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Everything you need to know about Gathering Place before its grand opening

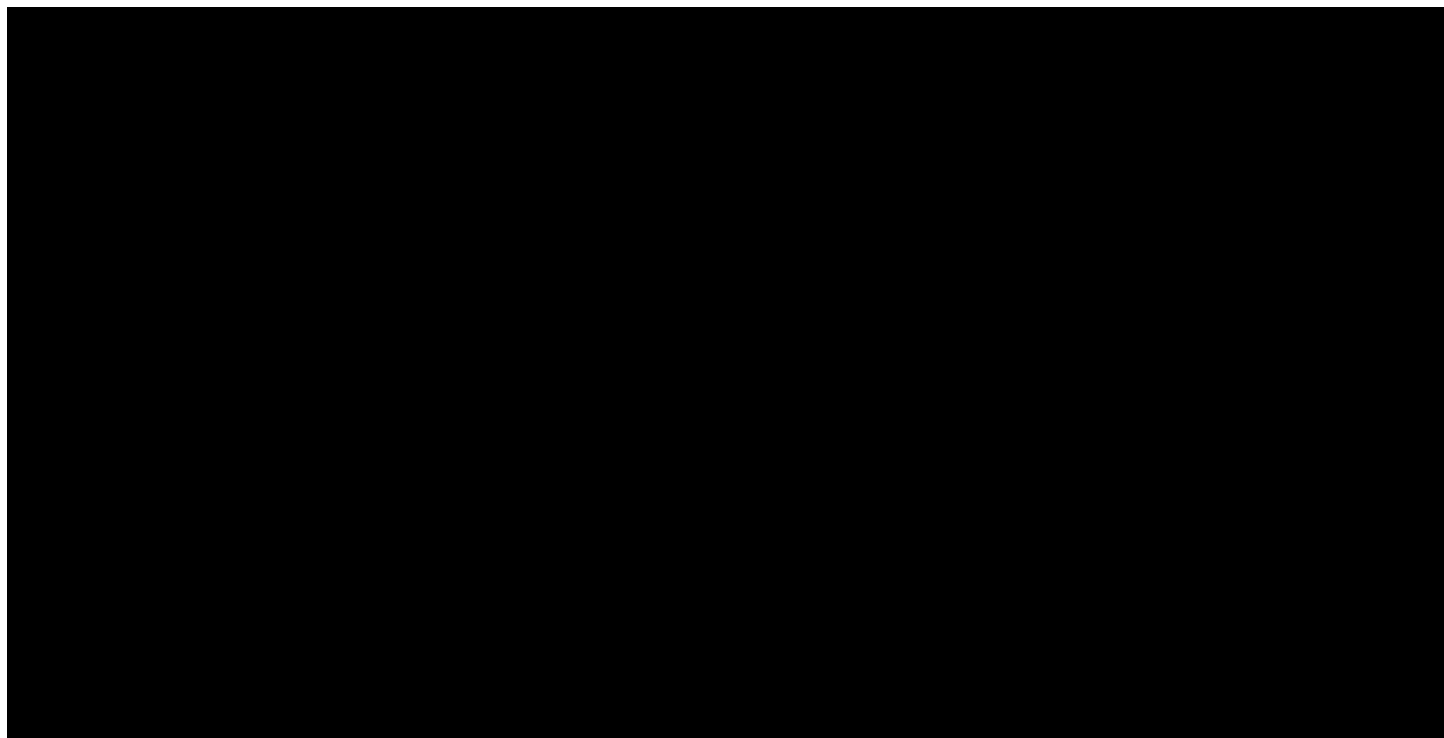
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Sep 5, 2018





A playground sits in front of the Reading Tree at Gathering Place on Friday, August 24, 2018. IAN MAULE/Tulsa World

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The largest and oldest cottonwood tree at Gathering Place is metaphorically full of leaves.

Last fall, Tulsa-area students were challenged to read at least 2 million books in time for the transformative park's opening, which will be Saturday.

For each book read, a leaf would magically appear upon the ancient [Reading Tree](#), as told in [an imaginative promotion](#).

Working with area school districts and the Tulsa City-County Library, [Gathering Place officials announced last week](#) that more than 30,000 students had exceeded the goal.

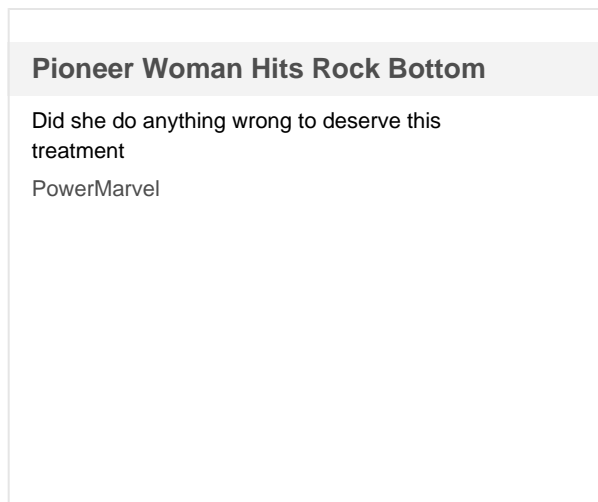
The total: 2,262,258 books.

That's a testament to the students, and the parents, teachers, librarians and mentors who encourage

them every day to read for fun and knowledge.

Hopefully, the challenge inspires young people to take a book to Gathering Place, find a favorite shade tree and get lost in a story.

The Reading Tree, located on the northeast corner of the park, will continue to represent the love of the written word. Literacy and literature programming will be centered around the tree.



To cap the challenge and celebrate the first-phase Gathering Place opening, Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum will read the final book during the Saturday ceremony at about 9:30 a.m.

A most perfect and appropriate choice, "Goodnight, Goodnight Construction Site," written by Sherri Duskey Rinker and illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld, will be read aloud by Bynum.

As the children's book states, "The sun has set; the work is done; it's time for trucks to end their fun. ... Construction site all tucked in tight; the day is done, turn off the light. Great work today. Now, shhh, goodnight."

Congratulations to all the students who read a book for a magic leaf and the grownups who helped them do it.

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Meet the newsroom



Bruce Plante: Editorial cartoonist



Write A Letter To The Editor

Letters to the editor are encouraged.

Each letter must include the author's name, mailing address and daytime telephone number.

The author's name and city of residence will be used if the letter is used in print or online.

Addresses and phone numbers will not be published. Letters have a 250-word limit.

Letters may be edited for length, style and grammar. Send to letters@tulsaworld.com.

Mail to Tulsa World, Letters to the Editor, Box 1770, Tulsa, OK 74102.

For more information, call 918-581-8330 Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Write a Readers Forum column

Op/ed space in the Tulsa World is limited. To preserve the space for the pieces we think our readers will most appreciate, we have these guidelines for submissions:

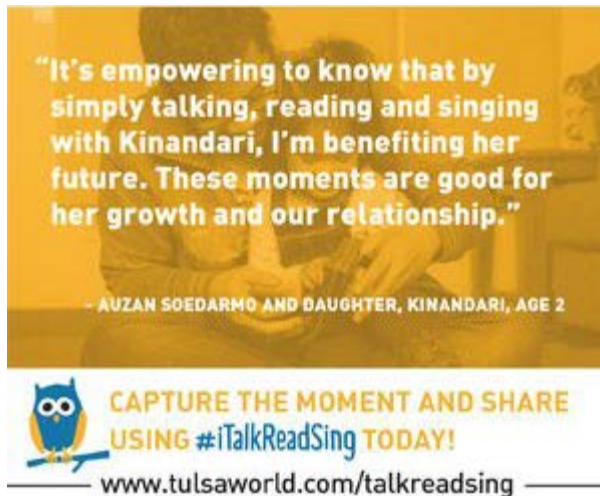
1. Op/eds should to be about public policy issues not personalities.
2. They should be debatable in nature: They should take a stance that some but not all of our readers would agree with.
3. They should not be in direct response to previous op/ed columns, syndicated columns, letters to the editor or Tulsa World editorials. The proper forum for such responses is our letter to the editor space.
4. They should come from authors who are authoritative on the topic or offer some unique identifiable perspective.
5. They should to be about 600 words long.
6. They cannot be election endorsements or un-endorsements, although at times the editorial department will solicit op/ed columns on both sides of an election for publication.
7. They cannot be product endorsement.
8. They should come from an author who lives within our circulation area.
9. They should not have been published elsewhere or submitted for publication elsewhere.

10. They cannot be libelous, incendiary or offensive to broad portions of our readership.

11. They should to be accompanied with an electronic photo of the author for publication.

These are not hard-and-fast rules. Sometimes, typically because of relative light demand for op/ed space, the editorial editor may waive one or more of the guidelines. At times of high demand, he may not be able to do so.

Columns should be submitted to: wayne.greene@tulsaworld.com



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