

Dustin. New members are always welcome. Registration is required online at ppld.org, events by location or 719-488-2370.

Also for tweens there will be a *Tween Party Games* event on Friday, April 25 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Enjoy cup stacking, tackling a mine field while blindfolded, and other games including Minute to Win It challenges. No registration required.

For teen patrons, attend the meeting of the *Teen Advisory Board* on Thursday, April 10 from 5 to 6 p.m. Learn leadership skills, earn volunteer hours, and give your input on what happens at the library. Regular attendance is recommended, and you must fill out a volunteer application to participate.

For older patrons, join the *Pikes Peak Library*

District (PPLD) Book Group sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of PPLD. The April meeting will be on Friday, April 18 from 10:30 to 12:30. New members are welcome.

An *Art for Older Adults Class* will be held from 1 to 2 p.m. on Thursday, April 10. This class inspires a sense of self-reliance for older adults, even when the participant may be reliant on a partner for help with materials use. This will be a monthly opportunity to produce high-quality art projects that respect their wealth of life experiences, skills, and innate capacity to create. All supplies are provided and registration is required. Go to ppld.org, events and happenings and Monument Library to register or call 719-488-2370.

Homeschool families or those considering homeschooling are invited to attend the annual *Homeschool Resource Fair* at Library 21c on Friday, April 11 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. This fair features a wide variety of exhibitors offering educational and extracurricular opportunities for homeschooling families. Chat with representatives from organizations and businesses that offer services and support, including arts and science activities, sports groups, enrichment programs, tutoring, and more. There will also be fun activities for kids throughout the building.

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Palmer Lake Historical Society, April 21

General Palmer's life explored

By Marlene Brown

The Palmer Lake Historical Society (PLHS) held its regular membership meeting at the Palmer Lake Town Hall on March 21. The guest speaker was "Gen. William J. Palmer," founder of Palmer Lake and Colorado Springs, portrayed by David Harmon.

Palmer began by telling us he was born in 1836 to John and Matilda Palmer. The family was of the Hicksite sect Quakers. He was born on the family farm, near Leipsic, Kent County, Delaware. Hicksite Quakers believed that there is an inner light in each of us, and they were committed to peace and non-violence. Their religious beliefs would cause conflict later with William and his family when he joined the army.

Palmer's early school days were spent in Pennsylvania where he went to private school and public school. Private school is where he received an engineering degree, though he never graduated. He had always been fascinated by trains. He was able to save and go to school in Europe, and that was where he studied railroads, mills, and coal mines. Returning to the States, he was hired by his uncle to work the Westmoreland Coal Co. as the secretary and treasurer. The following year he was hired as the private secretary for the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, where he met Thomas Scott, who was later appointed as assistant secretary of war.

Palmer's upbringing taught him to detest slavery and war, though when the Civil War began he enlisted with the Pennsylvania volunteers and took a commission in the Union Army. At age 25, he was a captain and they gave him a regiment of 1,000

men. Later that year, dressed in civilian clothes and scouting for places for the Union Army to recross the Potomac River back into Virginia, Palmer was captured and incarcerated for four months. He was released in a prisoner exchange and in February 1863 was able to rejoin his regiment. In 1865 he received the Medal of Honor for his actions as colonel of the 15th Pennsylvania Regiment.

After the war, the 30-year-old Palmer went back to railroads. While in Colorado Territory, he had a vision of a railroad running south from Denver to Mexico City. He built the first section going south from Denver, across the Palmer Divide and to Colorado Springs by 1871. He was married in 1870 to Mary Lincoln (Queen) Palmer. They had three daughters, and Mary passed away in 1894 at the age of 44.

In 1906, William fell from a horse and was left paralyzed. He was forever confined to a wheelchair. Unable to travel after that, veterans of his 15th Pennsylvania Regiment had their annual reunion in 1907 at Glen Eyrie. He provided a special train for 208 of the surviving veterans. Palmer passed away on March 13, 1909. The mayor of Colorado Springs said that Palmer was "a soldier, builder of an empire, philanthropist, and friend of the people whose life was a blessing."

Harmon graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1973. He and his wife Julie have three grown kids and have lived in Colorado Springs since 1981. Many attendees at the meeting came to Harmon afterward with more questions about Palmer.

PLHS meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of the month from 7-8:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:30 pm) at the Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent St. Meetings are free and open to the public. For more information regarding memberships and future programs, go to palmerdividehistory.org/ events.

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Above: At the Palmer Lake Historical Society meeting, Vice President Diane Kokes stands with Gen. William J. Palmer, portrayed by Dave Harmon.

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Earth Day and the joys of gardening

By Janet Sellers

Every year on April 22, Earth Day reminds us of our responsibility to care for the planet. First observed on April 22, 1970, it was proposed as a way to have an educational day devoted to protecting our Earth. An estimated 20 million participated in rallies, teach-ins, and demonstrations across the country.

The event was instrumental in gaining support for environmental legislation in the 1970s, including the Clean Air Act (1970) and the Endangered Species Act (1973) and the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in response to the growing concerns over pollution and the welfare of the environment. We can do our part with our landscaping and home gardens.

No deer landscaping

Marigolds are a go-to flower that comes in sizes from 6 inches to a couple of feet high and deters bugs, rabbits, and even deer. Surprisingly easy to grow and acknowledged deer-deterrent plants in-

clude chives, lemon balm, parsley, thyme, dill, sage, mint, yarrow, allium, garlic, echinacea, chamomile, and more. And these easy plants are herbs we can use for meals or just for tea.

Black Forest Mulch program

We tried out the multi-size mulch from the Black Forest Slash and Mulch Program this past year. It will be available again in May and it's free. We were amazed at its performance. We had a new garden bed with plenty of seeds planted and, as an experiment, we let Mother Nature do all the work for watering and weed control, etc.

Without any additional watering or work, just the mulch, that flower garden flourished. (I had to water some newly planted flowering bushes late in the season; we'll see if they come up this year.) The seeds and all of the plants in the garden bed with the mulch thrived all summer without touching it. We planted seeds in June but August was when they decided to show up and flower. This year I'm

planting seeds in April and May under the mulch, because seeds will use their own intelligence for growing. Indoor seedlings can be started in April, but we have to wait until the end of May to put them out safely, unless we have protection like cloches or cold frames.

Due to our late snows and cold temperatures, most plants are not particularly interested in doing much until they can rely on warmth, water, and of course good, garden-prepared soil. Earth Day is a perfect time to start a new garden project, volunteer at a local green space, or simply appreciate the beauty of nature. The Tri-Lakes Cares (TLC) food garden needs volunteers to help plant, care, and harvest vegetables this year. Contact me or TLC at tri-lakescares.org to learn more.

Janet Sellers is an avid "lazy" gardener, letting Mother Nature lead the way for permaculture gardening. Contact her at JanetSellers@ocn.me.

On the Trail (in memory of Tim Watkins)

Monument Hiking Group planning session



Above: Monument Hiking Group planning session led by Lisa Loeber. Photo by Steve Pate.

By Steve Pate

The Monument Hiking Group (MHG), led by Lisa Loeber, held a planning session at the Monument Barn Community Center on March 30. The group of about 25 local hikers met to discuss options for planning some long hikes as well as close-in treks in our local area.

For example, a local hike is now scheduled for April 8 at 8:30 a.m. The group will meet at the "Windsock" parking lot off of Red Rock Ranch Road

located just north of where Mount Herman Road meets the gate leading up to Mount Herman. The plan is to carpool up to the 716 Trailhead on the west side of Mount Herman, hike to the Limbaugh Overlook, and return by way of Raspberry Mountain/Mount Herman to the 716 Trailhead. It will be about a 4-mile round trip with about 1,200 feet of elevation gain and should take about three hours. This time of year, participants should bring micro spikes and be prepared for weather conditions.

The group will plan extended hikes later this year which could include 14ers (14,000-foot mountains) of which Colorado has 58. Several of the experienced hikers in this group, including Randy Phillips, have summited all 58 14ers. The group may also conduct training sessions on how to use devices such as InReach, a satellite-connected safety device or others such as Zoleo.

While you may choose to hike our local trails, it's best to plan off-trail adventures and bushwhacking to see hidden local points of interest with someone who knows the terrain and location of places like old mines, cabins, etc., such as Kerry Paige, a.k.a. "Saxsquatch" (a local saxophone player who knows our local mountains).

Others discussed planning hikes that require more endurance and could involve overnight stays. If you are interested in participating in either regular local hikes or those requiring overnight or longer travel, follow the Monument Hiking Group on Facebook. You could also seek advice from Al Andersen, who helped set up this meeting and has led many hikes over the years.

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Art Matters

Contemporary art: The return of bold beauty

By Janet Sellers

"What any true painting touches is an absence—an absence of which without the painting, we might be unaware. And that would be our loss."

—John Berger, *The Shape of a Pocket*

Art appreciation is subjective. One person may see beauty in the sunrise, a blade of grass, or glistening drops of dew on a spider web. Another may ig-

nore these and go about their day unaware of small splendors. A key factor in all of this is awareness and the moment of awareness; art may reach one person and not another. The close inspection of the

