

Community Meeting May 18

Come join your neighbors on Saturday, May 18 at 10:30AM at the Ford Warren Library for our next community meeting! Coffee and bagels will be provided.

We will meet with Lindsay Gilchrist, who is the HD8 nominee from the Democratic Party and is running unopposed to be our next Colorado State Representative, replacing term-limited Leslie Herod. Now is the time to let Lindsay know what you want to happen at the capitol over her first term.

We will also have open community discussion. First, we will ask the question: how can we be community with each other? How can we be good neighbors? Then, as time permits, we will discuss whatever the community brings up.

All are welcome! If you live in Whittier, which is defined as 23rd to MLK south to north and Downing to York west to east, then you're a member of the Whittier Neighborhood Association. There are no dues and membership is open to all.

Stay in touch with the WNA

- Check out our updated website at www.whittierneighborhood.org. The site includes an event calendar, business directory, a button to join our email list, a link to sign-up for volunteering, and more!
- Join the Whittier Neighborhood Facebook group, which stays active with buy and sell requests, questions, and events coming up.
- Text WHITTIER to 844-283-5563 to join the text list for news and events..
- Follow the WNA on our Instagram account @whittierneighborhood.
- Any questions? Send us an email at board@whittierneighborhood.org.

Save the Date: Whittier Dayz is June 1

Whittier Dayz is back! Come to **Fuller Park from 12pm - 3pm on Saturday, June 1** for this fun neighborhood picnic. Activities include:

- Make your own bubble magic wand and participate in the bubble making contest
- Fun run with District 9 Council Member Watson at 10AM (meet in the park)
- Create rock snake art and make your own Fairy Garden Door
- Community visioning art project
- Raffle, prizes, and more!

Calling all Youth!

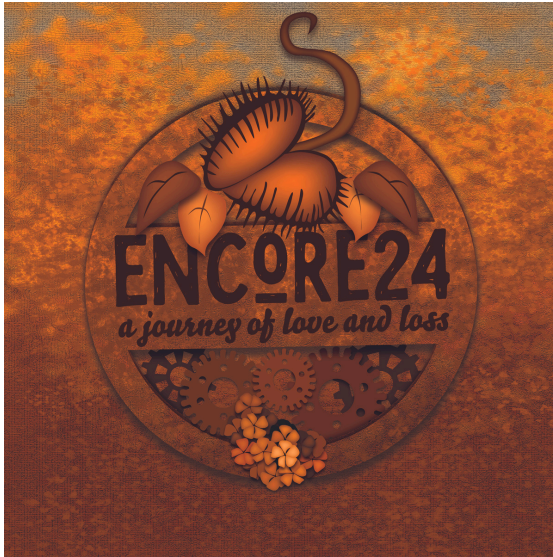
Youth (ages 14-19), WNA wants to hear your voice and vision for what our neighborhood should look like in 20 years. Join the WNA Neighborhood Plan Visioning Team for a summer workshop as we listen to learn to understand the neighborhood using Asset Based Community Development Tools. We will draft a vision and recommendations to be shared with City Planning Development as they prepare to update the neighborhood plans for Whittier, Clayton and Cole. Please register for the TBD summer workshop with lunch at www.whittierneighborhood.org/volunteer.

Business Spotlight: Bright Lights Early Learning

Bright Lights is 3-classroom Early Learning Center that will be opening in the Whittier neighborhood this coming August! Bright Lights will offer an enriching and nurturing educational experience for all children ages 6 months - 5 years. The center, directed by pediatric occupational therapist Rivka Leah Popack, will offer a space where all children will learn at their own pace, discover confidence in their abilities, explore their passion for learning and pursue learning in an engaging way. The full-day 8:30am-5:30pm schedule will incorporate an enriching educational experience inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach and including a values-based curriculum drawn from traditional Jewish values.

Located at refurbished premises West of City Park, the center's owners have plans to expand the preschool to a 5-classroom center within the next year. Director Rivka Leah Popack is excited to invite interested all families of all faiths to find out more and book a tour of the center at their website www.BrightLightsDenver.com.

Manual High School Musical: Encore 24... A Journey of Love and Loss



The performers' strong voices carry the songs out to the seats, even though they're not using mics for this rehearsal. These talented singers are the cast of Manual High School's upcoming spring musical review, **Encore 24...a journey of love and loss.**

Actors Marvin and Naomi shared about their experiences this spring after cast members originally tried out for Little Shop of Horrors. The students had provided input into their top 4 choices for the production, with music director and choreographer Rodney Douglas ultimately influencing the show's selection. They were about two weeks into rehearsals when events took an unexpected turn...

As theater director Ben Butler worked to secure the rights to Little Shop, he learned that another theater company in the Denver metro area was producing the show, which meant that the rights weren't available to Manual.

Marvin reflects that, as an 8th grader going into his second Manual production, the experience was somewhat scary at the start: he didn't know the other people or how their different personalities would come together. When the issue over the rights came up, he worried that Manual wouldn't be able to put on a spring musical at all.

But the directors and the students came together to discuss options. After taking a night to think it over, they found connections between Little Shop and Hadestown. Schools can perform some numbers from a show without needing to have the rights, so the cast and directors worked together to transform the show into their very own Encore 24.

Naomi notes that the school needs to have the right people to be able to put together a show like this, a creative and diverse group who can contribute to the show in different ways. She points out that at Manual, it's not just "theater kids" who perform. Mr. Butler works to recruit performers from all over the school, including football and soccer players and cheerleaders.

Cast member Jade says that the bonds among the cast helped them to make the big transition from Little Shop to Encore 24. Actor A'Ny agrees, saying that the entire production team supports each other to believe that you can do what you put your mind to. Successfully making it through the transition makes first-time cast member Xavier feel better prepared for the next show.

Marvin's message for Whittier community members: Come see the show, put yourselves in the performers' shoes, feel the energy of the music, your fellow cast members, and the audience as you imagine what it's like to look out into the lights and sing.

Want to see the show?

Encore 24 has showtimes on **May 16th, 17th, and 18th at 7PM.** Tickets may be purchased for \$10 at the door or by scanning the QR code to the right.

