

Virtual Tour

Discovery Garden Art Benches

When planning for the Discovery Garden began in 2018, all agreed that art must also be a focus in the garden space. This included art pieces created by local artists as well as hosting art activities for children.

Fruita artist Pavia Justinian, a former artist in residence for the Mesa County Libraries, began her involvement with the garden with the design and creation of the archway into the Children's section of the garden. Working with fifth graders at Chipeta Elementary School, she designed the arch and had the children craft the decorations across the top.



In 2020 Pavia created whimsical benches designed in acrylic over a steel frame. Iris, based on the dog that library volunteer Cindy Bennett brought to story hour at the central branch of Mesa County Libraries, loved having children read to her. Donations from a memorial fund for Cindy helped pay for Iris.



Horace the bookworm, with his top hat and reading a book, helps children know that being a “bookworm” is fun. This bench, located near the Bookworm Raised Bed in the Children's Garden, give visitors a place to read and relax while in the Garden. In 2019 students from Chipeta Elementary and Central High School planted the Bookworm Raised Bed which can be seen in the arch picture above. This sculptural bench was donated by two Discovery Garden volunteers.



The group of four benches reflecting the natural world were created by local artist Nyssa Capps. Nyssa is a sculptor and designer working in concrete along with other mediums. Her cement benches include a puma, a beautiful big leaf, a river running through a stone and a bench representing craggy mountains.





Nyssa's benches were made possible through a 2019 AARP grant which helped make the garden accessible to children and grandparents and everyone in between. Discovery Garden coordinator Nicole Fitzgerald said, "having somewhere to sit and enjoy the garden makes the space more comfortable for everyone." Whether coming to the garden with a good book to read, working as a volunteer in the planting and maintenance of the space, or stopping by to relax and enjoy this beautiful urban space, the benches welcome visitors with beauty and whimsy and a place to rest.