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WASH PARK

MEET

Bridget Federico



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lauren valinoti, courtney ranson + alix scott
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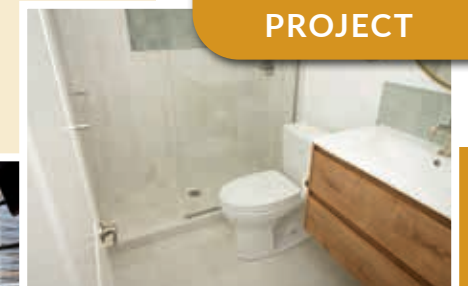
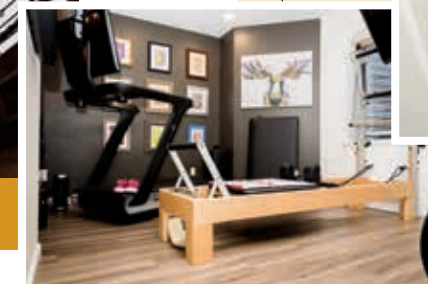


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MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Bridget FEDERICO



FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES, Bridget and Sean Federico have been helping build community in Wash Park—one child, one family, and occasionally one cookie at a time.

The couple has called the neighborhood home for 23 years and founded Larks Preschool in 2004, creating a beloved gathering place for local families. “I feel tremendously blessed to be doing what I love: working with young children and their families,” Bridget says. Today, Larks continues to bring people together through monthly park playdates and family dinners, helping generations of neighbors stay connected.

Bridget’s path to early childhood education began after a childhood spent in Colorado Springs surrounded by horses, chickens, ducks, goats, and four brothers. A graduate of



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Metropolitan State University with degrees in psychology and sociology, she later earned her teaching license through CU Denver. Sean, a New Jersey native, transitioned from the private sector into education and now serves as a school psychologist for Denver Public Schools.

The Federicos' son, Dino, was born during their second year in business and recently launched his own specialty car brokerage. "When we bought our house on Race Street 14 years ago, he was six years old and told us, 'The house picked us,'" Bridget recalls.

Their family also includes an unexpected long-term resident: Melvin the turtle. Originally a third-grade class pet borrowed for the summer, Melvin never left. Today, he enjoys a custom-built habitat and regularly joins Larks playdates, where he's a favorite among children.

When they're not working, you'll likely find the Federicos walking through Wash Park, visiting the Pearl Street Farmers Market, or enjoying an early "linner" at neighborhood favorites. But their favorite place remains home on the 800 block of Race Street.

"My favorite place in Wash Park is our block," Bridget says. "We take care of each other's homes, pets, children, and each other." It's that spirit of connection that has made Wash Park—and the Federico family—such a cherished part of the community.

To learn more about Larks Preschool, visit larks.preschool.com or contact Bridget at larkspreschool730@gmail.com



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MEET DISCO



Disco, a 2-year-old domestic shorthair tabby, is equal parts entertainer and loyal companion. Adopted from Denver Animal Shelter by Wash Park resident Adam Sheinman—whom readers may remember from a previous Meet Your Neighbor feature—Disco came into Adam's life after his stroke and has been a comforting, steady presence ever since.

Named for Adam's love of disco music and the era of dancing the night away, Disco certainly lives up to his playful name. He's known for his adorably passive-aggressive walk, often strutting away while turning his head back to meow as if he has one last opinion to share. He also loves his toy spider, anything with feathers, and watching "cat TV" on YouTube—birds and crickets included—which Adam leaves on when he heads out so Disco can stay entertained. But Disco's sweetest moments are the quiet ones: curling up on Adam, purring contentedly, and offering slow blinks that say everything.

Want to share your pet with us? Send us an email at washpark@n2co.com!



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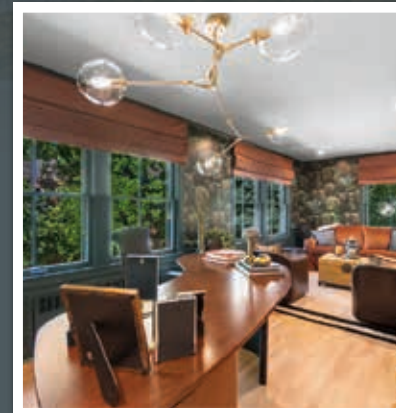
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Wellness Rhythms



DR. MICHELLE MACCARTHY, DC, has been a chiropractor for 16 years, but her path into the profession began long before that. After earning a business degree from Eastern Washington University, where she also played Division I volleyball, she experienced firsthand how chiropractic care transformed her own health and outlook. That experience inspired her to return to school and dedicate her career to helping others heal and thrive. Today, she is a wife, mother of two young boys (ages 4 years and 9 months), and part of a busy household that also includes two dogs and a cat.

At Wellness Rhythms the team is comprised of Dr. Michelle and Dr. Anthony who co-treat all patient care and Sarah who will greet you with a smile.



Dr. MacCarthy purchased Wellness Rhythms in early 2020, just days before the onset of the stay-at-home orders. The practice had already served the community in its current Wash Park location for a decade. Since then, she has continued to evolve its mission: to guide each person who walks through the door in managing physical, mental, and emotional stress while building lasting resilience through gentle, precise chiropractic care and education about the mind-body connection.

Wellness Rhythms offers two primary forms of care: a gentle, no-cracking approach that helps regulate the nervous system and release full-body tension, and Cranial Facial Release, a specialized balloon-assisted technique that supports improved breathing, headache relief, and reduced symptoms of sleep apnea and snoring.

What sets the practice apart is its emphasis on creating a true healthcare home—one grounded in nervous system-focused care, education, and community. Progress is tracked through regular scans and imaging to ensure measurable, individualized results. As Dr. MacCarthy



explains, “We don’t crack or pop in our office forcing an adjustment. Instead we guide your body and nervous system to reconnect with itself in such a way that it naturally releases tension and creates lasting change.”

Beyond the clinic, Wellness Rhythms actively engages the community through free monthly workshops, seasonal drives, nonprofit partnerships, and neighborhood events. The practice will host a neighborhood appreciation block party on Thursday, August 27, from 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Dr. MacCarthy’s guiding message is simple: a healthy nervous system isn’t always calm, it is adaptable, flexible, and resilient.

Wellness Rhythms is located at 184 S Pennsylvania St in Denver and can be reached at 303-722-1104 or info@wellnessrhythms.com to schedule a consultation or learn more about their services and upcoming community events.

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Love in Washington Park



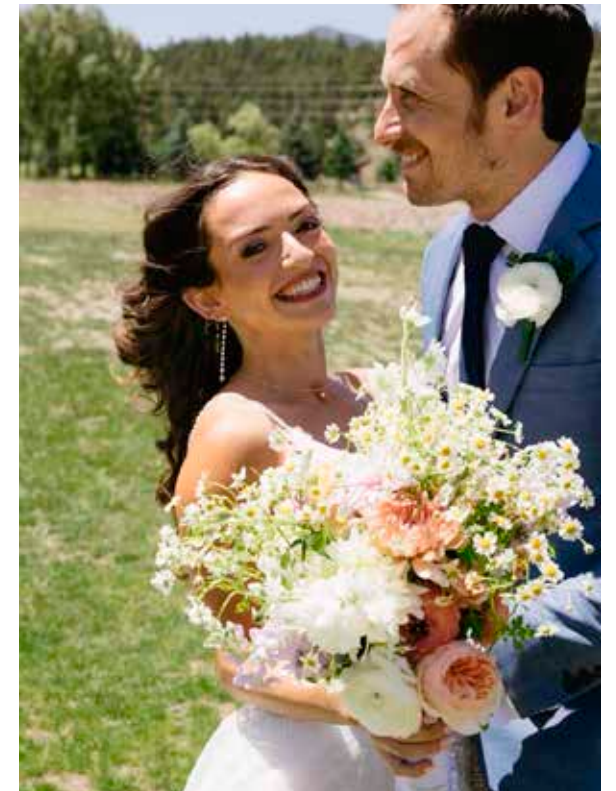
“My now husband, Colton, and I got engaged at Wash Park in the fall of 2022. Colton’s parents have a bench on their front porch that his father proposed to my mother in law on over 25 years ago. Our brother in law is a Denver firefighter and since the bench weighs about 300 pounds, he got a helping hand from Denver fire to place the same bench right in front of the water at Grasmere Lake. Colton and I live in Wash Park and take walks there with our dog on the weekends, so it was like a normal walk through the park after dinner at Perdida. Colton asked to sit at this bench on the walk and then proposed! The proposal was incredibly sentimental.”

—ASHLEY BROOK



“The first date I went on with my now-husband Gabe took place at Washington Park, where we competed in a game of paddle ball, attempted slacklining, and ran around barefoot. Having been the first neighborhood we lived in together, Washington Park has been a heavily frequented place for us: from bike rides and fun runs to poorly played tennis matches and impromptu dinner picnics, and even post-work walk and talks. We recently got married on June 11, 2026. I’m excited for all the new memories we’ll make at the park now as a married couple!”

—SHLOMIT COHEN



“David and Anna’s love story began five years ago in Washington Park, where they chose the Secret Garden (Hazel Gates Woodruff Tribute Garden) as the perfect spot for their first meeting. As their relationship blossomed, the garden became a meaningful place they returned to time and again. When it came time to propose, David knew exactly where to do it. He planned a surprise scavenger hunt through the park, sending Anna by scooter to several special locations—including Smith Lake and Grasmere Lake—where family members greeted her with gifts, clues, and heartfelt messages. The adventure ended where it all began: the Secret Garden. There, David got down on one knee and asked Anna to marry him. She happily said “Yes!”

—DEA ROARK

Protect Your Skin this Summer

BY LISA BLACKWOOD, MD, BOARD-CERTIFIED DERMATOLOGIST



As a board-certified dermatologist here in the Wash Park community, I want to take a moment to highlight something incredibly important this summer: your skin health.

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States, yet it is also one of the most preventable. With a few consistent habits and an awareness of your own skin, you can significantly reduce your risk.

Let's start with melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer. The incidence of melanoma continues to rise, but there is encouraging news—when detected early, the survival rate is over 95%. Early detection truly saves lives.

Melanoma often presents as a new or changing mole. The “ABCDE” rule is a helpful guide: Asymmetry, Border irregularity, Color variation, Diameter greater than 6mm, and Evolving over time. That said, not all melanomas follow these rules exactly, so it's important not to rely on them alone.

I encourage my patients to focus on two especially important clues:

First, the “Ugly Duckling” rule. Most of your moles will resemble one another. If you notice a spot that looks different from the rest, it deserves attention.

Second, look for evolution. Any mole that is new or changing in size, shape, or color—or becomes symptomatic with itching, bleeding, or crusting—should be evaluated.



Prevention is just as important as detection. A few simple habits can make a meaningful difference: Use a broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher every day, even on cloudy days. Seek shade during peak UV hours between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Wear protective clothing, hats, and sunglasses when outdoors. Consider planning your walk around Washington Park earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon.

Finally, establish care with a dermatologist and schedule an annual full-body skin exam. For those with higher risk factors—such as a personal or family history of skin cancer—more frequent visits may be recommended. Taking a proactive approach to your skin health

Want to share expert tips with our readers? Send them to: washpark@n2co.com

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GROW AND BLOOM THERAPY

FOR MINDY TEIKEN, helping children find their voice has been both a profession and a lifelong passion.

A Colorado native born in Fairplay and raised in Breckenridge, Mindy is a pediatric speech-language pathologist, mother of two teenage boys, and founder of Grow & Bloom Therapy. After earning degrees from Colorado State University and the University of Colorado Boulder, she spent years working in schools and early intervention programs before growing her private practice into a full-time business.

"I wanted to create a space where families feel truly supported, understood, and guided," says Mindy. "Children deserve individualized care without unnecessary delays."

Through Grow & Bloom Therapy, Mindy provides personalized speech and language evaluations, individual and small-group therapy, parent coaching, and early intervention support for children from infancy through high school. Her approach focuses on empowering families with practical tools while helping children build communication skills and confidence.



Beyond her practice, Mindy is deeply committed to the Denver community. She serves on the board of the Denver Santa Claus Shop, a nonprofit founded by her great-grandmother in 1931 that provides holiday gifts to children throughout Denver.

A familiar face in and around Washington Park for decades, Mindy has watched her own children grow up in the community she serves. Today, she continues to help local families navigate developmental milestones with compassion, expertise, and a genuine commitment to helping every child thrive.

GROW AND BLOOM THERAPY

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Know a Wash Park kid with a talent, hobby, or story to share? We'd love to hear from you for a future Kids to Kids feature! Email us at WashPark@m2co.com!



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Nana’s Bee’s Knees Honey-Oatmeal Cookies

BY ANITA FITZJARRALD, NANA’S GOODIES BY ANITA



Few recipes stand the test of time quite like these honey-oatmeal cookies. Originally featured in the Gold Medal Century of Success Cookbook published in 1979, this family favorite dates back to the 1940s. Packed with honey, oats, and raisins, these cookies are soft in the center with perfectly crisp edges.

Every member of baker Anita Fitzjarrald’s family loves these cookies, especially when the smell of a fresh batch wafts through her home. Anita even delivered a batch to the Island of Jeju off the coast of South Korea for her son and daughter-in-law.

INGREDIENTS

- 1¼ cups sugar
- ½ cup butter, softened
- 2 eggs

- ⅓ cup honey
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups quick-cooking or regular oats
- 1 cup raisins

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F.
2. Cream together sugar, butter, eggs, and honey.
3. Stir in flour, baking soda, salt, oats, and raisins until combined.
4. Drop rounded teaspoonfuls of dough 2 inches apart onto an ungreased cookie sheet.
5. Bake for 8–10 minutes, or until lightly browned.
6. Remove cookies from the baking sheet immediately and cool on a rack.

NANA’S TIPS

- Use organic honey when available.
- Substitute dried cranberries for raisins for a tart twist.
- Add ½ cup chopped nuts for extra crunch.

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Discovering the Arctic by Expedition Cruise

KAY FAHLBERG | IPPO TRAVEL



I had the privilege of joining a National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions voyage through East Greenland and Iceland's breathtaking Westfjords. The journey was for eight days, and the experience was otherworldly! Both destinations had long been on my wish list, and an expedition ship made sense, as many of those places are difficult or impossible to reach by land.

Expedition cruising offers the excitement of exploration with the comfort of returning each evening to a warm and comfortable "home". They are designed for curious travelers. They take you to places where larger ships simply cannot go. You'll be guided by a team of naturalists, who are National Geographic's historians, photographers, and scientists, and help us see and learn beyond what our eyes can see.

One of my most memorable moments was on a Zodiac ride near Greenland, gliding through icy water with sea ice and icebergs that looked like sculptures. It felt as if walking into the pictures from National Geographic photo contests! No words or even photographs can capture the scale or its beauty. You just have to experience it in person.

Another memorable experience was landing on Vigur Island in Iceland because people and wildlife have coexisted in harmony. Puffins floated on the water before landing on the rocks just in front of us. Nearby, eider ducks nested everywhere while Arctic terns vigorously protected their chicks.

Each day we had opportunities to hike untouched landscapes, observe Arctic wildlife, and visit remote communities with interesting histories. In the afternoon, we had daily briefings. We reviewed our experiences of the day and learned through the eyes of geologists, historians, photographers, and marine experts. I wasn't simply visiting the Arctic. I was beginning to understand it.

Who is an expedition cruise recommended for?
If you enjoy learning as much as relaxing, appreciate nature, wildlife, photography, and regional cultural experiences, an expedition cruise would be one of the most rewarding ways to travel. It's ideal for reasonably active travelers with a sense of curiosity. Families are also welcome, and children under 17 can participate in the Naturalist-in-Training program, learning alongside the expedition team throughout the voyage.

Best time to go?
The Arctic expedition season typically runs from June through early September, when long daylight hours make exploration possible. Each voyage offers something unique.

For me, this journey wasn't simply about checking Greenland and Westfjords off my bucket list. It reminded me how extraordinary our planet is and how important it is to protect it. The Arctic is only one of many expedition destinations. National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions also explores Alaska, Antarctica, the Galápagos, and many other remarkable corners of the world.



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**THURSDAY, AUGUST 27 |
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM**

Hosted by Wellness Rhythms

Summer is best spent together, and there's no better way to celebrate our incredible neighborhood than with an afternoon of fun, friendship, and community spirit!

Join us for the **Community Block Party**, hosted by **Wellness Rhythms**, as we transform the afternoon into a lively celebration for neighbors of all ages. Whether you're coming to reconnect with familiar faces, meet new friends, or simply enjoy a beautiful summer day, this event has something for everyone.



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- Maggie Ward

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Bring a lawn chair if you'd like to relax, or wear your dancing shoes and join in the fun—this is a casual, family-friendly celebration where everyone is welcome.

EVENT DETAILS

- **Thursday, August 27**
- **5:30 PM - 7:30 PM**
- Limited to the **first 150 attendees**
- **RSVP is required** to reserve your spot
- Every RSVP receives **one complimentary raffle ticket**
- **Raffle winners announced at 7:00 PM**
- Live Music by DJ Marc Anthony

This is what makes Wash Park such a special place to call home—a community that comes together to celebrate, connect, and create lasting memories. We can't wait to spend the afternoon with you!

Reserve your spot early—we expect this event to fill quickly!



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