

See ad inside for details

[LoneTreeVoice.net](http://LoneTreeVoice.net)

A publication of  Colorado Community Media

DOUGLAS COUNTY, COLORADO



Nanci Marr, right, the marketing and communications director for Douglas County Libraries, tours the site of the new Lone Tree library building along with other library administrators on Jan. 15. At left is Sharon Nemechek, director of archives and collections for the libraries. Photos by Mike DiFerdinando

## Lone Tree gets glimpse of new library

Staff report

The new Lone Tree Library took a break from construction Jan. 15 to show off its progress to the public. Jon Clark, Franssen Pittman's superintendent in charge of construction, hosted a barbecue lunch for the workers and visitors.

The new branch is slated to open in early June and will include a main level designed to be an active space for families and will house interactive elements like a Lite-Bright wall and farm-to-table exhibit. The upper area will house the adult and young adult collections in what Nanci Marr, marketing and communications director for Douglas County Libraries, described as more of a classic library space with quiet places to read and study rooms.

"What we learned over the years is that there are a ton of adults who read (young adult) fiction and that teens don't necessarily like being called young adults," Marr said. "They want to read what the adults



The 25,000-square-foot library will more than double the size of the current library on Lone Tree Parkway.

read."

The library's groundbreaking was May 4 just east of the Lone Tree Arts Center at the corner of Commons Street and Sky

Ridge Avenue. The 25,000-square-foot library will be two-and-a-half times as large as the current library on Lone Tree Parkway.

## Switch from ACT to SAT pushed to 2017

Colorado Department of Education changes test for high school juniors

By Mike DiFerdinando  
[mdiferdinando@coloradocommunitymedia.com](mailto:mdiferdinando@coloradocommunitymedia.com)

State officials avoided possible student panic and further controversy by delaying the switch from the ACT to the SAT for high school juniors until 2017.

The move to the SAT had been scheduled to begin this spring but was pushed back until the next school year after an outcry from concerned parents, students, teachers and administrators. State superintendents wrote a letter to the Colorado Department of Education urging them not to rush the transition. The CDE announced the decision to postpone the switch on Jan. 11.

Douglas County School District Superintendent Elizabeth Fagen said it was

### WHAT'S NEW ABOUT THE SAT?

This March, students taking the SAT will encounter a new version of the 3 1/2-hour college entrance exam. This new version is similar to the ACT and will draw from the Common Core standards, which emphasize skills in interpretations of text, reading, vocabulary usage and depth math skills, according

a mistake to move away from the ACT, which has been given to juniors since 2001.

"The original decision was to do that this March, which is a ridiculous timeline," Fagen said. "I immediately received an email from a parent who said, 'I've been preparing my child for the ACT. We've been studying. We've done ACT prep courses.' She said she had spent a considerable amount of money."

to the Colorado Department of Education.

It covers material from a greater number of courses and will ask students to derive meanings of words and passages based on context, answer more word and story-based math problems, and answer an optional writing portion.

Fagen also said she worried that abandoning the ACT would mean losing data the district has accumulated over the past 14 years.

"This is the one piece of long-term longitudinal data that we have, and they want to get rid of it," Fagen said.

The department of education is working with the College Board, the ACT

SAT continues on Page 15

## Property values on rise, along with taxes

County residents will see statements in mail this week

By Shanna Fortier  
[sfortier@coloradocommunitymedia.com](mailto:sfortier@coloradocommunitymedia.com)

Tax statements are being mailed to Douglas County residents the week of Jan. 18, and many will notice a hike in their property taxes due to an increase in property values.

Per state law, homes in Colorado are reappraised every other year in odd-numbered years. The most recent appraisal was in 2015, and the tax notices going out this week will be the first time homeowners see the changes.

The countywide market saw a 15.5 percent jump in 2015, according to Douglas County Assessor Lisa Frizell. Entry level housing, such as townhomes and condos, saw the greatest increases, 25 percent to 40 percent in value. What the county defines as the Highlands Ranch area, which

### WHEN YOU PAY

Property taxes can be paid in two installments, by the end of February and by June 15, or in full by April 30. The county distributes collections to the taxing authorities on or before the 10th of the month that follows when payments are received.

Taxes continues on Page 14

## Second teen charged as adult in school threat

Brooke Higgins' bond set at \$1 million

By Alex DeWind  
[adewind@coloradocommunitymedia.com](mailto:adewind@coloradocommunitymedia.com)

A second 16-year-old has been charged as an adult in connection with the alleged Mountain Vista High School murder plot and is being held on \$1 million bail.

Brooke Higgins appeared in district court in Castle Rock on Jan. 14 with her defense attorney, Dagny Van Der Jagt. Higgins' parents sat behind her, periodically rubbing her arm.

Higgins bit her lip and wiped away tears when Judge Paul King announced the bail.

Higgins, like Sienna Johnson, has been charged with conspiracy to commit first-degree murder with extreme indifference and conspiracy to commit first-degree murder after deliberation.

Colorado Community Media is



Higgins

Higgins continues on Page 15

**FACES AMONG US**

**HELLO**  
My Name Is...  
A glimpse of the people in our community  
**WYNNE SHAW**



Wynne Shaw says she enjoyed working in financial services because she was able to help people find answers to their questions. *Courtesy photo*

Former Charles Schwab employee, full-time volunteer

**My background**

My father was in advertising, and as a child I lived in many of the larger U.S. cities: Chicago, St. Louis, New York, Atlanta, St. Petersburg and enjoyed growing up in those places. I came to Colorado during my college years, and knew I'd found the best place on earth to call home. I've never left Colorado, and my daughter is a native Coloradan. I moved to Lone Tree from Golden when a company I worked for at the time — Charles Schwab — re-located from Glendale to I-25 and Dry Creek, and love it here.

**Finding answers**

I started my career working for a small micrographics and filing systems business. Somehow, my love for math and finance drew me to a change careers. I have worked in brokerage and financial services since the early 1980s when I moved to Denver from Woodland Park. During the last 23 years I worked for Charles Schwab and TIAA-CREF, in multiple roles from customer service and trading director, to market analysis and national sales director. What I learned about myself while working in financial services is that I've always enjoyed helping people find answers.

**Helping others**

I'm currently a full-time volunteer: a

member of Daughters of the American Revolution, and I'm the leader of the local chapter. I'm training to be a parliamentarian. I am on the list of FINRA arbitrators. I'm corresponding secretary for a local women's political club. I recently joined the Lone Tree Arts Center Guild's Education Committee and the Cherry Creek Valley Historical Society.

**My hobbies**

I am a genealogy buff and enjoy researching family history — so I couldn't survive without my computer. I enjoy reading, walking, amateur photography, and I used to sing with a group of friends. We sang the national anthem for a Rockies home opener in the early days of Coors Field.

**My passions**

I am passionate about art and music! Bold colors, glass, and music from Baroque to Adele all make me happy. I am a bit of a geek, and enjoy new technology like my Amazon Echo. Nature is awe inspiring. I really love watching the deer in my yard and on the bluffs, the sound of the coyotes and owls at night.

**Did you know?**

I can always find a reason to smile. Life is worth enjoying!

If you have a suggestion for My Name Is... contact Mike DiFerdinando at [mdiferdinando@coloradocommunitymedia.com](mailto:mdiferdinando@coloradocommunitymedia.com).

**Area thefts tied to national crime spree**

Felony Lane Gang is behind series of car break-ins, sheriff's office believes

**Staff report**

A national organized crime ring has been linked to recent thefts in the south metro area.

The Felony Lane Gang, based in south Florida, is suspected of three crimes in Centennial last month, according to the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office.

"These criminals target gyms, parks, day cares, shopping centers and other places frequented by women," a sheriff's office news release states. "They are often looking for vehicles that have been left briefly unattended and unlocked. They are specifically targeting purses and checkbooks and have left electronics and credit cards untouched."

While the suspects prefer unlocked vehicles, they will smash windows to gain entrance if needed, the sheriff's office said. They are known to cash stolen checks at bank drive-through lanes.

Incidents linked to the gang were reported the mornings of Dec. 17 and 18 at three locations in Centennial: the 9000 block of East Mineral Avenue, the 6800 block of South Homestead Parkway and the 10400 block of East Easter Avenue.

The sheriff's office said authorities are also investigating crimes that may be linked to the group in Douglas County, Aurora and other areas of Arapahoe County.

A national task force has been established to combat the gang. The

*Thieves continues on Page 11*

*Be Treated Like Royalty This Valentine's*  
AT  
**CHEROKEE RANCH & CASTLE**



**THE CHOCOLATE THERAPIST – FEBRUARY 4<sup>TH</sup>**  
*A Wine and Chocolate Pairing*

**VALENTINE'S DAY TEA – FEBRUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>**  
*A Special Themed Valentine's Tea*

**VALENTINE'S DAY BRUNCH- FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup>**  
*A Special Themed Valentine's Day Brunch, including a Crepe Station*

**VALENTINE'S BLUES – FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup>**  
*Dan Treanor's Afrosippi Band featuring Erica Brown, will bring down right fun to your night*







**TO PURCHASE TICKETS PLEASE CALL 303-688-5555 OR VISIT WWW.CHEROKEERANCH.ORG**

**303-688-5555 • WWW.CHEROKEERANCH.ORG**

**Ohana School of Early Learning**



**NOW OPEN & ENROLLING!**  
BRAND NEW **GREEN BUILDING**  
Currently Enrolling Infants through Kindergarten



**Luau and Open House**  
**Saturday February 20th 10 am - 3 pm!**  
**Come and Join us!**

**8361 Southpark Lane Littleton, CO 80120**  
**720-609-2589 • www.ohanaschool.net**