

# spark

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## Experience Something Different



Anythink's  
Smashing  
Brand  
Rollout!

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# spark

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

Published quarterly, Spark is available at any Anythink library.

Photos by Kent Meireis

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Brighton  
327 E. Bridge Street • Brighton, CO 80601  
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Commerce City  
7185 Monaco Street • Commerce City, CO 80022  
303.287.0063

Northglenn  
10530 Huron Street • Northglenn, CO 80234  
303.452.7534

Perl Mack  
7611 Hilltop Circle • Denver, CO 80221  
303.428.3576

Thornton  
8992 Washington Street • Thornton, CO 80229  
303.287.2514

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8992 Washington Street • Thornton, CO 80229  
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Visit us at [Anythinklibraries.org](http://Anythinklibraries.org)

# A Letter From the Director

"When you are growing up, there are two institutional places that affect you the most powerfully—the church, which belongs to God, and the public library, which belongs to you. The public library is the great equalizer."

—Keith Richards, Rolling Stones guitarist

Welcome to our new approach to library service, the Anythink libraries. Yes, we still have our traditions, our wonderful staff, our great collections and programs. But something is different. We are proud of our new look, our new Anythink branding. It inspires us to bring the best library possible to our community. Anythink libraries belong to you, our customer. If you are looking for a great book to read, a movie to watch, music to listen to, a story hour or just a quiet place to think, Anythink libraries are there for you and your family.

As our new libraries open and our branches are renovated, the refreshing change will become even more apparent. Rangeview Library District might have been the underdog in the past, but this is rapidly changing. We are still abuzz with excitement over the Sept. 12 launch of Anythink and the Brighton grand opening. I might be imagining things, but it seems like everyone is happier, and there are smiles and laughter everywhere.

This joyful atmosphere is experienced throughout our libraries. September must have been one of our busiest months, but everyone seems to be

enjoying the challenge. Even though the weather was less than glorious, close to 5,000 people attended the Brighton grand opening. As they walked into the library for the first time, almost every other person smiled at me and said "thank you." Then the party began, with dancing, food, storytelling, cooking, music, gaming and kazooing.

The staff and volunteers thoughtfully and happily issued hundreds of library cards, helped everyone find their way around the new library and helped connect lost brothers, sisters and parents. The day will be forever etched in my memory with a glow of happiness. The customers flowed throughout the space, each one amazed at the beauty of the library and curious to see all the nooks and new books and movies.

"Wow!" Was the comment from one of our teen speakers, Roberto, who noted that because of his regular visits to the old Brighton library and the coaching by teen guide Chris Lovejoy, he was able to bring his grades up and has transferred from the alternative high school and is doing well in the regular high school. I told Roberto that we had built this library for him and that he was always welcome, along with his friends and family. He turned to me and gave me a big hug. Wow! That's just the way the day went – a day filled with smiles, and that is emblematic of every day at our Anythink libraries.

Pam Sandlian Smith

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# Anythink—Our New Identity



Storyteller Bryce Jackman shows his love for the library through creative balloon designs in the children's area at the new Anythink in Brighton, which opened Saturday, Sept. 12, amidst food, dancing and other fabulous activities.

Throughout history, revolutions have ushered in great change. In Adams County, a library revolution is creating a new way for people to use their libraries in the post-Google era.

## The Facts

Last year, the Online Computer Library Center issued a study, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, entitled "From Awareness to Funding: A Study of Library Support in America." Many of its findings inspired a new vision for Rangeview Library District. First, the study showed that people who have transformative experiences at their public library support them through funding. The study also found that librarians who are passionate about their jobs have a direct impact on those they serve. Negatively, many of the people surveyed said they only thought of libraries as a place to house books. The consensus was that

serious changes must be made for public libraries to remain relevant in their communities.

The district's board and administration took these findings to heart. With new funding secured – thanks to the Adams County voters, who in 2006 approved a mill levy increase to help fund the library system – they began the search for a new model that would help the district remain relevant and propel them effectively into the future. After some discussion, the RLD board agreed to follow the "experience model" of libraries. This meant that the experience of each customer who walked through the doors would become the utmost priority for everyone who worked for the district.

## Birth of a Brand

As these discussions were underway, it also became apparent that the district

needed a new image to go along with their new experience focus. Not many people knew what Rangeview Library District was, and steps needed to be taken to change that.

John Bellina and Tasso Stathopoulos, co-founders of Ricochet Ideas in Denver, were part of a group who answered the RFP and have been integral in the development of Anythink. Bellina says when they first met with the administrative team to pitch their ideas, they took an approach they had never done before: "We walked in with nothing." Typically, he says, as an ad agency, you bring in several ideas for the client to see right away. Bellina compares this to designing a suit of clothes for someone before taking their measurements or learning their personal style. This time, they went against the norm and spent their allotted time learning more about the district and their vision.

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What developed was an ongoing creative relationship that led to Anythink.

The first step was to find the voice of the

them. The more time Bellina and Stathopoulos spent with their client, the more they realized the district was embarking on something truly different. The tagline “A Revolution of Rangeview Libraries” brought home the “little en-



*The young audience in the program space at the Anythink Brighton grand opening were captivated by the storytelling of Bryce Jackman, sitting in the library's comfy "u" chairs.*

district that Bellina likes to call “the little engine that could.” Going from being one of the worst-funded library districts in the state to being a district that others look to for guidance is no small feat.

“There’s always been a willingness to be challenged,” says Tasso Stathopoulos about Rangeview’s administrative team.

Bellina and Stathopoulos, through working with the district, established three main archetypes for librarians: part explorer, part wizard and part genius. These were presented to staff who embraced the idea, recognizing themselves in these archetypes. This was the beginning of the voice they were searching for.

After much brainstorming and hard work, the creative team brought several ideas to the table, Anythink among



*Artist Christy Honigman describes the *Tikkun Olam* exhibit on display during the Anythink Brighton’s grand opening.*

gine that could” theme and made a bold statement about the direction of the district. The made-up word “Anythink” was a playful way to say “we can offer you anything you can imagine.”

The graphic “doodle” came next, driven by Stathopoulos’ desire to find something more abstract, less literal to represent Anythink, he says. When they showed the Anythink logo with the doodle to the library’s admin team, everyone immediately gravitated toward it. The district had found its new identity.

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*People’s Kazoo Orchestra founder John Common and friend Jess de Nicola lead the Kazoo Hullabaloo in a fantastic rendition of the Beatles’ “Yellow Submarine” during the grand opening celebration.*

"It's been fulfilling," working with the district, says Bellina. "It's rare that you work with a client who knows their potential."

## The Road to Anythink

Although the world was just recently introduced to the district's new identity, many of the changes throughout the past year have paved the road to Anythink. In February, the district took the brave step of eliminating overdue fines. The motivation was that fines should never be a deterrent for people to come to the library.

By June, two of the district's six libraries were converted from the Dewey Decimal system to a word-based classification called WordThink. This new system relies on words instead of numbers to categorize library materials, and has been extremely popular among library customers. Currently, three libraries and Anythink in Motion – the district's bookmobile – are using WordThink, and by the end of the year, Anythink libraries will be the first in the country to have converted to a word-based system district-wide.

Yet most of the work towards becoming Anythink has happened internally. Anythink has invigorated the organization's culture in a profound way. This summer, new job descriptions were developed for library staff that better describe the work they do in an Anythink library. Librarians are now called guides, "the person who connects the customer with information they seek." There are also concierges responsible for greeting people "with a smile and welcome them into our library." Wranglers, similar to pages, are described as "part product placement, part inventory control, part display technician." All library staff went through extensive training this summer for their new roles.

"It's the level of service customers



Dancer Brandon Douglas with BreakEXX dance crew shows off his moves to an enthusiastic crowd at the Anythink Brighton grand opening. Participants were able to learn a few hip-hop moves of their own before the group performed.

receive when they enter an Anythink library that sets us apart," says public services director Ronnie Storey-Ewoldt. "At Anythink libraries, we put customers first, and this is something our Anythinkers really believe in."

## At the Heart of It

"People are truly at the heart of Anythink," says communications director Steve Hansen. "We call our staff Anythinkers, but anyone who walks into our library is an Anythinker."

But what makes Anythink so revolutionary?

Library director Pam Sandlian Smith is the driving force behind Anythink. "There are people and then there are materials – what we're focused on is what happens when those two things meet – the result of the interaction between the person and the material. You read a poem and feel a sense of sadness, or you listen to music and you have a sense of joy," says Smith. "Anythink libraries are places where ideas grow. When some-

one sees a cooking demonstration at an Anythink, they may check out a book or take that recipe home and make it with their family. Then a whole tradition occurs, and that tradition – that family bond – makes for a stronger community."

That's where the revolution occurs: It's not a fancy new name or a new logo. It's how people interact with information, how the idea is fostered. The spark of imagination a library can provide.

*Viva la revolución.*

Helping to bring sparks to your Anythink is the Rangeview Library District Board of Trustees:

**Kay Riddle, President**  
**Dot Lindsey, Vice President**  
**Ray Coffey, Treasurer**  
**Debra Neiswonger, Secretary**  
**Linda Wisniewski**

The board meets monthly on the third Wednesday of the month at 5 pm. Locations vary and are published at [anythinklibraries.org](http://anythinklibraries.org). Meetings are open to the public.

## FACES OF ANYTHINK



Rangeview Library District board trustee and Anythinker Ray Coffey - along with his fellow trustees - was essential in the campaign to pass the mill levy increase in 2006, which led to the beautiful new facilities opening this year and next.

## Transforming a District

Growing up in Granby, Colo., the library wasn't a huge part of Ray Coffey's life. "The library was in a town 10 miles away in a small log cabin," says Rangeview Library District's board treasurer. Because of the distance, his family didn't spend much time there. However, his mother was an avid reader, which she passed on to her children. "There were always books around," Coffey says.

Many years later, libraries took on a more prominent role in his life when he became treasurer of the newly formed Rangeview Library District board in 2004. His mother and brothers worked in libraries at times during their careers, but Coffey took a different public service route, working the past 27 years for the state of Colorado. Currently, he is a budget analyst for the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financ-

ing which runs the state's Medicaid and children's health programs. His main focus now is the department's Safety Net program, helping those who may not be able to afford health care but who don't qualify for Medicaid.

When the Rangeview board was initially formed, "we knew we needed to improve facilities and services," says Coffey. In November 2005, the district went to the voters asking for \$50 million in funding. "The voters were not in a good mood," says Coffey, and they lost the vote. "Part of it was that people thought it was too much to ask for."

"We knew we needed to try again; if we didn't, we'd continue to wither," he says. The second time around, the board was working with a smaller budget; it became more of a grassroots campaign

with volunteers going door to door and board members speaking to groups like the PTA.

"We convinced voters it was worth investing in their libraries," says Coffey. It worked. He attributes their success to several things. The economic climate in 2006 was better than the year before. "Voters weren't feeling as strapped," he says. Also, their campaign slogan was "Save Our Libraries" instead of "Say Yes to Libraries."

Voters were more aware of the consequences, he says. There was talk of having to close branches if the vote didn't pass, and this struck home with Adams County residents. They were also more aware of who Rangeview was. In 2005,

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the district had only been around for one year.

With funding comes much responsibility. There was this feeling, says Coffey, when they got the money of, "Now what do we do?" The board wasn't sure exactly where to begin; they just knew they needed more facilities and to improve services. In November 2007, they hired Pam Sandlian Smith, who provided the direction they needed.

"We only have one chance to give [Adams County residents] their money's worth," he says. So far, he thinks it's going "amazingly well."

When the idea for Anythink was first presented to the board, Coffey thought, "This is pretty far out there." Yet the more he thought about it, the more it grew on him. He believes it's something that will resonate with young people, and "it's fun to be part of something so hip," he laughs.



*Anythink Brighton opened on Saturday, September 12. The beautiful new building is part of the capital construction project, funded by the mill levy passed by Adams County voters in 2006.*

"We've taken some risks. We're being kind of radical," he says of leaving Dewey, no fines, and the new Anythink brand. "But it's worth the risk. It will pay off."

The future is bright for Anythink libraries, according to Coffey. He sees them as "transforming people's lives on a daily basis." His vision is that thousands of people will visit the libraries, and that they'll have a "real positive impact on people's lives." Coffey is passionate about his belief that libraries encourage and foster independent thinking, eventually leading to a more informed society.

Coffey modestly describes his part in the building of the four new libraries – Bennett and Brighton, which are now open; Huron and Wright Farms, which open next year. Nevertheless, he and the entire Rangeview Library District board have made some critical decisions that led the district to what it is today as a powerful, and positive, influence in the community.

## Anythinkers, Friendly to Customers and the Environment

Recently, Anythink libraries made a revolution in employee uniforms by broadening their dress code to include environmentally friendly T-shirts.

The shirts, which feature fun headlines and graphics, were designed to help customers identify library staff, introduce the fun and outgoing nature of the new Anythink brand, and provide a wardrobe alternative that is better for the environment.

"We printed here in Denver to avoid shipping and to support business in our local community," explains Steve Hansen, communications director. "And rather than using Plastisol, a petroleum-based product in the designs, the shirts were printed with water-based inks."



Although Plastisol is the most popular ink used by printers, silk screening with water-based inks penetrates the fabric and becomes part of the fibers as opposed to Plastisol inks which lie on top of the fabric and feel rubbery. "Anyone can tell right away if a design is water-based and environmentally friendly just by the feel," says Hansen.

Because water-based inks are defined as those that utilize water as the main solvent, they have the lowest impact on our environment. In addition, water-based inks do not require the highly toxic solvents used to clean off the Plastisol from all printing screens, squeegees and tools.

Beyond production, every time an employee chooses to wear one of the new Anythink T-shirts instead of a dress shirt or blouse, they cut down on toxic perchloroethylene vapors that are released during dry cleaning.

"We couldn't do everything we wanted," says Hansen, "but it's an important part of our brand philosophy to make smart choices and do what we can."

# Events Not to Miss



## Book Talk with Author Mary Peace Finley

Award-winning young adult author Mary Peace Finley discusses her books and stories about Colorado during the 1800s. A native of the state, Mary's Santa Fe trilogy has won the Top Hand Award from the Colorado Author's League, the Colorado Book Award, and the Benjamin Franklin Award in the Juvenile/Young Adult Fiction category.

Thursday, October 8, 3:30 pm  
Anythink Brighton  
327 E. Bridge Street  
Brighton, CO 80601

## Family Place Workshop Begins

Family Place Libraries™ is a network of children's librarians nationwide who believe that literacy begins at birth, and that libraries can help build healthy communities by nourishing healthy families.

Parents and caregivers with children ages 0-4 are welcome to sign up for this five-week series beginning Wednesday, Oct. 14. Participation is limited to 12 families. Different childhood experts will be on hand to talk to parents and play with children. Each week, new learning and exploration activities are offered.

Anythink Northglenn  
Wednesday, Oct. 14, 10:30 am  
10530 Huron Street  
Northglenn, CO 80234

## Catch the Buzz at Bennett

Spend time with friends and neighbors on Saturday mornings at the library to catch the buzz from around town or just enjoy fresh-brewed coffee or tea and delicious breakfast pastries with the morning paper.

Anythink Bennett  
Saturdays, Oct. 3, 17, and 31, 9:30 am  
495 7th Street  
Bennett, CO 80102



**For a complete listing of Anythink events, visit [anythinklibraries.org](http://anythinklibraries.org).**

## New Books: Check 'Em Out

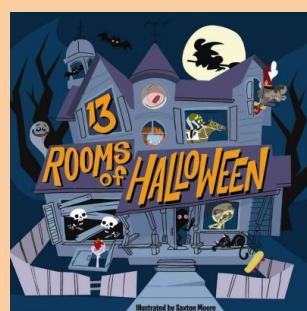
Find spooky stories and more this Halloween at your local Anythink or online through our catalog at [anythinklibraries.org](http://anythinklibraries.org).

### Children

**Minerva Louise On Halloween** by Janet Morgan Stoeke

**By the Light of the Halloween Moon** by Caroline Stutson

**13 Rooms of Halloween**  
illustrated by Saxton Moore



**A Monster for Halloween**  
by Cheryl Couteaud

**Halloween... or Bust!**  
by Jane O'Connor

**Druscilla's Halloween**  
by Sally M. Walker

### Adult

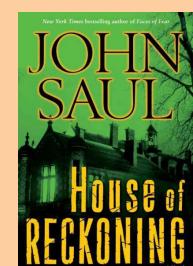
**A Touch of Dead**  
by Charlaine Harris



**Plum Pudding Murder**  
by Joanne Fluke

**Necessary as Blood**  
by Deborah Crombie

**Blood Game**  
by Iris Johansen



**House of Reckoning**  
by John Saul

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