

The Denver Public Library Commission

Commission Retreat

Thursday, May 31, 2018, 9:00 a.m.

Rodolfo Corky Gonzales Library

1. Call to order.
2. Introductions.
3. Approval of Minutes from April 19, 2018, Regular Library Commission Meeting.
Commission
4. Public comment period.
5. Retreat between the Library Commission and the Friends Foundation
6. Adjournment

MINUTES
The Denver Public Library Commission
Regular Monthly Meeting
Thursday, April 19, 2018, 8:30 a.m.
Denver Central Library
7th Floor Training Room

Present: Greg Hatcher, Alice Kelly, Mke King, Rosemary Marshall, Carlos Martinez, Laurie Mathews, Sonya Ulibarri

Excused: Cathy Lucas

Staff: Rebecca Czarnecki, Hong Ha, Michelle Jeske, Elaine Langeberg, Amber Lindberg, Erika Martinez, Ron Miller, Joe Mills (SC), Mark Passman, Diana Thompson-Buchanan (SC), Bria Ward

Guests: Pam Jewett, Laurie Romer, Dawn Schipper, Friends Foundation; Sam Hosfelt and Michelle Sandoval, Swinerton; Anthony Ross, customer

1. Call to order.

Vice President Carlos Martinez called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

2. Introductions.

Commissioners, staff and guests present introduced themselves.

3. Approval of Minutes from March 15, 2018, Regular Library Commission Meeting and the Approval of Minutes from February 15, 2018, Regular Library Commission Meeting. Commission

The minutes from both the February and March were approved as written.

4. Public comment period.

Customer Anthony Ross returned to lodge another complaint about being harassed at the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library. The Commission replied that Mr. Ross' comments were taken under advisement and there would be a response from the library.

5. Report of the President and Members.

President King noted that the memorial for former City Librarian Shirley Amore was very touching and that it was a fitting tribute. Said he hoped that the library can dedicate something in her honor in the future.

Mathews said she went with library staff to visit 21c in Colorado Springs and enjoyed seeing what another library was doing.

Ulibarri has met with library staff to finalize some details for the Latino Awards.

6. Report of the Friends Foundation. Laurie Romer and/or Pam Jewett

Pam Jewett reported that the Executive Director position was posted this week. The Friends also continue to work on their gift acceptance policy which should be ready for review in about a month.

7. Financial report: Year-End 2017. Ron Miller

Miller discussed the year-end financial report. He noted that in the past the City has made it difficult to use excess payroll budget and they seem to be changing their position on that. In the budget kickoff the City noted that there was \$30 million in unspent money from 2017, which is way too much. Last year, the library was able to use excess payroll for lowering shelves and the camera project. We were also allowed to use \$100,000 at the very end of the year for additional shelving costs. This is a positive and helpful trend that allows us to complete certain projects.

One Commissioner asked about the \$517,000 excess from 2017 noting that the projects Miller mentioned only explains a portion of those funds. Miller responded that the remainder is from special trust fund and can be rolled over to the following year.

A question was asked about the two trusts, the Caroline Bancroft and Frederick R Ross respectively. Those are both endowments and run through the Friends. Ross is specifically for collection development and is the same Ross for which several of our branches are named. It was noted that a discussion regarding what monies the library receives and how they can be spent could be a good topic for the retreat .

Miller also took a moment to outline that \$78,000 for grants. The money includes \$28,000 from the Buell Foundation for Read Aloud, \$20,000 from the State for Career Online High School, and \$25,000 from Telligen to support our peer navigators.

Commissioner Kelly thanked Miller and his team for the clear report.

8. Discussion of the Recognition Policy revision.

Jeske introduced the Recognition policy noting that there were no major changes between this revision and the last. She noted that the suggestion to address named spaces that may not exist in the future has been incorporated. The policy has been approved by the city attorney.

Kelly noted that she missed the discussion in March and is unclear about how you decommission a room or space that may have existed before these policy changes and wanted to know what the process would be.

Per Jeske, the library has not had to do this yet. It is complicated by a lack of documentation for named spaces in the Central library. There are a number of other cultural spaces in a similar position as business was just done differently in the past. Going forward we will be sure to have appropriate documentation and any conversations will be handled with caution and sensitivity. This policy is modeled after other libraries policies.

Kelly is specifically referring to language around the 'useful life of the space'. She wondered if some families might believe their gift would indicate the use of their name in perpetuity. Does there need to be language that more specifically addresses this?

Martinez agreed that a number of parts of the the policy are vague.

Martinez expressed that he is concerned with how we have conversations with donors and its effects. Specifically, Martinez wanted to know what is a significant donation? What can be deaccessioned and how? Martinez does not necessarily think that this needs to

be in the policy but maybe there could be an accompanying set of guidelines. It makes it easier to talk to donors when you have something specific to point to.

Jeske responded that the development committee is working on having a list of spaces we know are opportunities and a list of ones with a name that might change. Jewett added that we do want to have a blueprint for how we approach donors so that everything is clearly defined and outlined.

Martinez noted that determining the amount for a space is the easy part. The difficulty is that every gift is set up differently and has different flexibility. They can be combinations of stocks, cash, or property and some people may want to pay it over time. Larger gifts can be even more difficult. Martinez noted the part of the policy that says a name will not be given until paid in full may not always be feasible.

Ulibarri asked how important the attachment of a name is to major donations. Jeske clarified that we can't sell spaces for names; we can only honor donations. Ulibarri noted that is helpful and will resolve a lot of issues around deaccessioning. Everyone agreed that the issue is around the names that exist not future agreements. Ulibarri explained that she believes at least for future agreements it makes the language around the usable life of a space quite clear and accurate.

President King would like the Commission to discuss this further at the retreat. He asked that the Commission be able to see some precedent guidelines.

Jeske followed that there is a lot to learn from cultural institutions and that there are some great examples of how they handle recognition.

Martinez also asked if this policy should include naming of awards. Jeske clarified that this policy is more about IRS regulations regarding donations and that we don't have enough awards for that to come into play. Mathews would also like to know which named spaces might be at issue in Central.

9. GO Bond update. Michelle Jeske

Jeske told the Commission that there is a bond update this afternoon. She has also been asked to join the bond executive committee as a non voting member. The voting members are agency heads of parks and recreation, public works, and others. This afternoon we will find out how much money we are getting and the first funds should be issued in mid-June. There is likely to be money for us in the first issuance and then a second issuance next summer. After that money should be issued every other year through the 10-year cycle. Jeske believes the City is trying to honor priorities. They also have to be cautious about first issuance because there is only three years to spend it. Jeske will let the Commission know as soon as she has more concrete information.

10. Virtual tour of library field trips. Michelle Jeske

Jeske led the Commission on a virtual tour of libraries she has visited. She called attention to the different ways libraries recognize donors. Mathews noted that 21c had recognition that looked very different all over the building and that it would look better if there was some standardization.

Jeske also highlighted some cafe and store areas and our desire to have a more visible book store in the library.

Ulibarri noted that a number of the newer libraries have are similar to shared workspaces. Jeske responded that is part of what we're hoping to do and that part of the third phase of the vision is turning the 7th floor over to the public. We'd like to make it a collaborative space that balances the needs of different populations.

A couple of staff members will be visiting the library in Richland, South Carolina and we will share more photos from that visit.

11. Report of the City Librarian.

Jeske reported that the naturalization ceremony was lovely as usual. 80 people from 41 countries were naturalized last week.

The Blair Caldwell African American Research Library turns 15 this year. On April 26 there will be two guided museum tours and session on what an archival materials.

Dia del Nino will be held on April 29 and will be a little different this year. More of the events will be held in the building due to the construction in the area.

The library has hired Denise Bryant as the deputy director. She is the current director of workforce development for the City. We have worked with her on Career Online High School. She starts May 7.

Jeske called out the update from the Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team and introduced Hong Ha, one of the initiative leads. She then asked Rebecca Czarnecki to speak. Czarnecki invited any Commissioners who were interested in being more involved in the EDI work and team to reach out to her.

The North Denver Resource Center is opening and will be operating out of a study room in the Valdez-Perry branch. Various city agencies will use the room and offer services. There will be a schedule of who is there and when.

King asked for an update on where the library is with potentially eliminating fines. Jeske said that after the Commission approved us having further conversations, Ron Miller, Rebecca Czarnecki and Jennifer Hoffman had a meeting with Nikki McCabe and Stephanie Adams, the Director of Budget Management. They are supportive and want to us to go in front of the Policy Review Committee later this summer to prepare for 2019 budget.

In regards to the 2019 Budget, the library is asking for utility workers, ADA requests, and is looking to expand idealab at Central as well as add one at the Sam Gary Branch. We are also looking to add staff in RiNo for future lease opportunities. . The peer navigators are all grant supported and we are going to ask the City for funds to make them library staff.

Jeske also called attention to the Commission stats and is hoping to spend more time discussing them in June. She noted the way we have counted online visits has changed and that program attendance has not dropped dramatically. There is currently an issue with the data and everything should be accurate in about two months.

There will be no regular May meeting, the May retreat will stand for the May meeting and there will be some time to address business.

Lastly, Jeske noted that the Commission is now receiving an HR report only quarterly and that it is a new format. She mentioned that HR is willing to modify it of the Commissioners have questions or suggestions.

12. Other Business.

N/A

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Submitted by Rebecca Czarnecki for Cathy Lucas

City Librarian Report

Community Partner Awards

Denver Public Library was recently named Community Partner of the Year by Bayaud Enterprises, the company that coordinates the Denver Day Works Program and the Laundry Truck. The library was nominated for its efforts to better serve customers experiencing homelessness and for the work of our Denver Day Works participants who helped replace 30,000 light fixtures in the Central Library.

The library was also recently selected as Junior League of Denver's Community Partner of the Year. The Denver Public Library and the Friends Foundation were honored as key partners of the Junior League through its L.U.V.S. and Read2Kids programs specifically for work done at the Valdez-Perry Branch Library.



Our Denver GO Bond Update

It's hard to believe that almost six months have passed since Denver voters overwhelmingly supported the Our Denver Bond and specifically measure 2E, which provides \$69.3 million to renovate ten branch libraries and the Central Library. In March I was named to the Bond Executive Committee which oversees the City's bond management process and we recently had our first meeting to discuss next steps.

The City does not release all bond funds at one time. We provided our priorities based on the most pressing facilities

needs and the Mayor has selected what is included in the first issuance based on citywide needs and factors such as geographic distribution. The first issuance will come this year and includes funds to begin the design of some of our projects. This was approved by City Council on Monday, May 21. These design funds will be for Blair-Caldwell, Byers, Central, Smiley and purpose contingency.

Also Available with your Library Card

Prospector <https://encore.coalliance.org>

With your Denver Public Library card you have access to Prospector, a unified catalog of academic, public and special libraries in Colorado and Wyoming. Through Prospector you have access to 30 million books, journals, DVDs, CDs, videos and other materials. With a single search you can identify and borrow materials from the collections and have them delivered to your local DPL library. Recently, several new libraries have joined Prospector, expanding the options even more.



Photography & Memory Program

On May 11, the library held a celebration of a special program involving more than 40 University of Denver students and older adults from the community who gathered over three sessions to explore how treasured photographs can be a catalyst for telling stories about our lives.

In the end, what happened was much more profound than just a program about photographs. It was an inter-generational experience in which people connected with each other across age, race, gender, sexual orientation, background and more. They discovered their common humanity.

Some participant comments:

"This program made me feel GOOD! And glad I came. I saw really interesting pictures, and the students were so interested in us and so fun. When you are 77, it's hard to find young people who are interested in someone like me."

"Before the meeting, I felt lonesome and staying in my apartment. After the meeting, I felt happy and glad to meet everyone. The program made me feel so loved."

"After the meeting I felt joyful because the entire experience was affirming, welcoming, fun-filled, well planned, and well executed. Thank you so much!"



Summer of Adventure starts June 1!

We're in our second year transitioning to a new kind of summer program.

Summer Goals

- Curb summer learning loss experienced by youth during the summer months
- Implement recommendations for programmatic changes from the Reimagining Summer report developed by the Summer of Learning Initiative Team at the end of 2016
- Expand beyond reading and offer youth other kinds of informal learning and activities during the summer
- Provide fun opportunities, in and out of the library, for youth to learn and grow during the summer months

Additional Summer of Adventure Information

- Summer of Adventure is relationship-driven
 - Provide opportunities for children, teens and their adult influencers to develop and deepen relationships with library staff and each other
 - Provide active roles for parents, families, and adult influencers in Summer of Adventure
- Summer of Adventure is customer-centered and provides choice
 - Provide opportunities for personalization depending on the goals and interests of the participant
 - Create a flexible environment by allowing participation in the library, online, and in the community
- Summer of Adventure fosters self motivation to READ, MAKE, and EXPLORE
 - Incentives support self learning, early learning skills, and family engagement
 - Community partnerships will contribute tangible (i.e. family passes) and intangible (i.e. content-experts for programs) opportunities for youth

Stories of Impact

This month's stories come from the Reading Rocket and the Library Academy:

A bookmobile customer sent a message of thanks for the large print selection available on the Reading Rocket and supplemented the note with this:

"I hope that being brilliant is its own reward but still would like you to understand that your contribution - your brilliance - has enriched my life and buoyed my spirit."

Excerpt from an email from a Library Academy participant:

"Below are just a few of my takeaways from the program and from using the library over the past several months:

- *Denver's library has to be one of the most progressive and civic-minded libraries in the country. It makes me proud of my city.*
- *The library's community focus means that the more of a "library person" I become, the more I feel part of my community.*
- *Library people are cool! The staff is incredible. Everyone we met in the program (staff and attendees) and everyone that I have met from the library since are interesting, caring and just cool...*
- *The library offers a ridiculous amount of programming that goes under the radar for your average Denverite. I have been a library evangelist in general and consistently bring up the various programs and perks the library offers (museum passes, online magazines, Lynda, ebooks, plaza, etc.).*
- *Since DPL academy, the library has helped me visit the Museum of Natural Science and History twice, the Colorado History Museum, 2 plays (The Great Leap and Native Gardens), helped my girlfriend connect with many published authors at the Colorado Book Festival as she writes her first novel, helped me learn many skills via online*

resources that I'm using to launch two businesses, helped me gain a lot of knowledge that I needed for those businesses, allowed me to bring a personal touch to my family Christmas gifts with things made on the IdeaLab laser cutter, and many other things that I'm sure I am simply forgetting.

- *Additionally, I can't quantify the amount of use the people around me have since gotten out of all the library's resources, but I can say that I have become known as the library expert in my circles. I'm even pretty sure that I got one of my recent Uber drivers to take his daughter to more museums through the library passes; he was very thankful to learn about them."*

Stuart Semple's "Happy Clouds"

Originally released into the sky by Stuart Semple during London's 2008 recession, "Happy Clouds" is composed of smiley-face bubble sculptures, that when released with helium, drift amid public spaces. This iconic artwork has exhibited outside the Tate Modern in London, as well as in Dublin, Moscow, Australia and Milan. Intended to provide viewers with a brief moment of cheer, "Happy Clouds" will be launched at over a dozen sites across the Denver-metro area from Red Rocks to Denver Public Library branches. These fleeting, environmentally-friendly "Happy Clouds" will float outdoors, interrupting daily life and reminding all to be mindful of the present. "Happy Clouds" is funded in part by P.S. You Are Here. The following libraries are participating:

June 4 12p - Bear Valley Branch Library

June 6 3p - Hampden Branch Library

June 7 10a - Westwood Branch Library

June 9 1p - Schlessman Family Branch Library

June 22 11:30a - Virginia Village Branch Library

June 28 2p - Montbello Branch Library

Phone-A-Story

For many years, the library has offered what used to be considered a radical service that seems a bit quaint and old fashioned now but is still very popular and being used in new and creative ways by customers. Phone-a-story offers a wide range of stories for different age groups. We recently added stories, songs and rhymes in Amharic and Vietnamese. Dial 720-865-8500 24/7 and follow the prompts:

- Preschool story in Spanish, press 1
- Song, rhyme or riddle in Spanish, press 2
- Preschool story in English, press 3
- Grades K-5 in English, press 4
- Longer story for grades 5th-8th in English, press 5
- Song, rhyme or riddle in English, press 6
- Multilingual fun in Amharic or Vietnamese, press 7
- A traditional story in English, press 8
- Want to suggest a song or story, or just to provide feedback? Press 9

We have had 1,300-2,200 calls each month this year and hear they are being used for:

- Several parents have informed us that sometimes their children love the story so much that they want to go to the library and find the actual book.
- A couple middle school teachers mentioned that for their language classes (both English and Spanish) they often send home the Phone-a-Story number and a couple of questions about the stories that week. That way students can test their comprehension skills. Another option is having a written prompt based on the story, such as "Write down the words that rhyme in the poem" or "What is your favorite part?"



Highlights from the Central, Collections, Technology and Strategy Division-Zeth Lietzau

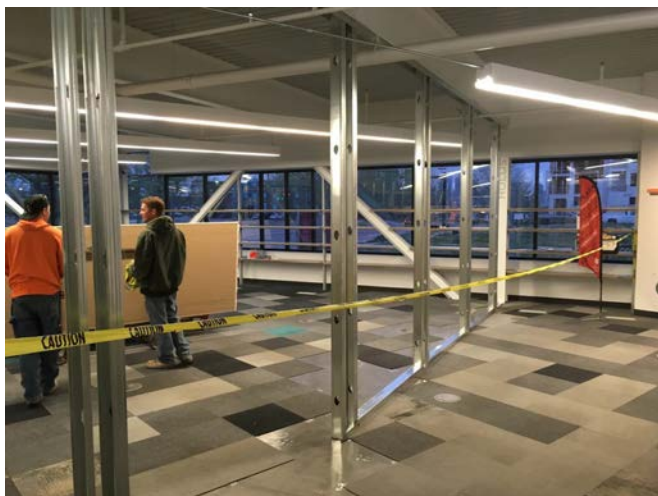
The Central ideaLAB hosted a photographer as Maker in Residence. John Lake engaged customers with a pop up portrait studio, commemorating their library visit with creative photos.

Elissa Hardy and Cuica Montoya from our Community Resources department are representing DPL on the Leadership Committee for the Collective Impact to address substance use in Denver. Elissa is co-charing this committee.

Our Reference department is expanding "How to Spot Fake News" class offerings due to customer demand. They have completed public programs at 2 branches (University Hills, Decker) and will be offering at least 4 more branch programs (Park Hill, Smiley, Sam Gary, Virginia Village). Additionally, they have offered special sessions for groups such as the Colorado Association of Libraries Adult Interest Group and Colorado Press Women.

The Western History and Genealogy department is celebrating Map Month in May. The theme for 2018 is "Maps and War." An exhibit of maps mostly from the library's Tenth Mountain Collection complements the four lectures scheduled for the Tuesday evenings from 5:30 to 6:30 in the Conference Center.

The new ideaLAB being created at the Gonzales branch continues to move forward - walls are going up and sheetrocking is next.



We have a variety of exciting technology training coming up. We will be holding a number of technology Summer Camps for teens this year, including MakerCamps at every ideaLAB (Central, Montbello, Hampden and Hadley), a GameCamp at Hadley, and devCamps at Central, Bear Valley and Hampden. For small business owners/entrepreneurs we're launching a new "Build a Brand" series in the Fall. This

5 week series will include components on getting started in small business, designing a logo, taking and using pictures for your website, a review of website platforms, and marketing with social media.

Select City Librarian Activities

Mayor

- Met with Mayor's Chief of Staff
- Attended Mayor's All Appointee meeting
- Attended Denver Executive Leadership Forum

Library Commission

- Participated in the Finance Committee meeting
- Met with President and Vice President with Foundation leadership to plan retreat

Friends Foundation

- Multiple Search Committee meetings and phone calls
- Met with Advocacy Chair
- Welcomed Loyalty Circle donors
- Participated in the Finance, Executive Committee and Board meetings

Community Engagement

- Communed with Read Aloud volunteers

Activate!Denver Facilities Master Plan

- Participated in Bond Executive Committee meeting
- Met with City and bond management firm to discuss first debt issuance
- Met with Councilman Lopez regarding Westwood Library
- Met with Redline CEO and RiNo Arts District Director regarding potential collaboration in RiNo Park
- Met with Urban Land Conservancy about potential collaboration for new Westwood facility
- Met with Mile High United Way Chief Innovation Officer regarding Globeville
- Met with Habitat for Humanity CEO about Globeville
- Met with staff from Parks and Recreation and Community Planning and Development regarding Globeville

Early Learning and Out of School Learning

- Participated in the Denver Afterschool Alliance Board meeting
- Attended Denver Health Foundation Ann Logan Lecture on early literacy and technology
- Participated in Children's Cabinet meetings
- Met with Denver Museum of Nature and Science VP about collaborations

Staff

- Onboarded new Deputy Director
- Worked with Finance team on 2019 budget request
- Attended Employee of the Quarter celebration at Schlessman
- Worked on Charting the Course strategic planning process

Professional

- Participated in National Library Legislative Day in D.C.
- Attended Public Library Association Board meeting in D.C.
- Attended annual Colorado Public Library Directors meeting
- Led Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries Board meeting

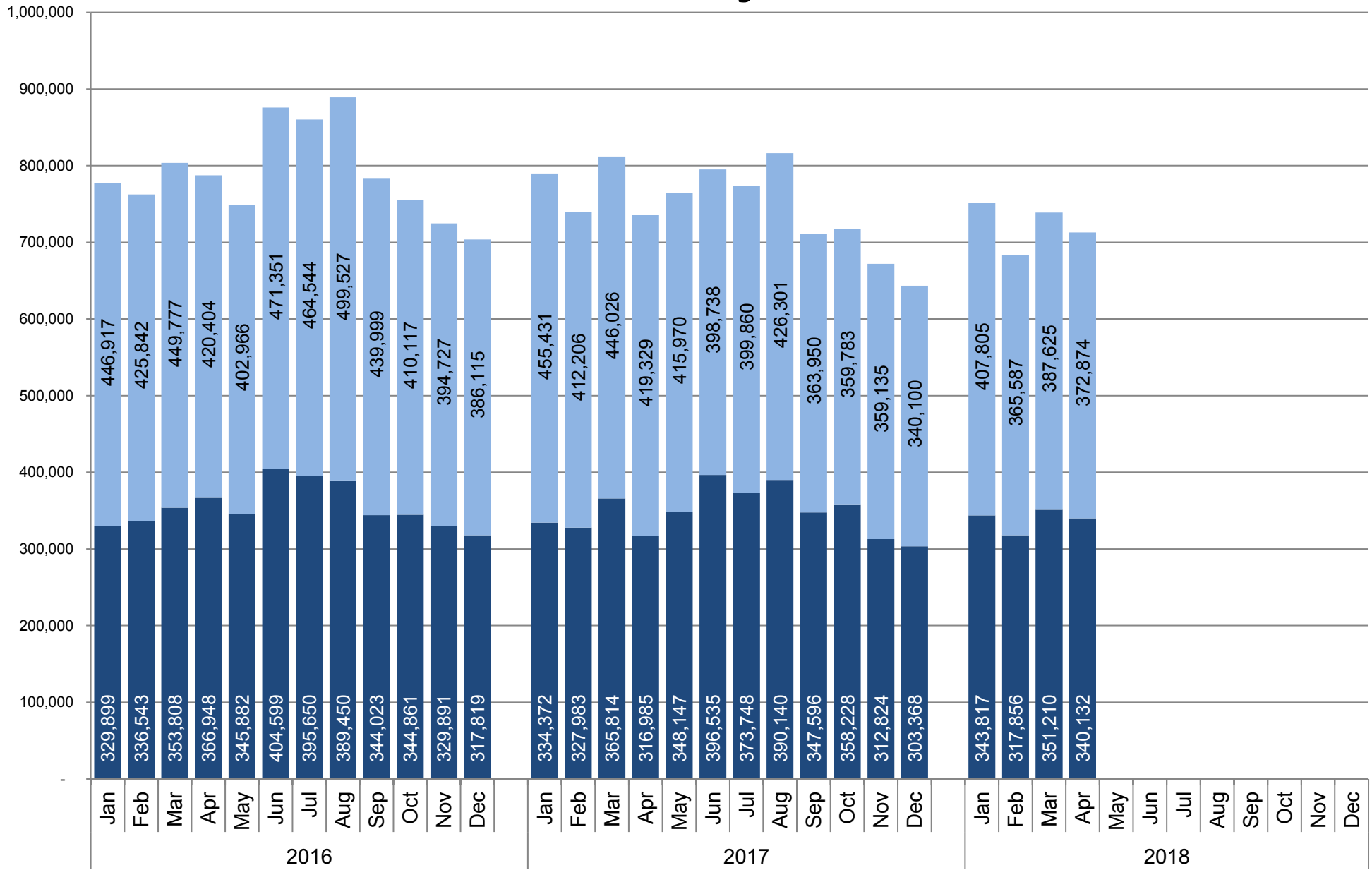
Dates to Remember

- 5/31 9a–12:30p - Commission/Foundation Retreat, Gonzales Branch Library
- 6/1 6p - 100th anniversary First Friday concert, Smiley Branch Library
- 6/19, 5:30p–7:30p Summer Used Book Sale/Presale, Central Library, Conference Center
- 6/20-23, 10a–4p, Summer Used Book Sale, Central Library, Conference Center

May 2018

Denver Public Library Total Visits By Month

Online
In Person



➔ Effective April 2018 Online visits have been updated to align with state and federal reporting guidelines and now only reflect visits to DPLs various websites.

Online visits - total website visits by session, as reported by DUX

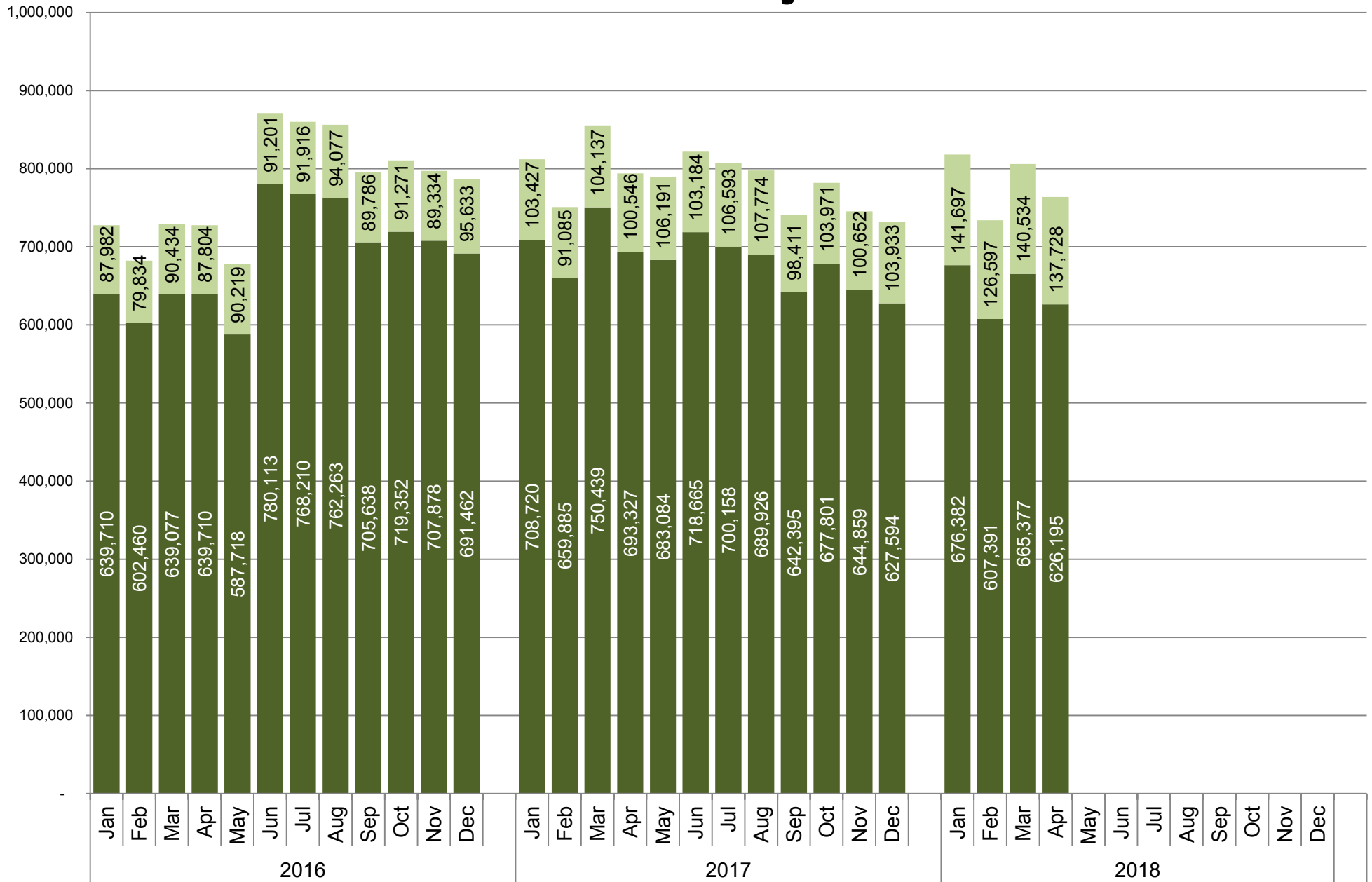
In Person visits - total door count from all locations, as submitted to TrackVia Door Counts application; data collection methodology changed to be more consistent across all locations in 2015.

Denver Public Library

Total Circulation By Month

Downloads

Materials



➔ Auto-renewals began on June 1, 2016.

Downloads - total downloads, including electronic books, movies, magazines, and music, as reported by DUX
Materials - total circulation of physical materials at all locations, from Polaris ILS

Denver Public Library

Monthly Circulation by Branch

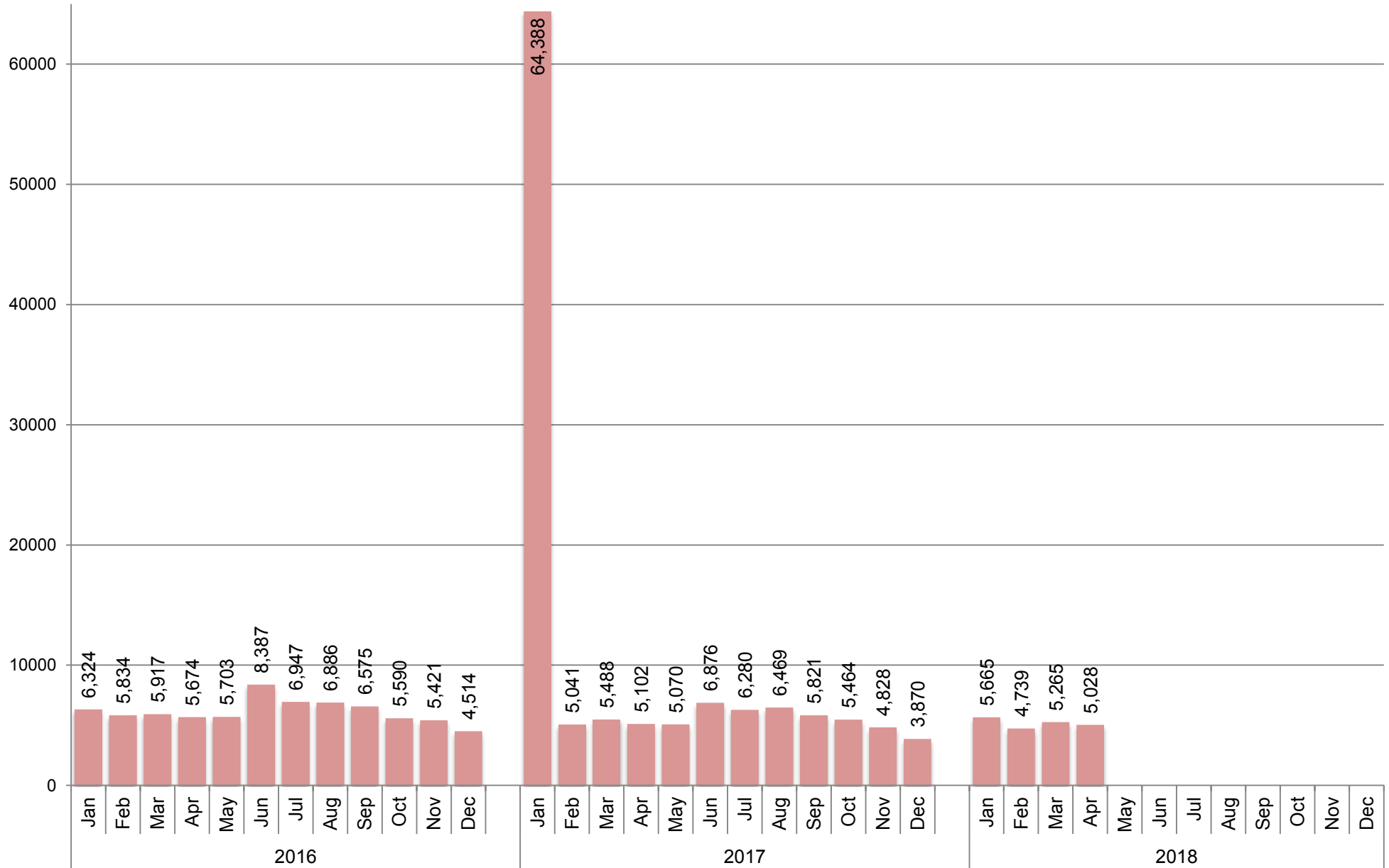
April 2018

Location	Total Circulation	+/- Previous Month	2018/2017 Year/Year
Athmar Park	8,546	↓ (1,758)	↓ (876)
Bear Valley	29,950	↓ (1,505)	↓ (2,592)
Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library	9,609	↑ 34	→ (397)
Bookmobile	8,451	↑ 336	↓ (4,335)
Byers	3,645	→ (11)	↑ 215
Central Library	91,305	↓ (6,405)	↓ (14,960)
Decker	14,213	↓ (1,172)	↓ (1,202)
Eugene Field	24,524	↓ (1,278)	↓ (600)
Ford-Warren	13,244	↓ (753)	↑ 9
Green Valley Ranch	27,442	↓ (1,966)	↓ (1,139)
Hadley	8,308	↑ 1,085	↓ (4,268)
Hampden	27,708	↓ (1,858)	↓ (5,467)
Montbello	8,941	↓ (533)	↓ (2,352)
Park Hill	30,499	↓ (2,023)	↓ (2,268)
Pauline Robinson	6,322	→ (350)	→ (5)
Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales	23,403	↓ (2,755)	↓ (4,751)
Ross-Barnum	8,736	↓ (625)	↑ 5,578
Ross-Broadway	15,293	↓ (920)	→ (266)
Ross-Cherry Creek	26,104	↓ (659)	↓ (1,153)
Ross-University Hills	51,870	↓ (2,641)	↓ (2,541)
Sam Gary	58,474	↓ (3,521)	↓ (5,407)
Schlessman Family	50,662	↓ (4,392)	↓ (9,188)
Smiley	20,892	↓ (1,561)	↓ (1,514)
Valdez-Perry	2,858	→ (141)	↓ (1,302)
Virginia Village	29,858	↓ (2,741)	↓ (3,333)
Westwood	4,369	↑ 167	→ (219)
Woodbury	20,969	↓ (1,236)	↓ (2,799)
Denverlibrary.org Downloadables	137,728	↓ (2,145)	↑ 37,182
Total	763,923	↓ (41,327)	↓ (29,950)

Denver Public Library

Total New Library Cards By Month

■ New Cards



➔ MyDenver card program large DPS database upload in January 2017.

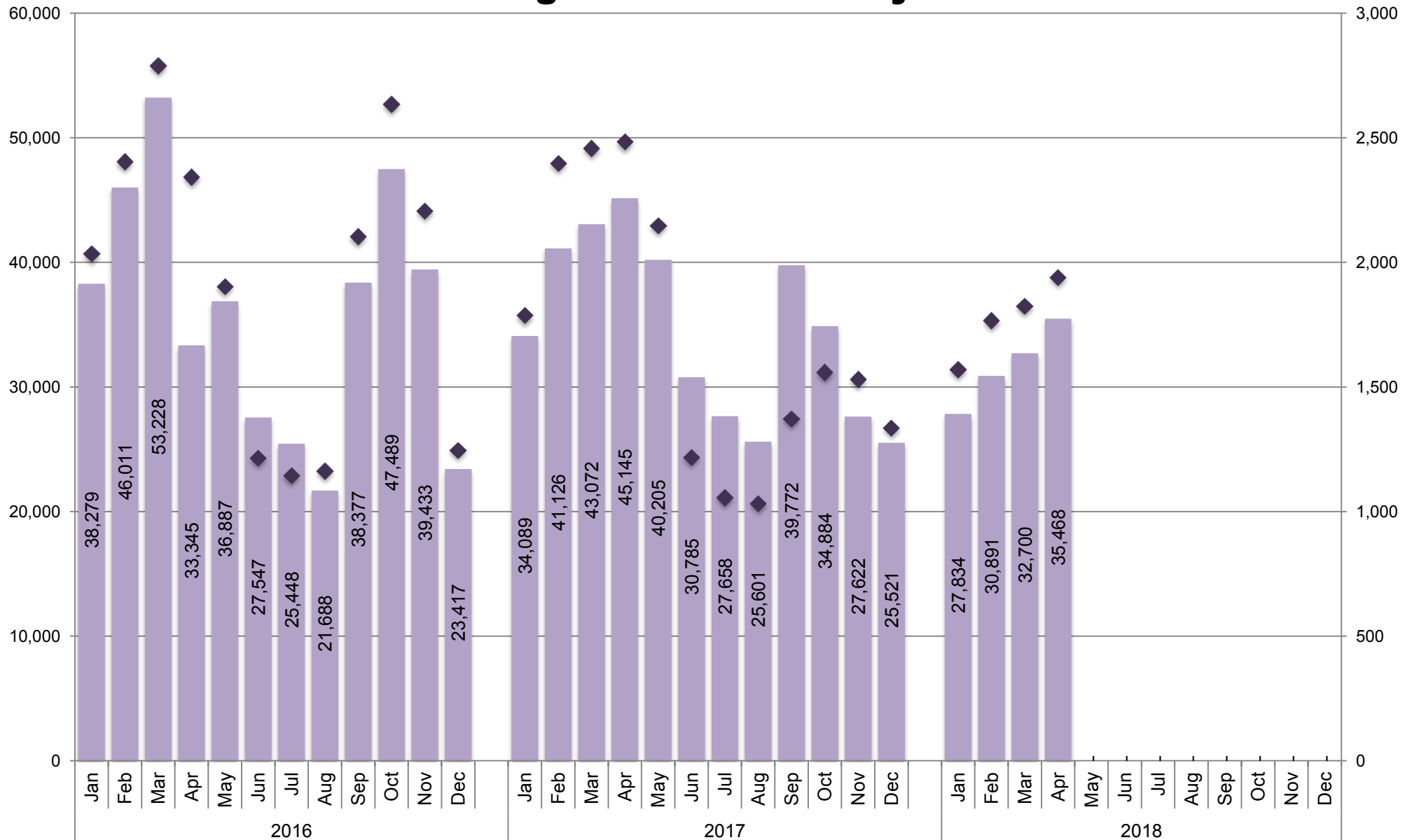
New Cards - total number of new library card registrations (including computer user only cards), as reported by IT

Denver Public Library

Total Program Attendance By Month

■ Attendance

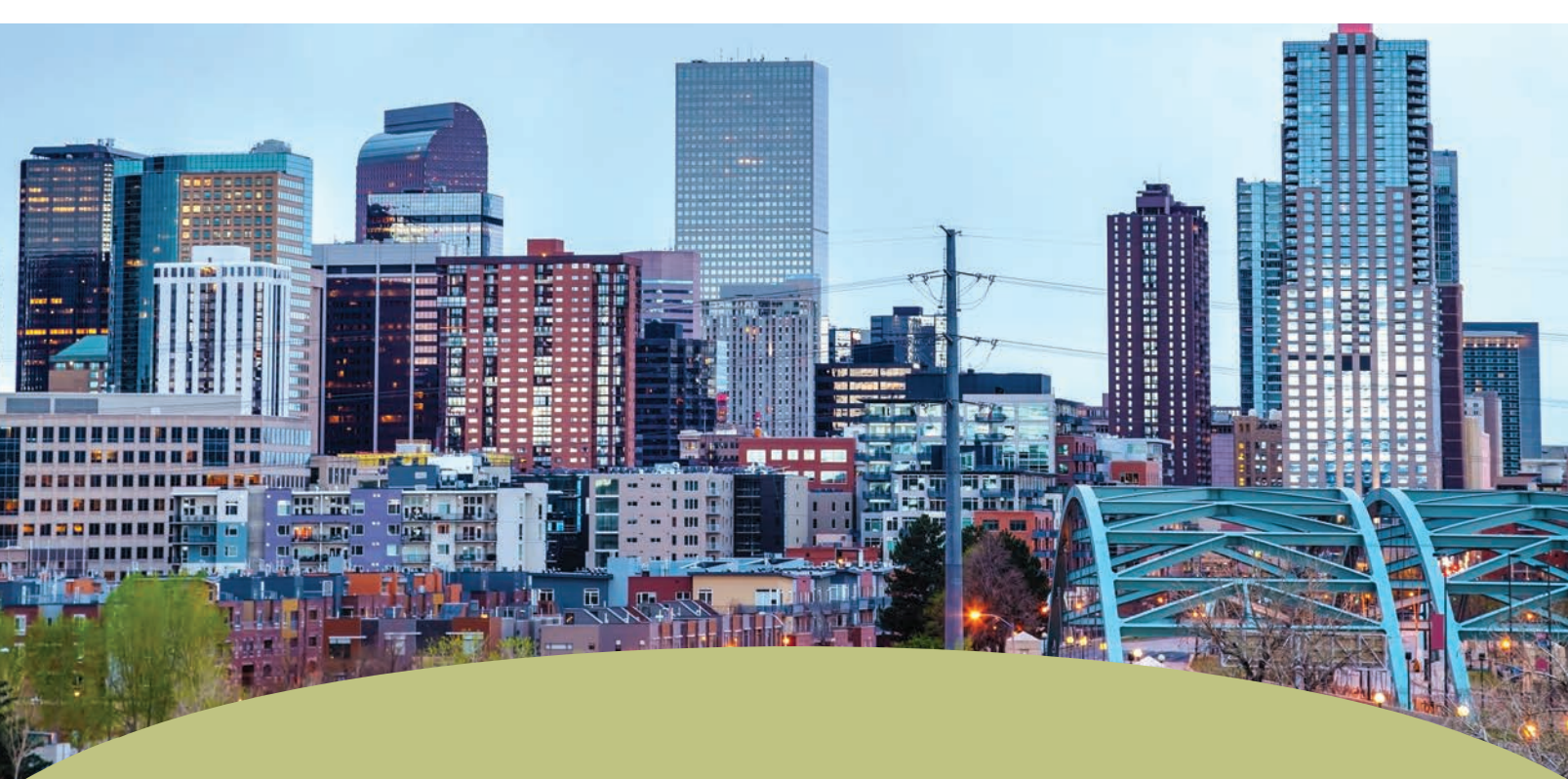
◆ Sessions



➔ Read Aloud program attendance tracking is in transition since the switch to our new Events Management system. Not all RDA storytimes are being captured properly. A solution is in the works.

Attendance - total program attendance from all locations, as submitted to TrackVia Program & Outreach Tracking application (includes programs, library events, storytimes, and tours); prior to 2015, attendance figures were not aligned with state reporting definitions and may include (Appointment Services, Exhibits, and Passive Programs).

Sessions - total number of program sessions offered (as defined in Attendance), as submitted to TrackVia Program & Outreach Tracking application



OUR DENVER PARK HILL

The Denver Public Library is listening and holding community conversations to better understand people's values and aspirations for Denver. Libraries all over the country are utilizing the library's role and position in the community to support and connect community members to activate brave spaces for open dialogue and action. The library will make decisions based on what we have heard that will ultimately empower our city, its neighborhoods and communities to thrive by achieving their aspirations.

From Fall 2016 through 2017, the Denver Public Library reached out to the greater Denver community to listen to its aspirations, concerns and needs. The information we received in those conversations will help guide our work, increasing our responsiveness to the customers and communities we serve. We will share what we learned widely, with partners and with the community and we will seek out voices in the community not fully explored in our original conversations. We will look to trusted community partners for their expertise and assistance as we move forward in our community engagement pursuits, and we will continue to ask questions, seek feedback, and listen to our community.



DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Our Park Hill: Ongoing Conversations and Action

The Denver Public Library is listening and holding community conversations to better understand people's values and aspirations for Denver. Libraries all over the country are utilizing the library's role and position in the community to support and connect community members to activate brave spaces for open dialogue and action. The library will make decisions based on what we have heard that will ultimately empower our city, its neighborhoods and communities to thrive by achieving their aspirations.

Between July 2016 and September 2017, Leslie Williams, representing Pauline Robinson Branch Library, and Tara Bannon Williamson, representing Park Hill Branch Library, held four group conversations with a total of 42 community members from all over the Greater Park Hill community (North Park Hill, Northeast Park Hill and South Park Hill) with more conversations in the works. These ongoing conversations seek to authentically engage with individuals to better understand our shared aspirations, concerns and actions.

In August 2017, we also engaged with the 50 plus members and attendees of the Greater Park Hill Neighborhood Association by presenting a summary at the August meeting. Those in attendance recognized the issues the community is facing were accurately represented. For those who were not able to attend, we wrote an article for the Greater Park Hill Newspaper on our ongoing combined efforts. This early summary will continue to grow as we receive more input from our community. We will continue to share out using community meetings and publications. If you would like to be more involved with these conversations and the actions that follow, please contact us at tbannon@denverlibrary.org and/or lwilliams@denverlibrary.org.



What kind of community do we want?

Community members we spoke with in the Greater Park Hill community want an inclusive and safe neighborhood where *"we can live in our home as long as we want."* All age groups also talked about the importance of diversity. In the words of one participant, *"Let's celebrate that we have differences!"* Residents also share a desire for open communication - *"civil discourse"* - exploring contrary beliefs and experiences.

For these things to happen, community members believe they need to work toward *"One Park Hill"* that includes all of Park Hill (North, Northeast, South). By embracing One Park Hill, the advantage to everyone is that a combination of races, cultures, socioeconomic statuses, family structures and ages provides a richer identity for the whole community.

What are we concerned about?

To achieve the kind of community Park Hill residents want, it is important to understand some of the big issues that are getting in the way. People can see each concern on its own and connected to the other issues. In other words, these issues influence each other in a significant way.

Civil Discourse

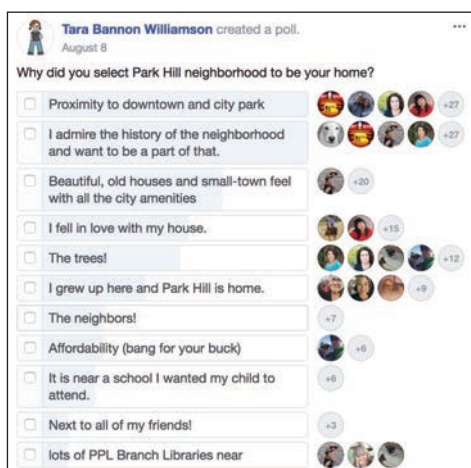
Those we heard from stated a need to, in the words of one person, *"practice talking to each other about things we're uncomfortable with"* and an increase in person-to-person dialogue. The ability to have conversations with others with different opinions and enhance understanding through open dialogue is seen as a stepping stone to other issues. One resident expressed that the inability to speak one's mind made the community feel unsafe. Neighborhood yard signs were seen as a frequent method of communication that may not always be effective.

When *"disagreeing, but being in community"* came up, social media and online groups were the focus as this is where most interactions happen. People expressed strong opinions about the negative way the neighborhood interacts online in groups like Facebook and NextDoor. These interactions were not seen as being effective conversations because one does not listen in order to understand in this environment. Specifically related to the comments on social media, one community member stated, *"There's history here, but new neighbors moving in don't respect it."*

History of the Neighborhood

Historically, the lines that created the divisions in Park Hill have been variable and subject to change over time. As you can see from the aspirations above, people want One Park Hill. For this to happen, the community needs to understand and build on the rich legacy of inclusivity and working together for a common goal.

Residents who have lived in the neighborhood for 50 plus years, as well as newer residents, have selected this community for its rich history and diversity. Many comments from conversation participants matched an online survey conducted via Facebook in the Park Hill Neighborhood group; 31 people indicated they selected Park Hill to be their home because, *"I admire the history of the neighborhood and want to be a part of that."* There was concern that many moving into the neighborhood are unaware of the history and



that *"knowing the history of your community, and neighborhood, leads to some appreciation"* in the words of one community member. This lack of knowledge is contributing to some of the tensions around diversity and discourse that is not very civil.

Gentrification

One resident voiced the concern that *"gentrification threatens our history."* The fast changes, growth and gentrification of Denver make keeping up relationships with neighbors, and learning the history of the community, challenging. A neighbor stated that she *"loves how diverse her block is and is afraid it will change."*

Another influence on losing the history of the neighborhood is that older adults are unable to age in place. Due to the rising cost of living and property taxes, they are being priced out of their longtime homes. Increasing isolation is also a factor as they often need additional help that their neighbors are unaware of or unwilling to provide.

School Equity

Rising housing costs and redevelopment are also impacting Park Hill's neighborhood schools as participants discussed the declining enrollment in some neighborhoods and deepening sharp economic divides between others, as can be seen in the five elementary schools in the Park Hill neighborhood (Park Hill, Stedman, Smith, Hallet and Roots).

Community knowledge is backed by expert data. While Park Hill Elementary School is at or nearing over-enrollment, others, like Stedman Elementary, are under-enrolled. In 2017, Park Hill School had an enrollment of 679 and Stedman had only about 200 enrolled. Park Hill school would need to add trailers for more classrooms if more kids were born/moved into the boundary, while other schools have empty rooms. Enrollment directly correlates to funding. These two schools are about a mile apart geographically, but receive different amounts of money each year. A stated concern for the community was this *"difference between school resources."*

During the April conversation, a community member who works with children and teens wondered aloud about how the same conversation would go with teens, wondering what their top concerns would be and who their trusted partners would be. Leslie and Tara saw that as an opportunity for follow-up and held a conversation with neighborhood teens in August. This conversation was led by teens from both libraries.

During the teen conversation, new topics did emerge, such as DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals); lack of trust in the school administration; a decline in diversity in their schools; and other perceived inequities, such as funding for arts programs versus funding for sports programs. The teen community conversation also spent a fair amount of time discussing the unique challenges of being a teenager in these times.

Safety

The topic of safety was multifaceted and means different things to different residents. In one community conversation, residents talked about threats from gang activity. One person summed up residents' frustration by saying, *"We wish the police would get a handle on the gang activity in the Holly Square (near Pauline Robinson)."* This is quite different from safety concerns expressed in another community conversation, *"While riding my bike, I don't feel safe with cars whizzing by."* In this discussion people talked about bike safety due to the speed of drivers on busy thoroughfares. To deeply understand this issue and related priorities, more conversations with residents will be needed.



What can we do together?

In summary, community members who attended these community conversations love Park Hill. While the changes over the decades have caused the neighborhood to slide backward in ways that are creating new tensions and conflicts, it feels like members are willing to do the work to create community and welcome others in the future.

What we heard from all of the community conversations so far is that members want spaces and places to get to know one another, more conversations that touch on deeper issues or one singular issue that affects the community; and an opportunity to understand the history of the community in its heyday. There are many individuals and groups who are trusted to help the community take action together, even though no one group or individual is trusted by everyone. Trusted partners will be explored further in future conversations.

How can Denver Public Library help?

The library is well positioned to this take action in the areas people said are important: we have a communal space, we have the trust of the community, and it is in our mission to give information to our community. We are listening and know we can be part of the desired changes.

Here's a snapshot of what the Pauline Robinson and Park Hill branches accomplished in 2017 inspired by what we heard from residents:

Create spaces and places to get to know one another.

Those new to the neighborhood often come to the library to get a new library card and plug into the community. A recent resident moved to the community to be with family, but struggled only knowing a handful of people. While attending Laughter Yoga, she said, *"The library saved my life."*

She moved to Denver four years ago, and library programming has been her number one way of connecting with others in the community. She shared that she lives alone and that this interaction makes a huge difference in her day as she deals with issues of anxiety and depression. She made plans with another attendee to go for coffee.

Here are some other examples of how we create spaces and places for community to get to know one another:

- Pauline Robinson hosted a series of Meet Your Neighbors events this summer. While only eight people attended in both June and July, 113 people attended in August. A big difference in August was that we had a block party. In June and July we only served refreshments.
- We scheduled a walk called the Park Hill Walking Tour. It was held Saturday, September 9 with 18 participants and led by a Walk2Connect Movement Leader. The walk consisted of neighborhood history, a walk down the Neighborhood Art Alley, and lots of fun photo opportunities. We walked a loop of 3.42 miles starting at Pauline Robinson Branch Library, then to Park Hill Branch Library and back to Pauline Robinson.
- Each year, the library participates in the Park Hill 4th of July Parade. People clap and exclaim that they *"Love the Library"* and *"That's my Librarian"* when we walk by, with the bookmobile as our anchor.
- Pauline Robinson Branch Library was invited to assist the next door school, Roots Elementary, in building a playground for the community to use during out-of-school hours. The October 14th article from The Denver Post by Danika Worthington stated, *"The group was creating more than just a playground, they were creating a place for the quickly changing community to come together to recognize the past while looking to its future."* The article also included quotes from Pauline Robinson senior librarian Leslie Williams, who assisted in the building.

Engage Teens in the conversation

The idea for the teen conversation came out of the April conversation, where a community member said *"I wonder what teens would think of these questions and what they would say."* Park Hill Branch had a summer intern (Frances), and Pauline Robinson had a summer youth worker (Quinton). Together they recruited 6 teens, and led an interesting conversation in September.

One important thing that we learned from the conversation was how important it is to treat teens with respect, to believe in them and to continue to engage them in the conversation. They are aware of the generally poor opinion of their generation and said, *"a lot of people think that teens are stupid and can't understand anything and just want to party."* Additional locations around Denver are now conducting their own teen community conversations to include teen voices in the dialogue.

As Pauline Robinson and Park Hill branches plan for the 2018 Summer Reading Program, the time of year we see the most teens in our locations, we will continue to collaborate on programming and projects that will benefit the teens of our community. We will continue to seek out and value their voices and input through our teen advisory boards, teen volunteers, school outreach and meeting teens where they are all year long.

Utilize shared space to engage in Civil Discourse

Building on the spaces that we create together to get to know one another, we can delve into discussions to better understand and gain more experience listening to one another, particularly when volatile topics are the focus. Doing so, we can show our respect for the history of the neighborhood and the work that came before, particularly in the area of Civil Rights.

This neighborhood has a history of working together on issues it cares about. For example, Smiley Middle School became the first desegregated Denver junior high school in 1969. Helen Wolcott integrated the Cub Scouts here. The Park Hill Action Committee, Inc. was founded in 1960, and the organization consisted of members from

seven churches in the area. Over the last several decades (within one generation), we have slid back to what feels like square one, meaning community members feel there are silos in the neighborhood, the passion to end racial inequality has faded, and only certain folks want to work with one another.

Here are some examples of how we utilized our spaces and places for community to engage in Civil Discourse:

- *The Greater Park Hill News* has included more articles about the history of the neighborhood, including an article published July 31 by Sierra Fleenor on the civil rights activist and trailblazing librarian Pauline Robinson, for whom the library on 33rd and Holly is named. The editor of the paper was in attendance at both conversations and received inspiration for this article as a result.
- In September 2017, we collaborated on an event with Curious Theatre Company with a special performance of *Black. by* Lamaria Aminah, a play written in last year's Curious New Voices Summer Intensive to *"get to the heart of the matter on communication between races."* This short play was followed by a discussion about race in our community, with over 120 in attendance. Months later, this event is still brought up among those who attended and those who were unable to attend.
- We developed our skills at talking about tough topics with a program facilitated by Joanna Hudson called *Help Me Understand: Discussing Volatile Topics* on September 6, 2017. The 19 people attending the event explored what makes topics tough to talk about and strategies for navigating our emotions during these conversations.
- In October 2017, we collaborated with Historic Denver and the Denver Public Library Western History and Genealogy Department for a *House History* program, on how to research the history of your house. Gentrification and pop tops were hot topics during this program. The program had a group of 19 people, ranging from long-time residents to newcomers to the neighborhood.

What's next?



We are excited about the upcoming opportunities both libraries will be offering. Here is a sneak peek of what is in the works for 2018:

Programming:

- The Pauline Robinson branch had another successful Meet Your Neighbors potluck on January 20. The 15 people in attendance were engaged with meeting neighbors and were interested in ongoing events.
- *Let's Talk about Gentrification* was held January 31, 2018. Over 150 passionate people were in attendance.
- *Different Perspectives, Civil Dialogue* was offered as a series three consecutive weeks in February.
- *What is Intersectionality?* was also explored in February by looking at how our multifaceted identities can help clarify ways in which people can experience privilege and oppression.
- *Artistic Expression for Social Change* was held in March. Facilitators guided participants in creating works geared toward social change.
- On May 2, we are celebrating *The Greater*

Park Hill News because it is an award winning, monthly publication that has been in continuous production since 1961 and a valuable community partner.

- May events will include *How to Spot Fake News* as well as learning more about the new museum celebrating and preserving a major thoroughfare in our community, Colfax Avenue.
- Plans are in the works for another Park Hill walking tour this Fall this time starting at the Park Hill branch and traveling to the Pauline Robinson branch and back again.
- We are exploring partnerships and ideas for Refugee Welcome Week in September.

Collaborating with Greater Park Hill Community Inc:

- We are continuing to attend the monthly community meetings to continue listening to community concerns

- We are continuing to write articles for the Greater Park Hill Newspaper each month incorporating what we have heard and learned while working in the community.
- We are looking forward to participating in community events like the Park Hill 4th of July Parade and Park Hill Street Fair.

“Practice talking to each other about things we are uncomfortable with”

- In our April and July conversation, members said they wanted to talk more in depth about safety, diversity and school equity, exploring

one issue at a time. Tara and Leslie will schedule two “deeper dive” conversations where we look at one of these issues. We are going to collaborate with other organizations in the city that work with the same issues to help us get more invested members at the table as well as their knowledge about the issue. One meeting will be held at the Park Hill Branch Library, and one meeting will be held at the Pauline Robinson Branch Library.

We are looking forward to working with community members. If you would like to take action and join the conversation, please contact us at tbannon@denverlibrary.org and/or lwilliams@denverlibrary.org.

**Community Engagement Team Lead
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Women's Forum of Colorado, Inc.

Notes & News - April 2018

Notes & News is the Women's Forum of Colorado monthly newsletter. If you'd like to submit content for future newsletters, please email admin@iwfcolorado.org.

President's Update











Dear Women's Forum of Colorado members,



Thank you to everyone that attended the [Women at the Helm of Higher Education](#) program earlier this month. Our panelists and moderator led us in a fascinating discussion about how they got to be at the top of their fields, how their personal backgrounds prepared them to lead such dynamic and diverse organizations, and where their organizations are headed in the future. What an impressive group of women!

Speaking of impressive women, today I have the great honor of announcing our newest Women's Forum of Colorado members. We had a very competitive pool of nominees and nine women were selected as part of the 2018 class. Thank you to all who submitted a nomination or provided a seconding letter. My sincere thanks to Barb Faulkenberry and the entire Membership Committee for your thoroughness and thoughtful discussion throughout this competitive process.

Please help me welcome our newest members!

	Adrianna Abarca Co-Owner, Ready Foods		Brenda Allen Professor & Vice Chancellor for Diversity & Inclusion, University of Colorado Denver & Anschutz Medical Campus
	Marti Awad Founding Partner, Cardan Capital Partners		Janine Davidson President, Metropolitan State University of Denver
	Yumi Hwang-Williams Concert Master, Colorado Symphony Orchestra		Michelle Jeske City Librarian, Denver Public Library
	Sharon Matusik Dean & Professor of Strategy & Entrepreneurship, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado Boulder		Lisa Roy Executive Director of Early Childhood Education, Denver Public Schools
	Merri Sanchez Principal Advisor, Aerospace Corporation		Congratulations and welcome to the Class of 2018!

We are in the process of finalizing the details for this summer's New Member Reception and will be in touch with more information soon. In the meantime, please see below for the dates of upcoming events. I hope you will attend an event and get to know more of our Women's Forum members.

Sincerely,

Shannon Block
President, Women's Forum of Colorado



April 18, 2018

By La Voz Staff
News@lavozcolorado.com

The Denver Museum of Nature & Science and the Mexican Cultural Center in partnership with Telemundo Denver to host the fifth annual “Día del Niño: Celebrating All Children,” an SCFD Community Free Day event, on April 29 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. New this year, the Museum will lead art activities related to the exhibit “El Alebrije: Una historia en común,” which is on display through August in partnership with the Mexican Cultural Center and the Museo de Arte Popular in Mexico City. In addition, the day will include multicultural music and dance performances, face painting, crafts, Colorado sports mascots, Mr. Bones the Paleo Puppeteer, the Denver Public Library’s bookmobile, a Museum-wide scavenger hunt, and free admission to the “Creatures of Light” temporary exhibition. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/2qqj6ki>.



April 19, 2018

City agencies and Denver Public Library open resource center for north Denver residents

The local library system hopes the center will bring vital economic mobility services to the Globeville, Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods.

Author: Colleen Callander

Denver Public Library and many city agencies have teamed up to put a resource center in the [Valdez-Perry Branch Library](#).

It will provide residents and business owners in North Denver neighborhoods easy access to resources including housing support, financial coaching, resources for citizenship and small business assistance.

“There are a lot of challenges and barriers in communities across the Denver metro area, so we want to be able to provide opportunities to remove some of those barriers for access and transparency and bring resources,” said William Chan, the Director of Economic Mobility for [North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative](#).

The resources are not new, but now they’ll be easily accessible for North Denver residents who need them.

“We’ve heard what they’ve said, how they want to have resources in their backyard, in their community,” Chan said.

According to Chan, the resource center will be open the same hours as the library. Each day will be a specialized focus, but the city representative can answer anyone’s questions and point people in the right directions.

“It was really important for us to work alongside residents and to acknowledge that we’re listening, and to connect the best we can to whatever their needs are,” Chan said.

People can call the library or go to the website to find out which services are available each day, and Chan said community members will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis.

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May 2018

How Two 100-Year-Old Libraries Are Adapting to a Digital World

The William H. Smiley and William N. Byers branches of the Denver Public Library are up for renovation—and reenvisioning.

BY MARY CLARE FISCHER



The Byers branch of the Denver Public Library drew a sizeable crowd when it opened in June 1918. Photo courtesy of Denver Public Library/Western History Collection

As one of the great steel and railroad magnates of the 19th century, Andrew Carnegie was a literal builder of cities. But the active philanthropist figuratively built up society, too, by funding the construction of more than 1,500 libraries across North America. **“I choose free libraries as the best agencies for improving the masses of the people,”** he wrote in the *New York Herald*. **“They reach the aspiring, and open to these the chief treasures of the world—those stored up in books.”**

Eight of those libraries were built in Denver, and residents greeted their openings, from 1913 to 1920, with the same enthusiasm as Carnegie did.

When the William N. Byers branch was dedicated in June 1918, at Santa Fe Drive and West Seventh Avenue, business owners closed their stores and gathered at the new building to celebrate. With ivory walls, sandstone trim, and a red- and gray-tiled roof that evoked the sunbaked homes of southern Italy, the structure was, as a 1918 *Library Journal* article stated, **“one of the most beautiful and artistic libraries in the city.”** The charms of both Byers and the English-cottage-like William H. Smiley branch, which opened in Berkeley in September 1918, haven’t protected them from financial struggles amid the past century’s cultural shifts. The internet has replaced books as the primary portal to knowledge. E-readers offer a lighter alternative to schlepping around tomes. And Amazon’s cost-cutting measures have made it nearly as practical to buy as to borrow.

So where does that leave local libraries? The Byers location nearly closed in 2009, but City Council members pressured then Mayor John Hickenlooper to keep it open. This past November, 70 percent of

Denver voters passed a ballot measure that gave the [Denver Public Library](#) system \$63 million for renovations as part of the GO Bond package. The Central Library will receive the bulk of the money; together, Byers and Smiley will get about \$3 million.

Denver library staffers are using the opportunity to make not only structural updates, but also visionary ones. In many ways, that strategy involves channeling the longtime ethos of the surrounding neighborhoods. Smiley was originally built near the Berkeley playground to serve the children who played there. Now, the branch will host neighborhood concerts to appeal to young families in the area.

The Byers branch hopes to tap into the vibrant [Art District on Santa Fe](#) scene and put on events that showcase the area's Latino heritage. Already, a mural of Hispanic leaders titled "Pasado, Presente, Futuro" hangs above the building's circulation desk. It's a good reminder that while times have changed, people haven't—and there's still plenty of treasure to be found in the world of books.

Centennial Celebration: Smiley will host a free concert in Berkeley Park on each First Friday from May to September. Byers is also throwing a birthday bash with complimentary music and food on June 23 from 2 to 4 p.m.



A publication of  Colorado Community Media

May 8, 2018

Author shares methods with readers in ballroom gathering Cynthia Swanson's first book is being made into movie by Julia Roberts

By Sonya Ellingboe
sellingboe@coloradocommunitymedia.com

As 7 p.m. neared on April 26, the ballroom at Embassy Suites DTC filled with readers, eager to learn about local author Cynthia Swanson, her new book, "[The Glass Forest](#)," her writing life and her very successful first book, "[The Bookseller](#)," which Julia Roberts is transforming into a movie now.

Swanson, who grew up in New York state, talked about her "writer's journey to date." She originally thought she was destined to become an architect, a designer — and started college on that track — but she had started writing in a special closet with a window and a desk and typewriter, off her bedroom. She included creative writing classes in her schedule ... "We forget how much our words can mean to younger people," she continued. A writing teacher, who realized she was headed toward architecture as a career, said she hoped Swanson would keep writing.

The student changed majors, changed schools, focused on an English degree and "kept publishing short stories." She learned a lot while writing two short novels, which remain in a drawer — and wrote another in her 30s which she workshopped with Lighthouse Writers for seven years. Meanwhile, she supported herself working in PR, freelancing design projects.

She married at 37, had three kids in four years (including twins) and went back to design, fixing and flipping — and freelancing. Then, came the "aha!" moment — the idea for "The Bookseller." She was at Denver's Schlessman Y with a 3-year-old and thought: "How can this be my life? I felt no regret but doubted I belonged ... What if you were a person who doubted you belonged in your real life?" Bingo!

An article by author Gretchen Rubin came into her hands. It suggested taking a 15-minute piece of time daily just for oneself, instead of waiting to do what you want. "I can write 15 minutes a day," she figured. Her understanding husband helped her make that time for herself.

Swanson writes a first draft straight through, then starts research. That first draft of "The Bookseller" took six months, then she shifted gears into research on 1960s Denver when/where it was set: A bookstore on South Pearl and a dream life in a south Denver neighborhood are both accurately portrayed as to architecture and cultural details/texture. After-hours at Denver Public Library's Western History Department and more exploring — and more time with Lighthouse Writers, she was "about 90 percent there," had an agent who pitched to major publishers. Swanson ultimately picked an editor. It was published in 2015, made the New York Times Bestseller List, has been translated into 18 languages and has been a book club favorite. And now a film is in production.

She started on "Glass Forest," set just outside of New York City, where she grew up, based on an idea that surfaced while she was finishing "The Bookseller."

Angie Glass is a happy, devout, conservative young woman from Door County, Wisconsin (Swanson's family spent summers there). Angie marries an older man, Paul, and they have a baby boy. She receives a call from Paul's teenage niece, Ruby, whom she had met once at her own wedding. Ruby's father (Paul's brother Henry) was dead — a suicide — and her mother, Silja, is missing.

The voices of these three women — Angie, Ruby and Silja — carry the narrative forward in a complex, suspenseful manner, as a reader watches for clues.

Swanson spoke of visiting the areas in the story. She also researched the paranoia about Communists that was prevalent in the period — and which affected Henry's behavior strongly. Swanson's fictional small city and Henry and Silja's extraordinary contemporary glass house provide a background for much of the story. And yes, Swanson visited Philip Johnson's famous glass house in Connecticut and another to get a feel for atmosphere.

She plans to promote her book in New York and is working on another book, also set in the 1960s, this one dealing with Vietnam and racial issues.



A **TEGNA** Company

May 10, 2018

You hear a lot about this Denver neighborhood's past, but its present and future are the real story

Five Points is changing at a rapid rate, but there are multiple people who are making sure that its history isn't forgotten.

Author: Allison Sylte

Cranes building future developments loom above murals of past glory in a Denver neighborhood that's changing almost beyond recognition.

[Five Points](#) is named for the intersection of Welton Street, 27th Street, Washington Street and East 26th Avenue – and what was historically known as a sanctuary for the African American community has become increasingly gentrified at a pace even faster than Denver's overall boom.

There are now yoga studios, a dispensary and a brewery on the Welton Street thoroughfare that used to have multiple famous jazz clubs, soul food restaurants and barbershops.

"Five Points has changed dramatically," said Jeff Fard, the founder of [Brother Jeff's Cultural Center](#). "I mean, you could be here next week and may not notice this community. It's changing rapidly."

"Businesses that used to be here are no longer here. Owners that used to be here are no longer here."

Population statistics back this up. [According to DenverMetroData.org](#), the white population in Five Points has risen more than 1,000 percent since the 2000 census, and it's no longer a predominantly African American community.

The median rent in the neighborhood is \$2,295 – more than the [median rent for the city of Denver](#) as a whole, [per real estate website Trulia.com](#).

With the rapid growth, Fard says there is still significant minority business ownership in the area, even as longtime inhabitants are priced out by a surge in development.

But in the face of all the change, there's hope that the past can live in harmony with the future

"Working together through this change is going to make this community work, and hopefully we're not doing it in silos, we're doing it together," Fard said.



View of the of the Rossonian, formerly the Rossonian Hotel, now an office building, at 2650 Welton Street in the Five Points neighborhood, Denver, Colorado

Five Points is essentially Denver's first suburb – something you might notice by the sudden change from the downtown street grid to a rectangular suburban grid at the intersection where the neighborhood got its name.

Development was rapid with Denver's silver boom in the late 19th century, and both the well-to-do and working class moved into Five Points.

In the early 20th century though, the socially prominent folks moved to the more trendy Capitol Hill.

By 1920, Five Points and the nearby Whittier neighborhood became home to more than 90 percent of Denver's African American community.

[According to the Denver Public Library](#), the real cultural boom happened in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, when the most famous jazz and blues musicians of the day played at the jazz clubs along Welton Street. Among them were Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington and Miles Davis.

The epicenter of this was the Rossonian Hotel, where jazz greats who weren't allowed elsewhere would stay and then perform in the lounge before and after their other Denver

engagements, [according to the Five Points Business District website](#). This historic building sat empty for years, but will start a new chapter with help from former Denver Nugget Chauncey Billups, who is opening a restaurant jazz club there.

[The end of segregation in Denver spelled rapid changes for Five Points](#). Many of the African American residents who had lived there for years took the opportunity to move to other neighborhoods, such as Park Hill.

This marked a big decline. [According to the Denver Public Library](#), the population of Five Points was 32,000 in 1959. That number became 8,700 in 1974. Crime rose in the neighborhood.

Today, long-time businesses like the [Welton Street Café](#) (known for its soul and Caribbean food) stand near newer businesses like [Rosenberg's Deli](#) and the [Rolling Pin Bakeshop](#) – the latter of which was founded by a longtime Five Points resident who wanted to help the neighborhood he loves.

“FIVE POINTS HAS NEVER GONE AWAY”

Fetien Gebre-Michael is the co-owner of the Ethiopian Food Truck and owner of Konjo Catering. She's been coming to Brother Jeff's Cultural Center for 15 years for poetry readings, and has watched the nearby neighborhood change before her eyes.

“Five Points has become a hustle and bustle type area for those who are non-colored, non black and brown,” she said.

She's helping Fard launch a new catering kitchen out of the cultural center which is aimed at preserving the food history of the Five Points neighborhood – and help aspiring entrepreneurs play a role in the area's growth.

“We have an opportunity to help train young people who are interested in the service industry, the food industry,” Fard said. “Why not come here and learn how to prepare food, how to serve community, and take advantage of all of the restaurants that are opening right here in our community?”

“We can be the launching pad for careers. Things that start small often become large.”

Fard only feels hope for how the neighborhood is evolving.

“You know, a lot of people know about Five Points from the past, and they talk a lot about the jazz, they talk about things that used to be here, but Five Points has never gone away,” he said. “It continues on into the future. You've got Brother Jeff's Cultural Center, you've got Cleo Parker Robinson's Dance Center.”

“Through current musicians, through hip-hop, it all continues to be here, continues to move forward, and that's one of the things that continues to make Five Points special,” he added.

Gebre-Michael said one thing she loves is seeing her community during big events in the Five Points Neighborhood. Those included the nationally renowned jazz festival, which is slated for May 19.

[The free Five Points Jazz Festival](#) brings in dozens of bands on 10 stages, and starts with a parade.

Another key community event is [Juneteenth](#), the oldest known celebration commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. Thousands of people gather in Five Points for speakers, music, an awards ceremony and a parade.

“Five Points is a wonderful place to be,” Fard said. “You’ll be able to experience the past, the present and the future and you’ll be able to do it through arts, culture, music, dance food.

“We invite you to come down, experience, participate and invest in the community. It’s a place to be, and it’s perhaps going to be the No. 1 place in the city to be, and it’s exciting that all of us will participate in that growth and development.”



May 16, 2018

You Are Here: Dreaming of the iconic Cinderella City

Cinderella City was a popular hangout in the '70s and '80s with its 28-foot fountain and double-decker carousel.

Author: Erica Tinsley

If you grew up in the Denver metro area -- it didn't take you long to guess that we looked back at Cinderella City in Englewood for Wednesday night's "You Are Here" segment.

The massive shopping mall opened March 7, 1968 -- after nearly a decade of planning.

It was brought to life by Gerri Von Frellick, a man who was known as the king of Denver shopping centers in 1960, according to an article written by the Denver Public Library.

The new mall held 250 stores spread across five different buildings that covered 1.5 million square feet of space over two miles.

The malls, which were separately named, the Rose Mall, the Sunflower Mall, the Gold Mall, the Shamrock Mall, and Cinder Alley, all connected at one central location known as the Blue Mall.

Cinderella City was a popular hangout in the '70s and '80s with its 28-foot fountain and double-decker carousel.

Eight viewers suggested Cinderella City to us for this segment. Many of them like Lisa Gibson, Renee Burnes and Tracey Qualteri all remember going to Farrell's Ice Cream Parlour in the mall.

Some fondly remembered heading over there to stop at Funtastic Nathan's. Still, business started to decline in the '80s.

Many of the small retailers were moving out, and by 1997, its last major retailer, Montgomery Ward, moved out and left the mall empty.

It was mainly abandoned after that, despite attempts to revive it.

Towards the end of the Cinderella City's life, one of its inner malls, Cinder Alley, was deemed too unsafe to host shoppers and was closed off -- according to the Denver Public Library's article. It turns out the mall had been built on what was once the town's dump and the ground underneath was shifting.

In 1998, the city began the process of demolishing Cinderella City.

However, the area was redeveloped.

Now Englewood Civic Center, a multi-use facility with retail and office space, sits in its place.

Almost everyone who guessed where we were for Wednesday's "You Are Here" on our Facebook page got this one correct. Some called it easy - we'll leave that up to you all.

ANOTHER ONE | [You Are Here: Remembering The Organ Grinder in Denver](#)

Don't forget to tell us where you want us to go next, it can be a landmark, old restaurant, venues, even a look ahead at new development you may be excited to see. Just email us at youarehere@9news.com.

The Denver Public Library featured Cinderella City in a two-part series last year called "[Cinderella City: The Rise and Fall of a Memorable Mall](#)."

Our partners at the Denver Business Journal also looked into the iconic mall's past. [Check it out here](#).



May 17, 2018

McGraw-Hill Education Pledges Support for Denver Public Library's Read Aloud Program

McGraw-Hill Education's donation will help instill the love of reading in more than 6,000 children

NEWS PROVIDED BY

McGraw-Hill Education

DENVER and NEW YORK, May 17, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Reaffirming its commitment to promoting literacy and instilling a love of reading in children, McGraw-Hill Education today announced its support for the Denver Public Library's Read Aloud program for the 2018-2019 school year. McGraw-Hill Education's donation will enable more than 6,000 children to receive a book through the program to cultivate the love of reading from an early age. The donation will also help to train volunteers who lead Storytime sessions in various libraries and educational centers across the Denver area.

"As a learning science company, we understand just how crucial early literacy is to success in school, college and beyond," said Marty Lange, SVP, Chief Product and Operating Officer for the School Group at McGraw-Hill Education. "The Denver Public Library's Read Aloud program directly supports our mission of developing not only children's literacy but also a love of books from an early age, and we are proud to support an organization making such a positive impact on the lives of Denver's children."

The Read Aloud program, now in its 30th year, aims to develop pre-reading skills and instill a love of reading and books among preschoolers, as well as promote the use of the Denver Public Library and its branches among families. The program currently reaches 350 classrooms, particularly educationally at-risk and low-income preschoolers, with volunteers and library staff members providing weekly Storytimes to children across various educational centers. Ninety-eight percent of teachers in participating schools have indicated that their students have become more interested in books as a result of participating in the program.

"The Read Aloud Program is an invaluable resource for both students and readers, and contributions from companies like McGraw-Hill Education help ensure we can continue to make a positive impact moving forward," said Brianna Austin, Read Aloud Program Coordinator. "Teacher surveys and verbal feedback always highlight that students learn from and look forward to the weekly visits from their readers. Those visits increase students' interest in books and strengthen early reading skills, all of which helps young readers develop self-esteem and confidence. It's really beautiful to see the excitement, both from students and volunteer readers, when they see each other and share books every week."

At the end of each semester, each child receives a brand-new book to keep. By donating books to children and supporting the building of mini Read Aloud libraries in participating classrooms, the program aims to continue fostering a love of reading outside of Read Aloud sessions.

About Denver Public Library

Founded in 1889, the Denver Public Library connects people with information, ideas and experiences to provide enjoyment, enrich lives and strengthen our community. With 26 locations throughout Denver, the library provides essential resources to the community including early literacy programs, computer and Internet access and training, family and adult programs. Learn more at denverlibrary.org and keep up on library news and events through social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#).

About McGraw-Hill Education

McGraw-Hill Education is a learning science company that delivers personalized learning experiences that help students, parents, educators and professionals drive results. McGraw-Hill Education has offices across North America, India, China, Europe, the Middle East and South America and makes its learning solutions available in more than 60 languages. Visit us at mheducation.com or find us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

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SOURCE McGraw-Hill Education



May 24, 2018

Ten Things to Do in Denver for \$10 and Under (Seven Free!)

WESTWORD STAFF

While Memorial Day weekend is typically dominated by blockbusters and barbecues, for Denver's creative community, it's just another weekend of great entertainment. Bookworms, art lovers, comedy nerds and brunch-happy jazz cats have plenty of reasons to celebrate in the days ahead: The city is positively bustling with a staggering variety of delightful diversions. Even better, admission to each of the events listed below is less than \$10 (fine print notwithstanding). Keep reading for the ten best free and cheap events in Denver this weekend.

Untitled: *Birdy* Presents the Cuckoo's Nest

Friday, May 25, 6 to 10 p.m.

Denver Art Museum

\$8 to \$13

The creative commingling between local artists and DIY publications continues as Untitled returns to the Denver Art Museum with *Birdy* magazine's Cuckoo's Nest, "an evening of art, laughs and beats." The multi-disciplinary art-stravaganza includes the Awesome Improv Workshop with Mark Shonsey of Third Curd and Grafenberg Productions, a Super Smash Bros. Tournament presented by Sexpot Comedy's Videogames, a *Birdy*-inspired DIY publication workshop from William Seward Bonnie of Cheeseburger Nebula Galactic Press, and a **button-making station guided by Denver Public Library's Molly Bassford**. The evening also includes standup comedy from Jodee Champion, Adrian Mesa, Nathan Lund and Ben Kronberg, music from Jonny DeStefano and Simulators, and a visually projected art installation from Jeromie Dorrance of DATELINE. Admission is \$8 to \$13 at the door, free for members. Visit the [Untitled at the Denver Art Museum Facebook events page](#) for more details.