

CULT MOVIE VAULT REVIEWS THE HAPPENING!



High Plains Library District

CommUNITY

JANUARY 2023

# 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

PAGE 5



Colorado Historic  
Newspapers

PAGE 3

Cult Movie Vault

PAGE 7

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# Contents

Extra, Extra, Read All About It!.....	<b>3</b>
1,000 Book Before Kindergarten: Better Than Ever! .....	<b>5</b>
Cult Movie Vault: The Happening .....	<b>7</b>
Locations.....	<b>11</b>



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Bibliotecas Experience  
Imagine Laugh Dream  
Build Explore Connect Experience  
Maktabaduhu Create Share Games Read

## What do **YOU** have to **SAY** about our newsletter?

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# Extra, Extra, Read All About It!



There's "extra" content available from the [Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection \(CHNC\)](#) these days: all the issues of *The Greeley Daily Tribune* (and *Greeley Republican*) from January 1, 1922 through June 30, 1923.

Digitized at crisp, high resolution from the original, print newspapers (instead of from microfilm), these editions are much more legible than other types of scans, and they are keyword searchable.

Whether you are researching family, community, state or regional history, the political, social, and economic trends locally (or nationally), or just want to know what Weld County residents were doing with their time in the early 1920s, you can find answers in these pages.

You can also use the other resources on [the CHNC site](#) (it contains over 2.7 million digitized pages from more than 635 newspapers) to read about developments across Colorado between 1859 and 2022.

For example:

Readers of the *Greeley Daily Tribune* on January 1, 1923 encountered the above advertisement and an accompanying story on page 5 inviting them to visit a “model home” filled with the latest electrical conveniences “which can be put to domestic use.”

Among the conveniences featured were an electric “water heater with automatic control, electric fountain, three and four way switches, electric range, electric refrigerating and ice making machine... outlets or plug in switches in all rooms...and lights in the two car garage [that could be] controlled from the house.”

You don’t even need a library card to access all this information, [just use \(and bookmark\) this convenient new link](#) from the “Local History” section of HPLD’s website and you are there in a snap!

Alternatively, you can enter the words “historic newspapers” in the search box on [HPLD’s online catalog](#), click the “enter” key on your keyboard and then click the “Access Now” link on the results page to arrive at the CHNC website.

Wishing you “extra” ease with all your research endeavors in 2023!

Call 1-888-861-7323 or email [cwelsh@highplains.us](mailto:cwelsh@highplains.us) if you have questions.

Article: *Greeley Daily Tribune* (Greeley, CO), 1 January 1923, p. 5. Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

**Did YOU have a great library experience? Like, ever?**

If you’re reading HPLD’s newsletter, we’re betting the answer is “Yes.” Or possibly even “YES!”

To let our staff know that they’re having an impact in your community, we’re proposing [a quick letter-writing campaign](#). Write your favorite HPLD staff member a letter, and if they’re up for it, we’ll ask them to read it out loud for the first time on video. That way, they can see how much you appreciate them, and you can see how much your words mean to them!



# 1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN: Better Than Ever!

What's cuter than the little fox mascot-ing for our 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program?

Nothing. Nothing is cuter.

Except an **EVEN CUTER FOX!!!!**

That's right, experts in the field told us it was impossible, that there was no way to improve upon the cuteness factor of the original fox. But we're a library, and we're all about defying the odds and showing nerds (other types of nerds, we're **ALSO** nerds, and this makes the rivalry very heated) that you can't always "accord to your calculations."

Sometimes you have to go with your gut. And your heart. And other places in the body where ideas about cuteness are stored.

So, first order of business: **CHECK OUT THIS CUTE FOX!**



You want another one? You got it!



**TAKE THAT,** people who said we couldn't do it! We'll be expecting

your apology shortly. And we'll be expecting that apology in the form of custom cookies shaped like this new fox. We're reasonable people, so you've got...45 minutes. And those cookies had better be delicious.

Now that we've got that out of the way: The cuteness of the fox is not the most important change to [1,000 Books Before Kindergarten](#), so let's do a quick FAQ:

**Q: What else has changed?**

**A:** We've added a game board/sticker map, complete with stickers, to help you track your progress all the way from Book 1 to Book 1,000. Oh, and [we've got parties!](#)

**Q: Parties?**

**A:** Yes, we've got some upcoming 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Bashes to celebrate the relaunch! Keep an eye out in February!

**Q: I was already on book number 467 in the old 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten. Do I have to start over? What happens to my progress?**

**A:** No worries, your progress is saved, that doesn't change, and while we pumped up some of the fun aspects of the program, the core idea of reading 1,000 books (Before Kindergarten) hasn't changed a bit.

**Q: If I was signed up before, can I still get a sticker map? I want a sticker map...**

**A:** Of course! Next time you come into the library, let us know you're already signed up and are ready to get your sticker map. We've got plenty!

**Q: Wow, this is really great. I appreciate everything the hardworking staff of HPLD does to keep this program fresh and fun. How can I ever express that in a meaningful way?**

**A:** You're always welcome to [contact our Board of Trustees](#) and tell them what a great job people are doing, and you can [send a note to a staff member via our Letter-Writing Campaign](#).

**Q: Cool, cool. I never know a good question to end these FAQ things. May I be excused?**

**A:** Nice. That's a question and everything. Yes, you may be excused.

[Sign up for 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten now](#), or, if you're already signed up, check out the cute, adorable, super-sweet refresh!

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# Cult Movie Vault:

# THE HAPPENING

Over the last couple years, we've decided to culturally reevaluate anything and everything.

This may have started with reevaluating the place of pop music and deciding that pop music is, in fact, good. It's a valid form of music. The only thing more rock solid than Britney's abs in the early 2000's was her songwriting.

It's been fun to go back and say, "Hey, maybe Garth Brooks was pretty legit, even though he was ignored because he worked in the Country genre." Or, "Gee, maybe comic books from the 90's were legitimately artsy."

But this reevaluation may be getting out of hand, or maybe we've just run out of stuff to reevaluate. Because now I'm seeing several articles about M. Night Shyamalan's *The Happening* with headlines like this:

*Hear me out: why The Happening isn't a bad movie*

*Why M. Night Shyamalan's The Happening Doesn't Deserve Its Bad Reviews*

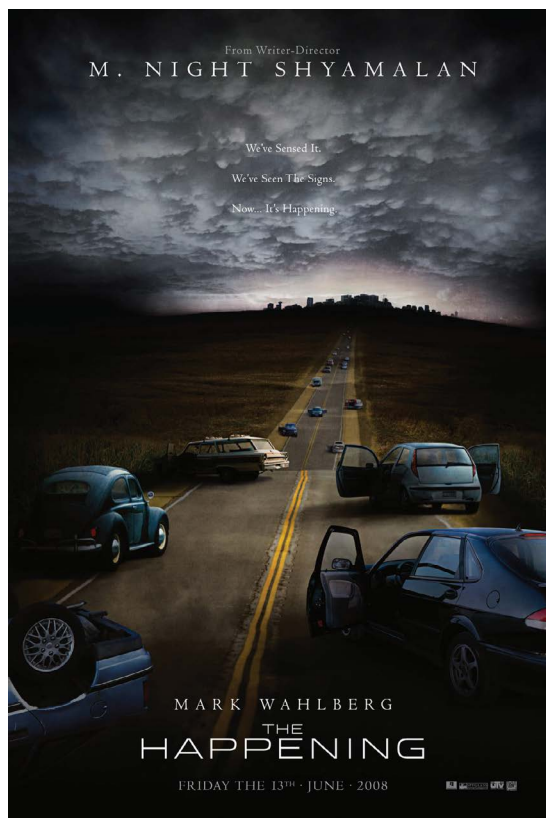
*The Happening is Super Dope and Anyone Who Says Otherwise is Going to Get A Happening-esque Comeuppance, Probably In Being Dropkicked By a Douglas Fir, And Also By My Friend, Douglas Fir, Who Just So Happens To Have The Same Name As A Variety Of Tree*

Okay, I made up that last one, but there's no shortage of [articles](#) defending *The Happening* out there, and they even have some quotes like this:

*But what I find particularly resonant about The Happening, especially in these pandemic times, is the*

*way it brings to bear the frailty of human knowledge, how easily our scientific and civilizational advances topple when confronted with something that eludes understanding.*

Ooooookay.



Because of all this reversal, I decided to bravely wade into *The Happening*, watch it for real, and reevaluate the reevaluations to find out if what people are saying is true: Is *The Happening* a secret success?

## Conclusion

No. *The Happening* is very bad.

...you want more than that? Okay, fine.

## Watching The Happening

I have to shamefully admit that I've never sat down and watched *The Happening* before.

Wait, why is that shameful? I've climbed a 14er. A few of 'em! I've stood on 3 of 7 continents, which isn't a TON, but it's not bad. Why am I ashamed of never seeing *The Happening*?

Well, because it's bad movie royalty. And I discovered why.

## Spoiler Section

The story of *The Happening* is thinner than my patience in waiting for HPLD to open up a donut stand inside the admin building where I work.

The film opens, and people start committing suicide in grisly ways, seemingly while in a trance. And it turns out this **happening** is because plant life is releasing, I don't



know, goofy gas? Some kind of goofball gas that makes people kill themselves?

This is a self-protective measure taken by the trees, a way to maybe prevent them from all being turned into whatever people are turning trees into these days. According to my Instagram feed, that'd mostly be wood tables with colored, poured resin rivers running through them.

That's pretty much it. We get that setup in the first third of the movie, and it never really goes anywhere from there. Imagine the plot of a typical movie, like *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. A thing happens, this causes another thing to happen, and so on until the last thing happens: a Nazi's whole head melts, and everything is cool again.

*The Happening* is not like that. In *The Happening*, ONE THING **happens**, and then a bunch of people walk around in a world where that thing continues **happening**, but not to our main characters for...some reason.

Huh. Maybe that's why it's called *THE Happening*. It's singular, only one thing **happens**.

But it's not the plot that makes *The Happening* so bad. It's a bunch of smaller things...

### Small Thing: The Talking

All the talking in this movie is...weird.

Sometimes it feels like no two actors were ever in the same room, doing their dialog at the same time.

You see this in *Birdemic*. What the filmmakers did there is film one actor doing all of his lines for a scene, then film the other actor doing all of her lines for the scene, then cut them together (the problem in that movie is that [an air conditioning unit kicked on](#) during one of the actor's shots, so the ambient noise between the two shots is really different, and every time the shot switches from one character to the other, you get this loud BWAAHHHHH!!!! of an A/C unit. There is a way to cheat this: first you reduce the sound in both clips to try and remove excess noise, then you add in an ambient noise track, in this case, the sort of noises you'd hear in a diner, that plays constantly and without cuts beneath the entire scene. That way, the small difference between the two tracks will be covered up, and the noise won't noticeably change between the two. But now we're getting into fixing *Birdemic*, and we don't have enough time to do that here. That's why film school was invented).

In *The Happening*, it's not that there are jarring audio or visual differences when characters are talking, it just FEELS like the actors don't know what is going on, why they're saying the things they're saying, who they're talking to...it's like they don't know anything. Like the whole thing was filmed one person at a time.

### Small Thing Two: Saying What's (The) Happening

You'll see this sometimes in screenwriting, especially if it comes from people who are used to writing novels and so on: the writer forgets that the images can do some of the explaining.

In other words, when you see something...Happening, you don't need a character to say exactly what is...Happening because you see it...occurring as well.

### Small Thing Three: The News

One of my pet peeves (has anyone named a rowdy kitten Peeves? Seems appropriate) is when a movie or TV show decides to do all of the explaining by having news anchors on TV just straight-up say what's going on all the time.

This happens constantly in *The Happening*. Someone has the news on, and the person on the news is like, "Here's exactly what's happening to you, Mark Wahlberg's character, whose name I can't remember because why bother?"

What's funny about this whole news thing is how readily we accept it in movies, yet in real life this has NEVER happened to me once. I guess that's the difference between being famous and not being famous: The news might focus on you, what you're doing, and what's going on in your life if you're famous.

Somehow, I doubt I'll ever turn on the news and hear, "Okay, Pete, dentist appointment today is looking good, though you've got some buildup on those back molars again."

### The Most Redeeming Factor

Some of the movie is just weird, and it's what I find most redeeming.

There's [the famous "Hot dog guy."](#) who just decides to tell everyone:

*We're packing hot dogs for the road. You know hot dogs get a bad rap? They got a cool shape, they got protein. You like hot dogs right?*

A "cool shape?" I...

There's also a weird semi-affair Zoey Deschanel is having with some guy named Joey, but she insists they just met up and ate tiramisu. Which, TBH, I would forgive my partner for doing. Tiramisu is delicious, and I don't feel like it pops up all the time. When you have the chance to eat it, you should take it, deal with the emotional fallout later.

### The Elephant Grass In The Room

I'm pretty sure the original reevaluation of *The Happening*



came from [Onion A/V Club's Ignatiy Vishnevetsky](#), who posed the theory that *The Happening* is meant to be a campy, 50's-style B-movie, and therefore its failure is actually a secret success.

Basically: *The Happening's* attempt to be like a lousy movie with wooden acting and bizarre dialogue and no story is successful, and if it was TRYING to do that, it succeeded.

I say this is nonsense. Poppycock. Banana oil. Other anachronistic things that mean "manure." See, I can use words like "anachronistic," too. I'm a bigtime film guy. Look at me!

Because the thing is, someone already made a movie that relies on 50's drive-in movie stylings that still manages to be good, scary, fun, and doesn't come off as being horrible: [Frank Darabont's \*The Mist\*](#).

That movie was originally meant to be screened in black and white, and if you can find a copy in black and white, I recommend it. The effects look better, and it's clear this was the intended style of the movie. *Mist* has never looked mistier.

What Darabont did is to pull some of the tropes of 50's movies that still work, but he left behind those that didn't. For example, outrageously bad acting.

Also, Darabont didn't skimp on having bizarre monsters. *The Happening's* monster is literally the wind.

And, I mean, come on, *The Happening*. "It was supposed to be that way" has to be the weakest excuse for making a crappy movie that anyone has ever heard of. When I burned Bagel Bites in the oven so badly that they looked like little lumps of coal, the "I meant to do that" excuse didn't make those Bagel Bites any tastier. Nothing could salvage those Bagel Bites. I hate throwing out food, especially when it's pizza-adjacent, so the Burned Bagel Bites Incident of 2017 still haunts me to this day. I see them every time I close my eyes...

If *The Happening* was meant to be crappy, then it succeeded, but that doesn't mean the movie itself is a success. It's still crappy.

### **Birdemic-ing**

Here's the big thing that makes *The Happening* feel irredeemable to me: *The Happening* and the aforementioned *Birdemic* are, essentially, the same movie. Both have an environmental message that, while correct, doesn't make up for much.

Both have really bad acting.

Both have a premise that comes into play, and then... people just sort of walk around in the premise.

And when the closest comparison to your movie is *Birdemic*, we've got a problem.

Especially because *Birdemic* cost \$10,000, and *The Happening* cost somewhere between \$60 and \$80 MILLION.

### **One Good Thing About The Happening**

I must admit, even though *The Happening* was bad, it doesn't seem to have ruined any careers the way some stinkers do.

Mark Wahlberg has gone on to be in a movie starring a living teddy bear. By which I mean: He was in *Pain & Gain* with Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. But I guess he was also in *Ted*, which starred a living teddy bear. If you ever need a guy to star alongside a human-like teddy bear or a teddy-bear-like human, Marky Mark is your boy.

Zoey Deschanel out-maniac-pixie-dream-girl-ed Natalie Portman, the original manic pixie dream girl, in *500 Days of Summer*. Not to mention her sitcom, *New Girl*, which is a delight. Also, she appeared alongside her real-life sister, Emily, on Emily's on-going series, *Bones*.

The two real-life sisters played second cousins who don't see the resemblance, which is hilarious.

John Leguizamo? Dude is working A LOT, and he's made a fine career of popping up in great movies (*Encanto*, *John Wick 2*), and some movies that are *Land of the Dead*.

And M. Night Shyamalan?

*The Happening* might have been the official end of his run of successes. But he's found a new niche in movies with lower budgets and smaller stories.

And I like these smaller Shyamalan's. They make me feel like he's back in the groove. Like he's a filmmaker with class and distinction again.

Like [The Visit](#), a movie in which a used diaper is shoved in a teen's face for horror purposes.



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Spring  
2023!



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[www.mylibrary.us/linc](http://www.mylibrary.us/linc)



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Greeley, CO 80634  
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(970) 454-2189

### Erie Community Library

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Erie, CO 80516  
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### Farr Regional Library

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Greeley, CO 80634  
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### Fort Lupton Public & School Library

425 S. Denver Avenue  
Fort Lupton, CO 80621  
(303) 857-7180

### Glenn A. Jones, M.D. Memorial Library

400 S. Parish Avenue  
Johnstown, CO 80534  
(970) 587-2459

### Milliken Location of the Glenn A. Jones, M.D. Memorial Library

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Milliken, CO 80543  
(970) 660-5039

### Hudson Public Library

100 S. Beech Street  
Hudson, CO 80642  
(303) 536-4550

### Keenesburg Branch of Hudson Public Library

140 Main Street  
Keenesburg, CO 80643  
(303) 349-2982

### Kersey Library

332 3rd Street  
Kersey, CO 80644  
1-888-861-READ(7323)

### Lincoln Park Library

1012 11th Street  
Greeley, CO 80631  
1-888-861-READ(7323)

### Nantes Library

703 Birch Street  
Gilcrest, CO 80623  
(970) 737-1035

### Northern Plains Public Library

216 2nd Street  
Ault, CO 80610  
(970) 834-1259

### Outreach

2650 W. 29th Street  
Greeley, CO 80631  
1-888-861-READ(7323)

### Platteville Public Library

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Platteville, CO 80651  
(970) 785-2231

### Riverside Library & Cultural Center

3700 Golden Street  
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