

spark

A Community Gathers



**NEW
BENNETT
LIBRARY
GRAND
OPENING**

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Spark is what's created when Rangeview customers walk into our libraries – it's a spark of creativity, of imagination and interest. Rangeview staff offer the fuel.

Published quarterly, Spark is available at any Rangeview Library branch. To request an electronic copy of the newsletter, send an e-mail to communications@rangeviewld.org.

Cover photo by Steve Peterson. You can also see his work on pages 3,4,6, & 7.

How to Reach Us
303-288-2001
Anythinklibraries.org

Find Your Local Branch

Bennett Branch Library
495 7th Street, Bennett, CO 80102
303-644-3303

Brighton Branch Library
575 South 8th Avenue, Brighton, CO 80601
303-659-2572

Commerce City Branch Library
7185 Monaco Street, Commerce City, CO 80022
303-287-0063

Northglenn Branch Library
10530 Huron Street, Northglenn, CO 80234
303-452-7354

Perl Mack Branch Library
7611 Hilltop Circle, Denver, CO 80221
303-428-3576

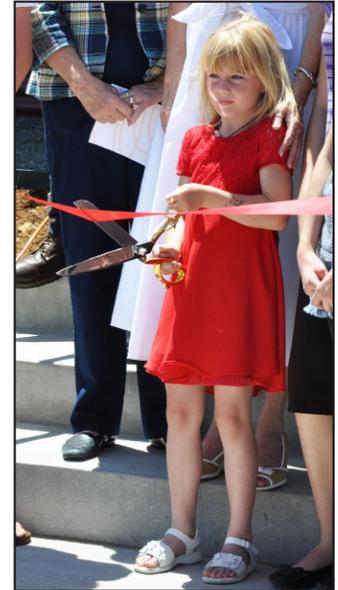
Thornton Branch Library
8992 Washington Street, Thornton, CO 80229
303-287-2514

Outreach Services Office/Bookmobile
8992 Washington Street, Thornton CO 80229
303-288-2018

A Letter From the Director

Welcome to the first edition of *SPARK*, the Rangeview Library District's community newsletter, available in print edition as well as online. Our library team is filled with an uncontainable energy and a sense of optimism. As you read our newsletter, we hope you will become part of our enthusiastic response to ideas, reading, and experiences that happen at our libraries.

As you may have noticed, there are significant improvements happening at our Rangeview Libraries. Our new Bennett Library, which opened in May, is the first of four new libraries for the district, followed by renovations of our Perl Mack, Commerce City and Thornton libraries. The new Bennett Library was an immediate success. We cut the ribbon and hundreds of people poured into the library. They took to the space as if it were always meant for them. Children, parents and grandparents scattered themselves on floor cushions, reading and listening to the storyteller. Children pulled books from the baskets and leaned to sit on laps of loved ones ready to read to them.



A sense of discovery was in the air. There were marvelous vistas to view: the colors, the rich wood shelving, the comfortable chairs, the fireplace, the pine ceiling, the thoughtful sense of comfortable yet inspiring design. And, of course, there are beautiful books and movies everywhere one looked. The library was filled with laughter, a sense of well-being, a sense of place.

Libraries today are not just places to check books out, but are becoming one of our most important community gathering places. At Bennett, Mayor Sue Horn notes that the library will be the center of the community. This is the place where people can gather to meet their neighbors, attend a program, read to their children, or just sit quietly reading a newspaper. One of the keys to our democracy is having opportunities to have social connections with people of all walks of life and ideas.

Just like the Bennett Library, all of our library spaces are being designed to delight and surprise. They will be places where serendipity happens, where community finds a sense of purpose, a sense of home, welcome, well-being and belonging. Whether you want to be quiet or engage in an activity, whether you want to think or listen to music, whether you want to be with a friend, or talk to a stranger. Everyone is welcome.

Pam Sandlian Smith

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If You Build It, They Will Come



The Nelson family spent the day at the new library in Bennett enjoying all the grand opening festivities. Donning their orange bandanas, they toured the new library and signed up for the 2009 summer reading programs. The Bennett Library will have ongoing programs all summer long to help encourage summer reading.

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Thirty miles east of Denver International Airport on I-70 is the rural community of Bennett. With a population just over 2,500, residents here treasure the small-town atmosphere, the beauty of the wide-open landscape, and the close bonds between friends and neighbors.

Adams County first established a storefront library in Bennett in 1969. Five years later, the library moved to a lot on the corner of 7th Street and Lincoln Avenue, where the current library is now located. For over 30 years, the library was housed in the same modest building. Yet the size of the library didn't truly represent the importance it had to the residents of Bennett and the surrounding communities. On Saturday, May 30, that all changed when the doors of the new

library opened to its customers. After Adams County voters approved a mill levy increase to fund capital construction projects for Rangeview Library District in 2006, a new building for Bennett wasn't on the list. Only three new library buildings were planned at the time – one in Brighton, one at 94th Avenue and Huron Street in Thornton and one in the Wright Farms neighborhood at 120th Avenue and Holly Street, also in Thornton. The idea was that whatever money was left over from those projects would be dedicated to Bennett; no one knew at the time if that meant a fresh coat of paint or major renovations.

"The second week I started, we took a look at the plans and the projections," says Rangeview Library District direc-

tor Pam Sandlian Smith. "We examined the entire capital construction package." After meeting with architect Dennis Humphries to make assessments project by project, Smith met with the library Board of Trustees in December 2007 to make some shifts.

It was decided Bennett needed a new library, and the fourth project was born.

With Bennett, Smith's desire was that the building design be thoughtful of the spirit of life on Colorado's eastern plains. She wanted to capture the simplicity of life, while also honoring the rich stories, legends and activities of the area, she says. Architect Dennis Humphries studied the storefronts in Bennett while working on the project, and Smith is im-

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pressed how the architects “understood the sacredness of space.”

“The vision has come to fruition,” Smith says. “[Humphries Poli Architects’] attention to detail and design helped create a space people will be drawn to.” This was evident during the library’s grand opening, where 300 people attended and the atmosphere was more like a family reunion than the opening of a library. Whether they were watching the festivities from the rocking chairs on the porch, surfing the Internet from one of the library’s many computers, or curled up in a comfy chair with a book, all seemed grateful and proud of their new library.

“Our customers are enjoying the new building,” says branch manager Frances Swallows. “Comments have ranged from ‘Cool, real cool’ to ‘This doesn’t look like Bennett!’”

The Bennett Library is one of two branches in the district that has replaced



Aaron McCloskey played some bluegrass favorites for the crowd, including songs by Bill Monroe and Bob Dylan.

the Dewey Decimal System with the library’s word-based organization system, WordThink. According to Swallows, customers are finding the system easy to use, and they are enjoying using the new DiscXpress, a self-checkout machine

that also dispenses DVDs and CDs.

“This new library has the opportunity to be the focal point of the town,” says Bennett Mayor Sue Horn, and the new library is in line with the town’s goal

to maintain its small-town atmosphere while modernizing. “We want to bring non-intrusive amenities to the town to enhance the quality of life, while keeping the small-town feel.” But it’s not just the services you’d normally expect that Horn is looking forward to, like new books or Internet access, though she’s excited for those too. “Having a library like this instills community pride.”

“The library is that connector – more than information, it is a place to share stories and help a community become what it’s meant to be,” says Smith. She believes this is true in every community Rangeview serves – but may



Children’s poet Lefty Farkleberry, author of *Codfish With Cherries n’ Graham Cracker Crusts*, read his poems to children and families throughout the day.

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be even more important for a community like Bennett. From one library to the next in the district, each has its own personality. Yet there will be a sense of continuity between all of them, she says.

The new Brighton branch is scheduled to open in September 2009; Huron Street branch is expected to open in late fall/early winter 2009; and the Wright Farms branch, which will be the district's flagship branch, is scheduled to open in spring 2010.

Smith often uses the analogy that libraries should be like entering a good Jewish



Trick roper Larry "Lucky" Lewis wows the crowd with his amazing rope tricks.

deli. "There's a sense of life and connectedness," she says. "The new Bennett Library in particular says, 'You belong here.'"

Stay tuned for details about our next library grand opening in Brighton, September 2009.

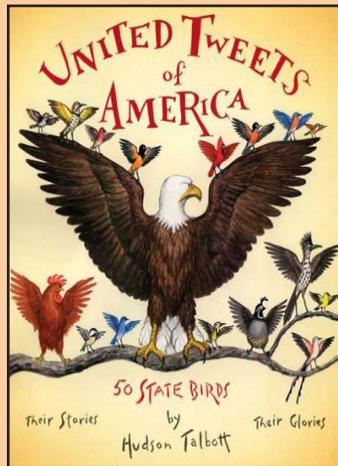
New Books: Check 'Em Out

Celebrate America's birthday in July with a story at any Range-view Library District Branch.

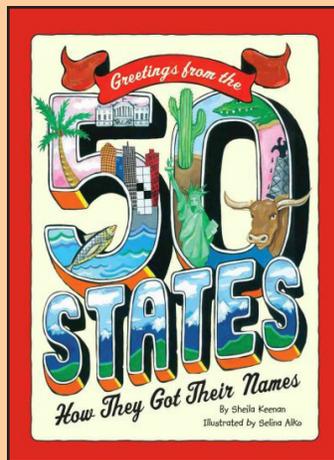
Children/Teen

United Tweets of America: 50 State Birds, Their Stories, Their Glories by Hudson Talbott

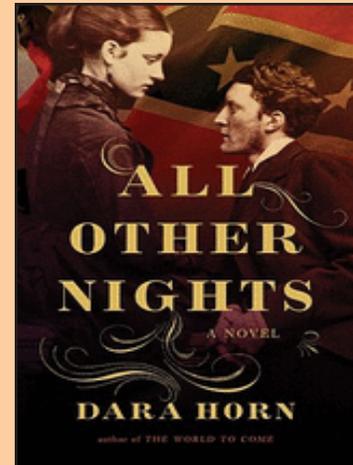
Lady Liberty: A Biography by Doreen Rappaport



We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball by Kadir Nelson



Greetings from the 50 States: How They Got Their Names by Sheila Keenan

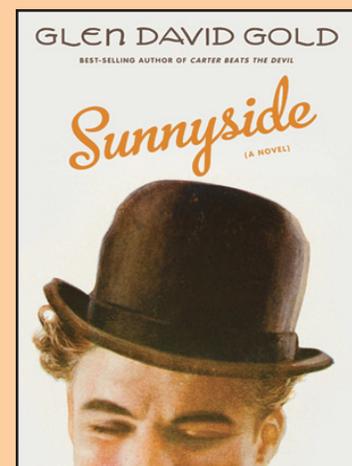


Adult

All Other Nights by Dara Horn

South of Shiloh by Chuck Logan

A Promise for Spring by Kim Vogel Sawyer



Sunnyside by Glen David Gold

Lost by Jacqueline Davies

The Devil's Paintbox by Victoria McKernan



Architect Dennis Humphries of Humphries Poli Architects in Denver has partnered with Rangeview Library District since 2003. Over the course of his career, he has worked on over 50 library projects in Colorado and elsewhere. “Bennett has the opportunity to set the standard for small community libraries across the country,” says Humphries.

Building Community One Library at a Time

As a boy in South Bend, Ind., architect Dennis Humphries remembers riding his bike to the local library. It had a storefront location with windows in the front but nowhere else. “The shelves were imposing” because they were so tall and took up much of the space. Tucked in a dark corner in the back were the children’s books that were only kept in the library because “they had to have them.”

“Kids are fortunate they have what they do today,” says Humphries, whose firm Humphries Poli Architects is working on all of Rangeview’s capital construction projects. So much thought is put into children’s space in a library these days, he says, and it wasn’t always like that.

Humphries has worked on over 50 libraries during his career. He shows off his numerous library cards as a proud parent would show photos of his children. For two years, he worked on the Denver International Airport design project, “what would typically be looked at as a career-defining project,” and yet it was the recent Bennett branch grand opening that became a career highlight for him.

The Humphries Poli staff working on the Bennett project spent much time researching the community and the wants and needs of its residents. They asked the children, “Why do you like living here?” and many said that the community was safe, friendly, comfort-

able and everyone knows each other, explains Humphries. The architects tried to create a space that reflected those sentiments. The team also assessed the landscape and the historical architecture in the town for inspiration.

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The book *West of Last Chance* by Peter Brown and Kent Haruf provided particular inspiration for the design of the new library in Bennett. A quote from the book, "You have to know how to look at this country. You have to slow down. It isn't pretty, but it's beautiful," became the theme for the project.

Not only is the new Bennett Library striking in its design, it includes many energy-efficient features that also add to its personality, like the use of regional beetle-killed pine or the ground-source heating and cooling. Yet these features are just "supporting characters to the overarching goal" to create a welcoming community place, says Humphries. It's really the effect the library has had on the community – the ability to bring people together – that has made the place what it is. "A library is more than bricks and mortar," he says.

Humphries knew from an early age he wanted to be an architect. "When I was

young, my father worked for the electric utilities," he says. As new communities were built, his dad encouraged the developers to go electric. Because of this, Humphries and his family moved frequently to the different subdivisions where his father worked, and they never lived in the same house for more than

A library is more than bricks and mortar.

two years. As a result, he was always around construction. At the age of 11, his parents gave him a drafting set as a gift. Instead of involving himself in normal tomfoolery appropriate for boys his age, he was at home in the basement designing his dream houses.

Early on in his career, Humphries began working on library projects; prior to that he attended school at the University of Illinois, which has one of the top-rated library schools in the nation, as well as one of the best academic libraries in the country, second only to Harvard. He

has always had respect for those in the library field because they are so highly dedicated to their work. This respect comes through in the library buildings he so carefully designs, and he has become lifelong friends with many of the library directors he has worked with.

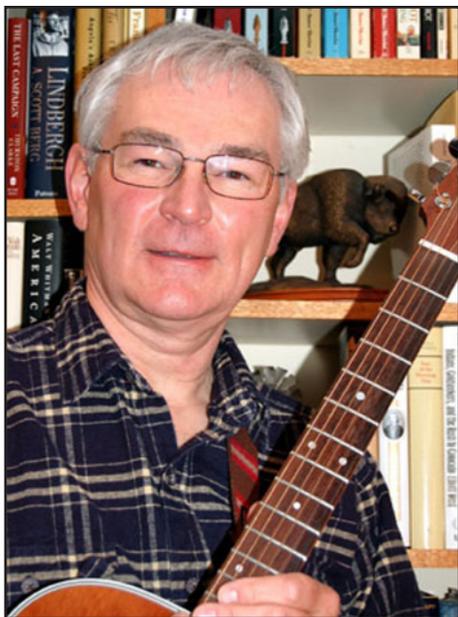
"It's a unique opportunity for an architect to design four library buildings at the same time," says Humphries of the Rangeview capital construction projects. Each takes on its own personality based on the different environments and communities. Bennett is the smallest project of the four at 7,000 square feet. Yet it's apparent the project holds a special place in his heart, which he attributes to the overwhelming pride and respect the community has for the new library.

"Bennett has the opportunity to set the standard for small community libraries across the country," he says. Yet, he emphasizes, "It's more than just building, it's the people in it."



Many people were integral in the Bennett Library project. Library administrators, the architects and designers, and even the children of Bennett added input and inspiration for the new library. From left to right: RLD Director Pam Sandlian Smith, RLD board president Kay Riddle, architect Dennis Humphries, and Bennett branch manager Frances Swallows.

Events Not to Miss



Book Talk with Author Daniel Blegen
Daniel Blegen, author of the book *Bent's Fort*, will discuss his new book, *Bob Sakata American Farmer*, a biography of the local Brighton community leader. The book will be available for purchase and signing by Daniel Blegen.

Brighton: Saturday, June 27, 2 pm

Bark Busters presents "Pack Law and Canine Communication"

Presented by dog therapist Barbara Marty, this class will focus on "Pack Law and Canine Communication." Owners will learn how dogs communicate so they can better understand their pet's behavior.

Northglenn: Saturday, June 27, 9:30 am - 12 pm



Your Name in Graffiti

Learn how to draw your name in a beautiful graffiti look while you find out more



about the history of graffiti, respect for people and property, and what it takes to become a professional artist. The YNIG team will take you through all aspects of the art of graffiti and guide you in how to draw with street style in a fun hands-on lesson.

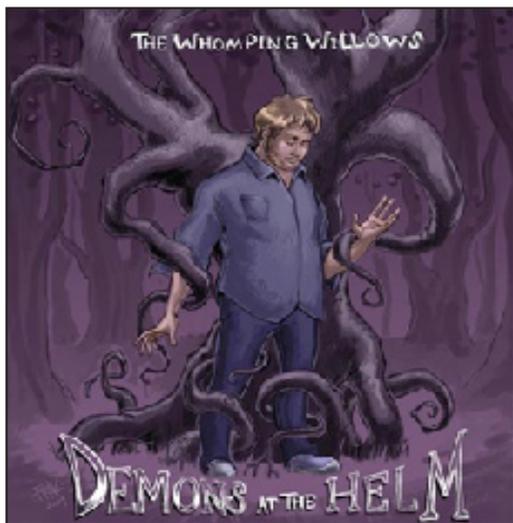
Perl Mack: Wednesday, July 8, 4 pm
Northglenn: Thursday, July 9, 4 pm

Master the Art of the Book

Two instructors from the Denver Book-binding Company will guide participants in creating their own hardcover books, starting with just paper. All materials are provided.

Northglenn: Saturday, July 25, 2-4 pm

For a complete listing of Rangeview Library District events, visit anythinklibraries.org.



The Whomping Willows and The Remus Lupins Live on Stage

Celebrate the upcoming release of the new Harry Potter movie by rocking out with wizard rock bands The Whomping Willows and The Remus Lupins. Popular fan site The-Leaky-Cauldron.org sparks the Harry Potter discussion with its award-winning PotterCast in front of a live audience.

Pottermania!

Tuesday, July 7, 5:30-8 pm, Commerce City

Discuss Harry Potter books and movies, dance and sing along to your favorite wizard rock songs, and enter to win free movie passes and other great Potter prizes.

Costumes encouraged!

When you're done reading SPARK, share with a friend, give back to your librarian or recycle.

