

Inspector plays the heavy on light rail

RTD official catches riders who skip fares

By Zachery Kouwe
Denver Post Staff Writer

On a cold November day at 4 a.m., Bartholomew Brown is in the gym pumping up for another day of hopping on and off the city's light-rail trains.

About 45 minutes later he's standing on the platform, waiting for the train to roll in, when a bundled passenger spots the broad-shouldered Brown and quickly whips out his monthly rail pass.

"I'm not ready for you yet," Brown says.

The 46-year-old RTD fare inspector known as "B.B." likes to check passengers on his own time. Once he boards a train, Brown takes a seat and acts like a passenger. After the train fills with riders, he gets up, finds his balance and bellows out the familiar wake-up call his regulars are used to. "Good morning. Fares please."

The rough-and-tumble inspector stays in shape not only because it keeps him out of the doctor's office, but because it helps him maintain the pit-bull image he portrays while checking passengers for fares.

"I need to be ready for whoever comes my way," Brown says. "I at least want to be able to run away, if not body-slam them."

As he makes his way through straphangers like a linebacker charging in for a sack, Brown eventually runs into someone without a fare. Whether you forget to buy a ticket or are trying to ride for free, Brown treats you the same way.

"I don't care who you are, what you wear or where you come from. If you don't have a fare, I'll write you up," Brown says.

Brown boasts that he catches more people trying to beat the system than any other fare inspector. He says he once caught 60 people in an eight-hour shift.

"B.B. is one of the most energetic inspectors we have, and I think the paying customers appreciate that," said Bill Bell, Brown's boss and RTD's manager of transportation for the light-rail system.

Brown has to deal with all types, from first-time riders to pierced teenagers who give him fake names when they get caught. After eyeing an ID in one fare-evader's wallet, Brown wrote the man two tickets — one for his fake name and one for his real name.

"It's a game I'm never gonna lose because I make the rules," he said. "Eventually, I'll catch you."

Brown strives to catch riders who try to ride for free day after day because they think the inspectors won't show up.

Brown knows all about playing that game. As a kid in New York City, he used to jump over turnstiles and ride the Big Apple's subways for free.

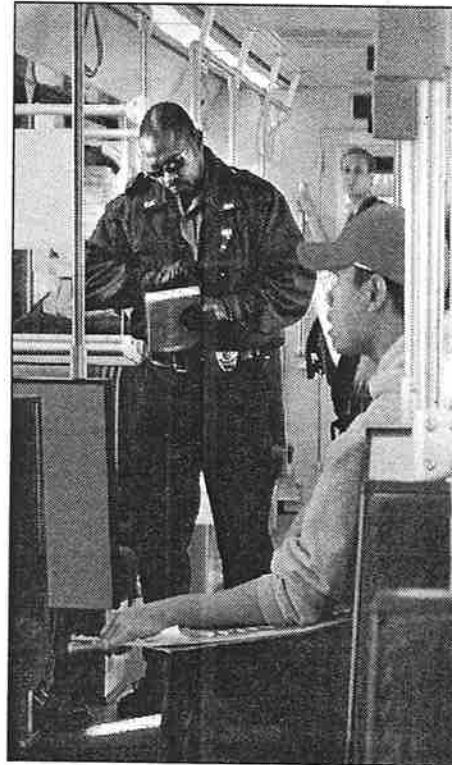
Some light-rail passengers think the current system of checking fares doesn't work.

"I don't believe our passengers think we enforce fares," said O'Neill Quinlan, who serves on RTD's board of directors.

But Brown doesn't think fare evasion is a huge problem. "Catching people is not like shooting ducks in a barrel," he says. "Ninety-nine percent of my people pay."

RTD officials say the fare evasion rate is 3 percent of the 35,000 daily riders, or 1,050 riders — about the same as other cities with light-rail systems.

Even if all the fare inspectors caught as many as Brown, they would only nab half the actual number of offenders.



The Denver Post / John Prieto

RTD light-rail fare inspector Bartholomew Brown prepares to write a ticket for someone found riding light rail without a fare earlier this month. Brown says he once caught 60 offenders in eight hours.

"It's like people who speed on the highway; there's only so much you can do about it, but eventually they will get caught," said RTD's spokesman Scott Reed.

Although he looks and talks like a hard-nosed guy from the streets of New York, Brown has a soft side when it comes to dealing with kids.

"It's hard when you have the kids whose parents don't have enough for a fare. I usually give them a few free tickets and a warning," he said.

Balancing that role as an enforcer and a benevolent peace officer is tough, he says.

"I look at myself as a deterrent instead of an enforcer," Brown said. "I like to help people as well as punish them."

Indeed, he has done both. He's the first to help disabled and elderly passengers board the train, and he once helped tackle a man high on PCP who was fighting with other riders.

He became a fare inspector in 1997 after injuring his back attempting to lift a woman in a wheelchair into the RTD bus that he drove for 16 years.

These days, Brown has to keep his eyes open for fake passes, which are being sold for as little as \$10 by skilled forgers on Denver's streets. Real passes go for as much as \$75.

Although RTD has recently taken steps to deal with the fakes, some inspectors fear the fare hike that takes effect in January could cause more people to risk a fine to ride for free.

The more passengers who get caught riding for free, the more the deterrent system seems to work, RTD officials say.

"I now tell everyone I see trying to beat the system about the fines," said Gail Bundy, who has been caught twice for fare evasion.

Whether the system works or not, Brown likes the job and sees each day as the start of another game of cat-and-mouse.

Misconduct, drugs ignored at halfway houses, suit says

By Zachery Kouwe

Denver Post Staff Writer

Four former halfway-house employees have accused their ex-employer of numerous counts of sexual misconduct and falsification of records and are suing the company and several state and local agencies.

The workers say those agencies, including the Colorado Department of Corrections, the Colorado Department of Public Safety and the Adams County Board of Commissioners, knew about the illegal activity but failed to act.

The four — Lori Gibson, Michael Crump, Mark Currier and Jennifer Duran — are former employees of three Adams County halfway houses owned by Oklahoma City-based Avalon Correctional Services Inc.

The lawsuit, filed Friday in U.S. District Court, makes several allegations, including that employees of Loft House in Denver and the Phoenix Center and Community Services Center in Northglenn had sex with the centers' clients and sexually harassed other employees.

The employees also contend that they were forced to resign because of the working conditions in the centers.

"We contract with the firm to provide community corrections ser-

vices, but we don't have any direct control over the operations of the center," said Adams County Commissioner Elaine Valente, who said she had not seen the lawsuit.

"Obviously we would be concerned if someone we contracted was not providing the appropriate services. Hopefully we'll be dismissed out of it (lawsuit)," she said.

Representatives of Avalon did not return calls for comment. Department of Corrections spokeswoman Alison Morgan declined to comment.

The suit charges that an executive at the Loft House had sex with an inmate and made inappropriate comments to Duran when she worked there as a client monitor.

The suit also accuses a female Avalon case manager of having sex with several male inmates and having a relationship with a corrections employee who was investigating the center.

The Department of Corrections investigated the Avalon centers after 9News reported some of the problems at the centers in a July newscast. The department issued an audit report on the centers, and some jobs were terminated, but no criminal action was brought against Avalon or its employees, according to Howard Bernstein, a Boulder lawyer who filed the suit.

Avalon still operates all of the centers under the auspices of the Department of Corrections, the Department of Public Safety and the Adams County Board of Commissioners.

"Everything we allege was known by the authorities," Bernstein said.

He added that his firm hired a private investigator to look into the matter and obtained documents relating to the correction investigation that show that both the government and Avalon management knew about the alleged misconduct at the centers.

"They did not act on what they found in their investigation," Bernstein said, referring to the corrections audit.

The suit goes on to allege that some employees of the Avalon centers sold drugs to inmates and assisted inmates in passing drug tests.

It also accuses some Avalon employees of forging documents that billed one client up to \$10,000 for services he did not receive.

"We're disturbed that our clients came forward and revealed to Avalon management what was going on and instead of Avalon management acting responsibly, they retaliated against our clients," Bernstein said.



Associated Press pool / Richard M. Hackett

Audra Dowler, left, watches as defense attorney Megan Ring unfolds a sleeper that was worn by Tanner Dowler. Audra Dowler was testifying at the trial for her husband, Joseph, at the Boulder County Justice Center on Monday. Joseph Dowler is accused of first-degree murder in the death of Tanner, the couple's 9-week-old son. Audra Dowler pleaded guilty to negligence in June.

Mom: Fear delayed care for hurt baby

By Zachery Kouwe
Special to The Denver Post

BOULDER — Audra Dowler testified that her husband, Joseph Dowler, admitted he might have injured their infant son, but he was afraid of child-abuse charges and did not seek immediate medical attention for the baby.

Joseph Dowler is facing first-degree murder charges in the death of their newborn, Tanner. Audra Dowler pleaded guilty in June to two counts of negligence for failing to seek medical care for Tanner; she was sentenced to 10 years in jail.

In her testimony, Audra Dowler said Joseph Dowler woke her up crying in the middle of the night and told her, "I think I broke our son," but wouldn't tell her how it happened and refused to call a doctor because he was afraid of being charged with child abuse.

She said Joseph cried himself to

sleep, and the next morning, Oct. 3, 2002, the couple decided to take the child to Community Medical Center in Lafayette.

In addition to Audra Dowler, prosecutors questioned several medical professionals, who testified that 7-week-old Tanner was properly treated at the medical center.

Central to the defense's case is the charge that physicians at the medical center improperly inserted a breathing tube into Tanner that caused further brain damage and contributed to his death.

But doctors and nurses who treated Tanner at the medical center said that although they failed several times to insert the tube, the procedure was eventually deemed successful.

Nurses who transported Tanner to Denver Health Medical Center have said they decided to reinsert the tube before flying Tanner to the hospital.

The medical team at the center said they disagreed with the two nurses but had no control over the situation.

"I pointedly asked them to stop what they were doing and talk to me about the procedure, but they didn't show a willingness to talk about it. At that point the child was legally in their hands and I couldn't force them to stop," said Dr. Michael Van Gortner.

Van Gortner said Tanner's medical treatment did not contribute to further brain damage. "Ninety-nine percent of the brain damage had occurred before" the infant arrived at the facility, he said.

Medical staff described Tanner as a pale, underweight infant who was crying in a "high-pitch shrill," indicative of massive head injuries, when he arrived at the hospital.

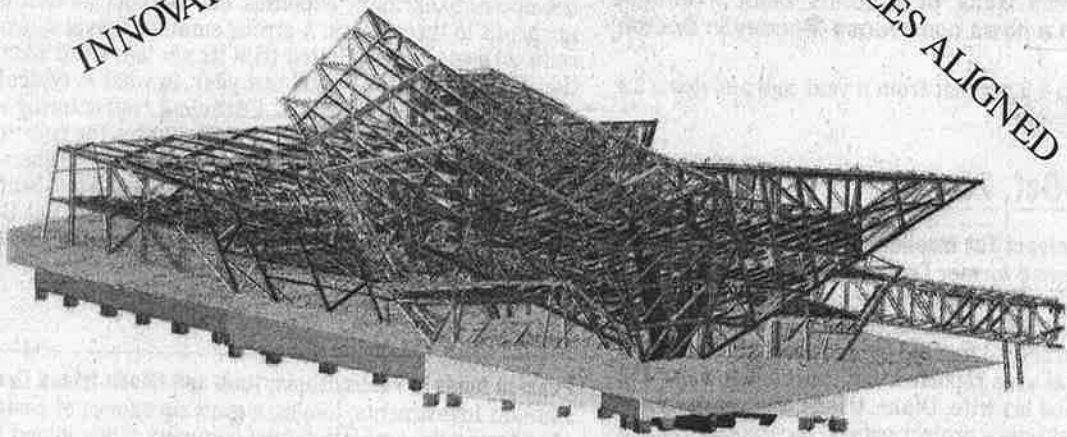
Tanner died nine days later, when he was taken off life support.

Several doctors and nurses who treated the infant testified that Joseph Dowler told them Tanner had hit his head on the back of a bathtub and the father was worried about shaking the infant the previous night.

The medical officials at the center also said Tanner's feet were tightly wrapped with pieces of diapers and masking tape that, when removed, revealed severe burns. The explanation given by Joseph Dowler — that Tanner had burned his feet on a floor heater — was called a "stretch of the imagination" by Van Gortner.

On cross examination, defense attorney Megan Ring tried to discredit Audra Dowler, saying she made a plea deal with the Boulder County district attorney and wrote a letter to prosecutors stating that she would help them with their case in exchange for easing her sentence.

HIGHTECH TOOLS
HELP THE DENVER ART MUSEUM'S
INNOVATIVE EXPANSION KEEP ITS ECCENTRIC ANGLES ALIGNED



Imagination takes shape

BY ZACHARY KOUWE ♦ THE DENVER POST

The radical Daniel Libeskind design for the Denver Art Museum expansion is meant to put the city on the architectural map.

But by the time the \$90.5 million project is complete in 2006, every inch of the visually jarring, titanium-clad building will already have been mapped many times over, using laser surveying and modeling technology that was developed for building nuclear power plants.

"If we didn't have this technology, we wouldn't be doing this project," site supervisor Jopy Willis said.

The most complicated part of building the structure is transforming 2,700 tons of steel into a complicated skeleton that will support and create the oblique angles that define the 146,000-square-foot Frederic C. Hamilton building.

Willis and his colleagues at M.A. Mortenson Co. will begin the process on Nov. 10, using

steel beams being manufactured by Denver-based Zimmerman Metals Inc.

Building the steel frame will take about 13 months — almost a year longer than it might take to erect steel in a traditional, right-angled building of the same size.

This project will take longer, in part because of the amount of steel and the fact that each beam is a different size — only a quarter of the beams are alike — and because each beam must be placed at a different angle.

"It's a very difficult job,"

said Mark Zimmerman, president of Zimmerman Metals, which also manufactured the steel supports for the tentlike

roof of Denver International Airport.

Another issue is that each beam plays a role in holding up the rest of the building.

If one beam moves or unexpectedly bends

SEE MUSEUM ON 10K

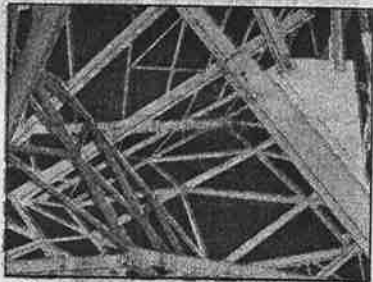
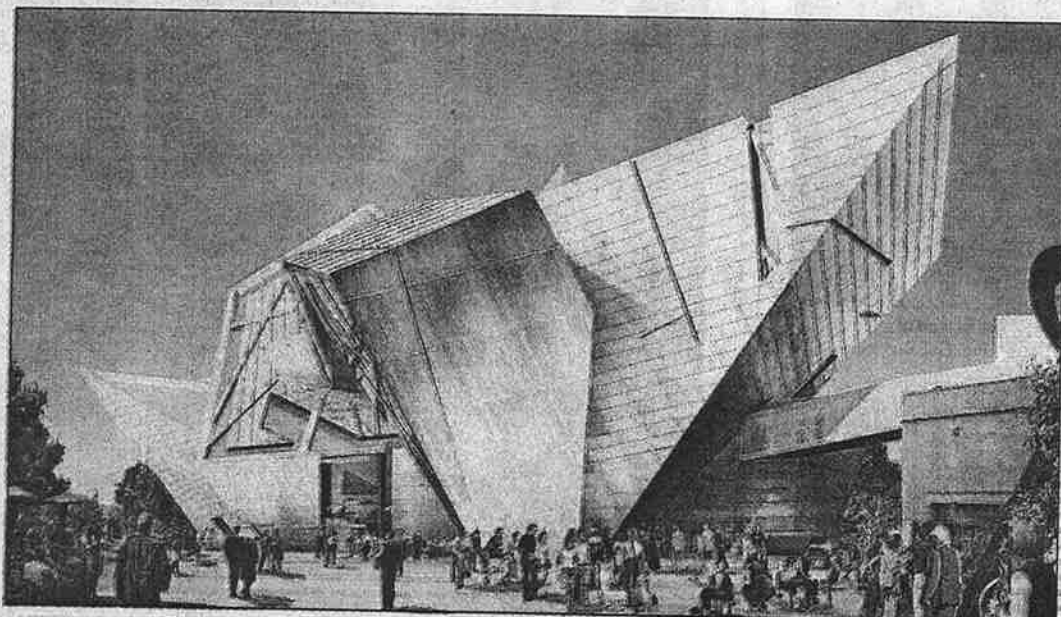


Photo courtesy of M.A. Mortenson Co.

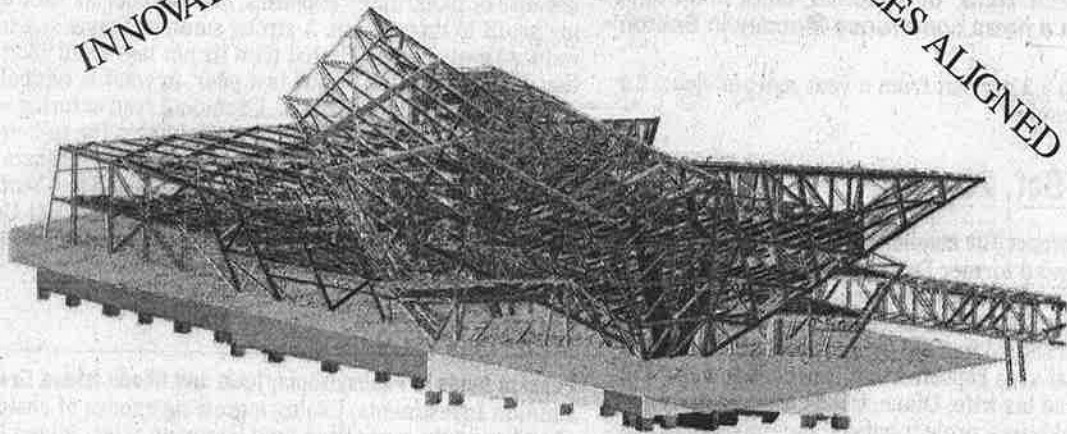
A web of steel, as depicted in this computer model, is carefully fitted together to create ...



Rendering courtesy of Denver Art Museum / Miller Hare

... the 146,000-square-foot Frederic C. Hamilton building, shown in this artist's rendering. The Denver Art Museum's expansion is scheduled to open in 2006.

HIGHTECH TOOLS
 HELP THE DENVER ART MUSEUM'S
 INNOVATIVE EXPANSION KEEP ITS ECCENTRIC ANGLES ALIGNED



Imagination takes shape

BY ZACHARY KOUWE • THE DENVER POST

The radical Daniel Libeskind design for the Denver Art Museum expansion is meant to put the city on the architectural map.

But by the time the \$90.5 million project is complete in 2006, every inch of the visually jarring, titanium-clad building will already have been mapped many times over, using laser surveying and modeling technology that was developed for building nuclear power plants.

"If we didn't have this technology, we wouldn't be doing this project," site supervisor Jopy Willis said.

The most complicated part of building the structure is transforming 2,700 tons of steel into a complicated skeleton that will support and create the oblique angles that define the 146,000-square-foot Frederic C. Hamilton building.

Willis and his colleagues at M.A. Mortenson Co. will begin the process on Nov. 10, using

steel beams being manufactured by Denver-based Zimmerman Metals Inc.

Building the steel frame will take about 13 months — almost a year longer than it might take to erect steel in a traditional, right-angled building of the same size.

This project will take longer, in part because of the amount of steel and the fact that each beam is a different size — only a quarter of the beams are alike — and because each beam must be placed at a different angle.

"It's a very difficult job,"

said Mark Zimmerman, president of Zimmerman Metals, which also manufactured the steel supports for the tentlike

roof of Denver International Airport.

Another issue is that each beam plays a role in holding up the rest of the building.

If one beam moves or unexpectedly bends

SEE MUSEUM ON 10K

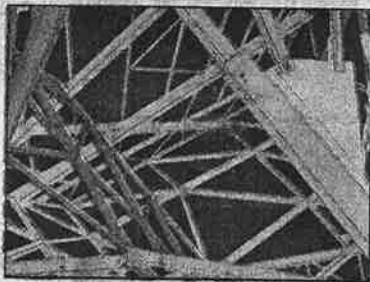
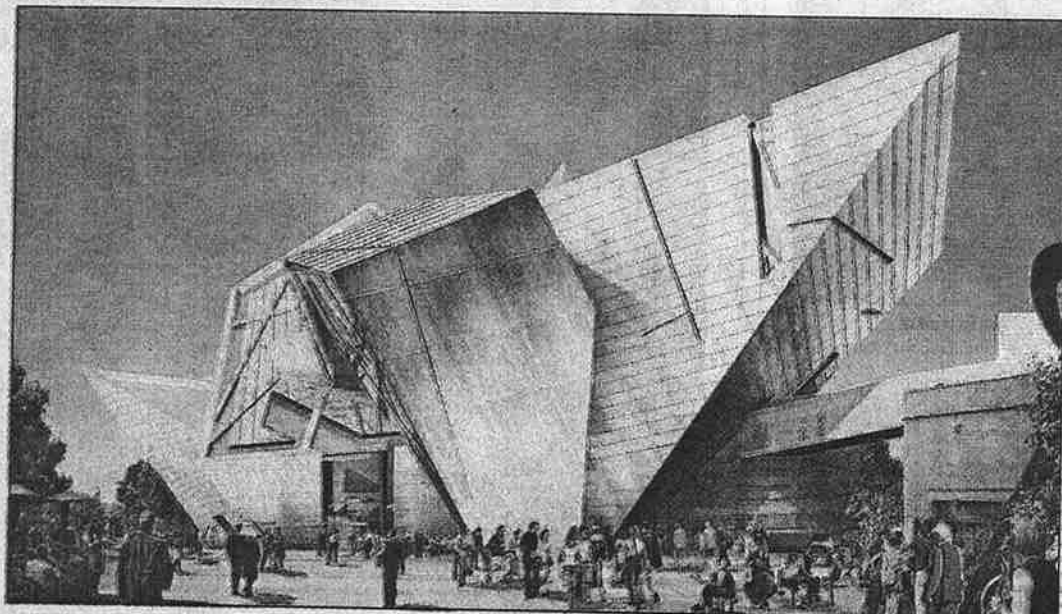


Photo courtesy of M.A. Mortenson Co.

A web of steel, as depicted in this computer model, is carefully fitted together to create ...



Rendering courtesy of Denver Art Museum / Miller Hare

... the 146,000-square-foot Frederic C. Hamilton building, shown in this artist's rendering. The Denver Art Museum's expansion is scheduled to open in 2006.

Lasers help keep art museum project in line

MUSEUM FROM PAGE 1K

the wrong way, it creates problems throughout the structure. If not fixed in time, the whole thing could come crashing down.

"It needs to be fully up before it can stand on its own," said Dave Sandlin, Mortenson's senior project manager.

In addition to bracing the structure with more steel, Mortenson workers continuously watch the beams to make sure they don't shift or bend. "We stay in total control of the building at all times," Willis said.

Willis and his colleagues aren't just keeping an eye on the building, though — they are using technology to pinpoint the exact location of each beam.

There are four people at Mortenson charged solely with watching the building to make sure it doesn't unexpectedly move. They walk around the structure all day shooting survey guns, which use laser technology to pinpoint the exact location of the beams.

If the coordinates of the beam are different than the last time they shot the laser gun, the beam has moved or changed shape and needs fixing.

But stopping to fix things can be costly, especially if you have more than 30 subcontractors and hundreds of construction workers on the site, not to mention daily deliveries of building materials.

"If someone is out of the loop, it creates huge problems," Willis said.

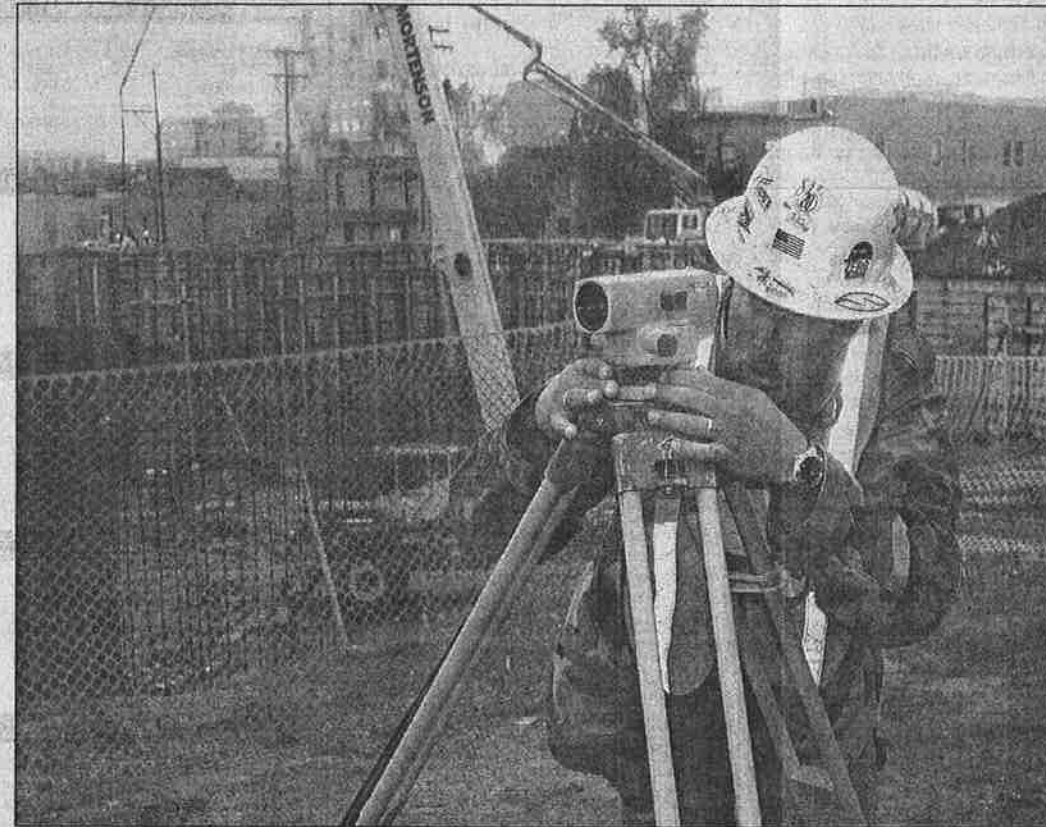
Keeping the whole thing together is an \$18,000 computer program designed by Marietta, Ga.-based Construction System Associates Inc.

The program takes a 3-D computer model of the building, which details everything down to the size of each of the thousands of bolts used to secure each beam, and introduces a fourth dimension: time.

The program takes the whole four-year building schedule — drawn up beforehand — and integrates it into the model to create a movie that shows every step of construction.

The movie enables everyone working on the project to visualize the work before they do it and know where everyone and everything — including the cranes and equipment — is at the site.

"They need to be able to reorganize the project continuously so they can evaluate how the work is being done," said Construction System president Amadeus Burger. The company is also working with Intel Corp., which began building a



The Denver Post / Glen Martin

Surveyor Chris Zimmerman of the M.A. Mortenson construction company takes a reading Thursday as work continues on the Denver Art Museum expansion.

\$2.6 billion manufacturing facility in Oregon a few months ago.

If something doesn't go exactly according to schedule — which often happens on complex projects — the movie and the model can be quickly revised to bring everyone on the site up to speed.

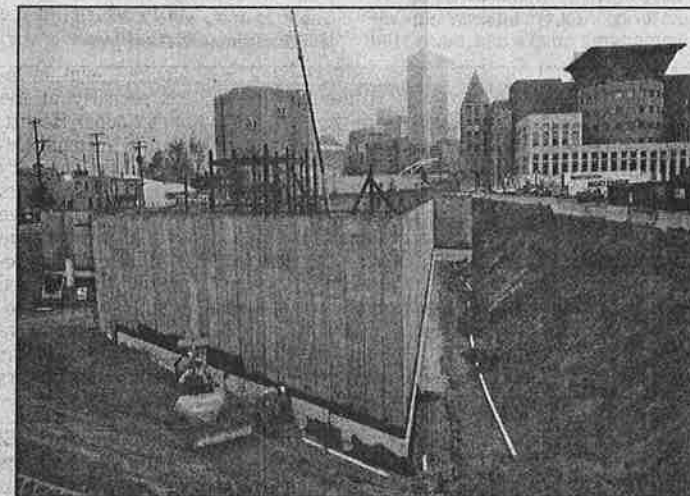
Willis likens the model to a road map that you can change while you're on the road.

"There are things like traffic jams that you could never predict. The model allows you to change the route and communicate the change to everyone on the project, and you can understand where the building is at all times," Willis said.

Working with traditional two-dimensional blueprints could add years and millions of dollars to the project.

"The model is invaluable," Sandlin said. "It pays for itself a thousand times over."

And Mortenson should know. The company has worked on several complex buildings over the years, including the \$274 million Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles. It took four years to complete the 293,000-square-foot struc-



The Denver Post / Glen Martin

When completed in 2006, the new section of the Denver Art Museum will be a landmark building, says site supervisor Jopy Willis.

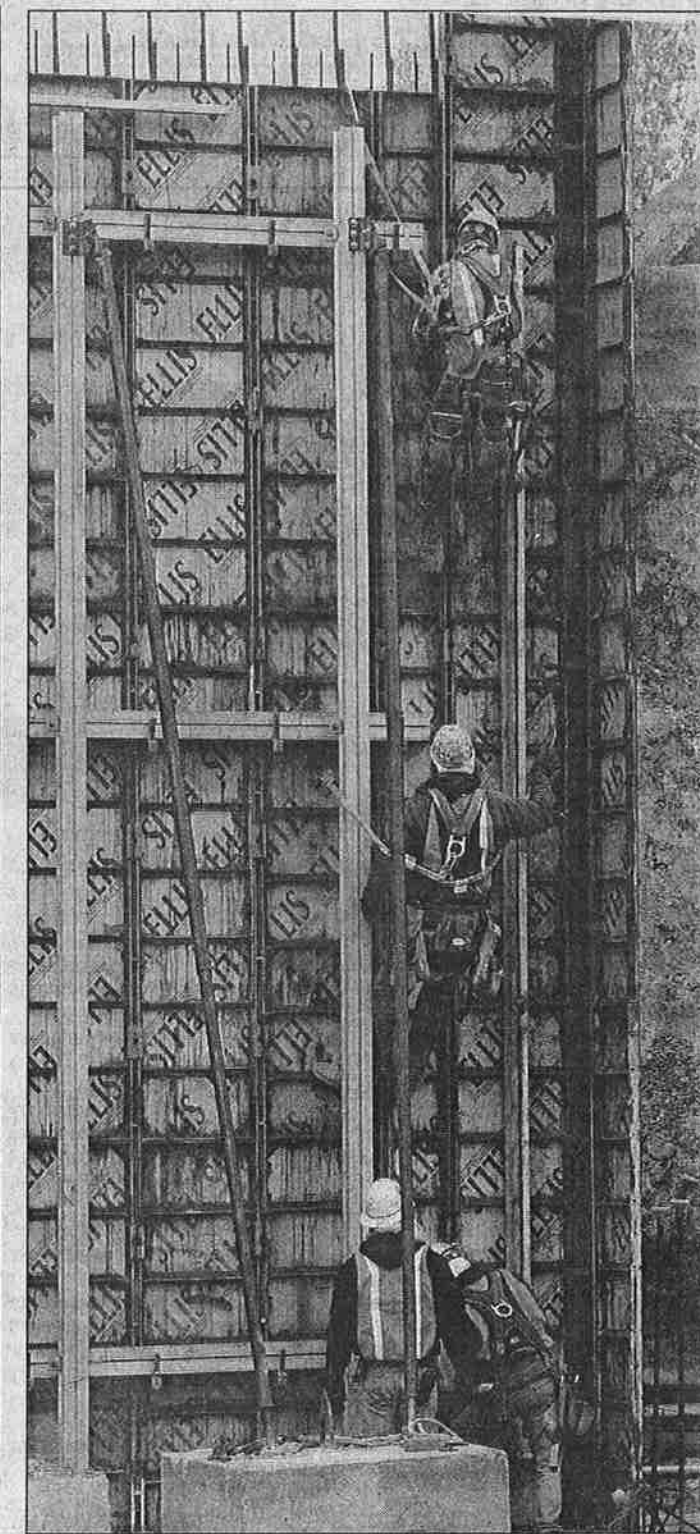
ture designed by legendary architect Frank Gehry.

The museum's board chose Mortenson partly because of its experience with complicated buildings, museum spokeswoman Andrea Kalivas said.

Willis recently came to Denver

from Los Angeles, where he and the other construction workers were treated to a special "hard hat" concert in the new concert hall.

"The acoustics are amazing," Willis said. "You can hear everything from the biggest and loudest instru-



The Denver Post / Glen Mar

Some workers prepare walls to be filled with concrete. Others use lasers to make sure each beam stays in place as work proceeds.

ment to the smallest."

For his part, Willis expects the Denver museum expansion to have a similar impact.

"It will be a landmark building," Willis said. "Like the (Sydney) Opera House in Australia, it will be on postcards, and people around the world will notice it."