Insider

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Redefining Titan Territory

The new McLain High School arena, designed by Sparks Reed Architecture and Interiors, built by Flintco.

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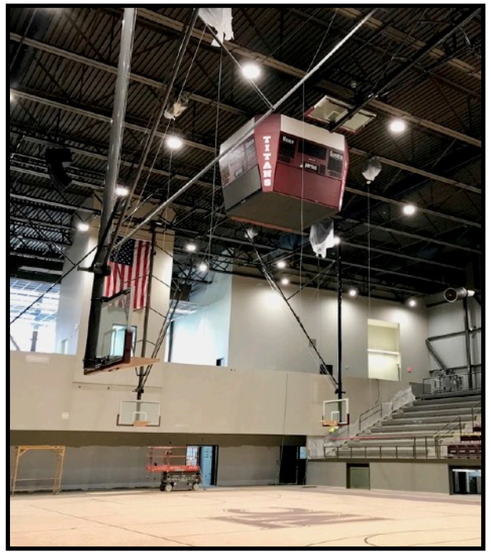
Just a bit of **what's inside**!



Sparks Reed Architecture & Interiors
the team you trust
www.sparksreed.com

Meet the SR staff!

Meet the staff of Sparks Reed Architecture and Interiors, seen here inside the new McLain High School gymnasium, which they designed! From left to right: Gary Sparks, Jill Selman, Rhonda Reed Gerrior, Emily Chambers, Jun King Robinson, Taylor Rider, Bryan Broaddrick, Stephen Earnest, and David Reed. General contractor Flintco expects to complete this 50,500-square-foot building this summer, for usage in the upcoming fall semester. To learn more about this unique project or this innovative firm, turn the page or go to SparksReed.com!

Redefining Titan Territory

Sparks Reed's arena design boasts innovations inside and out

A future McLain hot spot: the arena entryway.

Sometimes innovation springs organically from the soil. Such is the case with the new arena Sparks Reed Architecture and Interiors designed for the McLain High School of Science and Technology.

Tulsa (Oklahoma) Public Schools faced significant hurdles before it could provide this 60-year-old campus a new arena and practice gym.

● The earth beneath its two-acre site boasted high water content, leaving the soil unable to support the desired steel and concrete-block structure without costly deep support piers.

● Within that soupy soil runs a high-pressure pipeline operated by Magellan Midstream Partners. While that Tulsa firm did shift its 100-year-old gas line within its easement – which runs diagonally across the school's property, dissecting the site for the new arena – the pipe itself had to remain in service.

This forced builders to keep disruptive vibrations to a minimum – a severe restriction when raising any multi-level concrete structure, but a near-impossible task when driving the deep piers a traditional foundation would require.

Sparks Reed overcame these challenges by employing a geopier system. This method proved to be very cost-effective, meeting the seismic restrictions while significantly reducing the amount of concrete needed.

"That is a much shallower foundation system, which saved the project nearly half a million dollars," said David Reed, principal of Sparks Reed. "It also met the low-impact (seismic) requirements for the Magellan pipeline. "

This choice required Sparks Reed to keep the 50,500-square-foot building's weight as light as possible while still meeting the demands for a durable, easy-to-maintain structure. It forced designers to forego bricks or concrete blocks – favorites of many sports and educational buildings. Instead, Sparks Reed met its goals through two devices:

● A giant steel truss system resting on 16 piers. Reducing the number of columns touching the ground decreased the number of required piers and foundation costs.

"It's pretty incredible, that a building of that size has just 16 columns," said Reed.

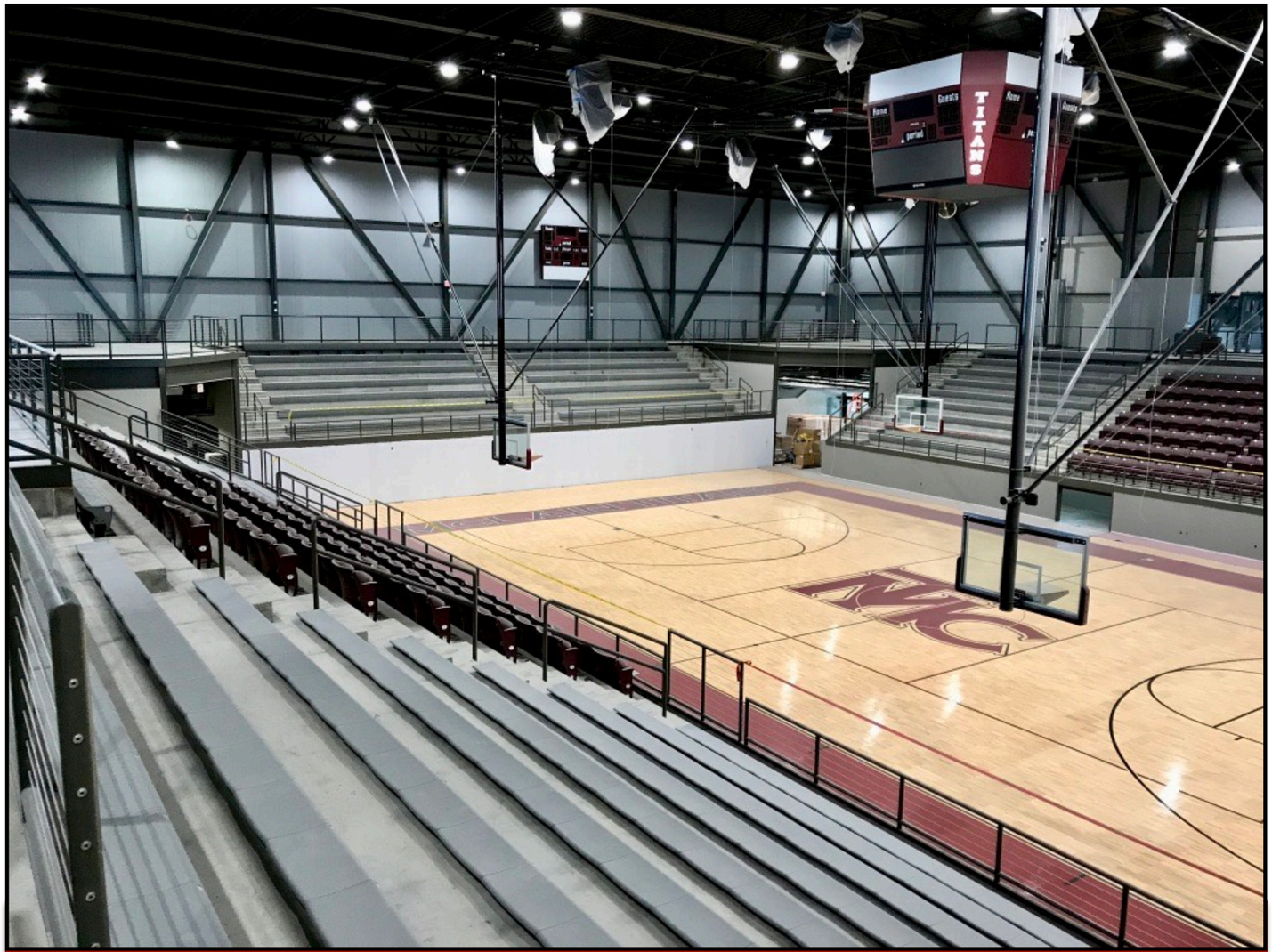
● Using a manufactured metal panel system for the exterior skin,

mixed with gray stone wall tile. This tile also was used on interior walls.

This mix of finishes significantly reduced the weight of the building from traditional brick veneer over concrete block. The panels and tiles also promise high resilience to impacts or wear, with easy replacement if damaged.

With some of the panels translucent, others solid, this wall design gives the arena a unique external look, one that takes a different presence at night. It also provides a considerable amount of diffused natural daylight inside the building, requiring little additional artificial lighting at these times.

"That panel system provided a total building envelope system in one delivered material," said Reed. "The outside finish and the inside finish were both delivered from the factory, so there was no need to paint or add another building material or trade to the exterior and interior – which sped the project up as well, eliminating the need to add additional trades to apply metal studs, drywall, gypsum board, and paint. It cut out three trades on the envelope of the building, which saved time and money for the district."



Engaging views from the concourse

This creative design achieves all of its primary goals while providing McLain an enviable home court. Its nearly 1,000-seat grandstand offers both chair-back and bench seating in a horseshoe-shaped bowl, elevated to keep fans off the court level. An impressive concourse wraps around this, providing standing room for another 500+ spectators or space for a variety of vendors, kiosks, social mixers, intimate meetings, and other fan-engaging options.

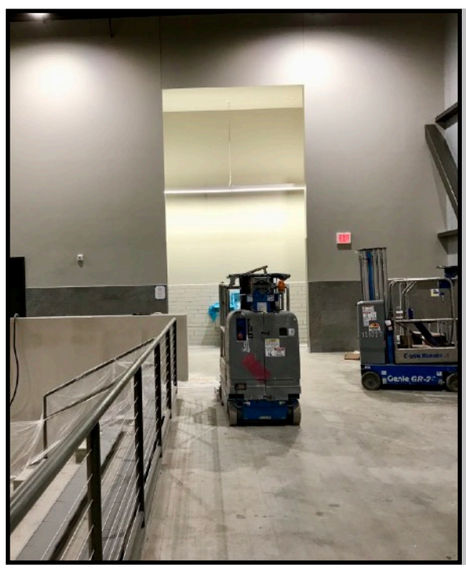
"That concourse provides some very engaging views of the game," said Reed. "Some may prefer it to the seats."

Squeezing in amenities

Into this two-acre site Sparks Reed also squeezed a practice gym, hospitality suite, concessions space and a spirit room, a wrestling room, varsity and junior varsity locker rooms for both men and women, a sports medicine training room, an athletic conference room, a study hall for players, and offices for coaches and administration. A dynamic glass entryway serves them all, with plenty of space for mingling and browsing before events.

"That lobby structure was designed to form a giant ‘T' for Titans, and that is repeated in the hospitality suite," Reed said with a smile. "It should be visible from the outside as you drive along Peoria (Avenue).”

Other subtle touches, like the soaring bathroom entryways, also embrace the Titan image.



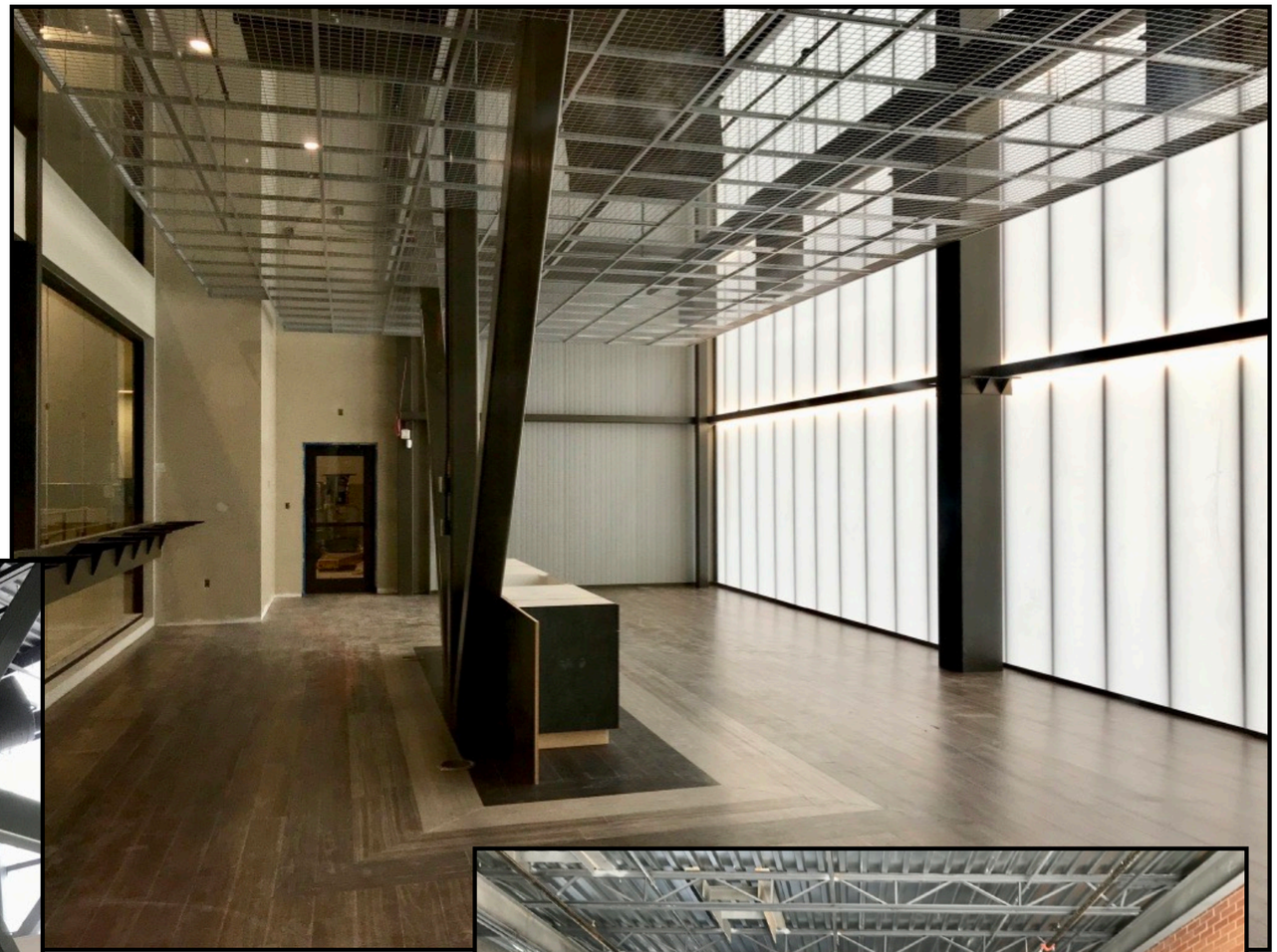
A concourse restroom entrance

Designed to inspire students

This Sparks Reed design employs many high-tech infrastructure solutions to deliver efficient, cost-effective operation and maintenance, including programmable, energy-conserving environmental systems, high-value panel insulation, and LED (light-emitting diode) lighting. Considering McLain's science and technology focus, Sparks Reed placed all these systems in full view, along with the six giant trusses and other structural elements, so that students may learn first-hand how a building is put together and works.

"Hopefully this will inspire some of them to want to become architects and structural and mechanical engineers," said Reed.

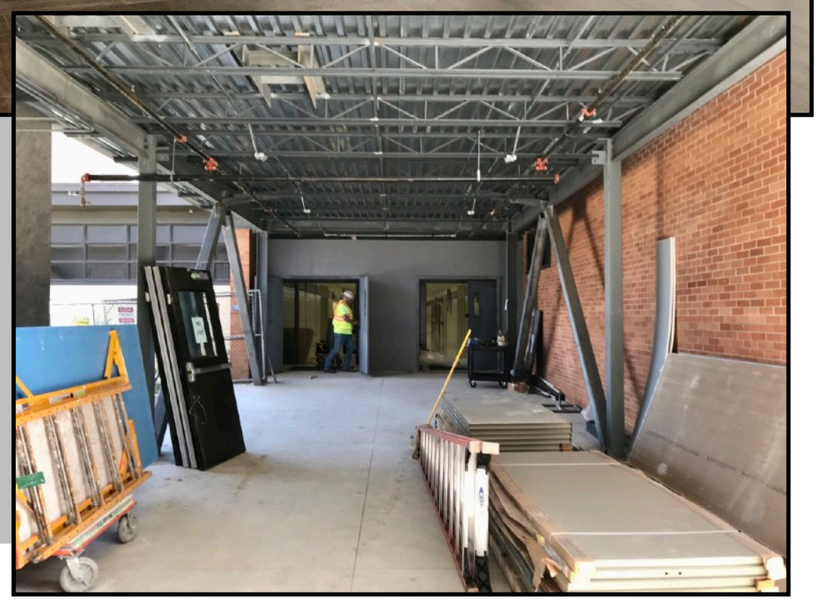
"We were able to do all of this without sacrificing the material nature of this building," he said. "All of this helps generate excitement and activity for the fan as well as the student-athlete, with a variety of other multipurpose spaces available for future needs and uses. What more could you ask for in an arena?"

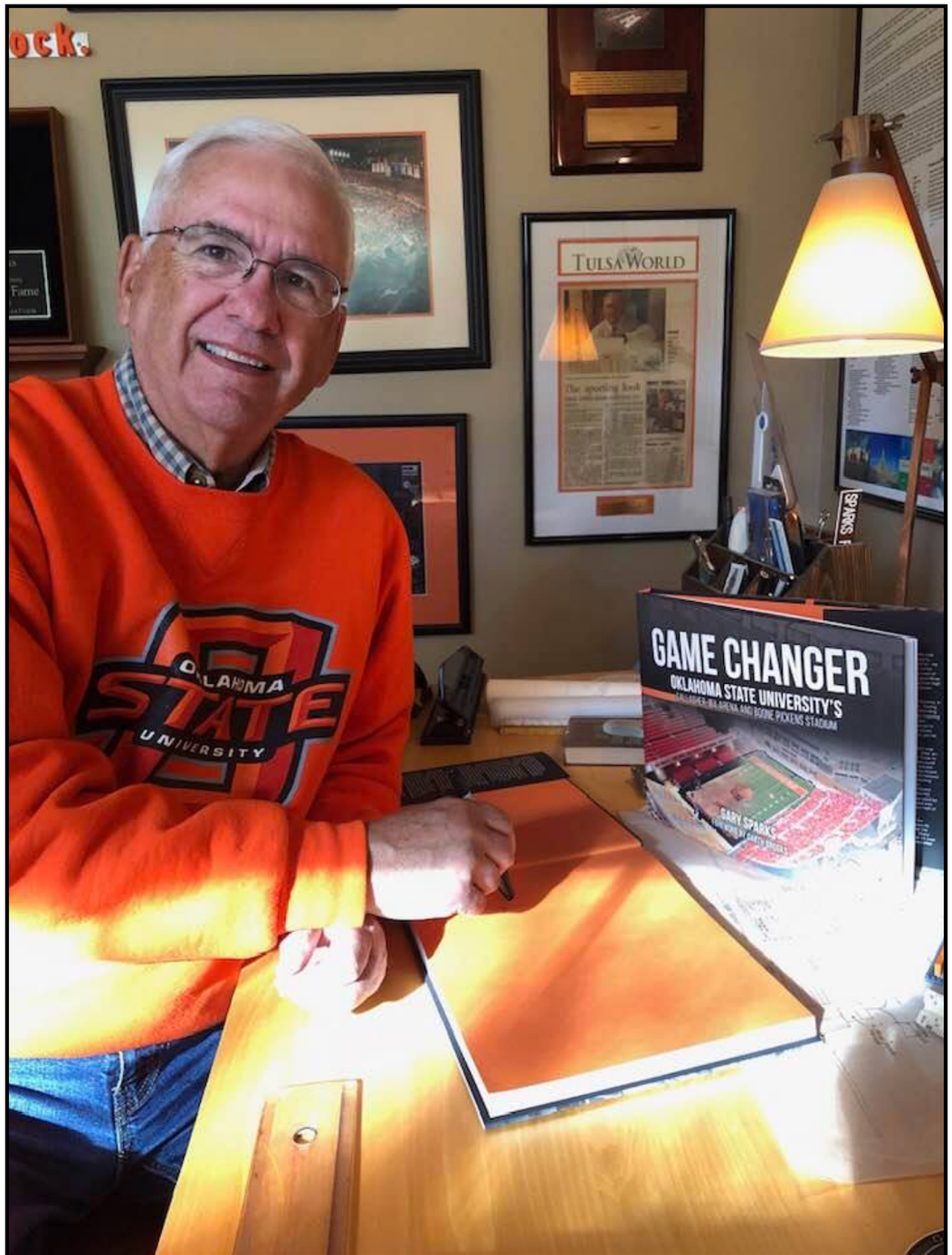


ABOVE: The hospitality suite demonstrates the arena's plentiful natural lighting.

RIGHT: Connecting the new arena to the existing high school campus.

LEFT: Building construction and infrastructure revealed in the practice gym.





Gary Sparks signs a copy of his new book

Game changer

New book reveals stories behind two OSU icons

A new book by Tulsa architect Gary Sparks tells the remarkable stories behind two of Oklahoma's most beloved athletic facilities.

On April 17, Oklahoma Hall of Fame Publishing released *Game Changer: Oklahoma State University's Gallagher-Iba Arena and Boone Pickens Stadium*, a beautiful coffee table hardcover with more than 150 photographs and illustrations decorating its 176 glossy pages. Country music legend (and OSU alumnus) Garth Brooks penned the forward.

Game Changer tells the behind-the-scenes stories of how Oklahoma State revitalized its two largest sporting venues. By the 1990s, these adjacent facilities had fallen on hard times, with aging infrastructure, backlogged maintenance needs, and substandard amenities. Realizing their poor quality limited the success of their teams and fans, OSU officials discussed different replacement options, starting with the arena.

This alarmed OSU supporter Sparks, a 1966 graduate who remembered when the 6,318-seat Gallagher-Iba Arena earned acclaim as "the rowdiest arena in the country" and "the Madison Square Garden of the Plains." So Sparks, who then operated a small Tulsa architectural firm, proposed the university raise a new shell around the arena, one that would increase its seating capacity to 13,611 and deliver all the state-of-the-art amenities desired, yet retain the historic "snake-pit" attributes fans cherished in the original landmark. To top it off, Sparks believed OSU could achieve this while keeping Gallagher-Iba in operation during construction.

"It was risky," Sparks admitted. "To my knowledge, nothing like this had been done before. But I believed we could do it."

Though some regional firms doubted the project's viability, OSU leaders gave Sparks the contract. General contractor Manhattan Construction Co. completed his vision in 2000, drawing widespread praise for the result. With the new Gallagher-Iba Arena earning the title "best college gymnasium" from CBS Sportsline, OSU soon turned to Sparks to reimagine the neighboring Lewis Field, a football stadium that never drew respect like Gallagher-Iba. Its three-phase renovation and expansion would result in the grand 56,790-seat Boone Pickens Stadium, opened in 2009 to national acclaim.

"These projects were very personal to me," said Sparks, now a partner emeritus in the Tulsa firm Sparks Reed Architecture and Interiors. "A chance to pay back a debt I owed OSU for taking a chance on me to pursue my dreams of becoming an architect. This was my chance to do something significant for the university I love."

Writing this book allowed Sparks to honor his university once again. To complete the book, Sparks drew not only from his firsthand experiences in every portion of these and related projects, but from his lifetime collection of books, articles, papers, photographs, and other OSU records. "It was a huge challenge," he said. "My editor Gini Moore Campbell did a huge job at guiding me through the process."

Readers may buy *Game Changer* at the Gaylord-Pickens Museum Store, Amazon.com, Hall of Fame Book Trader in Stillwater, and other retailers to come. Sparks also plans to headline several signing and sales events before upcoming OSU games.

"It's nice to have it completed and finished," Sparks said. "It's very rewarding. But what I appreciate more than anything is knowing that story is documented for ever and ever."

EMPLOYEE NEWS

Extending a unique internship

Intern Taylor Rider heads back to school Monday in an unusual position. This Oklahoma State University student remains employed at Tulsa's Sparks Reed Architecture and Interiors, with an Aug. 24 client presentation in Kerrville, Texas.

This reflects one of the surprising benefits Rider found in his Sparks Reed summer internship.

"When I came into this, I was expecting to have to do a lot of detail work, like detailing stairs —kind of the grunt work," said Rider, 22, who plans to graduate from OSU's School of Architecture in December. "That's what many of my friends faced in their internships. But at Sparks Reed, I actually got to work on my own project."

Kerrville's Trinity Baptist Church worships in three buildings raised at different elevations across its 69-year history. With three services plus small group meetings each Sunday morning, the growing membership often faces congestion and traffic problems.

"They have a lot of bottleneck issues, people finishing Sunday School and going to worship while others are getting out of worship," said Rider. "We've been trying to free up some room for them to get around better and to give them some additional room where they can meet."

Taylor Rider

Sparks Reed assigned Rider to work with Trinity, along with principal David Reed and project architect Bryan Broaddrick.

"I was able to interact with the client and control some big parts of the design," said Rider. "I thought that was pretty cool."

“Taylor has been a great addition to the team,” said Reed. “He has really jumped in on a complex project and has done a wonderful job.”

Sparks Reed's proposal would nearly double the church's brick and mortar while easing Trinity's accessibility and providing worshipers new gathering places.

"We're taking a trip on Aug. 24-25 to present this in front of the congregation," said Rider. "We have been meeting a lot with the board of the church and with the design/build team, Masters Plan, on helping them figure out all the loose ends."

He expects to take this up again when he finishes school.

"David has mentioned that when I get back, this will continue to be my project," Rider said with a smile

“We are very excited for Taylor to join our team fulltime after graduation in December,” said Reed.

Welcome
to our quarterly
newsletter!

Please let us know what
you think!

Have a
wonderful day!

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