



Celebrating Black History: Honoring Legacy, Embracing Diversity

Colorado Humanities <info@coloradohumanities.org>

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ROSA PARKS

COLORADO HUMANITIES PRESENTS

BLACK HISTORY LIVE

FEB 2024

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Colorado Humanities Newsletter

January 12, 2023

Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr. are two of the most iconic leaders of the Civil Rights Movement. Both were committed to finding peace and freedom for those who were oppressed and creating a better future for generations to come. Rosa Parks' actions are often relegated to her decision to not give up her seat on a bus, but to do so is a disservice to her legacy. She was a lifelong freedom fighter who fought for racial justice and advocated for tangible change for both women and people of color until her death in 2005. Martin Luther King, Jr., a man whose speeches and messages remain just as meaningful today as they were decades ago, first visited Denver in 1956, preaching at Denver's New Hope Baptist Church during the Montgomery

Bus Boycott. It was on this trip that he saw that segregation was not limited to the South, as African Americans in Denver were not allowed to live in certain areas of the city. He returned three more times before he was assassinated in 1968.

Their stories are integral to the fabric of American history, and this year's **Black History Live** tour brings two Chautauqua performers, nationally acclaimed scholar/actor Becky Stone as Rosa Parks and nationally acclaimed scholar/actor Marvin Jefferson as Martin Luther King, Jr., to Colorado to share their stories. There will be one special event featuring both portrayals on February 9 at the Aurora Central Library starting at 6 p.m.

Colorado Humanities' Black History Live program annually honors the struggles, triumphs, and contributions of pivotal African American visionaries and trailblazers who have shaped the intricate tapestry of Black heritage and American history. To learn more about the historical figures and scholar/actors and view the full tour schedule, please visit [Black History Live](#). With 14 events spread out over the first two weeks in February, I hope you will take the opportunity to attend one of these free Chautauqua performances and learn more about these two historical figures.

Jennifer Macias

History Programs Coordinator



Happy New Year, everyone! We hope that you have plenty of warm memories of 2023 and are looking forward enthusiastically to more bright moments in 2024. We're doing our part to start you off by offering a lot of choice activities in the next few weeks. Here are a few highlights. As always, we all greatly appreciate your interest and participation. Please let us know what you think.



***The Five States of Colorado* Upcoming Screenings**

Free screenings of *The Five States of Colorado* continue with the next three taking place in Ridgway at The Sherbino on January 25, La Junta at the Otero College Student Center on January 26, and Greeley at the University of Northern Colorado on February 1. Following each screening, Colorado Humanities offers either a Q&A session with an expert from the film or a community conversation with a trained facilitator to encourage dialogue and reflection on the diverse cultural and

geographical tapestry of Colorado. A full schedule of screenings is available on our [Five States of Colorado page](#).



Museum on Main Street’s “Crossroads: Change in Rural America” Moves to La Junta

Museum on Main Street’s *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* closes in Trinidad on January 13 and will open in La Junta on January 22 at Otero College. This Smithsonian exhibition offers small towns a chance to look at their own paths over the past century, highlighting the changes that affected their fortunes, and prompts discussions about what happened when America’s rural population became a minority of the country’s population, including the ripple effects that continue today. A full list of events is available to [view on our website](#).



Colorado Center for the Book Speakers Bureau Events in February

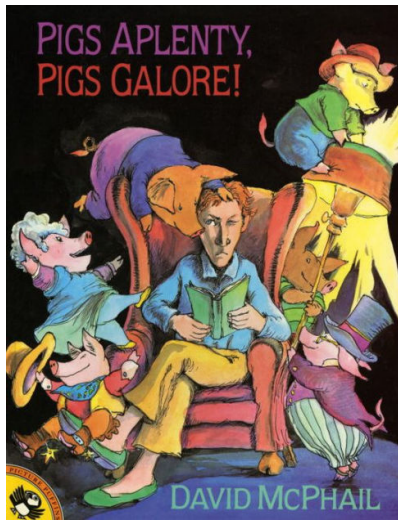
2023 Colorado Book Awards Creative Nonfiction finalist, Teow Lim Goh, and 2023 Colorado Poet Laureate finalist, Meca’Ayo, are sharing their work at the 2024 **Fort Collins Book Fest**. The Fort Collins Book Fest was conceived by librarians, writers, book lovers, and community members with the simple purpose of combining the community’s passion for the literary arts and their unique cultural heritage in a celebration of literature, literacy, and social conversation. The 2024 headlining

authors are Oscar Hokeah, a regionalist Native American writer of literary fiction, and Uma Krishnaswami, the author of more than 20 books for young readers, from picture books to novels. The festival kicks off on February 2 with a party and events and will continue throughout the month. Visit [Fort Collins Book Fest](#) for the full schedule of events.

Motheread/Fatheread Colorado: The Magic of Reading With Children

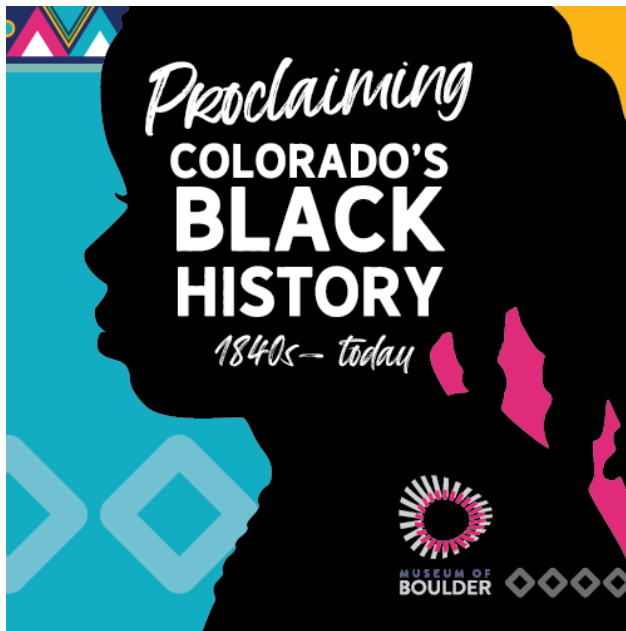
It's well known and documented that shared reading times between children and parents or other adults increases children's early literacy learning and school-readiness. It also encourages imaginative growth, the exploration and sharing of ideas, confidence for engaging in thoughtful conversation, and family connectedness. Motheread/Fatheread Colorado (MFC) promotes the skills and awareness among adults that make reading times with children most successful, and maximizes all these outcomes.

A compelling story comes to us from our MFC partner, Ignacio Community Library. The Library believes that reading helps unlock human potential and positive experiences, and creating access to materials, especially for people who are underserved, is key to its mission. With training and support from Colorado Humanities, the Library began running MFC at the Southern Ute Men's and Women's Detention Centers several years ago, and, after a hiatus during Covid, is again providing classes for incarcerated mothers and fathers, bringing them books from our large roster of children's titles that drive the MFC method, coaching them and enhancing their awareness of how to effectively read the books aloud for their children. The Library makes recordings of the parents reading, and sends them, along with copies of the books, to their children at home. An engaging and vital link between child and incarcerated parent is forged. And, as a story about the Library's MFC work that ran in The Southern Ute the Drum last October says, "a new cycle of literacy has been planted and hopefully the seed will mature and blossom into growing opportunities for all the members of the family." Read the whole article in the Southern Ute Drum [here](#).



You may also like to [listen](#) to a wonderful reading session one of our MFC fathers recorded for his children of the book *Pigs Aplenty, Pigs Galore!*, by David McPhail. The recording exemplifies the joy, the pure magic, of reading aloud to children.

More News



Proclaiming Colorado's Black History

On display at the Museum of Boulder until September 2025, *Proclaiming Colorado's Black History* is a comprehensive look at the African American experience in Colorado with the goal of preserving Colorado's rich and complex Black histories, sharing them broadly, and integrating them into Colorado education. This project has



New Durango Poet Laureate

The City of Durango recently announced its first Poet Laureate, Esther Belin, and Rising Poet Laureate, Zoe Golden. Belin has lived in Durango since 1997 and has published two single-volume poetry books, one of which won the American Book Award in 2002. Golden is a junior at Durango High School and a member of Durango

been in development for over two years and includes a multimedia exhibit, educational curricula, Street Wise Arts murals, oral histories, and a variety of programs. Visit [Museum of Boulder](#) to learn more.

StoryWalk® in Colorado

StoryWalk® programs promote literacy, reading, health, exercise, and movement in communities and neighborhoods across the United States and the world. Delta County Libraries will be hosting StoryWalk® everyday through March 1 at Crawford State Park, Sweitzer Lake, Surface Creek Trail, and Delta County Fairgrounds. Each location features a different book, so visit [Delta County Libraries](#) to learn more about the books.

Climate Action. Starting January 2024, the Poet Laureate and the Rising Poet Laureate will serve three-year terms and be a constant presence at various community events, sharing their writing with the public. To learn more visit the [City of Durango website](#). Please join us in congratulating Esther and Zoe!

Thank you



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