

From the Clipping Files: Mountain Ridge Community Library

Winifred Jensen served as Highland City Recorder from 1978 to 2007. In an effort to preserve an ongoing history of the city she collected several binders full of newspaper clippings including everything from city government concerns to LDS bishoprics. As a librarian/volunteer archivist and former employee of the current Highland City Library I thought I would write today about Highland's first library, the Mountain Ridge Community Library.

Opening in 1994 the library was located in the newly built Mountain Ridge Jr. High. It was a joint effort between the two municipalities of Highland and Alpine and the Alpine School District spurred on by the long standing go to group Friends of the Library. According to reports the Friends of the Library committee members had worked for three years to provide a library for their communities. Through their efforts they were able to raise \$50,000 enabling the library to have approximately 9,000 books on the shelves by opening.

The library, situated near the front of the school, allowed for community usage in the evenings and on Saturdays whilst serving the student population during the weekday. Even a built in book drop was included for patrons to return items after hours. We will hear more about the book drop later.

Mountain Ridge Community Library's grand opening was not a one-night affair and actually comprised a majority of the week of November 14th which also coincided with National Children's Book Week. The opening dedicated each day to a particular theme starting with Tuesday as Artists Night, Wednesday as Authors Night, Thursday as Entertainment Night, and Friday as High Tech Night. All culminating in Story Telling on Saturday morning.

Guests prevailed on each day including such notables as author Susan McCloud, entertainer Marvin Payne, athletes Dale Murphy and Todd Christensen, and the wife of the inventor of the television Philo T. Farnsworth, Mrs. Elma Farnsworth, who spoke about technology and education. Other delights included demonstrations on the new computerized card catalog as well as computer based research tools and an exhibit on Novell's *Corsair*, described as a "three dimensional network navigation of the Information Highway".

The events of the opening week not only were to showcase the library, but also a forum to solicit donations in order to purchase more books for the shelves. Current Mountain Ridge Jr. High Librarian, Linda Bushman, noted in an interview that the limited selection would only allow patrons to have two books checked out at any time. She also related her wish to become an accredited library in order to borrow from other libraries now referred to as Inter-Library Loan.

With everything running smoothly at the new community library nobody foresaw the events on a Friday evening the following January. Approximately one year from the time the drop box was installed an unknown individual decided to put a lit pipe bomb in the receptacle. Unfortunately the bomb successfully exploded causing \$3,000 in damage while destroying up to 50 media items. Not a good thing to happen when a library is trying to increase its collection.

Ultimately the Mountain Ridge Community Library would close its doors, as have most community library ventures over the years. But for Highland there has been a silver lining. In October 2008 Highland City celebrated the grand opening of the Highland City Library. And even today if you look close enough you might see a book on the shelf that once sat on the shelves of the Mountain Ridge Community Library.

Kellie M. Johnson, MLS, DAS