

## VFW presents award to lodge



**Above:** Sundance Mountain Lodge owner Gary Oakley, left, and manager Jane Crabb receive the highest award of VFW Post 7829 from Post Commander Joseph E. Carlson. The Order of Merit presentation was made in recognition of the support of veterans and their families by the lodge, its owner, and the employees, and their continuous dedicated relationship with the VFW. *Photo by Bernard Minetti.*

## Veterans' Day at LPES



**Above:** From left are VFW Monument Post 7829 Adjutant Pat Staffieri, Lewis-Palmer Elementary School Principal Lois Skaggs and Monument VFW Post 7829 Commander Joseph E. Carlson, just after the school's Veterans Day celebration. The veterans were invited by Skaggs to speak at the festivities. *Photo by Bernard Minetti.*

## Holiday season begins with Chili Supper and Star Lighting



**Above: Left:** Vicky Baker, a 17-year veteran of the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department, calls out raffle numbers during the Chili Supper and Star Lighting. **Center:** Palmer Lake firefighters cooked and served various types of chili, potato soup, and cinnamon rolls for attendees at the Chili Supper and Star Lighting. **Right:** The Palmer Lake Star shines brightly on Sundance Mountain. The star will be turned on each evening until Jan. 1.

**Left:** Gleneagle resident Baya Lipps held the winning raffle ticket for turning on the Palmer Lake Star. Lipps received a ride up to the star in a fire truck and turned on the light with a remote. *Photos by David Futey.*

*By David Futey*

On Nov. 24, the Town of Palmer Lake and Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department hosted the annual Chili Supper and Star Lighting. The event is a fundraiser for maintaining the star, which has shown brightly this time of year since 1936.

The star will be turned on each evening until Jan. 1. The first person to turn it on this year was Gleneagle resident Baya Lipps. *David Futey can be reached at [dfutey@ocn.me](mailto:dfutey@ocn.me).*



### *The Bright Star of Palmer Lake*

Late in the afternoon, when dusk begins and winter daylight fades into aspen and pine, a quiet snow dusts the rooftops, settles like thin sugar in cathedrals of red rock as the slow 5:10 coal train meanders by the silent lake.

One small town welcomes December with a star shining from a mountainside. The sparkling seventy year old tradition offers a beacon for the weary traveler, with the comfort of returning home where warmth waits like a soft weathered quilt.

The night wind's bright music weaves pure harmonies from bough to bough. A family pauses in the cold to listen to the celebratory concerto heard only on this hillside where heaven's candlelight shines out for miles to the hungry hearts of mankind.

This poem was read by the author, Anna Blake Godbout, at the Star Lighting ceremony, Nov. 24. It is from her collection of poems, *Journey On: Beauty and Grit Along the Way*. Reprinted here by permission of the author.

## Legacy Sertomans help fund home for injured veteran

On November 17, four members of Legacy Sertoma participated in a Homes for Our Troops Key Ceremony outside Parker, where Cpl. Nick Orchowski and his family were presented the keys to a new home at no cost to them. A flag-lined driveway greeted the Orchowski family as they were delivered to the site by fire trucks and motorcycle escort.

Orchowski initially was diagnosed as a quadriplegic, never to walk again after being thrown from the gunner's hatch of a vehicle that was hit during an insurgents' attack in Bagdad, Iraq. However, he was able to walk up that driveway basically unassisted.

The \$5,000 raised at the Legacy Sertoma golf tournament held in July was part of the contributions that made the home a reality.

Homes for Our Troops, a national non-profit, builds specially adapted homes for service members who have been severely injured in combat operations since Sept. 11, 2001. All homes are built at no cost to the veteran served through the support of individuals, foundations, and corporate contributors. Legacy Sertoma will sponsor its second annual golf tournament next July 15, with proceeds again going to this top-rated charity. ■



**Above:** Cpl. Nick Orchowski and his family make their way up the driveway of their new home outside Parker. *Photo provided by Legacy Sertoma.*