

steam locomotives of the time, in particular towns such as East and West Husted and Edgerton. Photos showed Edgerton had a hotel and later a gas station. The only remaining “Husted” structure is the Reynolds Ranch House, which is under restoration on the grounds of the Western Museum of Mining & Industry. Two other structures that are now homes in Monument and Palmer Lake also survive. Generously illustrated with slides, Jack spoke about the archaeological work required to document what remains of pioneer homesteads on the Air Force Academy. Jack called on members of the audience to briefly tell the story of their family’s experience in the mid-1850s.

In the third part of the presentation, also generously illustrated with slides, the audience learned how early area pioneers “signed” their names on Cathedral Rock. Surprisingly, the formation has layers of soft volcanic clay between the harder layers of sandstone, allowing area families to easily inscribe their names on these softer layers for all who followed to see.

In the final part of the program, Jack reviewed the history of the Palmer Lake Star, noting that it is the other Palmer Lake property on the State Historical Register, which is quite an accomplishment for a small community. A few interesting facts about the Star: It was erected during the Great Depression to lift the community’s spirit, a dog named Dizzy helped with its construction, and it is the largest structure of its kind in the world.

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Mark your calendars for Thursday, Nov. 21, when the Palmer Lake Historical Society Monthly History Series presents well-known author and railroad historian Mel McFarland as he takes us on a ride on the Colorado Midland Railway’s Wildflower Excursion. Did you know the train’s purpose was not originally to see wildflowers? Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Doors open at 6:30; the program begins at 7 p.m. Palmer Lake Historical Society events and programs are free and open to all.

Mike and Sigi Walker may be reached at [mikensigi@comcast.net](mailto:mikensigi@comcast.net).



**Above:** Historical Society Vice President Jack Anthony presented information about pioneer families, inscriptions on Cathedral Rock, and the Palmer Lake Star. Due to Anthony’s work and the efforts of his wife Margo and other PLHS members, the Palmer Lake Town Hall now joins the Palmer Lake Star on the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties. From left are Su Ketchmark, Anthony, Vaile Museum director Roger Davis, and Darren Schubarth. *Photo by Mike Walker.*

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

## Outsmarting weather and deer

By Janet Sellers

We had a hard time in the Monument Community Garden this year. We started early—February seedlings—to get going and have strong plants by springtime. What we didn’t expect were some of Mother Nature’s weather and critters that affected our harvest for the first time in six years.

Every year, I surround the deer-fenced garden with giant sunflowers. Their huge leaves protect plants from roadside and neighboring toxic blow-over, hail, and even deer. The local deer can’t see what’s in the garden and walk on by. This year, with our cold rainy spring and early summer, our plants just stayed small, needed more sun and warmth, and then got going. We were happy the sunflowers protected the underneath plants from hail, although the sunflower leaves were battered. What we did not expect were the deer attacks. In one small, 3-foot area at the fence, we had planted short flowers, but the rest of the garden was camouflaged thickly with sunflowers.

Those pesky deer, for the first time ever, jumped the 5-foot deer and rabbit fence in that one spot and ate their way through the garden. They ate the kale and lettuce after it had peeked over the top of the raised bed. The next week they devoured the sunflower leaves, but only up to where they could reach, so the 12-foot flower stalks were safe above 6 feet. Then, with the rest of the garden on view like a peep show, the deer returned, ate zucchini leaves then the actual squash, and the following week they came back and took out the pumpkins!

Now I know how other gardeners feel with deer attacks. Many heartbroken Pikes Peak region gardeners completely lost their first and second chance garden efforts to the onslaught of multiple hailstorms that decimated flower, food, and perennial gardens this past summer, and the deer were the last straw for me. Next year, triple rows of gorgeous giant sunflowers will be on guard. Their sturdy stalks should do the trick against would-be jumpers.

I did find a happy first-time gardener with safe, successful harvesting at the end of summer. Tara Lloyd, who recently moved to Black Forest from Florida, shared her first summer gardening experiences with me. She had been leery of what would actually grow in the middle of mountain forests but was happy with her results and looks to increase her summer garden plantings and size of the garden for next year.

Year-round, Lloyd also grows “micro greens” which are the sprouts of seeds used as food. These can be grown



**Above:** Black Forest avid gardener Tara Lloyd used some found (restaurant castoffs) Styrofoam containers to start her plants, and these were good for protecting the plants from weather, too. Her harvest in the garden was remarkable, especially given the cold, rainy summer start and hot, dry finish. *Photos courtesy of Tara Lloyd.*

in any room, using special hydroponic system devices or just a set of grow lights and simple flat containers deep enough to hold the seeds as they grow.

Lloyd grows certain veggies all year round, especially in the winter months, with an Aerogarden, a hydroponic indoor growing system. I had seen these devices in various gardening and big box department stores, so I asked her some questions about hers to learn more.

**Pros:** Grow indoors year-round. Takes up little space.

Comes with light and container so it’s already put together for you to start growing right away. Also comes with seeds and pods to pop right into the holes and you are good to grow. It also has a display screen that tells you exactly when to water and feed the plants. It has a timer to allow you to program the amount of light your plants receive as well.

**Cons:** Can only grow a small amount of food—mainly only greens, herbs and small plants like dwarf or micro dwarf cherry tomatoes.

**Be lazy and save the world at the same time**

This time of year, let’s also remember our tiny garden critters that live in our pine straw and fallen leaves. We can optimally wait until spring to clear out these things, as they are home to our biodiversity from micro to macro creatures. With these areas intact and protected, our next year’s gardens and landscapes can thrive. Even mulching the leaves will shred the tiny helpers we need so much for healthy environs, and our birds and animals rely on the seeds, plants, and micro animals that live in our landscapes.

Janet Sellers is an avid ethno ecologist posing as a lazy gardener. Send your organic forest lands and garden tips to: [janetsellers@ocn.me](mailto:janetsellers@ocn.me).

Bee positive, low water, cushy green lawns



**Above:** Mario and Sue Carrillo “just tossed the white clover seed out all over” in late spring at their Northgate home, and in a couple of months had a thick carpet of clover as lawn. With the good summer rains this year, they didn’t water and only mowed twice all summer. Clover supports pollinators, with a soft, welcoming habitat that kids and pets love to play on. Before the widespread use of herbicides, most lawns contained white clover. As it grows, clover ensures healthy turf by adding nitrogen to the soil and choking out weeds. Dutch white clover is well suited to lawns because it is low-growing and has good drought resistance. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

Art Matters

## Awesome: algebra, imagination, and art



By Janet Sellers

“F. Scott Fitzgerald famously said that the test of a first-rate intelligence is ‘the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind and still retain the ability to function.’”—

Graeme Sullivan

The word algebra comes from the Arabic al-jabr, “the reunion of broken parts.” Our imagination takes pieces and parts of experiences and ideas, fits them together, and voila—we adapt an idea and make it into something. In art, we sometimes keep what we make as two-dimensional ideas, as in a drawing or painting, and sometimes we put the idea into more dimensions, such as a sculpture or video. We adapt our ideas to the medium and the technology of the medium.

From bacteria to plants to animals to people to small or large businesses, adaptability is the single most

important quality needed to thrive. Where do adaptability and imagination come from? Likely from the algebraic thinking of outer and inner experiences that we hold somewhere in between those experiences via our mind. The arts and humanities give us the intelligent ability to hold more than two ideas in the mind and make a variety of choices for optimal outcomes on a problem or project.

We rely on our mind’s imaging using our vision for basic survival, for navigation on a daily basis walking, driving, or riding a bike. Our visual memory is basic to our life, and we rely on it for survival and for entertainment. We play with what we see via imagination—that’s how we experience our lives and our memory. Yet we discount this vitality repeatedly—are we blind to it?

We hear every day about the cultural calamities of crime, disaster, and loss. I have to wonder if our stress-

filled lives are the way they are because we don’t avail our days by refreshing ourselves with imagination via the arts, especially visual art. This time of year, when we are stuck indoors more (and Coloradans are among our nation’s top outdoorsy people) we need the full support of art as cultural imagination to thrive. But how will we grasp our intuition, our imagination, and actually use it to our benefit unless we have it practiced and at the ready?

Our education curriculums focus is on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math), but STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) creates the life and culture within which to make our lives, and it is the most cohesive. Art making activates the basic abilities of observation (science) technology (understanding the of materials) engineering (putting ideas and mate-