

**The Whole30: The 30-Day Guide to Total Health and Food Freedom**

By Melissa Hartwig Urban and Dallas Hartwig (Mariner Books) \$30

Since 2009, Melissa Hartwig Urban's critically acclaimed Whole30 program has quietly led hundreds of thousands of people to effortless weight loss and better health, along with improvements in sleep quality, energy levels, mood, and self-esteem. Now *The Whole30* offers a stand-alone, step-by-step plan to break unhealthy habits, reduce cravings, improve digestion, and strengthen your immune system. It teaches the meal preparation and cooking skills needed to succeed. It also contains detailed elimination and reintroduction guidelines and more than 100 recipes using familiar ingredients, from simple one-pot meals to complete dinner party menus.

**The Milk Street Cookbook: The Definitive Guide to the New Home Cooking**

By Christopher Kimball (Little Brown and Company) \$45

Milk Street cookbooks give home cooks a simpler, bolder, and healthier way to eat and cook. Now featuring over 400 tried-and-true recipes, this book is the ultimate guide to high-quality, low-effort cooking and the perfect kitchen companion for cooks of all skill levels. There are no long lists of hard-to-find ingredients, strange cookware, or all-day methods. Instead, every recipe has been adapted and tested for home cooks. Organized by type of dish, this book will introduce you to extraordinary new flavors and ingenious techniques.

**The New York Times Cooking No-Recipe Recipes**

By Sam Sifton (Ten Speed Press), \$28

Sam Sifton, founding editor of *New York Times Cooking*, makes improvisational cooking easier than you think. In this handy book of ideas, Sifton delivers more than 100 no-recipe recipes to make with the ingredients you have on hand or could pick up on a quick trip to a store. You'll see how to make these meals as big or as small as you like, substituting ingredients as you go. Welcome home

to freestyle, relaxed cooking that is absolutely yours.

**Ottolenghi Test Kitchen: Shelf Love**

By Noor Murad and Yotam Ottolenghi (Clarkson Potter) \$32

Led by Yotam Ottolenghi and Noor Murad, the team of chefs at the Ottolenghi Test Kitchen gives everyday home cooks the accessible yet innovative Middle Eastern-inspired recipes to put dinner on the table with less stress and less fuss. With fit-for-real-life chapters like "The Freezer Is Your Friend," "That One Shelf in the Back of Your Pantry," and "Who Does the Dishes?" you will learn how to flex with fewer ingredients, get creative with your pantry staples, and add playful twists to familiar classics.

Until next month, happy reading.

The staff at the Covered Treasures can be contacted at [books@ocn.me](mailto:books@ocn.me).

**February Library Events****Off-site story times, Palmer Lake ramp, math tutoring**

By Harriet Halbig

The Monument Library will be offering off-site story times at Reynolds House on the grounds of the Western Museum of Mining and Industry, 225 North Gate Road. The story times will be offered each Thursday at 10:30. Registration is encouraged. See our website ([ppld.org](http://ppld.org)) under programs or call 719-488-2370.

The new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant ramp at the Palmer Lake Library has been completed (see photo). We are awaiting town approval to use the building. Once approved, some work will be done inside, including adding to the collection and reorganizing the floor space.

Having trouble with math? Free tutoring is available every Monday from 3:30 to 6:30 at the Monument Library. Help is offered at all levels. Retired teachers volunteer to offer this service, which is available every Monday that the library and schools are open. No appointment is required.

The Winter Adult Reading Program began on Feb. 1 and will continue through March 31. See the website for further information.

We hope to see you soon at the library.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at [harriethalbig@ocn.me](mailto:harriethalbig@ocn.me).

**Right:** The new ADA-compliant ramp at the Palmer Lake Library is now complete. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

**High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)****Sauntering through nature; winter watering requirements**

By Janet Sellers

"I don't like either the word [hike] or the thing. People ought to saunter in the mountains—not 'hike'! Do you know the origin of that word saunter? It's a beautiful word. Away back in the Middle Ages people used to go on pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and when people in the villages through which they passed asked where they were going, they would reply, 'A la sainte terre,' 'To the Holy Land.' And so, they became known as sainte-terres or saunterers. Now these mountains are our Holy Land, and we ought to saunter through them reverently, not 'hike' through them."—John Muir

Most of us moved to our area to enjoy the green of the forest clime, the mountain air, and being able to just walk out our door and saunter in nature. The forest clime naturally has its own ecosystem to protect itself, but our homes and landscapes have impacted that, and nature needs us to keep protecting her consciously in many ways all year.

**Mulch protects our local high desert landscapes from drought**

American gardener and arborist Paul Gautschi is famous nationwide for using and promoting the "back to Eden" method of no-till gardening, using a variety of mulch materials at hand and even using rocks, which hold moisture and offer minerals. "Basically, we always

want to cover the ground; the ground should never be exposed. When we lift up a rock and look under it, we find moisture and worms."

**How mulch works**

Mulch is the skin of the garden, protecting the moisture and life underneath it. It's a free soil conditioner, water saver, and enricher aka the earth-friendly fertilizer. Mulch is the miracle worker we need in our high desert clime. Mulch keeps in the desired moisture and keeps out the weeds and unwanted. Christmas trees, leaves, etc. create mulch and soil, too. Neighbors will gladly give you their bagged leaves!

Leaves are safer than grass clippings (possible toxic loads of chemicals on grass clippings; trees are relatively chemical free). Pound for pound, leaves have more minerals than manure! But you do have to add nitrogen, so the breakdown occurs in a timely way: 5 parts carbon to 1 part nitrogen. Nitrogen can come from coffee grounds and safe, local manure from medicine-free vegetarian creatures like alpacas, chickens, etc. Sadly, horse manure often has a lot of medicines in it as well as not breaking down as easily as chicken, alpaca, or mushroom.

**Drought alert: Protect your plants and lawns now, long before summer**

Plants may appear perfectly normal and resume growth

in the spring using stored food energy but may be weak and all or parts may die in late spring or summer when temperatures rise. The result of long, dry periods during fall and winter is injury or death to parts of plant root systems. Weakened plants also may be subject to insect and disease problems.

- Water only when air and soil temperatures are above 40 degrees F with no snow cover.
- Water trees, shrubs, lawns, and perennials during prolonged dry fall and winter periods to prevent root damage that affects the health of the entire plant.
- Established large trees have a root spread equal to or greater than the height of the tree. Apply water to the most critical part of the root zone within the dripline.
- If recent snow has moistened the soil deeply, you can wait several weeks to water.
- For details on how to save your lawn and your landscaping, contact the Colorado State Extension via its website <https://extension.colostate.edu/>. Janet Sellers is an avid "lazy gardener" by using nature's back-to-Eden methods to save water and protect the garden. Send gardening tips to [JanetSellers@ocn.me](mailto:JanetSellers@ocn.me)

**Art Matters****How art is science, science is art**

By Janet Sellers

"I think one of the most primitive innate needs of humans is to understand the world around us, and then share that understanding."—David Featherstone, professor of Biology and Neuroscience, University of Illinois, Chicago.

Art and science are quite closely related; their 19th-century separation into different cultures is historically recent. In 1202, Fibonacci's eponymous sequence of numbers has since been widely found in art and music composition, photography, and even dentistry. Featherstone insisted that both science and art are human efforts to acknowledge and understand the world around us. We think of them as having different audiences, but do they?

Instinctively we feel that art reaches us at an intuitive level as well as a cognitive level. Is art-making meditative? What part of the art maker is engaged while considering, preparing, and making the art? It would be interesting to see how art affects us at a neurobiological level. The National Library of Medicine reports a number

of meditation studies, and one at the University of Kassel has shown that while the chest area of an average person emits only 20 photons of light per second, someone who meditates on their heart center and sends love and light to others emits an amazing 100,000 photons per second.

The report continues, explaining, "Numerous studies have also shown that when these photons are infused with a loving and healing intent, their frequency and vibration increases to the point where they can literally change matter, heal disease, and transform negative events."

We need to share, to reach out, because we are social creatures. Art allows us to do that, to share ideas, feelings and other non-verbal communications about ourselves, our successes, our failures, our lives, and make meaning from these. Also, art outcomes have a powerful effect on individuals and society.

**Art as transformational awareness and consciousness**

When we think about the value of art, we see that art



**Above:** Ute elder-confirmed culturally modified trees in Fox Run Regional Park and Monument Preserve show how our local First Peoples understood forest culture, arbor science, and stewardship including navigation and technological skill. Photo by Janet Sellers.

and art inquiry have affected all parts of human life for ages. Most recently, we know that art movements influence and change society. Dada artists responded to the