

brary District Book Trike.

Children's programs

Regularly occurring children's programs include *Book Break* on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:30 to 11, *Story Time* on Tuesday from 10:30 to 11:15 (please note there will only be one session of story time each week going forward), and *Toddler Time* on Thursdays at 9:30 and 10:30. *Paws to Read* will be on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4 to 5.

Family programs

Join us on Friday, Aug. 9 from 4 to 5:30 for *Coloring for Everyone*. We will color themed coloring sheets at a variety of skill levels. Colored pencils, markers, and gel pens are provided.

Lego Build will be held on Saturday, Aug. 17 from 10 to 11:30. All ages are welcome to build to their heart's content.

Teen programs

See above for descriptions of *Coloring for Everyone* and *Lego Build*.

All Ages Knitting meets in the study room from 3 to 5 each Wednesday. This intergenerational group supplies practice materials and basic instruction, but attendees are encouraged to bring their own projects.

The *Teen Creative Writing Group*

will meet in the study room from 6 to 7:30 on Tuesday, Aug. 6. Join us to meet fellow writers, share ideas, do writing exercises, and enjoy snacks. This group is for ages 12 to 18.

Wednesday, Aug. 28 from 4 to 5:30 there will be a program to celebrate *Spoil Your Dog Day* (Aug. 10) and National Cat Day (Oct. 29). We will make dog and cat treats for your favorite friends. Ages 12 to 18 only. Registration is required.

The *Monument Library Anime Club* will meet from 5 to 6:30 on Thursday, Aug. 29 to enjoy videos (nothing rated above TV-14) and tasty snacks. Help shape the anime club for the future. This group is for those 13-14 and older.

The *Teen Advisory Board* meets in the study room from 2 to 3 on the first Saturday of each month to talk about ways to improve the Teen Zone, share ideas for displays or events at the library, and earn volunteer hours.

Adult programs

See above for descriptions of *Coloring for Everyone* and *All Ages Knitting*. Other regularly occurring adult programs include *Senior Chats* on Wednesdays from 10 to noon, *yoga* on Mondays from noon to 1, and two book groups

described below.

The *Life Circles Writing Group* will meet from 9:30 to 11:30 on Mondays Aug. 5 and 19. This group involves writing memories of life experiences, offering discipline, inspiration, and structure. No registration is required.

The *Second Thursday Craft* on Thursday, Aug. 8 from 2 to 4 is Burlap Wreaths. Join us to create a rustic wreath, perfect for getting a head start on fall decorating. Adults only, and registration is required.

Join author Rand Samuelson on Sunday, Aug. 11 from 1 to 2 to take a look at the boisterous early days of Colorado from 1859 to 1930. The *Rowdy Colorado* will cover the shortage of women, gambling, bad whiskey recipes, licit and illicit drugs, prostitution, and cattle rustling. No registration required.

The *Monument Bookworms* will meet from 7 to 8:30 on Tuesday, Aug. 13 to discuss *Last Bus to Wisdom* by Ivan Doig. All are welcome and no registration is required.

The *Monumental Readers* will meet from 10 to noon on Friday, Aug. 16 to discuss *The Friday Night Knitting Club* by Kate Jacobs. All are welcome and no registration is required.

The *Monument Spinning Group* will meet from 1:30 to 3:45 on Thursday, Aug. 22.

On Monday, Aug. 26 from 2 to 4 use a wooden board, small nails, and thread to create a work of art representing our state flag. Registration is required.

The *History Buffs* will meet from 1:30 to 3:30 on Wednesday, Aug. 28. This year's discussion topic is the *Age of Exploration*. No registration is required.

Palmer Lake Library Events

The *Palmer Lake Book Group* meets at 9 a.m. on the first Friday of each month. Please call 481-2587 for the latest selection.

Family Story Time in Palmer Lake is on Wednesdays at 10:30.

Toddler Time is on Fridays at 10:30.

We hope to see you at the Ice Cream Social on Saturday, Aug. 3 from 1 to 2:30.

Please note that all Pikes Peak Library District facilities will be closed on Monday, Sept. 2 in observance of Labor Day.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

Palmer Lake Historical Society, July 18

Now-endangered oxen pulled wagons westward



Above: Three Eagles Ranch American Milking Devon Oxen, Davey and Dandy. Photo by Mike Walker.

By Sigi Walker

Palmer Lake Historical Society monthly history program attendees gathered July 18 at the Town Hall to caravan to the Three Eagles Ranch in southeast Larkspur. Our hosts, Rollie and Paula Johnson, provided a unique and thoroughly enjoyable experience for the large number of attendees.

Referring to a prior program on Ute culturally modified trees presented by John Anderson, Rollie called our attention to a huge, unusually shaped ponderosa pine just outside the ranch's event hall. "It is 450 years old," he said, "and it is a spirit tree. From its top, Tava (Pikes Peak) is clearly visible."

Next, the attendees were intro-

duced to the Three Eagles' "yoked" oxen pulling what is known as a "prairie schooner" or "western wagon." It was pointed out these wagons were smaller and more maneuverable than Conestoga wagons, which were large freight wagons used mainly in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, and Virginia. And, for the emigrants, oxen were the draft animals of choice: less costly, calm, friendly, intelligent, strong, and could eat while walking. In most cases, the settlers walked alongside the fully loaded wagons.

Rollie explained that a steer is classified as an ox when it reaches 4 years of age and has been trained as a draft animal, often weighing over 2,000 pounds. A team is usually paired from birth, and the two spend their lives together. The animals are controlled through voice commands and hand signals. Today, American Milking Devon Oxen are extinct in England and critically endangered in the United States.

The attendees then moved inside the event hall for an informative presentation covering some history on

westward expansion and maps showing the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails. It was pointed out that most deaths on the trail were due to illness, weather, and accidents, not because of attacks by Native Americans. Wagon trains were popular until the Transcontinental Railroad connected the East to the West in 1869.

Mark your calendars for the next upcoming PLHS event. On Saturday, Aug. 3, the Historical Society will host "Chautauqua celebrates Railroad Days in Palmer Lake." Commemorate the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad and enjoy model railroads, railroad history presentations, exhibits, and tours. The event runs from 10 to 3 in the Palmer Lake Town Hall and Village Green, 28 Valley Crescent, with the Library Ice Cream Social from 1 to 2:30 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.

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Indigenous science: our backyard Russian sage

By Janet Sellers

A favorite easy-care perennial is Russian sage, *perovskia atriplicifolia*, a gorgeous, waterwise plant thriving locally. It's actually a Tibetan medicinal plant and not the distantly related desert-grown purple sage *salvia* known as "Ute tobacco sage." Both have ancient medicinal uses. We easily grow the gorgeous, pest-free Russian sage here in Colorado.

I bought many Russian sage plants for a pretty penny years ago, and now have plenty of this hummingbird, butterfly, and bee favorite. We can bundle and dry the twigs and flowers for a fragrant, colorful dried bouquet. Historically a great antimicrobial house air freshener, it makes a lovely friendship gift, too.

Arizona State University reports its importance in academic studies rang-

ing from cultural and intellectual history, to biology, to agriculture and landscaping. "... In central and southwest Asia, Russian sage is a shrub of many medicinal uses. Flowers are eaten fresh, while the foliage is smoked like tobacco because of its slight euphoriant properties. Academic papers there include information on identified medicinal oils and secondary compounds in Russian sage, "Russian sage has also been found to possess inhibitory activity and might have potential therapeutic effects on inflammatory diseases."

In the U.S. National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health academic paper "Medical smoke reduces airborne bacteria," we learn that "aerial bacterial population caused over 94% reduction of bacterial counts by 60 [minutes] and the ability of the smoke to purify or disinfect the air

and to make the environment cleaner was maintained up to 24 hours in the closed room ... absence of pathogenic bacteria in the open room even after 30 days ... demonstrated that [by] using medicinal smoke it is possible to completely eliminate diverse plant and human pathogenic bacteria of the air within confined space..."

The purpose of the study was to

Right: Russian sage grows well locally and supports pollinators. The age-old indigenous use of smudging (burning dried flower and stick bundles for medicinal smoke) has found favor in modern science. Ancients used it to soothe the stomach (tea), treat fevers (tea compress), help relieve cold or flu symptoms (steam pot) and to purify the air in a closed space or sick room (smudging). Photo by Janet Sellers.

