

AT YOUR SERVICE:
HOW AN AWARD-WINNING DENVER MAGAZINE CATERS TO ITS READERS
WITH ITS EYE-POPPING SERVICE JOURNALISM

A Project
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by
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CHAPTER ONE: PROFESSIONAL COMPONENT INTRODUCTION

Never would I have thought I would keep moving west. Columbia, Missouri, was my limit, and I made the exception only for its outstanding journalism school with focus in magazine writing and a Missouri Method experience at *Vox* magazine. Then I went to Denver.

Never would I have thought I would be writing published works for an audience of nearly 500,000 (and even more online). I remember my first published newspaper piece in high school in *The Chronicle*. I was terrified of what others would think. Now, I love the thrill.

Two years ago, I was in small town, South Carolina, finishing up my degree in English at Clemson University and wishing graduation would never come. I worked at a local newspaper and did most of my reporting behind a computer screen. I also served as the editor of *Taps* yearbook and worked to compose my class's memories for the 104th edition of the school tradition. Magazines appealed to me — my favorite was *Cosmopolitan* — and I loved writing. In fact, my sorority, Alpha Phi, granted me the senior superlative of “Most Likely To Be Editor-In-Chief of *Cosmopolitan*.” When I was accepted into Missouri's School of Journalism to pursue my master's, I called my mom, but I wasn't very excited. I pushed the idea aside for a while. I never expected to be where I am today.

In Missouri's School of Journalism, I learned about the world of magazines outside of women's consumer titles. I was introduced to city magazines, their beautiful covers, vast coverage, in-depth narratives and, of course, service journalism. I was

hooked. After taking on nearly every position at *Vox* magazine — a reporter, a contributing writer, a department editor, a digital editor — I was ready to apply my skills elsewhere. I scrolled through the list of City and Regional Magazine Association members and applied to any and every internship program across the nation from Indianapolis to Portland. After several hive-inducing Skype interviews, I was offered a position at *5280* magazine in Denver.

As *5280*'s dining intern, I've done a lot of eating — and writing, too. On my first day in the office, I met Geoff Van Dyke and Robert Sanchez, two Mizzou graduates. I also got a lot of, “Oh you're a Mizzou person, too, huh?” remarks from other editors. I showed my chops that first week with a blog post about a group of local brewmasters betting their beards in a Super Bowl playoff bet. From there, I continued writing for *5280.com* and was assigned stories for the print magazine. I feverishly fact-checked and wrote up calendar event and dining guide blurbs. I transcribed for some editors and did research for others. In conjunction, I also worked on this project — studying service journalism at *5280*. A consistent award-winner of the City and Regional Magazine's reader service award, *5280* offered the perfect setting. The rack of archived magazines (back to its start in '93) waited to be analyzed. Its editors were willing to be interviewed and observed. Through these elements, I've been able to understand the importance service journalism plays at *5280* and in other city magazines and how it's executed. And it's not an easy feat; a year's-worth of planning and reporting is quite common.

Getting outside of my comfort zone and doing what I never thought I would — or could — do has given me the confidence and drive to move forward in my career. I hope

to continue to work in the realm of city magazines and to immerse myself in another city.

There, I'll likely rely on publications' service journalism to get to know my new home.

CHAPTER TWO: FIELD NOTES

Week 1: Jan. 19, 2016

General work:

- Attended a fact-checking orientation
- Attended a pitch training
- Attended an introduction with Dan Brogan, founder, president and editor-in-chief of *5280*
- Met with Amanda Faison, *5280*'s food editor and an assigned mentor, for coffee

Fact-checking assignments:

- Completed a fact-checking assignment about Nuance Chocolate — a Fort Collins-based chocolate factory

Analysis:

The Google calendar tied to my official *5280* email account quickly filled up this first week. An event titled “Dan’s introductory talk” had been scheduled for me for Thursday afternoon. For some reason, the Dan I had in mind was a Dan Roe-like character — tall, a little goofy, always smiling. However, this was the head honcho, Dan Brogan, *5280*'s founder, president and editor-in-chief. His office is actually right across from my small cubicle. Throughout the week I had heard his booming voice with a tinge of a Midwest accent going on about finances, advertising, events and editorial pages.

“So do you just have your hands in about 20 different pots?” I asked after his 45-minute introductory slideshow to the magazine. This probably wasn’t the most intelligent-sounding question, but Dan had just outlined how he’d carried this magazine from a doomed publication in ’93 to one that holds the more Coloradoan subscribers than multiple national magazines — even *O, The Oprah Magazine*.

Back in '93, he started with some fliers to gauge the public’s interest in a city

magazine. He made copies and passed them around town — different apartment complexes, neighborhoods, etc. The return rate, he says, was incredible. Denver, at that time, was the largest city in the United States without a city magazine. These fliers held promise. However, not many people believed in him. Local businesses had betting pools on how long it would take for the magazine to fold. Others didn't understand the whole "5280" concept. "Is it for old people?" he remembers one person asking. "50 to 80." Dan says he could have strangled that human.

Within his first few issues, Dan determined that service journalism pieces were the most popular. People wanted to know where to live, where to send their kids to school and where to eat that night. So, he relied on service journalism to draw readers in and to create a sturdy readership. In addition, service journalism was less expensive than other types of journalism. The whole "rank, rate and review" concept was a hit. It even acted as its own marketing agent as people around town gossiped about 5280's latest list. "What's 5280?" someone would ask. Well, let me tell you ...

By 2003, 5280 had become the largest magazine in the state. However, Dan couldn't help but wonder: Now what? So he started reinventing the magazine and making it higher end to appeal to a more affluent audience. He and his staff also began reinventing the service journalism wheel. In today's age, we have Yelp to rank our restaurants, housing databases to shop for new homes and Facebook to plan our social agendas. Although 5280 still sticks to producing those classic service pieces, including August 2015's Top Docs issue and October 2015's 25 Best Restaurants issue, the staff works to create pieces unique to Denver — what's considered nontraditional service journalism. These are pieces that can't be pulled from *Chicago* magazine or *Los Angeles*

magazine. As for translating these pieces digitally, Dan admits that's still an issue the team experiments with.

So within my first two days at *5280*, I'd heard the term "service journalism" more than I'd perhaps heard in my life. The fact that service plays such an important role at *5280* and at city magazines reiterates the importance of my project. When I met with Amanda Faison, the food editor and one of my mentors, she was excited for my project. She's been with *5280* for 19 years and is interested to see an outsider's point of view. Next week, I'm meeting with Lindsey Koehler, the deputy editor and another mentor. She was introduced to me on my first day as "the one who does all of the service pieces."

Project:

- Created a tentative schedule for my project:
 - Week of March 11: Submit first draft
 - Week of March 18: Jen reviews
 - March 25: Revisions are returned
 - April 1: Submit second draft to entire committee
 - April 8: Make revisions
 - April 15: Project complete
 - April 22: Defend
- Stockpiled 2015 issues of *5280* and created a spreadsheet to track elements of my textual analysis

Week 2: Jan. 25, 2016

General work:

- Met for coffee with Lindsey Koehler, *5280*'s deputy editor
- Met for lunch with Callie Sumlin, *5280*'s assistant food editor
- Attended a 4-hour, 20-course media dinner with Callie for a new restaurant

Blog posts:

- [Denver Beer Co. Bet Their Beards on the Broncos — and won](#)
- [Go Now: The Inventing Room Opens Doughnut Pop-Up](#)

Fact-checking assignments:

- Completed a fact-checking assignment about weird eats around town
- The March news page for Eat and Drink

Calendar events:

- [Cards and Cocktails](#)
- [Comida and Suerte Tequila Dinner](#)
- [Corner Office Brewers Brunch](#)
- [Super Bowl Party](#)

Dining guide:

- [The Crafty Fox Taphouse & Pizzeria](#)
- [Handy Diner](#)
- [Tycoon Ramen and Sushi Bar](#)
- [Sushi Ronin](#)
- [Via Perla](#)
- [Vitality Bowls](#)

Analysis:

Lindsey Koehler wisps by my cube multiple times a day. She's 5280's deputy editor and coordinates with multiple departments to execute the print magazine. On this cold January day, she's working on May's issue, which will include features about the Great Sand Dunes National Park, creative districts in Denver and a big *TK* in the third spot, noting that something must be "to come."

She pulls me into her cube and points to the whiteboard hanging from one of the walls. Each monthly issue of 5280's 2016 editorial calendar is planned out, except for those few *TKs* mixed throughout. She's been working with editorial director Geoff Van Dyke to fill the most upcoming *TK* in that May spot, but it really takes some diligence. They can't pull a feature from the August issue — say camping — because they're striving for editorial diversity, and a national park story and camping won't cut through that diversity line.

So today she's focusing on a story about the Great Sand Dunes National Park that she's been working on since last August when she camped out for five days. In her immersive reporting process, she had to very consciously follow her intuition and correct

her mistakes as needed. For example, only 10 camping permits are available per night, so visitors are encouraged to get there early. Luckily, Lindsey did, but she made note for her readers. If a reader showed up at nightfall and couldn't get a permit, his/her trip *might* be ruined. Then there was the whole shower issue. This wasn't like the Rocky Mountain National Park with plenty of infrastructure. There weren't any bathrooms, so when Lindsey got an itching to take a shower, she sought out the closest one, one that required \$10 and a permit. She'll include that important snippet for readers in the feature as well. But then there are other things, say the seven beetles that live in the dunes that can *only* be found there — nowhere else in the world. Although that's interesting, Lindsey says, it's not necessarily important for the reader, and when you're crunching information into a 12-page package, it'll likely get cut. It's all about prioritizing for your reader. That's service.

Pulling out of the world of sand dunes, Lindsey opens up May's break-of-book on her computer. Lucky for her, *5280* uses a computer program, so not everything is hand-drawn and covered in eraser shavings. She points out the ads placed heavily throughout. For this issue, the ad-to-edit ratio hovers around 50 percent. Editor-in-chief Dan Brogan determined that number as well as the rest of the pages each department gets. It's a "magical math equation," Lindsey says. "Really, after all these years, I still have no clue how he does it." Most of the full-page ads go in the front of the book. The feature well remains clear of ads, she says, though it's not like that for all magazines. And because *5280* is a city magazine and caters to local businesses, there are a lot of fractional ads because a business can't always afford a full page.

Getting back to specific feature planning, Lindsey shows me an example of a

different feature already planned out by another editor. On the page graphs, the photos are noted with boxes, an “X” drawn through each. Diagrams are roughly sketched out. In fact, Lindsey points to one spread: “There might be too many boxes and diagramming going on here.” Anyways, that’s just an example of what she’s about to do with her dunes feature.

“So, that’s it,” she says with a smile on her face — as if it’s effortless. I ask if it is. She says that most of the time it’s not as bad as it might seem. Some issues, though, can be a real struggle. I leave her to her planning and reflect on the magazine editing assignments I had in Professor Rowe’s class. The first was to plan an issue of *Martha Stewart Living* with x number of ads. For all of those hours I spent rearranging ads and adding and eliminating pages, Lindsey makes it seem so easy. Then, I had to plan a service package, except it was only one page — not 12. Through all of the eraser shavings, it looked a bit sloppy. Lindsey makes that seem so easy, too, including her sketches of the dunes.

Project:

- Continued textual analysis

Week 3: Feb. 1, 2016

General work:

- Graced by the presence of the wonderful Robert Sanchez during a classroom-like review of assigned magazine articles (See more below.)

For print:

- 150-word story on a local winery offering adult coloring book sessions

Blog posts:

- [Hurry to Hopdoddy for the Poutine Burger](#)

Fact-checking assignments:

- Two pages of calendar events for March
- A print story slated for April on a pricey cocktail

Calendar events:

- [Rogue Beer Dinner](#)
- [Cherry Creek North Chef Cook-Off](#)

Dining guide:

- [Aloy Modern Thai](#)
- [Englewood Grand](#)

Analysis:

Robert Sanchez is a legend. I realized this on my first day in the office. Another intern, Haley, was touring the office with me. Introduction by introduction, I memorized her name, her hometown, where she went to school and her work experience. I tried to do the same for the 20-plus staff members I met from editorial, marketing and advertising departments, but luckily each cube had a nameplate. Then, we got to a corner cube with the nameplate, "Robert Sanchez." Mary Clare, our supervisor, introduced him. I thought Haley had just been introduced to Ryan Gosling or the cast of *Friends*. I recognized his name and his byline, as it'd been mentioned several time in my classes at Mizzou. But I didn't recognize his seemingly celebrity status. We bonded over Mizzou and the fact that I'd read "Frank Sinatra Has A Cold," "a must-read, a classic," he says.

Although Robert Sanchez is a big name (a name that is only appropriate to mention in full for its status and rhythm), he's pretty illusive around the office — oftentimes out reporting. I think he's known for doing his own thing, driving his own story ideas to fruition, holding a lot of editorial power in that he does what he wants. But this week the interns had a scheduled meeting with him; he existed. We were assigned to read two stories, and a discussion was to ensue. Giddiness fell over me as I felt like I was

back in the classroom.

We discussed the two pieces he assigned (“Bret, Unbroken” and “The Lost City of Z”). Then, Haley started asking Robert Sanchez about his own stories, in particular his story about housing in Denver. I haven't had a chance to read it yet, but even so, the insight was invaluable. He interviewed David, a homeless college student (though this is not revealed until the end of the story) who was trying to find housing in Denver. “How did you find that source?” Haley asked. Well, Robert Sanchez said he remembers sitting in on his mom's college classes when he was about 6. He remembers that there were homeless people in them. So, that's where he started — at the Community College of Denver. Because this wasn't a story about mental health or government assistance, he wanted a reliable source, someone who wasn't on drugs or suffering from a mental disability. When he went to CCD's administrative offices, the woman at the desk said she couldn't share that information legally. He slyly suggested that she simply call a student in; he could take the hint. It worked. She called in David, a well-spoken, polite, motivated young man who became one of the story's protagonists.

On the other side of this story is Nick Steele, who was renovating a 109-year-old home in a part of town where housing prices are high enough to make your jaw drop. This source, Robert Sanchez said, resulted from him simply being a real estate guru. He knew about the area (thanks to iPhone apps) and found this house for sale. He asked a neighbor about the owner, who usually came around in the morning, about 7 a.m. before work. So, Robert Sanchez camped out in his car for a couple of hours early one morning. Then he caught up with Nick. From there, the reporting and the story unfolded.

Listening to Robert Sanchez speak made me get that itch back to deeply report a

story and to connect with sources. The moral of this story is to be innovative, work around obstacles and make people comfortable. In fact, Robert Sanchez said on his last day of interviewing David, David looked at him and told him that he wasn't as bad as he'd thought he'd be. At first, David thought Robert Sanchez was just an egotistical jerk. But he's not, and this is how he has become such a strong reporter and, consequently, writer.

Project:

- Continued textual analysis
- Created a list of interview subjects and questions

Week 4: Feb. 8, 2016

For print:

- Interviewed Moose Koons from Peach Street Distillers for a print story to run in June

Blog posts:

- [Best Bites: Aloy Modern Thai's Pomelo Salad](#)

Fact-checking assignments:

- An online exclusive about food markets around town: 8 pages, 20 blurbs, 20-plus calls, infinite language barriers, nearly 50 fact-checking changes
- A day-in-the-life of story about Curtis Park Delicatessen

Analysis:

“Do you think that helped?” Geoff asked as we got up from the conference table, and we pushed in our chairs at the same time. “Absolutely,” I said, and I meant it. My first interview for this project proved to be successful. Geoff Van Dyke, *5280*'s editorial director, always has a friendly smile. If he doesn't, he has those friendly, welcoming eyes that invite you to take a seat, relax. I was nervous gearing up for this interview. Sure, Geoff was very willing to do this interview. He'd even helped me sort out my interview subjects the week before. He also sat in my spot 17-some years ago. But it was Geoff,

The Editor.

I tried to organize my “semi-structured” questions to the best of my ability. I would ask about his general experience in the field, about topics of service journalism, about presentation, etc. All of that flew out the open window (it was a surprisingly warm February day) as soon as I asked him about his definition of service journalism. “Do you know the name Don Ranly?” he asked. Of course I do, and off the rails the interview went — but in the best way possible.

Not only did we have this Missouri connection, I had done my research. The analysis of *5280*'s 2015 service journalism features proved to be helpful. I asked about the importance of timeliness in publishing these pieces and noted last June’s fly-fishing package. “That's a great example,” Geoff said. Not only was I able to point to specific packages and recurring elements of service journalism at *5280*, I felt my brain peeling back the layers of these packages. Geoff mentioned the idea of these traditional and nontraditional service packages. Yes, this is exactly what John Fennel had been talking about, I thought. It was also the next question I had planned to ask Geoff, so the transition was smooth.

Throughout the interview, I had to reel myself in, not interrupt. Geoff mentioned a lean-back experience for readers. I distinctly remember our discussion of this in my magazine editing class with Professor Rowe. Geoff noted the importance of good reporting. I was pulled back into Jacqui's and Berkley's classes. He mentioned the importance of translating headlines online to be SEO-friendly. Yes, Sara Shipley Hiles harped on this. There were also specific *5280* mentions that I recognized. He mentioned the inclusion of first-person narratives. That was a question that was on my semi-

structured list. He referenced a specific issue for a specific example. Yes, I knew that; I had read that.

Doing my research proved helpful. And so did sitting through years of classes. I finally had that “ah-hah” moment where what I’d been learning in the classroom applied to “real life.” I remember always complaining in high school math classes: When am I actually going to need to know this? My teacher would tell me one day. Luckily, she was wrong. But this interview with Geoff proved that my journalism professors have loaded me with applicable, usable information for the “real world” — like service journalism.

Project:

- Completed textual analysis
- Interviewed Geoff, transcribed
- Scheduled interviews with Dan and Lindsey

Week 5: Feb. 15, 2016

General work:

- Met with the marketing and sales team for an introduction

For print:

- Interviewed with Nick French of Frangoisa Farms about his adopt-a-hive program for a June print story

Dining guide:

- [Arcana](#)
- [Love, Peace & Sol](#)

Analysis:

This week buzzed by, pun intended. One thing I haven’t touched on in these weekly notes is the importance of fact checking to these publications. On my first day, Mary Clare briefed me on fact checking. A lot of it I was familiar with. (Shout out to *Vox*, though the standards and rules here are less strenuous.)

I have to say, I don't love fact checking. Sure, I enjoy speaking with people, but I'd much rather be reporting a story versus re-reporting it. I've been given several fact-checking assignments since my start, but the biggest challenge was presented to me last week: the Denver food markets online package. I was given two days to contact 20 markets, many of which were international in nature with owners cut from diverse backgrounds and of all languages. I would babble a foreign word into the phone and get a "huh?" or "que?" or "uh ..." in response. Some people just told me in plain English that they didn't speak English. Others just hung up. Although this was a pain and pushed back the work I was excited to pursue (the writing), the package was published with immediate gratification. With it came 409 likes, 289 shares and 45 comments on Facebook — and counting. Now that's service.

Credibility comes in different shapes, though. There's the fact-checking kind that ties in with accuracy — yes. But there's also credibility in the form of integrity when it comes to these service packages. Dan noted this in my interview with him this week. Because his background is in journalism, he follows steadfast rules, including no mingling or schmoozing with advertisers. This gets tricky in the line of service journalism, though. Say you create a list of the top 25 restaurants in Denver. Someone's going to get his or her feelings hurt. In fact, Dan says he just got a call like that this week. An advertiser was upset. They'd advertised in *5280* for years, yet they weren't listed in whatever "best of" list it was. That's because *5280* has established itself with credibility and integrity, and readers keep coming back. "Lord knows it would have made the early years a lot easier with people saying, 'I'll totally buy a full-page ad if you write a story about us ...'" Dan says. "No. We don't do that."

So, my week clashed with talks of advertising and talks of international food markets, but somehow it all worked together. Because Dan has created such a strong sense of credibility and trust with our readers, they continue to come back to 5280 for all information, including information on where to grocery shop. Some even left comments asking where they could find other specialty products. Needless to say, it was my job to get back on the phone and figure out the answers to those questions ... all in the name of service.

Project:

- Interviewed Lindsey, transcribing in process
- Interviewed Dan, transcribed

Week 6: Feb. 22, 2016

General work:

- Sat in on a mobile photography workshop for staff

Blog posts:

- [Best Bites: Rioja's French Onion Consommé](#)
- [Eat Like Leo: Raw Bison Liver at the Fort](#)

Fact-checking assignments:

- Two pages of calendar for April print
- Abejas restaurant review for April print
- The April news page

Calendar events:

- [A Flavor Journey Around Scotland-Whisky Tasting](#)
- [Beer vs. Wine Smackdown](#)
- [Breckenridge Beer Festival](#)
- [Denver International Beer Competition People's Choice Tasting](#)
- [Dining Out For Life](#)
- [Glass Half Full](#)
- [Global Grubbing: Kamayan-Style Dinner](#)
- [High West Oyster Fest](#)
- [Microbreweries for the Environment](#)

- [Taste of Pearl](#)
- [Uncorked Wine Tasting](#)
- [The Whisky Extravaganza](#)

Dining guide:

- [Crazy Mountain Tap Room & BBQ](#)
- [Grind Kitchen & Watering Hole](#)
- [Kline's Beer Hall](#)
- [Tavern Platt Park](#)
- [Wystone's World Teas](#)

Analysis:

I was pretty busy in the office this week. The March issue came out, but things are already rolling along for the May issue. But, like all of my professors taught me, it's important to pause, take a breather.

Although I had no hand in the March issue (except a few fact-checking assignments), I feel attached to its cover story: *Where To Eat Now*. This package has consistently been brought up in my interviews with editors. Each March, there's a food feature. In the past, it's been packaged as *Best New Restaurants*. Although food features typically do really well in *5280*, this one had not been as successful in the past few years. Geoff, Lindsey nor Amanda can really say why. Perhaps it's the fact that the restaurant scene in Denver now changes daily — even hourly. One place opens, one place closes, one place is hot and one place is not. As a consequence, the “new” restaurants aren't necessarily that new when the issue comes out. So the feature was repackaged to highlight “*Where To Eat Now*.” This offers immediacy and a sense of being “in the know.” The package is broken down into categories: entertainment, bucket-list eats, dessert, cocktails and breakfast & brunch. Sidebars and photos dot the feature. (One sidebar is a green chile throwdown, a trend I noted in the food scene as soon as I moved here. Another is a flowchart to help you decide where to eat — very interactive.) In

reading these blurbs, they're simple — essentially the dining guide blurbs I write up each week, but packaged together, this is a great service package for readers.

Also interesting to note: The digital team has decided to experiment and release content at various times versus all at once this month. I'll be interested to see how that works out as well as how the readers respond to the subtle repackaging of this March issue.

Project:

- Set up interviews with Amanda and Jerilyn

Week 7: Feb. 29, 2016

General work:

- Attended a 3-hour media dinner event
- Met with Robert Sanchez for another discussion
- Attended a pizza-making media event

Blog posts:

- [Behind the Scenes: Denver Restaurant Week](#)
- [Where to Celebrate Leap Day](#)
- [A Guide To Cochon555](#)
- [6 Winners Emerge from DPS' Imaginarium Design Challenge](#)
- [How To Pair Your Pizza With Wine](#)

Calendar events:

- [Bottomless Latin Jazz Brunch](#)
- [Brew & Stew](#)
- [Stoic & Genuine's School of Fish](#)
- [SUDS for SIDS Brew Fest](#)

Dining guide:

- [Bread-N-Butter](#)
- [Lucile's Creole Café \(Platt Park\)](#)

Analysis:

On Thursday, I had a project interview with Amanda Faison, the current food

editor, a 20-year *5280* staff member and my mentor. As the dining intern, I work closely with Amanda, so I was excited to sit down with her to get her take on service journalism in the realm of food. In some of my previous interviews, Yelp had been mentioned as an indirect threat to service journalism at city magazines. To be honest, I don't use Yelp except to locate restaurants nearby; maybe I'm old school. And of course the digital world is threatening to take the print world, but we all know that won't happen — anytime soon at least.

Anyways, Dan mentioned Yelp. Then Amanda. At this point, I figured it might be something I should mention in my study of service journalism: The Internet's takeover of traditional service. However, Amanda had a good point, and I do hope *5280*'s readers (and nonreaders) get this. Yelp is watered down. Yelp isn't a bunch of aggregated reviews from critical thinkers. It's typically someone who has had a poor experience or a very positive experience. Or maybe it's a restaurant owner's friend posting. Or maybe it's someone who just got fired; this is his or her way of venting rage. This is where Yelp and city magazines vastly differ: credibility.

It seems like everyone knows Amanda around town. She's been on the scene for 20 years. She knows where to find the best pork roast or that the restaurant over in the Highland area has cricket tacos — she's even tried them, too. Amanda and her staff of writers and editors sneak around town and try out these foods, hold unbiased opinions *and* know what to take into consideration when reviewing a restaurant. All these other people don't.

Although Amanda showed strength in her conversation about battling (or ignoring) Yelp, she did seem a bit hesitant in our discussion of another rival: *Eater*. *Eater*

gets information up fast. For example, a pie shop opened in town on Valentine's Day. Of course, *Eater* wrote about it that very day. But on the day of our interview, about three weeks after the opening, Amanda was taking her time writing up a review. She had been twice, tried a variety of pies and had time to judge the service at two different times. She's not sure if readers will value that, but she feels sure this is a better, more thoughtful approach. *5280* also skips the gossip — chef so-and-so packed her knives and left town. Amanda hopes that this will only help secure *5280*'s position in the community as a credible source.

So, with service journalism — once again — it all swings back to credibility.

Project:

- Completed transcription of Lindsey's interview
- Interviewed Amanda, transcribed
- Translated text analysis to a Word document
- Began outlining my first draft

Week 8: March 7, 2016

General work:

- Sat in on art meeting with the food team
- Sat in on a meeting with Lindsey and Jess LaRusso, who is working on a service package

For print:

- Completed final draft of adopt-a-hive story
- Completed final draft of pear gin (with Moose) story
- Interviewed Mike Johnston, owner of Savory Spice who traveled the States in search of the best barbecue

Calendar events:

- [Beast & Bottle's Musical Chairs Series: David Bowie Dinner](#)
- [Estes Park Winter Warm Up](#)
- [Syrah Tasting](#)

Transcribed:

- Two interviews with district attorney candidates for Natasha Gardner, senior editor

Research:

- Tasted five desserts from restaurants around town for July is Top of The Town
- Tasted tacos around town for an online exclusive “Best Tacos” service package

Analysis:

I haven't seen Lindsey Koehler, deputy editor and my mentor, around for a while. Usually, she gives me a warm smile and wink as she's rushing by my desk or if we meet in the kitchen during lunchtime. Last week, when we set up a time for catch-up coffee, I told her to let me know about any planning meetings. This week, rather than swooshing by my desk, she stopped. She was having a meeting with Jessica LaRusso, 5280's copy editor in 15 minutes about a service feature package Jess was working on slated for July.

When I ducked in, Lindsey sat casually with her legs tangled in her chair and a notebook and purple pen in front of her. Jess sat up straight, fingers poised on her keyboard as she scrolled through her notes on the package she's been planning since last summer. She did most of the research then, when the parks were teeming with activity and when photographers could capture greenness. (You, ideally, don't want a snow-covered tree in a July feature, right?) Jess reminded me a little of myself: She had all of her information; she just had to execute it.

Lindsey and Jess started talking about finding a backbone for the package, a main element to run throughout. “Ten parks? Will that number look OK on a cover line?” Jess asked. They're already brainstorming cover lines — sell lines, more accurately. Lindsey thought more creatively: “Well, sure, we can feature 8-10 parks, but you'll have sidebars.” Jess had plenty of ideas for sidebars: There was the weird lawn game

characters she'd met at one park, a story about tennis courts being transformed to accommodate a Spanish game in another. Oh, and the wildlife sightings in each ... She started counting such-and-such park, where you can see such-and-such animal, and such-and-such park, where you can play such-and-such game. She adds it up that way — a way that readers might be more drawn to.

Lindsey broke out her purple pen and a piece of printer paper. She hesitated: “I don't normally do this in pen ...” She sketched out the 10-page spread and started marking it up: This page will be the opener. This page can include the mountain parks. Jess said she was thinking more of a full spread, but Lindsey said it could fit on one page — a couple of blurbs here, a sidebar. Her pen kept moving. She outlined the first park: A headline, a photo, a short blurb. “A sidebar can go over here,” she said, designating it with squiggles. Another park can nestle underneath that one. To break up presentation, she mentioned that charticle Jess had proposed: “If you want to ... then go ...” This can take up a large part of a page; that'll give readers a break, plus it'll add plenty of parks.

Afterwards, they sat back. Jess seemed to feel more confident. It reminded me of the way I feel after having a really great meeting with an editor or a professor or reading an inspirational Roy Peter Clark chapter; I feel like, whatever it is, might be achievable. Lindsey suggested Jess also look into city operations and how these parks are maintained to — again break up the flow of “do this” and “go there.” Why are the toilets locked up in the park next to her house? Oh, and one time there was an orange cone that sat in the middle of a lake for months; no one could come get that? What about the lack of trashcans? Bringing in these musings and questions from people on staff could offer some insight into some lingering questions readers might have.

At the end of their meeting, they both turned to me: Any questions? I nodded to the copy of *Atlanta Magazine* on the table between them; the cover story was about parks. “Did you get the idea from *Atlanta*?” I asked. Jess said no, that she was doing some research for a piece she was writing for the Summer In Denver feature last year. She got on the phone with this parks guy, and he just kept talking. She found it all interesting, and she wanted people to know about it, too. So, no, the idea didn't come from *Atlanta*. She was using it to see if she could find some ideas, but she wasn't a huge fan of what they'd done. Lindsey flipped through the feature; it's not that exciting, she says. She started pointing to some of the parks: “You'd never want to go there; you'd get shot there; that's not a good area.” As a native Atlantan, she's not impressed.

So, with that brief, 20-minute meeting — my question included — there's a game plan. The editor and the writer walked away in opposite directions back to their cubicles. Soon, the package will begin to take shape — from purple pen to glossy magazine pages.

Project:

- Completed first draft
- Created a reverse outline
- Edited text analysis
- Compiled and edited interviews

Week 9: March 14, 2016

Fact-checking assignments:

- A story about cheese shops around town for the May issue
- The May news page for Eat and Drink

Analysis:

Like I said, this was a sickly week. However, I'd like to reflect on a meeting I had with Amanda Faison and the food team last week. It was an ARF meeting; I'm still not

sure what that stands for, but the two food editors sat in with Dave McKenna, the art director, and Sean Parsons, the assistant art director. Earlier in the week, Amanda had sent them close-to-final copy of each story that's running for the May issue, including a story about cheese shops, the news page and a story about eating adventurously. (I fact checked this my first week in, but it had to be held for space.) So, Dave and Sean had a chance to read over the stories and brainstorm. In this meeting, with the clash of art and edit, the stories began to take shape. The cheese story I had been fact checking was flat ... well, literally because it was on a printed Word doc but also because it was organized by subheads and blurbs, subheads and blurbs. Now the idea was to present this on a full page as a cheese wheel of different cheeses that represents each shop. Essentially, it was becoming more of an infographic with various entry points.

After the meeting, Amanda showed me a galley of another story I'd fact checked. It was about a cocktail and, again, broken down by blurbs of how it was made. The idea was to justify the cost of this \$13 cocktail. On the galley, there was a beautiful photo of the cocktail, and then arrows pointed to various parts and pulled out the information. (See page 79.)

This ties in with the importance of presentation with service. In my interview with Amanda, she spoke about multiple entry points for readers; they can pick and choose what to read and how they read it. These entry points come in the form of varied presentation. Although this was a simple department story, with the collaboration of the food editorial team and the art team, a simple 500-word story offered the reader more.

Week 10: March 21, 2016

Print:

- Drafted a print story for August on the owner of Savory Spice. Mike traveled the country for 42 days visiting 88 barbecue joints as research for his company
- Wrote a blurb on the best dessert in Denver for the Top of The Town issue (July)

Blog posts:

- [Opening Today: Zoës Kitchen in Littleton](#)
- [Sweet Stuff: Meet Beast & Bottle's New Pastry Chef](#)

Research:

- Eating tacos still

Calendar events:

- [Chowder Room Beer Dinner](#)
- [Denver Grub Club at Bistro Vendôme](#)
- [Easter Brunch](#)
- [Mole Festival](#)

Dining guide:

- [Esters Neighborhood Pub](#)
- [Fooducopia](#)
- [Steuben's \(Arvada\)](#)
- [Zoë's Kitchen](#)

Analysis:

I didn't even think I liked tacos. My tongue feels as though it's been numbed when in contact with spice. My nose starts running; my eyes start watering. But when Amanda and Callie approached me about this “research,” I couldn't say no — partially because I'm a sucker but also because I was about to take part in a heavy service package.

It's been about two or three weeks of swallowing this assignment — and lots of tacos. I have been to four taco joints and have two more on my list. We have a huge running Excel sheet that's color-coded by the editor assigned to each restaurant, dive, bar and food truck along with its neighborhood/address, a ranking system and notes. This Monday, it was time to reconvene. It's been a joke around the office about eating so

many tacos, but we were starting to reconsider this feat of going to nearly 88 tacos joints amongst the five of us.

We went through the list, and Callie worked to rank these places by tier and category (i.e. 1st tier Al Pastor or 2nd tier seafood). We're about 75 percent complete with a deadline looming in two weeks. Ultimately, our taste buds will be salvaged, and we'll be serving our reader with the "Best Tacos" list on April 20. (I'm not sure if the date was intentional.)

This is all part of online-only food service packages that were proposed for 2016. In February, the best food markets package was released. Now, it's the best tacos. I asked Jerilyn, the digital editor, about these packages in our email exchange this week. What makes these different than the normal service stories online? "We're putting the full force of editorial behind them," she wrote. "This has never been such an intentional, collective effort. We're doing endless hours of expensive research, fact checking, etc." In my interview with Amanda, she had also mentioned these new online exclusives. Although she was sad that a lot of time and effort was being dumped into something that was online only, she knew it would be worth the traffic it brings to the site. And there's another issue, which is a recurring issue with online content: Sidebars aren't ideal. There are so many wonderful people, quirky side dishes and best margaritas we're running into, but sidebars just don't work online.

In the meantime, we'll settle with gorging on tacos and writing about them — in the name of reader service.

Project:

- Interviewed Jerilyn via email
- Began compiling all elements into one document

Week 11: March 28, 2016

Print stories:

- Made final, final edits to Moose Koons' Peach Street Distillery's "happy accident" story
- Wrote a dining guide blurb for June print issue

Online exclusive:

- Wrote taco blurbs

Calendar events:

- [Du Vin Festival](#)
- [The Cooking Studio's Pastry Class](#)
- [South Denver Beer Fest](#)
- [Festival of the Brewpubs](#)
- [Fermentation with Ozuke](#)
- [Curds & Brew Cheesemaking & Beer Tasting Bootcamp](#)
- [Colorado Corks & Cuisine](#)
- [Celebration of Mom Winemaker's Dinner](#)
- [Left Hand Beer Dinner](#)
- [Spring Cigar Dinner](#)
- [Owen Roe's Winemaker Dinner](#)
- [Nose to Tail Dinner](#)

Dining guide:

- [Pop's Place](#)
- [The Way Back](#)
- [Racca's Pizzeria Napoletana \(Lakewood\)](#)

Analysis:

Last week Lindsey B. Koehler shot me an email: Can you do some transcribing for me? Of course, I replied, sounding way more excited than I actually was.

I stopped by her cube that afternoon. She explained to me she's working on August's Top Docs. I remembered when I interviewed her back in February she'd told me she'd been having panic attacks in the shower that morning as she tried to brainstorm new approaches to this very traditional piece of service. But she had been on to something at that point. She along with two other editors had just had surgeries. She got a

copy of their medical bills and compared. Why was his saline \$100 more than hers? She started thinking about this idea of money in the medical field, especially with the Obamacare stuff being implemented. Do people really know what they're spending their money on? Do they shop around?

Since our February meeting, she ran with the idea. Now, she needed me to do some research — and transcribe. On the research side, I was to look into how people can actively and intelligently invest in their medical bills; it's like buying a car. She gave me the rundown, and I was off to see what I could find. She's hoping to put together a substantial list of 12-15 tips. She plans to culminate the list with a final tip: Find an advocate. She'll illustrate this point with a narrative to break up the service nature of the content. The essence of the story: A man got really sick, his ex-wife was recruited to help, and she became his biggest advocate and saved him thousands and thousands of dollars. (This is the interview I'm transcribing now.)

Anyhow, this is just one way Lindsey has managed to reinvent Top Docs in the last few years. Although this is a traditional piece of service journalism, she can still reshape it each time to offer something *new*.

Project:

- Interviewed Audrey Congleton, audience development manager, transcribed interview
- Typed up/ compiled observations
- Completed a second draft of the professional analysis
- Compiled everything thus far into one document

Week 12: April 4, 2016

General:

- Attended the monthly discussion with Robert Sanchez

Blog posts:

- [F*ckUp Nights Comes To Denver](#)
- [Sips: Rockies-Inspired Cocktails for the Home Opener](#)

Dining guide:

- [The Perservery](#)
- [The Rosedale](#)

Analysis:

This week's observations are coming in two parts, and they're mostly rambling thoughts:

1.) I do have one question about service journalism that I've yet to address in my interviews and that has become more and more evident as I've worked on this taco project. Last week, the digital team announced our taco list and made note that we'd feature 52 creations. Remember: Numbers are important. We chose 52 because there are 52 weeks in a year, and it matches, naturally, with *5280*. So, as a team, we'd visited more than 98 places in the last several weeks, which makes narrowing down options difficult. At first, it was easy: The places with low meat quality, greasy tortillas or that resulted in food poisoning (thank goodness not me) were goners. We got to about 65, and the process became more difficult. As editors volunteered to cross off their own tastings, I wondered how in the world this was happening. How do I know that the breakfast taco I tried wasn't better than the other editors' breakfast tacos? I was hesitant to cross anything off. I ended up sacrificing a mediocre veggie taco because it was fairly bland, but it didn't feel quite right. I'd like to ask Amanda Faison, the food editor, about how she handles other packages such as the best restaurants package in October. Does she do that on her own? It feels too subjective for service, especially with many minds collaborating. I'll pick her brain this week and send updates.

2.) Using service is weird after studying it so. Last weekend, I went to Aspen for the first time. I did my typical Google search of *5280* plus topic of interest. My first hit was articles tagged with Aspen on *5280*. The next two proved to be more specific. One was a first-timer's guide. Perfect. The online presentation is chunky, and to be honest, I slipped into the reader mentality that I only wanted blurbs to skim. It was broken down by where to eat, sip, tour, stay, if you do one thing, local's secret and ski. I admit that the photos helped a lot in discerning the type of establishment the restaurant and bars were — if we wanted to dress up or not. However, there were no price tags, which I was interested in. There were, though, specific dishes notes, which helped. Skipping down, I was intrigued by the local's secret, though once I was in Aspen, it seemed like a lot of tourists were there: Aspen Brewing Company. The BYOF (bring your own food) note was nice. Overall, unfortunately, I found myself skimming the skinny little magazine at the hotel. It has a classic “12 places to eat” service piece that included longer narratives, but each began with blurbs: ambiance, price tag and food genre, which proved to be helpful. The fact that I reached for that print magazine might be just for that — it was print. I could hold it in my hand. But my next step was to Google Map the place to see how far it was. And then I'd type it into Yelp — even though Amanda, the food editor, has instilled in me that those reviews are watered down. I couldn't help myself. I felt bad bailing on *5280*, but it could have been for any number of viable reasons: the quick hits of the blurbs or the ease of skimming a print piece. However, I'll always trust *5280* more.

Project:

- Received second draft edits from Jen

Week 13: April 11, 2016

Blog posts:

- [Go Now: Pop's Place](#)
- [Drink This: Great Divide's New Hibiscus Saison](#)

Fact-checking assignments:

- A Denver version of *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* for June's backstory
- Top tacos for online

Calendar:

- [Bacon and Beer Classic](#)
- [Feast For the Senses with Peggy Markel](#)
- [Frasca Food and Wine Takeover with Katie Parla](#)
- [The Real Dill Pickle Party](#)

Transcribed:

- 22 pages of Lindsey B. Koehler's interview with Annette, a woman who saved her ex-husband's life by being a medical advocate for July's Top Doc issue

Analysis:

Back to tacos. These little nuggets have been on my brain — still — lately. Little did I know, I'd be assigned to fact-check this package. It felt a bit like journalistic torture. Luckily, I split the restaurants with Amy, a digital intern who's fluent in Spanish. Still, that's 26 tacos, 26 (plus) calls, and nearly 50 fact-checking changes/notes made on my end thus far.

Plus questions. So many questions have popped up since I've actually been able to get my hands on service journalism. I've continued to think about the question I posed in my notes last week: Can this list be objective? I asked Amanda today. She said, well, no. We all have different tastes. For this, there was no way to have one person taste more than 300 different tacos. We just had to accept that. But we have to keep in mind that we are in an authoritative position that people come to for information about Denver and Colorado. We have to keep our power and our egos in check. We have to be fair in order to maintain credibility.

Then I asked Amanda about the more substantial packages that involve very objective numbers and rankings. The annual 25 Best Restaurants that comes out in October is all her; Amanda is the only one who has a hand in picking those restaurants. She samples each, but she also considers the history and reputation and uses her 20-plus years of knowledge in Denver's food scene to determine the pecking order. However, she admits it's still subjective. Sometimes she'll go to a restaurant and just have a bad dish, but she knows this isn't aligned with its history. So, she'll send the assistant food editor, Callie, to see what she thinks and to determine if the cooks were just having a bad night.

I also asked about crowdsourcing. For Top Tacos, we posted a few social media inquiries that asked for people's favorite tacos in town. We got some answers, though most of the places we'd already checked out. One reader suggested Cold Crush, a nightclub. Yelp reviews revealed that people were raving about these tacos — maybe literally. The editors sent me one night, and I was unimpressed with the overcooked meat and greasy tortillas. (But then I wonder: Is it just me who doesn't like these? How can my taste buds be objective?) Crowdsourcing for these packages is good and can generate buzz. For big packages like 25 Best Restaurants, however, *5280* won't crowd source.

On the backend of crowdsourcing is feedback, which Amanda loves when it comes to her 25 Best issue — even if it's something like, “You're totally off-base.” Next Wednesday our taco package will be released, and we expect plenty of feedback. Already when we crowd-sourced for suggestions, we found people arguing: Torchy's Tacos is good; no it's inauthentic and bad. I'm expecting some bitter social media arguments. I suppose, though, when you put your neck out and say something is the “best” or the “top,” that's what you'll get.

Project:

- Made a final round of edits

Week 14: April 18, 2016

Fact-checking:

- June news page for Eat and Drink
- A high-brow wine paired with low-brow food story for the Aspen Food & Wine Festival
- A June story about a butcher pairing up with the U.S. Army to train them to properly prepare meat

Calendar events:

- [Allegrini Wine Dinner](#)
- [Pizza Master Class](#)
- [También Spring Pop-Up Dinner](#)

Well, I can't believe I made it. Tomorrow, Top Tacos will be published, and it feels like the perfect ending to my stint at *5280*, though I'm certainly not ready to leave. I spent my night curled up on the couch editing my professional analysis. Reflecting, I can't believe how much I've learned. But I do feel as though I didn't get to accomplish one thing — and it was something I was determined to do: Offer an up-to-date definition of service journalism. Sure, the 5,000 words harp on the idea of service, its importance and how to execute it, but I still can't come up with a solid definition. I run the morning of my defense in my head. Y'all will ask: "So how would you define service journalism?" Well, I'm not really sure. I'd like to stick to those easy words: useful, actionable. But it's so much more than that as I've discovered through days of research, interviews, analysis, field notes.

The good news is that I have a solid 11-hour road trip ahead of me. Perhaps then I can pull back, out of the confines of Denver's streets and ponder how to define service journalism. However, I'm really not sure that it's possible without a word count of at least

5,000. Results are TK.

Project:

- Interviewed Dave McKenna, art director; transcribed
- Made final edits

CHAPTER THREE: EVALUATION

When talks of research started brewing at the beginning of my graduate school career, I was stumped and so, so frustrated. I wasn't entirely familiar with magazines. Sure, I was studying magazine writing, but I was two months into that — and reporting at a newspaper. In Jennifer Rowe's Magazine Editing class, I started to slide into the magazine industry. When I say slide, it was a slippery slope of binging on magazine subscriptions and hoarding stacks in my tiny apartment. There, though, I learned about the world of city magazines outside of *Vox*. City magazines intrigued me for their range of story topics and forms. And part of that, I learned, was service journalism. However, even after completing that class and even creating my own service journalism magazine spread, I still wanted to learn more.

I remember a couple of months later I was sitting in Jennifer Rowe's office talking — probably more like whining — about my stalemate of a project proposal. Look at city magazines and service journalism, she suggested. It seemed so obvious. As I started my preliminary research, I found there was nothing; that's a good sign, my professors assured me. From there, I pieced together research about city magazines and service journalism and tried to comprehend what it is, how it was practiced and why it was important. Never, however, would I have been able to understand this intense codependent relationship between city of magazines and their service journalism ... until I began my internship at *5280*.

In my first introduction of the magazine, service journalism wasn't just mentioned; its importance in keeping the magazine afloat in its early years was

emphasized. From there, its presence became even more evident through analyzing all issues of 2015, interviewing editors and crashing planning meetings. And not only is it important, there is a method to brainstorming, reporting, writing and presenting a vast amount of information for readers. I also had the opportunity to work hands-on in a couple of instances with service journalism packages. My first exposure came via a fact-checking assignment. “Denver’s 20 Best Food Markets” was to run online-only, part of an initiative to bulk up *5280*’s web presence. In two days, I called 20 markets to confirm they carried items such as hara chiwda and Golobolbol ice cream. With each, I confirmed the address, phone number and website. I thought my job was done afterwards, but a conversation through the article’s comments ensued: Where can I get this or that? I, at the service of the reader, did the research. After this, I participated, from its beginning, in the next online-only food service package: Denver’s Top Tacos. I drove around to various eateries to taste the tacos. I took photos, wrote notes and convened with the other editors to determine the 52 best tacos in town. After eating more than 300 different tacos collectively, we compiled our list — all in the name of reader service. Being able to participate in these packages provided a wealth of insight into the depth of these service pieces.

But service journalism wasn’t solely my focus in my time at *5280*. This was my first experience at a city magazine — and a magazine, period — outside of *Vox*, so I was eager to see how it operated. On my first day, my supervisor engrained the importance of fact checking in my brain; that was my primary task as an editorial intern. And as much as I was dreading it, I came to love the assignments and the idea of re-reporting a story. In addition, I wrote dining guide blurbs and calendar entries, which proved to be less

exciting but just as much of a learning experience. Perhaps the best experience was writing under a new stable of editors. I had that anxious new writer feeling all over again as I sent in my first draft to my editor. It felt like a moment of truth: Have I *really* learned anything these last two years? I guess I had because I didn't receive feedback. In my subsequent stories I did receive feedback, which I greatly appreciated, and with that, my confidence as a writer began to grow. For a blog post I pitched and wrote about Beast & Bottle's new pastry chef, Jodi Polson, Callie Sumlin, the assistant food editor, wrote: "This is GREAT. Really good job. I really feel like you've gotten really good at telling a story concisely and in an accessible way. This is going to be our Table talk header for the week, so Rachel, our photog, will go shoot the dessert :)." However, my favorite pieces were for print, which allowed me more time to report and develop the story. One day in February, I drove out to Parker, Colorado, to visit Nick French, owner of Frangiosa Farms, a Colorado apiary. He offers a CSA-like adopt-a-hive program. Rather than simply write, "This is what it is," I suited up and watched French interact with the bees and his process of collecting honey. I wrote in first-person to showcase how terrifying yet satisfying the whole experience was. To me, this adds to the conversation about French's program versus repeat the here-it-is facts.

In the midst of eating tacos, desserts and other Denver delicacies, I learned about the way *5280* operates. The publication is about integrity. Amongst Denver's other city publications, *5280* stands out for its credibility, which hinges on its fact-checking interns. Its stories also offer different perspectives with more in-depth angles. For example, if a new restaurant opens, Amanda Faison isn't necessarily going to write another "it's open" piece. Instead, she's going to visit the establishment a couple of times, accurately gauge

the food, service and surroundings.

I'm proud of what I've accomplished with *5280* this semester (beehives and all). I wish I could stay longer. Not only is Denver an incredible city, but also I was finally getting a hang of everything and feeling confident in my work and with my coworkers. I also began pitching more stories in the last month, something I wish I had done from the beginning, though proved difficult as a newcomer.

I'm also proud of what I've accomplished in my graduate school career as a whole. This project proved to be a culmination of what I learned in each of my magazine classes, and the setting of a new city added all the more challenge. But through too much coffee, not enough sleep and a case of bronchitis, I did it, and I am extremely happy with what I was able to contribute to the field and to *5280*.

CHAPTER FOUR: PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

While sitting at my small, dark cubicle at *5280* — lamps were provided — I cranked out many published pieces including print stories, blog posts, calendar events and dining guide entries. I also fact checked a variety of stories. I have compiled a range of my work in my time at *5280*.

PRINT SAMPLE

Note: Because 5280 is a monthly magazine, the staff works well ahead the published date. From January to April, I worked on stories that are slated to run April to August. In June, a story about Nick French and his adopt-a-hive program will be published. In July, a story about Peach Street Distilling's accidental pear gin will be published. Finally, in August, a story about Mike Johnston's statewide barbecue travels will be published.



MAKE ROOT DOWN'S HIBISCUS-GINGER SORBET

Can Root Down's raw, vegan, and organic dessert really deliver on taste? Indeed it can. —CS

1

Steep 1 pound of organic, dried hibiscus flowers in 4 quarts of filtered 180° water for 2 hours. Strain out the hibiscus flowers.



2

Combine the hibiscus liquid with 1 cup coconut nectar,* ½ cup organic ginger juice, and 1 tablespoon sea salt. Chill overnight.



3

Churn in an ice cream machine according to the manufacturer's instructions.



*Find coconut nectar at Whole Foods Market.

3

Pounds of raw, unrefined sugar and molasses that go into each 750-milliliter bottle of Montanya Distillers rum.

montanyarum.com



The Cornwall

OUR FAVORITES

The Cornwall \$10
Oy Vey Caliente \$9.50
Rabbi, I'm Confused \$9
Bourbon Egg Cream \$7
Frank's Blanket (Hebrew National hot dog, caramelized onions, cheese, pastry) \$6

fried egg. Though I was tempted to order my egg cream spiked with bourbon (the restaurant has a full liquor license), I opted for the classic chocolate version, given the fact that it was, in fact, lunchtime.

As I ate—the corned beef was tender and well-seasoned, and the latkes were praise-worthy for their creamy insides—I found myself invited into a conversation several older men were having nearby.

They mused about how this little spot had once been a sushi restaurant (and before that a burger joint) and about the weather, but mostly they talked about how delicious these darn latkes were. Although some of the old-timers bemoaned the modernity of the food (mainly, the presence of pork in firmly Jewish territory), the formula of the cozy neighborhood deli—the sort where a group of strangers invites you to sit down and chat—is timelessly satisfying. 689 W. Littleton Blvd., 303-965-9708, latkelove.com —CALLIE SIMLIN

Whole Latke Love

A Littleton restaurant elevates the potato pancake.

ANYONE WHO VISITED Latke Love's erstwhile location in Park Hill will remember the seven core menu options, all of which featured four freshly fried latkes accessorized with less-than-traditional (and certainly not kosher) toppings.

On my first visit to the Littleton location of Latke Love, I had trouble deciding among

bowls like the Classic (a combo of cinnamon whipped cream and applesauce); the Rabbi, I'm Confused (pulled pork, Carolina barbecue sauce, pickled onions); and the Oy Vey Caliente (green chile, cheddar, fried egg). I settled on the \$10 Cornwall bowl, which consists of small, golden latkes topped with tender corned-beef hash and a

DO THIS OUTSIDE THE LINES Adult coloring meets wine at Settembre Cellars.

Last fall, Tracy Eliasson, co-owner of Boulder's Settembre Cellars, discovered a new hobby: adult coloring books. As she sipped wine and filled in the predetermined lines, she noticed something. The activity was calming and methodical—almost, she says, like meditation for those who don't meditate. An idea took shape, and she and her husband (and winery co-owner) Blake launched Sunday afternoon adult-coloring-book sessions in the winery's tasting room. Given the Eliassons' Old World approach (traditional, slow, and natural) to wine making, this activity is right in line with their creative philosophy. Since launching the sessions in December, Settembre sees two to 10 customers at the weekly get-togethers. The resulting sip-and-create afternoons are marked by an easy flow of conversation flanked by comfortable silences. Sundays 1 to 6 p.m., 1501 Lee Hill Road, Unit 16, Boulder, 303-532-1892, settembrecellars.com —CARSON KOHLER



BLOG SAMPLES

Not only did I write blog posts based on press releases and assignments shuffling in from editors, I was also able to pitch some of my own ideas such as the post about Beast & Bottle's new pastry chef and the hibiscus brew. In total, I wrote more than 20 blogs for 5280.com. Most of these were food centric.

Best Bites: Aloy Modern Thai's Pomelo Salad

Bright, seasonal citrus stars in Aloy Modern Thai's vibrant starter.

BY CARSON KOHLER

FEBRUARY 8 2016, 1:28 PM



Having grown up in St. Petersburg, Florida, I associate February with "cold" weather (temperatures hovering in the 60s) and bright citrus, usually picked from a neighbor's fruit tree.

So when I tried the pomelo salad at week-old **Aloy Modern Thai** (located in the former Trillium space), I was immediately transported home. The pomelo is a citrus native to Malaysia that resembles a large grapefruit and tastes similar. The pink flesh of the pomelo offered a burst of fresh citrus, which was balanced with the salty crunch of roasted coconut flake and fried red onion. Perfumed with finely julienned Kaffir lime leaves and topped with a skewer of tofu seasoned with a spicy tamarind dressing (a family recipe), this starter highlighted the in-season citrus while offering complex Thai flavors. For a twist, you can also substitute the tofu for shrimp.

Although Aloy Modern Thai is new, it's the second Front Range Thai restaurant from sisters **Bo Bean** and **Arisa Chanchokpong**. While **Aloy Thai** in Boulder focuses on more traditional Thai dishes (many of which are inspired by their mother's treasured family recipes), the new Denver outpost is decidedly different. You'll find the same fresh, local ingredients and a few of those staple family recipes, but many dishes have been modernized and updated to reflect the current culinary scene in Bangkok.

To best experience the Ballpark restaurant's wide range of exciting, vibrant dishes, opt for a few small plates to share. The lemongrass-and-miso flavored mighty mussels, tar tar tuna on a crispy rice cake, or smoked Verlasso salmon with Asian pear, yuca chips, and orange aioli served in a jar are all fine options. Whatever you do, be sure to order the pomelo salad as a palate-cleansing starter. This winter salad will be a fixture on the menu as long as the pomelo remains in season.

Eat Like Leo: Raw Bison Liver at the Fort

In honor of Leonardo DiCaprio's performance in "The Revenant," the Fort Restaurant has added bison liver to the menu.

BY **CARSON KOHLER**

FEBRUARY 25 2016, 11:40 AM



Photo courtesy of The Fort



Leo, you could have eaten the fake bison liver that *The Revenant's* prop department made from jelly. But you didn't. And we Coloradans won't settle for anything less than the real thing, either.

In honor of the 2016 **Oscars**, the film, and perhaps Leonardo DiCaprio's first Oscar win (fingers crossed), **the Fort Restaurant's** proprietress **Holly Arnold Kinney** has added bison liver—which can be ordered raw by request—to the menu. While the organ is certainly a talking point, it also aligns with the restaurant's western roots: The Fort is modeled after Old Bent's Fort, a historic 1830s trading post, and the restaurant's cuisine features a variety of foods that trappers, traders, and Native Americans ate back in the day. The liver is offered as a component of the "Historian's Platter," an appetizer sampler featuring historical foods of the west like Rocky Mountain oysters and bison sausage.

In an interview with *Variety*, DiCaprio compared the texture of raw bison to that of a balloon. "When you bite into it, it bursts in your mouth." On screen, you'll see him gag—a reaction he says was very real. However, Kinney describes the organ as sweet, delicious, and lean. Eating the offal raw highlights the fresh taste of the minerals and iron, although Kinney does admit that it can be a bit chewy.

If you're feeling adventurous, head to the Fort for the raw bison liver. Or, if you prefer, you can enjoy the delicacy medium rare on crostini and topped with caramelized onions. Both dishes will be available as a part of the historian's platter until March 31.

19192 Highway 8, Morrison, 303-697-4771

Sweet Stuff: Meet Beast & Bottle's New Pastry Chef

Jodi Polson combines modern artistry and nostalgic inspirations to create beautiful, fresh desserts.

BY **CARSON KOHLER**

MARCH 24 2016, 9:00 AM



Jodi Polson hasn't always lived the sweet life. Several years ago she was teaching a classroom full of elementary-aged students, but she knew it wasn't the right fit. So she went back to school and earned a degree in baking and pastry arts from Johnson & Wales University in Denver. After that, she spent time at many of the city's best shops—from [City Bakery](#) to the now-shuttered [Glaze](#) to [Devil's Food Bakery and Cookery](#)—before landing at **Beast & Bottle**.

For her first dessert menu at the Uptown restaurant, Polson grabs inspiration from her childhood—specifically, the butterscotch candies she remembers her grandmother stashing around the house. Polson draws on this nostalgic flavor in her butterscotch pudding pie. The light pudding is encased in a personal pie crust—so perfectly constructed and flaky that you almost, *almost*, don't want to break into it. Sugary sweet Swiss meringue (reminiscent of marshmallow cream), lightly torched to provide a throwback to s'mores by the campfire, tops the mini pie. Vanilla crème anglaise sit underneath and craftily creates a path to a scoop of roasted banana ice cream. The garnish of oatmeal praline adds a welcome crunch.

The admirable, Instagram-worthy presentation is evidence of Polson's love of art. And with spring around the corner (hopefully), Polson is excited to create continuously fresh flavors with locally sourced ingredients, an ethos that ties neatly to Beast & Bottle's. Because most of her desserts are fueled by season, Polson's creations remain on Beast & Bottle's menu for one to two months—or until she gets bored and wants to create another treat.

719 E. 17th Ave., 303-623-3223

TABLE TALK

Drink This: Great Divide's New Hibiscus Saison

Head to the taproom for the pilot brew now, or you'll have to wait until it's officially released in June.

BY **CARSON KOHLER**

APRIL 12 2016, 9:27 AM



Something new has been brewing at **Great Diving Brewing Company's** Ballpark location. A couple weeks back, the Denver-based brewery released a special taproom-only hibiscus saison. While the beer has quickly become a top seller, it won't be around for long. The good news: It's a taste of what's to come.

In June, Great Divide plans to release a version of this hibiscus saison as part of its **Tank Farm** series. The brew will be called Nadia Kali (Background: Nadia is a popular Haitian name and Haiti's national flower is the hibiscus; Kali is a Hindu goddess and ginger is a prevalent ingredient in Hindu culture). The saison is a summery combination of ground hibiscus petals, ginger root, and lemon peel.

Consider the pilot version on tap now just a preview of Nadia Kali. The suds are slightly sweet, vaguely reminiscent of cranberry or pomegranate, and infused with just a hint of lemon and ginger. The vibrant pink grapefruit color is Instagram-worthy. A quick glance down the bar on a recent visit was proof that the sunset-hued beverage is already a popular choice. Stop by the tap room and give it a try before it's gone—or wait patiently for Nadia Kali's official June release.

2201 Arapahoe St., 303-296-9460

TABLE TALK

Sips: Rockies-Inspired Cocktails for the Home Opener

Celebrate the start of the Rockies' season with these boozy concoctions.

BY **CARSON KOHLER**

APRIL 5 2016, 9:41 AM



Viewhouse's "Purple Sky" cocktail. Photo courtesy of Viewhouse



As the Rockies gear up to take on the San Diego Padres this Friday, April 8, at Coors Field, Denver restaurants and bars have been busy dreaming up Rockies-inspired cocktail offerings (yes, some of them are purple). Celebrate the start of the 2016 season with one of these spirited libations.

If you're looking for a great view and a great cocktail, head to LoHi's **Avanti Food & Beverage**, just a 20-minute walk from Coors Field. Order the "Take Me Out To The Ballgame" special for a combination of Old Forester whiskey, ginger liqueur, lemon juice, angostura bitters, and ginger beer. You may recognize this sipper: It's actually a throwback to Avanti's opening cocktail list, and it's been resurrected just for the Rockies' hometown opening day. Pair this drink with eats from any of Avanti's seven restaurant concepts before ambling over to the game. *3200 Pecos St., 720-269-4778*

Just a three-minute walk from home plate, the **Viewhouse** offers sweeping views of the city and a lively bar scene. The "Purple Sky" cocktail pays tribute to the Rockies' signature color with a blend of grape rum, blue curaçao, fresh-squeezed lemon, cranberry juice, and a dash of lemon-lime soda. The fruity drink will pair well with the warm springtime temperatures that will—hopefully—grace Denver this Friday. *2015 Market St. 720-282-1548*

Game-goers should consider a stop at **Hopdoddy Burger Bar** (located next to Union Station) for its featured milk shake of the month, the "Purple Haze." This rich, home team-hued beverage is composed of from-scratch blueberry compote, spiced ice cream, and swirls of hazelnuts. We recommend lacing the treat with a shot of Chambord Black Raspberry Liqueur or Stranahan's Colorado Whiskey. *1747 Wynkoop St., 303-446-2337*

If you want to avoid the traffic and chest-bumping bros of LoDo altogether, head to **Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steakhouse** in Greenwood Village. Bartenders at this high-end spot will be slinging a "Seventh Inning Smash," a fruity mix of 360 Vodka, lemonade, Chambord Black Raspberry Liqueur, and a mint garnish served on the Rockies, err, ice. And don't worry—jerseys are acceptable attire for this special occasion. *8100 E. Orchard Road, 303-796-0100*

Bonus: Although **Beryl's Beer Co.** might not be offering a special Rockies drink for opening day, they are slinging something even better: free hotdogs. This warehouse-like brewery in RiNo offers unique barrel-aged brews like the Firecatcher Extra Stout and Antero Ale. Buy any one of Beryl's brews before the game and you'll score a free hot dog. The deal is good until 2 p.m. on Friday. *3120-C Blake St., 720-420-0826*

Double Bonus: For this Friday's home opener and every other home game this season, **Elway's Downtown** will offer all-day happy hour in the bar, lounge, and patio. Stop by before or after any home Rockies game for special deals like \$3 Coors Lights and \$4 baskets of chips and guacamole.

CALENDAR EVENT SAMPLES

Each Monday, Mary Clare sent along “Best Bets,” the editor’s suggested picks. These were quick turnarounds and would likely be published by Wednesday. They went through one round of edits. In addition to Best Bets, I was responsible for the monthly print calendar entries. I worked at least two months in advance to pitch the events, write up blubs and host one round of edits. These samples are a combination of Best Bets and print events. In total, I created 68 calendar events.

Stoic & Genuine's School of Fish Stoic & Genuine

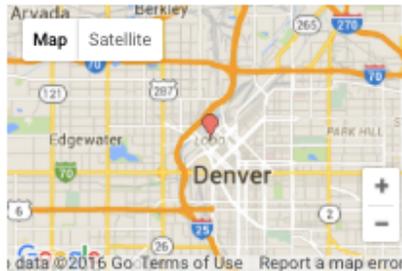
**BEST
BET**

DATE: March 5 2016, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
COST: \$60.
CATEGORY: Culinary

VENUE INFORMATION:

Stoic & Genuine
1701 Wynkoop St.
Denver, CO 80202
[GET DIRECTIONS](#)

<http://stoicandgenuine.com>



Don't worry about bringing your own fish to these seafood-themed cooking classes. Stoic & Genuine will haul crawdads and redfish from the Gulf of Mexico for you to cook under the direction of Chef Jorel Pierce. This is the first of a series that will take place the first Saturday of each month in Stoic & Genuine's kitchen; you'll learn how to cook up a different variety of our favorite fishy friends in each class. For an extra charge, you can even bring the ingredients home. Sat 10 a.m.-noon

Chowder Room Beer Dinner

Chowder Room

BEST BET

DATE: March 23 2016, 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

COST: \$64.

CATEGORY: Culinary

VENUE INFORMATION:

Chowder Room
560 S. Broadway
Denver, CO 80209

[GET DIRECTIONS](#)

<http://www.chowderroom.com>

Just because the Centennial State is landlocked doesn't mean Coloradans can't enjoy a fresh seafood dinner—paired with Odell Brewing Co. suds. This fishy eight-course meal includes dishes such as Island Creek oysters and first-of-the-season Alaskan halibut paired with Easy Street Wheat and Runoff Red IPA, respectively. Wed 6-9 p.m.



Mole Festival

Centro Latin Kitchen & Refreshment Palace

BEST BET

DATE: March 24 2016, 5:30 PM to 9:30 PM

COST: Ticket prices vary.

CATEGORY: Culinary

VENUE INFORMATION:

Centro Latin Kitchen & Refreshment Palace
950 Pearl St.
Boulder, CO 80302

[GET DIRECTIONS](#)



This feast isn't a tribute to the underground burrowing creature, but rather a celebration of a traditional, spicy Mexican sauce. Guest chefs Clint Myers from Zolo Grill and Jamey Fader from Lola Mexican Fish House will join chef Dakota Coburn of Centro Latin Kitchen & Refreshment Palace to create their own mole-centric dishes, each paired with a spirit from Vago Mezcal. Thu 5:30-9:30 p.m.

The Real Dill Pickle Party

The Dillery



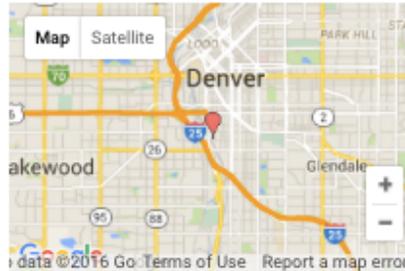
DATE: April 15 2016, 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM

COST: Free.

CATEGORY: Culinary

VENUE INFORMATION:

The Dillery
33 S. Fox St.
Denver, CO 80223
[GET DIRECTIONS](#)



<http://therealdill.com>

This Thai-inspired pickle party celebrates the release of the newest dill on the block: the Thai chile ginger pickle. In addition to sampling the innovative pickled veggie, celebrate with Thai beers from Ratio Beerworks and Thai-infused cocktails from Backyard Soda Co., or opt to jive to the blues played by the Raritans. Proceeds benefit Re:Vision, a Denver-based organization dedicated to building self-sufficient economies through community food systems. Fri 6-10 p.m.

Curds & Brew Cheesemaking & Beer Tasting Bootcamp

The Art of Cheese



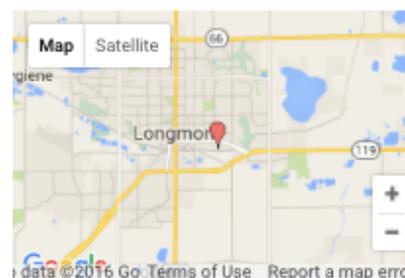
DATE: May 15 2016, 10:00 AM

COST: Ticket prices vary.

CATEGORY: Culinary

VENUE INFORMATION:

The Art of Cheese
505 Weaver Park Rd.
Longmont, CO 80503
[GET DIRECTIONS](#)



<http://theartofcheese.com>

No physical activity is required at this boot camp, which will last from one to three days depending on your lactose tolerance. Either way, a hands-on cheesemaking class will be followed by lunch, a local Longmont brewery tour (300 Suns Brewing, Shoes & Brews, or Left Hand Brewing, depending on the session), and a beer and cheese pairing. Sun-Tue 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

DINING GUIDE ENTRY SAMPLES

Each month I had a set deadline of when dining guide entries were due. This was so Callie Sumlin, the assistant food editor, could export them for print.

ALOY MODERN THAI

View Edit

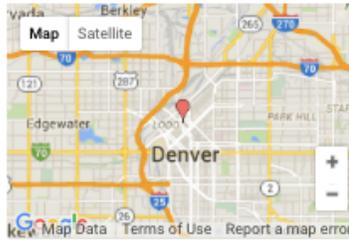
303-397-9497

www.aloymodernthai.com



2134 Larimer St.
Denver, CO 80205
[GET DIRECTIONS](#)

Neighborhood: **BALLPARK**
Cost: **\$\$\$ (AVERAGE ENTREE \$16-\$25)**
Cuisine: **THAI**



This Ballpark spot is bringing in fresh, local ingredients to create modern Thai dishes. Stick with small plates like the tartare tuna or the smoked Verlasso salmon, which is served in a jar with Asian pear, yuca chips, and orange aioli.

HOURS:

Mon-Thu 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; Fri-Sat 11 a.m.-11 p.m.;
Sun 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

Gluten-free
Handicap Accessible
Kid friendly
Liquor served
Vegan
Vegetarian

GRIND KITCHEN & WATERING HOLE

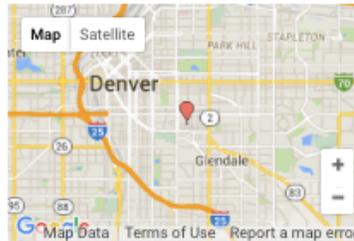
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720-749-4158



300 Fillmore St. Unit K
Denver, CO 80206
[GET DIRECTIONS](#)

Neighborhood: **CHERRY CREEK**
Cost: **\$\$\$ (AVERAGE ENTREE \$16-\$25)**
Cuisine: **AMERICAN**



This rustic watering hole offers an eclectic menu and a full bar. Stick with classic American eats such as fried chicken or a double cheeseburger, or switch things up with the pork belly banh mi and potstickers.

HOURS:

Sun-Sat 11 a.m.-midnight

SPECIAL FEATURES:

Free parking
Gluten-free
Handicap Accessible
Liquor served
Outdoor seating
Vegan
Vegetarian

LOVE, PEACE & SOL

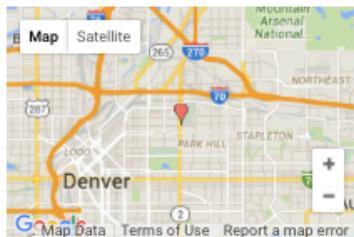
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303-304-8849



3435 Albion St.
Denver, CO 80207
[GET DIRECTIONS](#)

Neighborhood: **PARK HILL**
Cost: **\$\$ (AVERAGE ENTREE \$11-\$15)**
Cuisine: **FUSION**



Count on an eclectic mix of African and Southern cookery at this vegan, cash-only cafe. Favorites include a lentil patty with barbecue sauce and a side of collard greens. Once the food is gone, the doors close.

HOURS:

Tue-Fri 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Sun. 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (first of each month)

SPECIAL FEATURES:

Free parking
Gluten-free
Handicap Accessible
Kid friendly
Outdoor seating
Vegan

POP'S PLACE

View Edit

720-949-1235
popsplacedenver.com



2020 Lawrence St.
Denver, CO 80205
[GET DIRECTIONS](#)

Neighborhood: **BALLPARK**
Cost: **\$\$ (AVERAGE ENTREE \$11-\$15)**
Cuisine: **AMERICAN**

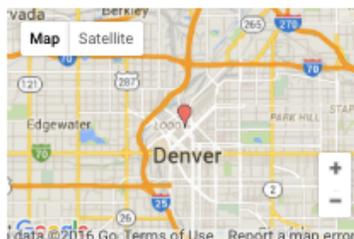
This quirky cafe is the brainchild of chef Steven Kleinman (father of the Inventing Room's Ian Kleinman) and Jim Pittenger (founder of Biker Jim's Gourmet Dogs). Try the short ribs loco moco Hawaiian breakfast or the sour cream waffles in the morning, or drop in for Thai-inspired dinner plates.

HOURS:

Mon-Sun 7 a.m.-10 p.m.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

Gluten-free
Handicap Accessible
Kid friendly
Liquor served
Outdoor seating
Vegan
Vegetarian



ZOËS KITCHEN

View Edit

303-904-9398
www.zoeskitchen.com



8501 W. Bowles Ave., Unt. 1085
Littleton, CO 80123
[GET DIRECTIONS](#)

Neighborhood: **LITTLETON**
Cost: **\$ (AVERAGE ENTREE UNDER \$10)**
Cuisine: **MEDITERRANEAN**

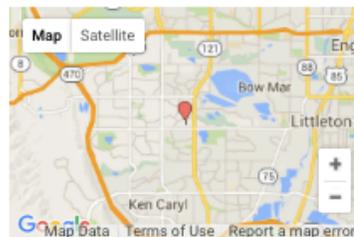
Zoës Kitchen began as a family restaurant in Alabama, but this chain's menu is still inspired by fresh, Mediterranean flavors. Try the rosemary, ham, and mozzarella piadina—a thin, crispy Italian street sandwich. Don't leave without a slice of YaYa's Chocolate Cake.

HOURS:

Mon-Sun 11 a.m.-9 p.m.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

Free parking
Gluten-free
Handicap Accessible
Kid friendly
Liquor served



FACT-CHECKING SAMPLES

My primary job as an editorial intern was to fact-check stories before they were published. Again, most of these stories were food and drink-based, so it took some research before making the calls to sources to figure everything out. The most difficult task was the review because I couldn't reveal what the story was for and had to twist some words around to check with the restaurant owner or chef (so they wouldn't catch that we were describing their noodles as slumped wads, for example). At the beginning of a fact-check, I received a printed document from Mary Clare Fischer, 5280's editorial assistant. I would highlight the facts in one color, the quotes in another and finally the proper nouns in another. If the information was correct, I would underline it. If it was incorrect, I would put brackets around it and number the change. In a separate Word document, I would make direct changes or write notes to explain the issue. Samples of this work are below. In my time at 5280, I fact-checked nearly 25 stories. Some stories required 1-2 changes while other required more than 40. Below is just a sampling.

Denver's 20 Best Food Markets: This fact-check assignment came to me with a deadline of two days. The calls I made were challenging; not everyone spoke English nor understood why I was calling. Because it's a service journalism piece, accuracy was paramount.

TABLE TALK

Denver's 20 Best Food Markets

Where to shop for specialty cheeses, halal meats, Bulgarian pastries, yam flour, fresh tortillas, and more.

BY **AMANDA M. FAISON, CALLIE SUMLIN, JERILYN FORSYTHE, NATASHA GARDNER**

FEBRUARY 17 2016, 9:00 AM



—Photography by Lucy Beaugard



18



If you've come to think of grocery shopping as a chore—something that has to be done but isn't exactly inspiring—we've got a solution to your doldrums with this roundup of Denver's best food markets. We scoured more than 60 shops in the metro area to find the best places to do everything from buying seafood to eating tamales to scoring noodles for pad thai. Our focus was on neighborhood spots and small mom-and-pop shops, but we also included our favorites from high-quality chains (think: our go-to outposts of Lowe's Mercado and H Mart). We had one overarching requirement: Each market had to be a place we'd return to—even if it's across town. Get your Google Maps app ready; you've got some shopping to do.

[Click here for a complete map of the top specialty food markets in metro Denver—plus where to go for must-have items like Korean rice cakes and freshly made tamales.](#)

Denver Metro's 20 Best Food Markets

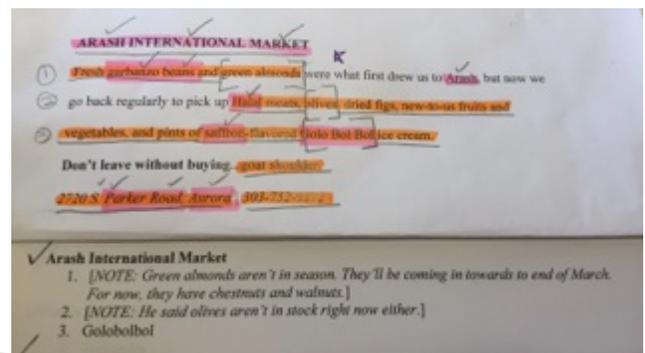
ARASH INTERNATIONAL MARKET



Fresh garbanzo beans and green almonds were what first drew us to Arash, but now we go back regularly to pick up halal meats, dried figs, new-to-us fruits and vegetables, and pints of saffron-flavored Golobolbol ice cream.

Don't leave without buying...goat shoulder.

2720 S. Parker Road, Aurora | 303-752-9272



BOMBAY BAZAAR



If you've eaten at Aurora's Masalaa, you were just steps away from this jam-packed Indian market. Expect a tiny but fresh selection of produce as well as a tremendous selection of rice, lentils, sauces, and frozen goods (including dosa dough and kulfi pops).

Don't leave without buying...a bag of hara chiwda, the ultimate sweet-spicy-crunchy Indian snack.

3140 S. Parker Road, Aurora | 303-369-1010

No changes.

EAST EUROPE MARKET



A gathering spot for regulars who sit at tables and chairs while nibbling Bulgarian pastries, this market is stocked with an eclectic mix of chocolate toy-stuffed eggs, canned sardines, and boxed juices. It's a must-stop if you're nostalgic for the old country or your last backpacking adventure in college.

Don't leave without buying...feta cheese.

4015 E. Arkansas Ave. | 720-446-1822

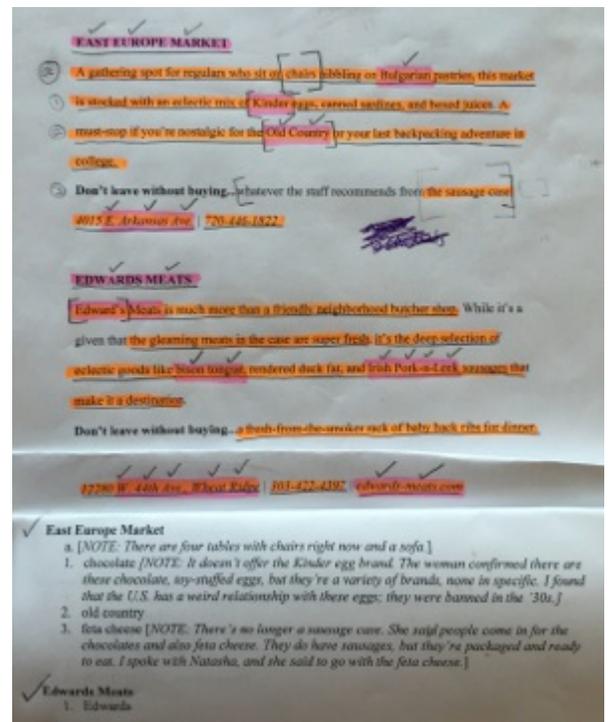
EDWARDS MEATS



Edwards Meats is much more than a friendly neighborhood butcher shop. While it's a given that the gleaming meats in the case are super fresh, it's the deep selection of eclectic goods like bison tongue, rendered duck fat, and Irish pork-and-leek sausages that make it a destination.

Don't leave without buying...a fresh-from-the-smoker rack of baby back ribs for dinner.

12280 W. 44th Ave., Wheat Ridge | 303-422-4397 | edwards-meats.com



H MART



Looking for live crab, kimchi, fermented black bean sauce, bitter melon, or Chinese sausage? You'll find it all at H Mart—and then some. Don't just go with a shopping list in hand; wander the aisles of this Asian supermarket and see what you discover.

Don't leave without buying...a host of hard-to-find herbs like saw-tooth, kaffir lime leaves, and Thai basil.

Our favorite location: 2751 S. Parker Road, Aurora | 303-745-4592 | Hmart.com

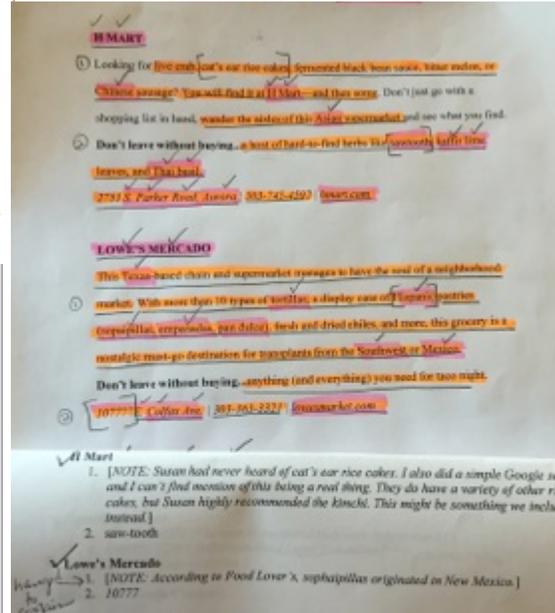
LOWE'S MERCADO



This Texas-based chain and supermarket manages to have the soul of a neighborhood market. With more than 10 types of tortillas, a display case of Mexican pastries (cookies, empanadas, pan dulce), fresh and dried chiles, and more, this grocery is a nostalgic must-go destination for transplants from the Southwest or Mexico.

Don't leave without buying...anything (and everything) you need for taco night.

Our favorite location: 10777 E. Colfax Ave., Aurora | 303-363-3321
| lowesmarket.com



MAKOLA AFRICAN MARKET



If you're looking for West African ingredients, Makola is a one-stop-shop. Pick up essentials like cassava and yam flours, Nigerian curry powder, rare African legumes, and fresh plantains.

Don't leave without buying...smoky shrimp powder, a must for Ghanaian foods.

2032 Clinton St., Aurora | 303-341-4771

MARCYK FINE FOODS

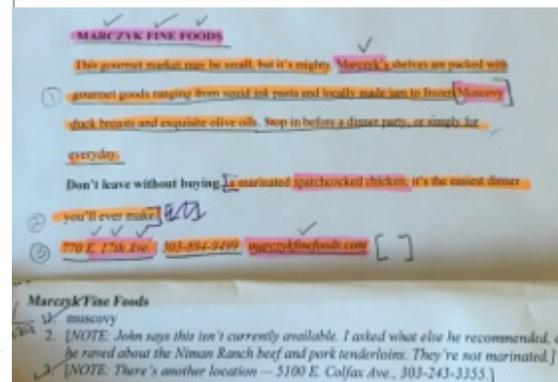


This gourmet market may be small, but it's mighty. Marczyk's shelves are packed with gourmet goods ranging from squid-ink pasta and locally made jam to frozen muscovy duck breasts and exquisite olive oils. Stop in before a dinner party—or simply for everyday shopping.

Don't leave without buying...a pint of market-made ice cream.

Our favorite location: 770 E. 17th Ave. | 303-894-9499 | marczykfinefoods.com

No changes.



MEGENAGNA GROCERY



If nothing else gets you through the door of this compact Ethiopian market, the \$1 samosas should. And that's not to mention the freshly made injera or gorgeous loaves of banana-leaf-wrapped bread. Then duck through the doorway and have breakfast, lunch, or dinner in the adjoining restaurant.

Don't leave without buying...the house-made chai blend.

306 S. Ironston St., Aurora | 720-532-0266

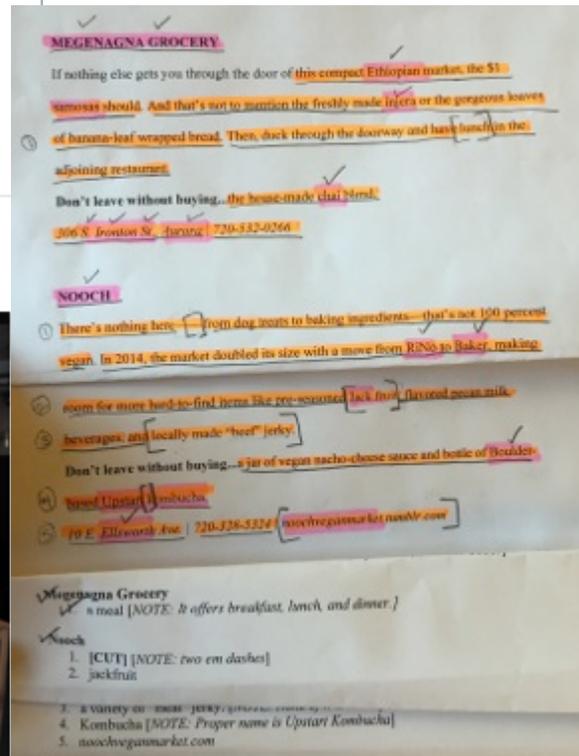
NOOCH VEGAN MARKET



There's nothing here—from dog treats to baking ingredients—that's not 100 percent vegan. In 2014, the market doubled its size with a move from RiNo to Baker, making room for more hard-to-find items like pre-seasoned jackfruit, flavored pecan milk beverages, and locally made "beef" jerky.

Don't leave without buying...a jar of vegan nacho-cheese sauce and a bottle of Boulder-based Upstart Kombucha.

10 E. Ellsworth Ave. | 720-328-5324 | noochveganmarket.com



PACIFIC OCEAN MARKETPLACE



While many stores tend to specialize in one type of cuisine, you'll find ingredients for Burmese, Thai, Vietnamese, Filipino, and Chinese recipes at any of POM's three locations. Don't miss the piles of fresh produce (as if you needed an excuse to take home bunches of scallions for savory pancakes).

Don't leave without buying...thinly sliced pork belly for ramen bowls.

Our favorite location: 2200 W. Alameda Ave. | 303-936-4845
| pacificoceanmarket.com

PETE'S FRUITS & VEGETABLES



You'll still find Pete Moutzouris, who has owned the Hilltop grocery since 1974, behind the register or unloading the produce truck nearly every day. You'll also find fresh, in-season produce—much of which is grown in Colorado—olives galore, and other authentic Greek specialties like loukanika sausage and imported feta.

Don't leave without buying...phyllo dough.

5606 E. Cedar Ave. | 303-393-6247

✓ **PACIFIC OCEAN MARKETPLACE**

While many stores tend to specialize in one type of cuisine, you'll find ingredients for Burmese, Thai, Vietnamese, and Chinese recipes at any of POM's three locations. Don't miss the piles of fresh produce (as if you needed an excuse to take home bunches of fresh scallions for pancakes).

Don't leave without buying...thinly-sliced pork belly for a ramen bowl.

2200 W. Alameda Ave. | 303-936-4845 | pacificoceanmarket.com

✓ **PETE'S FRUITS & VEGETABLES**

① You'll still find Pete Moutzouris, who has owned the Hilltop grocery since 1974, behind the register or unloading the produce truck nearly every day. You'll also find fresh, in-season produce—much of which is grown in Colorado—olives galore, and other authentic Greek specialties like phyllo dough and loukanika sausage.

② Don't leave without buying...fresh feta cheeses imported from Greece.

③ 5606 E. Cedar Ave. | 303-393-6247

✓ Pacific Ocean Marketplace
1. [NOTE: It also offers Filipino, Indian, Korean, and Japanese ingredients.]

✓ Pete's Fruits & Vegetables
1. 74
2. loukanika
3. [CUT] [NOTE: extra period]
4.

SAWA MEAT & SAUSAGE



People flock to this tiny market for two things: sausage (the fresh pork sausage is so popular it often sells out) and Polish-style pierogi. Pick up a frozen pack of the potato-and-cheese dumplings from Wheat Ridge-based Pierogies Factory for a family-night dinner, or nab a package of the sauerkraut-and-mushroom variety for a more traditional meal.

Don't leave without buying...the house-made Sawa sausage.

2318 S. Colorado Blvd. | 303-691-2253 | sawausage.com

SEAFOOD LANDING



In our landlocked state, it is rare to feel like you are near the ocean. Get your fix inside this small Highland shop. There's just the right amount of salt in the air as you ogle fresh filets of cod and swordfish and other sea creatures. Don't see what you're looking for—say, in-season crawfish? They'll order it for you.

Don't leave without buying...the prepared salmon patties.

3457 W. 32nd Ave. | 303-571-1995 | seafoodlandingmarket.com

SAWA MEAT & SAUSAGE

People flock to this tiny market for two things: sausage (the fresh pork sausage is so popular it often sells out) and Polish-style pierogi. Pick up a frozen pack of the potato-and-cheese dumplings from the Denver-based Pierogies Factory for a family-night dinner, or nab a package of the sauerkraut-and-mushroom variety for a more traditional meal.

Don't leave without buying...the house-made Sawa sausage.

2318 S. Colorado Blvd. | 303-691-2253 | sawausage.com

SEAFOOD LANDING

In our landlocked state, it is rare to feel like you are near the ocean. That is, until you step inside this small Highland shop. There's just the right amount of salt in the air as you ogle the fresh filets of cod, swordfish, and other sea-loving creatures. Don't see something you like? Say the season isn't right? They'll order it for you.

Don't leave without buying...the prepared salmon patties.

✓ **Sawa Meat & Sausage**

- [NOTE: An ampersand and "and" are used interchangeably. The woman working said both are fine.]
- pierogi [NOTE: She also said dumplings and pierogi are used interchangeably, but they call them pierogi.]
- Wheat Ridge
- [CUT] [NOTE: extra period.]
- sawausage.com

✓ **Seafood Landing**

- you
- crawfish [NOTE: It's the same thing, but this is how they pronounce/sell them.]
- [STET]

SPINELLI'S MARKET



A neighborhood staple of the Park Hill area for more than two decades, this Italian shop is in the midst of a revival. You'll still find the store's pasta sauces, but you'll also discover an expanded line of imported pastas stacked on floor-to-ceiling wooden shelves, everything you need to make pizza at home (including fresh dough), and a freezer stocked with pints from Sweet Action Ice Cream.

Don't leave without buying...ready-to-bake trays of cheese ravioli smothered with pomarola sauce.

4621 E. 23rd Ave. | 303-329-8143 | spinellismarket.com

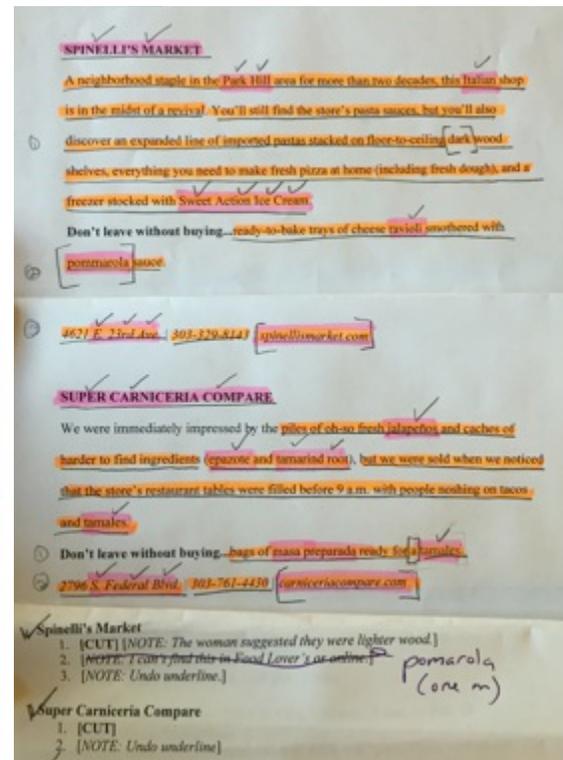
SUPER CARNICERIA COMPARE



We were immediately impressed by the piles of oh-so-fresh jalapeños and caches of harder-to-find ingredients (think epazote and tamarind root), but we were sold when we noticed that the store's restaurant tables were filled before 9 a.m. with people noshing on tacos and tamales.

Don't leave without buying...bags of masa (for making tamales and tortillas).

2796 S. Federal Blvd. | 303-761-4430 | carniceriacompare.com



TONY'S MARKET



Tony's Market, which opened its original Centennial location in 1978, has remained a gourmet stalwart for the metro area ever since. Its Capitol Hill shop's selection of ready-to-bake meals, like meatloaf and baked ziti, and premade sandwiches and salads from the deli make it a one-stop shop for families or working professionals crunched for cooking time.

Don't leave without buying...Tender Belly bacon and jars of MM Local tomatoes.

Our favorite location: 950 Broadway | 720-880-4501 | tonysmarket.com

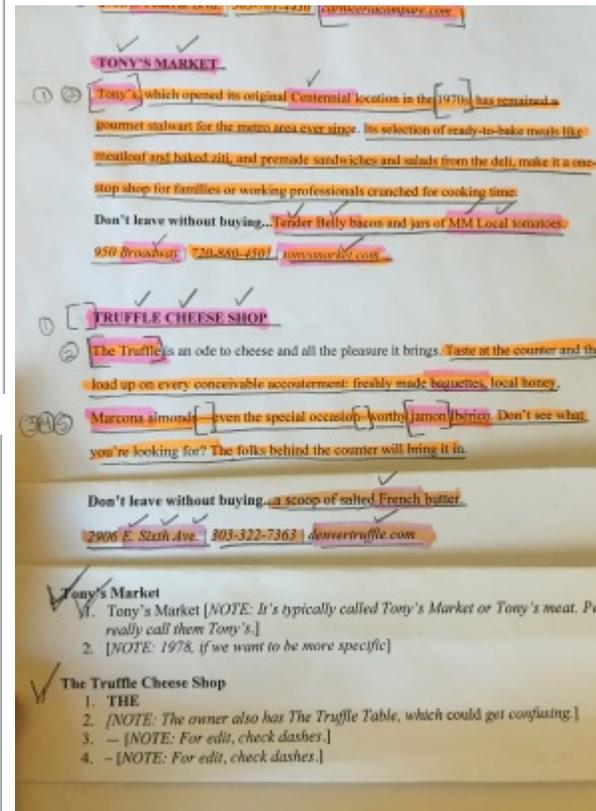
THE TRUFFLE CHEESE SHOP



The Truffle Cheese Shop is an ode to cheese and all the pleasure it brings. Taste at the counter and then load up on every conceivable accouterment: crispy baguettes, local honey, Marcona almonds, and even special-occasion-worthy Jamón Ibérico. Don't see something on your list? The folks behind the counter will order it.

Don't leave without buying...a scoop of salted French butter.

2906 E. Sixth Ave. | 303-322-7363 | denvertruffle.com



TONY'S MARKET

Tony's, which opened its original Centennial location in the 1970s, has remained a gourmet stalwart for the metro area ever since. Its selection of ready-to-bake meals like meatloaf and baked ziti, and premade sandwiches and salads from the deli, make it a one-stop shop for families or working professionals crunched for cooking time.

Don't leave without buying...Tender Belly bacon and jars of MM Local tomatoes.

950 Broadway | 720-880-4501 | tonysmarket.com

TRUFFLE CHEESE SHOP

The Truffle is an ode to cheese and all the pleasure it brings. Taste at the counter and then load up on every conceivable accouterment: freshly made baguettes, local honey, Marcona almonds, even the special occasion-worthy Jamón Ibérico. Don't see what you're looking for? The folks behind the counter will bring it in.

Don't leave without buying...a scoop of salted French butter.

2906 E. Sixth Ave. | 303-322-7363 | denvertruffle.com

Tony's Market

1. Tony's Market [NOTE: It's typically called Tony's Market or Tony's meat. People really call them Tony's.]
2. [NOTE: 1978, if we want to be more specific]

The Truffle Cheese Shop

1. THE
2. [NOTE: The owner also has The Truffle Table, which could get confusing]
3. - [NOTE: For edit, check dashes.]
4. - [NOTE: For edit, check dashes.]

VALENTE'S DELI BAKERY AND ITALIAN MARKET



A North metro staple, Valente's quickly won us over with its comprehensive selection of Italian goods, both imported from the boot and house-made. Find everything from fresh pizzella cookies to dry coarse polenta to spicy bulk sausage.

Don't leave without buying...the nontraditional but excellent chile verde-cheddar cheese ravioli.

7250 Meade St., Westminster | 303-429-0590 | valentesdeli.com

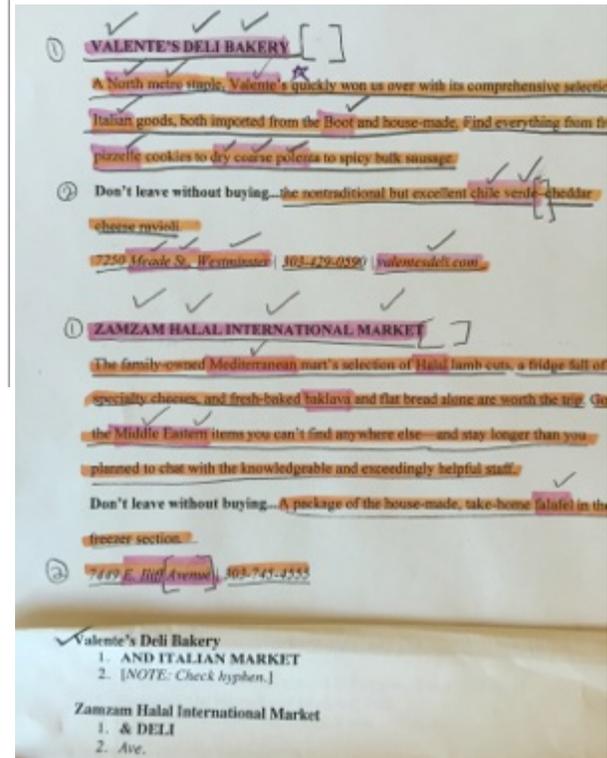
ZAMZAM HALAL INTERNATIONAL MARKET & DELI



This family-owned Mediterranean mart's selection of halal lamb cuts, fridge full of specialty cheeses, and fresh-baked baklava and flatbread alone are worth the trip. Go for the Middle Eastern items you can't find anywhere else—and stay longer than you planned to chat with the knowledgeable and exceedingly helpful staff.

Don't leave without buying...a package of the house-made, take-home falafel in the freezer section.

7449 E. Iliff Ave. | 303-745-4555



April news page: I fact-checked four news pages for the food department.

Usually, these required calling quite a few different sources.

Eat & Drink

NEWS

3

Pounds of raw, unrefined sugar and molasses that go into each 750-milliliter bottle of Montanya Distillers rum. montanyarum.com



HOW TO MAKE ROOT DOWN'S HIBISCUS- GINGER SORBET

Can Root Down's raw, vegan, and organic dessert really deliver on taste? Indeed it can. —CS

1

Sleep 1 pound of organic, dried hibiscus flowers in 4 quarts of filtered 180° water for 2 hours. Strain out the hibiscus flowers.



2

Combine the hibiscus liquid with 1 cup coconut nectar,* 1/2 cup organic ginger juice, and 1 tablespoon sea salt. Chill overnight.



3

Churn in an ice cream machine according to the manufacturer's instructions.



*Find coconut nectar at Whole Foods Market.



OUR FAVORITES

The Cornwall \$10
Oy Vey Caliente \$8.50
Rabbi, I'm Confused \$9
Bourbon Egg Cream \$7
Frank's Basket (Hebrew National hot dog, caramelized onions, cheese, pastry) \$6

fried egg. Though I was tempted to order my egg cream spiked with bourbon (the restaurant has a full liquor license), I opted for the classic chocolate version, given the fact that it was, in fact, lunchtime.

As I ate—the corned beef was tender and well-seasoned, and the latkes were praise-worthy for their creamy insides—I found myself invited into a conversation several older men were having nearby.

They mused about how this little spot had once been a sushi restaurant (and before that a burger joint) and about the weather, but mostly they talked about how delicious these darn latkes were. Although some of the old-timers bemoaned the modernity of the food (mainly, the presence of pork in firmly Jewish territory), the formula of the cozy neighborhood deli—the sort where a group of strangers invites you to sit down and chat—is timelessly satisfying. 639 W. Littleton Blvd., 303-996-9708, latkelove.com —CALLIE TUNLUN

Whole Latke Love

A Littleton restaurant elevates the potato pancake.

ANYONE WHO VISITED Latke Love's erstwhile location in Park Hill will remember the seven core menu options, all of which featured four freshly fried latkes accessorized with less than traditional (and certainly not kosher) toppings.

On my first visit to the Littleton location of Latke Love, I had trouble deciding among

bowls like the Classic (a combo of cinnamon whipped cream and applesauce); the Rabbi, I'm Confused (pulled pork, Carolina barbecue sauce, pickled onions); and the Oy Vey Caliente (green chile, cheddar, fried egg). I settled on the \$10 Cornwall bowl, which consists of small, golden latkes topped with tender corned-beef hash and a

PHOTO: JEFFREY M. HARRIS/GETTY IMAGES

NEWS PAGE
FC by CK

BY THE NUMBERS
750-milliliter

HOW TO
65

EAT CHEAP
✓ larger [NOTE: This new location is twice the size of the Park Hill location, holding 26 seats versus 13. Plus, there's outdoor seating.]
✓ fried
✓ puffiness [NOTE: Dina says the traditional latkes have lacy edges, but they make these more substantial so they can hold more toppings. Typically, their latkes are round and flat.]
✓ [NOTE: I could not confirm it was a bar. I did find that it had been a burger joint.]
✓ pork green chile [NOTE: This is not part of the name on the menu. There's also a vegetarian option.]
✓ 3
✓ 36

Callie?

Contact:
• Kyla, director of business @ Montanya — 970-799-3206 ext 700 — Feb. 18, 2:33 p.m., 2 min.
• Jersey Foast PR Person @ Communications Strategy Group (for Montanya) — via email on Feb. 19 @ jfoast@csgr.com
• Daniel Asher @ Root Down — 847-727-3793 — Feb. 22, 3:51 p.m., 3 min.
• Dina, co-owner @ Latke Love — 303-993-9708 — Feb. 17, 9:10 a.m., 7 min. 40 sec.

for a full (barre license), I opted for the classic chocolate version, given the fact that it was breakfast.

As I ate—the corned beef was tender and well-seasoned, and the crispy latkes were prize-worthy for their lacy edges and creamy insides—I found myself invited into a conversation that several older men were having nearby. They mused about how this little spot had once been a sushi restaurant (and before that a bar) and about the weather, but mostly they talked about how delicious these darn latkes were. And although some of the old-timers bemoaned the modernity of the food (mainly, the presence of pork in Jewish dishes territory), the formula of easy neighborhood deli—the sort where a group of strangers invites you to sit down and chat—is timelessly satisfying. 499.99. Latkes. 847-303-993-9708 latkelove.com — Callie Sardin

Our Favorites

✓ The Cornwall \$10

✓ Oy Vey Caliente with Park Green Chile \$9.50

✓ Rabbi, I'm Confused \$9

✓ Bourbon Egg Cream \$10

✓ Frank's Shanker (Hetero) optional hot dog, caramelized onions, cheese, pastry \$10

NEWS

BY THE NUMBERS: 3. Pounds of sugar and molasses that go into one bottle of Montana Distillers' maple syrup. www.montana.com FACT CHECK: WHAT'S THE VOLUME OF THE BOTTLE?

HOW TO

How To: Make Root Down's Hibiscus-Ginger Syrup

Can Root Down's raw, vegan, and organic dessert really deliver on taste? Indeed it can. —Callie Sardin

1. Make the hibiscus base: Sterile 1 pound of organic, dried hibiscus flowers in 4 quarts of filtered 180° water for 2 hours. Strain out the hibiscus flowers.
2. Combine the hibiscus base with 1 cup coconut nectar*, ½ cup organic ginger juice, and 1 tablespoon sea salt. Chill overnight.
3. Churn in an ice cream machine according to manufacturer's instructions.

*Find coconut nectar at Whole Foods

Fact check: Arrange phone call with Daniel Asher via Samantha Alviani, sam@procketcommunications.com.

EAT CHEAP

HED: Whole Latke Love

DEK: A Littleton restaurant elevates the potato pancake.

Anyone who visited Latke Love's erstwhile location in Park Hill will remember the seven core menu options, all of which featured four heavily fried latkes accessorized with less than traditional (and certainly not kosher) toppings.

1 On my first visit to the my Littleton location of Latke Love, I had trouble deciding between the Classic (the traditional combo of cinnamon-whipped cream and applesauce), the Rabbi, I'm Confused (pulled pork, Carolina barbecue sauce, pickled onions), and the Oy Vey Caliente (green chile, cheddar, fried egg). I settled on the \$10 Cornwall bowl,

2 which features small, golden latkes topped with tender corned beef hash and sunny-side up egg. Though I was tempted to order my egg cream spiked with bourbon (the restaurant

Restaurant Review — Abejas: The restaurant reviews were by far the most difficult fact-checks. After the first one, however, I had an approach: Read it, highlight it and then type interview questions. This helped me think through the way I would phrase questions. For example, I wouldn't ask if the pork T-bone was overly chewy or if the mushroom could be described as gelatinous (that's not really appealing). I fact-checked three restaurant reviews total.

Eat & Drink



Abejas shines when chef Nicholas Ames keeps it simple, such as with this porchetta sandwich.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CARMEL ZUCKER

ABEJAS RESTAURANT

807 13th St., Golden
303-952-9745
abejasgolden.com

★ ★ ★ ★

For more on our ratings,
visit 5280.com/dining.

THE DRAW

Good cocktails from friendly bartenders, a pleasant room, and ambitious cooking

THE DRAWBACK

Overly festooned plates and food combinations that don't always work

DON'T MISS

Brunch-time potato pancakes, lunchtime sandwiches, dinner-time steaks, terrines, and vegetarian plates

DETAILS

Small plates \$10 to \$14; entrées \$18 to \$28. Open Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 5 to 9:30 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday brunch, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and dinner, 5 to 9:30 p.m.

REVIEW

Westward Ho!

Golden's Abejas suggests the dining revolution is marching beyond Denver's city limits. BY SCOTT MOWBRAY

APRIL 2006 | 5280.COM | 143

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Eat & Drink

REVIEW

TOWNS LIKE GOLDEN that exist in the orbit of hot food cities like Denver have a gravitational problem: The odds of pulling customers out of the city are low, and the chance of losing customers to a night out in Denver are high. And getting locals to change their lunch habits is, as a bartender at Abejas told me on a recent visit, “especially hard because people have their favorite places and like to stick by them.” The truth of that statement hit me not long afterward, when I met a couple of corporate chaps in their offices a few miles from downtown Golden. They had vaguely heard of Abejas since last August’s opening but hadn’t yet bothered to visit.

To banish any skepticism, let me assure you this isn’t one of those restaurants where a chef, in thrall to the high cuisine of a neighboring city, serves up the farce and tragedy of unrealized ambition—it’s not, in other words, a *Waiting for Guffman* restaurant. The owners, Brandon Bortles and Barry Dobesh, worked in New York City, and executive chef Nicholas Ames cooked at Spantino in Denver. Abejas would be taken seriously in Highland or Boulder, and it elevates the dining scene in Golden considerably.

To begin with, the room is a pleasure, combining reclaimed barn wood, climbing ropes, air plants, and botanical prints into a whole that is in no way wacky. It’s warm, modern, cozy, and smart—as if it were decorated by someone from a Western offshoot of Anthropologie. That vibe

continues at the bar, which, if you’re a party of one or two, I suggest you approach immediately. Tao Stelmachowicz, one of three bartenders (she told me her hippie parents’ other name choice was Peaches, so we’re happy for her), radiates the relaxed, friendly confidence you want at a neighborhood joint. There are several memorable drinks on the list, most notably the Left at Albuquerque, one of the best cocktails I’ve tasted this year. Its flavors fuse so well that you’d be hard-pressed to figure out that carrot syrup, rum, lemon juice, and egg whites are in the mix. When my wife asked for her Damson gin fizz to be made a bit tarter than usual, this was not received as an offense against the code of mixology: The drink was simply made to order and subsequently drunk with joy.

With a drink in hand, you can now contemplate the dinner menu. It’s not overly long—one page, eight small plates, eight entrées—but a quick read tells you that Ames is going for it, not only for Coorsville, but for the whole region. Duck is served with forbidden black rice and pistachio butter; lamb with salsify milk curds and lentil sprout granola; foie gras with gingerbread crust and huckleberries.

I have to admit I was apprehensive after reading Abejas’ ingredient combinations because they hinted at trouble: Some American chefs have lately been pushing the farm-to-table thing into baroque territory. I had just returned from eating

Seared scallops; bartender
Tao Stelmachowicz



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Eat & Drink

REVIEW

at a well-regarded Austin restaurant called Foreign & Domestic, where I had basil-fed snails and local quail with flaps of gelatinous mushroom, rutabaga, barley, and a cloying béarnaise. The dish, oily as a late-night TV preacher, spoke in tongues.

It turns out, however, that many of Ames' combinations at Abejas are less weird than confusing. But before I get to that, I'm pleased to say the restaurant serves some very good food, especially when the chef points in a straightforward bistro direction.

His pig trotter and sweet potato terrine arrived as a slice of chewy, piggy pâté, unusually dark and flecked with sweet potato, and was absolutely delicious. It only required crusty bread and a vigorous mustard to thoroughly succeed; why I failed to ask for them is a mystery. My dining companion judged the flat iron steak—fanned over charred broccoli rabe and served with a rich bordelaise sauce—perfectly cooked. At brunch one day, potato pancakes were crisp, light, potato-y, and not greasy, served with crème fraîche and a cranberry mostarda. Sausage gravy that pooled around cheddar biscuits had the milky smoothness of a Southern mama's kitchen. At a lurch, the tuna melt signaled simple diner intentions: a big wallop of tuna salad and crunchy slaw between two slices of toasted, supermarket-sourced marbled rye bread. Like the pâté, the sandwich lacked something tangy to be fully self-actualized, so this time I asked for, and received, a nice ramekin of house-made mustard.

When Ames gets fancy, he shows he can combine interesting ideas with careful execution. Black cod came with flash-fried kale stems, which were small lances of crunch, slightly tannic “essence of kale.” Little pearls of persimmon with a foie gras torchon were carved from perfectly ripe fruit—tangy, not mushy, and just right with the liver. A brilliant vegetarian plate called Winter Squash and Pear Dauphine (I think it should have been “dauphinois”) was a square of gratin-style veggies, served with Brussels sprouts, cipollini onions, pine nuts, and a white wine reduction—a complex, savory masterpiece.

The problems begin when the chef fusses. Ames favors fruits and nuts, purées, and crumbles,

and they pop up everywhere, like eccentrically dressed guests who've shown up at the wrong party. If gingerbread bits are going to dust a torchon of foie gras, as they did on that dinner appetizer, it shouldn't lead the dish in a conga line into dessert territory. (The liver itself was oddly bland, as if cut with Crisco.) Meanwhile, the dabs of nutty and fruity purées that came with my pig trotter terrine seemed to have wandered in from a first-year culinary arts course.

There can be basic errors, too. All the bitterness had been cooked out of the braised endive (walnut-crusting, of course), which was served with a heap of king crab. Bitterness is the point of braised endive, which otherwise consists of watery gray matter; the dish needed a pungent kick. A deboned lamb shank was a tough—rather than sticky-gelatinous—knuckle of meat, not to mention oversalted and served with beluga lentils that may or may not have been intentionally left crunchy. A pork T-bone, which I was assured came from a pig of good local standing that was broken down in the kitchen, was overly chewy. Similarly, my slow-roasted black cod, despite the intrigue of those kale stems, curiously lacked the fish's signature fatty, smoky succulence.

Peruvian purple potatoes and sweet potatoes lend color to Ames' salt cod and celery root appetizer.



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Eat & Drink

REVIEW



Abejas' vibe—friendly, casual, and rustic—fits Golden.

And yet...the cheery ambience of Abejas can make one overlook a lot of cooking flaws, starting with that warm reception at the bar. The casual vibe works especially well at brunch (egg and potato combinations, a tasty duck confit hash) and lunch (porchetta sandwich, house-made sausages, striped bass with an heirloom bean ragout). It extends to the main dining area come dinnertime, too, though our server for two meals was an over-explainer who not only described each dish at length while we were ordering, but again when the dishes were delivered. I don't mind the explaining instinct—some diners appreciate a tour of the menu, especially when there are salsify milk curds to ponder—but it needs to come with a good eye for guests who squirm.

There's a robust beer list, an admirable 18 wines by the glass, and a couple of nonalcoholic coolers I recommend, especially the fiercely gingery blackberry-ginger version. Desserts are hit and miss: A lovely carrot-walnut cake was exactly the right size, with luscious crème fraîche frosting and cinnamon ice cream, while a fig-and-honey semifreddo was altogether too freddo and lacked much figgy-ness.

As a Coloradan living in the gravitational field of both Denver and Boulder, I like Golden's un-Boulderness. I pass through town often on the way to other places, and I intend to set aside extra time for another stop at Abejas to try whatever is new on the cocktail list and see if the chef has calmed down a bit and tended the rough edges. I'll lean toward the bistro-style dishes—the ones that promise the least amount of fussiness. I'd advise Denverites to do the same. ▲



OVO
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Trunk Show

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 Flatiron Marketplace

April 2nd
 Aspen Grove

April 3rd
 Promenade at Briargate

EUROPTICS

Cherry Creek North 303.321.3000	Greenwood Village 303.721.9666	Aspen Grove 303.706.9900	Flatiron Marketplace 720.566.0300	Colorado Springs 719.473.2020
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www.europtics.net

#1

HED: Westward Ho!
 DUK: Abel's suggests the dining revolution is marching beyond city limits.
 By Scott Mendery

Abel's Restaurant
 807 4th St., Oakland
 510-952-0243
 abelsrestaurant.com
 2 stars

The draw: Good cocktails from friendly bartenders, pleasant room, and ambitious cooking.

The drawback: Overly festooned plates and food combinations that don't always work.

Don't miss: Branchtime potato pancakes, lunchtime sandwiches, dinnertime steaks, terrines, and vegetarian plates.

Details: Small plates \$10-14; entrees \$18-54.
 Open Tuesday through Friday 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.;
 Saturday and Sunday brunch 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and dinner 5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Towns like Oakland that exist in the orbit of a hot food city like Denver have a gravitational problem: The odds of pulling customers out of the city are low, and the chance of losing

#2

customers to a night out in Denver are high. Getting locals to change their local habits is, as the bartender at Abel's told me on a recent visit, especially hard because people have their favorite places and like to stick by them. The truth of that statement hit me not long afterward, when I met a couple of corporate chaps in their offices a few miles from downtown Oakland. They had vaguely heard of Abel's since last August's opening, but hadn't bothered to visit.

To banish any skepticism, let me assure you this isn't one of those restaurants where the chef is third in the high cuisine of the neighboring city, serves up the fashions and trappings of innovative ambition—it's not, in other words, a fusion or fusion restaurant. The owners, Brandon Borke and Harry DeBosh, worked in Chicago and New York and executive chef Nicholas Ames cooked at Spencer in Denver. Abel's could be taken seriously in Highland or Uptown, and it elevates the dining scene in Oakland considerably.

To begin with, the room is a pleasure, combining old oak wood, climbing ropes, air plants, and botanical prints into a whole that is in no way wacky. It's warm, modern, cozy, and smart—as if it were decorated by someone from a Western offshoot of Anthropologie. That vibe continues at the bar, which, if you're a party of one or two, I suggest you approach immediately.

Two bartenders, one of two bartenders (she told me her hippie parents' other name choice had been Peaches, so we're happy for her) radiates the relaxed, friendly confidence you want at a neighborhood joint. There are several notable drinks on the list, most notable the Tortuga—Abuquerque, one of the best cocktails I've tasted this year, whose flavors fuse so well that you'd be hard-pressed to figure out that carrot syrup, rum, lemon juice, and egg whites are in the mix. When my wife asked for her Damian Gin Fizz to be made a bit tarter than usual, this was not received as an offense against the Code of Mixology. The drink was simply made to order, and subsequently drunk with joy.

With your drink in hand, you can now contemplate the dinner menu. It's not overly long—800, eight small plates, eight entrees—but a quick read tells you that Abel's is going for it, not only in Coastville, but also for the whole region. Duck is served with sublimed FACT CHECK: THERE'S A TRADEMARKED RICE NAME "FORBIDDEN"—IS THIS THAT BRAND AMES IS USING OR IS THERE A GENERIC TERM? Black rice and pistachio poach lamb with saffron milk cards and herb grain granola. For you with gingerbread crust and blackberries.

I have to admit I was apprehensive after reading the ingredient combinations, because it hinted at where some American chefs have lately been pushing the firm-to-table thing into baroque territory. I had just returned from eating at a well-regarded Austin restaurant called Fronson Road Barbecue, where I ate "bowl-fed" crab and local quail with flour of gelatinous truffle cream, rutabaga, barley, and a clay béarnaise. The dish, only as a late-night TV procher, spoke in orgues.

It turns out, however, that many of Ames' combinations at Abel's are less weird than confusing. But before I get to that, I'm happy to say the restaurant serves some very good food, especially when the chef points in a straightforward bistro direction. His pig trotter and sweet potato terrine arrived as two slices of chewy, piggy pith, unusually dark and flecked with sweet potato, and was absolutely delicious. It only required crusty bread and a vigorous mustard to thoroughly succeed; why I failed to ask for either is a mystery. Flat iron steak, fanned over charred broccoli rabe and served with a rich bordelaise sauce, was judged perfectly cooked by my dining companion. At brunch one day, potato pancakes were crisp, light, potato-y, and not greasy, served with crème fraîche and a cranberry mostarda. Sausage gravy that pooled around cheddar biscuits had the milky smoothness of a Southern mama's kitchen. At a brunch, the tuna

Eight signaled simple dinner intentions: a big walnut crust and crunchy slab between two slices of king crab supermarket scorched quail egg bread. Since it lacked something tangy to be fully self-actualized, this time I asked, and received, a nice marinade of homemade mustard.

When Ames gets fancy, he shows he can combine interesting ideas with careful execution. Black cod came with unarmored sole steaks, which were small pieces of crust, slightly tan; pieces of king crab, little pearls of persimmon with a fox gum touch; were carved from perfectly ripe fruit—tangy, not starchy, and just right with the liver. A brilliant vegetarian plate called Winter squash and pear Dauphinois—I think it should have been Appenzeller—was a square of grate-style veggies, served with Belgian squash, cippolini onions, egg yolk, and a white olive reduction—a complex, savory masterpiece.

The problems begin when the chef fesses. Ames favors fruits and nuts, purées, and crunches, and they pop up everywhere, like eccentrically dressed guests who've shown up at the wrong party. If gingerbread bites are going to dash a torchon of foie gras, or they did on that dinner appetizer, it shouldn't lead the dish in a conga line into dessert territory. (The liver itself was oddly blind, as if cut with Crème.) Meanwhile, the dabs of nutty and fruity purées that came with my pig trotter terrine seemed to have wandered in from a first-year culinary arts course.

There can be basic errors, too. All the bitterness had been cooked out of the braised endive (walnut crust, of course), which was served with a generous heap of king crab. Bitterness is the poise of braised endive, which otherwise consists of wonky gray matter; the dish needed bitter kick. A deboned lamb shank was a tough, rather than sticky-gelatinous, knuckle of meat, oversalted and served with beluga lentils that may or may not have been intentionally left crunchy. A pork T-bone, which I was assured came from a rig of good local standing that was broken down in the kitchen, was not overdone, but it was overly chewy. Similarly, my slaw

Why It's Worth It: I noted this story in my Week 9 Field Notes (page 27). I didn't see the complete vision of this piece until it was laid out on the page. It was simply my job to fact-check it.



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Eat & Drink

COCKTAILS

WORTH EVERY DROP

Home values aren't the only prices spiking in Denver these days. If you've been out to dinner or to a bar recently, you've probably noticed entrée-priced cocktails headlining drink menus. Do these concoctions warrant the price tag? In a word, sometimes. For one drink worth your hard-earned cash, peer inside the glass of the **RiNo Fix N' Flip**, a \$13 cocktail crafted by Topher Hartfield, bar manager at Nocturne Jazz & Supper Club. —**ALYSON REEDY**



THE SECRET
The magical ingredient in this velvety, decadent drink is the Eierlikör, which Hartfield makes himself. It takes him an hour to whip up each 64-ounce batch of the liqueur: a blend of eggs, sugar, milk, and Don Q Puerto Rican Cristal rum.

THE METHOD
The eggy Eierlikör is heated in a double boiler to 150° to 160°—just enough to kill salmonella and make it creamy, but before it turns into rum scrambled eggs,” Hartfield says.

THE TECHNIQUE
Hartfield double-shakes the cocktail—first with ice and then dry—to “open it up and get that good frothiness in there.” He also double-strains the drink to remove ice crystals that can cause extra dilution.

THE GARNISH
Fresh rutting—there’s not enough bits in the jarred stuff—is grated on top.

THE COCKTAIL
Hartfield cuts the sweetness of the Eierlikör with 1 ounce of Buffalo Trace bourbon, chosen for its bold but well-balanced flavor and slightly higher than average alcohol content (50 proof), and ½ ounce of Niepoort tawny port. “The port is a good way to get acid without introducing acidic components like lemon or lime juice,” Hartfield says.

*Hoping to cheat and buy pre-made Eierlikör? Sorry; as far as Hartfield knows, it's not available locally.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARAH BOYUM

A Slice of Life: I fact-checked many different pieces, including timelines or chronological stories. Timestamps are critical when working on these pieces.

Eat & Drink

BEHIND THE SCENES



Clockwise from top: An Italian making mustard; on the line; the crew (from left): Michael Reif, Blake Nelson, Jae Humphrey, and Shane Grundtner

Slice Of Life

An inside look at the daily flurry of sandwich making.

OUTSIDE CURTIS PARK DELICATESSEN, a man steps past a dozen people in line and through the doorway. He looks up at the menu, which is obscured by an unfortunate but familiar banner: "Sold out! The addicts ate them all." He frowns, and then leaves. "We try for that not to happen," owner Michael Reif says. Mondays are hard to predict, though. "It's usually our slowest day, but the weather is the wild card."

The deli is entering its fifth year serving Curtis Park and its neighbors via a lunch-only concept. Six days a week, Reif and company turn fresh-baked City Bakery ciabatta, house-made condiments, top-quality meats, cheeses, and fresh produce into remarkably tasty sandwiches—until the bread is gone. "Fresh food is a limited resource," Reif says. "We serve our sandwiches from 11 a.m. until we sell out." Consider yourself warned: Get to the deli early or go home hungry.

2532 Champo St., 303-308-5973, cwtisportdeli.com —BILL GIBLER



9 a.m. One hundred loaves of ciabatta await as the staff arrives. Blake Nelson sets up the line, griddles veggies, and slices cheeses. Shane Grundtner, armed with a single commercial food processor, makes the condiments: First, he blends egg yolks, olive oil, apple cider vinegar, garlic, and salt into a smooth, spreadable aioli. Queued up are the ingredients for pesto, Thousand Island dressing, and butter. Reif sets up tables and chairs, replenishes the chips, and stacks the bottled beverages in the self-serve fridge.

10 a.m. The sandwich line is hustling through a catering order of 18 sandwiches. Local distributors fresh Guys and Cheese Importers drop off fresh and aged provisions, such as produce, meats, and cheeses.

10:30 a.m. The to-go lunch rush has begun. A woman orders an iced tea and an Italian, three types of salami, Asiago, aioli, and a handful of arugula tossed—to order—in red wine vinaigrette. An hour later, the dine-in business picks up.

Noon The two large, shared outdoor tables are full, as are most of the seats indoors, and there's a line at the counter. Nelson slices bread and meats to order. Grundtner completes and plates sandwiches accented with house-made jalapeño pickles. Reif's got the front of the house, taking orders, running plates, and handling payments—in that order. "We do it like a restaurant," he says. "Make yourself at home, help yourself to whatever you need, and at the

end we'll just ring you up. Everybody gets on the honor system that way."

12-53 p.m. The last ciabatta loaf is sold, so Reif hangs the "Sold out!" sign. The place bustles with customers finishing their sandwiches well past 1 p.m.

1:30 p.m. Nelson and Grundtner tackle the dishes while Reif texts a specialty meat order to Tonali's Meats in Arvada for Tuesday delivery. Just past 2 p.m., the crew sits down and eats American sandwiches: turkey, tomatoes, smoked Gouda, aioli, and olive-oil-



tossed spring greens served on toasted bread (frozen leftovers).

2-15 p.m. The last couple of hours of the workday are marked by clearing, resetting, more condiment making—mustard, this time, as two types of mustard seeds plus mustard powder, vinegar, honey, and water meet in the food processor—and checking in deliveries.

2:45 p.m. Reif handles the accounting; he notes payroll in a notebook, distributes tips, balances the cash drawer, prepares the bank deposit bag, and reviews sales reports from Square. Just past 4 p.m., the deli crew locks up and leaves with a few sun-filled hours still ahead.



RUBRIC: Behind The Scenes
 RED: Carls Park Delicatessen
 DEK: decide the daily flurry of sandwich making

Outside Carls Park Delicatessen a man steps past dozens people in line and through the doorway. He looks up at the street, which is obscured by an advertisement for Sheriff's home—"Sold out! The adlets are them all!"—down, and then leaves. "We're for that red to happen."

① owner Mike Reif says Mondays are hard to predict, though. "It's usually our slowest day, but the weather is the wild card."

② The skill is entering its fifth year serving the Carls Park neighborhood with a basic but effectively healthy concept. Six days a week, Reif and company turn fresh-baked City Bakery ciabatta, house-made condiments, top-quality meats, cheeses, and fresh produce into remarkably easy sandwiches—until the bread's gone. "Fresh food is a limited resource," Reif says. "We serve our sandwiches from 11 a.m. until we sell out." So there you have it: Get to the deli early or go home hungry. —Bill Gleibler

③ 8 a.m. One hundred loaves of ciabatta await as the staff arrives. Blake Nelson sets up the line, griddles veggies, and slices cheese. Shane Gundersen, armed with a single commercial food processor, makes the condiments: First, he blends egg yolks, olive oil, and vinegar, garlic, an salt into a smooth, spreadable aioli. Queued up are the ingredients for pesto: Thousand Island, dressing, and butter. Reif sets up tables and chairs, replenishes the chips, and stocks the bottle beverages in the self-serve fridge.

④ 9 a.m. The sandwich line is heating through a catering order of 18 sandwiches. Local shortbread, fresh eggs, and Chico's Interiors drop off fresh and aged provisions, such as cheese.

⑤ 10:30 a.m. The to-go lunch rush has begun. A woman orders an iced tea and an Italian steak types of salami, salami, salami, and a handful of arugula tossed—in red wine vinaigrette. An hour later, the drive-in business picks up.

⑥ Noon if he two large, shared outdoor tables are full, in one most of the seats indoors, and there's a line at the counter. Nelson slices bread and means to order Gundersen goats and plate sandwiches accented with house-made jalapeño pickles. Reif's get the front of the house, taking orders, netting plates, and handing payments—in that order. "We do it like a restaurant," he says. "Make yourself at home, help yourself to whatever you need, and in the end we'll just ring you up. Every body gets on the honor system that way."

⑦ 12:50 p.m. The last ciabatta loaf is sold, so Reif hangs the "Sold Out" sign. The deli handles with customers finishing up their sandwiches well past 1 p.m.

⑧ 1:30 p.m. Nelson and Gundersen tackle the pile of dishes while Reif tests a specialty meat order to Benelli's Meats in Altoona, for Tuesday delivery. Just past 2 p.m. the crew sits down and the an American turkey smoked goats, cheese, and olive-oil-tossed spring greens served, in this case, on toasted bread (loaves leftovers from the past week).

⑨ 2:18 p.m. The last loaf of the workday is marked by cleaning, resting, more condiments.

⑩ making—measured, this time, as two types of measured seeds (the measured peas and vinegar) meets in the food processor—and checking in delicacies.

⑪ 2:45 p.m. Reif handles the accounting: he notes receipts in a notebook, distribution time, release the cash drawer, prepares the bank deposit log, and reviews sales reports from the deli's Sage point-of-sale processing system. Just past 3 p.m., they lock up and leave with a few sandwiches left over.

Carls Park Delicatessen, 2122 Cherokee St., 303-308-5973, carlsparksdeli.com

SIDEBAR:
 By The Numbers
 Each month, Carls Park Delicatessen slices its spreads:
 3,200 loaves of ciabatta
 800 pounds of deli meat
 150 pounds of cheese
 37 gallons of garlic aioli
 127 cups of mustard
 75 pounds of jalapeño pickles
 250 pounds of local tomatoes (except in winter when they're not local and they "taste like cardboard," according to Reif)

Making a sandwich
 FC by Carson Kohler

*What Day
 makes winter*

Some days are hard to predict, though. "The weather is the wild card." [NOTE: Mike says recently Tuesday and Wednesday have been slow days. It just all depends.] [NOTE: They also do deli-to-go offerings. It's not just a restaurant.]
 close [NOTE: After the bread is sold out, they'll offer customers sandwiches on toasted bread (fresh leftovers). However, they're not allowed to leave the shop because the bread will get rancid, and customers will be disappointed. They stay open until 4 p.m.]

- ✓ apple
- ✓ fresh produce, meats, and cheeses.
- ✓ [NOTE: These are only added upon request.]
- ✓ aioli
- ✓ each case
- ✓ tomatoes
- ✓ just couple of hours [NOTE: They close at 4.]
- ✓ vinegar, honey, and water
- ✓ 5:45 p.m. [NOTE: See note below.]
- ✓ 4 [NOTE: The times change should reflect this change.]
- ✓ 14. [NOTE: This depends on the season.]
- ✓ 15. [NOTE: They only use fresh, in-season local ingredients. So, tomatoes aren't in season in the winter; therefore they're not used. I think it sounds fine and makes sense as is.]

Contact:
 • Mike Reif: 303-308-5973, 2:38 p.m. on Feb. 11, 17:34

CHAPTER FIVE: PROFESSIONAL ANALYSIS

Editors can hear his voice throughout the office. There's a Midwest tinge to it, but, most notably, it booms, which can be intimidating to the fact-checking interns in the cubicles across the hall. The figure attached to the voice seems illusive at times. When rounding the corner, it's hard not to take a glimpse into his wide-windowed office to see if his sharp eyes are focused on the computer screen. Sometimes, for days at a time, his office stays dark — empty.

But Daniel Brogan's imprint at *5280* magazine is always evident. In 1993, with a degree in journalism from Indiana University and 10 years of professional experience, he founded the Denver city book. From the beginning, the magazine was deemed doomed. Brogan remembers hearing the buzz around town. Businesses were making bets to see how soon Denver's newest city magazine would fold — just like the ones that came before it. Certainly, with such a track record, it wouldn't take long. Brogan proved them wrong, though, and service journalism helped keep the new magazine afloat.

And I'm one of those fact-checking interns who, at times, find Brogan's voice intimidating. For the past four months, I've served as *5280*'s editorial dining intern, and I've fact-checked stories, written blog posts and print stories while also creating the ever-so-exciting calendar events and dining guide blurbs. In addition to carrying out those day-to-day tasks, I also studied *5280*'s approach to service journalism as a part of my master's project at Missouri's School of Journalism.

When I first started developing this idea of studying service journalism in city magazines, I couldn't even pinpoint its definition. Sure, it serves the reader, but I sought

out a concrete explanation. However, even after nearly a year of studying its practices, it remains, at times, almost as illusive as Brogan. In interviewing the editors at *5280* that practice service journalism daily, I found that they, like me, use singular, abstract words such as useful and actionable. My next step was to study the magazine's content. I conducted a loose textual analysis of each featured service journalism package from 2015. I then resorted to crashing editorial planning meetings.

At the end of my search, this is what I have discovered. This is a year's worth of research and examinations at a nationally award-winning publication. (According to its shelves of awards, *5280* has garnered five recognitions in the past five years for its reader service.) Not only does it have the awards to prove it, but *5280* also surpasses other city magazines in newsstand sales. In 2015, the city magazine industry as a whole experienced a drop of newsstand sales of 15.5 percent, but *5280*'s dropped only 5.64 percent. The sell-through rates for *5280*'s are also impressive. The average sell-through rate at other city magazines hit 26.4 percent while *5280* was 42.1 percent. Bragging rights aside, here's my dive into the realm of service journalism and its importance in city magazines.

The Evolution

For more than 100 years, city magazines have had a foothold in some of America's greatest cities. Many began as gossip magazines. (Think: Colonel William Mann's *Town Topics* in New York City founded in 1879, which shutdown in 1905 due to a blackmailing scandal.) Although arguably one of the most notable city magazines hit the printing press in 1935 (*The New Yorker*), *Philadelphia* magazine is one of the oldest. The Trade Leagues of Philadelphia founded the publication in 1908 as a quarterly

illustrated book. Founding editor Alan Halpern and chairman D. Herbert Lipson helped evolve the *Philadelphia* into a more modern city book. Other city magazines began to grow and come into themselves in the '60s.

At that time, many magazines tried imitating these illustrious city books but failed in doing so — until a character by the name of Clay Felker came on the scene in 1968. He challenged that cartooned, monocle-clad mascot in the top hat from the *New Yorker* with *New York* magazine. Tom Wolfe, one of Felker's staff writers, recalls Felker throwing down the challenge: "... we start out the week the same way they do, with blank paper and ink. Is there any reason we can't be as good as *The New Yorker*? ... They're so damned dull." Thus *New York* magazine began its trek to the top. And other city magazines followed.

And what perfect timing Felker had. America's social scene was experiencing something of a shift. The baby boomers rapidly bumped up the nation's population, and tension within cities bloomed. Inner cities began facing a sense of depletion, and the 'burbs filled up with mostly affluent white families. Tourists also made more of an appearance. The conditions seemed fair for a growth in city magazines.

In 1968, the same year *New York* magazine hit the scene, *Newsweek* magazine reported: "Every red-blooded American city craves a symphony orchestra, a civic center, a major league baseball team and other monuments of civilization. But these days a city can take a shortcut to status with a city magazine." Those city magazines offered information on symphony orchestras, civic centers and baseball teams — all via service journalism.

Defining The Practice

The term service journalism is sweeping. Sometimes it's called consumer journalism or reader service or even civic journalism. There have been various definitions offered through the years. James Autry, former president of Meredith Corporation, once described it as action journalism. Autry defined it as, "... journalism that goes beyond the delivery of pure information, to include the expectation that the reader will do something as a result of the reading."

Byron T. Scott, a Missouri School of Journalism professor, notes this hard-to-define sector of journalism in his 1988 speculative essay. His goal was to build a program at the Missouri School of Journalism that pinpointed service journalism. The chair of the department, Don Ranly, asked him to define it. Through pages and pages of typewritten contemplation, Scott concludes, "Service journalism is needed information, delivered in the right medium at the right time in an understandable form, and intended for immediate use by the audience." He admits he's not satisfied with his own definition. A year later, Scott's protégé Gael Cooper studied the term and concluded that it's "a term coined to describe the process of providing needed information to segments of the reading public."

Lucky for the industry, Don Ranly, a Missouri School of Journalism professor, got more creative and concrete with the idea; he coined the term refrigerator journalism in the '80s. This is how Geoff Van Dyke, editorial director of *5280* and a 2000 Missouri School of Journalism graduate, still thinks of the term. "That's always stuck with me," Van Dyke says. "For someone to be reading a magazine and to take the energy to tear or cut a story or a page out and put it up on their fridge, there has to be something of value there." He complains that his wife *still* does it; there's something called the Internet now.

Refrigerator or not, Van Dyke and other editors all agree: Service journalism is the backbone to *5280*.

Remember when Brogan started the doomed-from-the-start magazine? These service packages fueled the pages. They didn't require too much time or money. The first cover story published in July 1993 in *5280* was Top Docs, a very traditional service package that the magazine still runs today. Brogan remembers collecting a list of licensed doctors, stuffing envelopes and sending ballots out. Then, when they came back, he sat in front of the TV and tallied up the votes for the best doctors in town. "If you were willing to put in the shoe leather, you could do those type of packages," he says. Remember, this was before the Internet, Yelp and Facebook. *5280* capitalized on these issues. People were picking them up, passing them around. With its food in Denver's door, the staff could then afford to produce longer, perhaps investigative, narratives that required months of substantial reporting.

Serviceable Perks

Today, *5280* proves to be more of a diversified magazine, mingling those narratives with, still, those service journalism packages. And these packages still fuel the magazine by maintaining newsstand sales and drawing in advertisers. It's a similar scene at other city magazines, too. "Service journalism is the bread and butter of any city magazine," Koehler says. "People underestimate it; people like to think narrative is more important. A lot of people forget that they didn't pick up the magazine for the long-form story. They picked up the magazine for the top 12 restaurants." She continues: "It's so sexy to be like, 'Oh I followed this person for 10 years.' Yeah, but nobody read it because the magazine had a crap cover for its crappy service story."

Audrey Congleton, *5280*'s audience development manager, oversees those newsstand strategies. Recently, the editorial and art side of *5280* has started to include her in cover decisions, which she deems important. She grabs an archived issue of the magazine and throws her forearm halfway up the cover. "This is what you see as a consumer," she says, referring to the pocket on newsstands that most magazines perch in. The big *5280* logo pops, and, ideally, the image or piece of a cover line will pop, too.

In 2015, each of the 12 issues published (not counting *5280*'s ancillaries) featured service journalism on the cover from best bars to mountain escapes to a coffee guide. However, that's about the end of any sort of formulaic cover creation. The best-selling issue in 2015 was January's Colorado bucket list, which, Congleton says, goes against all of her beliefs. There isn't a smiling face; there isn't a photo of pretty scenery. It's funky colors, and the cover line rests below the pocket.

However, the reader's key takeaway remains service. And with service pieces, especially those traditional ones, advertisers flock. Top Docs is always a thick issue because it's easy for the ad department to sell to medical businesses and doctor's offices. It makes sense, they think, to advertise a like-minded service. Advertisers can't yet understand that those nontraditional pieces draw in more eyeballs, like June 2013's fourteeners issue, one of *5280*'s best-selling issues to date. (There'll be more on that later.) With the money that comes from newsstand sales and advertisers — and also those loyal subscribers who've kept happy — *5280*, in turn, has more money to reinvest in its long-form narratives and nontraditional service packages.

Planning Service — The Nontraditional Way

Back within the brick walls of 5280's downtown Denver office, Koehler plans the May 2016 issue. It's a numbing yet sunny February day, but she enthusiastically talks about the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve down in the southern part of the state. She spent four days camping there last August — nearly six months ago — and now it's time to compile her notes, collected brochures and iPhone reminder photos. She pulls out her phone to show me a picture of the alien-like desert. She explains that there are two places to camp: the park and the preserve. She also races through some other important information for readers. Visitors can't get a permit after nightfall; that *might* ruin someone's trip. Visitors have to let air out of their tires to drive on the sand, but what happens when they go to leave? No tire compressor. That *might* ruin a trip. And there aren't bathrooms in the park, so plan accordingly; that also *might* ruin a trip. (Koehler found this out once she was there. She was itching for a shower, so, like a reader/first-time visitor might do, she sought out the closest bathroom, which was in town and required a \$10 permit.) There are also these cool bugs in the park found nowhere else in the world, but do readers really need to know about those? Koehler continues to think aloud.

This is her way of sorting out information. She scratches notes as she talks and refers to a numbered list of topics and story forms she's already started making in a notebook. She explains that, with a service piece like this, the writer must prioritize the information. It's a 14-page package, so she starts planning the space accordingly. She scribbles some math: 14 pages total, the first two are the opener, 450-words per page, so

450 multiplied by 12 ... That's what she gets. She has less than 5,500 words to explain to the first-time visitor how to spend 48 hours in these dunes.

What Koehler is working on is considered nontraditional service journalism. This is the sweet spot of service journalism in city magazines. Traditional pieces include Top Doctors, Top Lawyers, Top Dentists, Best Neighborhoods and Best Restaurants. And although those might seem easy to piece together, Koehler says brainstorming and keeping these packages fresh year after year — 20 years down the line — is tough. It's the nontraditional packages that are fun to produce and bring more value to the magazine. To describe nontraditional service journalism in one word, it would be localized. Unique and audience-specific or tailored would also work. According to Amanda Faison, *5280*'s food editor, Brogan has lived by the mantra that if you pick up a page of a city magazine from the gutter, you should have a sense of that magazine; that it's *5280*. Faison's been around for nearly 20 years — since the magazine's start when a team of four worked out of a bedroom in Brogan's apartment and a "big" issue was 80 pages. Today, a big issue hovers around 240 pages. A package about a national park with sand dunes is all Colorado, all Denver and so very *5280*.

These are the packages that push readers to pick up an issue. Remember, with platforms such as Yelp and Facebook, traditional service packages have become less valuable, though Faison argues that those Yelp reviews are just watered down; everyone can be considered a critical reviewer these days. But only *5280* editors and other city magazine staff members can be the true experts — and such a voice in the writing is required, mixed with some personality and sharpness. So sure, Yelp is stealing some of these service packages' limelight, but nontraditional packages are so locally tailored and

aggregated that readers can't go anywhere else for such comprehensive information about, say, the guide to fracking in Colorado or how to conquer a fourteener. (Defined, those are mountains that peak at an elevation of 14,000 feet or more. And yes, Coloradans are really into Mother Nature and extreme sports.)

A Service Article About Service Journalism

Like climbing a fourteener for any normal person, service journalism isn't easy to master, especially when it comes to those nontraditional pieces. As discussed, it's difficult to define, which naturally makes it difficult to execute. Ranly always said service journalism should be three things (in addition to refrigerator-worthy): useful, usable and used. For Van Dyke, it's less about the definition and a set of rules and more about the idea and the execution. "Definitions, while worthwhile, I don't think about them at all," he says. "I don't think about 'Is this going to be useful?' By definition it has to be useful or it won't go in the magazine." So service journalism, according to Ranly and Van Dyke, has to be useful. But, beyond that, not many people have attempted to develop any other concrete "rules." Ranly offered up some rules of thumb, but that was 1992, nearly 25 years ago and pre-5280.

After spending 14 weeks inside the walls of the 5280 office and analyzing, interviewing, observing and even helping to create service journalism packages, I've developed a list broken down by serviceable categories on how to master service journalism at a city publication: Brainstorming and planning, reporting and information gathering, writing and executing the package. This, in essence, is a service journalism piece on, well, service journalism.

Brainstorming and planning.

Know your audience.

“I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but people have no problem hopping into their Subaru and driving three hours up to the mountains to go hike or camp,” Van Dyke says. “It’s built into the culture.” After spending a couple of weeks in Denver, it’s easy to notice this trend. On the weekend, familiar faces seem to disappear into the mountains via clogged highways. Like any good magazine, *5280* has taken note of this trend. Because outdoor covers seemed to do better in 2015 than other topics, the editorial team decided to amp that up this year and add a few extras to the mix. And because driving three hours is not a big deal, why not feature statewide natural attractions? The staff doesn’t mind escaping the city and writing outside its limits.

Think seasonally.

Even though Coloradans prove to be adventurous, fly-fishing in the dead of winter, though it’s still in-season according to regulations, isn’t the most appealing. With many service packages, seasons play a role. In April 2015, the cover feature, “50 Front Range Adventures,” marked the start of warmer weather. In June, the fly-fishing guide was published — right in time for the summer season and when people are willing to wade into creeks. But seasonality isn’t end-all-be-all. Other packages such as the Colorado bucket list could have arguably run at any time.

Mind the cover.

In March, I sat in on a meeting between Koehler and writer Jessica LaRusso. LaRusso was in the midst of a summer service package about parks in Denver. Although her outline held promise, words had yet to be strung together. Yet the two were already

considering the package’s cover line. “Ten parks. Will that look OK on the cover?” LaRusso asked. Koehler wanted to beef up the number. (Numbers are important for service. See more below.) “Well, 8-10 parks will act as a backbone, but with all the sidebars ...” With those elements, the number of parks could jump just based on mentions and potentially pull in more readers.

This conversation took place *before* the story had been completed. This shows the importance service journalism plays on covers via the cover line and corresponding art. In 2015, each of the 12 covers published featured service journalism pieces — from 50 Front Range Adventures to Top Docs to Winter in Denver. The cover lines set the reader’s expectations. You’ll get a list of surprising things to do close to Denver, find 315 of the best physicians in town or discover 75 things to do in the brutally cold winter months. This year’s cover line-up is on track to mimic the service-centric covers of last year’s with a beer lover’s guide and a newcomer’s guide. In the realm of city magazine covers, *service sells*.

Adjust accordingly.

In the same vein as the cover, consider framing. Each July since 1998 (the idea of “best this” and “best that” was done before then, but the 1998 June/July issue featured the first cover of Top of The Town), *5280* has published its Top of The Town issue. This is a traditional piece of service that highlights the best in town — from bakeries to ski repair shops. Van Dyke describes the Top of The Town issue like a rollercoaster; you never know how well it’s going to do. Last year, the staff decided to switch up the wording on the cover. Instead of simply boasting “Top of The Town,” the cover line read: “153 Reasons to Love Denver.” From 2014 to 2015, sell-through rates increased by nearly 20

percent. Of course, 5820 can't be sure the cover line is what did it, but certainly it had to play a role.

Reporting and information gathering.

Do the reporting, and own it.

This might seem obvious because, well, this is a journalist's job. But reporting is key in service journalism packages at the city magazine level. Sure, international travel magazines report on resorts halfway across the world via the Internet, but because city magazines are local, just go. As previously noted, Koehler traveled to the sand dunes and did her fair share of firsthand reporting. "We are almost without fail going everywhere, tasting everything, drinking as much as we can without missing work, so we're doing these things, and we want to convey that, and I think they [the reader] appreciates that," Van Dyke says. This, in turn, expresses authority and credibility. People won't read service articles if they can't actually *use* the information.

Avoid conflicts of interest.

As a journalist, this seems obvious, but not all publications abide by this rule of thumb. Faison, who has been around for 20 years and is known as one of Denver's top food experts *still* tries to dine out incognito. It doesn't always work, but she hates being recognized. Callie Sumlin, the new assistant food editor, can slide in and out of restaurants and bars not as noticed. "When we're doing our restaurant lists, we pay for our own meals," Brogan says. "We do everything we can so the restaurants don't know we're there when we are, so we don't get any special treatment." This is important, and the reader values this unbiased approach to reporting.

Find a backbone.

Of course the reporter needs a backbone, but so do these service packages. Usually, that comes in the form of a numbered list or categories. Take, for instance, February 2015's Best Bars package. It's broken down by usable categories: beer bars, date bars, foodie bars, bars for locavores and booze+. September 2015's Smalltown Getaways features seven small towns; that's its backbone. In April 2016's nontraditional feature, "The Dark Side of Fitness," Koehler and the editorial staff decided to offer reasons that give fitness is "dark." Each blurb begins with a reason: "because." "Because even the strong-willed bow to Facebook," "Because fitness is f&#ing expensive," "Because Colorado's fickle terrain can mount a sneak attack." Whether it's a number, a reason or a category, backbones give the package structure.

Offer multiple entry points.

The time to consider the presentation isn't while sitting down to write; it's during the reporting. Faison always keeps this in mind. "The reality is very few people are going to sit down and beginning to end read a story," she says. So, help them out. Vary the visual. Offer a chart here, an infographic there and a short narrative over there. Then, readers can pick and choose what appeals to them. Koehler says it simply: "Sometimes a block of text is not that sexy."

Faison enjoys breaking things down to showcase various elements. This, she says, gives the readers something outside of a chunk of text. In her September 2015 Food Lover's Guide, a whole spread is dedicated to "The Colorado Pantry." A photograph of a pantry with various locally made items offers a catalogue-like approach that allows readers to pick a numbered item and read up on a certain product. On the next page, an

illustrated \$12 jar is diagramed out with little blurbs that explain why this jam is \$12: The fruit, the can, the work hours and so on. Below that is a small essay about apple cider.

Thus, the reader can pick and choose.

Include directives.

As the food editor, Faison always thinks of specific directions that she might be able to use to push her readers to action. “If we don’t give you that ‘sit here, go at 6 p.m. and order this,’ then that information becomes lost; it comes muddled,” she says. Readers want the lowdown, and that’s the reporter’s job. Always work to push the reader to action.

Writing and execution.

Address your audience.

Koehler issues a challenge: Write a piece of service journalism *without* using second person; it’s tricky and awkward. “It’s conversational,” Koehler says of using second person. “It’s how I would speak to you. We’re sitting here, and you say, ‘Oh I have a friend coming into town. What should we do for the day?’ I say, ‘Here’s what *you* should do.’”

Use numbers.

As previously mentioned, numbers are appealing on the cover. Van Dyke says this is the case because there’s a tangible sense of, “Wow, that’s a lot” of whatever it is — doctors, restaurants, destinations, tips, etc. “It telegraphs to the reader that there’s something that will be useful,” he says. *5280* also has a knack for using by-the-numbers blurbs. These are quick snippets of statistics. In part, it plays with the idea of *5280* — its numerical title. It also gives readers a break and allows them to take in a quick hit.

Steer straight with the headline.

Sure, everyone loves a good pun, but whom is it really serving? With service journalism, let go of the cleverness, and cut to the chase. “Who are you benefitting by being cute with this pun?” Van Dyke asks. “You’re edifying yourself and your colleagues, and that’s about it.” To really serve the reader, give it to them straight. Tell them what they’ll take away from the package.

Find a voice.

Because the text is in second person, it’s likely the voice will be more conversational; this is important for service packages. It’s also important to consider the subject. In writing the “Dark Side of Fitness,” Koehler says she aimed to use a voice that was almost like, “Are people really doing this?” laced with a sense of incredulity. Other packages require a different voice: “You’ll think, ‘I should try to write this in a way that’s more high brow.’ Or, ‘This calls for a conversational, sitting-around-a-campfire feeling.’” It’s also important to understand the voice of the magazine and how to manifest that “royal we” personality.

Give readers a break.

5280 likes to include first-person narratives to break up its service packages and that information-overload feeling for readers. Van Dyke and Koehler keep in mind that reading a magazine should be a lean-back experience, one in which readers can kick back and relax. The reader shouldn’t be leaning over it like a textbook or handbook. Part of this comes with varying the presentation and length of the content. Another part is including first-person accounts that might offer some fun insight through a character or plot.

Vary, vary, vary.

Don't write 10 stories at 400 words a piece. Help out the art director (in this case, Dave McKenna) and vary the story lengths. There are these elements calls a grid and hierarchy. McKenna uses a grid to help guide his designs. These are preset, though might be subject to change with redesigns. There's always going to be a dominant element on the page — that's usually the backbone. Outside of that, there are the sidebars, boxes, charts, Q&As, etc. Rather than standard, uniform elements, it's important to vary lengths, style and even point of views. This idea combines the elements of a prominent backbone and offering multiple entry points.

Mind the advertisers.

This point should probably be highlighted in a bold yellow or presented in a big box. "There is no fraternizing with ad sales," Koehler says and describes it as a church-and-state relationship. "It doesn't mean we don't write about our advertisers, but if you ask me who advertises with our magazine, I do not have a clue, and it doesn't matter." This ideology stems, in part, from Brogan's journalism background. He admits he frequently gets angry phone calls from advertisers, especially with the annual Top of The Town issue. It goes something like: "We've been advertising with you for 15 years, and we aren't voted the top jeweler?" But because service journalism hinges on credibility, the editorial and ads departments should not intersect in any way. However, the advertising department can sell ads by selling the issue; as noted, the annual Top Docs issue draws in a lot of medical-based companies and practices.

On The Page

In accordance to these guidelines, a survey of last year's service packages reveals a few standouts. There's May's "Backyard Bounty" by LaRusso. This guide to urban homesteading in the city offers the reader pieces in information in digestible categories such as vegetables and herbs, fish, hops, fruit and bees. These categories serve as a backbone while the fun sidebars provide multiple entry points that bust myths, offer a checklist for gardening (perfect refrigerator material) and break down beehives by the numbers.

Another notable package was Koehler's "Beginner's Guide To Fly-Fishing" issued in June. Of course, she went fly-fishing. There are many elements to this seasonal information, but the package begins with a simple glossary of terms. Each page has a dominant element such as a list of steps to follow to assemble your "system" and a chart of the best fishing holes for beginners. Mixed in is a first-person account from Koehler herself where she laces a humorous voice into the narrative: "It was a fitting introduction to what may well be the single most exasperating, curse-inducing leisure activity on the planet. (Yes, even more so than golf.)" The rest of the pieces utilize that "you" in addressing the reader: "If you don't know a Woolly Bugger from a Copper John—but you're interested in learning ..." or "... it's on these rivers you'll find anglers doing their damndest to 'match the hatch' ..."

December's "Coffee!" issue by Chris Outcalt and Callie Sumlin also provided the reader with digestible, fun pieces of information — a favorite being the blind taste test by connoisseurs of McDonald's, Dunkin' Donuts, gas station and Folgers's coffee. Also included was a first-person defense of the decaf drinker, barista confessions and how to

brew better coffee at home. Each of these packages aims to serve its reader and does so by addressing them with the second-person “you” in a conversational tone that’s easy to read and spiked with a fun voice.

Off The Page

But the concreteness ends as soon as the print pages end and where the infinite world of the Internet begins. Translating these service packages online proves to be a challenge — one that digital associate editor Jerilyn Forsythe says every magazine is struggling with. The root of the issue stems in the brainstorming phase when, oftentimes, online presentation isn’t yet considered; that’s the last step. In reality, the essence of service journalism simply can’t be transferred to the Web. “Our service packages in the print magazine tend to be highly designed,” Brogan says. “There are lots of pieces. It’s not necessarily linear. You can jump in at any point and move through the spreads. We haven’t figured out how to translate that to the Web yet.” Frosythe agrees: “It’s almost like the entire concept of a print service package is so starkly different than what digital audiences are looking for, so there is no perfect translation. I think that’s why lists have become so popular.” Although lists often serve as the backbone for service packages, there are all of those other components: boxes, sidebars, charts, graphics. Those, if translated, are mostly easily imported as JPEGs, which are not SEO-friendly.

To hit a middle ground, this year *5280* started creating online-only, food-related service pieces. Faison, who is heading up this initiative with the digital team, likes that this is bringing more traffic to the site, perhaps gaining more routine readers in the process, but the amount of reporting going into these for an online package makes her sad. She says these pieces could easily warrant sidebars, boxes, infographics or charts but

that the Internet limits this. The first service package featured 20 of Denver's best food markets, a work-in-progress for more than three months. Teaming up, four staff members visited more than 60 food markets in Denver. The result was 14,700 views in its first month online and 18 comments. The first time it was posted on Facebook, it received 116 likes, 75 shares and 6 comments; this is above average. The initiative is proving to be successful. Next in line: tacos and then ice cream.

In the end, the good news is that every editor agreed without my prompting: Print isn't dying anytime soon. And service journalism is still thriving — both online and in print.

Concluding Thoughts With Tacos In Hand

It's mid-week at *5280*, and I find myself sitting at the bar of the Four Seasons. It's a stark contrast from Taqueria Emanuel, a small, sweaty taco joint where I sat yesterday for lunch. I, along with four other editors, am working to compile a list of the best tacos in town. It's part of building the online presence via food service initiative that *5280* launched this year. And as I've learned, writing service journalism pieces requires you to gain new experiences — not just do online research and making calls to PR managers. Because of this, I've been to 10-plus taco joints in the last three weeks. My stomach is reeling, anticipating my final taco, a sirloin and bacon taco. I hope this will be my last for a while.

But this is service. We're curating content, or tacos, to serve our readership with the best. Each blurb will be a quick hit, about 70 words and will include the eatery's location, phone number and website. Move to the next. There will be categories: Breakfast, veggies, pork, beef and wild card (oysters and bison). Through these greasy

little tacos, I've taken in firsthand the work that editors and writers issue into these services pieces. They might not always be easy, especially those nontraditional ones, but they're valuable assets to city and regional magazines.

APPENDIX 1: PROJECT PROPOSAL

Professional Skills Component

The skills I've gained in the classroom and at *Vox Magazine* will be relocated to another city magazine, *5280*, Denver's award-winning publication. *5280* has consistently produced award-winning, innovative service journalism feature packages. In 2013, the magazine was voted runner-up in the City and Regional Magazine Association's reader service award with its package, "A Religious Experience." In 2014 and 2015, *5280* received first place in the same category for its "Going Green" and "Everyday Environmentalists" service packages. In speaking with Geoff Van Dyke, *5280*'s editorial director, he emphasizes the importance of service journalism to the magazine. He outlines the working parts that come together to successfully execute each issue: the writers, the editors, the designers and even the fact-checkers. Thus, *5280* will serve as an ideal case study for my graduate project.

As the magazine's editorial dining intern, I'll be responsible for fact-checking stories and performing research. I'll also have the opportunity to enter calendar events online, write blog posts and produce some front-of-book content for the print magazine. Because of my experience as a reporter, contributing writer, department editor and calendar editor at *Vox Magazine*, I am confident I can proactively contribute to *5280*.

The internship will begin the week of January 18, 2015, and will continue into the month of May. I will work Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. I will also be assigned a mentor and will have the opportunity to shadow various departments of the magazine. Mary Clare Fischer, who oversees the research department and editorial internship program, will be my supervisor. On Friday when I'm not working, I will

dedicate time to the research portion of my project and submit field notes to my committee chair and members. These notes will consist of a bulleted list that highlights tasks I've performed that week as well as analyze my experience in relation to my project.

In addition to carrying out the required tasks as an intern and student, I will also act as a reporter and conduct interviews with the editors, writers and designers. These interviews will be transcribed and contribute to my final professional analysis. I will also analyze *5280*'s past service journalism articles to note trends in their execution. In addition, my own participant observation will play a role in creating scenes that illuminate the importance of service journalism at *5280* and the editorial decisions that are a part of its production.

At the end of my internship, I will have compiled articles I've fact-checked, researched and written. Although these might not always tie to service journalism packages, they will provide insight into the magazine, its brand and its well of experienced writers and editors. It will also allow me to showcase my experience and the knowledge I've gained as an intern.

Professional Analysis Component

Walk into a bookstore, or pass any newsstand, and the cover lines from the stacks of magazines will scream service journalism. "How to put the 'other grouper' on your place," shouts *Florida Sportsman*'s December 2015 cover. "5 Ways to Get What You Want Under the Tree & in Love," taunts *Cosmopolitan*'s December 2015 issue. *Garden & Gun*'s December 2015 cover features the ultimate gift guide. All of these cover lines, though varying, play on the idea of service journalism.

And city magazines do the same. *5280*'s December feature is all about coffee; its cover line reads: "The Java Lover's Guide To Denver's Best Roasters, Coolest Cafes & Much More." *Austin Monthly*'s December issue focuses on the best of the city, a vague topic that shares with its readers Austin's best designers, leaders, cocktail hot spots, outdoor excursions and more. *St. Louis Magazine*'s December cover lines feature the best ways to get around town.

Service journalism is everywhere in magazines — featured in cover lines, laced throughout feature packages and weaved into department stories. City magazines act as an ideal host for such journalism; they aim to serve the city, its dwellers and its visitors. But what exactly is service journalism and how is it best executed?

Research Topic and Questions

Professional discussions and analyses of service journalism have lacked a true understanding of the benefits of service journalism as well as the best ways it can be produced. By examining *5280*'s service journalism packages; interviewing editors, writers and designers; and participating in its editorial discussions and decisions, I will compose an in-depth analysis that explores the technique — even possibly a formula — that *5280* editors use to construct service journalism features. In this analysis, the following research question will be addressed and discussed:

RQ: How does *5280*, an award-winning city magazine, execute its service journalism packages, and what elements make these packages successful?

Studying service journalism at *5280* magazine and analyzing how it's executed and its trends will contribute to a larger industry conversation about the practice. It will offer insight that other city magazines can use to capitalize on this type of journalism. This

information will largely come from a loose content analysis of articles. (See Appendix A for a full listing of the sample selection). In addition, relevant questions and answers will be pulled from interviews with editors, writers and designers from *5280*. (See a list of sample questions in Appendix B.) Finally, some observations will come into play as conversations and discussions about service journalism bubble from writers, designers and editors' desks and conference rooms.

Relevance to The Field

There seems to be two main reasons effective service journalism is key to a magazine's success. The first reason pertains to the publication's readership. Service journalism is reader-centric and aims to engage the audience and to push them to take action; Autry's idea of "action journalism" again prevails (Missouri Group, 2011, p. 238). One such action is to simply grab the magazine from the shelf. Many magazines on display at retailers appeal to readers through their cover lines by addressing the reader or enticing them to take an action (Missouri Group, 2011, p. 238). Because the function of cover lines is to engage readers, showcasing service journalism articles is key. *5280*, for example, thrives on service pieces. More than half of its November 2015 cover lines relate to service articles: "Our guide to being good," "Winter in Denver: 75 amazing things to do in the Mile High City" and "The very best spas for you." Ideally, these cover lines that are promoting the magazine's service journalism will pull readers in.

In addition to the importance of inclusion of service articles in city and regional magazines, the execution remains even more important. Because magazines thrive on credibility, the piece must be accurate and also accessible to readers (Missouri Group, 2011, p. 238). Autry noted the importance of service journalism in a seminar for the

Center of Communication, which Scott (1987) recounts: “Autry also observed ... ‘If we, as service journalists do our jobs right, the readers will believe us. . . .On the other hand, we’ve failed when they say to hell with us because they discover we have given them a bum steer’” (p. 5). If the service piece is executed effectively, it can impact a reader’s attitude, thought process and the way they decide to spend their money, eat or travel (Fioria, 1992). Thus, if the reader believes the publication and the articles prove to be accurate and effective and moves them to action, there is a greater chance for future subscriptions and resubscriptions (Missouri Group, 2011, p. 238). In addition, any increase in subscriptions, resubscriptions and even newsstand sales, will likely increase the marketability of the magazine to its advertisers, a driving force of its income.

Theoretical Framework

Robert Entman introduced the idea of framing in the media in 1991 when he examined the different ways the media framed the coverage of two different news events. He has since defined framing as “the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote particular interpretation” (Entman, p. 164, 2007). Entman (2007) explains: “Framing works to shape and alter audience members’ interpretations and preferences through priming. That is, frames introduce or raise the salience or apparent importance of certain ideas, activating schemas that encourage target audiences to think, feel, and decide in a particular way” (p. 164). Framing evaluates information based on salience (Entman, 1993, p. 53). Entman (1993) defines salience: “It means making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences. An increase of salience enhances the probability that receivers will perceive the information, discern meaning

and thus process it, and store it in memory” (p. 53). Saliency focuses on what information is being pushed to the forefront for audiences to take in and digest into their memory. And communicators — in this case, writers, editors and designers — are responsible for these decisions: “*Communicators* make conscious or unconscious framing judgments in deciding what to say, guided by frames (often called schemata) that organize the belief systems” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). These framing judgments, in the magazine industry, are considered important editorial decisions.

Framing can be applied to service journalism in that this genre of journalism must be executed so that it serves readers. Todd Gitlin (1980) connects the framing of media to the audience: “Since the media aim at least to influence, condition, and reproduce the activity of audiences by reaching into the symbolic organization of thought, the student of mass media must pay attention to the symbolic content of media messages ...” (p. 14). Thus, the topic, text and overall packaging must be framed in a way that users will, according to Ranly (2001), find it *useful* in a *usable* that will be *used*. For example, for an article about hair to be considered service journalism, it must be framed in a way that readers will find useful, i.e. “The best color treatments for brittle hair” or “The top 10 environmentally friendly hair salons.”

Like Pamela Fioria (1992) states, if a service piece is executed effectively, “it can impact a reader’s attitude, thought process and the way they decide to spend money, eat or travel.” Jim Autry, editorial president of Meredith Corporation, once called service journalism “action journalism.” According to Byron Scott (1987), Autry once defined service journalism at a conference as “... journalism that goes beyond the delivery of pure information, to include the expectation that the reader will do something as a result

of the reading. In some cases, that means making something that will enhance the reader's life" (p. 2). Because service journalism caters to readers and them taking an action, the topic, text and packaging of each piece must be framed in a way that users comprehend and find accessible. It must take into account the reader and frame the information in a way that's serviceable.

Since Entman, many other researchers have used framing to look at the way in which magazines have presented information. Although no other researcher has used framing to examine service journalism in city magazines, these past studies provide useful contextual insight. In Cristina Daglas' (2009) thesis for the University of Missouri, she used framing to examine how and why consumer magazine writers and editors frame articles to establish and advance points of view in their publications. Other studies have focused on more concrete, topical messages in magazines. For example, Dalene Rovenstine (2011) examined the way in which *Seventeen* magazine frames sexual messages including messages of sexual health, sexuality and romance. In analyzing 20 issues of the magazine, Rovenstine (2011) found two governing frames: one that highlights romantic messages and another that highlights sexual health, which leaves a divide in portraying healthy sexual relationships. Finally other studies that focus on framing look at the way that information is visually presented. Qi An (2012) studied the way that fashion photography frames fashion, and women, in local Washington D.C. magazines. By using framing, An (2012) found that most of these magazines focus on female fashion. Not only that, she found that the models that sported such fashions were typically white, blonde, curvy women who wore no emotions. An (2012) concluded that this reveals the way that the public determines beauty and female social roles. These

studies vary content — from text to topics to photos. However, in this study of service journalism, framing will be used to tie together all of these elements to examine how 5280 frames information to serve its reader.

Literature Review

The new world of city and regional magazines.

Some might argue that the first city magazine appeared before 1900 with Colonel William Mann's *Town Topics* in New York City (Abrahamson, 1995, p. 174). Although *Town Topics* was the first American magazine to focus on a city, it generally included gossip with some light news mixed in (Abrahamson, 1995, p. 174). In 1925, *The New Yorker* began publication, and other cities attempted to follow its model, though most did so unsuccessfully (Abrahamson, 1995, p. 174). In Theodore Peterson's (1956) study of American magazines, he suggests these magazines tried too hard to embody *The New Yorker* and failed in doing so (p. 238). However, Clay Felker felt up to the challenge. According to Tom Wolfe, one of Felker's staff writers at *New York Magazine*, Felker was prepared to face *The New Yorker*:

I remember Clay saying, 'Look ... we're coming out once a week, right? And *The New Yorker* comes out once a week. And we start out the week the same way they do, with blank paper and ink. Is there any reason why we can't be as good as *The New Yorker*? ... Or better. They're so damned dull.' (Wolfe, 2008)

Wolfe was skeptical of Felker's approach, but Felker proved he was up for the challenge with his "new kind of news" (Wolfe, 2008). In 1968, he launched *New York* magazine and served as its first editor-in-chief (Wolfe, 2008).

Felker is now often credited with inventing the formula for modern city magazines, which began to emerge in the 1960s (Abrahamson, 1995, p. 175; Carmondy, 2008). After World War II, the baby boomers were born, and the nation's population rapidly increased — as did conflict among the country's dwellers (Abrahamson, 1995, p. 175). Tension became evident with the human rights movement, the conflict in Southeast Asia as well as the consistently changing city demographics (Abrahamson, 1995, p. 175). The increase in population resulted in the depletion of inner cities and an increase in suburbs, which mostly filled up with affluent white neighbors (Abrahamson, 1995, p. 175). Cities also became more competitive and vied for tourists (Abrahamson, 1995, p. 175).

As a consequence, city magazines began to develop and thrive (Hydnes, 1994, p. 175). Many of these publications started with a city's chamber of commerce in order to promote business and tourism (Hydnes, 1994, p. 175). Other city magazines began as a way to offer an alternative city voice, and some began as a “survival guide” to residents, particularly to those who were new to suburbia (Abrahamson, 1995, p. 175). These newfangled city magazines continued to grow. A 1967 article in *Business Week* reported, “Some sixty magazines have sprouted up in cities across the land, many of them slick, provocative, and aimed at an affluence audience” (City Magazines Are the Talk of the Town, 1967, p 184). *Newsweek* magazine suggests these glossy, colorful magazines were a shortcut to achieving a level of status: “Every red-blooded American city craves a symphony orchestra, a civic center, a major league baseball team and other monuments of civilization. But these days a city can take a shortcut to status with a city magazine” (A

Shortcut to Status, 1968, p. 44). And thus, this sector of magazines began to grow, as did one of its popular forms of writing: service journalism.

The perfect conditions for service journalism.

With the changing landscape of America's cities, city and regional magazines began acting as "urban survival manuals" for relatively affluent citizens (Riley & Selnow, 1989, p. 3). Riley and Selnow (1989) describe these magazines as slick, attractively laid out and dependent on serving its readers:

These magazines were ... more dependent on service journalism than literary content ... guides to the best shopping, the best dining, the best entertainment that a city had to offer. All, however, were filling a service need: acquainting residents, newcomers and visitors with the how-to, where-to, and when-to of modern living ... (p. 3)

These how-to, where-to and when-to pieces fit into a category of journalism deemed service journalism. In fact, Clay Felker of *New York* magazine cited this type of journalism as his "secret weapon" to maintain sales in a time when cable TV threatened to take away consumers' attention (Carmondy, 2008). The information on where to eat, shop, drink and live is what kept readers coming back for more (Carmondy, 2008).

In 1973, Michael R. Levy established *Texas Monthly*, a magazine that has consistently "relied upon a tried and true formula: one part Texas mythology, one part service journalism ..." (Parker, 2013). This service journalism formula, according to Abrahamson (1995), is still an effective formula for publishing influential city magazines: "City magazines that successfully mix serious reporting and commentary with guides to leisure-time fun can exert influence and provide service far beyond their

numbers ...” (p. 172). Like *Texas Monthly*, service journalism continues to play an important role in today’s city magazines. However, the definition of service journalism and the way it is effectively executed varies from academic to academic, magazine to magazine, editor to editor, writer to writer, designer to designer.

Service journalism in academia.

The definition for “service journalism” varies widely, though not too far from the University of Missouri. Byron T. Scott, a former Meredith Professor of Journalism at the University of Missouri, explains in his 1987 speculative paper the trouble he had with defining the term. He was troubled with the task of building a program in service journalism and, to do so, he recalled the chair of the program asking him to define the term (p. 1–2). So, this is what Scott (1987) wrote up: “Service journalism is needed information, delivered in the right medium at the right time in an understandable form, and intended for immediate use by the audience” (p. 2). He himself admitted this definition was nothing special (p. 2). A year later, Gael Cooper (1988) worked under the supervision of Scott to explore the idea of service journalism with a focus on Edwin Thomas Meredith, a founder of the Meredith Publishing Corporation and someone who Cooper said developed the idea. Concluding his research, Cooper (1988) defined service journalism as “a term coined to describe the process of providing needed information to segments of the reading public.” Again, this is somewhat vague.

A couple of years before Scott and Cooper proposed their definitions of service journalism, Jim Autry, editorial president of Meredith Corporation, spoke about what he called “action journalism.” According to Scott (1987), Autry defined this action journalism as:

“... journalism that goes beyond the delivery of pure information, to include the expectation that the reader will do something as a result of the reading. In some cases, that means making something that will enhance the reader’s life; it could be using a product to better advantage ... it could be trying harder on the job because of a new pride gained or a new understanding of felt; it could be voting more knowledgably ...” (p. 2).

Scott (1987) also noted the definition The Meredith Corporation offered in an annual report to its stockholders: ““Service journalism provides readers with information and ideas in the expectation he or she will do something as a result”” (p. 3). This again tied together the idea of service journalism as “action journalism.”

More recently, in Don Ranly’s (2001) textbook for Missouri’s School of Journalism’s Magazine Editing class, service journalism was defined by the word “useful” (p. 133). Ranly (2001) noted that the subjects of service journalism might vary; the pieces don’t necessarily create a separate category of writing (p. 133). However, the overarching idea was that these articles put the reader first: “They provide information readers can use; they move people to do things. Often service articles report on and evaluate good and services, and tell readers how to do or how to improve something” (Ranly, 2001, p. 133). Ranly also coined the term “refrigerator journalism,” which emphasized that a good service article is one the reader could cut out and stick to his or her refrigerator.

A Missouri School of Journalism textbook, *News Reporting and Writing* (2011), referred back to James Autrey’s role in defining service journalism as action journalism

in that the goal is to get readers to use the information that's presented (p. 238). It also touched on Ranly's idea of "refrigerator journalism" (p. 238).

Service journalism in the industry.

Although definitions of service journalism have been offered in the past, today's definition of service journalism remains more ambiguous. In November 2015, a simple Google search of "service journalism definition" yielded more than 1.6 millions results; however, the articles ranged in topic. Wikipedia, for instance, offered a page for service journalism and defined it with less authority as "a term for generally consumer-oriented features and advice, ranging from the serious to the frivolous" (Service journalism, 2015).

In a 2008 article by Jessica Lockhart published by Ryerson Review of Journalism titled "5 Reasons to Love Service Journalism," the definition of the headlined topic remained unclear. She compared service journalism to fast food — of the magazine industry — and points specifically to women's service magazines (Lockhart, 2008). Lockhart (2008) made note of the history of service journalism in magazines but admitted that the definition, even 40 years later, was still indistinct: "Forty years later, the definition of service remains subjective, but one thing's certain: while many industry insiders view service as junk food in the spinach aisle, readers keep devouring more."

More recently, the question of the definition of service journalism appeared after a controversy when the *Mpls.St.Paul Magazine* cover featured all-white, all-male "Top Chefs" (Lambert, 2015). According to the *MinnPost*, food writer Dara Moskowitz defended the decision to feature these chefs because it's what the city had to offer, and "as a service journalist I feel entirely duty bound" (Lambert, 2015). A reporter

responded: “What is a ‘service journalist’? That’s a new one” (Lambert, 2015). Brian Lambert (2015) decided to explore the topic. After a Google search, he concluded that the only credible definitions focused on the fact that it provided consumers with information. He also spoke with Gayle Golden, a senior lecturer at the University of Minnesota who teaches magazine writing. “The way I talk about it is that it identifies a need, it then reports on that need and in the final step offers tips or solutions,” she said (Lambert, 2015). So Lambert (2015) concluded that to be service journalism, there must be a need, even if it’s as simple as the best tacos in town, and then there must be the process of reporting to offer a solution or tips to readers. Lambert, however, prefaces his definition by noting this is what *he* sees it as.

Ryan Broussad (2012) also explored the concept of service journalism in a column published on the Society of Professional Journalists’ blog:

Public service journalism is just what it sounds like. You, the journalist, are performing a service to the public by doing any number of tasks, like compiling a listing of all restaurants in a 20-mile radius or conducting a survey of people to see who they think is the best pediatrician or best wedding photographer in a city. He cited specific ways to carry out service journalism, such as making lists, conducting surveys and offering the “best of the best.” A 2013 Columbia Journalism Review article defined service journalism similarly, though more simply, in an article about *Texas Monthly*. Tucked in parentheses, it says service journalism is “(‘Top’ this and ‘Worst’ that)” (Parker, 2013).

Creating service journalism.

The standards for effective service journalism are as vague as its definition, but its practice remains important. In Scott's (1987) discourse, he outlined the effects unsuccessful service journalism can have on consumers: "misunderstanding, confusion, boredom, apathy, cancelling the subscription, turning the page or changing the channel" (p. 3). In order to avoid this, Ranly (2001) outlined the criteria for a service article: the subject must be useful to the reader, and the writer must present the article in a useable way (Ranly, 2001, p. 132).

The topic.

To begin, the topic of information is important, though broad. In order to have a topic that deserved to be framed as service journalism, there must be a need and desire for such information (Scott, 1987, p. 8). Scott (1987) offered a basic formula to compose a topic: "You have a problem. This is the problem. Here's a way or ways to solve it." (p. 5) There's also the element of timing or newsworthiness; the article should add something new to an existing conversation or updated advice (Scott, 1987, p. 10; Ranly, 2001, p. 134). Scott (1987) also pointed to the idea that service journalism isn't just about the how-to; it's also about the "what" and "why" (p. 13). These elements, if not immediately obvious, must be explained in the text to the reader.

The text.

At the most basic level, service journalism should be useful, usable and used (Ranly, 2001, p. 131). To be useful, the audience must be able to answer the question, "What's in it for me?" (Ranly, 2001, p. 131). This can be explained through the text; "you" is an important word to use to connect to the readers (Ranly, 2001, p. 131). To be

usable, the piece must be presented in a way that the information will capture the reader's attention and will be easy to digest; "tips" is a keyword (Ranly, 2001, p. 131). Finally, to be used, the piece must involve the readers and push them to action (Ranly, 2001, p. 131). Scott (1987) notes that the action must be realistic for the consumer, which will, in turn, develop a sense of credibility for the publication (p. 13). Another way to push consumers to action is to offer something free (Ranly, 2001, p. 131). In addition, Ranly (2001) provides working principles of service articles. These include keeping copy clear and concise, involving the reader, using accessible vocabulary, including new information and thinking about money (Ranly, 2001, p. 134).

The presentation.

The next task is more difficult and perhaps more important; that's determining how to present the information in the right medium and in a way that most effectively aids the reader (Scott, 1987, p. 9, 12). Sometimes, this requires thinking outside the norm:

The 'inverted pyramid' is not an invariably superior form for textual data, just as the pie chart is sometimes inappropriate for graphic information. Nevertheless, we tend to stick stubbornly to traditional forms and formats, despite variations in the material and changes in the information-consuming behaviors of audiences. Too often we write and edit without regard for these needs. (Scott, 1987, p. 12)

While Scott noted the importance of presenting the information in the most appropriate and effective manner, Ranly (2001) outlines the tools that can be used to accomplish this (p. 132). This includes breaking the text up with internal blurbs and subheads (Ranly, 2001, p. 132). The information can also be presented in various ways, such as a Q&A, an

informational box, a sidebar or a graphic (p. 132). These smaller pieces are easier to digest.

In conclusion, Scott (1987) offered some questions for practitioners to answer: Who are the consumers of the information? What are their informational needs? How do they absorb such information? Am I allowing for a pathway to action? Is there a better way?

Methodology

Because city magazines vary in geography, staff, budgets and other resources, the best way to examine the role service journalism plays in these magazines is to look at one successful case: *5280*. *5280* is Denver's monthly city magazine. It has 48,000 subscribers, 30,000 newsstand sales and is distributed among 5,000 hotels and 2,000 waiting rooms; thus, its total guaranteed distribution is 85,000, according to its 2015 media kit. In a four-issue period, the magazine has a cumulative readership of 517,053. The media kit also boasts that *5280* reaches 1 in 4 Denver-area residents. Not only does *5280* cater to a large audience, it also consistently takes home awards. Since 2005, the publication has been a six-time national magazine award finalist in the American Society of Magazine Editors awards (*5280* 2015 Media Kit). In addition to other awards, *5280* has also been a finalist in the City and Regional Magazine Association awards the past several years for reader service. In 2013, the magazine was voted runner-up for its package, "A Religious Experience." In 2014 and 2015, *5280* received first place for its "Going Green" and "Everyday Environmentalists" service packages. *5280*'s large readership and innovative idea in service journalism lend itself to an ideal case study.

The Case Study

A case study can be defined as an in-depth, multifaceted investigation into a single social phenomenon using qualitative research methods (Feagin, Orum, Sjoberg, 1991, p. 2). Its importance lies in in coming to understand activity within a single important circumstance (Feagin, Orum, Sjoberg, 1991, p. 2) The study is done in abundant detail and relies on several data sources (Feagin, et al., 1991, p. 2). Researchers Joe R. Feagin, Anthony M. Orum and Gideon Sjoberg (1991) maintain that this definition is intentionally broad and ambiguous as to leave it open for multiple uses; the case study can be applied to an organization, a role, a city, a group of people and even publications (p. 2).

Analysis methods and sample selection.

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of *5280* and the way that it executes its service journalism packages, this professional analysis will make use of several methods including a loose content analysis, observations and semi-structured interviews.

Content analysis.

A loose content analysis will allow the researcher to make conclusions about trends in *5280*'s service journalism feature articles. A coding sheet formulated from Ranly's guide to service journalism will create a sense of consistency and fluidity though the researcher will not rely on it for her final findings. The main objective is to understand these trends and to cite specific examples of service journalism practices. The sample selection will include featured service journalism articles from 2015 in *5280*'s print editorial content. Appendix D shows a detailed list of these featured service journalism articles. Each will primarily be examined in print, but the digital presentation

will also be considered, especially in discussing the future of service journalism.

Observations.

Observations will also be pulled into this professional analysis. Because the researcher will be working in the magazine office, she will ideally be able to sit in on staff meetings and observe the way that the editors and designers work together to produce the service journalism content. Conversations and the way that people act will tie together certain ideas and allow the researcher to show versus tell the story of service journalism.

Semi-structured interview.

Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to enter an interview with a planned set of questions, but she may deviate from those questions and offer an open dialogue with the subject (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Because service journalism is such a sweeping term, the semi-structured interview will allow the researcher to pursue different questions based on the subjects' answers. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role service journalism plays in *5280*, the researcher will interview a number of staff members from different parts of the magazine including the magazine's president and editor-in-chief, the editorial director, the deputy director, the art director, the publisher, the advertising executive, the digital production manager and the audience development manager. Appendix D provides the qualifications of each of the prospective interview subjects.

Advantages.

Because a case study focuses on such a narrow subject, its analysis offers rich detail and descriptions and is able to analyze a micro event in terms of a larger construct

(Feagin, et al., 1991, p. 6). Because the analysis is hyper-focused on one case, this allows the researcher to dive into a number of sources over a period of time and study the case in a depth that's otherwise not possible (Feagin, et al., 1991, p. 6). For this case study, the variety and wide scope of methods will offer more insight into service journalism at *5280* than other methods would. The detail and description that will come from this case study will be able to benefit others interested in the practice.

Not only does this method allow for a variety of sources, which lends itself to rich detail, but it also allows for a more complete understanding of a single phenomenon over a period of time. Studying the way that service journalism is executed at *5280* “allows the observer to examine social action in its most complete form. The investigator is better able to grasp the total complex world of social action as it unfolds” (Feagin, et al., 1991, p. 9). In this case, studying *5280* through its print packages; its editors, writers and designers; and its editorial interactions and decisions that unfold in the office, a more clear portrait of how it executes service journalism will be painted.

A final advantage, and perhaps the most important to this research, is the idea that a case study can lend itself to theoretical generalizations (Feagin, et al., 1991, p. 13). Because service journalism has not been a focus on study in recent years, these new interpretations will offer new innovations: “Theoretical generalization involves suggesting new interpretations and concepts or reexamining earlier concepts and interpretations in major and innovative ways” (Yin, 2013). In this case, these generalizations will ideally assist other city magazines.

Considerations.

It's important to remember that a case study is not representative of other cases,

and it is not sampling research (Stake, 1994, p. 4). The purpose of a study is not to understand other cases; the first obligation is to study one case: “A collective case study may be designed with more concern for representation but, again, the representation of a small sample is difficult to defend” (Stake, 1995, p. 5). This will be important to remember in studying *5280*. Because *5280* executes its service journalism packages in a certain way does not mean that other city magazines can or should do the same. It can offer suggestions, perhaps, but it will not lend itself to a universal guide for the industry.

Because interpretation is a large part of a case study — interpreting editorial discussions and decisions — it’s important that the researcher remain objective and open: “On the basis observations and other data, researchers draw their own conclusions” (Stake, 1995, p. 9). Because the researcher will be immersed in the workplace and might take part in editorial decisions, it’s important that she remains objective and keep the goal of the study in mind.

Publication

The final product of this professional analysis will be a long-form article that examines the prominence of service journalism in city and regional magazines, in particular *5280*. *5280* will act as a case study and might serve as an example for other city magazines to follow in producing future service journalism packages. The article will paint an overall picture of service journalism, examine *5280* as a pioneer of sorts and will take a look at the presentation and teamwork that goes into producing such pieces. It will integrate content analysis, observations and interviews to create an in-depth analysis. In essence, it will be a service journalism article on service journalism.

This article will ideally be published in *Folio*., a magazine for magazines. *Folio*: will serve as an ideal platform to share this information about service journalism with other professionals. Its 2015 media kit reads:

Folio: is dedicated to providing magazine publishing professionals with the news, insights, and best practices to keep them in tune with today's media industry trends. Through our website, newsletter, research and social media networks, Folio: offers professionals real solutions that drive revenue and provides a platform where buyers and sellers can connect and engage.

Its media kit also notes the magazine's targeted audience: "B-to-B publishers, consumer media, specialty/enthusiast, city & regional, and association magazines." And it's not just targeted to those big, New York-based magazines. It caters to small and mid-size print-centric companies as well. Because *Folio*: focuses on the magazine publishing industry and aims to offer news, best practices and trends in the industry, this article will add something new and insightful to an otherwise stagnant conversation.

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PROJECT PROPOSAL: APPENDIX A

The following interview questions will serve as a guide when interviewing members of 5280's staff including the publisher, editors, writers, designers, digital leaders and advertising executives:

General questions on the magazine and service journalism:

1. What do your website analytics show in terms of how readers receive service pieces?
2. How do you define service journalism?
3. What elements are crucial to an effective service journalism article?
4. What elements do you consider when brainstorming service pieces?
5. How have your service journalism pieces evolved over time? Are you seeing a shift in service journalism in the industry as a whole?

The specific award-winning article:

6. What inspired the idea for this topic of service journalism?
7. If you had to describe the purpose of the package in one sentence, what would it be?
8. What makes the package serviceable for the readers?
9. What kinds of discussions were had in determining the execution of this service package?
10. How are you consistently remaining innovative in your service articles?

PROJECT PROPOSAL: APPENDIX B

The following components and questions listed below provide a guide for a loose content analysis. The (*) indicates information from Ranly's service journalism principles published in 1992, which will act as a backbone in analyzing current trends.

DATE ARTICLE PUBLISHED:

SELECT OVERARCHING TOPIC:

Family	Food/drink	Health/medicine	Hobby
Lifestyle	Money/finance	Politics/policy	Shelter
Style	Travel/leisure	Misc.: _____	

HEADLINE:

- Is this a "how-to" title? *
- Does it include any of these keywords?

Easily	Immediately	Quickly	Soon
--------	-------------	---------	------

- Does the headline address the reader in second person?
- Does the headline make a promise?
- Is the headline clear or cryptic?
- Is it creative/work to capture the attention of the reader?

EXTERNAL BLURB:

- Does the blurb promise a benefit to the reader? *
- Does it clearly summarize what the article is about? *
- Does it include the word "how"? *
- Does it address the reader with "you"? If not, what is the point-of-view? *
- What tone does it establish? Light-hearted? Serious?

BODY COPY:

- How is the text organized?
- Does the text utilize any of these words that John Caples suggests to accomplish usefulness? *

Handy	Helpful	Practical	Powerful
Reliable	Reversible	Serviceable	Usable
Useful	Versatile	Washable	Workable

- Does the text involve the reader? *
 - Does it use the "how-I" approach where the writer is the expert?
 - Does it use the "how-you" approach that addresses the reader directly?

- Does it use the “how-Jane Doe” approach?
 - Expert?
 - Celebrity?
 - Amateur?
- Does it address news or something new? *
- Does the text address money? *
 - How much “it” costs
 - How to make money?
 - How to save money
- Does it address time? Does it use words such as: *

Quickly Immediately Soon Easier

- Are statistics/numbers used to convey importance or provide clarity?

WRITING DEVICES: *

- Does the article use a list? What type?

Do and don’t Advantages and disadvantages *n* ways to ... The *n* best ... or the *n* worst ...

- Does the article utilize subheads to break up the text?
- Does the article use internal blurbs to provide clarify or highlight important information?
- Does the article use sidebars and/or boxes? What information is included?

References such as a bibliography or contact information Summary note with most necessary information Glossary of technical terms or words difficult to pronounce Bio box to describe the subject of the story

- Does the article use a chart?

VISUALS:

- What types of visuals are employed? *

Photos Illustrations Infographics Maps

Other: _____

- Are there interactive elements?

OVERALL: *

- Is the article useful?
- Is the article useable?

Does the article push the reader to take action? If so, what?

PROJECT PROPOSAL: APPENDIX C

A large portion of this professional analysis will consist of semi-structured interviews. In order to comprehensively understand the execution of service journalism at *5280*, I'll interview a variety of staff members from various departments. These are subject to change after some observation.

- Daniel Brogan, president and editor-in-chief
 - Brogan founded *5280* in 1993. He will be able to offer a more historical perspective of how *5280* has evolved since its beginning and how it has become a leader in service journalism.
- Geoff Van Dyke, editorial director
 - Van Dyke will have the best understanding of how each department comes together to execute service journalism feature packages. Van Dyke has been working at *5280* since 1997 and has lead the magazine to win a number of City and Regional Magazine Association awards.
- Lindsey Koehler, deputy editor
 - Koehler edits features packages, including service packages. She also writes for these service packages. Her most recent feature service package, "Winter in the City," was published in *5280*'s November 2015 issue. She will provide insight into the editing and writing of these packages.
- Dave McKenna, art director
 - McKenna has been with *5280* since 2010. As the art director, McKenna will be able to speak on the presentation of these packages — how is the information presented in a way that is useful, usable and used by readers? What considerations go into service packages that make them different from a regular feature story?
- Cassie Noyes, associate publisher, digital media & audience development
 - Noyes has played a key role in making *5280* a dominant voice in Denver. She spent 12 years as *5280*'s audience development director and in that time tripled its paid subscriber base and solidified it as a top-selling title on local newsstands. Noyes will provide insight into the evolution of *5280* and how it became a leading city magazine as well the role that service journalism played (or didn't play) in this process. She'll also be able to explain the role of service journalism in cover lines and their influence on sales.
- Ari Ben, advertising executive
 - Ben will be helpful in offering an explanation to what drives advertisers to the magazine as well as how important advertising is to *5280*'s well-being.
- Tamara Head, digital production manager
 - It will be important to speak with Head about how and if *5280* does anything special in translating its print content online — particularly with service packages.
- Audrey Congleton, audience development manager
 - Congleton works to track the circulation for print and digital audiences. She will be able to offer insight into how service packages fare against other feature stories.

PROJECT PROPOSAL: APPENDIX D

This project's sample selection for the content analysis will focus on 5280's featured service journalism packages from 2015. These packages offer a variety in topic, writing styles and layouts. The researcher will analyze the print content. These titles and blurbs have been gathered from the [online archive](#).

From January 2015:

- **The Colorado Bucket List:** The ultimate compilation of only-in-our state things to do before you take your last breath of thin air.
- **Top Lawyers 2015:** Our first-ever list of more than 300 of the very best attorneys, in 46 specialties, in the Denver metro area.

From February 2015:

- **Cheers! Denver's Best Bars 2015:** Seven years ago we said bars weren't destinations. We were wrong. Here, we submit 15 pieces of evidence to the contrary.
- **Meet the Makers: 10 Craftspeople to Know in Denver:** Independent designers, artisans, and creators—collectively described as “makers”—are filling studios and workshops across Denver and cranking out beautiful handmade products. Meet 10 of the best.

From March 2015:

- **Denver's Best New Restaurants 2015:** From humble bagels to farm-to-table dishes, the local dining scene has never been so exciting. Here, 10 spots to try now.

From April 2015:

- **50 Urban Adventures You Must Try:** You don't have to drive far into the mountains for outdoor thrills. Try these 50 bona fide (and really fun!) escapades without leaving the Front Range.
- **Pain In The...:** There's no room for wimps in the Rockies. But just how much pain can Coloradans take—and what are the best ways to deal with it?

From May 2015:

- **Summer: Colorado's Other High Season:** Summer tourism to the high country's most sought-after winter destinations is experiencing an unprecedented boom. If you haven't made plans to head for the hills when the weather warms, you should do so right away. Here's why.
- **Urban Homesteading in the Mile High City:** From growing fruits and veggies to raising chickens, goats, and bees, we show you how to make the most of your backyard this summer.
- **Denver's Best Neighborhoods:** What makes a neighborhood amazing? We dug into the data—home prices, crime stats, school quality—and factored in intangibles such as proximity to parks, public transit, restaurants, and cultural

attractions to find the most livable spots in the Mile High City. You might be surprised at what made the list.

From June 2015:

- **Summer in the City:** 53 cool things to do when Denver heats up
- **Top Dentists 2015:** Keep your pearly whites, well, pearly white with our list of the 717 best dentists in Denver and beyond. Plus, discover nine dental-care facts your dentist wishes you knew.
- **The Beginner's Guide To Fly-Fishing In Colorado:** From how to cast to which fly to use to finding the best fishing holes, we teach you all you need to know to get on the water this summer.

From July 2015:

- **Top of the Town 2015:** 153 ways to re-energize your summer (and the rest of the year).
- **The Absolute Best Colorado Workouts for You:** Whether you're into free weights, high-intensity interval training, spin classes, yoga, or gymnastics, we've found 29 places in Denver—and beyond!—to break a sweat.

From August 2015:

- **Our Annual Must-Have List of Denver's Top Doctors:** With 315 physicians in 95 medical specialties, we're bound to have to doc you need.
- **Outward Bound:** The 5280 field guide to taking your child's learning outside the classroom—and into the world.
- **Health & Wellness Issues You Must Know About Right Now:** New programs, novel treatments, nitty-gritty research, ongoing clinical trials, astute diagnostics, big-data sharing, forthcoming facilities, and state health statistics—and more!—that are important to every Coloradan's well-being.

From September 2015:

- **7 Spectacular Small Town Getaways:** We spent time exploring seven of our favorite small towns so we could tell you the best ways to enjoy 36 hours in each.

From October 2015:

- **25 Best Restaurants 2015:** Hungry? Check out our annual ranking of the metro area's best restaurants.

From November 2015:

- **Winter in the City:** 75 things to do in Denver when plummeting temperatures chase you inside.
- **The 5280 Guide to Altruism in Colorado:** A look at some impressive local philanthropic figures, and tips for how you can become one of them.
- **19 Spa Experiences to Help you Relax This Winter:** You need—no, deserve—a way to untie those weekend-warrioring (and workday) knots this ski and holiday season.

From December 2015:

- **The Beginner's Guide to Denver's Exploding Craft Coffee Scene:** Where to drink coffee now, which beans to buy, how to make a better cup of joe at home, and everything else you need to know to enjoy coffee in the Mile High City.
- **Something For Everyone (On Your Nice List):** The perfect presents—at the perfect prices—for everybody from your secret Santa to your soul sister. Bonus: They're all designed or made right here in Colorado.

APPENDIX 2: TEXT ANALYSIS

January

1. **Cover line:** The Colorado Bucket List, 104 Thing All Coloradans Must Do Before They Die!
 - a. **Print head:** The Colorado Bucket List
 - b. **Print blurb:** The ultimate compilation of only-in-our-state things you need to do before you take your last breath of thin air.
 - c. **Edited by** Jerilyn Forsythe & Natasha Gardner
 - d. **Why now?** A bucket list aligns with the idea of resolutions for a new year.
 - e. **Point of view:** Each blurb uses implied second-person commands. The Royal We is used. First-person narratives are also included.
 - f. **Body copy presentation:** There's no introduction. The blurbs are sorted by task. Examples include: "Plan a 10th mountain division hut trip," "Take a dip in 102-degree water" and "Be in four places at once." The blurbs are presented in different ways such as a checklist, a by-the-number breakdown, a graphic and a map.
 - g. **Sidebars:** n/a
 - h. **Other presentation elements:** n/a
 - i. **Online head:** The Colorado Bucket List
 - j. **Online presentation:** Each task is presented in a dropdown box that has an interactive element: Readers can actively check off the tasks they've completed. A tally is kept at the bottom of the page.
2. **Cover line:** The 345 Top Lawyers In Denver & Beyond
 - a. **Print head:** Top Lawyers
 - b. **Print blurb:** Our first-ever list of more than 300 of the very best attorneys, in 46 specialties, in the Denver metro area.
 - c. **By** Patrick Doyle & Rebecca L. Olgeirson
 - d. **Why now?** This is a yearly staple at *5280*.
 - e. **Point of view:** The introduction predominately uses second person and includes first person plural.
 - f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 180-word introduction highlights the process of reporting and why this list is important. Subheads break down the type of law practice (agriculture, banking, etc.) and lists lawyers and their contact information.
 - g. **Sidebars:** A FAQ box explains the process *5280* used in selecting the lawyers.
 - h. **Other presentation elements:** Pie charts provide statistics about the lawyers in the list such as "Are You A Colorado Native?" "Did You Attend Law School In Colorado?" "What Is Your Hourly Rate?" "How Many Hours Do You Work Per Week?"
 - i. **Online head:** Top Lawyers 2015
 - j. **Online presentation:** The first page includes the introduction and the FAQ box. At the bottom, a "click here" link takes readers to a full list of lawyers organized alphabetically. The second page features the pie charts.

February

3. **Cover line:** Denver's Best Bars, Where To Drink Now In The Mile High City!
 - a. **Print head:** Cheers!
 - b. **Print blurb:** Seven years ago, we said bars weren't destinations. Turns out we were mistaken (at least, we were by today's standards). The Mile High City's watering holes are no longer merely neighborhood distractions; they're objectives in their own rights, as the 15 bars on the following pages—for beer snobs, foodies, couples, and more—demonstrate. We've never been so happy to be wrong.
 - c. **Edited by** Kasey Cordell
 - d. **Why now?** Typically, February features an alcohol-related service package.
 - e. **Point of view:** Second person is used. First-person essays are included.
 - f. **Body copy presentation:** The bars are broken down into categories: beer bars, date bars, foodie bars, bars for locavores and booze +. Each bar is presented by its name with its location, phone number and website immediately underneath. Then, a short paragraph sums up the bar.
 - g. **Sidebars:** There are three sidebar essays throughout: one about the old fashioned, one about drinking alone and one about the components of a good bar. There's also a "bars we miss," high dives and a Q&A with a bartender.
 - h. **Other presentation elements:** Running along the bottom of the whole package is a "Statewide sipping spots" banner that features out-of-town bars. There are also "Where Bartenders Drink" blurbs. Photos of each bar are included.
 - i. **Online head:** Cheers! Denver's Best Bars 2015
 - j. **Online presentation:** A featured image includes the introductory text. When scrolling, it disappears, and the bars appear by category. Between each category is a "where bartenders drink" blurb to break it up. There's a "Mapping The Best Bars" feature at the end that doesn't appear to be working.

4. **Cover line:** Meet 10 Of The Finest Craftspeople In Denver
 - a. **Print head:** Making It
 - b. **Print blurb:** Bartenders slinging craft cocktails and chefs growing their own seasonal ingredients have primed our city for the next wave of locally made goods: Independent designers, artisans, and creator —collectively described as "makers"—are filling studios and workshops across Denver and cranking out beautiful, practical, handmade products. This craft revolution is right at home in the Mile High City, where it's easier—and hipper—than ever to buy local goods. Need an introduction? We tracked down 10 of the city's finest craftspeople. Their handmade products—ranging from handsome wood furniture to all-natural soaps—are proof the "small-batch" label isn't just relegated to the kitchen anymore.

- c. **Edited by** Haley Masell Oswald
- d. **Why now?** The introduction addresses Denver's "craft revolution," which has been spurred by craft cocktails and farm-to-table foodies.
- e. **Point of view:** The second person is not prevalent. Each craft person is described in third person; the reader never seems to be addressed.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** Each page of the spread is designated for a type of product: menswear, paper goods, bags, etc. This package is mostly photo-driven with brief descriptions of the maker and the product.
- g. **Sidebars:** n/a
- h. **Other presentation elements:** n/a
- i. **Online head:** Meet the Makers: 10 Craftspeople to Know in Denver
- j. **Online presentation:** The package is presented on one page. Headers, photos and dividing lines are used to separate the categories.

March

- 5. **Cover line:** Best New Restaurants, Pull Up A Chair At The Next Generation Of Iconic Denver Eateries
 - a. **Print head:** Best New Restaurants
 - b. **Print blurb:** From humble bagels to casual Latin fare to farm-to-table dishes, the local dining scene has never been so exciting—and so full of potential. Snag a table at any of these 10 spots today!
 - c. **By** Amanda M. Faison
 - d. **Why now?** Each March issue includes a food service feature. Since 2012, that feature has been Best New Restaurants.
 - e. **Point of view:** The second person used, though not obviously.
 - f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 75-word introduction pushes the reader to action: Go eat now! Each of the 10 new restaurants are broken down by blurbs, which features its name, address, phone number and website. A blurb summarizes each restaurant and why it's the "best" with examples of dishes included.
 - g. **Sidebars:** A sidebar includes a "Best New Elsewhere" with a best new restaurant outside of Denver.
 - h. **Other presentation elements:** Each blurb is accompanied by the restaurant's open date as well as an "order this," "don't miss" and "room for improvement" tidbit.
 - i. **Online head:** Denver's Best New Restaurants 2015
 - j. **Online presentation:** There's a link to an older feature: 25 Best Restaurants. Then there's another link to click to get to the best *new* restaurants. Each page features a new restaurant with the information categorized by bolded subheads.

April

- 6. **Cover line:** 50 Front Range Adventures, Our List Of Surprising Things You Can Do Close To Denver!

- a. **Print head:** Choose Your Own Adventure
- b. **Print blurb:** You don't have to drive far into the mountains for the outdoor thrills. Try these 50 bona fide (and awesomely fun!) escapades without leaving the Front Range.
- c. **By** Dougald MacDonald
- d. **Why now?** It's April. The weather is warming up, and presumably everyone is itching to get outside.
- e. **Point of view:** Each blurb uses a second-person command; however, not all blurbs are consistent.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** The 150-word introduction makes a tie to Alastair Humphreys, an Englishman who wrote *Microadventures: Local Discoveries, Great Escapes*, which was published in April 2014. Each blurb starts with an imperative sentence: "Hike the Beaver Brook Trail," "Bike To A B&B," "Do A Pub Run," etc. The blurbs are formatted in various ways. Some of them are typical descriptive summaries. Others are in the forms of lists, checklists, graphs and maps.
- g. **Sidebars:** One sidebar features locals' choice: "We asked a few of Colorado's boldest adventurers to tell us about their favorite close-to-home outdoor exploits." There's also first-person essays about skiing uphill and going caving.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** n/a
- i. **Online head:** 50 Urban Adventures You Must Try
- j. **Online presentation:** After the introduction, there's a table of contents that lists each thing to do. However, upon clicking one, it links to a page that lists about three activities, then the reader must scroll. Each to-do item is highlighted. Readers can also view the activities subsequently by clicking through through the pages.

7. Cover line: How Tough Are Coloradans?, Find Out On Page 76

- a. **Print head:** Pain in the ...
- b. **Print blurb:** There's no room for wimps in the Rockies. But just how much pain can Coloradans take—and what are the best ways to deal with it?
- c. **Edited by** Kasey Cordell
- d. **Why now?** n/a
- e. **Point of view:** There's a mix of advice pieces, informative stories, profiles and narratives.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** The package begins with a 500-word essay that explains the physiology and psychology of pain. It narrows in with a local take on Coloradan's knack for outdoor/extreme activities. Other essays and narrative blurbs include a look at a CU professor finding a nonaddictive way to treat pain, pain in the pursuit of pleasure, joint replacements, muscle activation technique for Payton Manning and a profile of a patient suffering from chronic headaches.
- g. **Sidebars:** This text-heavy package includes many graphics including the 5280 agony index that compares editors' pain index to the McGill index.

The Fix-Me File is a charticle that features different treatments, their uses, why they work, other facts and dosages. Another chart breaks down common injuries by activity. A diagram of a Broncos player showcases each of his injuries. There's also a sidebar that notes the pain of doing nothing. There's also a graphic that offers advice from a physical medicine and rehab specialist.

- h. **Other presentation elements:** One pull quote is included as well as a by-the-numbers blurb. The 5280 agony index offers an online exclusive interactive element.
- i. **Online head:** Pain In The ...
- j. **Online presentation:** There is no introduction, only a photo and table of contents links. It doesn't seem as though the personalizable agony index is within the package—only accessible via direct link. The charts and graphics are included as images, some with the magnifying tool.

May

- 8. **Cover line:** Mountain Escapes, Everything You Need To Know About Visiting The High Country This Summer!
 - a. **Print head:** Colorado's Other High Season
 - b. **Print blurb:** Summer tourism to the high country's most sought-after winter destinations is experiencing an unprecedented boom. If you haven't made plans to head for the hills when the weather warms, you should do so right away. Here's why.
 - c. **By** Lindsey B. Koehler
 - d. **Why now?** This preview for summer vacations ties in news and numbers for the time peg: "According to the Colorado Tourism Office, 4.8 million tourists visited the state during the months of June, July, and August in 2013—about 1.1 million more than visited during January, February, and March."
 - e. **Point of view:** The content is mostly written in second person. There are some third-person accounts such as "participants" or "adults" or "participants."
 - f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 350-word introduction pushes the "why now?" Major blurbs broken down by location such as Vail, Crested Butte and Winter Park.
 - g. **Sidebars:** By-the-number blurbs are sprinkled throughout.
 - h. **Other presentation elements:** The locations are paired with subheads such as "Where to eat and drink," "At the resort," "In (or near) town" and "Where to stay."
 - i. **Online head:** Summer: Colorado's other High Season
 - j. **Online presentation:** There's a landing page with links to each location. Each location is then broken down by subheads.
- 9. **Cover line:** Backyard Bounty, Your Guide To Urban Homesteading In Denver
 - a. **Print head:** Backyard Bounty

- b. **Print blurb:** Vegetables and chickens and bees, oh my! Your guide to urban homesteading in the Mile High City.
- c. **By** Jessica LaRusso
- d. **Why now?** Over the past half-decade urban homesteading restrictions have loosened. In April the city hired a manager of food systems development. Now, it's summer and time to grow.
- e. **Point of view:** This is written mostly in second person to address the reader.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 350-word introduction notes the evolving trend and action taken in city government to enhance urban homesteading. Major blurbs broken down by categories: Vegetables & herbs, fish, hops, fruit, bees, goats and chickens.
- g. **Sidebars:** A running footer of "If you want ..." "Try ..." information with phone numbers, groups, shops, etc.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** There are many elements that make up each blurb. These includes mythbusters, a narrative about city restrictions, a checklist for gardening, a graphic laying out plot size by vegetable, a do and don't list of canning, a numbered list of why to grow hops, a by-the-numbers of bee hives, etc.
- i. **Online head:** Urban Homesteading in the Mile High City
- j. **Online presentation:** A landing page includes the introduction with links to each section: Hops, Bees, Fruit, etc. Blurbs are designated with bold type, and graphs translated to images.

10. Cover line: Denver's 24 Most Livable Neighborhoods

- a. **Print head:** Denver's Best Neighborhoods
- b. **Print blurb:** What makes a neighborhood amazing? We dug into the data—home prices, crime stats, school quality—and factored in intangibles such as proximity to parks, public transit, restaurants, and cultural attractions to find the most livable spots in the Mile High City. You might be surprised at what made the list.
- c. **By** Chris Outcalt
- d. **Why now?** The introduction notes that the city is undergoing a “growth spurt,” but this is a traditional, annual package.
- e. **Point of view:** Third person is used in the form of Denverites. The text also includes second person in explaining how to find neighborhoods that fit *your* needs. There's also use of "our" in terms of the magazine's criteria/selection process.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 325-word introduction explains how *5280* determines these "best" neighborhoods. Major blurbs are broken down by the ranked neighborhoods (1-25).
- g. **Sidebars:** Each location gets a sidebar that includes average price, percentage increase, percentage increase rank, crime rank, schools score and X factor score.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** n/a
- i. **Online head:** Denver's Best Neighborhoods

- j. **Online presentation:** There's a pop-up sidebar in the introduction, and then pop-up blurbs show location, photo (click for more info) and a chart that can be sorted by rank (plus the additional 26–66 neighborhoods).

June

11. **Cover line:** Summer in Denver!, 53 Cool Things To Do When It Gets Hot In The Mile High City

- a. **Print head:** Summer Guide 2015, Heat Wave
- b. **Print blurb:** As the mercury soars, so does the fun. With new festivals and farmer's markets, backyard barbecues, and perfect patios, there's always something going down in Denver when things turn hot.
- c. **Edited by** Spencer Campbell
- d. **Why now?** This is a seasonal package.
- e. **Point of view:** This package uses second person, i.e. "Your hour-by-hour guide...", "Play like a kid..." and "Are you an athlete, artist, or history buff?"
- f. **Body copy presentation:** Copy is broken down into smaller stories, blurb pieces, charts and graphics. The presentation ranges from timelines (the best patios for each time of the day) to numbered lists (how to make ice cream) to charticles (of the city's parks) to numbered maps (for city bike trails) to a simple matrix (of which workshop is best for you). There's also a short narrative on a water park.
- g. **Sidebars:** n/a
- h. **Other presentation elements:** Some of the shorter blurbs touch on hot sauce and the best bazaars ("Best For ..."). Other elements include a thermometer of water temperatures (i.e. 70 degrees at Cherry Creek Reservoir), quotes about "hot singles" (the music kind) and an outline of the best Colorado-brand sunglasses.
- i. **Online head:** Summer In The City
- j. **Online presentation:** The online presentation is presented in more obvious categories: Dine & Sip, Play, Style and Learn. The charts are either presented as images from the magazine or in a way that uses subheads.

12. **Cover line:** A Beginner's Guide To Fly-Fishing

- a. **Print head:** Hooked
- b. **Print blurb:** From how to cast to which fly to use to finding the best fishing holes, we present the essential beginner's guide to fly-fishing in Colorado.
- c. **By** Lindsey B. Koehler
- d. **Why now?** This is a seasonal package.
- e. **Point of view:** The step-by-step blurbs are written in second person. Other blurbs, however, such as lodging, are written in third person.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 100-word introduction acknowledges the perfect scenario for fly-fishing: Colorado's rivers, lakes

and streams. It also acknowledges that fly-fishing isn't exactly easy, so *5280* will "teach you everything you need to know to start fishing this summer." The package opens with a glossary and a guide to gear—a photo with numbered items. Each page has a dominant component including a numbered list of steps to assemble your "system" (rod, reel, line, fly, etc.), steps to casting and catching and a charticle of best fishing holes for beginners.

- g. **Sidebars:** Other, smaller components of the package include three categories of artificial flies, four types of trout, 15 must-use flies for Colorado and a FAQ section, among others.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** There's also a first-person account from Lindsey, three top lodging blurbs and a story about bugs, among others. Some "details" blurbs offer prices, locations and websites for lodging options. One pull quote is included.
- i. **Online head:** The Beginner's Guide To Fly-Fishing in Colorado
- j. **Online presentation:** The package is broken down into nine pages online. Each page features two to three stories. Some charts are translated as graphics and others are simply organized with subheads. Videos are included that show Lindsey's experiences.

13. Cover line: The 717 Top Dentists In Denver And Beyond

- a. **Print head:** Top Dentists 2015
- b. **Print blurb:** Keep your pearly whites, well, pearly white with our list of the 717 best dentists in Denver and beyond. Plus, discover nine dental-care facts your dentist wishes you knew.
- c. **Edited by** Lindsey R. McKissick
- d. **Why now?** This is a traditional service package that runs each June.
- e. **Point of view:** Second person plural is used throughout the introduction that discusses how "we" chose the dentists on the list.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** A 170-word introduction touches on the process of how *5280* selects the dentists. The list is broken down by two categories: endodontics and general dentistry. It's then organized by location.
- g. **Sidebars:** A sidebar defines certain specialties, such as oral and maxillofacial surgeon and oral pathologist.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** A blurb encourages readers to go online for a complete list of dentists. There's also a pull quote with advice. The rest of the package continues into the back of the book with listings and more quotes.
- i. **Online head:** Top Dentists 2015
- j. **Online presentation:** The explanation of the selection process opens the package. Underneath is a list of quotes from dentists as well as the sidebar of specialties. Before the introduction is a link to click on for a complete, searchable list.

July

- 14. Cover line:** Top of the Town 2015, 153 Reasons To Love Denver
- a. **Print head:** Top of the Town
 - b. **Print blurb:** No more grumbling about having nothing to do next weekend. Our annual compilation of the best of the best around the Mile High City provides you with 153 ways to re-energize your summer (and the rest of the year), from must-visit restaurants to outdoor activities, first-date ideas, worthy boutiques, and more. All you have to do is turn the page.
 - c. **Edited by** Daliah Singer
 - d. **Why now?** This is a traditional service package that runs each July.
 - e. **Point of view:** There's a direct "you" in the introduction, though the point of view varies throughout the other blurbs.
 - f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 60-word introduction notes the concept of Top of The Town—"the best of the best." Each page features categories broken down by dining; services; sports, fitness, and outdoors; culture and nightlife; shopping; and a FAQ. Quick blurbs about each winner touch typically note a time peg. At the bottom is the readers' choice, the name, location, number and website.
 - g. **Sidebars:** In addition to the typical blurbs is a "first-date inspiration" box, which outlines the perfect date for different personalities. (This is under the category of nightlife & culture.) There's also a FAQ at the beginning of the package that answers common questions about the process of selecting the winners.
 - h. **Other presentation elements:** The beginning of the package offers table of contents, and each category divider includes a blurb that summarizes the picks, i.e. "The best places to view art, enjoy a cocktail, watch the game, discover a new band, and more."
 - i. **Online head:** Top of The Town 2015
 - j. **Online presentation:** There's a landing page that includes the short introduction and a linked table of contents, which allows readers to jump to different categories. At the bottom is the FAQ blurb.
- 15. Cover line:** Fitness, Find The Perfect Colorado Workout For You
- a. **Print head:** The Absolute Best Colorado Workouts For You
 - b. **Print blurb:** Whether you're into free weights, high-intensity interval training, spin classes, yoga, or gymnastics, we've found 29 places in Denver—and beyond!—to break a sweat.
 - c. **By** Jayme Moyer
 - d. **Why now?** According to the introduction, the fitness scene has reached a tipping point with 2,000 results in a Yelp search of places to workout around town. Other evidence: Colorado has the ninth-largest CrossFit market in country, more boutique gyms popping up and there's a gym-hopping trend, as quoted by a personal trainer.

- e. **Point of view:** The reader is directly addressed in the introduction. It's very evident in the "Find Your Fitness Level" blurbs. Second person becomes less evident in the workout blurbs.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 320-word introduction emphasizes the timeliness of the package. Below the introduction is a chart titled, "Find Your Fitness Level," which allows you to decide if you're at a complete newbie, beginner, intermediate or advanced level. Each level a coordinating hashtag, which the reader can use to follow throughout the package. The rest of the package breaks down gyms by skill level, noting that hashtag. The blurbs include details of the gym, quotes from owners, examples of workouts, etc. Each blurb ends with the location and website.
- g. **Sidebars:** In addition to the blurbs, sidebars outline ways to get started/motivated (a list), a list of yoga studios with fave class, fave teacher and the details included. There's a Trend Alert box, which highlights boutique gyms. A graphic breaks these down by studio "if you like" and by price/location. Plus, there's a Q&A with a personal trainer about dieting and a sidebar defending the mega-gyms in town.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** There's a "get gear" box on each spread, which highlights gear needed for certain activities, its price and where to get it.
- i. **Online head:** The Absolute Best Colorado Workouts For You
- j. **Online presentation:** This package is posted onto five pages. The first page includes the "What's your fitness level?" blurbs, in which the hashtags link to the respective levels (on other pages). The sidebars are also on various pages.

August

- 16. Cover line:** Top Docs, The 315 Best Physicians In Denver
- a. **Print head:** 2015 Top Doctors
 - b. **Print blurb:** For more than two decades, *5280* has asked Denver-area physicians whom they would trust to treat themselves or a loved one. The following 315 doctors—in 95 medical specialties—made the cut this year.
 - c. **By** n/a
 - d. **Why now?** This is a traditional service package always issued in August.
 - e. **Point of view:** "We" is used as a transparency tool to discuss the selection process.
 - f. **Body copy presentation:** A small paragraph notes the information included for each doctor as well as the other information that can be found online. The list is broken down by category.
 - g. **Sidebars:** One sidebar lists hospitals in the area and another addresses frequently asked questions about the selection process.
 - h. **Other presentation elements:** n/a
 - i. **Online head:** Our Annual Must-Have List of Denver's Top Doctors

- j. **Online presentation:** The FAQ blurb and hospital listing is posted on the main page. A link to the searchable directory is listed above that.

17. Cover line: Fun Ways To Teach Your Kid Outside The Classroom

- a. **Print head:** Outward Bound
- b. **Print blurb:** The 5280 field guide to taking your child's learning outside of the classroom—and into the world.
- c. **By** Lindsey R. McKissick
- d. **Why now?** This is back-to-school month, so this package offers ideas to get your kids outside the classroom to learn more.
- e. **Point of view:** This is written in second person to directly address a parental figure.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 550-word introduction offers examples of ways parents can turn regular experiences into learning experiences. An illustrated map labels historical points of interest, paired with blurbs that include an odometer (miles from Denver) and a "what you'll find" blurb. Other elements include a guide to gardening with types of plants and a recipe. There's also a list of advice from a mom who traveled to Costa Rica for six weeks with her two kids, more advice about kids' creative processes, an art appreciation lesson and a list of books.
- g. **Sidebars:** There are many shorter elements to this package including life lessons kids learn can from sports, mini profiles of innovative kids, how to teach your kid to stretch a dollar and volunteer organizations for kids.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** There's a pull quote and an "on the web" blurb.
- i. **Online head:** Outward Bound
- j. **Online presentation:** This package is broken down to 10 pages. Each one is categorized more obviously than in print. The two online exclusives are highlighted. The other elements are straightforward and presented with subheads and line breaks.

18. Cover line: n/a

- a. **Print head:** 21 Health & Wellness Issues You Must Know About Right Now
- b. **Print blurb:** New programs, novel treatments, nitty-gritty research, ongoing clinical trials, astute diagnostics, big-data sharing, forthcoming facilities, and state health statistics—and more!—that are important to every Coloradan's well-being.
- c. **Edited by** Lindsey B. Koehler
- d. **Why now?** This package goes hand-in-hand with Top Docs.
- e. **Point of view:** Overall, the package addresses the reader, but many of the smaller elements don't focus on the reader but on the subject of the story.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 180-word introduction lists the instances you might need a doctor, and lets the reader know that the package will educate you on Colorado's medical community. Each page features one to three components that vary in presentation. This includes

short essays, Q&As, first-person narratives, charts about medical research and ways to reduce the risk of developing dementia. This package is text heavy with a lot of numbers.

- g. **Sidebars:** By-the-numbers sidebars are sprinkled throughout the package. Some are brief, i.e. “3,600: Number of Colorado health insurance plans canceled in January 2015 because of a glitch in the state's ACA exchange.” Others are more in depth, such as the percentage of Colorado kindergartners who were vaccinated against measles—explanation included.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** There are "get involved" blurbs and "the more you know" blurbs.
- i. **Online head:** Health & Wellness Issues You Must Know About Right Now
- j. **Online presentation:** This is packaged into 10 pages, each with one to two components from print. Some of the visual elements are embedded as photos with the magnifying glass tool and others are presented in blurb form.

September

19. Cover line: Small Town Getaways, Plan The Perfect Weekend Escape To One Of These Seven Charming Outposts This Fall

- a. **Print head:** Small Town Getaways
- b. **Print blurb:** With so many amazing resort towns in Colorado, it's easy to overlook the smaller, less glamorous hamlets that dot the Centennial State. Which is a shame because these enclaves offer outstanding outdoor recreation, quaint main streets, unique lodging, mom-and-pop restaurants, and genuine doses of Western hospitality. We spent time exploring our favorites so we could tell you the best ways to enjoy 36 hours in each of these seven splendid small towns.
- c. **Edited by** Lindsey B. Koehler
- d. **Why now?** Labor Day weekend lands in September, so 36-hour trips are the perfect fit.
- e. **Point of view:** The 36-hour tour is written in second person, which puts the reader *right there*. For example: "As you sit on the wooden front porch of Coffee on The Fly with a Mexican mocha in hand ..." and "You'll be tempted to sleep in the next morning, but set your alarm ..."
- f. **Body copy presentation:** This package is organized by town. Each town has a "City File" blurb, which highlights the basics: year founded, population, drive from Denver and claim to fame. A short introduction offers an overview of the town, then a 36-hour tour highlights the things to do, places to visit and where to eat/drink. This is in paragraph form with each place bolded.
- g. **Sidebars:** Each town comes with a unique sidebar. Durango offers an "In The Neighborhood" sidebar, which includes other bucket-list-worthy spots nearby. Creede's sidebar is titled "Rooms For Rent," which outlines

lodging options. Another sidebar makes note of a September music festival, and another highlights four treks to take, the mileage and the difficulty level of each.

- h. **Other presentation elements:** n/a
- i. **Online head:** 7 Spectacular Small Town Getaways
- j. **Online presentation:** An introduction sets up the table of contents, which simply lists the names of the towns. The copy and sidebars are presented in a straightforward way with use of subheads and divider lines.

20. Cover line: Food Lover's Guide 2015!

- a. **Print head:** The 5280 Food Lover's Guide
- b. **Print blurb:** There was a time when, for many, food was just food. Crops or livestock were raised and harvested and eaten. They provided fuel, nourishment, a means to an end. But the local food movement, here and everywhere else in this country, has worked to champion the craft, the artistry, and the people standing behind much of that sustenance. The local products, ingredients, and stories on the following pages highlight Colorado's richly populated and deeply integrated food scene.
- c. **Edited by** Amanda Faison
- d. **Why now?** The introduction hits on the local food movement, not only in Colorado but also across the country. This package, however, focuses on Colorado.
- e. **Point of view:** Second person is used; however these are mostly profiles, so third person is prevalent.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** Each story within this package is presented in a different way. The first one is a longer essay with a classic headline, subhead and byline. Other stories are photo-centric. Like a catalog, pantry items in a photo are numbered, and along the edge of the spread each numbered item is listed and explained. There's also another infographic of a mason jar, which points to various parts of the jar and offers insight into what determines the cost of jam. Other presentation elements include a Q&A, blurbs of chefs and their favorite ingredients, and a charticle that pits peaches and cantaloupes against each other.
- g. **Sidebars:** There are shorter pieces throughout such as a tidbit on an annual event, a blurb on a Denver-based soda company and a farmer vs. baker take.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** A "By The Numbers" sidebar acts as a running footer throughout the package.
- i. **Online head:** The 5280 Food Lover's Guide
- j. **Online presentation:** The introduction sets up a table of contents with seven pages for readers to click through.

October

21. Cover line: The 25 Best Restaurants in Denver

- a. **Print head:** 25 Best Restaurants

- b. **Print blurb:** The Denver restaurant revolution is well underway. We're a city that favors relaxed over formal, and although there will always be a time and place for the white-tablecloth experience, more diners are seeking—and finding—fine-dining elements in more casual spaces. One thing is for sure: There's never been a better time to be a foodie in the Mile High City.
- c. **By** Amanda M. Faison
- d. **Why now?** This is a traditional service package always issued in October.
- e. **Point of view:** The most noticeable use of second person comes with the implied "Order this" blurbs, which directly address the reader.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** This is a fairly straightforward package. Each of the best restaurants is listed 1-25. Each blurb is marked with a number, the name of the restaurant and its previous year's ranking. The blurb gives some history of the place/chef, describes the food and offers advice: "Go during dinner for the most exquisite of dishes—don't miss the Spanish octopus or the green garlic budino ..." At the end of each blurb is the restaurant's address, contact information and a dish recommendation.
- g. **Sidebars:** The sidebars break up the list. One notes seven food trends with each blurb offering examples of restaurants/dishes in the area that are embracing the trend. Another sidebar offers the Dos and Don'ts of being a better diner. This advice comes from professionals in the industry.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** n/a
- i. **Online head:** 25 Best Restaurants 2015
- j. **Online presentation:** This packaged is presented differently than other packages from 2015. The first page is sleek; a photo paired with the brief introduction. A reader clicks "See the list" to go to No. 25. He/she can also navigate with the toolbar on the top, which offers a drop-down list of the restaurants. The sidebars are not included.

November

- 22. **Cover line:** Winter In Denver, 72 Amazing Things To Do In The Mile High City
 - a. **Print head:** Winter In The City
 - b. **Print blurb:** 75 things to do in Denver when plummeting temperatures chase you inside
 - c. **By** Lindsey B. Koehler
 - d. **Why now?** This is a seasonal package.
 - e. **Point of view:** Second person is prevalent. This whole package aims to push the reader to action—to get off the couch.
 - f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 150-word introduction that takes notice of Denverites' tendencies to be outdoors. These inside activities are broken down by category: Be Active, Be Creative, Be Cultured and Be Curious. The information is presented in various ways such as "If you like to ... you should try" charts, a Q&A with owner of a cooking school, first-person essays, "Why It's Worth Getting Off The Couch" explanations, a movie matrix, trivia, etc.

- g. **Sidebars:** This piece is very blurbly, so the sidebars don't stand out. It's all incorporated.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** There's an online exclusive blurb about cooking class events.
- i. **Online head:** Winter In The City
- j. **Online presentation:** After the introduction, the activities are broken down by the same categories used in print. The category is linked to a separate page while the activities are listed below, though not linked. Readers can also click through the pages. Charts are embedded images, some with magnifying glasses—some without.

23. Cover line: n/a

- a. **Print head:** The 5280 Guide To Building, Growing, Doing, Teaching, Inspiring, Being Good
- b. **Print blurb:** Giving season is upon us. But we're not talking about the stuff that comes with fancy wrapping paper and bows; we're not really even talking about money. We're talking about pure, unadulterated altruism. With that in mind, what follows is a collection of inspiring Colorado people and organizations that epitomize generosity and compassion. PLUS: tips for earning some good karma of your own.
- c. **By** Luc Hatlestad
- d. **Why now?** As stated in the external blurb, "Giving season is upon us" in November.
- e. **Point of view:** Second person is not used in the main blurbs. It is used to introduce the package: "You'll see examples of ..." The reader is also addressed in the sidebars with imperative sentence structures: "Focus on kids," for example.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** The approximately 350-word introductory essay highlights the giving nature of Coloradans. Statistics and numbers are included. This ties to the idea that givers are happy people and transitions into the package: how people are giving and how you can give. Each spread features a main blurb that tells the story of someone/an organization who/that gives. The impacts are local and international. A Q&A with Stephen Brackett caps off the package.
- g. **Sidebars:** Sidebars play a large role in this package. One outlines ways to find an organization to donate to, another outlines how to hold a fundraiser and another lists local businesses/organizations that are doing good.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** A blurb at the beginning of the package notes more that there is more content online. One page of the package is an infographic that breaks down giving in Colorado by numbers.
- i. **Online head:** The 5280 Guide To Altruism in Colorado
- j. **Online presentation:** The introduction is presented on the landing page. There's a table of contents where each blurb and sidebar is listed and organized by the way it's presented in the print package.

24. Cover line: Wellness: The Very Best Spas For You

- a. **Print head:** Find Your Bliss
- b. **Print blurb:** As winter, the holidays, and ski season loom, your weekends start to fill with mountains, travel...and agonizing hours in I-70 traffic. You need—no, deserve—a way to untie those weekend-warring (and workday) knots. Luckily, the vast number of relaxing spas near Denver means this is one activity that requires little car time. We've uncovered 19 local experiences to fit your needs, whether you're picky about your nail polish or looking to soothe tired muscles, so you can find your refuge—maybe even right down the street.
- c. **By** Mary Clare Fischer & Jerilyn Forsythe
- d. **Why now?** The time peg is stated in the introductory blurb: It's cold, it's busy and it's time to treat yourself.
- e. **Point of view:** Second person allows the text to address the readers' needs. It also seems to add voice.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** Each blurb starts with "You need ..." and categorizes various needs including a pop of color, a foot focus, a staycation spa, local love, etc. The "cure," or spa location, is listed after with its location and contact information. Each blurb touches on the spa's background, your treatment options, etc. Photos are also included.
- g. **Sidebars:** A variety of sidebars add to the conversation, including an "Ingredients Of The Moment" breakdown, one that notes discounts for each day of the week at various spas, one that highlights odd indulgences such as marijuana-infused lotion, one that highlights local spa products to buy and finally a do and don't checklist from "industry pros."
- h. **Other presentation elements:** Each spread features a by-the-numbers blurb that features a quirky spa fact such as "3: Millimeters healthy adult fingernails grow, on average, each month."
- i. **Online head:** 19 Spa Experiences to Help You Relax This Winter
- j. **Online presentation:** There is no landing page or table of contents. This package is presented on four pages that readers can click through. The sidebars are mixed in throughout.

December

25. **Cover line:** Coffee!, The Java Lover's Guide To Denver's Best Roasters, Coolest Cafes & Much More
 - a. **Print head:** The Beginner's Guide To Denver's Exploding Craft Coffee Scene
 - b. **Print blurb:** Where to drink coffee now, which beans to buy, how to make a better cup of joe at home, and everything else you need to know to enjoy coffee in the Mile High City.
 - c. **By** Chris Outcalt & Callie Sumlin
 - d. **Why now?** This is a trend piece that acknowledges a growth in Denver's craft coffee scene due, in part, to the thriving craft beer and culinary scenes.

- e. **Point of view:** A lot of blurbs address the reader directly via second person.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** An approximately 400-word introduction notes the trend and quotes experts on craft coffee. There are “shop talk” blurbs that highlight craft coffee shops. Underneath the name of the shop is the neighborhood it’s located in. After the blurb, the address, phone number and website are included as well as what’s available. They’re stamped with “For xx ...” so readers know what to go there for.
- g. **Sidebars:** Sidebars include an explanation of the coffee bean, barista confessions, myths explained, how to brew better coffee at home (with the technique, grind, brew time and instructions included), a Q&A of coffee roasters, a blind taste test, a first-person defense of a decaf drinker.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** Running along the bottom of the package is a glossary that defines coffee terms. There’s a map that maps out countries and coffee tastes. There’s also a graphic of bags of coffee beans that include helpful terms to know when buying.
- i. **Online head:** The Beginner’s Guide To Denver’s Exploding Craft Coffee Scene
- j. **Online presentation:** A landing page features the introduction, and a table of contents maps out each section of blurbs, i.e. what is a coffee bean?, shop talk, the taste test, etc.

26. Cover line: How Much Do you Know About Your City Council?

- a. **Print head:** Inside The Sometimes-Contentious, Surprisingly Productive, and Never-Boring World of Denver's City Council
- b. **Print blurb:** As it welcomes seven new members, the City Council has a long to-do list. But do you really understand how this governing body works? A look at the people who shape life in the Mile High City.
- c. **By** Natasha Gardner
- d. **Why now?** In July, the city's officials were inaugurated, which resulted in a few "hiccups." The goal of this package is to get readers acquainted with the new council and its objectives.
- e. **Point of view:** Second person is used to grab reader’s attention in the introduction.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** The story is broken down by the 11 districts. They’re presented in the form of baseball or collector’s cards—“Collect All 13!” Each district showcases the council member, a snapshot, his/her experience, a to-do list, a sound bite, bragging rights and a sore spot.
- g. **Sidebars:** There are two sidebars of “hot topics” that include legalizing marijuana and getting Chick-fil-A at the airport.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** At the beginning of the package, a “Find Your District!” map shows the areas of each district in Denver. There’s also an illustration of a neighborhood that points out what a council member can do for you—fill potholes, install a stop sign, etc.
- i. **Online head:** Inside Denver’s City Council

- j. **Online presentation:** An introduction and the districts map open the package. (The map is an image, but there's a magnifying glass tool to zoom in.) There's a table of contents that is broken down by district. The sidebars are not included.

27. Cover line: The Ultimate Colorado Gift Guide

- a. **Print head:** Something For Everyone (On Your Nice List)
- b. **Print blurb:** The perfect presents—at the perfect prices—for everybody from your secret Santa to your soul sister. Bonus: They're all designed or made right here in Colorado.
- c. **By** Spencer Campbell and Jessica LaRusso
- d. **Why now?** Everyone' winding up for the holidays.
- e. **Point of view:** Use of the second person points to the readers and relates to them. "You may not love them. Heck, you might not even know them that well. ..." It also adds voice.
- f. **Body copy presentation:** This is mostly a photo package. Each spread is broken down into categories: Thoughts That Count (inexpensive gifts), Presents with Presence (mid-range prices) and Grand Gestures. Each photo of a gift is paired with a "For ..." and lists the type of person you might be shopping for, i.e "For Secret Santas," "For Top Chefs" or "For Watch-aholics." Each short description is capped off with a price and website and/or location.
- g. **Sidebars:** Each spread in the six-page package includes a "What The Etiquette Expert Says About ..." A quote touches on a certain aspect of gift giving—in the office, a note on gift-of-the-month clubs and gifts for parents.
- h. **Other presentation elements:** Three boxes offer tips on gift giving. It pushes readers to visit 5280.com for more details.
- i. **Online head:** Something For Everyone (On Your Nice List)
- j. **Online presentation:** A landing page links to three other pages that break down information by price and categories.

APPENDIX 3: OBSERVATIONS

Thursday, January 21 at 3:30 p.m.

Setting: Conference room in 5280's office

Occasion: Dan's Introductory Talk for the new interns

The Google calendar tied to my official 5280 email account quickly filled up this first week. An event titled “Dan’s introductory talk” had been scheduled for me for Thursday afternoon. For some reason, the Dan I had in mind was a Dan Roe-like character—tall, a little goofy, always smiling. However, this was the head honcho, Daniel Brogan, 5280’s founder, president and editor-in-chief. His office is actually right across from my small cubicle. Throughout the week I had heard his booming voice with a tinge of a Midwest accent talking about finances, advertising, events and editorial pages.

“So do you just have your hands in about 20 different pots?” I asked after his 45-minute introductory slideshow to the magazine. This probably wasn’t the most intelligent sounding question, but Dan had just outlined how he’d carried this magazine from a ’93 doomed publication to one that holds the more Coloradoan subscribers than multiple national magazines—even *O, The Oprah Magazine*.

Back in '93, he started with some fliers. He made copies and passed them around town—different apartment complexes, neighborhoods, etc. The return rate, he says, was incredible. Denver, at that time, was the largest city in the United States without a city magazine. These fliers held promise. However, not many people believed in him. Local businesses had betting pools on how long it would take for the magazine to fold. Others didn’t understand the whole “5280” concept. “Is it for old people?” he remembers one person asking. “Fifty to eighty.” Dan says he could have strangled that human.

Within his first few issues, Dan determined that service journalism pieces were the most popular. People wanted to know where to live, where to send their kids for school and where to eat that night. So, he relied on service journalism to draw readers in and to create a sturdy readership. In addition, service journalism was less expensive than other types of journalism. The whole rank, rate and review concept was a hit. It even acted as its own marketing agent as people around town gossiped about 5280’s latest list. “What’s 5280?” someone would ask. Well, let me tell you...

By 2003, 5280 had become the largest magazine in the state. However, Dan couldn’t help but wonder: Now what? So he started reinventing the magazine and making it more high-end to appeal to a more affluent audience. He and his staff also began reinventing the service journalism wheel. In today’s age, we have Yelp to rank our restaurants, housing databases to shop for new homes and Facebook to plan our social agendas. Although 5280 still sticks to producing those classic service pieces, including August 2015’s Top Docs issue and October 2015’s 25 Best Restaurants issue, the staff works to create pieces unique to Denver—what’s considered nontraditional service journalism. These are pieces that can’t be pulled from *Chicago* magazine or *Los Angeles* magazine. As for translating these pieces digitally, Dan admits that’s still an

issue the team experiments with.

So within my first two days at *5280* I'd heard the term "service journalism" more than I'd perhaps heard in my life. The fact that service plays such an important role at *5280* and at city magazines reiterates the importance of my project.

Tuesday, January 26 at 3:30 p.m.

Setting: Lindsey B. Koehler's office

Occasion: A quick planning session for the May issue

Lindsey Koehler wisps by my cube multiple times a day. She's *5280*'s deputy editor and coordinates with multiple departments to execute print issues of the magazine. On this oddly warm January day, she's working on May's issue, which will include features about the Great Sand Dunes National Park, creative districts in Denver and a big *TK* in the third spot, nothing that something must be "to come."

She pulls me into her cube and points to the white board hanging from one of the walls. Each monthly issue of *5280*'s 2016 editorial calendar is planned out, except for those few *TKs* interspersed throughout. She's been working with editorial director Geoff Van Dyke to fill the most upcoming *TK* in that May spot, but it really takes some diligence. They can't pull a feature from the August issue—say camping—because they're striving for editorial diversity, and a national park story and camping won't cut through that diversity line.

So today she's focusing on a story about the Great Sand Dunes National Park that she's been working on since last August when she stayed five days at the dunes. In her immersive reporting process, she had to very consciously follow her intuition and correct her mistakes as needed. For example, only 10 camping permits are available per night, so visitors are encouraged to get there early. Luckily, Lindsey did, but she made note for her readers. If a reader showed up at nightfall and couldn't get a permit, their trip *might* be ruined. Then there was the whole shower issue. This wasn't like the Rocky Mountain National Park with plenty of infrastructure. There weren't any bathrooms, so when Lindsey got an itching to take a shower, she sought out the closest one, one that required \$10 and a permit. She'll include that important snippet for readers in the feature as well. But then there are other things, say the seven beetles that live in the dunes that can *only* be found there—nowhere else in the world. Although that's interesting, Lindsey says, it's not necessarily important for the reader, and when you're crunching information into a 12-page package, it'll likely get cut. It's all about prioritizing for your reader. That's service.

Pulling out of the world of sand dunes, Lindsey opens up May's break-of-book on her computer. Lucky for her, *5280* uses a computer program, so not everything is hand-drawn and covered in eraser shavings. She points out the ads sprinkled heavily throughout. For this issue, the ad-to-edit ratio hovers around 50 percent. Editor-in-chief Daniel Brogan determined that number, as well as the rest of the pages each department gets. It's a

“magical math equation,” Lindsey says. “Really, after all these years, I still have no clue how he does it.” Most of the full-page ads go at the front of the book. The feature well remains clear of ads, she says, though it’s not like that for all magazines. And because *5280* is a city magazine and caters to local businesses, there are a lot of fractional ads because a business can’t always afford a full page.

Getting back to specific feature planning, Lindsey shows me an example of a different feature already planned out by another editor. On the page graphs, the photos are noted with boxes, an “X” drawn through each. Diagrams are roughly sketched out. In fact, Lindsey points to one spread: “There might be too many boxes and diagramming going on here.” Anyways, that’s just an example of what she’s about to do with her dunes feature.

“So, that’s it,” she says with a smile on her face—as if it’s effortless. I ask if it is. She says that most of the time it’s not as bad as it might seem. Some issues, though, can be a real struggle. I leave her to her planning and reflect on the magazine editing assignments I had in Jen Rowe’s class. The first was to plan an issue of *Martha Stewart Living* with *x* number of ads. For all of those hours I spent rearranging ads and adding and eliminating pages, Lindsey makes it seem so easy. Then, I had to plan a service package, except it was only one page—not 12. Through all of the eraser shavings, it looked a bit sloppy. Lindsey makes that seem so easy, too, including the realistic sketches of the dunes.

Tuesday, March 8 at 3:40 p.m.

Setting: The War Room at *5280*

Occasion: Food department art meeting

This was an ARF meeting; I’m still not sure what that stands for, but the two food editors sat in with Dave McKenna, the art director, and Sean Parsons, the assistant art director. Earlier in the week, Amanda had sent them close-to-final copy of each story that’s running for the May issue, including a story about cheese shops, the news page and a story about eating adventurously. (I fact checked this my first week in, but it had to be held for space.) So, Dave and Sean had a chance to read over the stories and brainstorm. In this meeting, with the clash of art and edit, the stories began to take shape. The cheese story I had been fact checking was flat ... well, literally because it was on a printed Word doc but also because it was organized by subheads and blurbs, subheads and blurbs. Now the idea was to present this on a full page as a cheese wheel of different cheeses that represents each shop. Essentially, it was becoming more of an infographic with various entry points.

After the meeting, Amanda showed me a galley of another story I’d fact checked. It was about a cocktail and, again, broken down by blurbs of how it was made. The idea was to justify the cost of this \$13 cocktail. (See page 79.) On the galley, there was a beautiful photo of the cocktail, and then arrows pointed to various parts and pulled out the information.

This ties in with the importance of presentation with service. In my interview with Amanda, she spoke about multiple entry points for readers; they can pick and choose what to read and how they read it. These entry points come in the form of varied presentation. Although this was a simple department story, with the collaboration of the food editorial team and the art team, a simple 500-word story offered the reader more.

Thursday, March 10 at 10:10 a.m.

Setting: The War Room at 5280

Occasion: A writer-editor meeting about an upcoming service package

I haven't seen Lindsey Koehler, deputy editor and my mentor, around for a while. Usually, she gives me a warm smile and wink as she's rushing by my desk or if we meet in the kitchen during lunchtime. Last week, when we set up a time for catch-up coffee, I told her to let me know about any planning meetings. This week, rather than swooshing by my desk, she stopped. She was having a meeting with Jessica LaRusso, 5280's copy editor, in 15 minutes — in the War Room — about a service feature package Jess was working on slated for July.

When I ducked in, Lindsey sat casually with her legs tangled in her chair and a notebook and purple pen in front of her. Jess sat up straight, fingers poised on her keyboard as she scrolled through her notes on the package she's been planning since last summer. She did most of the research then, when the parks were teeming with activity and when photographers could capture greenness. (You, ideally, don't want a snow-covered tree in a July feature, right?) Jess reminded me a little of myself: She had all of her information; she just had to execute now.

Lindsey and Jess started talking about finding a backbone for the package, a main element to run throughout. "Ten parks? Will that number look OK on a cover line?" Jess asked. They're already brainstorming cover lines—sell lines, more accurately. Lindsey thought more creatively: "Well, sure, we can feature 8-10 parks, but you'll have sidebars." Jess had plenty of ideas for sidebars: There was the weird lawn game characters she'd met at one park, a story about tennis courts being transformed to accommodate a Spanish game in another. Oh, and the wildlife sightings in each... "There's a lot," Lindsey said. She started counting such-and-such park, where you can see such-and-such animal, and such-and-such park, where you can play such-and-such game. She adds it up that way—a way that readers might be more drawn to. Lindsey broke out her purple pen and a piece of printer paper. She hesitated: "I don't normally do this in pen..." She sketched out the 10-page spread and starts marking it up: This page will be the opener. This page can include the mountain parks. Jessica said she was thinking more of a full spread, but Lindsey said it could fit on one page—a couple of blurbs here, a sidebar. Her pen kept moving. She outlined the first park: A headline, a photo, a short blurb. "A sidebar can go over here," she said, designating it with squiggles. Another park can nestle underneath that one. To break up presentation, she mentioned that charticle Jessica had proposed: "If you want to... then go..." This can take up a large part

of a page; that'll give readers a break, plus it'll add plenty of parks.

Afterwards, they sat back. Jessica seemed to feel more confident. It reminded me of the way I feel after having a really great meeting with an editor or a professor or reading an inspirational Roy Peter Clark chapter; I feel like, whatever it is, might be achievable. Lindsey suggested Jessica also look into city operations and how these parks are maintained to—again break up the flow of "do this" and "go there." Why are the toilets locked up in the park next to her house? Oh, and one time there was an orange cone that sat in the middle of a lake for months; no one could come get that? What about the lack of trashcans? Bringing in these musings and questions from people on staff could offer some insight into some lingering questions readers might have.

At the end of their meeting, they both turned to me: Any questions? I nodded to the copy of *Atlanta Magazine* on the table between them; the cover story was about parks. "Did you get the idea from *Atlanta*?" I asked. Jess said no, that she was doing some research for a piece she was writing for the Summer In Denver feature last year. She got on the phone with this parks guy, and he just kept talking. She found it all interesting, and she wanted people to know about it, too. So, no, the idea didn't come from *Atlanta*. She was using it to see if she could find some ideas, but she wasn't a huge fan of what they'd done. Lindsey flips through the feature; it's not that exciting, she says. She started pointing to some of the parks: "You'd never want to go there; you'd get shot there; that's not a good area." As a native Atlantan, she's not impressed.

So, with that brief, 20-minute meeting—my question included—there's a game plan. The editor and the writer walked away in opposite directions back to their cubicles. Soon, the package will begin to take shape—from purple pen to glossy magazine pages.

Tuesday, March 22 at 10:30 a.m.

Setting: Conference room at 5280

Occasion: Converging about a Top Taco package

I didn't even think I liked tacos. My tongue feels as though it's been numbed when in contact with spice. My nose starts running; my eyes start watering. But when Amanda and Callie approached me about this "research," I couldn't say no. Not because I'm a sucker, but because I was about to take part in a heavy service package.

It's been about two or three weeks of swallowing this assignment—and lots of tacos. I have been to four taco joints and have two more on my list. We have a huge running Excel sheet that's color-coded by editor assigned to each restaurant, dive, bar and food truck along with its neighborhood/address, a ranking system and notes. This Monday, it was time to reconvene. It's been a joke around the office about eating so many tacos, but we were starting to reconsider this feat of tasting nearly 88 tacos amongst the five of us.

We went through the list, and Callie worked to rank these places by tier and category (i.e. 1st tier Al Pastor or 2nd tier seafood). We're about 75 percent complete with a deadline

looming in two weeks. Ultimately, our taste buds will be salvaged, and we'll be serving our reader with the "Best Tacos" list on April 20. (I'm not sure if the date was intentional.)

This is all part of online-only food service packages that were proposed for 2016. In February, the best food markets package was released. Now, it's the best tacos. I asked Jerilyn, the digital editor, about these packages in our email exchange this week. What makes these different than the normal service stories online? "We're putting the full force of editorial behind them," she wrote. "This has never been such an intentional, collective effort. We're doing endless hours of expensive research, fact checking, etc." In my interview with Amanda, she had also mentioned these new online exclusives. Although she was sad that a lot of time and effort was being dumped into something that was online only, she knew it would be worth the traffic it brings to the site. And there's another issue, which is a recurring issue with online content: Sidebars aren't ideal. There are so many wonderful people, quirky side dishes and best margaritas we're running into, but sidebars just don't work online.

In the meantime, we'll settle with gorging on tacos and writing about them—in the name of reader service.

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

*Interview with Daniel Brogan, Founder, President, Editor-in-Chief
Wednesday, February 17 at 10:09 a.m., 24 min.*

First off, I want to ask you how you define journalism.

You know, it's a funny term in that all journalism should serve the reader, right? But I think it describes a category of things, usually packages, often lists. In the case of city magazines, I think it's very much that sort of stuff that makes your regular life easier, better. You know ... where do I eat dinner tonight? Where should I send my kid to school? Where should I buy a house? ... those kinds of everyday questions.

I know your background is in journalism. When were you first exposed to this idea and the term service journalism?

Well, earlier in my career I was a music writer. I wrote a record column for the *Chicago Tribune*. I wrote the very first personal computer column for the *Tribune*. So in a sense, those things were service—which album do I buy? What kind of computer should I get? Later on I was the chief editor at a technology publication, and we did a lot of big lab test kind of things. What are the best laser printers? What are the best color monitors? In a way, that's probably an introduction to the big, expansive, comprehensive kind of service package.

Can you touch on how 5280 gained a foothold in the Denver community and the role service journalism had in that?

Well, like I said in that presentation, the original idea was, you know, I wanted to make a city magazine that was modeled after what I saw was the best city magazines out there—*Chicago* magazine—where I was from, *Los Angeles* magazine, *Boston*, *Philadelphia*, *Texas Monthly*. All of those magazines typically have a blend of long-form narrative, whether that's investigative journalism or storytelling journalism. And then there are service packages. So I went in with the best intentions to do both, and reality slapped me in the back of the head pretty quickly. We didn't have the capital or resources to do those long-form narrative pieces—you know, to send a writer out for three months and to do that kind of work. What they could do, though, were the service packages. If you were willing to put in the shoe leather, you could do that type of packages. For our very first issue, the cover story was Top Doctors. I put together a survey, got the list of all the licensed doctors, stuffed the envelopes, mailed them, and when they came back I sat in front of the TV and tallied them up. So for our very first issue we had this very substantive, deep package. And a lot of times when you look around at first issues of local magazines, they're very thin and very light. You know, there are typically fashion stories on the cover and stuff like that. So from the start, we were able to at least say we have stuff you can't get elsewhere. So those kinds of stories from the start were part of our mix.

And were you borrowing ideas from other city magazines at that point?

Absolutely. You know, you look around at other city magazines, and there are a bunch of standards. Almost everybody does top doctors, top neighborhoods, top restaurants. These

were all standards. So yeah it was easy to look around and say “OK.” And with Top Doctors as an example, almost everybody includes their methodologies. So I was like, “OK I have to call the state and get the licenses, I have to mail out a survey.” You could do some research. You could do all of that. But yes, we absolutely borrowed from everybody else. And we always have. Today, we’re a member of the City and Regional Magazine Association, so there is that sort of collaborative, sharing aspect. So we can talk about it. Our bit is all of us have done these standard service packages for literally decades, and we’re starting to see...and I think the other city magazines are, too...are seeing some fall off in newsstand appeal. Because you can go on Yelp and see what the best restaurant is—or at least what someone thinks it is. It used to be a big deal when we did our best neighborhood package because we’d get sale price data from the realtor board, we’d get crime rate data from the cops, and we’d bring all of that together. And that was something unique. Well, nowadays most everyone can go online and look that up—and usually on a more granular level, you know, where about on my street versus this whole neighborhood. So as Geoff and Lindsey probably told you, we’ve had to start looking and say, “OK, what are some other topics we can do?” We’ve had to start reinventing service, and that’s been a fun challenge.

And that’s another thing. You have these traditional packages of Top Docs, Best Restaurants, etc. Then you also have these nontraditional packages. Can you talk about those, and how reinvesting in the magazines back in 2003 influenced an upward shift in the ability to execute these?

You know, one very easy criticism of city magazines is that they tend to be very cookie cutter. Once you get below that top tier of *Los Angeles*, *Philadelphia*, they start to be pretty cookie cutter. You know, I used to say, with a lot of these magazines you could do a search and replace *a* city for *b* city, and you wouldn’t know the difference. So what we’ve tried to do is find the things that only we can do. You’re not going to have that fly-fishing package in *Detroit* magazine. We did a piece a few years ago on “Low on O2” about what it’s like to live at altitude. Do you really get drunk faster? Does it really cause health issues? What’s true and what’s not? That’s a great service package if you live here. No one else is going to do that. *Philadelphia* magazine is not going to do that. We’ve really started looking for those kinds of packages that are only Colorado.

And what’s your strategy for brainstorming these more inventive, Colorado-centric topics?

You know, the advantage of being a local magazine is that everyone lives here, so it’s just being a good journalist and being like “What are people doing?” Stand-up paddleboards are suddenly popular. Oh, well maybe we should do something on that. Or we’re noticing more people are riding fat bikes in the winter. OK, are there 10 great places that you can ride your fat bike? That’s good old-fashioned brainstorming. That’s fun sitting around and brainstorming. You can only do a Top Doctor story so many years in a row before you start losing your mind, so you start reinventing. We find that anything that’s really about Colorado, taking advantage of this place, travel stuff...the shorthand is that we always use is the blue-sky cover. We’ve learned that any cover that has that blue Colorado sky is going to sell well. So we’ll keep doing it until it stops working.

Again, going back to your background as a journalist: A big part of service journalism is building credibility and having your reader trust you. How do you think you've established that sense of credibility from the beginning?

I hope that comes from me being a journalist...that we've always done it without bias. You know, when we're doing our restaurant lists, we pay for our own meals, we do everything we can so the restaurants don't know we're there when we are, so we don't get special treatment. We try to do everything on the up-and-up, and we try to communicate that to the reader very actively; we want them to know. And I think that's important, especially nowadays, when the lines are so blurred. They can come to us for authority and credibility.

Lindsey touched on advertising a little. Can you talk about where the line needs to be drawn between ads and edit?

I mean we have a pretty absolute separation between ads and editorial. Lord knows it would have made the early years a lot easier with people saying, "I'll totally buy a full-page ad if you write a story about me," or "I'll buy a spread if you put me on the cover." No, we don't do that. We have certainly lost advertisers because we wouldn't write about them, and we've lost advertisers because we did write about them in ways they didn't like. It's funny, and I don't say funny in an entertaining way—funny in a really aggravating way—that in spite of how hard we work, a lot of people still think, "Oh that list is just the advertisers; you have to buy an ad to be in the restaurant list, or you have to buy an ad to get on the doctor's list." What I always tell people is that more often than not, these lists end up causing us problems with advertisers. The example I always give is that we do our annual Top of The Town—our annual best of Denver issue. In any given category, there are two winners: the editor's choice and the reader's choice. Well, in any given issue, I may have, for example, six or seven or eight different jewelers as advertisers. So if we have a top jewelry category, by definition I'm pissing off five or six or seven—you know, however many there are minus two. And the phone rings, and they complain: "I've been buying ads for 10 years. How come I'm not in there?" I had a long-time advertiser complain about it yesterday. So, no, those kind of packages are not to sell ads. They're to get readers, and then we turn around and sell those eyeballs to advertisers. There's a lot of education that has to go on to get advertisers to understand the reason that we're a good advertising vehicle is because we have integrity, because the readers trust us, because they come back month after month. And in the process they see your ad month after month after month.

How important is service today for the success of the magazine?

I think it's every bit as important as it ever was. In fact, I think in some ways it's more so. I do think that in spite of it seeming to be so much easier to find this kind of content online, it definitely seems like people—not everybody—but a core group of people are coming to us because they want a) the integrity and credibility and b) they want us to do the leg work for them. You know, if I'm trying to decide where to go to dinner tonight, I'm going to look on Open Table and see what's available. And I think Open Table is fantastic; I'm a huge Open Table fan. But when I go look at their reviews, I can see yes,

that the average is four stars, but I've really got to scroll through dozens of reviews to really get a sense of OK, what's the consensus on this place.

And a lot of times it's someone who has had a great experience or an awful experience. Absolutely. The awful experiences are going to say something. So for that reason, you've got to read a bunch of them to get a consensus. If I'm busy, isn't it a lot better to come to someone I trust, in this case Amanda, and say, "Hey give me the executive summary." Boom, I want to go there. Or, eh, it doesn't sound like my thing; I'm not going to go there. So it's funny how that really seems to be the case, and it really seems to be the case in the digital realm. We've been noticing that it's those packages, those lists, that are the top traffic-getters on our website. And it's funny because when the web came along, I think a lot of us thought that now we don't have to be bound by the monthly publication. We can be daily; we can compete with the newspapers, the TV stations, all of that. And so we've gone out, and we've done daily coverage of things and respond to breaking stories, and sometimes those stories get some traction, but time and time, what's really getting the bulk of the traffic for us, is that kind of service stuff and then our long form stuff. For whatever reason, people aren't thinking of us as that daily news source. They're still coming to us for, "Oh, I need a doctor," or "I just found out I have a problem..." or whatever. "I need to go look at 5280's top doctor list," or "can we afford to send our kid to a private school? If so, which one?"

Going back to the idea of digital, I want to talk about the future of service journalism, and I'm interested in how it's translated online. I know that's been a challenge.

I think it's definitely something that is wanted. We see that in our traffic. Our service packages in the print magazine tend to be highly designed. There are lots of pieces. It's not necessarily linear. You can jump in at any point and move through the spreads. We haven't figured out how to translate that to the Web yet. Like it or not, 20 years into this Web thing, most of these pages are still pretty linear. It's a long string of text with some images, and yeah, you can click and link to other things, but it's very "scrolling." And that's not the way our packages tend to work. And we're still struggling with, "OK, how do I take this, and put it in a form—not just on a screen like this, but also on a phone screen.

And also in a way that's search-friendly, too.

Exactly. That's a challenge. It really is. We're hoping that once we get our new site up and running, it'll give us some room for experimenting. Our current site is pretty rigid in what it'll let us do.

As a whole, where do you see the future of service going?

Well, something I thought of that ties into the previous question more so is that the other thing we as magazine people have to learn is that we tend to think in terms of issues. The March issue is Best New Restaurants or the October issue is Best Restaurants. Doctors are August. And so with the restaurant list, for example, we tend to think, "Oh, the 2015 restaurant list," or "Oh, the 2016 best restaurant list." Readers don't care; they want to know the best restaurants now. One thing that we are going to move away from this

archive of you've got 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and instead the list will be live. We've got this list of 25 restaurants. Maybe this place closes and disappears, and something new takes place. Or this place changes chefs and suddenly gets better, and it moves up the list. So we want to make these lists more dynamic and real time.

So that's something you can do throughout the year online and then it could still translate to print?

Yes, it could, it could. You could still have a place where the list as it was published is still archived, you know, mostly it's the restaurant and their publicists that want to know that. You or I as consumers don't care that it was No. 2 six months ago. You might want that for the trend, but you don't care the way a restaurant cares for its ego. You want to know what's good tonight.

So just more online parts...

Yeah, I don't believe that digital will replace print anytime soon. With what we do, people still enjoy getting that print magazine and stepping away from their screens for an hour or two and enjoying that. And I think that's true of people who are my age and people who are your age. It's across the board. But digital will continue to be important. It will become more important; it just won't replace print.

*Interview with Geoff Van Dyke, Editorial Director
Thursday, February 11 at 2 p.m., 1 hr. 16 min.*

What's your job description as editorial director?

My responsibility is to oversee the content of the magazine, the content of the website—though I don't pay as much attention to that just because there's so much volume—and then the content of our three ancillaries, *5280 Home*, *5280 Health*, *5280 Traveler*. But probably 85 percent of my energy goes toward the monthly print publication. My responsibilities include helping plan, driving the plan for the editorial calendar, collaborating with other senior folks on our team to build that out and then to build out the feature wells once we have that. The analogy I use a lot for that is that you've got the skeleton, which is the editorial calendar, then you flesh it out. Or you've got the foundation of the home and then once you know what you're doing—you know, where to eat now in March 2016—then you build the rest of the house from there. In addition to that I top edit everything that goes into the magazine with the exception of the dining guide and calendar, so I don't read those at all. Everything else from the TOC page to the back page I read—oftentimes in manuscript and in proof, but for sure in proof. And then I do some story editing of my own. I edit story features; I do occasionally edit service and then there's a whole bunch of other stuff. I also do performance reviews and work with Dave and Dan on the covers.

One of the challenges professionals face in the industry is defining service journalism; it's a broad term. Do you have any running definitions for that term or a set of basic criteria?

That's a good question. Do you know the name Don Ranly? One of the things that he called it...I had him for a different class (than magazine editing) and I TAed for him...he called it refrigerator journalism. That's always stuck with me because for someone to be reading a magazine and to take the energy to tear or cut a story or a page out and put it up on their fridge, there has to be something of value there. My wife—I mean, here we are in 2016—she rips out pages of newspaper book reviews or recipes from magazines, and we have like little piles all over our house, and I'm like you know we have this little thing called a computer. But I mean I think service is actually really straightforward. We (5280) are a lifestyle publication; it is the backbone of what we do. You know, there are some days that I wish we would skew the equation of what we do editorially a little more toward narrative and think piece stuff, but I do really enjoy this. I think at the end of the day it's just something that will entertain the reader and somehow improve their life. I think it's easy or easier to make service that will improve a reader's life because that comes in the concept and in the reporting. The entertainment, I think, comes in the presentation and the sharpness of the writing, and that's where I think you find a difference between the average service and the more elevated, better than average service.

Ranly also notes the idea that service journalism is useful, usable and used. Do think that's relevant today, and do you keep that in mind when you're planning packages, or is it just second nature?

I'm having some flashbacks because I was in your chair 17 or 18 years ago, and I did mine on literary journalism. I'm going to semi-repeat in this context what someone said to me, which was the definitions, while worthwhile, I don't think about them at all. I don't think about "is this going to be useful?" By definition it has to be useful, or it won't go in the magazine. Do I think about literary narratives? No, I just want a good piece, and the writing and reporting to be the best it can be. One of the things we talk about though, and this may get at what you're getting at, we do some things that we call nontraditional packages. So let's say for a city and regional magazine, best restaurants is very traditional; top doctors is very traditional; best neighborhoods or best places to live is very traditional. I think service, and let's just talk about city and regional magazines for now...City and regional magazines have an advantage in my mind when it comes to service because you have a defined area of coverage, right? And sometimes you see *Esquire*, *GQ* or *Men's Journal*—I just use those as examples because I used to work at *Men's Journal*, and I'm a dude—sometimes it feels like there's sameness. They might pick up on the same trends. What we can do...each city has a personality, and that personality should be manifested in the pages of the magazines. I did this presentation last year at the CRMA conference, or a panel I should say, and one of the points I made was, when we're thinking about service, yes, we're going to have to do Top Docs and Best Restaurants and stuff, but we should strive to make those better and reinvent them and challenge ourselves. But with other ones, we should really look at the city or state or region or whatever it is that we're covering and do things here that no one else can do. So for example, *Indianapolis Monthly* or *Cincinnati* magazine, or *Texas Monthly* or *LA*...I want to do service that they can't do and so that's understanding the city, it's environment—in our case it's about active, outdoor life and culture because that's such a big part of who we are. That was kind of a blabbery answer...

No, no. And I want to get into those topics of service journalism. John Fennel outlined the traditional with me — Top Docs, even hair salons, etc. — then you have these more innovative ones like the fly-fishing package from 2015. How is it that you're brainstorming and really tuning into the city and pulling those kinds of innovative ideas out? Ideas that, say, *Texas Monthly*, can't necessarily do.

I mean, I think one of the things I like about being a magazine editor is that, for better or for worse, you are the tastemaker. It is your responsibility, if you are a good magazine editor, to know what's going on for your audience. In this case it's Denver and Colorado. I don't know if Dan talks about this in his presentation because I've never seen it, but whenever I speak to a college class I say, "We're the city magazine of Denver, but we consider Colorado, the state, our backyard." We cover the state a lot more than many other city magazines do. We cover a broader geographical area. It would be silly of us to narrowly constrain ourselves to Denver because, I don't know if you've noticed, but people have no problem hopping into their Subaru and driving three hours up to the mountains to go hike or camp or fly-fish—or whatever it is. It's just built into the culture. Going back to the tastemaker thing...we have a staff people who, to use the horrible cliché, have their finger on the pulse. They—we know—what it means to be a Denverite, to be a Coloradan, and it's our job to reflect that back. We don't want to necessarily be booster-ish about it, and I can talk about that at length, but our job isn't to be a cheerleader; it's to reflect back the culture. Sometimes it might feel a little cheerleader-y because we have these beautiful vistas, and what's not to like about that? But I think—we think—and brainstorm about what it means to be a Denverite and to be a Coloradan. I mean Denver has changed a lot in the time I've been here—about 8.5 years. It's become much more hip. RiNo barely existed; the Union Station neighborhood, which has grown up behind Union Station, didn't exist. It was like dirt with tumbleweeds. I'm not kidding. We're constantly figuring out what's going on in the hipster scene, what's going on in all these things. Then I guess, you know, it's just the outdoorsy thing that's just so hardwired into who we are, and so we did a service package on "fourteeners." I remember the editor at the *Washingtonian* shot me an email and was like, "I've never even heard that term. I grew up in Vermont where the mountains don't go above 7,000 feet." So people hike; people want to do fourteeners. That's a thing. So we did a feature on it. It was one of our best-selling issues on newsstands — ever. And so was fly-fishing, one on the Alpine Lakes, one about living at elevation...those are all things that are unique to us that we can package for our readers, and no one else can really package. Beers are a big thing at city and regional magazines, but it's just how you package it. It's not to say other magazines can't do it, but it's how we can make it very Denver, what can we do to distinguish it.

Going back to the traditional service journalism staples — Top Docs, Top Lawyers...

Yeah I'll run through it for you. Up until this year, starting in March we would always do a dining story, and for the last 4-5 years it was best *new* restaurants. We used to do best new and then the top 25 in October. But best new started to feel tired, and, being very candid, it just wasn't selling as well on the newsstands. I think what we realized and what the consumer was telling us was that the food scene here changes so fast, like a top 10 list of new restaurants in a monthly magazine is not enough. It can be online maybe —

constantly changing. So we rejiggered it this year to do where to eat now, and instead of it being a big 10-page package that had 10 restaurants, it's now a 10-page package that now have 100-plus blurbs about where to find best breakfast, best cocktails...so that's an example of us responding to the changing times. It felt tired to us, but we're also getting a clear message based on newsstand sales. So that's March. Usually in the spring we do a real estate package, and we're going to do it similarly (to last year). We basically take data and rank the top 25 neighborhoods or whatever it was. We do two fashion issues. I would consider those service packages. It's service because it's pretty photos with where to buy clothes. I think I would loosely consider that service, but it does go on the editorial calendar. It's a very different beast than our beer package. And then you could also say the professional lists, Top Lawyers, which is January, Top Doctors, which is August, Top Dentists, which is June—those are sort-of their own category, too. They are service, but they're different beasts. I guess when I think about service, I think of these feature packages. The lists are lists. The fashion is fashion, but they're all under this larger umbrella.

Do you ever borrow from other city magazines for inspiration?

Oh yeah—city and other magazines. I think, you know, there are every few things that are wholly original at this point, and so, we definitely do. And that's a great thing about the City and Regional Magazine Association is that we all are doing the same thing but in our own markets. Especially on the business side, there's a ton of sharing of business ideas because you're not competing. *Esquire* and *GQ* do not share ideas. But I got an email from the editor of *Charlotte* magazine a couple of weeks ago...we were going back and forth about the Super Bowl. Then he said, "Hey, with your best of"—oh that's another one I forgot, Top of The Town. He said, "We're trying to freshen up our Top of The Town, do you guys have any ideas?" I told him we didn't have any brilliant ideas, but here were a few things we'd done in the past couple of years that we've seen success with. So there's a lot of sharing.

Time pegs. Some of the staples you do by month. But how important are time pegs for these service packages? For example, last year's June issue was featured a fly-fishing package. That's timely; it's summer, and it's beautiful. So how important is that?

There's a two-part answer. Some of those things that we do...the reason Top of the Town is in July and Top Docs is in August is because from a sales perspective, (those months) have been very slow. And they are big franchises that the sales team can use to sort of bolster that month. So that's part one. If you go to any city or regional magazine, they'd probably tell you the same thing: "Oh we do our Best Of in December because it was really slow..." or whatever it is.

So your point is to draw more people in and increase sales at that time?

The point is that ad sales go like this (*up and down hand motion*). There's a big hangover right now—right after the first of the year because people spent a lot of their marketing dollars placing ads in the magazines before the holidays. Then they're like, "Oh no, maybe we should dial back." So that's why you see January and February issues are always really thin. And then summer, too. Those are two big walls. So they can just sort

of boost their revenue goals by having something that they feel like is a sure bet. So that's answer one. Answer two: I would say the pegs are very important, but they're not like...I would describe them as being seasonal. We'll do a lot of stories where we'll say, "We need to do this in in the spring," or "We need to get this in in the summer or fall or winter." It doesn't have to be a specific month. For fly-fishing—that's a great example...it was either May or June when it was the beginning of the season. It may have been a little early because the elevations are so high here, the snowmelt...you know. But I remember talking to Lindsey, and she was like, "There are really two perfect months," so we got it in on the first perfect month. Then you can do it throughout the summer. Then I think it's later in the summer that it gets better, too. And we've done things like "Winter in the City" or "Mountain Guides." Those are seasonal. Food stuff is usually not seasonal. We did this one, which I really like, "33 Things Every Coloradan Should Know How To Do." It ran in March of 2014. It can run anytime. On the ones where there is a seasonal component...this one on the Alpine Lakes...obviously that's a summer thing. We ran this in June 2011. Did that answer your question?

Absolutely. And are there any more topics you'd like to see more of in the magazine that you think aren't covered enough or could be covered more?

I would love to do more outdoor stuff, and we are going to be doing more this year. There are a few reasons for it. One, I just like it. I just love the fact that I ended up at a magazine that sort of ducktails my personal interests with the interests of our readership. Before I worked here, I worked as a freelance writer for three years, and so I found myself doing the same thing—my sort-of personal beats became things I was interested in, so sports, outdoor recreation, health, that type of stuff. That's the first part of it; I just like it, and I think a lot of our other editors like it. The second thing is we have seen, over the years, some softness in newsstand sales with our franchise packages, which was a big reason we changed up the Best New Restaurants package. We've also seen a slow but steady decline in Top Doc sales. Top of the Town is like a rollercoaster ride. We were actually talking about if we wanted to retire that franchise because it wasn't doing really well; it wasn't selling as well as it used to from an ad sales perspective; it wasn't selling as well on the newsstands. But with the help of our newsstand consultant, we studied how we were wording things on the cover, and what we found was, the current one, which says "Top of the Town" over the logo and under it, it says, "TK number of reasons to love Denver." That sells much better.

And that's another question I have—the use of these numbers. It might be the most random number like "717 Dentists." So why do you think it is that these numbers, no matter how obscure they might be, appeal to readers?

It's tangible. It's just a tangible thing. On the list of doctors, it's 350 doctors, or whatever it is...it conveys this tangible sense of, "Wow, there's a lot." It's something readers can just hold on to and say, "Well, if nothing else, I can get five tips on how to..." whatever. Numbers are just...it's just an old trope of magazine editing. You've probably heard of the 2-second rule or 3-second rule. When you put a magazine on the newsstand, it's an impulse buy, and you have two or three seconds to catch the reader's attention. So if you do it well, it telegraphs to the reader that there's something that will be useful. Back to the useful...what was it? Useful, usable, used, which translates to cover lines well.

Going off of that, let's talk about headlines. You can be really creative/cryptic or more straightforward. I've noticed with these headlines, they're more straightforward. Why do you think that's important for the reader?

I think there are two approaches, and we employ both. One is like you said. To me, sometimes I'm just like let's just give the reader what they want. You don't have to be cute, and whom are you benefitting by being cute with this pun? You're edifying yourself and your colleagues, and that's about it. I mean we do both. One thing I would say is cute headlines don't work on the Web. They just don't get picked up for searches. They also don't typically...I was also going to say the other person you should talk to is Dave McKenna because he's very much an editorial art director. When I interviewed him when he applied to this job, he made a point of saying, "I'm an editorial art director. I think like a journalist, not like an artist," so he's very much a visual communicator. A lot of thought goes into these packages from the designer/visual perspective. The reason I bring that up is because this all makes sense as a design unit. But when you take it out of its context and slap it on the Web, it might not work. So in terms of search, SEO, and in terms of reader service, having them understand what is coming...you have to be much more straightforward. So what we've started doing is when we turn in a manuscript, it has a print head and deck, and it has a Web head and deck. So I like to do it both ways, but I mean, there's no reason to be overly cute.

Going into the external blurb...a lot of times second person is used. I know that's important to service journalism—addressing the reader directly. Then there's also balancing a sense of authority with a cheeky voice, too.

Yeah, I think that the second person is just—it kind of goes with hand-in-hand with the list of commands, so if you're using rubrics for headers that are commands, it just makes sense. We've done entire... In fact, Lindsey put together a package, and I edited it on the dark sides of fitness. We're such a fitness-obsessed culture here, and we all think it's so great, and everyone is so healthy and thin, but there are actually all these downsides to these people who over-train, so she did a nontraditional service journalism package on that. So she wrote this intro, and then we were kind of struggling with how to organize it, and so I said I feel like if you just ask this question at the end of the intro, like "Why is this happening?" and then each header becomes because: "Because you need too much affirmation in your life," "Because you can become anorexic or mannorexic." And so that was an example of using the same person. It's not a command like "Go do this thing," but you're still addressing them. In terms of authoritative versus cheeky, I would say I don't think of it as separate things. To me, the success or failure of the package starts with the idea. If it's a good idea...let's say it's a bad idea, but you have a fantastic writer with a great magazine-y voice, it's still going to suck, right? If you have a good idea, and then your people report the heck out of it—this is another thing I said at the CRMA—I think of good packages much in the same way as narratives. You report the heck out of them, and then there's no question about being authoritative. It is, by definition, going to be authoritative because you've reported the heck out of it. You know everything you need to know about (for example) everyday environmental issues in Denver. Or you know everything about beer in the city, to the point of where we didn't want to drink beer anymore. So you report the heck out of it, then the writing...I don't think of it as cheeky.

I think of it as sharp and conversational. And it has to have voice whereas you have a little more leeway in narrative features where it will have more of the voice of the writer. But if you read...I mean we don't edit the hell out of these things so there's like a house style like the *New Yorker* where every story sounds the same, but I do think there is a *5280* voice that comes across in these service packages.

On the same line as authority and credibility, can you talk about using “we” or “as a staff”? Why do you think that’s important?

Yeah. I think there are a couple of things going on. One is it's...whereas in a narrative feature, some people don't like first person. I think that each story warrants whatever it warrants. A story wants that it wants, so if it wants first person in it, that's great. I think a lot of what we do in terms of service is based on our experience with these things as we report them. So is it travel, is it going to craft breweries, is it dining out? We've done these things, and, for whatever reason, the sort of institutional or editorial “we” just sounds better. It just sounds more authoritative. I think “I” sometimes sounds thin. Typically these packages are very collaborative, so how can you use first person singular? You can't because you don't know whom it's referring to. A lot of it is experience, and I think we like to telegraph that we've done these things. I worked at *Men's Journal* where I free-lanced, and we did a lot of international travel stuff—service—and it was written by making phone calls. We weren't flying to Indonesia. We (the *5280* staff) are almost without fail going everywhere, tasting everything, drinking as much as we can without missing work...So we're doing these things, and we want to convey that, and I think they (the reader) appreciates that.

I've also noticed by-the-number blurbs throughout or a little sidebar. Why do you think that's appealing? Is it again the tangible idea?

There is a reason for that. It was really Dave's invention. You see by the numbers in other places, but there are very few magazines with a number as a name, and it's a play off that. *5280* is our name. When Dave redesigned, we talked a lot about the typeface we would go to, and it was kind of rugged but also elegant. The numbers look really nice, so it's just referring back to our identity. And it's just sort-of grazable content. Something we talk a lot about when putting together packages—writing, editing, putting together—is no one reads a package from front to back. A writer puts it together, an editor takes care of it, then it comes to me. We are all reading it front to back in a Word file. No one experiences this package like that, so we want to make the pages dynamic, and you need to have different presentations of information. A number is a really easy way to do that, and it looks cool.

Note: Geoff brought in past issues of 5280 to help show me the evolution of the magazine and its service packages. Here is the conversation:

So this is the issue (October 2007, comfort food) of when I started here, so totally different design. This is two redesigns ago, so it looks very different. Here's an example of a service package we did back then. It was Amanda. I also think presentation is so key to how successful a package is. When I was gathering these, what I noticed about this, the pages aren't that dynamic. There are big photos and then small blurbs. There's not a big

different in how things are presented. Everything is about the same length. There are some weird adjacencies. It's just the same thing throughout. Amanda knows the food scene here better than just about anyone else, and I'm sure the information is great, but to me, it's not a dynamic package. It's not singing to me.

It's also hard to know where to look.

Exactly, because there's no hierarchy to the page. So that's example No. 1.

This is when Lindsey and I started talking about doing things really central to what we are. So this (October 2009, Low on O2) was an idea that had been floating around for several years, and Lindsey was finally just like, "All right. I'm going to do it." And this was nominated for a National Magazine Award. When I look back at it...I mean it's an awesome package, and, again, you can't do this at *Cincinnati* magazine or *LA* magazine because it's unique, but I don't love this design. But you're seeing an evolution here. You've got a definition; you've got a glossary type thing. You've got a bunch of different things going on that draw you in. You've got a longer read-through; you've got an infographic; you've got a chart.

There's a lot more white space, too.

Yeah, it breathes, and I think that was part of a conscious decision of our art director then to let it breath; we're talking about oxygen. You can see that it's long. There's a lot of stuff packed in there.

So Denver is a high desert environment, and then you get into the mountains, and there's not a ton of water here, so Lindsey discovered these lakes, and basically this was like, "Wow, there are all these beautiful lakes..." It's (June 2011, Great Lakes package) sort of like a glorified photo portfolio, but there's a lot of good service in here. So this is like getting out of the way of the story. The photography really drives this one, but what I like about it is that there is a little write-up about each one, and there's a little service box with a locator map. So you get this short narrative; you get service. I think this one is really successful because it takes advantage of our natural resources, and it's just beautiful. And if you are like, "Crap, I want to go there," then you have the information. So that's another one.

This (March 2014, 33 Things Every Coloradan Should Know), we started to get a little more sophisticated. By March 2014 we were getting more sophisticated about how we were conceiving these packages, putting them together. I think you can just see there are more elements; the pages are more dynamic. You know, all of these little things add to the success of it. So this is a great example of a grazable package. You find your headline: "I don't camp, so I'm not reading that," or "I cycle, so I'm reading that." So this is just jammed packed with information, and it's really compelling. It has a sense of humor because it has a blurb about how to pack a bowl. Some people didn't like that, but we live in Colorado when it's very much of the place. Most of this stuff, though, if you were to take it to another city, you couldn't do these things. It would be very difficult. Anyone can do "33 Things Every xx Should Know," but then the trick is tailoring all of these things so it feels authentic and right.

So this (December 2014, Everyday Environmentalist) was a specific topic issue we did at the end of 2014 that we did on the environment. You know, we did a mix of all sorts of stuff. A lot of things we did could be considered service. These are places protected by the Federal Wilderness Act. You can loosely call those service because people don't know about these things. But this is fairly traditional. What I love about this is, again, it's very knowing and authentic about who we are. Even down to the illustration. This grew from the idea that we like to think we're very environmentally conscious, but we do a bunch of shit like fill up out Subaru and drive three hours to our campsite. There's just a lot of practical information like, "You think you're good? Well this is what you can do better." What I think really separates...if you get to a level of sophisticated design, you have good reporting, you have good magazine-y writing...I think what can make a package even better is essays. So I think it gives a little soul to the package. Sometimes they can just...I think service can feel just like that: too much service. So when you have something like this where you have Lindsey Koehler writing about why she composts, you are able to pull back from that editorial "we," and you have a first person and a very intimate story. That really is the sign of more elevated type of service.

So it's really just breaking the information up and giving the reader a chance to take a breath?

Yeah so the backbone of this package (Denver Beer Lover's Guide, February 2016) is 10 local places, so these are little write-ups that sort of go throughout the package. And then we have trends, so sort of what's happening at the moment. Then Kasey wrote this essay that's sort of news, state of the state of craft brewing, so it's not really first person, but it nicely contextualizes the information. Then we have this travel hit. We have the new school, old school, if you like this...try that, then we have a couple of little essays. Chris wrote one. Chris lives in the suburbs, so this is his experience loving beer and moving to the suburbs and being like, "Crap, there are a bunch of crappy bars." Then he found this place. I wrote this little thing about beer gardens. And that's interesting about this one is sometimes the reporting has to bear out. We conceived of this as a rant about why there are no good beer gardens in Denver, then when I started going to them, I was like there's a bunch. But a lot of new, so that's why we thought that. And there one traditional one, but a lot of them are sort of stretching the definition of this. So we changed the piece. I think this is a great one that shows all of the elements.

And that's exactly what I've noticed studying these. There's almost always a backbone like this list, then you have these other elements breaking it up.

Yeah that's exactly right, and you notice there's a ton of information even packed in right here. You've got the name, when it was established, how much they produce, the address, the phone number, the website... There's just a lot of information packed into that then you get these little fun hits. Like I love this one: "From the brewer's mouth."

So yeah that's a little through the years.

From there, where do you see service journalism going?

I don't think there will be a big evolution. To answer that question, you have to look at the larger print magazine publishing. My sense is that there will continue to be a thinning of the herd, if you will, in magazine land. And that's not the end of the world. That's OK. The magazines that are doing what their audiences want and have a loyal readership, and we fit into that category I think. I'm just amazed, and I've had the good fortune of getting to know editors of other city books, and they're like, "No one ever talks about our publication." You know, my wife and I were just at a restaurant on Saturday night, and we asked (the waitress) if she had any favorites, and she was like, "Well, *5280* featured this dish." That's cool; that shows the power of the brand that Dan has built and the importance of what we do in the community. That's the long way of getting to say we can always do better in our service. It's like golf; you can always improve. But I think what we're looking at going forward are marginal improvements. So *Top of The Town* is an example I can give you where we did some changes—real subtle changes. I think that the casual reader wouldn't necessarily notice these things, but I felt like we were having too many categories. It was other editors, too. It was full—like bloated. It just felt unwieldy, like not great service—like, "Here, take this." We just tightened up the number of categories, looked real hard at the categories themselves, and then just put the screws of editing on it. We just said these write-ups have to be 75 words or less, and there can't be a missed word in there; they have to be really sharp. I can go back and look at *Top of the Town* from six to seven years ago and compare it to what we did in the last two years, and I'm really proud of what we did. It's not going to look wildly different, but I think it's a much stronger package. So that's an example of marginal gains. Another thing I would say is—and this summer we are going to unveil a total redesign—the memo I put together that sort of got this off and running is, who are we as a publication? Who are our readers? How can we better reflect Denver, Colorado? One of the things we are going to be doing is making the pages less complicated. I think there was a move when digital became really big, everyone was like, "Oh, digital, you're constantly getting all of this stuff, so we have to make the magazine pages look like that." It was a reaction to digital, but it was also maybe a natural direction design was going. And it was great. Then it was like there's too much shit on these pages. It's overload. There are too many colors and too many highlights. So one of the things we're going to dial back is turn down the volume a little bit, and it'll be more subdued. A phrase I use, I didn't invent, but it should really be a lean-back experience. You get it once a month. It's not like you're at your laptop with your mouse or with a textbook you're highlighting. It should be like a novel you're reading with your legs crossed or in bed or whatever. And it's enjoying and relaxing. So in that vein, just sort of simplifying things and letting the beautiful images and good storytelling come through a little more. So some of our service will start to look a little different. It might not be super different actually, but hopefully it'll convey to our reader that sort of idea that you can escape when *5280* shows up in the mail. So that's another example of making small tweaks to improve reader experience—because at the foundation it's still essentially the same thing.

The process of service journalism: *(This started after our interview was over. I asked for some extra guidance in interviewing other staff members. Here, Geoff offers*

Lindsey's upcoming package on the sand dunes as an example of the profess of service journalism.)

We'll come up with the idea together. That was one we loosely conceived a while ago because we knew she'd need time to report. So she went last summer, and it'll come out this summer. She's really good at that type of planning. We figured it out. We knew we wanted it to be a cover story because here is an example of something that can be outdoorsy but not the Rocky Mountains. What's cool about the sand dunes is that it's so different. It's like you're on another planet. So that's always a fun thing. One thing we always try to do with our service and everything is to be surprising. That's the goal. And with that, it's visually surprising. When people think of national parks, it's probably the Rocky Mountains. But the sand dunes are this weird anomaly, so it made all sorts of sense to feature it. So then she reports it. She outlines it, then she starts writing it. Then she'll put together a rough draft map. This is for most editors; it helps them organize their thoughts. Obviously there's a lot of moving parts and components. If you don't do that, you're setting yourself up to fail. You won't figure out how everything is going to fit. It's very easy to just write things and have a bunch of 300-word blurbs. But that's an opportunity to say, "This can be a chart, what else do we want on this page? Maybe a sidebar with an illustration." Then she and I will sit down with Dave and look at the map. Some art directors are like, "Don't do that. That's my territory," but Dave uses it as a guide to inform his design. It's meant to be a guide. So we sit down and discuss it. She finishes writing then it comes in for an edit. We'll go back and forth. Then it goes to copyedit and fact check then it goes to Dave for layout. Then he works his magic. It's very much a collaboration, and I feel so lucky to have that. It's very much an effort to tell the story in the best way.

*Interview with Lindsey B. Koehler, Deputy Editor
Tuesday, February 16 at 1:27 p.m., 1 hr. 16 min.*

To start, can you describe your job as deputy editor and what your responsibilities are?

So I have been deputy editor, I think, it's been probably been three years. I've had essentially every title they offer at the magazine because I've been here for so long.

How long have you been here again?

It'll be 15 years in September. So I started as an editorial assistant and went all the way through the whole thing. I would say over the past 8-10 years, honestly my job has been relatively stable as far as what I do. Depending on the title, certain things were added on top. So I would say deputy editor, right now, means I spend 30-40 percent of my time editing and writing. I would say probably another 30—probably 40 percent—is doing planning, managing the staff, doing line-ups, brainstorming, you know, all kinds of silly managerial stuff. I do all of the page budgets, I do all of our financial budgets, I do vacation reports, you know all of that stuff you do when you're a manager of other humans. So what does that put me at? Eighty percent? Then the last 20 percent I'm out reporting. So editing, writing, the other 20 percent I'm doing by own kind of stuff, meeting sources out in the community. But as far as actual duties, I write, I edit—and we

edit each other, other freelancers... So yeah that's kind of it...a lot of line-ups, making sure there aren't giant blank pages in the magazine, which is never good.

When were you first exposed to the idea of service journalism, and how would you define it?

I think that's a great question. I would say I was exposed to it probably my very first day at the magazine, which I remember was Sept. 17, 2004. And I have to admit, even though I think I went to a relatively good journalism school, they didn't put it in those terms. And I don't know why they didn't use to term that everybody in the industry uses. You know what it is intuitively because if you're standing in line at a grocery store and it's "100 ways to make your life simpler," or it's "50..." whatever it is, you know what it is; it just wasn't under that term. So for *5280*, like many magazines, service journalism is the bread and butter of any city magazine. It is the thing that makes someone pick up the magazine off the newsstand. And so to me, service journalism—and defining it on the fly is hard—but I think as opposed to narrative, which is most of the time a good old-fashioned yarn, like you want to sit down and learn something and understand something complicated about your community... I think service journalism is a little on the flip side where it's a very actionable set of stories. I think service journalism is all over the magazine. It can be a 250-word story in the front of the book. But I think it's about the action, about going and doing something better. So you tell someone how to do something, whether that's climb a "fourteener," find the best pair of jeans for your rear end, whatever it is. I think it's about the action and helping the reader do something in a better, more fun way. I think there are other types of service journalism that other people don't think of that are more informational. So I said that narratives you learn something about your community. I think you can use service journalism in a way that it may not be telling me to do something; it may not be as actionable as where to find those jeans, but we've done service journalism packages over the years—that I would consider service packages—that most people would probably wouldn't think of that way innately. We've done packages on the city's infrastructure; we've done packages on fracking. I did one years ago on religion along the Front Range. It was interesting... CRMA, you get up there... the award ceremony is interesting because you get up there, and you feel kind of like the Oscar's, especially because you know you're voted, so you're sitting there, and you're all dressed up, and it's like, "Lindsey B. Koehler," and they have this big presentation, and they show pages from the magazine, and they describe the story. And I remember this very specifically. It said something like, "*5280* went a different route with..." — it was for reader service—"it informed *5280* readers about how religion functions along the Front Range." It was very atypical for a reader service package, which I think is why it was very interesting. It didn't tell anybody: "Go do this," or "This church is for you!" It wasn't in an overt way. Those ones are harder to accomplish because they're kind-of a mix for service journalism and narrative, and they do very well for us.

That's along the same line of another question. One of my professors laid out the fact that you have your traditional service and then your nontraditional service—so Top Docs versus fly-fishing, very Colorado-centric. So how do you think of these new, innovative ideas?

Some of it is a necessity simply for the mental health of a staff. Having to reinvent the wheel on top doctors and do it every year and do it well—or Top of the Town, everyone does their “Best Of...” Honestly, I think the reader gets tired a little bit of it; the editors definitely get tired of it. So some of it is a function of, “What can we do that will make us excited?” Obviously the answer that you really want to say is that if we’re going to be excited about it, then our readers will be really excited about it, too. But when you’re talking about brainstorming these types of packages, I think the way we think about them is—and this is probably different than a national magazine—but the thing I think about most specifically is what can we do that no other city magazine can’t? What does our readership want that is so specific to them? So when you talk about fly-fishing. Yes, if there were a magazine in Montana—there might be, but I don’t even know—they could do that package. But I did a package a few years ago about living at elevation. There are very few places that can do what it means, what it does to your body, when you live at 5,000 or 14,000 feet. So when we start thinking about these nontraditional—as you call it—packages, we have to think about what our readers would want, and how that fits for them. So we essentially say they have to be very regional. Otherwise, they become traditional packages. If they can be lifted out of our magazine and put into any other magazine, then there’s no reason specifically for our readership for us to do it. Now for infrastructure or fracking or those things, those happen elsewhere, but Denver’s changing so rapidly that we think to ourselves, “OK, we’re getting such an influx of population. What does that do to the city? OK, well that means there’s this many more cars, and this much more money that needs to be spent on roads and bridges”...or whatever. So it’s hard to think of nontraditional ones if you’re not thinking really specifically to your city and to your readership.

And part of that is just being tuned in to your city and your reader and what they are talking about?

Yeah. And I mean I just finished one that would be called nontraditional. We’re calling it the dark side of fitness. It’s very nontraditional. It doesn’t tell anybody to go and do anything. In fact, it’s kind of the opposite. It’s like don’t do this. I still think it’s a service package. It tells someone the pitfalls of a very specific Colorado compulsion, which is to run until you literally cannot run anymore. It’s very specific mostly to the West with all of these triathlons and marathons. But some of these triathlons and marathons and ultra-distance running happen here in Colorado. So that was what made me think of it—was kind of thinking about the types of events. Like in Wash Park, it can be 10 below and snowing, and there are guys up there running around. I’m like, “This is why we have gyms; go use the treadmill.” But you have to be very observant of what makes your readership tick and determine how you can do something you might not have thought about in that way. Doing Top Docs and Top of the Town and real estate...it’s monotonous. You know it gets monotonous for your readers, too. So we try to mix it up.

Are there any topics you’d like to see more of?

Yeah I think we’ve come to learn...and I actually think 2016 is the first year we’re going to come to test our hypothesis on this, so this is a good question right now. Newsstand sales across the country are on a downward slide. We’ve been doing just fine, but we have noticed a very similar trend. The thing that we’ve learned from our readership is if

there's something outdoorsy on the cover, it sales. So in 2016... and that differs on where you are I'm sure, but we've learned if you put an accessible activity under a big blue Colorado sky, it flies off the newsstand. So what we have done for 2016, and we started planning this in early 2015, is to try—between six and seven outdoor covers, which means you have to have six to seven outdoorsy features that go in the magazine, whether that counts as travel or hardcore outdoor rec... they're kind of all in the same vein. So I guess my answer would be because we have realized that's what our readers want right now, that's what we're aiming to give them. And it's kind of a little experiment to see if we'll overload them with too much outdoor stuff or if it will continue to sell. So that required a lot of early planning in 2015 because we had to go do all of this stuff last summer to actually photograph it to run it this year. I think it'll be interesting, and I think whether or not it sells or not, that those stories for our readership will always hit home. So to me I think those stories are right in our wheelhouse, and we should be doing them a lot.

Along with your mention of having to go do these things last year, can you talk about the reporting process involved with some of these packages?

I'll give you two quick examples. The sand dune one you already know about, so I'll use that. So the sand dunes was all me. It kind of depends on the package, so I'll juxtapose two of them. Sand dunes was... we've been doing national parks; this is the 100th anniversary of the national park system, so we decided we were going to look at Colorado's newest national park, even though it's 10 years old, but it's the newest one. So I took four days—I think I did a Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday—and I drove down there by myself, and I ahead of time determined what I had to do, looked at the surrounding area, did research, called ranger districts, looked at what was going on in the nearest, biggest town. So I do pre-research before I go down there. As you can imagine, four days evaporates pretty quickly, and there's just no way to get to everything. There are also not enough pages in a magazine, so I can't see everything, but I do pre-research. Then I go down, and I try to—as with any of these things—try to experience it how a reader would. Even though sometimes I talk to the PR people in advance or call somebody and say, “I need this information because I'm doing this story...” for the most part I learn it as I go. Because I think that's how you realize what your reader is going to need to know. A PR person or the ranger—they're too inside. They already know all of this stuff, and they probably don't have the exact same reaction to think as just someone who drives up. So when I realized I didn't have a tire air compressor, I was up a creek. So that was a big deal. Driving on sand, you have to lower the tire pressure in your tires to go over sand, but then you have to re-inflate to drive on roads; that was a problem. So those are the kinds of things, even when I looked on their website, there's nothing about bringing your own air compressor, but when I got down there, they were like “Oh yeah, that would be really helpful.” So that's one of those things I wouldn't have known unless I had gone down there. So essentially I pack myself pretty full on those days. I don't do a lot of doddling. Every now and then, I'll sit there for an hour and try to take it in like a normal person would, but I go to surrounding attractions, I'm driving around, I'm in the car, I'm trying to find things like where do I go eat? Where does someone go to get gas? Because this is an all-encompassing deal, these service packages. Especially when you send someone to travel. So that's all me, all day long. I'm taking notes; I'm taking

reminder photographs with my iPhone. How long was this trail? I take snapshots of the trailhead map so I remember those things. The iPhone is an ingenious little reporting device. So that's how it happens when it's just one person. They kind of plan their own deal and go, go, go.

And try to get in the head of the reader.

Right. So we're calling this the first timer's guide to the Great Sand Dunes. I've probably been there four times. I try to think of it like, "OK, I'm going to come down here and spend 48 hours...what do I need to know as a person who just kind of drives up? Then after the fact I call and talk to rangers and ask the questions that maybe I didn't get answered when I was down there. But going made the question pop in my head, so those are good. Talk to the superintendent of the park, talk to rangers. And then, on the flipside, we do travel or outdoor rec features where we break them up. So we did one last year called, "Small Town Getaways." I was the project manager on that, but I sent Kasey to check out two towns, I sent Daliah to check out two towns, I sent Jess to check out two towns, and then I checked out two towns...or whatever it was. So we split them up sometimes because there's just no way one person can get to all of those in the timeframe we need them. So those become a little bit more of a planning issue in that we can't all do the exact same things. So all of these towns obviously have great outdoor recreation, but you can't write six or seven stories that all sound exactly the same. So there is a preplanning part of packages where there are multiple writers where I say, "OK, what do you think your main outdoor recreation or main activity is going to be?" And if they're like mountain hiking and biking, I say "nope" so not everyone comes back and starts writing the same thing that sounds exactly the same. So there's the planning that goes into a package that has multiple writers, and we also plan to format in advance so people can, you know...I think we did 36 hours in blank town. So everyone had that in mind when going because if something is going to take you six hours to do, that might not be the best inclusion because then you don't get to tell people what to do. On the flipside, you want to make sure you don't leave something out. But you have to kind of build that into the format. So it's good to go down with the format in mind if there are multiple writers. Like I had no idea of the format when I went down to the sand dunes because I can come up with it on the fly myself. If you have multiple people, it helps them to have some type of layout in mind.

And I also wanted to touch on presentation. With a lot of these packages I've noticed an inclusion of numbers. Why do you think that's important for the reader?

Usually—this is not going to be a sexy answer at all—but usually the reason there's a number is based on how many pages I have. So I knew that we only had 10 pages for "Small Town Getaways." Based on trying to get text and art in there, max I can do is probably eight. Because you have an opening spread—there aren't any towns on that—then that leaves you eight pages. Does that mean you can get a town per page? It gets real small real quick. I think we did seven if I'm not mistaken. So it's based on space in the magazine, which most editors know in advance because there's a goal for sales; sales money translates to editorial pages, and I have a certain amount of pages that break down. I have five features. Boom, "Small Town Getaways" has to be 10. The other thing is when we think about things when they are lists, we do consider what will look good on

the cover. So if there are...you know sometimes you just need a little extra padding in there. So you think about, "OK, how can we count this creatively, or do we need to find two more things because 21 sounds better than 19?" For whatever reason, it's completely arbitrary; for some reason that just sounds better. So the numbers thing is just really based on space and also just what sounds good. You know, "9 things to do at DIA" just sounds lame. Fifteen, for some reason, just sounds better.

There are so many components to these packages, and you have to pick and choose what's important for the reader. How do you determine that? When do you know when you just have to cut content? And what content gets cut?

It again comes down to how much space you have in a magazine, and when you think about pages... We're writers, so we just love to write until the cows come home; however, there does actually have to be a photograph on a page—so they say. So I think about it, and for a page to look good, we'll probably cap it at no more than 450 words per page. That allows for art. So if I have eight pages worth of text...I actually think Great Sand Dunes was 12 pages. But we have the first two for the first spread, then 450 times 12, and that's about how much I got. Then I start looking at my components. What stories do I have to tell? Which ones can be told very easily in a short amount of space? So when you're talking about national parks, there are a lot of rules. No dogs off the leash. No glass containers. Blah, blah, blah. Those are things that are nice to tell your readers, especially dogs if they're not allowed to be there overnight. Well, that makes it really tough if you brought a dog. So there are things like that. You don't need a whole bunch of words for that. So I think to myself, "Can that be a quick bulleted list? OK, that won't take more than 100 words. That leaves me 350 on that page to write a big, long description of whatever it is I want to describe." But there are two parts to the national park. There's the national park, then there's the preserve. What are the rules that are different between those two? Then I go in and write a 350-word piece, like an actual main bar, on that. And so really, when you get down to it, I sit down—and I think I showed you—I just write out a list of all the stories, the pieces that pop in my head when I start thinking about what I did. And I took copious notes when I was down there. But there does come a point when you have to make a decision: "OK, I think that's relevant; people will think that's interesting, but I don't have space for it. So what do I do?" In our case, a lot of times, we do a Web extra. I'll write it, and when the piece goes online, there is additional information you didn't find in the print package. And you can tease that, too. But it does become a difficult thing to do when you've done all this research. The problem is, that if you don't regulate yourself, you end up spending a lot of time reporting and have written a piece that just ends up getting cut. And it takes a long time to realize that's just not worth your time. Sometimes, just like anything, you have to make a decision about what's most important. It's not easy. There's an art to it. And sometimes it can even be...I can do this story in a fun flowchart type, and I don't have any fun flowcharts yet. I might like the content of this other story a little better, but the only way to do it is a block of text, and that's so boring. So the only way to do it is choose this other bit of information because I can think of a way to make it graphic and fun.

That's another thing: These graphic components. Do you have these formats in mind, or is that just something you think of when you come back and you're decompressing? And also, why do you think a varied story forms are so important for readers?

I would say it happens both ways. Sometimes you're doing something, you're in the moment, you're reporting it, and all the sudden you're like, "This would be an easy charticle," or "This would be a really fun choose-your-own-adventure flowchart." When I was doing the Rocky Mountain National Park feature a few years ago, I sat down with the ranger, and they have like 150 back-country campsites. And he was like, "Well it kind of depends on what you like. Do you like woods? Do you like lakes? Do you like this?" And I was like, "FLOWCHART!" All I had to do was say lakes, tree, whatever at the bottom then I found a way to get me there. And I thought about it the moment that came out of his mouth. And everyone loves flowcharts. Sometimes you sit down with all of your information, and you're like, "How do I present these bits in a different way?" And you asked about why they're good for readers. I think it's just like anything else. There's an eye-catching midst to these things. They're the multiple entry points for the reader. Sometimes a block of text is not that sexy; it's hard to get into. It's not as accessible as a chart. I also find that charts give you a little more room to have fun with the language. Sometimes I think that's what draws the reader in. There's a snark factor that you can get to ... you almost have to because they're so short that you have the inclination to go with a slightly different voice than you would in a block of text. I just also think that varied pages are more interesting. They're more dynamic; they grab someone's attention. A full gray box of text is not that fun to look at. If the reader isn't really particularly interested in that topic, they're probably not going to stop. But sometimes there's a point where you have to make a decision. So the dark side of fitness that I just wrote is very text heavy. It just is. There's not a lot of ways to tell the story. And sometimes that's just how it goes, and we just had to make a decision that that's OK. Hopefully it's OK. But I have to be aware of the reality that maybe somebody skips right over it because it's not as attractive as a more graphical approach. Sometimes it just is what it is. It's different. We actually call it a narrative package because it is. It's just more content heavy, more little mini profiles of athletes and these things. There's just no flowchart for, you know, choosing your favorite mental disorder. So that doesn't lend itself to that snark factor like some others do.

On that note, there's a great balance of this authoritative, credible voice—we know what we are doing and talking about—balanced with a sharpness or conversational tone. How do you balance that or is it just something that's innate?

Most people have their own voice that just comes out. There are times when you are writing a package, and you think, "I should try to write this in a way that's more high brow." Or, "This calls for a conversational, sitting around a campfire feeling." When I was writing dark side, I wanted it to be a little bit of a mix of incredulity like, "These people do this?" Snarky is the wrong word, but kind of analyzing this trend that seems totally insane. And that's hard for me because that's not my typical writing style. So when I wrote some stuff, Geoff was my editor, and I did say, "Is this working?" If it's not... So sometimes you have to force yourself to sound like *GQ* when you're really not *GQ*. Plus I'm not as funny as I think I am when I write it down. Some people are.

Spencer Campbell? Is laugh-out-loud funny, and on the page it comes through. I don't know what he does, how it does it, but you can't just be funny, and you can't just write down what you'd say out loud. He has a way of writing that is very humorous, so that stuff comes easy for him; that's his voice. It's harder for him when he has to play it straight. So the voice thing, most of the time, I think you just write it in your own voice. And if it's too voicey, then your editor helps you pull it back, or if it needs to be more voicey, often you'll say like "amp this up" or "more voice" or "make this more Carson." It's hard to change your voice.

**Can you talk about addressing the reader as "you" and the magazine as "we"?
What's the importance of this in these service packages?**

I think you're right. I think you'll very rarely find the "you," second person in a narrative. That would be really hard to do. It's very easy to use in a service package for the exact reason you just mentioned: voice. It's conversational. It's how I would speak to you. We're sitting here, and you say, "Oh I have a friend coming into town. What should we do for the day?" I say, "Here's what *you* should do." It's almost hard to write it the other way around. If you've ever tried to write a service package in the third person, it doesn't work. It sounds completely wrong. I think a lot of times we insert first person in service packages because we often do mini essays, and I would say that's a pretty common device we use. There will be one in the Great Sand Dunes (package), there are two in "dark side"...because they essentially change something up for the reader. It's not just you, and it's not necessarily actionable. It gives you a little bit of a breath from "go do this, go do this, go do this." It changes the tone, and it takes you, the reader, out of feeling like you're just getting information. Instead, you read someone else's experience, which should still be relatable to the reader. This silly, hilarious camping fail, whatever it is, it's funny. So when you're talking about the voice...the royal "we" works in service packages. "We visited the Great Sand Dunes." I would never say, "I visited the Great Sand Dunes" even though it was just me. But the service information is coming from the magazine. It works because it's conversational, and that's how it should be.

And I would say it adds a sense of credibility, too. It's so important to go *do* these things versus just researching. So if you go and do these things, you might as well say you did, right?

Right. We almost never do that. A lot of travel magazines do simply because there's no feasible way for them to go to all the places they're writing about. There are front-of-the-book stories that are super short, 200 words, where we didn't actually go experience something. But for any of our travels pieces, you go and experience it. It's not worth it to me...because it could be terrible. If I went to the Great Sand Dunes and say, "This stinks. I'm not sending someone down here." And sometimes that does happen where you spend three days there and have no stories. But I'm not sending a reader down there, and you have to pull the trigger on deciding that. And it doesn't usually happen all that often. Usually you can salvage that. You might have to stay an extra day. So I think it's incredibly important, and I think you're right that there's a credibility to that. You can tell when reading something. It's the level of detail; it's knowing what the reader needs to know that they can't just get on the website. It's easier to write, too. It's way harder to write when you can't do it.

I have more general questions now just to round things out. What are some challenges you face when creating these service packages?

That's a good question. I was going to say that I think the hardest thing is concepting the idea for a nontraditional service package. And I guess not far behind that is concepting a traditional service package in a different way. So they're probably equally challenging. Finding new nontraditional ideas is fun—but hard. Reinventing the wheel on traditional service packages kind of makes you want to jump off a bridge. So those are the most challenging things. One is fun; one is like, “Oh man.” But they both have to be done. The enthusiasm for the latter is the hardest part. One of the things we do to try to combat that is we often do brainstorming. I'll send an email out to six or seven people and be just like, “I will buy a beer if you just come sit around a table with me, and please try to think of something different.” Like right now, I'm having to think about Top Doctors, and I'm like having anxiety attacks in the shower this morning because I can't think of what I want to do. And it's so hard. It's not like we can just be like, “Oh, let's not do it this year.” No. So you have to come up with something, and sometimes it's hard. And it's also sometimes the same person doing things, and in certain situations it's hard to get around that. Something like Top Doctors or Top of the Town...they're huge, really detailed topics, and once there's someone who knows how to do it, it's really hard to just hand it off to someone else. I've been doing Top Doctors for like 13 years, and God knows I would love to give it to someone else—which it might be good to have a fresh eye on it—but on the flip side, I have every single PR contact in the medical community on speed dial, so it's hard to hand that off. So when we sit down I just listen to them talk about Top Doctors and what they have in mind that helps with reinventing the wheel.

But there's no true strategy to that?

Yeah, and it's what in the ether. Like a couple of years ago we did a focus on cancer. There have been a lot of new advances in the past 3-4 years—major advances in cancer drugs—so that seemed like a smart thing for us to focus on. I mean cancer is obviously as old as time, but because I talked to people and sent out emails a couple times of year saying, “What's going on? What's happening?” you start to get enough answers that say, “Have you talked to this guy about this new cancer drug?” So I started to get enough consensus from people that that was going on. It is what's going on, what's in the air. Like right now it's about healthcare and how much everything costs. Like I just got my foot cut on last week, and I was like, “How much is that going to cost?” And they were like, “I don't know.” I'm like, “What do you mean you don't know?” And they don't. And that's a big thing in healthcare. So that's one of the things I think about. How do I work on that end of things? The beauty of something like that is I think to myself, “Luc just had back surgery, I just had foot surgery, Kasey just had abdominal surgery. Maybe I just start looking at all of our bills and seeing...we all got it done at different hospitals...and see how much did your saline solution cost, and how much did my saline solution cost? If yours is \$27 and mine is 27 cents, what the hell? So that's something I've been thinking about because we have access to that stuff. Medicine is really hard because there are HIPPA laws. It's hard to get inside medicine. And a lot of us have life experiences, and sometimes those form how we go about doing these.

And other people are having the same experiences, too.

OK, we talked a little about credibility and voice, but how do you think 5280 has established credibility as a magazine and in these service packages to where readers trust that it's correct?

I think that's a really good question to ask Dan, but I'll tell you my answer. The answer is actually Dan. The answer is that Dan, at heart, is a journalist. He went to journalism school; he worked as a reporter, so there is no fraternizing with sales. It is church and state. Unless there is a really great reason, and that's how anything should be, you will not see an advertiser in an issue sitting right next to a story about them. We do not pay for play. And Dan has made that clear from almost as early as the magazine started. It's very difficult for sales because people don't understand it. An advertiser does not understand why they're paying \$1,000 for an ad, and we aren't going to write about them. It makes their lives very difficult because there are publications that do that. So when you are the shining beacon of credibility, no one understands that. But it becomes very clear and very obvious to your readership that you're not doing that because it is obvious when you see it done. So smart readers will notice when we write a story about Vail Resorts, which clearly does not need any more press... No. 1: There's a good reason to be writing about something like that. No. 2: There's not a full-page ad on the next page. It doesn't mean we don't write about our advertisers, but if you ask me who advertises with our magazine, I do not have a clue, and it doesn't matter. So that has all come from Dan, and I think that's something that's subtle and almost something that a reader almost unconsciously notices. It's almost subliminal. It's very hard for the sales team, but our credibility is also that we don't, unless it's the only way to experience something, is we don't take press trips; we don't take freebies for anything. Food... I think it's like \$30 or less if someone sends us doughnuts or something. We can accept that. It's food, whatever. But if someone sent me cool sunglasses that are \$50 and made here in Colorado, I have to send them back. There's a credibility factored into that. A reader would never see that, but it allows us to be free and clear of that bias.

Do you think there's a "formula" for effective service journalism?

I think that probably the formula depends on the publication you're at. It's going to depend if you're doing service journalism for *New York* magazine or if you're doing it for 5280 or if you're doing it for *Real Simple*. So the formula is different. Our formula is that—and I think I kind of said this earlier—but our formula is that it has to, in any way possible, be as specific to our readership as possible. Now, Top Doctors and Top of the Town... they are your very typical service packages; however, they do offer service that only a Denverite use. Someone in Atlanta doesn't care who a top doctor is in Denver. But when we're talking about over ones, the vast majority of our service—traditional and nontraditional—it's about being regional, specific, experiential—going and doing it, and going back to the credibility is that it has to be accurate; it can't be riddled with errors. And you guys realize that as fact checkers. You realize how many errors are in those stories. And it's not intentional; it just happens. If you're writing 7,000 words, it's going to have errors. I misunderstood what that person said, in the three weeks since we talked they changed their mind, or they changed the price of that. It has to be accurate so that when someone goes to do what we tell them to do—because these are actionable—it has

to be right. So when you read a narrative story, it's a nice little lean-back piece, and you're like great! And you put it aside, but when you do a service package you're supposed to get up out of your chair and go check that restaurant out, and if you do that, and it doesn't match what you're saying, and your experience doesn't match what we're telling you, that kills your credibility. So it's also having reporters and writers that you trust to make that determination. That is a place, like I said, that sometimes you go to restaurants and galleries and you're like, "Oh, I can't send somebody here," but you have to be able to determine that. And you know when you're talking about... sometimes we'll have a writer, and I'll be like great, nice person, but I don't think I would trust their judgment on this thing. Not because they're a bad person, but Luc does not like outdoor stuff. I hate politics. So when I write about politics, no one should ever be reading that. Luc should not be skiing. Dude does not ski. But I think a lot of times people don't think of it that way. They send a reporter regardless of what they bring to the piece. So some of that is assigning the right people in the first place. So it has to be accurate; it has to be specific. So the formula is a little tough, but those key things...

My last question is about the future of service journalism. Where do you see it going in the future? And let's also touch on the trouble with translating it online.

So when I started in 2001—the magazine started in 1993; I came on in 2001—I would say the vast majority of our service was very traditional. We were new; there was not another city magazine around, so there wasn't anyone else giving that very basic traditional service journalism. There was no Internet, so doing restaurants was a huge deal because there was no such thing as Yelp. It was hugely different. People looked forward to Top of The Town because there wasn't Yelp. And it was a huge—a huge hit every year. But those very basic service packages are the easiest ones to put together simply in a reporting manner. Like I said, we try to reinvent the wheel now, but back then we weren't. And they're not as difficult, so you didn't need experienced reporters. We just didn't have them. There was like nine of us on staff, and there were like three editorial people. So putting together traditional service was what we did. Then over the years, I think the things that changed were, No. 1: 5280 started doing better on newsstands. It all goes back to you have to pay good writers and good reporters. So once 5280 started doing a little better on the sales side, Dan, very intelligently, started investing in journalism. He says if you have a good journalism product, the money will come. So he started investing in better reporters, better training, better art directors, better photography, and when that started happening, it sort of opened us up to do nontraditional packages. And so the evolution I think there... in the same way that traditional service packages were impacted by the Internet, nontraditional are not. Nontraditional packages... that stuff isn't available online. I mean you can go find the top 10 restaurants in Denver on Yelp. You can't find the guide on fracking, all in 12 pages, specific to Denver online. You can't find the guide to, you know, why us crazy people like to run a million miles and what psychologists say about that. They're different, and so they don't compete on the Internet like traditional service packages have. I think traditional service packages have, over the past 10 years, have started to suffer on the newsstand. We've seen it across the board with Top of The Town; it's not as popular newsstand wise. And that's the other thing. The only way we have to quantify whether something is doing well is the newsstand. So it's really tough because newsstand is down

across the board. So is it that the Internet killed journalism, or is it that we're all doing traditional packages over and over, and that's not working? So it's a little hard to tell. You're kind of guessing. But we summarize that traditional packages aren't like Top 10 New Restaurants, Top Doctors, Top Dentists, Top of The Town, Best Real Estate...you can find all of that online. So while we still do them, and we try to do them in different ways, I think over time—and you asked in the future—I think those will become less and less critical. I think that the really tough part of that is a lot of advertising dollars are tied to those traditional packages because they're accessible and an advertiser understands them. So if you're doing best restaurants, restaurants want to be in that issue. They want to advertise in that issue. Top Doctors...hospitals, clinics, they all want to be in that issue. It's really hard to sell dark side of fitness. It's hard to tell an advertiser on fracking. It's what the reader wants, and that's what advertisers don't totally understand. They're buying, with their \$5,000, eyeballs. All these people who want to read about fracking are going to see their ad, whether they're a boutique, doctor, gallery, whatever. It's a really hard crossover for sales to make people understand that. They want to advertise in an issue that they know a similar topic is written about, and it's easier to say, "We're going to have a giant list of doctors." I mean hundreds of thousands of dollars are tied to Top Doctors. I don't think it should be on the cover, and it's my story. I don't think it's smart to have on the cover. And I think this year will probably be the first year ever to—I take that back—second time ever that Top Doctors will not be on the cover. And that's exactly why. It's just not selling the way it used to on the newsstand. It probably pays my paycheck—or way more than that—to do that. So the future of that is how do we continue to keep those revenue-driving traditional service packages smart and good for the reader and allow the advertising base to be maintained without our newsstand going down? And how do we increase those stories we can't find online but that advertisers don't love? And as far as online, I think online is our biggest problem...I think our biggest problem is online. With service packages, like we just talked about, the layout is so important. It is so critical in being able to understand what you were trying to do. And they do not translate online. At least we haven't figured it out, and I haven't seen any other publication on the planet that does it well. You can put up a PDF so someone can see how it was originally constructed, but it falls flat. It's not dynamic; it's not search friendly. N body has found out a way...I think people have learned how to do narratives much better, and that kind of snowflake look where things move down, and there's embedded pictures. I think that has improved how narratives look online. We call that our epic treatment. But it's hard. It's something we've absolutely talked about. I think some of it is the limitations with how websites are built. So I don't know when you're talking about the future...I'm hopeful that there is a way in the coming years to be able to design them for specifically online. You're problem becomes you're designing a story twice. So resources...who's going to do that? Dave, our art director, doesn't build stuff on a website...doesn't have a clue. He can barely email. So is Scott going to do it? He's not an editorial guy. He knows how to do a website, but does he understand the relationship between this story and this story, and how they should look together? So you have this weird crossover of talents. Somebody's got to be a journalist, but they also have to have a website developer's brain, and that's not a lot of people. So that's going to be a really tough challenge for us and for every other publication on the planet. If the Internet—which I don't think it is—if the Internet is going to destroy the print product—which I

don't think that's actually going to happen—we're going to have to figure out a way to make that work online in the future. I would have to say—I can't even—I wouldn't be so bold as to say how we're going to do that or how anybody is going to do that. It's going to be tough. Those are good questions.

Thank you! Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

Well, I'll say this. I think that a lot of people—especially because of the rise of long-form and long-reads and all of those things...there is definitely a sexiness to the long-form writer. And I write long-form narratives just like anyone else, but I think that people underestimate how important service journalism is to publications like *5280* and thousands of other magazines. But specifically in city book land, even with the big city books, and I mean I count *5280* probably in the top 10 city books in the country, but when you're talking *Texas Monthly* and *Boston* and *LA* and all of those...there is definitely a...there's kind of a... People like to think that narrative is more important. And I think what a lot of people forget is that they didn't pick up the magazine for the long-form story. They picked up the magazine for the top 12 restaurants. And nobody—not nobody—I think it's very rare that people in the industry...I think there's this tendency to put this high priority and holier than thou emphasis on narrative. And don't get me wrong; I think narratives are incredibly important. But when you're talking about...we write 12-14 narratives a year. We do 48-58 service packages a year. So what really is more important? What's the driver behind the business? If you're not good at service, I would venture to say you're not going to have a successful magazine. So for you to do what you need to do to pay the bills, keep the lights on and pay your reporters, you need good service. And then you can be good at narrative, too. But if you have no where to put your narratives because no one picked up that magazine, but there aren't enough pages, then it's not happening. And I think that's something people forget. It's so sexy to be like, "Oh I followed this person for 10 years." Yeah but nobody read it because that magazine had a crap cover for a crappy service story, and 4,000 people picked up that magazine with that story in it. That means nobody read it. All that time and effort ... so as a narrative writer, you better hope you have a great service journalism team because no one's reading your stuff if there isn't a great service article.

And that's a perfect tie to what I'm looking into in city magazines.

Yeah and it's kind of a catch-22. Because there are great national publications that do service, right? I mean, *Oprah* magazine, *Glamour*...they all do it, right? *Real Simple*... But the problem is it's not specific. When you open the magazine, you're like oh this is really cool, but the product they mentioned you can only get in New York City. It's not specific. It doesn't make me want to order that product. It doesn't make me have any connection to it. So service in general is incredibly important in city books—maybe more so in national books because of its specificity. I don't want to order something online, like some stupid lipstick. So I think that's a little different...service in city books in particular. That's why I think city books in particular do service well and why people respond to it is because it's local.

*Interview with Amanda Faison, Food Editor
Thursday, March 3 at 9:31 a.m., 45 min.*

First off, and I know we've already talked about this, what's your background in journalism? What's your position at 5280, and how has your career evolved to get you here?

I've been at the magazine for going on 20 years, so I started in 1996. There were four of us on staff, including me, at that point. The magazine was tiny. You know, 80 pages was like a huge issue. And we were bi-monthly. I started as a marketing assistant, but my background is in journalism. I don't have a journalism degree; I have a degree in professional writing. I went to the University of Puget Sound in Washington. It's a very small liberal arts school, and that was the program they offered. But it was like J-school, just a little more wide reaching where we did really in-depth learning on creative writing and writing grants and ethnographies—every style of writing. But I always knew—since I was about 6—that I was going to be a writer. So I thought maybe I would write books, like children's books. At one point I thought I would write romance novels—of course—and then I thought I would work for *National Geographic* because that's what everyone thinks they're going to do because travel writing is awesome. But I've always loved food and have always read *Bon Appétit* magazine and *Gourmet* when it was around, and *Saveur*. I have just always ... I think it comes from my mom and my grandma—they're just terrific cooks, and everything's just about what's next? What's the next meal? So I've always had that interest. So when I started at 5280 and the staff was so small, we all had about 100 jobs, and I did whatever was assigned to me, but I just had sort of a natural love for food, so the food stuff very quickly fell under my jurisdiction. I didn't do a ton of food writing right away, but I was editing and learning and checking out restaurants and stuff like that. Then, the city's dining scene was just grim. It was just terrible. That might have been everywhere in 1996, except like San Francisco, Chicago and New York. But then *Food Network* launched in about 1999, 2000 and that changed the food industry across the nation, if not across the world. It made chefs celebrities, and people started looking at restaurants as entertainment as opposed to just a meal. And that led to a huge boom in restaurants. So there were some names before then, but really the kind of explosion began then. And it hasn't stopped. And the last five years in particular have just been extra wild. And the last two in particular are even... I mean it's even hard to keep up with. So I was overseeing the food stuff, but eventually in 2007 I became solely the food editor. At that point I had gone from marketing assistant, to assistant editor, to associate editor, to managing editor, to senior editor, to senior editor and food editor. In 2007 I was like I just need to focus on one title. I had just had my first child. And the dining scene supported just one title, so that was the beginning of that.

And what are your day-to-day responsibilities right now?

Absolutely keeping up on whatever has happened in the last 24 hours, so what has opened, what has closed, who has left, who has come in. I read as much as I can in the morning wherever I can glean information. Then of course I'm talking to people all day long, too. There's always writing, there's always editing involved. You know, writing a blog post or editing a blog post or writing or editing a story for an issue. Working with our restaurant critic isn't a daily thing, but, for example, I just got his review today for

May, so I'll be working on that today. I don't have a typical day. Of course, dining out is part of that and/or cooking. I think being a cook is critical to being a good food writer because it teaches you the science whether you're actually thinking about it as science or not. But if you're cooking something and it's browning or you're braising something and it comes out or it doesn't come out, you have context there for when you go to a restaurant whether or not the dish was prepared well or incorrectly or if they're riffing on it. Of course you can get some of that knowledge when you're eating out a ton, but I think you understand it on a more visceral level when you actually cook.

When were you exposed to the term service journalism and how would you define it?

It must have been when I first started at *5280*. Just being at a lifestyle publication—that by nature is service journalism. Back then we did less narratives and less long-reads that are in every issue now that aren't service journalism—that are wonderful profiles or real crime stories or something like that. We did a little bit of that but not as much. The vast majority of the magazine was service journalism. It was telling people what they needed to know about Denver. The people who were living here, the restaurants that were cropping up, where you needed to go, which art exhibit you needed to see, what to do in the mountains ... so I don't remember exactly when I heard the term, but that was when I was first steeped in it.

That's interesting. I'm always curious about when people had first heard the term. For me, I had been doing service journalism without knowing that term. And that term is so loose...

It is, but I think it perfectly defines a city magazine. And I suppose you could say the same of a national, but it's so niche that yes it's service, but it's within a niche. Whereas with a city magazine, it's service, and it's all-encompassing. The whole idea of a city magazine is that you should be able to...this is what Dan has always said...if you find a page of a magazine in the gutter or it's just flying in the wind or something, and you pick it up and read it, you should have a sense that it is from a Denver publication: "That is from *5280*." And you should have a sense of who we are from that publication. That's a tall order, but it's one that permeates the entire magazine.

Going into service more, you have your traditional and nontraditional packages. Do you think there's a type of traditional or nontraditional within food?

Yeah I do. So traditional would definitely be best restaurants or cheap eats—which we haven't done in a while, and I miss. I would really like to do it, but the sales team doesn't want "cheap" on the cover, which is ridiculous. Cheap eats or bargain bites: We've done it before, and it's always done well for us. Anyway, apparently it's a losing battle at the moment. But those types of things—those kind of overarching 25 Best Restaurants—our Best New Restaurants...that to me is very traditional food service journalism. So when you look at stories like our September issue, our food lover's package, or even where to eat now—to some extent, it probably straddles both because it's very much a roundup, but it's packaging it in a different way. And I suppose you could say the same thing about Food Lover's, too. ...I'm trying to think of other things we've done ...

I was thinking even beer lover's guide.
Definitely.

But would you consider that traditional or nontraditional?

I think it works for Colorado. I think you could do that story in Colorado, in Portland and a couple of other places where there's a huge micro culture or craft culture. I don't think that would work everywhere at all. Bars would be another one that we do. And are those traditional? I think they're evolved. I think they have traditional roots, but they've evolved to have more relevant, more modern topics. And we're able to dive a little deeper sometimes, and I think oftentimes that can be the different between a traditional package and a more modern, or more nuanced, one. You go deeper; you have some longer stories, or maybe there are essays in there. It's kind of mixed media as opposed to just a list. I mean like Top of The Town I think of traditional, classic service journalism. But when you take more information away from that—when you take backgrounds and stories and in addition to just, “Oh I want to go there and eat this doughnut,” that's when it transcends traditional to me.

In terms of presentation and story forms, how do you get away from lists and into other, less traditional forms of presentation? And why is this different presentation so important to these packages?

Well, I definitely think as many entry points as you can make in a story is critical. The reality is very few people are going to sit down and beginning to end read a listy story. Whether it's food—even Lindsey's dark side of training story...this is a conversation we had. It's many, many stories within it. I don't know if you've seen it yet ...

I haven't, but she was telling me how text-heavy it is and how that might be an issue.

It's text-heavy, but it doesn't feel text-heavy. There are so many entry points, and she has many of the same sources throughout the story, but in each story they are reintroduced. So it's not so-and-so Faison, blah, blah, blah. It's Amanda Faison in every story. Because they're realizing people aren't likely to read it all the way through. And that's really different for us. We usually on first reference use first name, full title, all of that. Then you refer back by last name and maybe a reminder of clinical psychologist. And I think it really works well with that story. I think multiple entry points for a story, like Food Lover's, is equally important. I love varying the visual. Because if it's just the same linear layout, I think it's boring. I think it shows less ingenuity on our end as both a writer and an art department. The pantry (in Food Lover's) was a really fun one, and the styling on that came out really well. It could have been just a very flat shot, like a studio shot on white of a line up of products, but instead it's in a shelving unit. That actually came from one of our stylists, or at least she was in on it with the photo editor. But I love graphics. I love deconstructing something where you have a dish, and you do little arrows. For example, we did the jam that way. It was a by-the-numbers part. You know, you're going to pay \$14 for this jar of jam? What? Well, here's why it's worth it. Here's why you're paying that \$14. Because the rental of the commissary kitchen cost this much, those ingredients—and they're organic ingredients—cost this. The time involved is this. The lids cost this. I love pulling out those background details. I think it's really important to anything. Food in particular, especially when you're talking about high price points. A

story in the—I think you actually fact checked it—in the April issue about the expensive cocktail...It's a \$13 cocktail, which isn't the most expensive, but it's still 13 bucks. Is it worth it? In this case yeah, it is. And I really want to go try that. But the layout on it is beautiful. It's this fluted cup. It's gorgeous. Then what the liquor is, how he makes it, how he makes the cocktail, how he garnishes it, and there's little icons in it. And it's beautifully presented. We could have just written that, but it's much more interesting and engaging. And we want our readers interested; we want our readers engaged; we want them to read what we're writing.

Along that line, I feel like Yelp keeps coming up in talking about these service packages. But 5280 is still elevating this information. Can you talk about this—I don't want to say competing because it's not on the same level—but the rise of the Internet and these forms.

I think it makes what we do all the more important. We need to be even more careful to be as objective as possible. And when we're ranking things, that's not objective. But the actual process of ranking things is very objective. It's solely based on experiences. And also having that household knowledge of, you know, well this place has really changed, and it's changed for the better. I don't think that's something you get with Yelp. You don't get the expertise. Everyone on Yelp and other sites has become a critic in this age. It's all over the place. Look at TripAdvisor. Look anywhere online. Recipes online...the comments section... Everyone has a voice now. To me, that waters it down because you don't have any idea who these people are or if they work for the restaurant. Do they work for the company? Did they get fired and they have a bone to pick? Are they the owners' best friends' neighbor? You know...who knows? And I know there are some Yelpers that can get credibility ratings based on how helpful reviews are, but that's not the same as making this our job. I just feel like we have even more of a responsibility to do it right than ever before because people do still look at us, and they want to know where they should go, and they want to know the quality of reporting we're doing. Even if they're not aware of it, they know our product. They can't possibly know what it takes to put a story like that together, but you know. I'm not threatened by Yelp in the least. And I think most people read it realizing they need to take it with a grain of salt. If there's a five star across the board, you know, maybe it's a 3.5 or something. Or if it's a 1, it's probably closer to like a 3. Maybe it depends. I think it's an interesting thing. It's a much bigger deal for the actual businesses than for us. If you have a negative review, it's practically impossible to get rid of that even if it's not true. So we have the benefit of being on the outside of that. I just really rambled. I'm sorry.

Not at all! I feel like that's so true. It's watered down. I like how you put that. It's going to be either positive or negative.

Yeah, it's not for critical thinkers. There's no system by which those people review—air quotes. Whereas we have a very specific system—I'm not even a restaurant critic—but there's a system of what we look at when I go out to eat. Scott, our restaurant critic certainly does. It's a system of checks and balances.

I also wanted to ask about the CRMA...do you borrow ideas from other city magazines? If so, how do you work to make food more local to Denver?

We absolutely look at other city magazines. It's a great place to find ideas or to see a package that maybe we both did, and did they do it better? Did we do it better? And dissecting. I really love that. I also look at a lot of national magazines. I constantly look at *Bon Appétit* because *Bon Appétit* is at the top of the national food game right now. *Saveur* is struggling to find its voice right now with Adam Sax as their new editor. I think he's terrific, but they're sort of taking a fine line. *Bon Appétit* had to do that several years ago when Adam Rappaport came on. But *Bon Appétit* is just full of excitement; I'm just excited to read that magazine. If I can impart that excitement into our food section or our actual packages, that's exciting to me. It gets my juices going and gets me looking in different directions—especially with city magazines because you know they're appealing to their audience and their audience is as specific as ours. Their demographic might be different, but they are appealing to their city. How are they putting the magnifying glass on their city? And how can we do that here without ripping them off? Then nationally, I think taking national trends and seeing them play out here...or I love when I see a trend here and then the next issue of *Bon Appétit* I see it on a national level. But if you're not reading locally and nationally and paying attention, you're going to miss that. I just think it's our responsibility to show our readers how we fit in nationally. You know Denver has gotten a bad rap for being behind on the times, and if there's a trend, it'll be the last to get here, and that's not the case anymore. We need to continue that conversation that we are right on trend. So taking national stories and applying them locally...a lot of times we'll do an around town, or in the feature well, when I write 25 Best Restaurants, I look at national trends. Last year, Acorn was No. 1. And that was the first time since we started this list that Frasca's was not No. 1. They were No. 2. And it's not because Frasca's is not a good restaurant. It's one of the best in the state, but it's a very certain ilk of restaurant, and it's not achievable for the vast majority. Not very many people can go weekly or monthly or even once a year and spend \$350 on dinner. And that felt really relevant considering that. When the trends in dining are going more casual—and I don't mean fast casual, I don't mean that low—but the vast majority of restaurants opening here and across the nation are sitting in that sweet spot where it's more achievable...you can go there once a week, you can go there once a month. And it's not a fan or celebratory event. So to take Frasca out of No. 1 and put Acorn there felt very with the times, and that's what the intro was about: "Dining is changing. It's not just changing here; it's changing nationally, and we need to reflect that in our list." Last year I got so much feedback about it, and pretty much everyone said we were right on; we nailed it. And that's great to hear because not everyone is happy about the list. And I don't care if they're happy; I do care about the fact that they say it's fair, even if they dropped seven spots or maybe aren't even on the list anymore. Keeping it relevant is super important.

What information is important for readers to have when talking about food or drink to serve the reader?

I think we've talked about this a little bit. I really like nuggets. So for every list, food lover's, whatever it is, I want you as a reader coming out of it saying, I want to buy that product, I want to go to that restaurant, and I want to get this dish or buy that doughnut. Whatever it might be. That to me is so much more useful of an overview of what they do. We may have some background information and context, but if we don't give you that sit here, go at 6 p.m. or go at 10 p.m. and order then, then that information becomes lost. It

becomes muddled, especially in that 25 Best Restaurants. That would be 25 overviews, and not a ton of content you can take with you.

And it's very actionable; you're pushing the reader to go do something.

Absolutely. I'll use that dish as a symbol of the restaurant. For example, at Cholon, the textures of the flavors in his dishes, the depth of it, is so amazing, and it's because he's such a great chef, but he's also tapping into Southeast Asian cuisine, which by definition has so many layers of flavors and so many different textures, and if he didn't have those, he wouldn't be accomplishing the cuisine. So yeah those nuggets of information that you can say—I want that doughnut, I want that beer, I want this specific cocktail—is really important. Another important thing is neighborhood. Where is it located? Is this close to you? Is it not close to you? If we're just talking about a dish, but you don't have a context of where it is in the city, I don't think that's entirely helpful. Usually we get the chef's name in there or the owner. I think that's important. It's not 100 percent critical depending on how you write it, but the neighborhood or drink or sit here—those really directives are important.

And this is kind of out of my own curiosity, but why is it that *5280* doesn't typically include prices?

I just think it's distracting. That's my personal view. It's just kind of always been that way. But to have a price in parentheses or within commas, I think it really interrupts the flow of a story, even though your eye glosses right over it. The one place that we occasionally put in prices or at least refer to a price point is Eat Cheap because that makes sense. You're going to spend \$10 on this noodle bowl, but it'll feed you for three days. I think that's important.

To wrap things up, what are some of the challenges you face when working on food stories and ranking places, etc.?

So I think there are lots of challenges actually. I think No. 1 is being out there constantly. Especially in a scene like ours right now, where it's changing almost over night—certainly by the week...just making sure I'm out there and now Callie and you—our team—is out there and has a presence. I don't mean people need to see us; they just need to read us. Ideally they won't see us. We are under the radar enough, then we Tweet about it, Instagram it, blog about it, and that is a real challenge when the scene is changing as quickly as it is. The other challenge for me is *Eater*. It's not competition in the traditional sense because it's not the same genre, but there are times when I worry people are looking at *Eater* on a daily basis as opposed to looking at us, and we're kind of bringing up the rear on that, and the way that I tackle that is—because we don't cover the gossipy news like they do. It's just not our style; our readers just don't demand it. But I like giving more context to a restaurant, to a chef leaving—to whatever we're writing about. I like putting more thought into it. Not that we don't think about what we're doing, but we have the luxury of saying, “OK, I'm going to write about Humble Pie's opening on Valentine's Day.” Well I'm writing about it now—like literally today. I've been able to go twice and really digest what it's like. I can test out the service; I know which my favorite pies are. But I just think it's fair...I think we have the ability to be a little more comprehensive in our approaches. But that creates challenges because it's not always fast

enough, so it's really a double-edge sword. We can jot something off really, really fast without having the full knowledge of the place. Is that better for the readers? Or is it better that they're getting more vetted information? It's sort of the Yelp versus the magazine dilemma. I think we do well. I know print does really, really well. And we're really trying to figure out how to better package our stuff online. Something like food markets has done incredibly well. And I'll tell you why it's done so well. And we're working on tacos now and ice cream after that. We're putting the same amount of energy into these online stories as we would in print. These are magazine stories. They are very traditional service journalism in that they're just round ups. And we're putting them online. I have to say it kind of hurts my soul a little bit to do that because I can visualize what we can do in print. We could do essays, cool graphics, and instead we're putting them online. And you can't do the same elements; they don't connect. At least our site doesn't connect it in the same way. So it's exciting for digital because we're finding that we're able to build this presence, but as a print journalist, it kind of hurts that we're putting that really good content that's reported really well only online. **What was the thought process behind that? Just to get people to the site?** You can ask Jerilyn and Erin about that. There's a huge push right now for that. And food does really, really well online, so they want to build that as much as possible.

One last question: Where do you see food in the whole scheme of the magazine, and how important is food coverage to 5280?

I think they're absolutely critical. And that's not just because it's my area; it's because it's what I hear from readers and friends and family and whomever. And people pick up the magazine because of the service journalism and in particular, usually when it's food. Although our Best New Restaurants last year had pretty low newsstand sales ...

And that's why y'all changed it to where to eat now?

Yeah just to do something different, which I love the Where to Eat Now. It's so relevant. It just feels exciting and almost phonetic in the way this scene feels whereas Best New Restaurants did not feel that way. The way that our methodology was, a best new restaurant had opened since December 2014. A year. And they're no longer new restaurants. Especially in a scene where it's changing like that (*snaps*), it's *really* not a new restaurant. So it was feeling tired, and I was really glad we made the change.

And it's so service-y. It's pushing you to take action now.

Exactly. It's all those nuggets we were talking about. It's you want to eat that churro sandwich; you want to eat that pancake. So it's very go, go, go. This is your list for the next six months or whatever. So back to your question: Just again and again I hear people say I pick up the magazine for the food, whether it's on the cover or it's the review, and then they read the other stuff. Then they're really pleased with everything else and that they've learned so much that they pick it up for the food.

The food is the entry point.

Yes. And I really don't believe it's just because it's me. And food is entertainment now. So it's not just nourishment. It's not just eating anymore. It's a status symbol. It's everything. For me, it's everything.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

No, not really.

OK, well this is great. I feel like a lot of the other editors talked about the travel pieces, so I loved honing in on the food.

And travel does really well for us, too.

Right, and they're bumping that up a little bit.

They are, and I think that will be interesting to see how that does. At what point are we doing too much? And how many more times can we have a cover of a mountain scene? They start to look the same, and I started feeling that way looking at our coverage last year.

Yeah, and when Geoff and Lindsey started talking about that, I was surprised. But I know people here love that.

They do, but I do think you hit a saturation point. We'll see. I think it's one thing to have travel within the magazine but not necessarily on the cover because the cover drives newsstand. If you see something you think you've seen before and are like, "Wow, that looks really familiar," you may not pick up. I think the redesign will help that a little bit, too. So that will be an interesting test of where that all lands.

I'm also interested in seeing how *Where To Eat Now* does.

Me too. Of course we won't know for like four months. But the buzz has been great.

*Interview with Jerilyn Forsythe, Digital Associate Editor
Thursday, March 23 at 3:07 p.m., via email*

What are the biggest challenges you face when translating service packages to the web?

Can I reply with a simple "yes"? ☺

In all seriousness, the biggest challenge is just that: translating service packages to the web. When traditional—or even nontraditional service packages—are being conceived by our print team, its eventual existence online isn't often considered.

Any preemptive thought on digital presentation or additional web components mostly falls on the shoulders of the writers. Some staffers are more interested in how their stories live on the web than others. But as a rule, the digital life of an article—particularly a service package—is as an afterthought (if a thought at all). So, much of the challenge is that the digital process isn't considered in the early stages of story conception or woven into the print process. This has been attempted previously at *5280*, but for many reasons, didn't quite "stick."

The first thoughts on how a service package will look on the web usually start with me, a couple weeks before the issue goes live on 5280.com. Here's a quick and dirty of what happens once the InDesign files are ready: The digital team digs into the files and retroactively tries to piece them back together to make them "make sense" online. (It's often a bit like trying to make a square peg fit into a round hole.) We dissect a story, element-by-element, and try to figure out how we can better present it online. Sometimes, it's just a matter of reorganization. Other times, we have better options for images online, and/or the writers will have extra content to put online (usually text). We used to do "epic" presentations, but have put those on hold during the website redesign. (See: [Best Bars](#); [25 Best Restaurants](#); [Walking Scar\(r\)ed](#), and so on.) Moving forward, we'd like to have two or more templates in Wordpress that lend themselves to service packages.

Do you see these issues being resolved anytime soon, and do you have any ideas for how this can be worked out?

There are two important truths here: The first is that as digital evolves, the experience will have to as well—so the work is never done. The second, and perhaps more important reality, is that *no one*, not even the *New York Times*, has figured out how to seamlessly present service packages online. It's almost like the entire concept of a print service package is so starkly different than what digital audiences are looking for so there is no perfect translation. I think that's why "lists" have become so popular. I'm interested to see how these types of stories take shape and transform in the coming years.

What would you say was the strongest service package online from 2015 (from the feature well)?

I loved [Bucket List](#) (I'm biased.) and Best Bars. Both of these service packages I thought actually worked well in this format (which was inaugurated with the Bucket List story from January 2015.) This makes sense, of course, because both of these stories are essentially "lists." Presenting a story like this month's [April's] Newcomer's Guide proves a little more difficult.

Can you talk about the new online exclusive service packages (markets, tacos) 5280 is doing? What fueled the decision to do these strictly online and not in print?

While we've done online-only "service packages" before (see: [Summer Guide](#); [Month of Cocktails](#)), this particular type of content is definitely new for 5280.com. Previously it was a series of stories that we packaged together.

In 2016, we decided to tackle (surprise!) food-related lists on 5280.com.

What also makes these different is that we're putting the full force of editorial behind them. This has never been such an intentional, collective effort as it has for Food Markets and Top Tacos. It's really wonderful that Callie was brought onto the dining team because I believe it's motivated Amanda (and myself, Erin, Natasha, and whoever) to tackle these stories together. This means we're doing endless hours of expensive research, having it fact-checked, etc. It is also expected that in focusing time, money, and manpower to these packages for 5280.com, that we would be spending less time on daily

content. I believe this will be a slow adjustment over time and will continue to fluctuate and change as our editorial strategy and digital day-to-day capacities do as well.

*Interview with Dave McKenna, Art Director
Monday, April 18 at 4:01 p.m. for 41 min. 22 sec.*

How would you define service journalism and when did you first come into contact with that term? You were with *National Geographic* before *5280*, right? Did they use the term there?

I think the first time I encountered it was at *Money Magazine*, so that was before *Adventurer*. And, you know, *Money Magazine* came from pretty much a service place. They might have done long form narrative, cautionary tales, but generally their cautionary tales were couched in a package of what takeaways were there for a reader with tips boxes. So most of their features were service packages in that the service comes first — what you can offer the reader. It's not just a reading experience. You know, everything is there for a purpose. Oftentimes service journalism might be pretty tightly packed, and that's sort of where the balancing act comes in between edit and our team and how much is too much? So you don't want to overwhelm readers, but you want there to be a lot of value, a lot of service there. The value of service journalism is right at face value. You know what you're getting, all of these tips. You're walking away with these things you can use.

Exactly. That's something you can do and practice. It's interesting you bring up money because that's one of the founding principles of service journalism.

And also money ... you know ... it's a topic ... we're lucky that topics we do here are fun, and there are graphic elements that can draw you in. With financial topics, you know, it can be very homework-y. When I was there, it was like the stock market was still a big thing, and it's like how do you make this kind of content approachable and not like homework. We had editors whose specialty was taxes. So as a designer and art director, how do you make these packages fun? That was the challenge there.

And did they call it service journalism, or did they call it something else?

I'm pretty sure they did. I feel like that's where I heard the term for the first time.

Geoff described you as an editorial art director. Why is it important to really know the text before packaging the material?

Yeah, I mean there are different kinds of stories that I work on. I don't know if you only want me to talk about service journalism ...?

Yeah, my project is focused on service journalism, and I know that's where it gets tricky.

What do you mean?

Layout is crucial for service packages and packed with tons of text and information.

Yeah, I mean it's a little more challenging to design. I was just going to go into why I sort of call myself an editorial art director. I consider myself an editorial art director because I basically take my cues from a story. Like if you were able to use any ... especially when it comes to features. If you could use any color palette, photograph, or illustration style. It's like how do you choose? The text tells you what to do. So I'll always read the text first. And specifically with service packages, I'll always read the text. Some editors up front will assign pieces of varying lengths, so they know what they want to be super short, what they want to be of medium length, and they'll know what they want longer because typically in service packages you want varying lengths. And some editors will assign things all about the same length, so for those I have to read through everything, see what the balance sounds like, see about photos, the text will tell me a bunch of things ... there might be a photo or illustration or just a text treatment. Within that, every once and a while, I'll suggest, 'oh, well maybe this would be better as a charticle treatment, but a lot of times that happens pretty early in the process.

So the writers and editors usually determine the format of the piece?

Yeah and some stories will have those, and some won't. Some service packages will lend themselves ... you know I kind of feel like we're on a little bit of a matrix kick right now. We are doing a lot of matrices, and that's a different way to visually treat the content. It kind of makes it infographic-y. It's a little more subjective. They're fun, even though they can take a reader a couple of seconds to figure it out, but generally the content itself is lighter.

And on that note, do you have a toolbox of formats to pull from?

I mean there's definitely a range that you'd consider. They don't all look the same, and they might have different interpretations. Like each time we do the matrix, we'll sort of mix it up a little bit. Like we had one that was in the shape of a snowflake just to get away from the graph paper look.

So you talked about varying length and then we have these different tools. Several of the editors, especially Lindsey, harped on these different entry points. Can you tell me about your thoughts about that?

Yeah. I mean within a service package we'll have different typefaces and different treatments, so that will help. So every page needs a hierarchy. It can't be a variety of short items all at the same length with the same treatment. Definitely design. Definitely the words matter. To sort of help guide the reader through the page. That's one of the things I look at.

Awesome. Then when you have all of this information, and you want the reader to have a lean-back experience, like Geoff said. So how do you take this into consideration when thinking about layout?

It's definitely about balancing the images on the page. Magazines are definitely a visual medium. So just figuring out the right size for the images to be, what that balance is, how you guide the reader's eye around the page. Pretty much intrinsic for any editorial designer, the grid is really important. So we have a few grids we can use, which helps. Not only do we have one service package, sometimes we have two and even three. So all

of those are competing for the reader's attention within a certain issue then they're kind of reacting off of each other. So yeah, I brought a few here. (He opens up the latest issue, April's "Newcomer Guide.") You know this newcomer's was pretty much a faster links, lots of quick hits. So everything was kind of based on this four-column grid throughout. So each thing was almost taking up one of the four columns. It's just a faster read, and newcomer's is pretty fun, and there's lots of visual things and lots of hierarchy within it — the way the text was treated instead of just completely running. So we can get away with having the faster columns. And pretty much every element of this was different than every other element. But in the "Dark Side of Fitness Feature," there were more repetitive elements. There were also kind of first-person pieces that wanted to be a little more thoughtful, a little slower. Plus, you know some of the content is a little hardcore; it gets a little dark. I mean the headline was, "The Dark Side of Fitness," but we didn't want it to feel depressing. And it was still a service package. It wasn't just sad stories about people who went to the wrong side, wrong path. They still wanted there to be service elements. So we kind of mixed those in with longer, textier ... so the body size, type is more serif because they're more longer reads.

I remember Lindsey also talking about this specific package back in February when we talked, and she was a little worried about the longer lengths of the pieces. So you just have to be aware that you're not overwhelming your readers?

Yeah and what helped with the pacing was this editorial conceit of these reasons: because, because, because. We just always return to that. You know, these elements are similar.

And I talked a little about having a backbone to these packages whether it's a list of something like this with the "because." Would you say that's definitely important in keeping the package coherent?

I think so. And because it wasn't newcomers, and it wasn't best hikes, I think this helped ... these kind of reasons why there was a dark side of fitness ... just helped make the case for spending time with the story. It doesn't necessarily appeal to everyone. I think they want things to appeal broadly to readers; I don't think they were trying to hit the Iron Man crowd with this. I think as more and more people consider their exercise regimens. So this is graphics-light. We do that sometimes. Or you make a graphic out of something that's not always a literal infographic. Sometimes you literally need to show a map or change over time, but these were made just for the visual eye-candy.

So you can work two ways: Edit to graphic or graphic to edit.

Yeah.

(I point to a first-person essay.) That's a first-person, which I know Geoff and Lindsey say it's good to give the reader more of a lean-back experience.

Yeah it slows it down a bit, personalized it. Otherwise it does become like a handbook. It stops feeling like a magazine and just becomes a list of things.

(I point to a by-the-number blurb from the November 2015 spas package.) Do you plan these in or do you consider them if you need to fill space?

Something like this was after the fact. OK, now that we know we're doing a slower grid, it just allows to break it up. And it could always be a pull quote. It doesn't necessarily have to be number-driven. And then of course these illustrations break up the spa images, which gets a little repetitive photographically.

(Flips to altruism package.) We didn't want it to be too daunting. We kept the infographics friendly and on one page instead of scattering through because we had lots of things. We just wanted to segment things a little more. This seemed like a good thing, if the reader was going to take one thing away, it was this. It's all in one place. It's good to get the big picture. So yeah lots of first-person stories. We kept the sidebars on the side to keep it a little slower.

Do you always try to designate that backbone from the sidebars?

Yeah. It helps the hierarchy. It lets readers see a.) this is less important and b) it gives them a start here. I also think it starts looking like a newsletter. You want the pages to be dynamic. If something is a sidebar, and you're making it sans serif and a little smaller, you can get a lot in there. It doesn't have to be shorter, but you're telling the reader to start with the main bar first then go to the sidebar. Sometimes the sidebar is related, sometimes it's unrelated, but it should be read second.

And you guys are doing another design right? In July?

Yeah we are.

Are there elements with service journalism that you've reconsidered?

Service packages, it's an evolutionary process with them. Once the designer gets it, it's evolutionary, too. Then you go back and forth with it. I'll get things basically in their positions then check in on photos and illustrations then if we have a great photo for this and a bad one for that, can we switch it around? So that will evolve a little bit. And also once I kind of get everything maximum density, I'll pitch it back to the editor and ask if this can be cut down or if we have too many elements. As much as we kind of say how much we value white space, in service packages, you don't always have the luxury of a lot of white space. I think a magazine, maybe like *Real Simple* can get away with it because they're oversized and their mantra is simple, so they can do that. And they are tackling issues that are simple. It won and ASME for laundry a few years ago. That's part of their aesthetic and mission. I don't think we're characterizing ourselves as a simple guide to Denver. We try to have white space, and with this redesign, it's something we're trying to get back to. When you do a redesign, it's always kind of there. And when I look back at the first issues after the last redesign, there is more white space. Things were less dense. With this new redesign, we kind of aspire to that again. We want it to be easier, less frenetic, sort of that balance — how much is too much? So starting over with the redesign, that's when you address your grid: How is it working/not working? Can we add some more white space by default, and how can we ... and we are trying to open the point size and leading just to add that in there. It doesn't necessarily have to be around everything. We would never want it to not feel that there's lots of usable information.

Exactly. That's what people are reading it for.

*Interview with Audrey Congleton, Audience Development Manager
Wednesday, March 30 at 11:18 a.m. for 41 min. 4 sec.*

Audrey: Can you give me a rundown of what you consider a service piece?

Yeah, of course. That's part of my project — defining service journalism. Basically, I'm talking about any package that's considered useful to our readers. Every time I ask an editor to define it, I get a broad definition.

OK, good. I glad I'm not dumb wondering what it is.

No, not at all. I've been working on this for a semester and am still wrapping my head around it. Really, overall, it serves our readers. (I point to several service journalism cover lines of magazines she has on her desk.)

A good thing is when we put like “53 tips for ...” It's a number on the cover. So when I think of service, I think of lists: restaurants lists, top doctor lists, top dentists lists. This is a list. (She points to a cover.)

Exactly. That's service.

OK. So just to give you a little bit of a background, Dan told us this year that the three pillars of 5280 are audience develop, sales and edit. Because you can't have one without the other. So since that — and we've been kind-of fighting over the years to be involved in the cover conversation because we are responsible for the newsstand sales. And how can we be responsible for the newsstand sales if we have no part in this part of it (points to the cover), which so heavily affects the newsstand sales. So I'll give you a rundown on a couple of things. Think about when you put a magazine in a rack. You don't see anything underneath my arm (spans it across the middle of the magazine). And some of our pockets do allow you to see the whole cover, but you do have to think when that person looks at the cover, they're only going to see 121. Also, I don't know if you've heard this before, but it's like a 10-15second test. Literally. Or even 5 seconds. It's impulse buying with the candy and gum and whatever. Those are considered impulse buys. So in 5 seconds. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 ... Do you want to buy this cover? Because that's all it takes for them to decide if they want to buy it. So it has to be grabbing.

(She picks up the December 2015 coffee issue.) This one did terrible on newsstands.

Really? I loved that issue!

Right, and you'd think in your mind, ‘Who doesn't love coffee?’ It really is kind of a niche topic. But you also have to think about timing. This is December, which comes out at the end of November, which is Thanksgiving. Think about it. People are traveling; people have family in town; people aren't really out and about. I mean yeah. They might be at the grocery store to buy food and what-not, but maybe it's a really tight budgeting time because Christmas is right around the corner. So they're not picking up stuff like this. So this is a tough time.

So is December always a difficult month in terms of newsstand sales?

Yeah, and August is another one. August is another one we've been having trouble with because it's just Top Doctors. Maybe people are sick and tired of us telling them where to go. So those veteran issues like Top of The Town, Top Doctors, have started to go down over the years.

And that's what we call traditional service.

Let's see ... August 2015 is 8,840. In 2014, it was 10,000. So, you know ... And here's another thing you have to think about. In 2014 there was a picture of a doctor on the cover. It was a woman I think. This year, we went totally opposite and did the first aid kit thing. People smiling on a cover always do better than illustrations usually. So covers like this one (Jan. 2016) makes me nervous. First of all, there's just so much going on with this cover; it's just very busy. This kind-of gets lost—the 75 things to do—because there's so much going on. But November 2015, did really well. It's at like 14,000 copies. So here's the thing about it: There's no science. No fact. No formula. Because I could tell you, when the Bucket List one came out. I hated it, but it did really, really well on newsstands. So that just proves that I don't know what works all the time. I know happy people on the cover work. Another thing: Outdoor covers do a lot better, too.

So what was the best-selling issue for 2015?

So that's January 2015, which totally breaks all the rules. It's really busy; it was an illustration; it was crazy colors ... The second best was the Top of The Town. And that was the first year we kind of changed it up. So technically that's kind-of an illustration/image, but it did really well. Plus, you have to keep in mind, in 2015, we added back the reader's choice. So that could be another thing that was pulling them to buy the issue.

Was that mentioned on the cover at all?

Yes, I believe so. Oh and then I have to tell you, there was a meat-on-plate debacle for a while. I was like they have to stop putting meat on a plate on the front of all of these issues. It was like back-to-back three food issues were meat on a plate. They were like, "Gee, we didn't even notice." I was like we have to stop doing that. This is better (March 2016).

It all starts to look the same.

Exactly. And we changed March this year because it was starting to look the same. It was the 25 same best new restaurants.

And I spoke with Amanda about that; restaurants aren't new anymore with the changing scene.

And it's hard to work so far ahead in our industry, too. Timing is a big one, too. Our magazine comes out at the end of every month, so you have to think about what's going on. I think that's why November and December are so tough because you have to think travel, holiday time. Summer issues, you sometimes you have to think of that.

Out of curiosity, how did the fly-fishing issue do last June?

Yeah, so that did 11,000, about 40 percent sell-thru. Our average sell-thru is like 50 percent, so it's definitely under the average. But if you look at the rest of them, it lands in the middle about. That's also the dentists issue, which we don't put on the cover. Oh the June cover of this one ... it was the girl on the bike. She had dark hair, but they photoshopped it to blonde hair.

What? I didn't know that ...

You didn't know that? Yeah they photoshopped her hair. Look.

Why?

I have no idea. That's a question for them. But it just didn't ... I just don't feel like this even fits our magazine. I know what they were trying to communicate, but ... I mean she's smiling; she's happy. And if you do this test (the arm test), it works. It didn't do horrible, but again it's the top dentists issue, which is full of dentists profiles, so maybe people just don't care about that. And June comes out in May, which is right when kids are getting out of school, and summer is starting. They could be doing camps, you never know what's going to happen. Another thing I want to add is that I'm audience development. Audience is anybody with an eyeball. The problem with newsstand sales is I don't know who you are. I assume they're similar to our subscribers, but I don't know who's picking it up. We don't have the demographic information on that. So that's tough. For the most part you want to think it's in line with your subscribers but ... there was a February issue with like a sexy cocktail. It was Best Bars, but it had a picture of a pink martini glass. I was arguing that when I think of a bar, that's kind of dude thing. I think of beer or a simple cocktail. I don't think that necessarily helped. Even though it was February around Valentine's Day, I don't think it worked.

And wasn't the background dark?

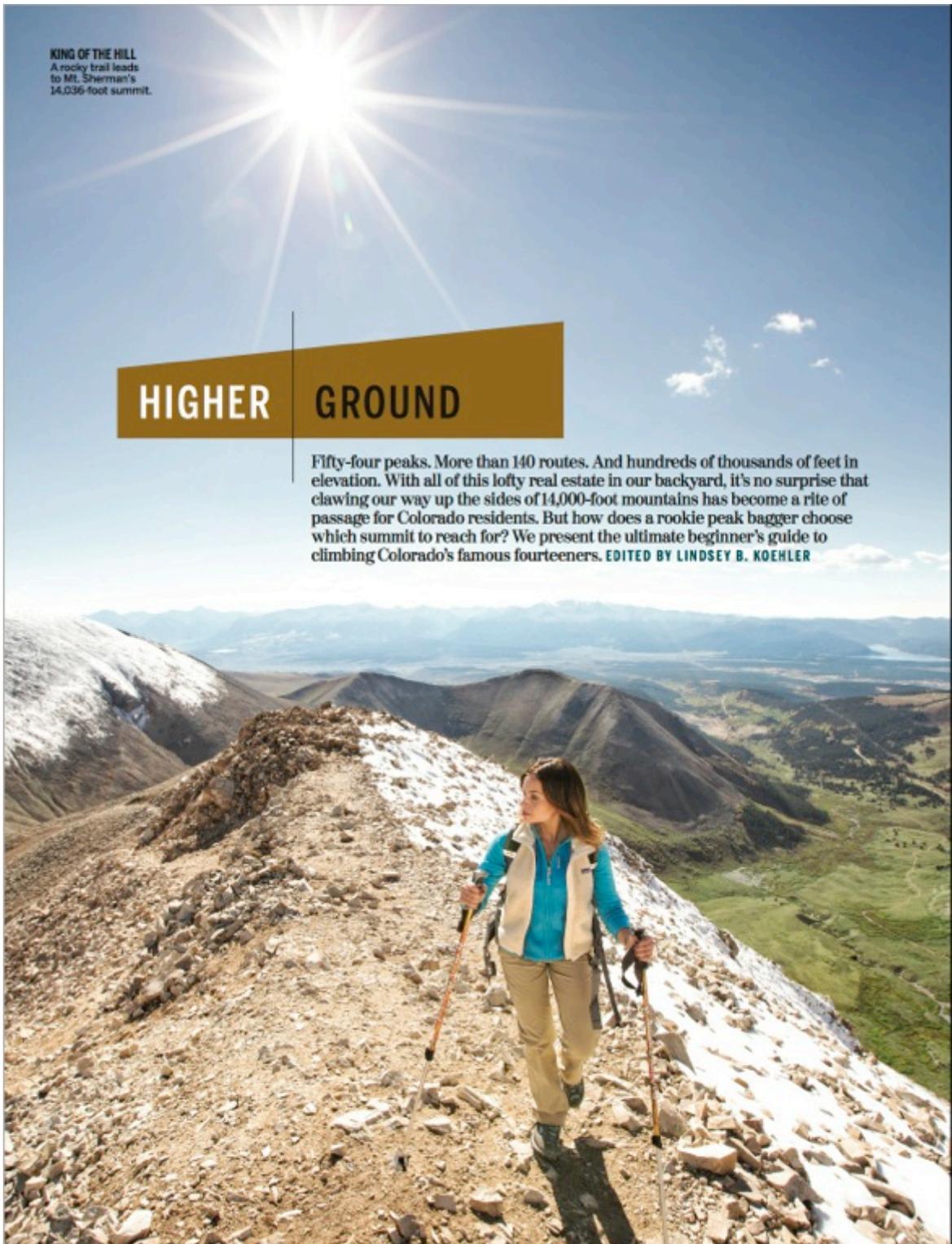
Yes. And dark, dark covers don't do well. But then again there's going to be an outlier because there's no perfect science to it. That sale was 9,400. Terrible. 32 percent sell-thru. ... This was one of our best-selling issues ever (about fourteeners). There's a person; it's outdoorsy.

Right, and very Colorado-specific.

And this one did well, too. (May 2014 bike rides) Yeah so May had 17,000 and June 20,000, so now you see the trend, too, that newsstand sales are going down overall in the industry. Oh and here's a good stat I sent to Dan. 2015 sales are down 5.64 percent from 2014, which is 5280. As an industry whole, they were down 15 percent. So that's a big deal. 2014 industry average overall was 29.4 percent. City and regional magazines were 30 percent. So this is the sell-thru percentage. 5280 is 43 percent on average. So as a local city and regional magazine, we're doing better than a national magazine in the area. That's a big deal.

APPENDIX 5: EXAMPLES

Fourteeners!, June 2013



KING OF THE HILL
A rocky trail leads
to Mt. Sherman's
14,036-foot summit.

HIGHER GROUND

Fifty-four peaks. More than 140 routes. And hundreds of thousands of feet in elevation. With all of this lofty real estate in our backyard, it's no surprise that clawing our way up the sides of 14,000-foot mountains has become a rite of passage for Colorado residents. But how does a rookie peak bagger choose which summit to reach for? We present the ultimate beginner's guide to climbing Colorado's famous fourteeners. **EDITED BY LINDSEY B. KOEHLER**



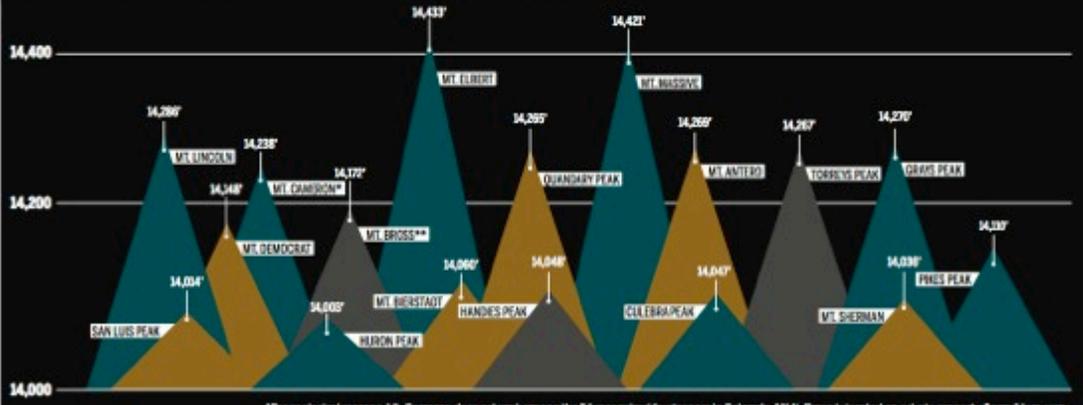
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THE LONG VIEW
 The West Slopes route up Mt. Bierstadt offers plenty of scenic spots to take a breather.



A NOVICE'S CHECKLIST

The 17 fourteeners Mother Nature built for beginners.



*For geological reasons, Mt. Cameron does not rank among the 54 recognized fourteeners in Colorado. **Mt. Brooks is located on private property. www.14ers.com

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES; CHART: SEAN PARSONS



MT. BIERSTADT

- TRAILHEAD ELEVATION
11,669 feet
(West Slopes standard route)
- SUMMIT ELEVATION
14,060 feet
- HIKING DISTANCE
7 miles round-trip
- TIME
2.5 to 3 hours up; 2 hours down
- DRIVE TIME FROM DENVER
1.5 hours

14,060

A Close Encounter

I'M NOT GOING TO LIE: Peering up at a tall mountain while simultaneously thinking about climbing it usually gives me vertigo. But from the parking lot, the summit of Mt. Bierstadt—one of the closest fourteeners to Denver—looks entirely attainable. I tell myself it's probably just the way the sunlight is hitting the treeless mountainside on this early July morning, but the 98th highest peak in the Centennial State is less intimidating than I expected. Which is maybe why, at 7:25 a.m. on a Monday, there are 60 other people layering up, lacing their hiking boots, checking that they have at least 1.5 liters of water per person, applying sunscreen, and taking a last (vault) potty break before they begin the ascent.

The first mile of the standard West Slopes route supports my idea that this might actually be a double climb: It's a relatively flat walk, mostly on a dirt path that morphs into elevated boardwalks in some of the swamplier areas. My husband, our six-year-old boxer, and I cruise along, taking in views of nearby ponds and the Sawtooth ridge, which *is* intimidating and snakes all the way to Mt. Evans. Once the climb really begins, it doesn't let up. This

middle part of the ascent is the most lung-busting, but there are some long switchbacks and great spots to pull up a patch of grass and snack on some oxygen. As a novice peak bagger, I am initially worried that my pace will be too slow, but as we climb higher it's apparent there's no need to rush. Afternoon thunderstorms are a real menace any time after 12:30 p.m., but the sky is still impossibly clear at 10 a.m.

From the outset, the trail is easy to follow and is mostly free of scree and boulder fields until we reach the final crest, turn left, and find ourselves looking upon a wide ridge that purses to the rocky summit. Before we make for the top, we look northwest to see Torreys and Grays peaks, peer down the dizzying backside of Bierstadt to spot Frozen Lake, and watch for small mouselike animals called pikas among the rocks.

The push to the summit does not have a well-defined trail. The landscape is a jumble of large boulders that will tax your already tired legs. My husband has to lend me a hand in a few spots, but the last 300 feet aren't a punishing cardio workout. We force ourselves to go all the way to the tippy top to make certain we actually hit 14,060 feet. The blown-open views make us happy we do. —LBK

WAKE-UP CALL Bierstadt is close enough to Denver that you don't have to camp near the trailhead to get an early enough start. We awoke at 5 a.m., left our Denver home at 5:55 a.m., and were hiking by 7:30 a.m. If you want to camp the night before, there are plenty of backcountry spots along Guanella Pass, or you can grab a spot at the nearby Burning Bear or Whiteside campgrounds (\$16, two vehicles allowed).



DOG IS MY CLIMBING PARTNER Parts of the Mt. Bierstadt trail go through the Mt. Evans Wilderness Area, which requires dogs to be on leash. We took our four-legged friend, who managed

the route better than we did. However, hikers need to be aware they are responsible for their animal's safety on the mountain. In August 2012, Colorado resident Anthony Ortolani took his dog Missy on a hike along the Sawtooth ridge and abandoned the five-year-old German shepherd after bad weather rolled in and the animal's paws were too cut up for her to descend. The dog languished on the mountain for eight days before volunteer rescue hikers found her and saved the dehydrated 112-pound shepherd. Ortolani pleaded guilty to a charge of animal cruelty in October and was sentenced to a year of unsupervised probation and 30 hours of community service. Bottom line: Treat your pooch like any other hiker.

GETTING THERE From Denver, drive west on U.S. 285 until you reach the town of Grant. In Grant, turn north on Guanella Pass Scenic Byway and drive about 13 miles to the top of Guanella Pass. You'll see the parking lot for the trailhead on the right.

PERMISSION SLIP

Should permits be required to climb our famed peaks?

→ Coloradans like to think of the Rocky Mountains as pristine wilderness, but the truth is many of the state's popular fourteeners—like Longs Peak, Mt. Bierstadt, Mt. Elbert—are experiencing overexposure. To combat the degradation and overcrowding, local wilderness officials have been discussing a permits system, which would decrease the number of people who climb Colorado's high hills.

One such proposal surfaced in 2010 for the South Colony Basin, a spot known for its access to three fourteeners. The U.S. Forest Service began kicking around a \$10 day-use permit to pay for necessary maintenance. The proposal met with resistance but is still under consideration, according to the U.S. Forest Service's Jim Bedwell. Bedwell concedes there are problems with permitting, including the

cost and staff necessary to manage the paperwork and the patchwork system of organizations that would need to issue said permits. Lloyd Athearn, executive director of the Colorado Fourteeners Initiative (CFI), shares those concerns (the nonprofit itself has no formal position on the issue), and adds limiting use doesn't always mean limiting damage.

That's why CFI and other similar organiza-

tions focus on building trails that can mitigate harm caused by thousands of footfalls. Athearn says a permits system could hurt his organization's efforts: Hikers who have to pay to climb may be less willing to donate to organizations like his, and more important, money from permits doesn't always necessarily go toward on-mountain maintenance—which means a permits system could be a detriment to the only solution anyone's found for rescuing our state's too-trampled fourteeners. —Dan England

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GREG MABLY

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14,270

GLOSSARY

Climbing lingo you'll need to know—and use.

ACUTE MOUNTAIN SICKNESS (AMS)

Caused by low-oxygen environments (anything above about 5,000 feet in elevation), this usually minor medical condition is often characterized by headache, fatigue, nausea, and dizziness. AMS can become serious during extended stays at very high or extreme altitude (above 11,500 feet). Fluid can build up in the lungs (high altitude pulmonary edema, HAPE) or brain (high altitude cerebral edema, HACE), both of which require immediate descent to lower elevation.

CLASS Routes on Colorado's fourteeners are generally rated by class. Classes 1 and 2 are "hiking" routes and include easy to moderately difficult hiking on good to slightly less-well-maintained trails. Routes that are classified as 3, 4, or 5 are considered "climbing" routes, which can range from moderate scrambling (Class 3) and climbing steep and dangerous terrain (Class 4) to technical climbing that requires rope and belaying (Class 5).



«**CAIRN** A noticeable pile of rocks placed by hikers to mark a trail, particularly when the trail is difficult to discern.

SADDLE A high pass between two or more adjacent peaks.

SCREE Small, loose rocks that often make stable footing difficult.

SUMMIT As a noun, the topographically highest point of a mountain; as a verb, the action of reaching such a high point.

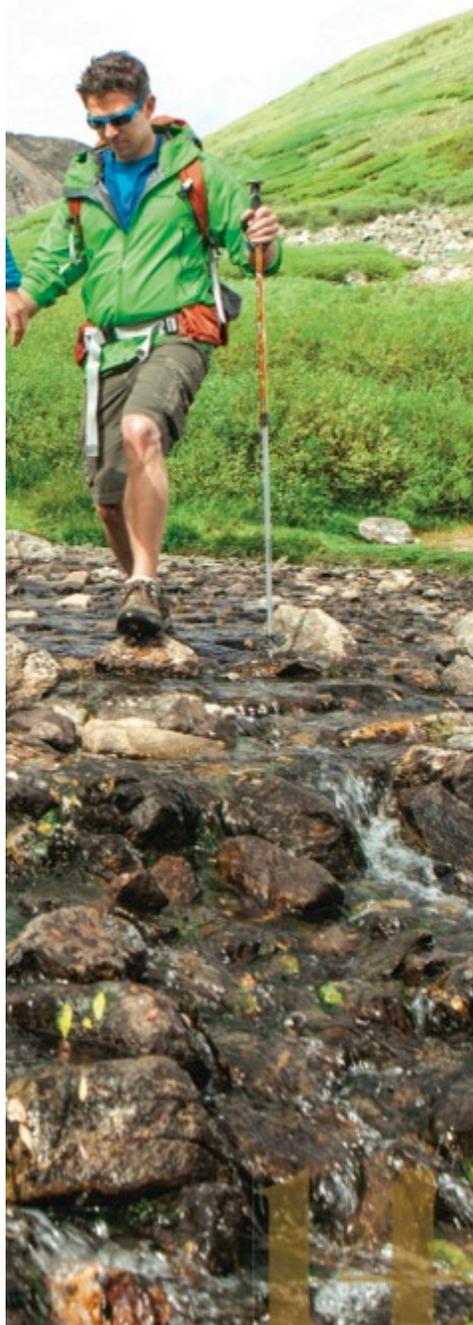
STANDARD ROUTE The most common—and often easiest—path of a particular climb; many fourteeners have multiple routes to their summits.

TRAVERSE As a noun, a section of a route that progresses in a horizontal direction; as a verb, the action of climbing in a horizontal direction.

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SLIPPERY WHEN WET
Grays Peak Trail crosses Stevens Gulch Creek before heading upvalley toward Grays and Torreys peaks.



GRAYS + TORREYS PEAKS

- **TRAILHEAD ELEVATION**
11,280 feet (Grays Trail standard route)
- **SUMMIT ELEVATION**
Grays, 14,270 feet; Torreys, 14,267 feet
- **HIKING DISTANCE**
8.25 miles round-trip
- **TIME**
4 hours up; 2 hours down
- **DRIVE TIME FROM DENVER**
1 hour and 15 minutes

Half The Battle

COLORADANS HAVE A BAD HABIT of being a little too flip about climbing fourteeners—I mean, c'mon, these are huge mountains!—and that's especially true with Grays and Torreys peaks. The mountains, which are a short drive from Denver, are wildly popular beginner fourteeners because their respective terrains are moderate and hikers can do both in a single day-trip. So...I try to be dismissive of the excursion as well. I know I will still have to schlep up two summits, but, as my friends remind me, the mountains are connected by a saddle, making it comparatively easy to hike up one and cross over to the other.

At least, that's the refrain I repeat to myself as we drive west on I-70 to begin our early morning climb. It's still chilly at 8 a.m. on a late-summer day when we layer up in Under Armour and sweatpants and strike out on Grays Trail, a dirt path that dissolves into gravel before larger rocks and boulders appear as we climb higher.

Unlike many fourteeners, the treeless peaks of Grays and Torreys are visible from the outset. But as we ascend, the mountains don't appear to be getting any closer. They are, I decide, mocking me. But I am undeterred. We continue upward, the sun warming our backs on the wide-open trail. We curve left, then right, and back again as the grass-lined route undulates through the postcard-worthy valley. At the trail junction about two miles in—where hikers can choose to tackle Grays first or Torreys—we stop to rest, snack, hydrate, and de-layer. The summits still look painfully far away, but I am feeling good—enjoying myself even. Most of our fellow peak baggers—we are joined by a few hundred other hikers, though the trail never feels too crowded—head left toward Grays, so we venture right, putting Torreys squarely in our sights. Using rocks as stepping stones, we follow cairns to the saddle, which lies about 500 feet from the summit of Torreys. It is here, after spotting a family of mountain goats precariously balanced just off the path, that I notice a distinct change. The mountaintop looms large, but I'm losing my drive. I've consumed more than a liter of water, yet I notice a light throbbing in my head. I suddenly feel a little weak, sluggish. I know immediately I'm suffering mild altitude sickness.

The symptoms aren't subsiding after a five-minute break, but they're not bad enough to force me to stop. Not when I'm so close. Slowly, we trudge the final feet and reach the summit. We are greeted by a few dozen others, beers in hand, who arrived there before us; many of them have already ascended Grays. I look south toward the sister peak. It doesn't appear *that* far away—but my body simply won't let me do it. Instead, I descend and watch one of my companions skirt the saddle to crack a beer of his own at 14,270 feet. In my case, the Rocky Mountains won half of the battle, but as much as I wish I had been able to summit Grays, I am proud to say I conquered Torreys.

—Daliah Singer

A FULL ITINERARY If you live in Denver, camping nearby the right before isn't necessary to hike Grays and Torreys. But if you want to make the fourteeners part of a weekend excursion, plan a hike to nearby Chihuahua Lake, outside of Keystone, which you can see from both summits. You'll want a four-wheel-drive vehicle to reach the trailhead.



FEEL THE BURN Up the adventure quotient on your fourteener quest by approaching Torreys Peak via the more technical Kelo Ridge. You'll follow Grays Trail until, at around 12,300 feet, instead of curving left you'll turn right toward some old mining buildings. The exposed ridge is a Class 3 scramble over hunks of granite. Some people choose to bring a rope and harness, though it's not required. Instead of the difficult descent, follow the traditional trail to conquer Grays or head all the way down.

GETTING THERE Take I-70 west to the Baker-ville exit (221). Turn south onto Stevens Gulch Road/CR 321 and continue for about four miles—you'll see signs for the Grays Peak trailhead—until you reach a parking area.

14,267

14,148

THE DECALIBRON LOOP

- **TRAILHEAD ELEVATION**
12,000 feet
(Combo standard route)
- **SUMMIT ELEVATION**
Mt. Democrat, 14,148 feet;
Mt. Cameron, 14,238 feet; Mt. Lincoln, 14,296 feet; Mt. Broas, 14,172 feet
- **HIKING DISTANCE**
7.25 miles round-trip
- **TIME**
6 hours round-trip
- **DRIVE TIME FROM DENVER**
2 hours

The Four Pack

THE DECALIBRON LOOP is a well-known mountaineering route that lies less than 15 miles outside of Fairplay. The undulating trail allows hikers to summit four 14,000-foot peaks in one day, which is not an uncommon feat. There are at least a dozen groupings of fourteeners that can be conquered in a day-trip.

MT. DEMOCRAT Although it's the shortest and first mountain I summit, Mt. Democrat requires the day's most strenuous climb. From the Kite Lake Trailhead, a mild start to the ascent unfolds before two long, steep traverses put me at the saddle between Mt. Democrat and Mt. Cameron. A giant rock garden to the south looks like it leads to the summit, which doesn't appear to be all that far off. Except, when I arrive at the top, it's not the top at all: What looks like the end of my climb is a false summit. It's another 250 feet skyward to the west to reach the true apex, from which point I see much of the rest of my (up-and-down) day laid out before me.

MT. CAMERON The drawback to conquering so many summits in a dayhike is the requisite backtracking. After snapping pics at the top of Democrat, I retrace my steps through the rock garden back down to the saddle between Mt. Democrat and Mt. Cameron. I pause here for a midmorning snack and ponder whether I'm really ready to hike farther: This is the best turnaround point before I'm



TICKTOCK Based on a moderate pace, the suggested Decalibron Loop start time is no later than 6:30 a.m. This is made easier by snagging one of the free camping spots just feet off Buckskin Street near the trailhead. Show up midafternoon on the day before your hike as the free sites often fill up in the late afternoon. Or take your chances with the five nonreservable paid sites at the Kite Lake Campground, which cost \$15 per night (\$12 for camping, \$3 for parking).



14,238

FRATERNITY OF FOURTEENERS
The Decalibron Loop—a name created from the first few letters of each of the mountains' names—is an efficient way to conquer multiple peaks.



committed to completing the entire loop. I decide I'm game. The haul to the zenith of Mt. Cameron is easily the most exhausting of the day—not because it's any more difficult but because my legs are already weary from the 2,148-foot ascent of Democrat. To add insult to what feels like respiratory injury, Mt. Cameron doesn't officially count as a fourteener. The flat summit of Mt. Cameron only rises 138 feet above the saddle to adjacent Mt. Lincoln. According to someone's arbitrary and, I think, silly rules, Cameron's high point would need to rise 300 feet above that saddle to claim the fourteener title on its own. I count it anyway.

MT. LINCOLN The view from the eighth-highest peak in Colorado is worth the short but steep pebble-strewn climb. I'd probably perch here

GETTING THERE

From Breckenridge, take Colorado Highway 9 about 16 miles south to Alma, Colorado. Take a right on CR 8/Buckskin Street and drive about six miles to the Kite Lake Trailhead. The closer you get to the trailhead, the dirt road turns from passable washboard to a treacherous four-wheel-drive path. Park and walk if you're concerned about your vehicle's clearance.

PHOTOGRAPHY: CLIMBER/COURTESY; PHOTOGRAPHY: JEFF NELSON; THE PALE, PEARL TOP: LUCAS JARVIS/COURTESY; JARVIS/VALENTIN

for hours if I could; however, space is at a premium on Mt. Lincoln. Any more than 15 people crowded atop the rocky summit makes even the most stable hiker leery of the sheer cliffs. There are a few folks climbing up behind me, but it's the wind that sends me in search of lower terrain. And thankfully, it's almost all downhill from the top of Lincoln. I relish the easygoing ridgeline hike before entering a series of switchbacks that leads me back to the trailhead—or, for those who've made special arrangements, to Mt. Bross.

MT. BROSS This 14,172-footer is one of the 54 recognized fourteeners, but unless one has permission (a near impossibility) the climb is illegal; the privately owned peak requires permission from landowners to summit. The Colorado Fourteeners Initiative, a nonprofit that preserves the state's fourteeners, is working with landowners to open the summit, but for

COMING UP SHORT

Our sub-14,000-footers deserve love, too.

→ Colorado's fourteeners get all the attention, but many other peaks are just as fun to climb. Dan England, outdoor and entertainment editor for the *Greeley Tribune*, occasional mountain guide, and conqueror of all of Colorado's fourteeners, suggests four shorter hills.

FLATTOP MOUNTAIN

(12,224 feet, *Easy*) Unlike many in its height category, this popular peak in Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP) offers a trail all the way to the top. Take a left at the summit to hike over tundra and hit Hallett Peak (12,713 feet), about a half-

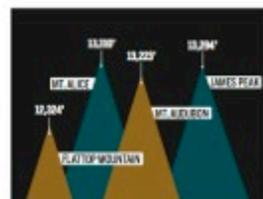
mile jaunt away, for a stunning view of Longs Peak.

MILAUDUBON (13,223 feet, *Easy*)

The Indian Peaks Wilderness' most well-traveled peak has a trail almost all the way to the summit, and yet its wild beauty and breathtaking views make it feel like a much more exciting adventure.

JAMES PEAK (13,294 feet, *Moderate*)

Many aspiring mountaineers—the kind who might one day like to summit more dangerous and exotic peaks—learn how to navigate snow and ice by trekking this peak's St. Mary's Glacier route.



MT. ALICE (13,800 feet, *Difficult*)

The long approach is the bane of any peak bagger's existence, as the fun stuff often occurs near the summit. Mt. Alice's approach is a really long 18 miles, but the journey truly is the reward. Alice's trail winds through the Wild Basin segment of RMNP, an underrated beauty full of waterfalls, streams, and the famous Lion Lakes. Alice's summit, if you can believe it, is boring in comparison.

14.286



now the organization recommends hikers respect those property rights. Hikers do often make the push up this final summit without approval, but it's important to be aware of trespassing laws (specifically CRS 18-4-504) and their penalties, which can range from a \$50 to \$750 fine and include jail time. The trail down from Bross zigzags inside the cirque and is littered with steep declines and pea gravel. Hikers will want to de-layer as they descend and stop to dip their toes in the creek near the hike's end. —Lindsey R. McKissick

PACK IT IN

The must-have equipment list.

- **DAYHIKING PACK**
Nothing heavy or bulky
- **STURDY SHOES**
Cross-trainers or hiking boots will do fine
- **LAYERS**
Summertime climbs can be chilly in the morning and hot in the afternoon

- **WATER**
A bottle or a bladder is required; bring enough for your dog
- **FOOD**
Pack trail mix, jerky, or granola bars to replace spent calories
- **WATCH**
It's good to keep track of time—afternoon

- **SUN PROTECTION**
Many trails are exposed and, at 14,000 feet, the sun is piercing
- **HEAD LAMP**
- **POCKET KNIFE**
- **CELL PHONE**
You may not always have reception but bring it anyway—it could be a lifesaver

- **MAPS AND A COMPASS**
Most of the "easy" fourteeners do not require route-finding skills, but it's always good to have these in your pack
- **FIRST-AID KIT**
If nothing else, you may want Band-Aids for blisters
- **MARCHES**
This fits into the it-can't-hurt category

↑
MT. SHERMAN

- **TRAILHEAD ELEVATION**
12,000 feet
(Southwest Ridge from Fourmile Creek standard route)
- **SUMMIT ELEVATION**
14,036 feet
- **HIKING DISTANCE**
5.25 miles, starting at the gate
- **TIME**
2.5 hours up;
1 hour down
- **DRIVE TIME FROM DENVER**
2 to 2.5 hours

A Historical *Twist*

TAKING A LOWLANDER to altitude and then asking her to summit a tall mountain is almost never a great idea. In fact, it's often a recipe for respiratory distress. But I'd gotten the day off from work to conquer what would be my ninth fourteener—and I needed a climbing buddy. So I texted my friend Emily, who happened to be visiting from the East Coast.

"Wanna do a fourteener with me on Friday?"

Although Emily had lived in Colorado off and on for five years before moving to Boston, I knew she'd never done a fourteener. She texted me back with a quick, "Yes!"

On the morning of the hike, we pack the car with provisions, agree if at any point Emily can't handle the elevation we'll turn around, and leave Denver around 8 a.m. We reach the trailhead at 10:30 a.m. I'd hoped to get there earlier to avoid afternoon storms, but sleeping in got the better of us.

We luck out with a bluebird day.

The first half of the hike is gradual; an old rock-strewn road winds us up and around various mining ruins, including the Dautless and Hilltop mines, where we stop to take a few snaps. The surrounding landscape is also photo-worthy, although

maybe not beautiful in the traditional sense. The mountainside is rocky and barren, but the cobalt sky is a brilliant contrast to the ruddy orange hues of the Colorado clay and gray rock that dot the mountain. During our lunch break near the Hilltop Mine, we sit on a side trail with our feet outstretched, taking in the views of the valley and Fourmile Creek Road. I try not to let on that I am watching Emily closely, but at 12,800 feet in elevation, she seems to be handling the hike just fine.

We continue, and at the top of the saddle between Mt. Sheridan (a thirteener) and Mt. Sherman, the town of Leadville slides into view along with a breathtaking look at Turquoise Lake. With vistas like this, I am eager to reach the summit. We start up Mt. Sherman's southwest ridge, at about 13,150 feet, when I realize we need to stop. I tell Emily to slow down—but not because she needs a breather. Instead, I'm the one in need of a short break. I huff and puff and dive into my trail mix for fuel. I look at Emily with amazement as she waits for me, even offering a gulp of her water. She—a flatlander!—is out-hiking me. As a longtime Coloradan, I feel a twinge of embarrassment.

But that feeling melts away as we reach the most difficult portion of the hike—a narrow edge laced with scree. We skirt over it, taking care not to dwell on the drop-off. Instead, we fixate on our destination, the oh-so-close summit, where we relish a deep breath and the knowledge that we made it to the top together. —Dana Pritts



LOOK INTO THE PAST

The mining town of Leadville sprang up in 1881 on the east side of Mt. Sheridan and in its heyday boasted a population of more than 200 hearty souls who lived their lives in search of gold, silver, and zinc. Mining ruins now pepper the entire

area, including the hiking trails, and make for great side jaunts and photo opportunities. You'll definitely lay eyes on the Dautless Mine and the Hilltop Mine. Be careful, though: The ruins are fragile and unstable; do not enter or touch the structures.

GETTING THERE

From Fairplay, drive about a mile south on U.S. 285, then turn right onto CR 18. You'll drive along this road until you reach a closed gate at about 12,000 feet. This gate marks the trailhead. On busy summer weekends, you may not be able to park at the trailhead. Instead, park at a lower-elevation pull-off and hoof it to the gate.



THE FIRST PEAK BAGGER

Carl Blaurock pioneered a craze that lives on today.

➔ Prospectors and American Indians hiked many of Colorado's highest peaks way back in the 1800s, but it's safe to say that no one had climbed all of the state's fourteeners until 1923. That year, Denverites Carl Blaurock and Bill Ervin completed the list of 46 (revised surveys later raised the count to 54) by summiting Kit Carson Peak in the

Sangre de Cristo Range. In the '20s, there were no guidebooks, no trip reports on 14ers.com, not even roads to many trailheads. Blaurock, who climbed his first fourteener, Pikes Peak, at age 15, recalled that he and Ervin would ride the train from Denver to Creede and "walk over to Ouray and Telluride and climb the peaks in between." For perspective: The

➔ Carl Blaurock (third from left) with a hiking group atop La Plata Peak, August 1934



COURTESY OF COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB HISTORIES

14,036

THE MOTHER LODE
The area around Mt. Sherman is rich with mining history, including visible remnants like those of the former Hilltop Mine.



PHOTO TOP: JEFF FALSON; COURTESY OF COLORADO MOUNTAINS IN MOTION

shortest walking route between Creede and Telluride is at least 75 miles and traverses the state's wildest terrain—and that's before any detours they took to bag other peaks.

To put their feet into further context, lightweight, weatherproof Gore-Tex was but a dream for these hardy hikers. Blaurock wore Army surplus wool shirts, neatly buttoned at the collar, baggy Army britches with puttees, and a floppy wool hat. The climbers smeared a concoction of charcoal and

petroleum jelly on their faces to serve as sunscreen. And when the wind howled, they stuck folded newspapers inside their shirts and trousers for extra protection.

Though today he would be labeled an "extreme" climber, Blaurock welcomed beginners on his hikes and never took himself too seriously. In fact, Blaurock was known for celebrating successful ascents by doing a headstand on the highest point of each mountain he climbed.



He was also a charter member of the Colorado Mountain Club (which still operates today) and taught hundreds of others to climb and ski, including women, who joined his trips as often as men. David Lavender, who Blaurock taught in 1927 to glissade down sweeping snowfields, wielding an ice axe as a brake, wrote of his mentor's "gentleness, patience, and ability to make others feel comfortable on an uncomfortable cliff."
—Dougald MacDonald

THE 411

Credible information from local sources.

- 13ERS.COM
- 14ERS.COM
- 100SUMMITS.COM
- COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB, CMC.ORG
- COLORADO FOURTEENERS INITIATIVE, 14ERS.ORG

CLIMBER'S TOOLKIT

If you're ready for more difficult terrain, here are three talents you'll need to hone. —DE

→ SCRAMBLING

This skill requires the ability to move over challenging and exposed terrain without the use of ropes. Routes that require scrambling are rated Class 2 up to Class 4. Check out *Colorado Scrambles* (Colorado Mountain Club Press, 2005) by Dave Cooper for routes to learn on.

→ ROUTE FINDING

To climb more difficult mountains, you'll need to be able to find the best way up a peak. Learn to recognize when a mountain feels more difficult or is taking longer than it should. That can mean you're off the best route. And while there are no posted signs, cairns set out by previous hikers often mark the way. Being able to navigate using maps and a compass is also a good idea.

→ FOCUSING

It's OK to be nervous about falling, but fear should focus you, not paralyze you. Learn to be confident on climbs with significant drop-offs and skirry pathways because those things are a part of more challenging fourteeners. You'll gain that confidence with every climb, but going with a guide or a more experienced friend can help.

THINK YOU'RE READY?

These fourteeners will show you what the harder ones are really like.

■ MT. SHEFFELS (14,150 feet)

This peak in the San Juan Mountains offers a scree-filled gully that feels as if you're hiking up marbles and a spooky exposed notch just before the summit.

■ MT. LINDSEY (14,042 feet)

From the Northwest Ridge Loop route, there are two ways to reach the top—and both are dicey. One is more exposed but solid, and the other veers from the cliffs but is full of loose scree.

■ MT. EDUIS (14,080 feet)

This peak, deep in the Needle Mountains, challenges your comfort with exposure. They don't call it the "sidewalk in the sky" for nothing, but the route is solid and fun.

HURON PEAK

○ TRAILHEAD ELEVATION
10,560 feet
(North Ridge from Clear Creek standard route)

○ SUMMIT ELEVATION
14,003 feet

○ HIKING DISTANCE
6.75 miles round-trip (11 miles round-trip if you hike the four-wheel-drive road)

○ TIME
3.5 to 4 hours up; 1.5 hours down; add 4.25 (relatively flat) miles' worth of time if you must hike the four-wheel-drive road

○ DRIVE TIME FROM DENVER

Scrambled Legs

HURON PEAK CAN BARELY call itself a fourteener. It pushes past the mark with just three feet to spare—as if one little boulder at the top is jutting over the measuring stick. Reports describe this Sawatch Range beauty in the San Isabel National Forest as “scenic,” “enjoyable,” and “a great choice for my first fourteener.” Having scampered up plenty of peaks over the years, I figure I’m in for a mild, ho-hum ascent when we set out one Saturday in early September.

Not quite.

Admittedly, my friend and I got off to an easy start when we hitch a ride

with two other hikers along the old jeep road between the lower and upper trailheads. The two-mile dirt stretch is usually passable only in all-terrain vehicles—definitely the way to go if you want to cut two non scenic miles out of your hike each way.

By 8 a.m. we're on the trail (the path forks in two directions at the trailhead; look for the wooden “Huron Trail” sign marking the left-hand standard route, also known as the North Ridge). Navigating switchback after switchback

through the woods, we move steadily through the pine-scented air, and I try not to notice how hard I'm breathing each time we hit a steep pitch. Just shy of 12,000 feet we break timberline, and our heads-down push through the forest is rewarded with sprawling views of a trio of peaks aptly named the Three Apostles.

Shortly after, the trail dips into a grassy meadow basin surrounded by 360-degree views of the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness. Hefty boulders dot the well-maintained trail, making for convenient resting points to guzzle some water or scarf a granola bar. But when the path rises out of the basin and melts into a stone staircase along a ridge, every step provokes a new muscle spasm in my quads. Eventually, the marked route dissolves into one big rocky pitch upward—basically a *Choose Your Own Adventure* scramble—about a quarter-mile from the summit.

Red-faced, legs shaking, and lungs on fire, I crest the

last cluster of boulders around 11:40 a.m. I want to collapse on the rock and nap on the summit all afternoon. Instead, we settle for 30 minutes, a sandwich, and panoramic views that render my start-and-stop slog (and my silly notion that any fourteener would ever be an easy stroll) a distant memory.

—Julie Dugdale



BRING THE TENT

Huron is a haul from Denver—too much for a day-trip. If you have a car that can handle it, there are some nice dispersed backcountry camping spots along the four-wheel-drive dirt road before the trailhead. Drive down midday on Saturday, set up your camp, cook a hearty meal around the campfire, and get a good night's rest. Hit the trail right outside your tent in the morning. Or, leave Denver in the wee hours to arrive at Huron early, keep your camping stuff in the car, and set up your campsite after you finish your trek—a plan that's much more conducive to kicking back with some celebratory drinks around the campfire.

TIP

If you don't have a four-wheel-drive vehicle that can make it about two miles up a rutted dirt road to the upper lot and trailhead gate, you'll need to park and walk starting from the lower lot at 10,260 feet.

MIX IT UP If you have an extra day, take the right fork at the trailhead for a 76-mile round-trip hike to Lake Ann, a serene alpine gem worthy of a trip by itself. Make sure to stay right when you get to the Apostle Basin junction after about 1.5 miles; going left will take you up the Southwest Slopes route to the summit of Huron (a trek about a mile longer than the standard trail that requires route-finding skills). After a couple of creek crossings, you'll get to another fork at 3.7 miles; stay left this time to reach the lake.

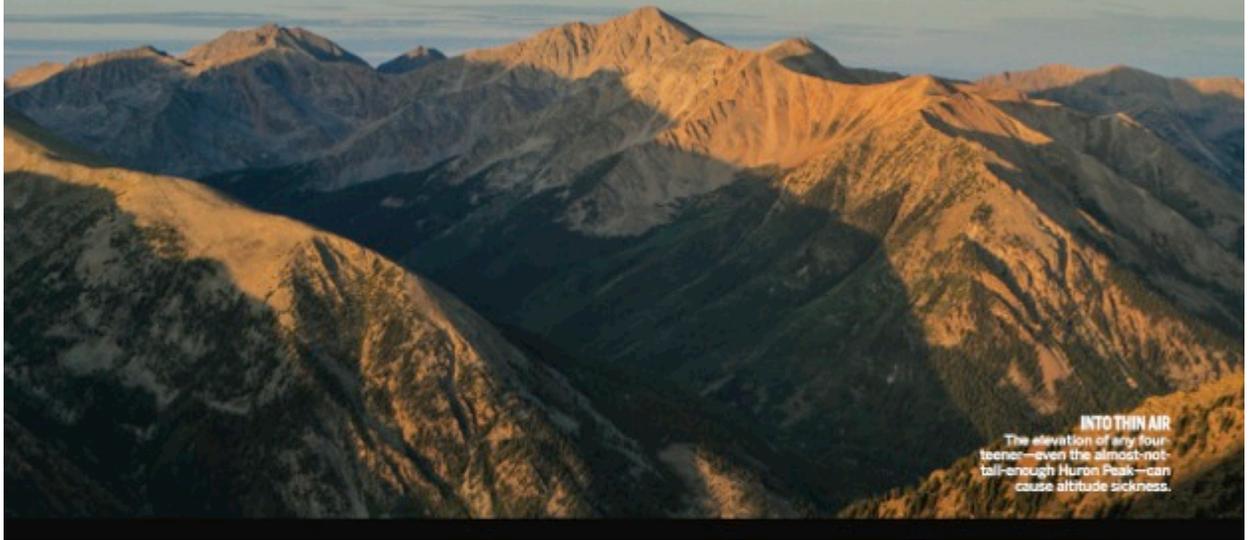
GETTING THERE

From U.S. 24 (15 miles north of Buena Vista, 19.3 miles south of Leadville), take CR 390 west for 11.7 miles to the ghost town of Winfield. Turn left to stay on CR/Forest Road 390 and continue 0.3 miles to the lower lot. If you have four-wheel-drive, continue up the jeep road for another two or so miles to the upper lot trail gate.



COURTESY OF JAKE DUNN

14,003



INTO THIN AIR
The elevation of any fourteener—even the almost-not-tall-enough Huron Peak—can cause altitude sickness.

THE DOCTOR IS IN

Dr. Peter Hackett, the founder of Telluride's Institute for Altitude Medicine and one of the world's leading experts on high altitude-related illness, talks about reducing the risk of altitude sickness and who shouldn't climb fourteeners. —LBK

Can Denverites get AMS while hiking a fourteener?

Yes, but it is usually mild: Headaches, heaviness in the legs, and shortness of breath are normal when going to 14,000 feet. Some folks will also get nauseated. Denverites will have about half the incidence of AMS compared to lowlanders.

What can peak baggers do to combat AMS?

Hike at a steady but moderate pace. Avoid dehydration by drinking enough to maintain clear urine. If you're accustomed to caffeine intake, be sure to have your usual amount the day you'll be climbing. And stay fit—

although AMS is not directly related to fitness, being fit makes the hike more enjoyable and a touch of AMS easier to tolerate. Take ibuprofen with you on the hike, and either use it at the first sign of a headache or take it preventively. As long as the hike is a day-trip, and you will be returning to a lower altitude within hours, there is no danger of serious illness, so immediate descent is generally not necessary when AMS develops. That is, it is safe to push on to the summit with some symptoms.



What don't most people understand about physical exertion at high altitudes?

That exercise capacity is markedly reduced, and that intensity of exercise needs to be reduced to avoid exhaustion. Also, the greater the exertion, the more likely they'll experience symptoms of AMS.

Are there any pre-existing conditions that may make climbing a fourteener a bad idea?

Yes. Most doctors recommend not going over 11,000 to 12,000 feet during pregnancy, but this is not based on data, and it's unlikely that a one-day exposure to high altitude would cause problems. Since we're dealing with day-trips, most problems such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and atrial fibrillation are not a concern. But in terms of impacting performance, lung disease is

at the top of the list. People with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or cystic fibrosis will not generally do well. Neither will those with heart failure or pulmonary hypertension. However, it is not necessarily dangerous to go to altitude for these folks; it's more that they won't be comfortable and might have to turn around. The most important advice relates to exercise ability at low altitude: If a person can exercise with moderate to high intensity and/or duration at low altitude, they will generally do fine at high altitude.

Is there anything available over the counter that helps combat AMS?

People always want to know about herbs, supplements, and vitamins. The only such products ever shown to help with AMS are ginkgo biloba—about 100 mg twice a day for one to three days before climbing—and ibuprofen at 600 mg three times a day on the day of your hike. ▲

PHOTO TOP: DENNIS ADRIANO; COURTESY OF INSTITUTE FOR ALTITUDE MEDICINE



BACK- YARD BOUNTY

Vegetables and chickens and bees, oh my! Your guide to urban home-steading in the Mile High City.

BY JESSICA LARUSSO
Illustrations by Daniel Guidera



When the first pioneers rolled into Colorado via covered wagon, they had no alternative to growing, raising, and hunting their own food. Today, it's by choice that an increasing number of Denverites are planting veggies, raising chickens, and even milking goats in their backyards. You may be wondering, *Why bother?* * "People are coming at this from a gajillion different places," says Dana Miller, co-chair of the Denver Sustainable Food Policy Council, a group of

appointed volunteers that advises the mayor. Think: preppers who want to be self-sustaining in case of the zombie apocalypse; do-gooders on a mission to help solve food-access problems; DIY-happy hipsters into handcrafted everything; parents worried about pesticides; and foodies craving the freshest flavors. * No matter your motivation, you're in luck if you live in the Mile High City, where, over the past half-decade, urban homesteading restrictions common in other towns have loosened considerably. Hens and goats have been legal residents in Denver since 2011; Colorado's 2012 Cottage Foods Act allows home cooks to sell low-risk foods prepared in their own kitchens; and last July's residential sales ordinance means gardeners in Denver can now set up stands to peddle their produce in their front yards. On a larger scale, nonprofits are establishing community gardens in food deserts across town and hosting regular classes on beekeeping, raising goats and chickens, and preserving fresh produce. * In fact, there's so much going on that in April the city hired a manager of food systems development who will try to wrangle these disjointed efforts to make progress toward Mayor Michael Hancock's 2020 goal for the Office of Sustainability—that at least 20 percent of basic nutritional foods purchased in Denver will be grown or processed in the state. It's a lofty (some say unreachable) goal, but it aims to decrease this startling statistic: On average, food travels 1,800 miles from its source to your plate. Unless, of course, your ingredients are coming straight out of your backyard. It's easier than you might think to get started; let us show you how.

► MYTH BUSTERS

The Godmother

As the author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Urban Homesteading*, Coloradoan Sundari Kraft wrote the book (literally) on self-sustainable living in the city. We asked Kraft—whose journey began with three tomato plants in an apartment and grew into eight hens and two dwarf goats in her Wheat Ridge backyard—to debunk some of the common misconceptions about what it means to be an urban homesteader.

MYTH: Homesteading is for hippies.

TRUTH: "There are all sorts of reasons why people enjoy urban homesteading. Some people do it to know where their food is coming from, or to save money, or to live more sustainably, or simply because they like really good food. Urban homesteaders come from every part of the political and socioeconomic spectrum."

MYTH: I don't have enough space.

TRUTH: "The fundamental principle in urban homesteading is to start where you are. You can grow lettuce and peppers in a small patch of dirt next to your house. You can grow a tomato plant in a pot on your deck or herbs on your windowsill. Upcycling, canning, soap making—these are all things that can be done in a small apartment."

MYTH: Goats and chickens are too noisy.

TRUTH: "Actually, chickens and goats are prey species; if something startles or scares them, their response is to



Don't Go It >>



Sundari Kraft with her three-year-old daughter, Ela

FARM CITY

Why the burbs are following Denver's lead when it comes to food-producing animals.

✦ A couple of dwarf goats graze on the lawn of a modest ranch home as a brood of hens wanders back to the coop to roost. If you had to guess where this scene is taking place, would you choose: A) North Boulder, B) Greeley, or C) Park Hill?

If you chose C—or wrote in a spot located anywhere in Denver County—you are correct. Boulder doesn't allow goats unless you have half an acre to spare per animal, and Greeley's city council shot down backyard chickens in 2010. But in the Mile High City? If you've got \$20 for a permit and a few hundred square feet in your backyard, you're free to house up

become very still and very quiet. Dogs are a predator species; their response is to bark bark bark. And, of course, Denver doesn't allow roosters, which can make a racket."

MYTH: My yard will be smelly.

TRUTH: "Poorly kept animals of any kind smell bad, but well-kept chickens and goats—and we're only talking about female goats and wethers, not stinky male goats—don't smell. Chicken and goat manure doesn't smell as bad as dog and cat manure."

MYTH: My neighbors will hate me.

TRUTH: "Having chickens and goats in my backyard and putting a garden in the front yard has actually brought me so much closer to my neighbors. The kids want to come see the animals; they're in my backyard all the time. When you have a front-yard garden, the neighbors become almost invested in

it. They like to walk their dogs by and see what's happening, and of course you have to be out there working on it. And it's a great idea to share those fresh tomatoes or eggs—that tends to go a long way."

MYTH: What I can do in my home won't be enough to make a difference.

TRUTH: "It's not about growing all your own food. It's about doing what you can. People might grow produce and preserve some of it; some people like me might even have eggs and dairy taken care of. But most people don't produce their own meat, and nobody in a city setting is producing all their own grains, salt, and oils. Every step you make—no matter how small it may seem—makes a difference. Grow three tomato plants like I did 15 years ago—look where it got me."

to two goats (females and neutered males only) and eight hens.

It may seem counterintuitive that those two more pastoral bergs have tighter restrictions on food-producing animals than Colorado's largest city, especially given the stereotypes of Greeley (cow town) and Boulder (liberal locavores). But it's not an uncommon scenario. "The change often happens in the more progressive urban centers first," says Sundari Kraft, an early homesteading advocate for Denver. "Our success is affecting what's happening in Arvada, Lakewood, and Littleton. They're starting to see we can have chickens and goats, and it's fine. We passed the food-producing animals ordinance in 2011, and how are Denver's property values doing?" (If you don't know the answer, please see "Denver's Best Neighborhoods" on page 96. The short answer: very, very well.)

One Denver suburb in particular is putting its fresh-from-the-backyard eggs in the homesteading basket. Wheat Ridge—or Carnation City, as it was called in the '60s when it sent a weekly bouquet of its highly regarded blooms to the White House—is embracing its agricultural past in hopes of attracting homebuyers interested in more space for their homesteading endeavors. Looser building codes on structures like hoop houses, along with zero permits for goats and chickens, await those willing to cross Sheridan Boulevard. "We're drawing attention to what's already here and inviting others to build on that," says Britta Fisher, executive director of the nonprofit Wheat Ridge 2020, which helps organize coop and homestead tours, harvest events, and free ag-related classes. "If you want to farm, if you want to have a few chickens or a beehive, Wheat Ridge welcomes that and welcomes you to our community."



COURTESY OF THE DENVER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Alone

Find everything from community garden plots to chicken swaps through these homesteading-friendly groups and other local resources.

IF YOU WANT...to meet like-minded folks TRY...the Greater Denver Urban Homesteading Group on meetup.com, which has more than 2,500 members

VEGETABLES & HERBS

▶ CHECKLIST

BEFORE YOU DIG IN

The foundations of gardening are good dirt and quality plants—two things worth giving a little extra attention.



SOIL

For \$35 plus the cost of shipping, the Soil Testing Lab at Colorado State University will analyze a sample of your dirt and send you a report alerting you to any potential issues—from the presence of heavy metals to pH imbalances. Plus, they'll tell you how to fix it. You can pick up a free soil kit at many nurseries and garden stores around town; check soiltestinglab.colostate.edu for a list of locations.

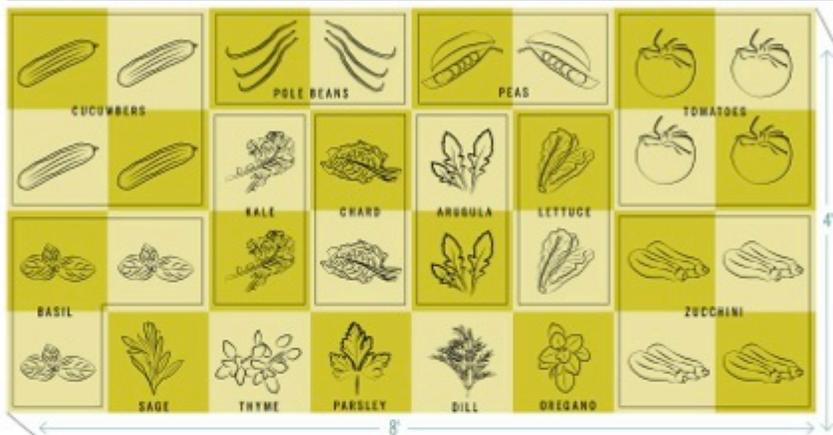


STARTERS

In Denver, you can do better than buying your young plants at the big-box stores (some of which use potentially bee-killing neonicotinoids to treat their seedlings). On Friday, May 8, and Saturday, May 9, hit plant sales at both Denver Urban Gardens (hosted at DUG headquarters in Curtis Park) and Denver Botanic Gardens (at the York Street location). Or support budding entrepreneurs at the GrowHaus: Through early summer, Elyria-Swansea residents sell starters they raised from seeds as part of the nonprofit indoor farm's micro-business class.

Garden Secrets

Even if you can only find 32 square feet to plant in your front yard, you can still get an impressive yield. Bryant Mason, founder of the Urban Farm Company—which has installed nearly 500 raised beds across the Front Range—shows you how to get the most bang for your buds in a four-by-eight-foot container. urbanfarmcolorado.com



CHOOSE WISELY

Leafy greens, such as kale, chard, arugula, and lettuce, will have a much higher yield per square foot than space hogs like squash, cucumbers, pumpkins, and melons.

GROW UP

Save space by growing tomatoes,

cucumbers, peas, and pole beans on trellises.

WATCH OUT FOR SHADE

Put taller crops on the north side of your bed so they don't block sunlight to shorter plants.

GO SMALL

Harvest crops like cucumbers and

zucchini when they are still "babies"; the smaller the fruits are, the better they taste. Plus, frequent harvesting means the plant will have a higher yield.

SAVE MONEY

Mason estimates a single healthy basil plant (about \$4) will produce the equivalent of

30 of those little packets of organic basil at Whole Foods Market, which run about \$3 apiece.

CONSIDER USAGE

Plant herbs—oregano, basil, parsley, dill, sage, and thyme are at the top of Mason's list—on the outer edges of your bed for easy access.

TRY BEANS

Add some protein to your diet by sowing pole beans. Mason suggests the buttery, stringless Fortex green bean variety.

FOLLOW CONTAINER LAWS

Never place mint in a bed—the perennial will take over. If you must have your mojito

fixings, plant some in a separate pot.

PASS ON THE SPROUTS

As trendy as Brussels sprouts are, Mason doesn't advise growing them yourself. They take around 110 days to mature (Colorado's growing season is about 157 days) and are often pest-ridden by harvest time.



WATER WORKS

The tide may be turning on H₂O collection in the notoriously stingy Centennial State.

Colorado was still the only state in the nation with a ban on rainwater harvesting in municipalities at press time, a result of our complex water-rights laws. (CliffsNotes version: Water that falls on your property actually belongs to people with claims downriver.) But change could be coming. In March, the state House passed the "rain barrel bill," which would allow for the collection of up to 110 gallons of water on residential properties. If the legislation makes it past the Senate and the governor's desk, it will be the second big policy pivot in recent history: Before House Bill 1044 was signed by Governor John Hickenlooper in May 2013, Colorado was the only Western state that didn't explicitly allow gray-water recycling (e.g., sprinkling your flowers with used bathwater). The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's final public hearing to establish minimum guidelines for gray-water use took place in April; the next step will be for the City and County of Denver to adopt an ordinance giving its thumbs-up to the practice, which could help a four-person household save 58,000 gallons of water a year.

IF YOU WANT...to buy high-quality organic planting or potting soil
TRY...Denver-based Maxfield's product line

IF YOU WANT...help getting your raised garden bed going
TRY...the Urban Farm Company, which will install your bed, fill it with high-quality soil, sow your plants, and educate you on gardening (pricing starts at \$350 for a four-by-four-foot bed)



Extra! Extra!

Anyone who's ever had even a miniature garden knows that excess produce is inevitable. Check out these ideas for what to do with your abundance this season.

EAT IT

✳ **Overwhelmed by kale?** The three-year-old outdoor kitchen at the Denver Botanic Gardens at Chatfield's working farm hosts **hands-on cooking classes** on how to use up all that produce. (Visit 5280.com/backyardbounty for recipes from the instructors, including herb-infused vinegar and butter for that surplus basil.) botanicgardens.org

✳ When you just can't stomach another fresh-from-the-garden beet salad, remember: There's nothing better in the middle of winter than a jar of **preserved produce**. It's worth your time to carefully save summer's bounty for later in the year (see "Canning 101," at right).

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES COURTESY: ALISON MANN

SHARE IT

✳ **Fermenting** is a supersafe food-preservation method—more so than canning—making the finished products even better for gifting (see "Fermentation," at right).

✳ Local nonprofit **Produce for Pantries** was founded in 2013 to help connect gardeners with food pantries in need of fresh fruits, veggies, and herbs; more than 42,000 pounds were donated last year. Call Produce for Pantries' Hunger Free Hotline at 1-855-855-4626 to find a pantry near you that accepts produce. produceforpantries.com

SELL IT

✳ In July, the Denver City Council passed a **residential sales ordinance** that allows anyone who obtains a \$20 permit to set up a farm stand in his or her yard. Combined with the 2012 **Colorado Cottage Foods Act**, which says you can sell certain low-risk foods—including jams, teas, eggs, honey, and some baked goods—made in your home without a license, you could easily set up a farmers' market just steps from your front door. (Note: Produce must be sold by the grower, and cottage foods must be labeled and traceable to the maker; sales per item can't exceed \$5,000 in a year.) denvergo.org/homebusiness

TREND ALERT

Fermentation

The hottest, hippest method of food preservation happens at room temperature.

✳ Once reserved for traditional Korean eateries, kimchi—a fermented veggie dish often starring cabbage—is popping up everywhere. You'll find it atop Uncle's steaming bowls of ramen, in a torta at City O' City, and in MM Local's recently launched lineup of fermented goods (try the spicy kale version). In fact, restaurant industry pundits predict that 2015 will bring even more chef experimentation with fermentation, an ancient method of preserving that, at its most basic, involves a crock, salt, water, and vegetables that sit on the counter for anywhere from three days to six weeks. But why let the pros have all the fun? "In some ways it is easier than canning, and safer too, as fermenting is a process that makes sure the good bacteria are the only ones left," says Willow King, CEO of Lafayette's three-and-a-half-year-old Ozuké, which distributes seven flavors of kraut and kimchi across the country. As with canning, you should always use vetted recipes; start with Ozuké's Napa cabbage kimchi recipe, available at 5280.com/backyardbounty.

CANNING 101

In the past year, the preserving maestros at RiNo's six-year-old MM Local have launched online ordering, expanded to the Pacific Northwest, and sold more than 300,000 pounds of Colorado produce. We spoke with co-founder Ben Mustin (pictured) to get his top tips for home cooks who want to save summer flavors safely.



DO:

Find recipes from proven, reputable sources. Jar-maker Ball's website, freshpreserving.com, and the USDA's Complete Guide to Home Canning (available online) are great, free places to start.

Start with the water-bath method—ideal for high-acid fruits, tomatoes, and pickling—rather than investing in a pressure canner (used for low-acid veggies and meats). You'll want two big pots with racks inside; a canning funnel; and canning tongs.

Adjust for altitude. Most recipes will include specific instructions, but for water-bath canning, typically you will need to add one minute of processing time for every 1,000 feet in elevation (round up!).

Use produce at its ripest point. Generally speaking, canning preserves existing flavor (as opposed to improving it).

DON'T:

Fiddle with recipes. Canning and pickling are precise and scientific arts that are more like baking than cooking. Deviating from recipes can cause food-safety problems, including botulism, which can be fatal.

Skimp on the good stuff. Remember that whatever you're preserving will cook and shrink in the jar, so pack it tightly.

Reuse lids. You can, however, use the jars and rings again. You'll simply want to purchase new lids separately.

Be intimidated. If you can follow a cookie recipe, you'll be able to can. However, nervous newbies can check MM Local's Facebook page for classes on preservation around harvest time.

IF YOU WANT...to learn how to save your heirloom seeds
TRY...Feed Denver's Vegetable University: Seed Saving Edition on May 16 (\$35)

IF YOU WANT...one-stop local shopping for your DIY homesteading needs
TRY...Homesteading in the Hood, a specialty market being held in conjunction with the South Pearl Street farmers' market on Sunday, May 17

▶ THE BREAKDOWN

Go Fish

Aquaponics is poised to be the next big thing in organic, sustainable farming. The basic idea? Waste from fish is converted (via microbes and worms) into food for plants, which then filter water for the fish. (These can be decorative, à la kol, or edible, such as tilapia, catfish, or trout.) Once installed, a system—envision a tank and plants connected by tubes, with a pump to cycle the water through—uses around 10 percent of the water a regular garden does and requires about five minutes of daily maintenance, plus a once-weekly 10-minute checkup. And between the Aquaponic Source in Longmont—a retail shop that also runs North America's largest online aquaponics forum—and Commerce City's Colorado Aquaponics, which harvests 500 to 1,000 heads of greens per week, year-round, the Front Range is quickly becoming an epicenter for the national movement. Sylvia Bernstein, owner of the Aquaponic Source and author of *Aquaponic Gardening*, gives us the lowdown on what a setup could look like in your backyard.



A greenhouse is the ideal setting because it keeps the fish warm enough through the winter but still uses natural light (eliminating the need for, and cost of, grow lights). If you don't mind adding lights, you can set up a system in your garage, basement, or shed—pretty much anywhere.

The rule of thumb is one pound of fish per five to 10 gallons of water, so a 200-gallon tub could hold anywhere from 20 to 40 fish. Start with 50 fingerlings (\$1.50 to \$2 each from Longmont's Beavers Fish Farm, beaversfishfarm.com), a one-time investment as they'll reproduce from here on out. Put them on

the dinner menu when they're around 12 inches long, or about 1.5 pounds.

There are two primary aquaponic methods: raft-based (roots dangle directly into the water) and media-based (plants are grown in an inert planting media).

Leafy greens and herbs are ideal for beginners, but you can grow just about anything, including fruit-bearers like tomatoes, once your system is established, which takes a few months.

Pumps vary by gallon count and height, but unless you're going for a really big system, most cost less than \$100.

Save a few bucks by using a recycled or repurposed container, such as an old bathtub (try Habitat for Humanity's ReStore, habitatmetrodenver.org/restore).

The Aquaponic Source (theaquaponicsource.com) has a mechanical engineer and master plumber on staff who will create a custom design for your space (\$100 up front for the specs, but it'll be applied as a credit to your equipment order).

You'll have some daily chores: sprinkling fish food—about \$1 per pound for conventional, \$3 per pound for organic—twice a day and plucking what you need for your salad.

HOPS

THE PURSUIT OF HOPPINESS

Hop plants aren't the most practical crop: They grow like weeds, and they'll make Fido very sick if he eats them. But, hey, this is Colorado, and our pint glasses are half full. We found five great reasons to start growing hops next year*:



1 They make your yard smell awesome. Imagine sipping an IPA in the sun while hoppy, piney scents waft your way....

2 They're really cool-looking. Hop bines—yes, they're called bines, not vines—will grow up to 25 feet tall in one season.

3 You can brew beer with them. Serious homebrewers often prefer store-bought pellet hops because without pricey testing, there's no way to know the amount of alpha acid (read: bitterness) in homegrown hops. But you can at least add them for aroma after the fermentation stage.

4 You can use them to infuse your pint. Whether it's homebrew or something you grabbed at the store, let the sud's marinate with your hops in a French press, then push the top down to filter out the plant material but keep the fresh hop scent.

5 You can donate them to AC Golden Brewing Company. The first 700 Coloradans to sign up this year for its Colorado Native Brew Crew (coloradonative.com) will be mailed a rhizome. During end-of-summer "hop drop" events, you can trade in your harvest for a commemorative patch. The hops will then be used in batches of Colorado Native (specially marked so you can find the brew you contributed to at local stores).

*Baby hops, called rhizomes, are generally harvested in March. The Brew Hut (thebrewhut.com) in Aurora takes preorders through late February; the rhizomes cost \$4.99 each and arrive ready to plant in early April.

IF YOU WANT...to learn how backyard aquaponics works
TRY...Colorado Aquaponics' monthly classes

IF YOU WANT...a plot in a community garden
TRY...Denver Urban Gardens' network of 145 growing spaces throughout the city

FRUIT NATURE'S CANDY

Just because you don't live on an orchard doesn't mean you can't grow the sweet stuff. You just might have to look beyond the usual fruit-bowl suspects. "Because we have a lot of transplants, people from California or New York, they're used to what grows where they're from," says Adam Brock, co-founder of the nonprofit GrowHaus and board president of the seven-month-old Denver Permaculture Guild, a group that looks for ways humans can positively impact their natural surroundings (such as cultivating species that are well adapted to Colorado's climate). "But there are lots of really tasty fruits that grow well here that you won't find in the grocery store." Here, eight varieties you can plant in your outdoor space to make it both beautiful and fruitful.

Apple Tree

Scientific Name: *Malus domestica*

Grows To: Up to 10 feet high for dwarfs, 15 feet high for semi-dwarfs

Brock Says: "One of America's most popular fruits is also one of the most reliable in Colorado's climate. Serious apple growers will graft a tastier variety onto a cold-tolerant rootstock."



Ground Cherry

Scientific Name: *Physalis spp.*

Grows To: 3 feet wide by 2 feet high

Brock Says: "This relative of the tomatillo produces fruit in small, papery husks. Their unique flavor is somewhat like a pineapple."



Nanking Cherry

Scientific Name: *Prunus tomentosa*

Grows To: 4 feet wide by 6 feet high

Brock Says: "This short, cold-hardy relative of the common cherry tree is perfect for small spaces."



Goumi

Scientific Name: *Elaeagnus multiflora*

Grows To: 4 feet wide by 12 feet high

Brock Says: "This shrub is somewhat thorny, but its large, tart berries and nitrogen-fixing qualities [it fertilizes the soil by taking nitrogen from the air] make it great for a Colorado garden."



Goji Berry/Wolfberry

Scientific Name: *Lycium barbarum*

Grows To: 5 feet wide by 12 feet high

Brock Says: "The berries of this bush have a mild, slightly sweet taste with a hint of acidity. Gojis do well without much water and are often planted in sensitive areas to stabilize eroding slopes."



Clove Currant/ Buffalo Currant

Scientific Name: *Ribes odoratum*

Grows To: 4 feet wide by 6 feet high

Brock Says: "Close relatives of this bush can be found throughout the Rocky Mountains. In addition to its raspberry-esque fruit, this variety of currant has beautiful, clove-scented flowers in April and May."



Pawpaw

Scientific Name: *Asimina triloba*

Grows To: 6 feet wide by 20 feet high

Brock Says: "The largest fruit native to North America, the pawpaw was a staple food of indigenous peoples in the Midwest. This small tree does best in moist and shady areas, and its fruit tastes like tart bananas."

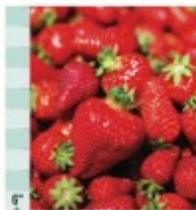


Strawberry

Scientific Name: *Fragaria spp.*

Grows To: 3 feet wide by 6 inches high

Brock Says: "Here in Colorado, strawberries perform best in moist, shady areas—such as underneath a fruit tree. Keep an eye out for the cold-hardy Ogallala or Fort Laramie varieties."



ON THE WEB Visit 5280.com/backyardbounty for fruit-preserving recipes, including part-time Coloradan Eugenia Bone's spiced apples from her James Beard Award-nominated cookbook, *Well-Preserved*.

BEES

ALL ABUZZ

Last spring, Pete Marczyk, who's been keeping bees at home for four seasons, installed a hive atop a storage container at his East Colfax Marczyk Fine Foods location. That swarm lost its queen and died—but the grocer turned beekeeper isn't discouraged. We asked him about his experiences with the buzz-worthy insects.

5280: Some people might think hosting thousands of stinging creatures in your yard is kinda crazy.

Pete Marczyk: We live with bees all around us. Once you've closely observed bees, you realize the last thing on their agenda is stinging. Bees are busy! Stinging is a distraction.

Have you ever been stung?

Every year it seems I get stung a couple of times, usually due to my less-than-perfect handling. Last year I got stung twice trying to collect a swarm [to relocate to a new hive]. I decided we didn't like each other enough and left them alone.

Do you wear the full space suit?

No, but if I had one, I would. I always wear the veil and hat; it's just prudent. Gloves sometimes, but I'm working on going bare-handed [for dexterity].

Is it really worth all the effort?

If we were to look purely at economics, at our scale, no. But we get a lot out of the experience of beekeeping, and there is a tremendous amount of satisfaction in the consumption of honey from one's own bees. We literally could not use the volume of honey our bees produce in a year; we end up giving a bunch away as small gifts.

Are you going to try to have bees at the Colfax store again?

Yes. We are ready to try to establish a colony and bring new meaning to the phrase "Colfax working girls."

THE BEE'S KNEES

For a numerical look at the esoteric art of beekeeping, we turned to the gurus at To Bee or Not To Bee. The new owners of this decades-old business (formerly located near I-25 and I-70) moved its storefront to Littleton in February; the larger space hosts classes and beekeeping club meetings, as well as houses all necessary supplies. tobeeornottobee.us

1

Queen honeybee per hive

15 to 20

Approximate square feet you need to host one Langstroth (stacked boxes) hive, which has a footprint of about 16 by 20 inches

Average startup cost for a hive, including bees and protective garb

\$250 to \$350

60,000 to 70,000

Female worker bees per hive (plus several hundred male drones)

6

Feet tall the screen in front of your hive should be (so bees fly up and over rather than straight at you)

3 to 5

Distance, in miles, bees will fly in order to collect pollen and nectar

60

Pounds of honey you can expect to get annually from an established hive (about two seasons)

20

Percent of To Bee or Not To Bee's clients whose primary reason for hosting hives is to improve pollination in their gardens

7

Pounds of nectar bees must consume to produce one pound of beeswax (which can be used to make candles, lip balm, wood polish, and more)



SWEET DEAL

A honey extractor, a device used to spin the honey out of the combs, will set you back \$300 (for a hand-crank version) to \$2,000 (electric)—and collect dust for most of the year. Come time to harvest in August and September, for 75 cents a pound (with a \$25 minimum), you can take your frames to Denver Urban Homesteading's commercial kitchen at 200 Santa Fe Drive for processing into raw, unfiltered liquid gold. **Bonus:** If you have extra, Denver Urban Homesteading will sell it at its year-round Saturday markets and give you a cut. denverurbanhomesteading.com

GOATS

Got Milk?

As of 2011, Denverites can keep up to two dwarf goats (does and wethers only, no unneutered males; 130 square feet each, plus shelter). But just because you can doesn't mean you should. "Raising backyard goats for milk is a bigger commitment than getting chickens," says Sundari Kraft, who recently moved to Wheat Ridge and helped update the suburb's goat policy. "But goats are very easy to take care of, and they're as smart and personable as dogs." With Kraft's help, we offer a few things to consider.

UPSIDES:

- › Dwarf goats are **small enough to be manageable**, about the size and weight of a golden retriever.
- › You'll have **fresh milk** for drinking and for making cheese, yogurt, and ice cream.
- › Goats make **fantastic pets**; many people keep them for this purpose alone. In fact, they'll happily carry your water and snacks on a hike.
- › Goat manure makes **great fertilizer** for your veggie garden.

DOWNSIDES:

- › Goats **crave companionship**; one by itself might become ill from the stress of being alone.
- › They love to climb and can be **escape artists**—you'll need to have a very secure fence that's at least four feet tall.
- › Does **must get pregnant annually** to continue producing milk, which means once a year you'll be racing to get your goat "serviced" by a buck at the first signs she's in heat and then cutting umbilical cords in your backyard five months later.
- › For optimum production, someone will need to be home to **milk your goat twice a day** (usually a five- to 10-minute process) at 12-hour intervals.



GOAT: DENVER POST; LEFT: DENVER POST; RIGHT: DENVER POST

IF YOU WANT...to save the bees
TRY...joining the Living Systems Institute of Golden's Bee Safe Neighborhoods program, which asks clusters of households to pledge they won't use systemic pesticides

IF YOU WANT...how-to videos (think Craftsy, but for urban ag)
TRY...Boulder startup Hatch Lab's professionally produced 30-minute films, the first of which goes live this month (\$5 each)

CHICKENS

Diary of A Hen Owner

One Denverite discovers the trials and delights of keeping chickens—from coop construction to poop cleanup to gathering brunch eggs from the backyard.

1. Denver's ordinance requires 15 square feet of permeable (ground) space per chicken, plus adequate coop real estate.



2. This feed store has been family-owned since 1938 and sells chicks (\$3.50 to \$5 each) from February to Labor Day.

3. Rhode Island reds, Plymouth rocks, and Ameraucanas are good choices for Colorado because they're cold-hardy down to 20 degrees Fahrenheit and strong layers (four to seven eggs a week). Plus, Ameraucanas lay green or blue eggs.

4. Use a large wooden or cardboard container; allow about two square feet per chick. You can find the rest of what you need to get started—a feeder, heat lamp, pine shavings, etc.—at Wardle for around \$60.

5. Raising chicks is more work than buying adults, but the birds are more likely to bond with you and get along with one another if you bring them up together.

COURTESY OF DWIG. (LEFT/STOCK)

IT STARTED WITH A SINGLE BLUE EGG. When my family joined a farm-share program, I was surprised the first time I opened my carton: Nestled among the neat rows of brown, white, and speckled orbs was an egg the shade of a Tiffany box. It was so beautiful, I decided I would never buy plain old supermarket versions again. That, of course, meant I would have to find a place to source enough eggs to fully support my growing sons' omelet habit.

So I did. **My backyard.**¹

After sketching coop designs and Googling exotic bird breeds, we headed to **Wardle Feed**² in Wheat Ridge one Saturday in March 2013. We ducked under a heat-trapping tarp hanging in the back corner of the store to find dozens of tiny fuzzballs cheeping and tottering in their pens, and any lingering doubts—*Would our dog gobble the chicks in front of our kids? Would our neighbors hate us?*—melted away. We picked out a **rainbow flock**,³ cranked the heater in our Pathfinder, and drove home like parents leaving the hospital with a newborn.

For the next two months, the chicks peeped in a cozy homemade **brooder box**⁴ in the study. We scooped poop twice a day and fussed over the temperature. While the **chicks**⁵ grew into gawky pullets, we fine-tuned our coop design. We took into account our 900-square-foot Congress Park yard, garden beds, and penchant for backyard parties. In the end, my DIY husband designed and built a sturdy double-decker (pictured at left) with a living succulent roof, wainscoted walls, vintage windowpanes, and a rooster weather vane. The residents couldn't care less about the design details, but we appreciate that our outdoor entertaining space doesn't look like a baryard.

When our flock graduated to the backyard, maintenance got a lot easier. We top off their **food**⁶ and water every five days and muck out the coop once a month. There have been low points in our chicken adventure: syringing medicine into a sick bird's beak, soaking crusted poop off chicken backsides, and, dare I admit it, slinking into the **vet**⁷ with a hen in a dog carrier. But the day we discovered our first **egg**⁸ we shrieked like a miracle had taken place. There is nothing like the round, warm weight of a just-laid egg in your palm. And no store-bought version can rival the fluffy richness or fat orange yolk. Frittatas, Dutch baby pancakes, snickerdoodles—every family recipe tastes better. Two years later, the kids still love their daily chore of peeking into the nesting boxes. When their friends come over, they run straight to the coop to hunt for eggs.

It's not just children who flock to the coop. Our neighbors have been intrigued, if sometimes bemused, by our urban petting zoo. When we leave town, they keep an eye on the coop in exchange for fresh eggs. This past Thanksgiving Day, our neighbors discovered a fat-size double-yolker the color of faded denim. Elderly visitors often reminisce about their childhoods, when backyard chickens were commonplace.

Although we got into keeping hens for the eggs, they've quickly—if unintentionally—become pets. They're not on the same level as our beloved English springer spaniel (who, unlike most dogs, skitters away if the chickens so much as squawk in her direction), but I doubt the wizened farmers at the feed store would approve of their pampered lifestyle. They flock to the sound of my voice, and Cluck Cluck—a two-year-old hen with cobalt and copper feathers—tries to cuddle on our laps like a cat. When they cluster around a treat of worms my boys just dug up, their fluffy bums remind me of a gaggle of bustling Victorian dames.

This morning, when I gave my sons the day off and went out to look for eggs myself, I found three: Goldie's creamy pink, Baby Zebra's chocolate oval with a smattering of black freckles, and one of those robin's-egg blue ones that started it all. —Christine Bayles Kortach



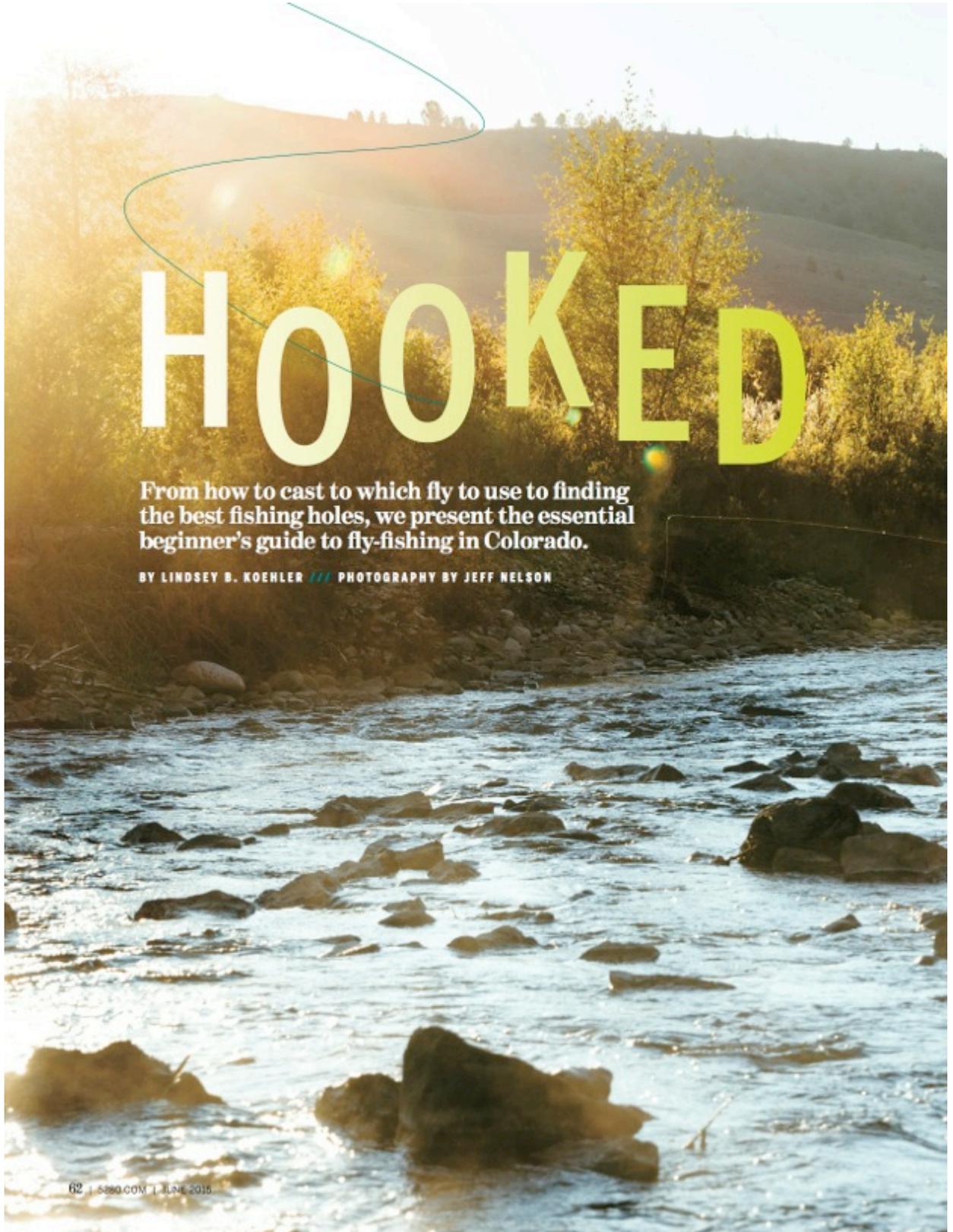
6. Feed from Wardle will run you about \$2.50 (commercial) to \$6 (organic) per month, per chicken; the folks at Denver Urban Homesteading also sell organic feed at 370 Kalamath St. seven days a week.

7. Call around before your bird is sick; most vets in Denver will not see chickens. A few that do: Washington Park Veterinary Clinic and University Hills Animal Hospital in Denver, Homestead Animal Hospital in Centennial, and Broomfield Veterinary Hospital.

8. Hens will lay eggs on their own, no rooster required—which is a good thing since the noisy males are outlawed in Denver.

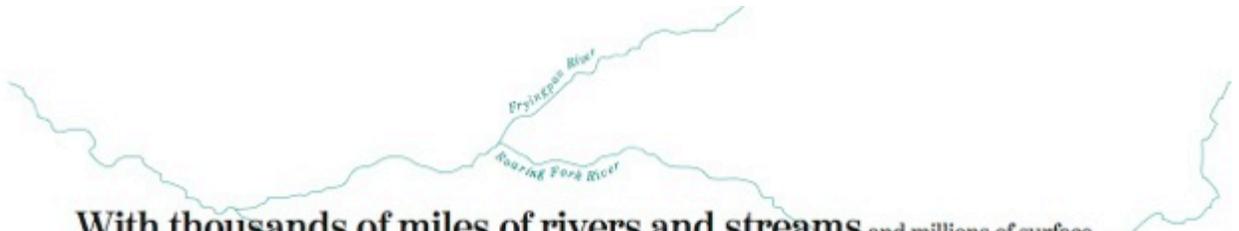
IF YOU WANT...to get rid of a chicken or goat TRY...Wardle Feed's chicken swap, every third Saturday from March to October in Wheat Ridge

IF YOU WANT...to keep up to date on the local food movement in the Centennial State TRY...subscribing to *Local Food Shift Magazine*, a bimonthly periodical that will publish its first issue this summer (\$36 for an annual subscription/membership) ▲▲



> Teeming with trout, Willow Creek cuts right through Grand County's C Lazy U Ranch.





With thousands of miles of rivers and streams and millions of surface acres of lakes, the Centennial State is angling nirvana for the approximately 340,000 fly-fishermen who, each year, are captivated by the rhythmic action and stunning backdrops associated with the age-old pursuit. But fly-fishing isn't as easy as putting a worm on a hook and chucking it into a stocked pond. No, fly-fishing takes a little more skill, a lot more patience, and a borderline obsessive need to know what makes a fish bite. So how does one break into this quintessential Colorado pastime? We'll teach you everything you need to know to start fishing this summer.

THE GLOSSARY

Fly-fishermen have a language all their own. Here's some lingo you'll need to know before hitting the water.

BREAK OFF: When your line snaps unexpectedly, allowing the fish to get away.

CATCH AND RELEASE: A conservation practice in which fishermen try to fight fish quickly, land them gently, and rapidly release them back into the water.

FALSE CAST: A type of cast that uses multiple backward and forward casts without letting the line hit the water or ground; the cast is generally used to lengthen the amount of line and/or to change the line's direction.

FOAM IS HOME: Foam lines or bubbles in a river or stream show where currents are moving and where food collects; anglers often say these foamy areas are where the fish are.

HATCH: The stage in an insect's life cycle when it matures and leaves the water to mate. This can happen in an intense burst of activity when many insects hatch at once. This attracts predators like trout (which, in turn, attract anglers).

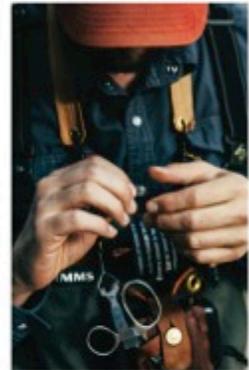
HEADWATER: The upper reaches of rivers—near where the waterways begin—before major tributaries join them; headwaters are usually narrow

or with less flow, which may make fishing more difficult.

MATCH THE HATCH: An angler's attempt to select the artificial fly that mimics the natural food fish are feeding on. During a hatch, fish often become picky eaters, only wanting to eat what is hatching at that moment.

MEND: A fly-fisherman's goal is to make an artificial fly imitate a real insect; part of that is making sure the fly rides the current in a natural way. If the fly line is dragging the fly downstream, fishermen rearrange, or mend, the line while it's drifting to eliminate the unwanted pull.

POOL: A pocket of slower moving, deeper water where fish often reside in an attempt to hide from predators or rest from swimming



RIFFLE: A shallow, quickly moving section of water where fish can congregate to feed.

RIISING: Trout generally feed underwater, but on the rare occasion they decide something on top of the water looks tasty; they may ascend to the surface—fly-fishermen call this "rising," as in, "the fish are rising."

ROLL CAST: A short cast—created by a quick, forceful flick of the wrist—used to deliver a fly when an angler doesn't have room for a full overhead cast (see "Casting And Catching," page 67).

SEAM: An area in a river or stream where two currents—one slower, one faster—merge. Fish will hole up in the slower water and dart into the faster current for food.

STRIPPING LINE: This phrase describes the action of retrieving line by pulling it in using your fingers as opposed to using the reel.

TAILWATER: The section of river below a dam; these waters are often ideal trout habitat because water temperatures stay more consistently cool.



PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK/STEFAN; THE FISH; JEFFREY LINDLEY

GEAR

LOOK LIKE A PRO

Outfit yourself with equipment from these six local companies.



1. Reel? You don't need no striking reel with this Japanese-inspired—but Boulder-built—**Tenkara Rhodo triple-zoom rod**, perfect for both tiny mountain streams and more expansive waterways. \$275; tenkarausa.com

2. Hand-built by fly-fishermen for fly-fishermen in Montrose, **Scott Fly Rod Company's Radian rod** is a trout-centric, fast-action tool of the highest order. \$795; scottflyrod.com

3. Made in Colorado, **Topo Designs' Light Hip Pack** (a collaboration with Tenkara) is the perfect carryall for flies, leader and tippet, weights, and anything else you need to have within reach. \$69; topodesigns.com

4. For the angler who wants the smoothest retrieval possible, Montrose-based **Ross Reels' F1 model** (in eye-catching nickel-silver) is the only way to go. \$550 for a five- to seven-weight rod; rossreels.com

5. Lightweight, durable, buoyant, waterproof, and coated with a sticky grip, Denver-based **Fishpond's Nomad Hand Net** is big enough to scoop up whatever you can hook. \$125.95; fishpondusa.com

6. Don't know what flies to toss? No problem. Order Louisville-based **Umpqua Feather Merchants' Premium Rockies Trout Selection** box with 50 flies preselected for Colorado waters. \$159.95; available through [Trouts Fly Fishing](http://TroutsFlyFishing.com); troutsflyfishing.com

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL MILLER

- LURE THEM IN -

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of artificial flies (i.e., bait) to choose from, but almost all of them fall under one of these three categories:

→ NYMPHS

Sometimes called "wet flies," these subsurface lures imitate immature insects that live temporarily underwater. A special kind of nymph called an "emerger" emulates the stage of an insect's life cycle when a maturing bug moves from the depths toward the surface.

The lowdown: Nymphing is the most successful way to fly-fish since fish mostly feed underwater; however, it's trickier for newbies because hooks can get caught on below-the-surface debris, and it's difficult to know when a fish takes the bait. A strike indicator (the fly-fishing equivalent of a bobber) is often used.

→ DRY FLIES

This type of lure floats on the surface of the water and mimics a wide array of mature insects (read: food sources), including mayflies, caddis flies, midges, and big ole grasshoppers (aka terrestrials).

The lowdown: Dry-fly fishing can be one of the most exciting ways to fly-fish, but the fish must be rising to the surface for these flies to work, which isn't always the case—especially midday when the water warms and fish dive deeper to enjoy cooler water.

→ STREAMERS

These larger subsurface lures represent prey such as minnows, leeches, and other small baitfish. The best-known of this breed of lure is the aptly named Woolly Buggie, a large, furry-looking fly that comes in a variety of colors.

The lowdown: Streamer fishing is one of the more challenging ways to fly-fish. Not only is the fly comparatively heavy (making casting more difficult), but the angler must also retrieve—or strip—the line in a way that mimics the natural motion of the bait to entice the fish.

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SETUP

ANATOMY OF A FLY ROD

Unless you're planning to pony up \$450 for a day of guided fishing every time you want to hit the river, you're going to need to learn the components of and steps for assembling your system.

Step 9 Your Fly
You'll want to choose a fly based on what's hatching around you.

Step 1 Fly Rod

Because everything must be in balance with the rod, we're going to say this is a five-weight rod, a size compatible with most fly-fishing situations in Colorado. Most rods break down into at least two, if not more, parts to make them easy to store. When assembling, you will put these parts together (it's pretty self-explanatory), making sure to align the guides (which should point toward the water).

Step 2 Fly Reel

The reel must match the rod weight; some reels are sized to fit a range of rod weights. We'll choose a five- to seven-weight reel for our five-weight rod. You will hold the rod in your dominant hand and attach the reel—also pointing toward the water—so that the reel's handle is usable for your nondominant hand. There will be a small dial on your reel that sets the drag—a term for how quickly (or not) your reel will release line.



Step 4 Fly line & the Albright knot

Attached to the loose end of the backing by an Albright knot, the fly line is a weighted but buoyant line—usually a fluorescent green or orange color—that provides the necessary heft for a fisherman to cast his line any distance.



Step 3 Backing & the Arbor knot

There are four types of line that contiguously attach to your reel. The first is called backing, a thin but very strong section of line that is secured directly to the spool using an Arbor knot. It is, essentially, the safety net for when a fish takes off downstream and an angler's fly line runs out. The backing will almost always stay fully spooled on the reel.



Step 5 Guides

Once you have the backing attached to the spool and the fly line attached to the backing and both are spooled onto the reel, you will thread the loose end of the fly line through the guides—the metal holds along the bottom of the pole—and to the end of the rod.



Step 8 The Fly & the Clinch knot

At the loose end of the tippet, you'll tie your fly using a Clinch knot.



Step 6 Leader & the Nail knot

Unless your fly line and leader have a loop-to-loop system built in for easy attachment, you'll be using a Nail knot to attach the leader to the fly line. Leader is a clear, usually tapered line that further helps transfer the power of the cast down the length of the line. You'll attach the thick end of the leader to the fly line.



Step 7 Tippet & the Surgeon's knot

At the thin, loose end of the leader, you'll attach another clear but much finer line called tippet using a Surgeon's knot. Tippet is much harder to see and sinks relatively quickly with the weight of a wet fly.



THE BIG FOUR

Catch all of these trout in one day to complete the quintessential (and hypothetical) Colorado stringer.



CUTTHROAT

Characteristics: Cutthroats are distinguishable from other trout by two

prominent red swaths on the lower jaws; light spotting on the backs and sides; heavier spotting on the fins; greenish-brassy coloring; and sometimes orange or red bellies.

Size: In Colorado, cutthroats rarely grow larger than 12 inches.

Colorado Habitat: Clear, cold headwater lakes, streams, and small rivers with deep pools, big boulders, and undercut banks.



RAINBOW

Characteristics: Rainbows have multihued coloration with blue, green, or yellowish bodies, pinkish bands running from the gills to the tails, and black spots.

Size: The average size of a rainbow is between 12 and 35 inches, but they can grow to 26 inches in the Centennial State.

Colorado Habitat: Cold headwaters, creeks, cool lakes, and small to large rivers with an array of riffles and pools and aquatic vegetation.



BROWN

Characteristics: Browns are brownish-yellow to dark brown with varied spotting patterns; their tail fins are not forked and have few to no dark spots; and there are no white edges to their pelvic or anal fins.

Size: Brown trout in Colorado are usually 13 to 17 inches long but can grow to 26 inches or more.

Colorado Habitat: Browns are often found at lower elevations in streams and rivers and can sometimes better tolerate warm water.

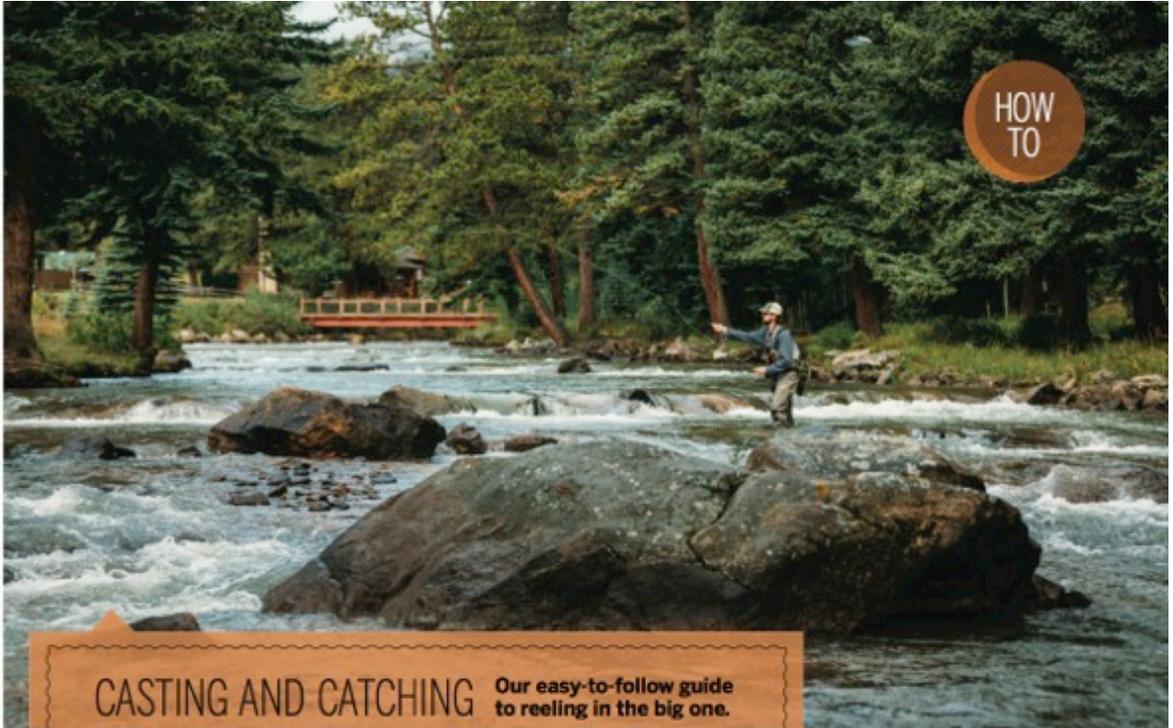


BROOK

Characteristics: Brookies have dark olive green backs covered with scraggly lines; sides speckled with reddish-orange spots surrounded by blue halos; and rust-colored fins with white edges.

Size: In Colorado, brook trout can reach 12 to 14 inches and weigh about half a pound.

Colorado Habitat: Cold, well-oxygenated waters, preferably with gravel bottoms; their presence is an indicator of pristine water.



CASTING AND CATCHING Our easy-to-follow guide to reeling in the big one.

~ THE OVERHEAD CAST ~

- ➊ **Begin with your grip.** Grab the rod with your dominant hand as if you're giving it a handshake, then curl your fingers around the cork handle, keeping your thumb on top. The butt of the rod should rest on your forearm for stability. Keep your wrist locked.
- ➋ **With your nondominant hand,** pull 10 to 15 feet of fly line off the reel, letting it dangle around your feet. Keep a loose hold on the extra line with your nondominant hand.

- ➌ **Toss your line** onto the water in front of you (or upstream on moving water).
- ➍ **Lift up the tip** of your rod, and as the fly line is about to leave the surface, flick your wrist and forearm backward to send the line up and over your shoulder. Abruptly stop the tip of your rod before it goes past the hypothetical 2 o'clock position (if your head is at 12 o'clock and your feet are at

- 6 o'clock) and allow the line to unfurl fully behind you.
- ➎ **Once the line has fully extended in the air,** flick your wrist and forearm forward, once again abruptly stopping, this time at 10 o'clock. Allow the rod's power to shoot the line you're loosely holding in your nondominant hand through the air. Then bring your rod tip down to point out in front of you, which will allow the fly to settle onto the water.

SET THE HOOK!

- After your forward cast has placed the fly into the water, be ready for a fish to bite.
- As opposed to a spin rod, a fly rod setup often means you will have slack fly line. To set the hook when you see a fish take the fly or feel a bite, pinch the fly line against your cork grip with your casting hand and raise the rod tip straight up. If you don't pinch the line, it will slip through the guides and no force will be applied.
- Once you've set the hook and there's a fish on, keep your rod tip high and your fly line pinched while reeling in your extra fly line with your nondominant hand. At that point, you can use the reel to help you land the fish.

PHOTO: JEFF MEYER, COURTESY OF JEFFMEYERPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

TIE ONE ON

The 15 flies, according to Brian Schmidt, fly manager at Louisville's Umpqua Feather Merchants, that must be in your Colorado kit.





- 10 GREAT (PUBLIC) FISHING HOLES FOR BEGINNING ANGLERS



YOU'RE FISHING ON	NEAR	AT	BECAUSE	YOU'LL NEED
THE ARKANSAS RIVER Just above the North F Street Bridge	Downtown Salida	Twilight	Even though you'd think an in-town spot would be overfished, you can often throw a dry fly and watch trout rise for their dinners	Polarized sunglasses and not much else; you can cast from the bank
LAKE AGNES	The summit of Cameron Pass off Highway 14 (the left-hand turnoff is two miles west of the summit; day fee is \$5)	8 a.m.	It's a steep 0.8-mile hike into a gorgeous alpine lake that's full of fish—but the trout seem to dive deep once the sun gets high	Hiking boots—the shoreline is rocky—but no waders (unless you're carrying a float tube in)
 THE YAMPA RIVER	Downtown Steamboat Springs, specifically along the stretch of river between 13th and Fifth streets	4 p.m. until dusk	The Yampa is one of the better trout streams in the state, and the section through town is public, easily accessible, and a perfect end-of-day activity (just remember to yield to tubers!)	Waders
THE UPPER COLORADO RIVER	Hot Sulphur Springs (in the Hot Sulphur Springs State Wildlife Area's Paul Gilbert Fishing Area)	Sunrise	This wide but not-too-swift section of river is great for streamer and nymph fishing, but it can get crowded as the day gets long	Waders
SARVIS CREEK In the Sarvis Creek State Wildlife Area	Stagecoach State Park, about 15 miles from Steamboat Springs	Sunrise	This prized trout stream, which feeds into the Yampa River, has multiple deep pools and lots of great riffles, and anglers in the area know the early bird gets the elbow room	Waders
THE YAMPA RIVER In the Chuck Lewis State Wildlife Area	Downtown Steamboat Springs	3 p.m.	The trout on this lovely bit of water go nuts for grasshoppers in the late afternoon	Waders and some leggy terrestrials in your box
THE BLUE RIVER Section 7, for a public-access fishing map, visit silverthorne.org	Silverthorne, just off Highway 9 (turn on Bald Eagle Road toward the water; you can park on the other side of the river)	8 a.m.	This section of water was upgraded in 2007 by a Colorado Parks & Wildlife Fishing Is Fun grant, and the refurbished habitat offers nice riffles full of fat trout	Waders
THE CACHE LA POUDE RIVER	 Fort Collins	Dusk	This area has a 14-mile, public-access stretch of water, which can mean lots of river traffic during the day, but find an easy spot (we like the area around the Hewlett Gulch trailhead and the Diamond Rock picnic area) to wade in after dinnertime and enjoy the relative solitude and rising trout	Waders
THE FRYINGPAN RIVER At Strawberry Rock, Downey Creek, Folkstead Spring, or Rosie's Pool (all public-access points)	Downtown Basalt and upstream toward the Ruedi Reservoir	11 a.m.	 There are eight miles of public access (out of about 14) on this gold-medal-fishing tailwater in what is one of the most beautiful areas in the state of Colorado	Waders and a few Mysis shrimp patterns in your box
THE SOUTH PLATTE RIVER In the Charlie Meyers State Wildlife Area	Hartsel	Sunrise	The five-mile section of the South Platte River below Spinney Mountain Reservoir is often referred to as the "Dream Stream" for its big browns, monster rainbows, and larger-than-normal cutthroats and cutbows	Waders



FISHING FAQ

Do I need a license?

Yes. Visit cpw.state.co.us to buy a one-day pass (\$9), a five-day pass (\$21), or an annual permit (\$26 for residents, \$56 for out-of-staters).

Where can I legally fish?

This is an important question Colorado anglers should ask themselves before letting out their lines. A few basic guidelines:

- Trespassing laws in Colorado favor private landowners; ignorance to those laws is not an excuse.
- Colorado landowners are not required by law to mark their properties as private.
- Landowners own the stream bottoms bordering and/or running through their properties; anglers standing in a river are trespassing.
- Landowners do not own the water; anglers who are floating—on drift boats or tubes—can pass through (if they accessed the water legally), so long as they do not an-

- chor, beach, or leave their vessels.
- If one side of a stream is public and the other bank is private, the private land extends to the middle of the stream. Anglers can cast to the water on the far side but may not step onto the stream bottom.
- Visit the local U.S. Forest Service ranger district office for information and area maps or seek out the well-marked public-access fishing areas on Colorado rivers (also: see our helpful chart above); as you advance and want to try new waters, you'll become an atlas junkie.

Are there rules of etiquette?

Rookies should be aware of two edicts: Don't spoil the solitude, and don't bogart the fish. Many anglers relish the quiet and natural beauty as much as they do the hunt for trout. It's only good manners to give other fishermen wide berth (read: don't edge into someone else's hole) and keep the hooting and hollering to a minimum. As far as fly-fishermen are concerned, catch-and-release practices are the best way to ensure there are fish to hook tomorrow.

COURTESY: ARKANSAS RIVER: JEFFREY W. HARRIS; LAKE AGNES: JEFFREY W. HARRIS; YAMPA RIVER: JEFFREY W. HARRIS; SARVIS CREEK: JEFFREY W. HARRIS; BLUE RIVER: JEFFREY W. HARRIS; FRYINGPAN RIVER: JEFFREY W. HARRIS; SOUTH PLATTE RIVER: JEFFREY W. HARRIS.



> The Big Laramie River is more of a stream in certain places, but deep pools and overhanging vegetation make for great trout habitat.



TOP LODGING

Water Water Everywhere

Rawah Ranch's favorable location means anglers have access to more fishing holes than they can shake a rod at.

THERE'S A SAYING commonly used among those who fly-fish: *Trout don't live in ugly places*. It's a truism that rings even truer at northern Colorado's Rawah Ranch. Located adjacent to the 78,000-acre Rawah Wilderness Area, the property comprises nine luxury cabins, a rough-hewn-log lodge, working stables, and two glorious miles of the Big Laramie River. In this rarefied setting, managers Tim and Meg Dyer have crafted a guest ranch experience that feels simultaneously high-end and casual. The food is exquisitely prepared, yet meals are served at communal tables. The staff silently notes how you take your morning coffee and has your preferred cup waiting for you at breakfast, yet there exists not a whiff of the pretension or falseness that sometimes accompanies pro-level service. This unique atmosphere of laid-back precision extends to the fishing as well. The private stretch of water on the property is more of a meandering creek than the name Big Laramie River implies, but the fish are there and waiting in aptly named holes such as the Aquarium. The Dyers also have private access to six miles of the Big Laramie at a ranch down the road; it's a bit of a drive, but *A River Runs Through It* could easily have been filmed there.

Quick tip: Rates at the ranch include lodging, meals, ranch activities and amenities, and fishing guides and gear—but don't include alcohol. In fact, Rawah doesn't stock any hooch at all. If you like a brewski after a day on the river, bring your own.

DETAILS: Book the Angler's Retreat package, which includes three nights' lodging and two days of guided fishing for \$1,675 per person; rawahranch.com

JEFF HEINZ/50

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FIRST PERSON

Deep Pools (Of Patience)

My unlikely love for a frustrating pastime.

THE HOOK PIERCED my index finger, going deep enough I could actually see the tip of it pressing against the underside of my fingernail. I swore. And then I peered at my husband with a panicked look that said: *What do I do now?*

"Well, you're gonna have to rip that outta there," he said.

I'm sure my eyes grew wide with dread, but I knew he was right—we were in the middle of nowhere in northern Colorado fly-fishing on a so-far-fishless stream. I cursed again. Then, on the count of three, I yanked out the fly.

It's been more than a decade since that tiny hook bit me on the first day I ever cast with a fly rod. It was a fitting introduction to what may well be the single most exasperating, curse-inducing leisure activity on the planet. (Yes, even more so than golf.) In a way, fly-fishing is akin to telemark skiing; both pursuits are decidedly more difficult ways of doing something for which there exists a simpler method. You can catch a fish from the bank with a spinner rod and live bait; you can also make it down the mountain using fixed-heel bindings. But that would be *unaaaaay* too easy.

Instead, fly-fishermen wiggle into neoprene jumpsuits, wade into rushing rivers, and use nine-foot-long, comparatively weak rods, which they must learn how to wield well enough to create sufficient force to sling a knotted-together combination of line across the water in an adequately pleasing way to entice a fish to eat a fake fly made out of chicken feathers. They have to do all that without catching their hooks in the trees behind them, in the tall grasses in front of them, in their fleece jackets, or in their ears. Also: that long line they use? It tangles—a lot. The knots they have to fashion to put on a fly? Not simple. And then, at the end of the day, they're still fishing. Which means they might not even see one of the elusive swimmers all day.

And yet...I get it. Which is remarkable since I'm the least patient person I know. For all of its flaws, fly-fishing is undeniably hypnotic. I didn't think so at first—I threw out a lot of expletives in the beginning. And then, it slowly grew on me. After a while, the casting, which had been difficult to pick up, began to feel more natural, more rhythmic. I learned to settle in and allow the cadence to clear my crowded mind, much like footfalls do for runners. Improving my cast became, for me, a way to compete with myself. I thought it similar to refining a forehand in tennis: Each cast would be different, rarely perfect, but hopefully effective. Selecting a fly had initially been puzzling (*What the hell is a midge?*), but after learning a bit about insect life cycles and trout feeding habits, the process of choosing a fly became a more intellectual quest, one that roused a long-dormant primordial urge to best another species. It's still trial and error, but now with a hint of strategy. And then there's the surrounding environment: the splashy symphony of a stream, the cool breeze coming off a lake, the high-elevation sun glinting on the water; the corniced peaks above providing snow-melt ideal for trout habitat...experiencing all of these beautiful things makes the all-too-often reality of not catching anything (except your finger) completely OK.

Well, maybe not *completely*. But mostly: Goddamn sneaky fish. —*LBK*



The Big Question: How do you learn which fly to use?

I'm still learning, but doing three easy things has helped me immensely. First, I Googled the life cycle of insects so I could better understand what a fish might be seeing—and looking for. Second, I do a windshield test, meaning I check out what flying bugs are currently in the air (or were, before they hit laminated safety glass) near where I'm going to fish. And finally, I turn over river rocks to see what creepy crawlers and larval stage bugs are living in my chosen fishing hole. Then I try to match what I find with something from my fly box.

THE RHYTHM IS GONNA GET YOU

Learn how to cast correctly—and pick up other useful skills—with instruction from these Front Range fishermen.

FLY FISHING 101 ORVIS

orvis.com

If you don't know a Woolly Bugger from a Copper John—but you're interested in learning—Orvis' Cherry Creek retail store has the beginner's class for you. From 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays and Sundays (through June 28), wannabe anglers can learn all about rod assembly, knot-tying, fly selection, and casting from fly-fishing gurus. The free class takes place in-store (as well as on the roof of the adjacent, casting-friendly garage) and supplies all the equipment you'll need to learn. Just bring shades and sunscreen. Plus: Orvis provides a Fly-Fishing 201 course—which takes place on the water and is also free—for those who've taken the first installment. To register, visit orvis.com.

CASTING & COCKTAILS TROUTS FLY FISHING

troutsflyfishing.com

Although this event is actually BYOB (the name doesn't make sense to us either), it's a great—and totally free—way to get a little casting instruction while also checking out fishing gear. Put on by Trout's Fly Fishing, this monthly (April through September) get-together at the southeast corner of Washington Park allows anglers to mingle with Trout's guides, peruse and try out the wares of rotating featured fly-fishing equipment manufacturers, and drink a few cold ones.

THIS SUMMER'S LINEUP

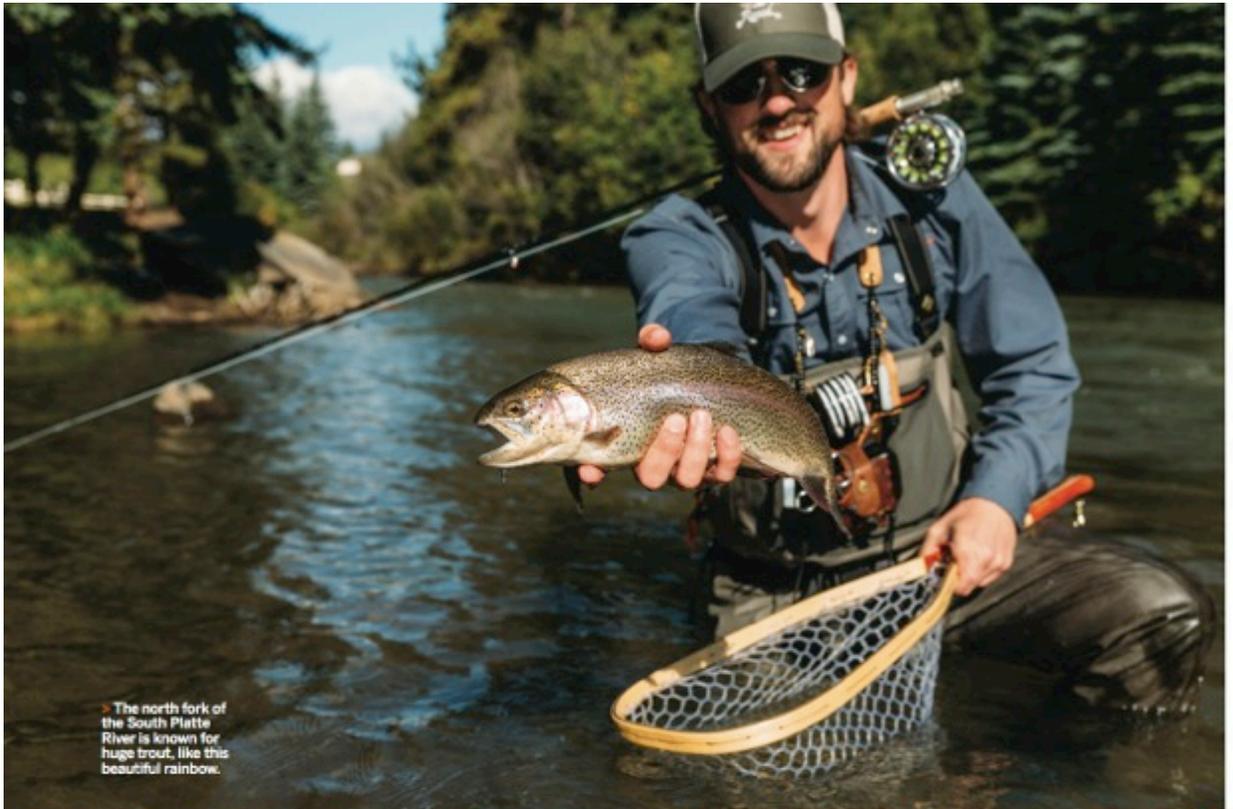
JUNE 11, 5 PM TO 7 PM, SCOTT FLY RODS
JULY 9, 5 PM TO 7 PM, ORVIS
AUGUST 6, 5 PM TO 7 PM, THE FIBERGLASS MANIFESTO
SEPTEMBER 12, 5 PM TO 7 PM, ST. CROIX RODS

CASTING CLINICS CHARLIE'S FLY BOX

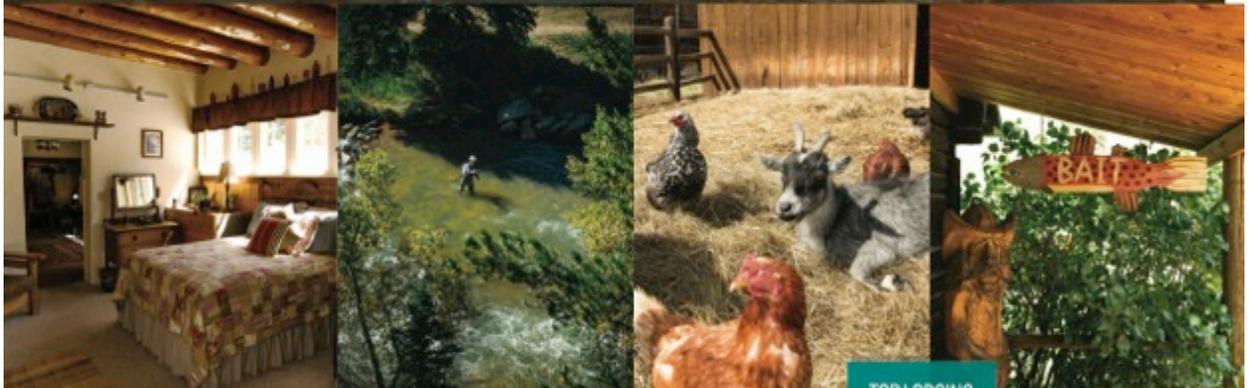
charliesflyboxinc.com

Charlie's Fly Box in Arvada offers a series of Saturday casting classes (\$50 per person, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.) beginning in April each year, but the June 5 "Impress Your Guide (And Yourself)" workshop is a great way to learn how to cast from a drift boat. The July 11 "Going Long 1" and July 25 "Going Long 2" clinics are geared toward advanced beginners and intermediate casters looking to improve their distances. The August 22 "When You're Up Against The Wall" class reviews the basic roll cast, the switch cast, the single spey, and other compact casts perfect for tight quarters. September 12's "Heavy Lifting" lesson provides anglers instruction on dealing with weighted flies and sinking lines.

ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES E. BYRNE



► The north fork of the South Platte River is known for huge trout, like this beautiful rainbow.



TOP LODGING

Short Drive, Big Fish

Shawnee's North Fork Ranch offers everything a Front Range fly-fisherman could ever want.

TUCKED OUT OF SIGHT of motorists humming along U.S. 285, 500-acre North Fork Ranch enjoys an atmosphere of seclusion even though it's located just 52 miles southwest of Denver. The ranch caters to guests with a wide range of activities—horseback riding, hiking, zip-line touring, white-water rafting—but fly-fishermen will swoon over the short 50-yard walk from the lodge's rocking chair-strewn back porch to the rainbow-, brown-, and cutthroat-choked waters of the north fork of the South Platte River. Anglers really should take advantage of owners Karen and Dean May's hospitality and stay a night or two at the Orvis-endorsed ranch, which proffers clean, cozy (but not overly fancy) lodge rooms and cabins and meals cooked by Karen herself. However, à la carte guided daytrips are available for those who want to fish the mile of private water and then head home.

Quick tip: Make reservations for daytrips well in advance: The ranch limits the number of people who can fish on its stretch of water to six each day. If you missed your window, don't fret: North Fork Ranch has access to adjacent sections of river and can usually work something out for your group.

DETAILS: Guided fishing rates start at \$360 for a half-day outing; lodge rooms start at \$190 per night; northforkranch.com

PHOTOGRAPH BY



FOLLOW THE HATCH

Water: The Arkansas River

Insect: Caddis fly

Approximate dates: Traditionally, early April through May (which explains why it was dubbed the Mother's Day Caddis Hatch), but after an ill-timed water release from a local dam in 2009, the bugs haven't been reproducing as well; the hatch is still active, but it's less of a buggy blizzard, and emergences are now lasting further into the summer.

Path: Recently, the hatch has been starting near Cañon City, exploding off the river through Coaldale, decreasing near Salida, and then moving on upstream. There's still a strong caddis emergence in the Hayden Meadows area and toward Leadville into June and even July.

Why it's famous: "Before the water release changed things, the caddis hatch was an Animal Planet-style phenomenon. It was a snowstorm of trillions of bugs. Today, the fishing is better because your fly doesn't get lost among the throngs." —Stuart Andrews, guide, *ArkAnglers*

Water: Upper Colorado River

Insect: Salmonfly

Approximate dates: Early June

Path: This is a fickle hatch, sometimes occurring right before or during peak runoff when the river is high and unfishable. When it does happen, look for these large bugs around the Pumpphouse Recreation Area.

Why it's famous: "This is a magical moment in Colorado fishing. These prehistoric-looking bugs crawl out of the river to lay eggs; the trout are there to catch them as they head to the bank or, as they're clumsy fliers, when they fall into the water. It's the one time anglers can throw these huge dry flies and watch a trout go after them." —Brian Stevens, manager, *Minturn Anglers*

Water: Fryingspan and Roaring Fork rivers

Insect: Green drake mayfly

Approximate dates: On the Roaring Fork, shortly after runoff through July; on the Fryingspan, middle of August through October

Path: The hatch on the Roaring Fork begins near Basalt and moves upstream toward Aspen; the bugs emerge on the Fryingspan River near Basalt and move upriver toward the Ruedi Reservoir.

Why it's famous: "The green drakes are the largest bugs we get on these rivers, so every fish is hitting the protein hard. You can throw dry flies all day, and they'll rise to them." —Rich Hastings, guide, *Taylor Creek Fly Shop*

BUGS ARE AN ANGLER'S BEST FRIEND

Three seasonal hatches—that is, when insects mature and mate—that present some of the state's most legendary fishing.

If you've ever walked along the bank of a lake and been unexpectedly swarmed by a frenetic cloud of bugs, you've experienced what anglers call "a hatch." And as opposed to the get-away-from-me reaction you likely had, fly-fishermen actually seek out these fleeting scenarios in which insects that spend some of their life cycles underwater transform into oxygen-breathing, flying adults that mate in the air above rivers and lakes. The insects' journeys from water to air make them vulnerable to predators like trout, which often decide the emerging critters are meals too good to pass up—and a feeding frenzy ensues. Small- and medium-size hatches happen all the time, but there are a few rivers that experience somewhat predictable and often epic hatches of certain insects (don't fret: most of these are nonbiting, nonstinging bugs). It's on these rivers you'll find anglers doing their damndest to "match the hatch," a phrase that means choosing the correct fly for the precise life stage of the insects present and delivering it in a way that's most enticing to the trout. It's an impressive science, but there's nothing else like it. Here, a few buggy bonanzas to chase down. ➔

- RED FISH, BLUE FISH -

Fly-fishing Colorado's under-the-radar kokanee salmon run in Summit County.

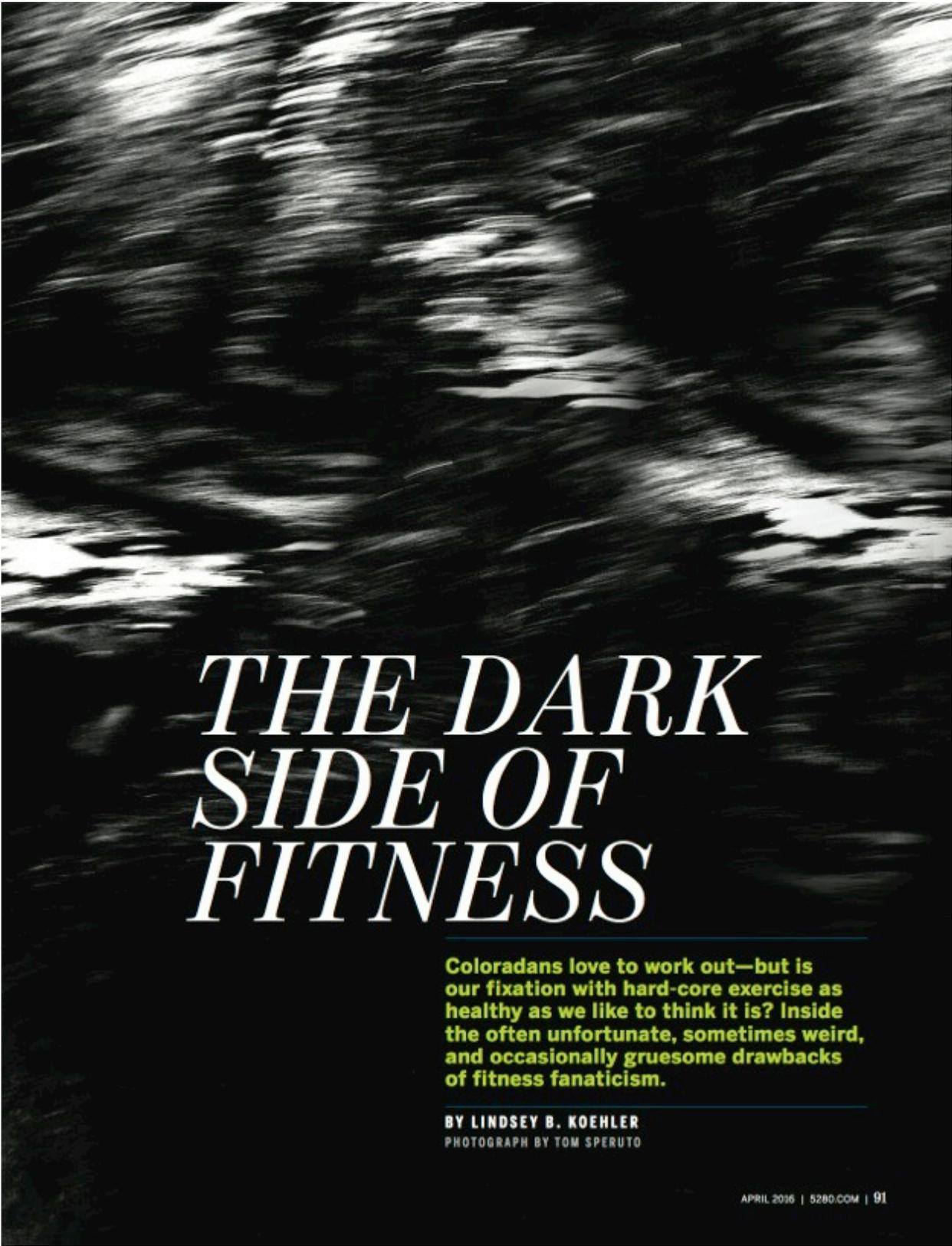
You could call it a poor man's Alaska, but that might be underselling this Colorado phenomenon: In October and November, kokanee salmon—which are the landlocked version of sockeye salmon—leave Summit County's Green Mountain Reservoir and swim up the Blue River to spawn. Although kokanee fisheries have thrived in Colorado for more than 60 years in places such as Green Mountain (as well as in Lake Granby, Wolford Reservoir, Blue Mesa Reservoir, and Williams Fork Reservoir), most Coloradans are unaware of this fishing windfall. The salmon aren't huge (they max out at about 18 inches), and as sterile hatchery stockers, they can't reproduce. But they still heed nature's call to spawn, which turns them a brilliant shade of red and creates stunning pockets of color throughout the

Blue River. "There's no mistaking those kokanee," says Randy Veeneman, a guide with Breckenridge's Mountain Angler. Some anglers snag salmon with treble hooks; others toss egg patterns (yes, salmon will snack on their own eggs). The salmon are good eats, and anglers can take 10 per day, though Veeneman says he rarely targets them. Instead, he casts for the clever brown trout trailing the salmon to feast on kokanee eggs.

Egg patterns will yield good results for those luring browns as well, but streamers (try a white and olive marabou Barely Legal pattern) also arouse the trout, which "can be aggressive that time of year," Veeneman says. And when the red run coincides with autumn's golden leaves? Says Veeneman: "The scenery becomes as good as the fishing." —Kelly Bastone







THE DARK SIDE OF FITNESS

Coloradans love to work out—but is our fixation with hard-core exercise as healthy as we like to think it is? Inside the often unfortunate, sometimes weird, and occasionally gruesome drawbacks of fitness fanaticism.

BY LINDSEY B. KOEHLER
PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM SPERUTO

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THE ATHLETE'S DOWNFALL

The folly of placing the fittest and fastest on pedestals.

In Colorado, we're all athletes in the making. It doesn't matter if you're uncoordinated or can't complete a two-mile jog. The notion of fitness permeates life in the Centennial State to such a degree that it's almost impossible to escape. It matters not whether you were born here or moved here later in life; eventually, the not-so-subliminal messaging—that your inner athlete is just waiting for her chance to shine—gets through. Then, somewhat inexplicably, you find yourself thinking ridiculous thoughts like, *I should start going to CrossFit every day, or How bad could an Ironman really be?*

Yes, Centennial Staters admire those who eschew the couch for the trail, and we practically worship those who take their workouts a step further by running marathons or competing in triathlons. And why wouldn't we? According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' 2008

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, adults should be getting at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week plus strengthening activities at least eight days a month. Not surprisingly, a hearty majority—an estimated 83 percent—of Colorado adults participate in some form of physical activity and do many things right when it comes to fitness.

But this is Colorado. We don't stop at five kilometers. Instead, three-mile jogs morph into marathons and sprint-distance triathlons become Ironmans. And suddenly you're no longer exercising for the health benefits; you've become what Dr. Inigo San Millán, director of sports performance at the University of Colorado Sports Medicine and Performance Center, calls a "Colorado freak." These are people—and their numbers are growing, according to organizations such as USA Triathlon, USA Cycling, and

Running USA—who not so long ago might've huffed and puffed their ways around Wash Park once a week but today could be considered borderline elite athletes. They train as hard as the best, and they compete in the most challenging events on Earth.

Here's the catch: "Professional athletes have encourages to help them," San Millán says. "The majority of Colorado freaks are doing this on their own, even if they happen to have a sponsor or two. They don't know how to train, how to eat, how to recover, or how to balance their lives, and this brings issues to this population."

"Issues" may be something of an understatement because the list of downsides that people are loathe to discuss is long and varied. Time. Money. The lure of performance enhancers. The fights with your spouse. The dangers of the backcountry.

On top of all that, the human body simply isn't equipped to withstand a 100-mile foot-race or to repeatedly dead-lift a 600-pound tractor tire. "These people are writing checks their bodies can't cash," says Doug Jowdy, Ph.D., a Front Range sports psychologist. "There's only so much a body can take." And, Jowdy points out, the damage isn't restricted to the physical. "People can become too attached to exercise because it gives them something they can't get elsewhere. That can lead to emotional injury."

In our fat-and-getting-fatter society, it's difficult to comprehend how Coloradans'

"These people are writing checks their bodies can't cash. There's only so much a body can take."

outsized love of movement could be a bad thing, but there does come a point when more isn't better. It's in that murky space, where pain sometimes masquerades as pleasure and happiness hinges on getting in your next workout, that the dark side of fitness lurks. Here's why.



Because even the strong-willed bow to Facebook.

Along with the widespread inability to communicate using more than 140 characters and rising divorce rates, you can add "working out too much" to the long list of societal ills that can, in part, be blamed on the popularity of social media. "Social media has taken endurance training to new heights," says Brendan Trimboli, a Durango-based energy analyst who has competed in more than 30 ultramarathons since 2008. "It allows you to ask yourself if you're less accomplished than that guy, if you're doing less than that guy. I'm guilty of that—of trying to keep up." It doesn't seem like something you should feel ashamed of—getting in an extra workout is usually a good thing—unless you've already asked your body to carry you 75 miles that week or you have an injury you should be nursing back to health. "Social media is hard; it prompts you, teases you," says Durango's Hannah Green, a 25-year-old distance runner who recently underwent surgery to repair a deep bone bruise to her knee. "And that's especially difficult when you're injured. You try to do things you shouldn't do."

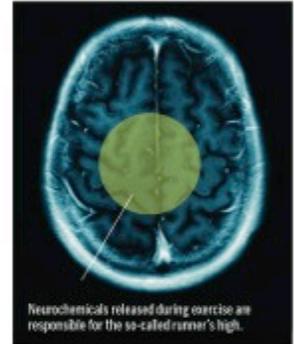
Because competitive athletes tend to be affirmation addicts.

We all like a pat on the back, but when you crave—even need—positive feedback, things can get messy. “There’s definitely a personality type associated with competitive athletes, especially endurance athletes,” says sports psychologist Doug Jowdy. “These people are achievement-oriented but often have unrealistic expectations; they’re perfectionistic, very type A; they’re self-critical. And they compensate through exercise.” Translation: The act of crossing a finish line or seeing improvement based on your Garmin’s data can serve as a booster shot of confidence. “If you can transfer the skills you learn being an athlete—dealing with pressure, being goal-oriented—to other aspects of your life and gain confidence elsewhere, that’s ideal,” says Jamie Shapiro, Ph.D., assistant professor for the Master of Arts in Sport and Performance Psychology program at the University of Denver. “These folks need to learn to find self-worth from other areas of life.” Why? Because family, work, injuries, an aging body—you name it—will inevitably get in the way of your fitness routine.



Because endorphins are habit-forming.

You’ve heard of “runner’s high”: that mythical place runners swear exists, where pain and suffering dissipate and exercise feels (almost) as good as sex. If you’ve never felt it, runner’s high might seem like a fairy tale—except science backs up its existence. Although questions persist about how it all works, neurochemicals (like endorphins) and neurotransmitters (like serotonin) produced in the brain as a result of stress can induce a pain-free euphoria and post-workout contentedness. Those feelings can be

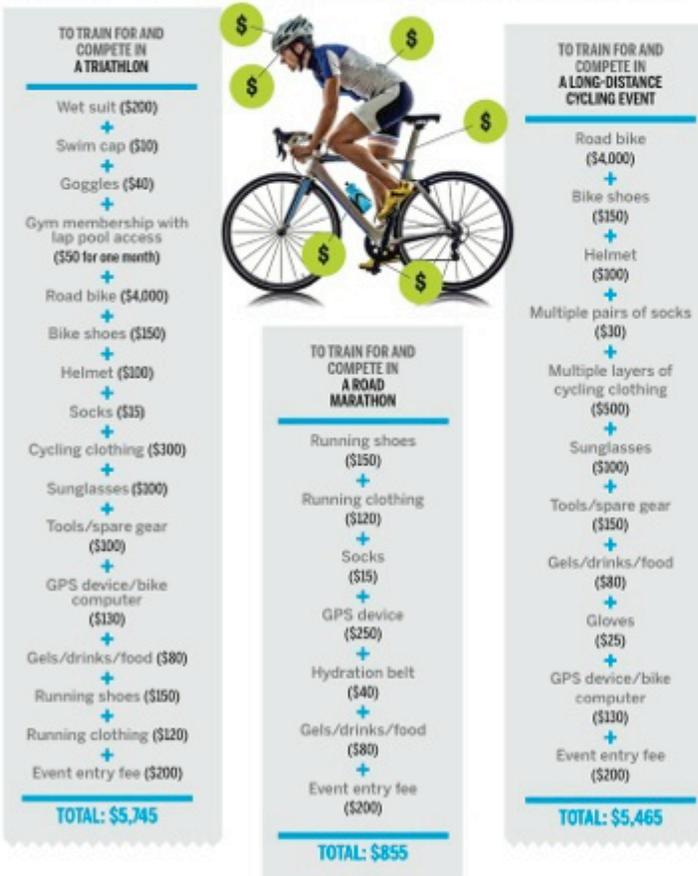


Neurochemicals released during exercise are responsible for the so-called runner’s high.

therapeutic—and highly addictive. “I suffered from some depression in my early 20s,” says Paul Hamilton, 29, a sponsored Colorado ultrarunner who lives out of his truck during training season so he can be closer to the trails. “But I found extraordinary healing by running in nature.” Not only did Hamilton find that trail running served as a form of active meditation, but he was also almost certainly enjoying the effects of neurochemicals. “Endorphins are some of the best antidepressants out there,” says Dr. John Hill, a primary care sports medicine specialist at the University of Colorado Hospital. Which is all well and good—until an injury prevents you from getting your fix. Whether you’ve become addicted to the way neurochemicals make you feel or you use them to battle some form of mental anguish, going cold turkey can be agonizing. “People come to me bleeding emotionally,” Jowdy says. “They can’t get that reward and they feel empty, frustrated, and hopeless.”

Because fitness is f&#%ing expensive.

Here’s (approximately) how much dough you can expect to spend, depending on your particular discipline. Keep in mind if you’re not competing in a local event, you’ll need to add the cost of airfare and baggage (a bike can cost up to \$300 round trip), lodging, and food to your total.



STOCK/SH

Because seemingly minor irritations can morph into agonizing indignities.

THE PROBLEM	THE CAUSE	THE PRESENTATION	THE IN-RACE QUICK FIX	HOW TO AVOID IT
CHAFING	Friction, either skin on skin or skin on fabric	Red, rashlike irritation, sometimes accompanied by bleeding, which most commonly occurs on the nipples, thighs, groin, armpits, and shoulders.	Remove the offending fabric if you can. Turning clothing inside out can help; rubbing a layer of ChapStick over the irritation can work in a pinch.	Use lubrication. Vaseline is OK, but runners and triathletes like BodyGlide, while cyclists swear by Chamois Butt'r and DZ Nuts.
BLISTERS	Friction	Pockets of fluid (pus, blood, serum) materialize under the top layer of skin, usually where socks or shoes rub the skin.	Hopefully you have some moleskin in one of your drop bags; if not, you'll have to decide if it's worth stopping at a medical tent to get some.	Keep your feet moist by using lotion every day, and on race day slather your feet with Vaseline. Don't blister-free socks and wear shoes that fit.
RUNNER'S TROTS	Unknown; researchers surmise organ jostling, decreased blood flow to the intestines, and pre-race jitters might be contributing factors	It feels like your everyday bout of diarrhea, except there's often nowhere to relieve yourself—unless you're cool with using the bushes.	You're kinda SCL (pun intended).	Take Imodium an hour before the start; limit fiber within 24 hours of the race; avoid caffeine on race day; drink fluids before and during your event.
INCONTINENCE	Stress applied to the bladder during exercise causes leakage (experts suggest weakened pelvic muscles could be a factor)	Ever laugh so hard you pee a little? It's kinda like that. Studies suggest up to 30 percent of female runners experience it.	Find a Porta Potty or, honestly, don't worry about it. A little urine never hurt anyone.	Doctors say pelvic-strengthening exercises can help. Most runners wear an absorbent pad, bring wet wipes, or just change clothes after the race.
NAUSEA/VOMITING	Pre-race anxiety, decreased blood flow necessary for digestion during a race, and a sudden change in exertion after the race can all cause GI distress	You feel like—or actually end up—puking.	Take it easy on the energy gels; stay adequately hydrated; and pop an antacid if you have one.	Finding a way to avoid nausea and vomiting takes trial-and-error research—meaning, you need to find out what combo of race-day nutrition works for you.
EXCESSIVE SNOT	Unknown, but up to 40 percent of endurance athletes suffer from exercise-induced allergy symptoms	Runny nose, sneezing, itchiness, and congestion can occur.	The "snot rocket." Depress one nostril while blowing through the other to clear it—without using a tissue.	Using a nasal spray that relieves your runny nose is about all you can do.

FIRST PERSON

PLAYING WITH PAIN

What it feels like to run the Leadville 100.

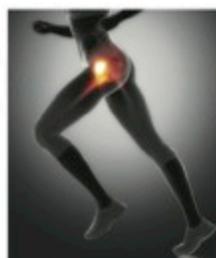
I first noticed the twinge in my left calf around mile 25 of the Leadville Trail 100 Run, shortly after finishing a heiter-skelter scramble down the rutted dirt track called Powerline. By Twin Lakes, at mile 39.5, my steady gait had become a lopsided hobble. I told my crew—four friends and family members who were supporting my somewhat quixotic first attempt at a 100-mile race—I might have to drop out. But ultramarathons are all about



not quitting, despite fatigue, nausea, blisters, and pain. Everyone goes through "rough patches," and I thought this might just be mine. After gulping some ibuprofen, I limped out of Twin Lakes and began the long climb toward Hope Pass, the race's high point.

I had not been a hard-core runner for long. Unlike many thousands of Coloradans, I'd never even run a marathon. Rock climbing was my sport. But the summer before my Leadville race, I took a bad fall and lost the confidence necessary for serious climbing. I felt like I needed a big but relatively safe new challenge. Running the Leadville 100, the "Race Across the Sky," seemed to be the ticket. I gave myself one year to prepare for Leadville's high-elevation course.

PHOTO: JASON WATKINS/ISTOCK



Because there's something called the female athlete triad—and it's not awesome.

When female athletes don't give their bodies the fuel they need to expend the energy they want to, a troika of nasty medical problems can ensue.

ENERGY DEFICIENCY
This is the root of the problem: Whether an athlete is purposefully restricting caloric intake or doesn't know she isn't eating enough, energy deficiency forces her body to alter critical physiological systems—like growth and reproduction—to conserve energy for survival. Athletes who are energy deficient will often feel fatigued and unable to focus.

NO MENSTRUAL CYCLE
When the body halts menstruation because of low energy stores, the suppression of estrogen—an important developmental hormone—leads to decreased bone growth and bone strength.

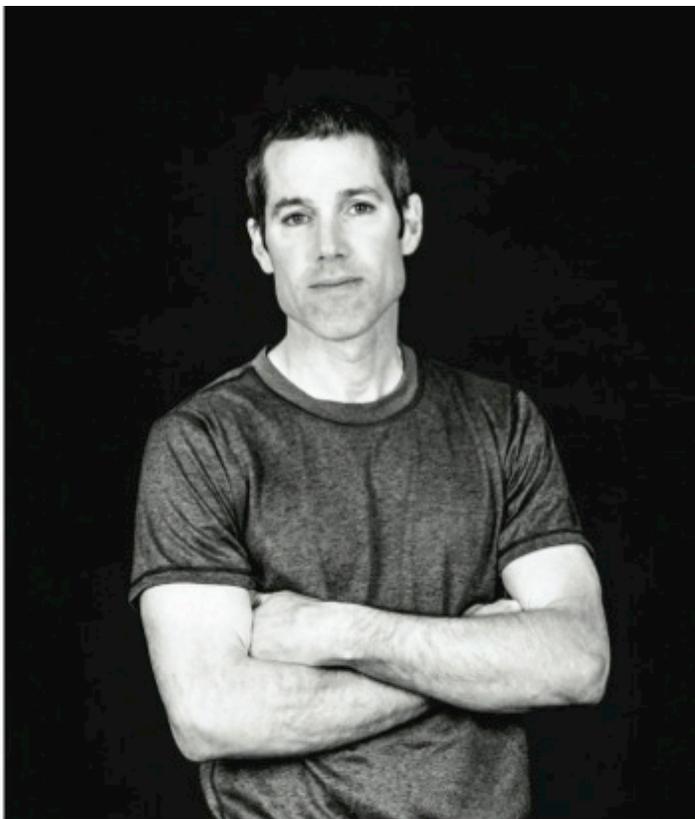
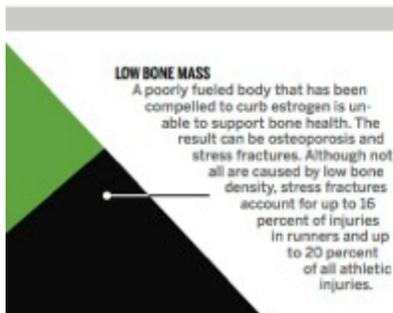
I ran my first half-marathon that October and then a 50K in early spring. In May I finished the 50-mile Collegiate Peaks Trail Run near Buena Vista at the stately pace of 13.5 minutes a mile—exactly as planned. My training was working, and I felt good about my chances of finishing within Leadville's 30-hour cutoff in August. My wife, however, was not happy. I ran nearly every day, often for hours, and rock climbing—her favorite sport—had largely been abandoned.

Hope Pass was a bitch. On the downhill side of the 12,540-foot saddle, bolts of pain shot up my left leg with every footfall. But at Winfield, the turnaround point halfway through the race, an old friend joined me as a pacer and I got a second wind. *This is what a 100-mile race is all about, I told myself. Suffering is just part of the game.* Then night fell and I could no longer run at all: I lurched like Quasimodo. In the glow of my headlamp, every pebble seemed like a boulder. I had a blister the size of a silver dollar on one foot, but that was a mere annoyance compared to my throbbing calf. Still, I kept going.

The sun rose at May Queen, the race's final aid station. It was only 13.5 miles to the finish, and I'd already traveled more than 60 miles since my injury—what was another half-marathon? But my strained calf muscle had swollen to twice its normal size and my will was broken. I begged an official to cut off my wristband, ending my bid at 86.5 miles.

Regret kicked in as soon as I could walk comfortably again, about a week later. If I'd started down that final leg to the finish, could I have made it? I vowed to return to Leadville the following August to find out. However, once I started training again, I discovered a nagging ache in both hips. I quit ultrarunning for good. I had been willing to suffer to finish at Leadville, but I wasn't going to risk premature hip replacements to go back. I, unlike so many other endurance athletes, couldn't reconcile the notion that being competitive meant always being in pain. Suddenly, rock climbing was looking like a whole lot of fun again.

—Dougald MacDonald



Because Colorado's fickle terrain can mount a sneak attack.

➔ **FOUNDING THE PAVEMENT** has its advantages: A jog on an urban running path is quick and convenient. But many of Colorado's endurance elite prefer the knee-saving qualities, challenging topographies, and distracting beauty of backcountry trails. Which is exactly what Dave Mackey was looking for on May 23, 2015, when he headed toward Boulder's Bear Peak on an overcast 40-degree morning.

"I had planned a three-hour run," says Mackey, a well-known and decorated trail runner sponsored by shoemaker Hoka One One, "but the outing took a bit longer than that." After cruising up Shadow Canyon and South Boulder Peak—a 3,000-foot climb—Mackey summited Bear Peak around 9 a.m. and began picking his way down a scree-filled path on the west side of the mountain. He'd done this route on a hundred previous occasions, but this time the earth moved under his feet. "I stepped on a giant rock, and it rolled," he says. "I tried to catch myself, but I took an out-of-control 50-foot fall."

Although he tumbled a long way over rough terrain, Mackey says he's certain the compound fracture of his left leg happened when the 250-pound boulder came to rest on his lower leg. As luck would have it, the two-time USA Track & Field Ultrarunner of the Year had just minutes before passed a friend on the trail; Paul Gross was still close enough to hear Mackey's screams and was able to lift the rock off his shattered leg with the help of a tree branch. It then took several good Samaritans and the Rocky Mountain Rescue Group four hours to evacuate a bloodied Mackey from his precarious perch to Boulder Community Health.

"Before that day, the worst injury I'd had was a sprained ankle," Mackey says. The Bear Peak accident was something altogether different: Over the subsequent six months, Mackey endured 12 surgeries, including procedures to stabilize his leg, address myriad infections, insert rods and plates, and place bone and muscle grafts. Mackey knows he'll likely never again be 100 percent, but he hopes he can at least get back into running someday. He also knows he was lucky. "If it had been later in the afternoon or during the winter," Mackey says, "I might not have survived. There might not have been someone on the trail to help me."

PORTRAITS BY CLAUDIA LÓPEZ

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Because being a competitive athlete can bring out your demons.

➔ IT'S DIFFICULT FOR WENDY GREENE to pinpoint exactly why or when she became too focused on her body and fitness. Maybe it was at 12 years old when she first began lifting weights with her dad when they were living in northern Wyoming. Or maybe it was when she was assaulted at 19 years old. Or maybe, she says, she has been compulsive and anxious since she was born. "Genetics loads the gun sometimes," she says. "Life pulls the trigger."

Whatever it was, Greene, 33, says she's always had a tendency to be at the extreme end of everything. For example, Greene didn't just continue lifting weights to stay in shape; she began competing in bodybuilding events. And she didn't just go to CrossFit; she became a CrossFit instructor. Her other jobs—as a wildland firefighter and now a surgical trauma nurse at Denver Health—have also fed her need for constant, high-pressure stimulus. "I've always had an inability to focus," Greene says. "I like things that make me pay attention because if I stop, I have to face myself."

Facing herself became unavoidable in 2011. Greene's anxiety and other emerging compulsions—like obsessively counting calories, chewing food and then spitting it out, and working out to the detriment of her social life—had her drowning in what felt like a pool of depression. She went to see a therapist, who helped Greene understand she might be experiencing orthorexia (an obsession with eating only healthy foods) and compulsive exercise disorder (prioritizing exercise over everything else), both mental health issues that research suggests are more common among competitive athletes. "I wasn't underweight," Greene explains, "so no one knew I was struggling." But she was. "Social media didn't help. CrossFit stuff is all over Facebook, and I felt the pressure to maintain the appearance—the abs, the bicep veins, the superhero look."

Greene checked herself into Denver's Eating Recovery Center for a 40-day partial hospitalization in 2011. The program changed her life by giving her coping skills. "In addiction, everything is black or white," she says. "I had a hard time dealing with gray." She learned though. She took herself off Instagram. She began looking at food not as strictly good or bad. She resolved to call a friend if she was isolating herself. Today, she still does CrossFit but limits it to a few times a week. "I'm still obsessive, and working out is still a part of my life," she says, "but I've discovered that there's more to life than CrossFit."

STOKOZ

FIRST PERSON

FIGHTING THE FOG

What it feels like to have overtraining syndrome.

The buzzing woke me—again—and I reached over to silence the alarm clock. I'd been hitting "snooze" every 20 minutes for three hours. Sleepiness wouldn't loosen its grip, and I was grumpy that I still felt the dread of getting up caused by this deep fatigue. It had been two months since my last ultra-distance race, and I hadn't managed any meaningful training since. My 36-year-old body just wouldn't respond. Downstairs, I poured a second mug of coffee and wondered how many French presses it would take to kill me. I decided I didn't care.

I'd been swimming in this milieu of exhaustion since returning home after my first attempt at southern Colorado's Hardrock 100 Mile Endurance Run—arguably the most challenging, and definitely the highest in elevation, 100-mile ultramarathon race in the country. In preparation for the midsummer race, I had competed in ski-mountaineering events and finished my off-season training with 100,000 vertical feet of uphill trudging in one week. Instead of feeling primed for the season, I started spring training trying to regain a zest for life. Not yet realizing



what I needed was more rest, not more exercise, I began the athlete's version of cocaine and Valium—coffee and melatonin—to get in the 100- to 120-mile weeks required for a good showing at Hardrock.

Not surprisingly, my Keith Richards-style workout plan resulted in a disappointing go at the 100-mile loop through Silverton, Lake City, Ouray, and Telluride. I was crushed. I resolved to get right back after it. I would train better and harder and, in doing so, keep my dream of being a professional athlete alive. I had left a six-figure tech job to live the meager but adventurous life of an ultrarunner, using paltry stipends from a few sponsors to get by. I quickly learned that »

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THE DARK SIDE OF FITNESS

being a professional endurance athlete is not exactly like being a pro baseball player; however, I felt indebted to my benefactors nonetheless. I had to perform, win races, be sponsor-able. And to do that, I had to get the fuck out of bed.

There is a pervasive training philosophy in ultra-distance sports that more is always better: more miles, more intensity, more time on foot. And it works—to a point. But when the stress-recovery balance is off for long periods of time, you go backward physiologically and your performance suffers. Life and running post-Hardrock wasn't good. I would wake up in cold sweats. My sex drive became a distant memory. When I did manage to hit the trail, my muscles would ache for weeks. It wasn't until my mother sent her 100th text telling me to "Answer the phone!" that I realized I'd been avoiding friends and family because I was depressed—and ultimately suffering from overtraining syndrome (OTS).

OTS is a sneaky ailment. Today, I can see that it took advantage of what made

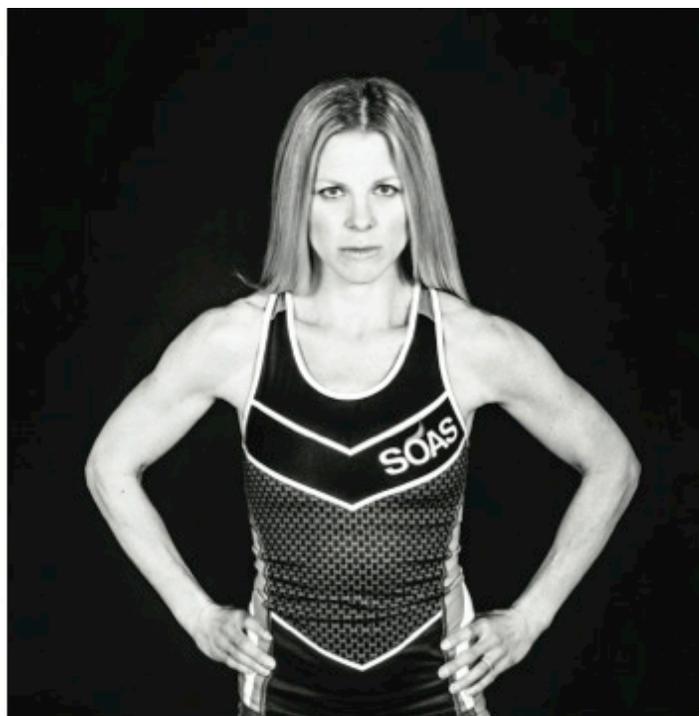
WHAT IS OTS?

While researchers have yet to reach a consensus on a mechanism, biomarkers, or treatment (beyond rest) for overtraining syndrome, most experts agree the condition occurs when an athlete trains beyond the body's ability to recover. In short, each athlete has a threshold for physiological stress, and when the load exceeds this limit for too long, it can cause a cascade of reactions that can result in hormonal, nutritional, emotional, muscular, and neurological imbalances. Essentially, the body melts down and stops responding. —MH

me a good endurance athlete in the first place: motivation, love of training, and ambition. These attributes aided in my demise by making it difficult for me to make a sober decision about whether I needed to frequent the couch or the trail.

When I finally realized my body was cooked, I spent my days in bed—tired, sad, embarrassed, and feeling like a failure. After a couple of weeks, my hormone-producing adrenal glands rebounded; I felt better, but it was months before I felt any enthusiasm about running, and my performances were (are?) still subpar. Now, at 40 years old, it's impossible to ascertain if my inability to excel is age-related degradation or the result of unhealthy training throughout my 30s. As I sit here today, sipping maté tea—yes, I had to give up the devil coffee bean—I wonder what my athletic career could have looked like. And I chew on the notion that OTS may have killed my dream. —MH

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Because rest can become a four-letter word.

It's no secret that those who gravitate toward endurance sports tend to be aggressively type A and atypically driven to succeed. Those personality traits are perhaps partly responsible for one-time recreational athletes morphing into elite endurance racers. But they're also probably responsible for a lot of sports-related injuries. Sarah Bay, 36, an Aurora-born marathoner and triathlete, says she'd take the "probably" out of that sentence.

In 2003, a friend talked Bay into doing the Big Sur Marathon. The pretty, petite blonde admits she didn't train much for that race, but she competed so well she qualified for the Boston Marathon. She was hooked. "That race started my running craze," Bay says. "I ran *woozay* too many marathons in 2004."

In those days, Bay says, she had no idea what rest and recovery were. "For me, it was always train more, more, more," she says. "I didn't know taking a day off was good for my body." The result? Catastrophic injuries. In February 2005, she sustained a stress fracture to her left heel. Eight weeks later, she started running again—too fast, too much, too soon—and got plantar fasciitis in her right foot. To battle the pain so she could continue to run, Bay got cortisone shots in her right foot—and promptly tore her plantar tendon. Throughout that summer she continued to run, despite knowing her feet were in a state of distress. When she finally got an MRI in September, the images showed absolute devastation: bone edema, soft-tissue swelling, stress fractures, and a complete rupture of the plantar fascia. Translation: Bay's feet were wrecked.

That didn't stop her from running a marathon in October—before she forced herself to stop for nearly two years. "It was awful," Bay says, "and stupid." That may be the case, but it's not uncommon. "World-class athletes take days off," says the University of Colorado Sports Medicine and Performance Center's Dr. Inigo San Millán. "In fact, world-class athletes sometimes take *weeks* off. These folks in Colorado, they don't. They are skipping the recovery phase." Recovery, according to San Millán, allows microtears in muscles and tendons to repair themselves. It allows hormones—like cortisol and testosterone and estrogen and others—to rebalance. "The body takes a breath," San Millán says. "And that's critically important."

Today, Bay has fully transitioned from marathons to triathlons, and she takes days off (albeit begrudgingly). She's also hired a coach and spends four to five hours each week at Denver Sports Recovery trying to take better care of her body. "When I started training, I had no idea how much sleep I needed or how to fuel my body appropriately," Bay says. "I mean, I was eating Lean Cuisines and running every day. It was not a great training plan."

Because you're probably going to hurt yourself.

Local orthopedic surgeons Dr. Andrew Parker and Dr. Michelle Wolcott, as well as primary care sports medicine specialist Dr. John Hill, break down some of the more common ailments that limp into their offices.

CROSSFITTERS

Anterior knee pain: usually related to stress or overuse or incorrect form when lifting

Achilles tendonitis: inflammation in the tendon caused by overuse

Rotator cuff tendonitis: caused by lifting too much weight above the head or using incorrect form when lifting

Lower back pain: usually related to strain from lifting too much weight or not correctly balancing when lifting

RUNNERS

Anterior knee pain: sometimes attributed to weak glutes and inwardly rotated thigh bones (although the cause could be due to a variety of factors)

Plantar fasciitis: inflammation and tears in the plantar fascia near the heel caused by too much stress on the heel

Shin splints: sometimes caused by too-long strides

Stress fractures in legs, feet, and hips: often caused by low bone density, overuse, weak muscles, or doing too much too quickly

Meniscus tears: typically caused by an acute twisting or bending of the knee

Achilles tendon injuries: sometimes aggravated by speed training, running uphill, or landing on the forefoot.

CYCLISTS

Acute injuries from crashes: frequently, head injuries and broken clavicles and upper extremities

Numbness in hands: nerve compression often triggered by putting too much weight on the wrists while riding

Neck and lower back pain: tightness in the trapezius muscle usually attributed to riding with a curved back

IT band syndrome: caused by friction of the connective tissue between the quad and the hamstring, which can happen when the knees are pointing too far in or out

Achilles tendonitis: inflammation in the tendon caused by overuse or because a rider's calf muscles are too tense (sometimes remedied by moving cleat position)

Patellar tendonitis: caused by fatigued adductor muscles, which can be related to bike fit or an athlete's unique hip rotation

TRIATHLETES

Rotator cuff injuries: usually attributed to overuse or weak shoulder blades or back muscles

Bicep tendonitis: often caused by overuse or by hunching forward while biking

Nutritional deficiencies: usually ascribed to insufficient caloric intake for the amount of fuel burned while swimming, cycling, and running

Lower back pain: experts sometimes blame a limited range of motion in the hips or bad posture when running or cycling



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Because when you said “I do” you thought your penchant for endurance sports was covered in the “in sickness and in health” section.

➔ MAX AND ANDREA FULTON HAVE been together for 19 years. He's handsome with a slightly crooked smile; she's beautiful in the way only natural redheads can be. They're sitting next to each other on the opposite side of the booth from me at Benny's Restaurant and Tequila Bar in Cap Hill. They clearly love each other; their gentle teasing gives it away. But because I've asked them to tell me how Max's proclivity for endurance sports affects their marriage and family, they're not quite as sure about me.

Andrea warms up pretty quickly, though. “Max lives his life as close to death as possible,” she says with a laugh. “Unfortunately, I'm the most risk-averse person I know.” She isn't totally joking about the 39-year-old father of her two young children. Max has completed more than 130 endurance events—marathons, triathlons, ultramarathons, road-cycling races—in the past 17 years. In summer 2015, he completed the Ironman Boulder, the Leadman series, and Run Rabbit Run 100—about 450 miles of racing total—in approximately three

months. Oh, and he ran the Boston Marathon in 3:06 that year, too. When I ask him why, Max says, “Being in shape is nice, and I'm really competitive, and, well, I want to find out what my limit is. I don't get pushed to my limit during everyday activities.”

I look at Andrea and ask if she's ever reached *her* limit—with all the training and racing and resulting injuries, including stress fractures and a broken collarbone. “It's sometimes challenging for me that Max has so many passions,” she says. “I struggle with the fact that I don't really have that many.” I suggest it might be difficult for her to find the time for such leisure pursuits with kids and her job at the Denver Art

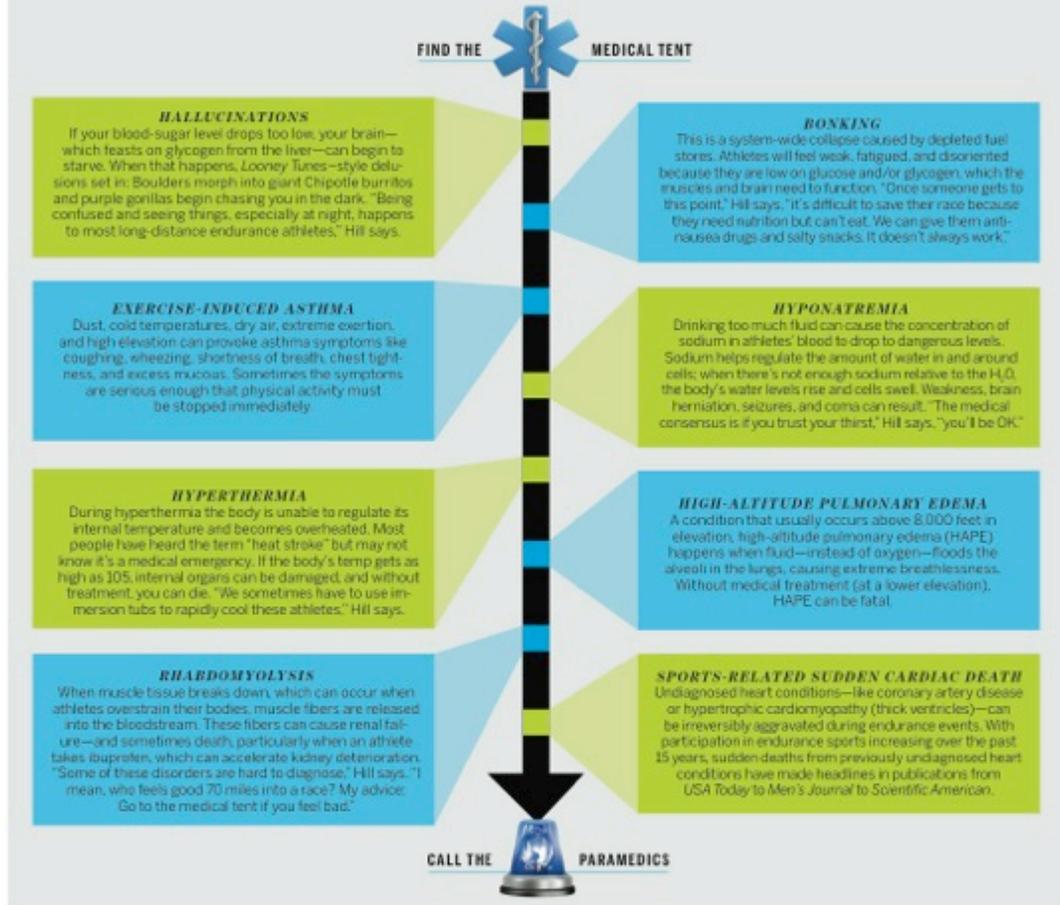
“Max lives his life as close to death as possible. Unfortunately, I'm the most risk-averse person I know.”

Museum and Max's long list of athletic addictions. “Sometimes I get resentful that he gets to take that time,” she says, explaining it was more challenging when their kids were babies than it is now. “But he's grateful for it, which really helps. Plus, I get a lot of flower arrangements in August, which is always a brutal month [full of endurance events].”

The Fultons try to limit the potential for disagreements about training and racing when they can. It's a savvy move considering how frequently experts like sports psychologist Doug Jowdy, Ph.D., see what's colloquially referred to as “divorce by triathlon.” “It's not uncommon that athletes can become more passionate about their chosen sports than about their spouses,” Jowdy says. Fortunately, that's not the case with the Fultons—probably because they work so hard to make sure it isn't. For example, Max gets up early—like 5 a.m. early—on weekdays to get in his training so it doesn't interfere with the rest of the family's day. When Max has a race out of town, the Fultons try to make it a family affair, something that can be enjoyable for Andrea and the kids as well as for Max. And when endurance event season is over, there's a moratorium on talking about it or planning for the next season—at least for a few weeks. “Our biggest challenge with this has always been time,” Max says. “It's our most valuable resource. Andrea does get her time, but it's less than mine. It's something we work on.”

Because a lot of scary medical stuff can go down during an endurance race.

Dr. John Hill, director of CU's primary care sports medicine fellowship, has not only overseen Leadville 100 biking and running events as a medical director—he's also experienced them as an athlete. Below, he helps us break down eight serious ways the human body can react to the stress of competition.



Because death is an honest-to-God possibility.

1 in 76,000

The approximate fatality rate for athletes participating in a triathlon, according to a study released by USA Triathlon in 2012.

1 in 114,000

The approximate fatality rate for athletes participating in a marathon, according to a 2010 study focusing on 30 years’ worth of races in the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands.

4,250

The estimated number of sports-related sudden cardiac deaths in the United States each year, according to a 2011 study circulated by the American Heart Association.

At least 10

Athletes—from long-distance mountain bikers to triathletes to ultrarunners—who have died competing (or shortly after competing) in Colorado events since 1992. ▲

