-7770. Hours are Tuesday-Saturday 11 am-8 pm and Sundays 11 am-5 pm. This cupcake "thing" seems to know no bounds.

Mirepoix, the sleek but not-so-popular restaurant tucked inside the JW Marriott Hotel at 150 Clayton, has been shut since November, but the wraps come off the renovation of the space March 3.

Rumor has it that the make-over ran around \$2 million and the sneak peek I had this week shows it was really comprehensive.

Textures abound in this new eatery. Wood bark, lots of stone, even faux cowhide. They're comforting textures selected to fit a place named **Second Home Kitchen**. The general manager, Jeffrey Parr, tells me the target was to create the ambience of that mountain home you wish you owned in Vail or Aspen.



THE REMODEL FOR SECOND HOME KITCHEN (formerly Mirepoix) boasts a rich collection of textures & the familiar wall of wine, a lot like the home you wished you owned.

The adega (that's Portuguese for "above ground wine cellar") is the only thing that remains from Mirepoix. It covers the entire eastern wall, but the hard edge visual of all that glass has been softened with the addition of sheer curtains.

The rest of the space was stripped to the studs and redone.



Additions include a 15' fire pit on the patio and a two-ton stone wood-burning pizza oven in the kitchen.

The pretensions of the former entity have been totally erased and best of all, the expansive bar area is now contained inside the restaurant instead of sprawling across the hotel lobby. Much cozier.

The menu at Second Home is predictable but still delightful. Parr says they will feature “modern American home cooking with spins on timeless classics.”

He offers the dish “Ahi Tuna Two Ways” to illustrate his point. It pays homage to the tuna casserole your mom used to make but features Shiitake mushroom sauce and seared tuna at the same time.

There will also be comfort foods like Southern-fried chicken and rotisserie leg of lamb, and expect a heavy focus on microbrews from around the area and the US.

Second Home will serve breakfast, lunch and dinner. The menu after 11 am is constant and won't change... in offerings or price... after dark.

Hours for breakfast are weekdays 6:30-10:30 am and weekends 7-11 am. The main menu begins at 11 am and is offered until 10 pm every day except Friday and Saturday, when the kitchen remains open till 11 pm. The number is 303-253-3000.

If you go, don't miss the patio to the south. It's now easier to reach and I have always thought it one of the best al fresco options in CCN.

Fans of the old Normandie Restaurant at 1515 Madison are still reeling over the arrival of old-fashioned burlesque shows at this locale.

I wrote about this offering briefly last month, but there's more. **The Pink Elephant Room at The PS 1515** is now featuring a burlesque review Thursday through Saturday 4:30 pm-2 am. At 10 pm on Friday and Saturday nights there's a show dubbed “Shimmy Shaker” that features performances of the burlesque troupe named As It Was.

Manager Anika Zappe says “It's a relatively traditional vaudeville show with a \$10 cover. It's sexy but respectable.”

On the non-burlesque nights there are DJ offerings. Reservations are strongly suggested. Call 303-394-1515. Gourmet cocktails feature fresh herbs and juices plus homemade simple syrup that you won't find at most places.

They say history repeats itself and nowhere is that statement more accurate than at **Maison de Fleur**, 1225 Logan.

This is the former Ardelt's Victorian Garden. A vintage Victorian beauty, the building has been home to florists and special events since the 1880s. The original vintage flower cases still survive.



THIS STATELY VICTORIAN at 1225 Logan is once again home to the Thibault family's flower & events business, which is now named Maison de Fleur.

What makes this quite a story is that when the Ardelt family sold the place last year the buyer was none other than Charlene Thibault, daughter-in-law of Floyd Thibault, who owned the place for two decades before the Ardelt family purchased it in 1975.

The current focus at Maison is tea and event hosting. When I spoke to Thibault about this remarkable twist in history, she was preparing for a bridal shower tea. There may be a change in focus soon.

The number is 303-861-2189 and it's wise to call for hours. Maisondefleur.net is the Web address if you'd like to read the entire history of this remarkable structure.

Patrick Thibault, 23-year-old grandson of the original Thibault

owner, is actively participating in the business as chief floral designer. He also manages the day-to-day operations.

“My grandfather was one of the best florists and business owners in Denver. I didn't know my grandfather but his reputation precedes him. I hope to pick up where he left off. I have a feeling he is somewhere guiding me,” he said.

3 Little Birds Salon is now styling at 837 E. 17th next to Watercourse Foods. Their number is 303-861-2333.

This is a full-service hair salon offering cuts, waxing, and hair extensions. In short, anything to do with hair. In summer, hours may run as late as 9 pm. Right now, figure on 10 am-7 pm Tuesday to Saturday.



AT '3 LITTLE BIRDS,' 837 E. 17th next to Watercourse Foods, graffiti wall art sets the business apart from many other hair salons.



I am told that Birds is “Bumble and Bumble” exclusive, using only the B&B product line.

While there are only two owners, the place is named 3 Birds. The duo is evidently partial to Bob Marley music and the number “3” is the favorite number of both women. That works.

Big Hairy Monster is a two-chair hair salon located inside The Fabric Lab at 3105 E. Colfax at St. Paul. The number is 303-321-3604 for appointments. Those are available Tuesday-Saturday. Small approach, but a full service salon, I hear.

Ditto Gallery has debuted in the former 5280 Magazine space at 1224 N. Speer. This is an offshoot of GRI Studios and it promises to showcase a “diverse selection of local and international artists in a

relaxed atmosphere.”

The gallery specializes in fine art reproductions, with the stated goal of making art affordable for enthusiasts. Ditto gallery.com is their website if you’d like to browse the artists online. The number for hours is 303-289-9727.

Clayton Lane Fine Arts is now open next to Betsy Johnson at 110 Clayton. This is the new home and new name of Gallery One, which was located on the 200 block of Fillmore until last summer.

The art here is an eclectic mix... everything from Norman Rockwell to the Impressionists. The number to call for hours is 720-214-5263. They’re open after 6 pm some nights to take advantage of the CCN dinnertime foot traffic.

The former Looks Salon building on the north side of 6th at Lafayette has emerged from reconstruction as a massage center.

Elements Therapeutic Massage is now operating at 1367 E. 6th. Their phone is 303-339-3100.

Elements features Swedish massage in addition to deep tissue, trigger point, sports, prenatal and hot stone treatments.

This is a franchise operation. Their website is touchofelements.com.

In the coming months you’ll hear and read a great deal about “DenverFive,” a quintet of Denver-based chefs who will travel to the celebrated James Beard Foundation in NYC on May 14 to whip up delicacies for an audience of 75 of the nation’s food critics, industry professionals, and celebrity guests. Talk about iron nerves.

This is the brainchild of Leigh Sullivan, formerly of the Sullivan Restaurant Group, who recently founded **Leigh Sullivan Enterprises**.

While not based on the Hill (She has no permanent office yet and is operating out of her car, she says.), she’s working to help launch several new restaurants in the area and to help other small entities master their marketing.

“My vision is go into smaller restaurants and teaching them how to do their own marketing, to be creative with their marketing.”

Hers is a culinary consulting business. Sullivan’s Five concept is about showcasing local talent and Colorado ingredients. She has garnered endorsements from the likes of Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper and Broncos head coach Mike Shanahan.

For many years Sullivan worked with and for her dad, renowned restaurateur Jim Sullivan. After taking a few months off to rejuvenate, she’s back, but now independent.

“(The restaurant business) is a sickness in my blood. Working with family is a whole lot easier to talk about than to actually do,” she said with a chuckle.

Sullivan’s number is 303-883-5944 and her email is lsullivan@leighsullivan.com.

Sullivan’s husband, Troy Guard, has also worked with the Sullivan restaurant team and his credits include Ocean and nine75. Expect a new restaurant from Guard in the next year. It will be the “share concept” that he’s known for, with a Continental flair.

Dana McDowell, MA has opened **New Beginnings Psychotherapy** at 1735 Lafayette. McDowell works with a naturopathic doctor, Jennifer Vitaro, ND, who operates a block away on Marion.

Her emphasis is on targeted amino acid therapy. Lab work helps determine whether brain chemistry or hormone imbalances might be triggering issues like depression, eating disorders, weight gain or anxiety. Most tests are done using saliva or urine, so there’s no needle or blood draw.

“The thing I really, really love about targeted amino acid therapy is they don’t have the same possible side effects as antidepressants or anti-anxiety medicines,” said McDowell.

After a full work-up, you might end up with dietary suggestions, supplements, or recommendations for lifestyle changes. Fees start at \$85 an hour and a sliding scale based on income is available.

The lab work, which can range from \$150 to \$450, can often be covered by insurance. The initial evaluation by the pair of professionals runs around \$200.

Their phone number is 303-241-5057. Most office hours are in the afternoons or evenings, with occasional weekend hours as well.

Do social events make you squirm? Always at a loss for a snappy comeback? If so, you’re not alone and Mike Stephen thinks he can help.

Stephen, who lives on the Hill, promises that his new venture can help any communications problem. He’s launched a new business as a social coach. It’s called **Conversation Courage**. Conversationcourage.com is the Web address and 303-532-6576 is the phone.

“Whether it’s starting conversations, keeping them going, business networking, dating, or just feeling comfortable in crowds, Conversation Courage can turn you into a social butterfly!” his Web page proudly claims.

Contemplative Hatha Yoga with Lisa is now offering classes at the 6th Avenue United Church of Christ, 3250 E. 6th at Adams. You might be familiar with the church as the location the Denver Potters Association’s seasonal sales. Instructor Lisa Eller Davis has been involved in meditation and the healing arts for more than 30 years. She holds a yoga teacher certification from the Prana Yoga and Ayurveda Mandala and is a registered member of the Yoga Alliance. She describes her teaching style as combining compassion with humor.

Davis said, “There is a yoga for every body at any age. We all live with human wear and tear, and that means adapting postures to support our unique process and progress.”

Class times are 7:15 pm Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Drop-in classes and multiple class discount cards are available. Beginners are welcome.

Davis was an active member of Denver Potters for many years. She believes yoga is another way to express human desire for centering. You can reach her at 303-388-6388 or through LisaEllerDavis.com.

What’s New?

French 250, the traditional French restaurant at 250 Steele in CCN, has expanded its hours to include Mondays. Their number is 303-331-0250. They’re now open weekdays 10 am-2 pm for lunch and 5-10 pm for dinner. On weekends, the hours are 5-10 pm on Saturday, and Sunday brunch is offered 9 am-2 pm, with dinner 5-9 pm.

Sunday dinner is a prix fixe menu with wine and four courses priced at \$85. If you wish to forego the wine (Warning: the staff may swoon. Who eats French food without wine anyway?) the price is \$40.

Neighborhood Flix Cinema & Cafe is changing its menu... again. This time the shift will add more comfort food.



THE RESTAURANT AT NEIGHBORHOOD FLIX CINEMA & CAFE is attracting its own following as area residents get a taste of dining amidst (silent) movies.

I asked owner Jimmy Lee Smith for a sneak peek and he said he hadn’t even seen it yet but by the time you read this there should be some new offerings, including a meatloaf sandwich that Smith promises could make you drool. Don’t panic, though. I have been assured that the sweet potato fries will remain. There will also be more family fare and family-friendly movies in the spring.

Smith hasn’t given up on the idea of adding custom pizza to the offerings. Their arrival may depend on how the meal business progresses.

There seems to be a good mealtime crowd in addition to guests there to see films. Still, it’s impossible to avoid some movie exposure

when classics like *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* are shown on the restaurant walls with subtitles. The number for hours and movie schedules is 720-214-3549, or check out neighborhoodflix.com on the Web.

Jil Cappuccio One of a Kind & Limited Lines at 1433 Ogden just off Colfax has added a new designer to the offerings at her custom couture shop.

New to the store is Kirsten Coplane, creator of the “Pearl” line of recycled clothing. Think of it as “creative reuse.” Coplane is crafting stunning women’s wear from thrift store finds. She once ran Sparrow (the gift store not the restaurant) on 17th near Franklin.

Both women will be showcasing their wares at the “2008 Spring Fling” on March 8 & 9 at the Denver Turnverein, 16th & Clarkson (see article on page 23). Craft shows come and go but this one caught my notice because admission is my favorite price... free!

You can reach Cappuccio at 303-832-1493.

Saturday, March 8 also marks International Women’s Day 2008. On that date, 11 am-2 pm, **Ten Thousand Villages** at 2626 E. 3rd in CCN will host card artists from the **Gathering Place**, a day shelter and resource center for women and children at Colfax & High.

The women artists will conduct in-store demonstrations, creating before your eyes the colorful cards that shoppers can buy at the non-profit year-round.

Ten Thousand Villages’ mission is providing economic opportunities for disadvantaged artisans, the majority of whom are women. Call 303-316-8773 for more info.

Isis, 5701 E. Colfax at Ivanhoe, will be moving sometime in the next month. Their new address will be 2775 S. Broadway, a block

south of Yale, and it's a "wow" located down in Englewood near the distinctive blades of green grass sculpture. Check out their cool remodeling photos at isisbooks.com.

The Web announcement indicates that the new location will not only feature an even better selection of books, gifts and spiritual tools, but also their own wellness center: **Isis Healing Oasis**. Call 303-3321-0867 for hours or check out the website.

Rick Vanderiet at **Namaste** salon, 1019 E. 9th at Ogden, has launched an Aveda "new talent" program. It's an in-house training program for beauty school grads that also offers affordable haircuts for clients.



NAMASTE'S OWNER, RICK VANDERIET, right, & new talent stylist Charity Nielsen, center, watch as fellow Aveda graduate Dana Glista wraps up a hair color job.

Vanderiet has been in the biz for 15 years, many of them at this location. His business carries a Sanskrit name that reflects the intent to honor the divine in each individual.

"(This program) is my opportunity to give back to the business that's been good to me and give back to the neighborhood," he said.

The Aveda company started the year-long program to give graduates from its Aveda Institute advanced training and experienced mentors.

"While the grads are working, they are working here at reduced rates," said Vanderiet. "They're honing their skills to become 'salon

ready'. It's a wonderful service at an incredible price."

With the program an introductory haircut is just \$11. Partial highlights and full color are also available. Customers who try the program get Aveda customer service, scalp massage, cuts and even finishing makeup touches.

Call 303-837-1300 and ask for a "new talent professional" to take advantage of the program. Hours are Tuesday to Friday 9 am-7 pm, Saturdays 9 am-6 pm, Sundays 11 am-5 pm, and Mondays 11 am-7 pm.

Folks, there's more cupcake news. Gulp. I am gaining weight just writing about the cupcake overload on East Colfax.

Open just a month, **The Shoppe**, 3103 E. Colfax at St. Paul, has already refined its hours. Their three sizes of cupcakes (and the rest of the menu) are now available for snacking Tuesday through Thursday 11 am-10 pm and Friday and Saturday 11 am-2 am. Sunday hours are 10 am-4 pm. The Shoppe is closed on Mondays. Their number is 303-322-3969.

The Shoppe, and the adjacent Fabric Lab and Plastic Chapel Designer Toys have changed their art show schedule, moving the event to the second Saturday of each month.

Mark your calendar. The crew will be holding a "Super Block Party" March 8, 7-11 pm.

Expect cupcakes (of course), DJs, what they bill as "fine ass art," and custom toys in all three spaces for the party's duration. What more can you ask for in one night? Maybe an energy drink?

Pita Grill, next to What's Knot to Love at 911 E. Colfax at Emerson, has reopened. Mazen Sawaked, one of the new owners, convinced his parents to relocate from Jordan last month to help him make it a genuine family-run operation.

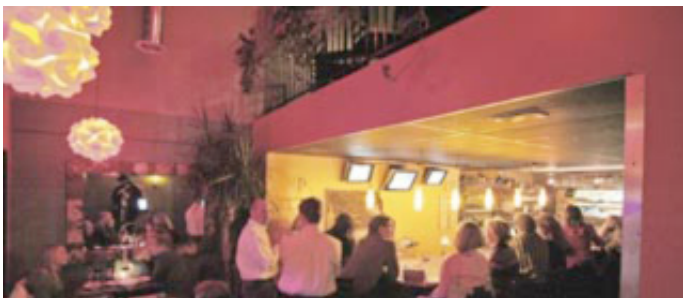
Sawaked, who's also a full-time college student, can use the help, given his extended hours of operation, 11 am-midnight or beyond.

"We don't close for business as long as customers are still here. Sometimes we stay till 4 or 5 am," he said. Ouch.

"We import all our tobacco and hookahs from Jordan," said Mazen. "We are trying to step up the customer service, too. Our food is cooked by my mom."

The number is 303-832-1730.

Soleil Mediterranean Grille & Wine Bar, the four-year-old, two-story eatery at 2817 E. 3rd at Detroit, has wrapped up a mini remodel and now can boast an expanded copper-top bar in the main level dining area where more guests can enjoy tapas and fine wines.



AT SOLEIL MEDITERRANEAN GRILLE & WINE BAR in Cherry Creek North folks can't wait to congregate around the newly extended, L-shaped copper-top bar.

"We are right on the boarder of a residential area. We have a lot of single customers who come in. The way the (new) bar is set up, it creates an 'L' shape that promotes conversation. It's warm and inviting," said Rebekah Donovan, who owns Soleil with David Pellegrin.

In addition to the physical plant expansion, Soleil has stretched



the kitchen hours and is now serving tapas, small plates and wood-fired pizza 4:30 pm until midnight Tuesday to Saturday and until 10 pm on Sunday.

The full menu is available all that time. Check out the bacon-wrapped dates, dirty bag shrimp and spicy fried almonds. Fans of lamb will enjoy the half rack priced at \$14.

The number for details and info on daily specials is 303-316-9100. Their website is [soleil denver.com](http://soleil.denver.com).

Jerry's Nut House, 2101 Humboldt, is operating their retail operation from a new, temporary showroom after a wall collapsed in the old one after the blizzard of 2006. The original site is now dirt awaiting the foundation and framing crew. Jerry's staff hopes to complete their new home and move again by fall.



THE SPACE WHERE THE JERRY'S NUT HOUSE showroom once stood is now filled by a front-end loader as the owners make plans to open a brand new retail outlet on the spot late this year.

Meanwhile, the candy and nuts Jerry's is famous for are available in quantity at their temp locale. Hours are 8 am-5 pm weekdays only. The number is 303-861-2262.

Vectra Bank... long a fixture on the south side of Speer... has relocated from 616 E. Speer to 401 E. Speer at Logan, on the north side. They made the two-block leap effective Feb. 29. Wonder if it was motivated by Leap Year.

Vectra will continue to offer its full line of services from the new location and its drive-up windows should be easier to navigate.

To celebrate the move, the bank will hold Grand Opening events

throughout the week of March 31, giving away daily prizes and a grand prize of a \$1,000 Certificate of Deposit at the end of the week. The number to call for more details is 720-947-7800.

Cherry Creek Audio has relocated to 156 Steele. The move marks the first time in the company's 13-year history that it and its neighborhood bear the same name.

Owner Jim Rhye explained his long tenure on S. Colorado in University Hills this way: "Thirteen years ago Cherry Creek North was not as exciting to me as it is today."

The company moved from 1243 S. Colorado. The number is 303-758-4434. Weekdays the store is open 10 am-7 pm. Saturdays they close at 6 pm. Sundays, doors are open noon-5 pm.

Cherry Creek Audio carries many exclusive audio lines, including Paradigm, Draper and Krell. Cherrycreekaudio.com is the website.

Closings

Sparrow at 410 E. 7th across from Governors' Park is closed. A recording at their main number states, "We are temporarily closed for business."

What on earth is a temporary restaurant closure?

"We had issues with our landlord that went back a long time. We're looking for a new location," explained owner Nancy Sparrow Scruggs.

Sparrow is looking for a smaller nest, too. They hope to downsize to a space around 3,000 square feet. Scruggs' goal is to locate a turnkey space so she can reopen rapidly.

Cherry Creek, Capitol Hill, downtown or E. 17th are the possible relocation areas. The number should once again be 303-831-1003 when Sparrow rises from the ashes.

Calico Corner in the 200 block of Clayton in CCN has closed, but that's just temporary too! Maybe temp closings are the next, upcoming trend?

The space is stripped to the studs but signage promises a March 26 reopening as the **Calico Home Design Center**. Stay tuned.

Here's a curious closing. Rumors circulated for months that **Dolce Vita**, an Italian eatery in the Beauvallon on Lincoln at 9th, would close and that the space would morph into a sports bar, yet its long-time owner flatly denied that rumor to me just a couple weeks ago.

Indeed, the moment of truth has arrived and the sweet life has ended for Vita. The windows are papered. Signs indicate that a pub

will open soon. Sounds like that rumored sports bar may appear in the near future.

Studio Bini, the unique children's clothing store on 1030 N. Speer, is now closed. Their Lowry store closed last summer. The brand may live on as a wholesale entity.

The Moderns hair salon at 2817 E. 3rd is also shuttered.

Correction

Doggone it. A couple issues ago I placed a business in "South Park Hill" when it was on the other side of the line known fondly as East Colfax and should have been labeled as a Mayfair biz. When will I learn?

In February, I mentioned **Steve's Snappin' Dogs'** new heated patio. I should be embarrassed to admit that once again I had the neighborhood stated incorrectly but, frankly, it's hard to feel much shame when you're laughing so hard.

Here's an excerpt from the email sent to yours truly by the South City Park Neighborhood Association (SCPNA).

"Without barking too loudly, I have to tell you that the address of Steve's, which is on the north side of Colfax, places the establishment in the South City Park Neighborhood, not Congress Park. We are very proud of our doggone businesses here," wrote Mike Straka on behalf of the group.

I stand corrected... and entertained. SCPNA is rightfully proud of its merchants and I better start paying attention to my geography.

Send biz news to Jeanne at otlgroup@comcast.net.

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