

Palmer Lake Historical Society, Aug. 16

# Specialists describe restoring old ranch equipment

By Bernard L. Minetti

Johnny Mulligan and Jerry Wlodarek, historic restoration specialists with the Douglas County Open Spaces project, spoke about their work at Prairie Canyon Ranch during a meeting of the Palmer Lake Historical Society on Aug. 16.

Douglas County purchased the ranch, just south of Castlewood Canyon State Park, when it was still a working cattle ranch. Mulligan is a Native American of the Lakota tribe. Wlodarek is known for his expertise in the making of custom flintlock and cap lock rifles. He has been doing that for 40 years.

Mulligan and Wlodarek both have been qualified building inspectors for Douglas County and have worked on the original homestead at the ranch for many years. Frederick Bartruff and his family originally homesteaded the ranch itself in 1873. The ranch buildings are prime examples of the technology and agricultural techniques used from 1870 to 1930.

Both speakers are known for their restoration techniques. They utilize only materials that were in vogue when the restoration items were first made. Much of their time in restoring a building, for instance, is spent in locating the wood and other items from the time when the building was first constructed.

Both men spoke with pride about the forge and anvil building that they were renovating and restoring on the ranch. The anvil and forge, and the other items necessary to operate a blacksmith site, were available but needed to be collected, renovated, and restored. They provided a series of photographs that illustrated the work as it has progressed.

Tours of the site may be arranged through the Douglas County Open Spaces Commission. Mulligan said both men would provide another presentation, "Pioneer Weapons," to the Historical Society on Nov. 15.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next meeting will be on Sept. 20 at 7 p.m. at the Palmer Lake Town Hall. The public is invited to attend. The title of the presentation is, "Ponderosa Giants—How Old



**Above:** Douglas County Historic Restoration Specialists Johnny Mulligan and Jerry Wlodarek described their work at the Prairie Canyon Ranch. In particular, they described the restoration and reconstruction of an anvil and forge building at the site (shown on the right). *Photo on the left above by Bernard Minetti. Photo on the right above provided by the Palmer Lake Historical Society.*

**Right:** The topic for the Sept. 20 Palmer Lake Historical Society meeting will be "Ponderosa Giants—How Old Is That Tree?" *Photo provided by the Palmer Lake Historical Society.*



Is That Tree?" Terry Stokka will demonstrate that "you can't judge a tree's age by its size." He will also describe efforts to determine the age of local area "giant pines."

*Bernard Minetti may be contacted at [bernardminetti@ocn.me](mailto:bernardminetti@ocn.me).*

## Support Our Community. Become an OCN volunteer!

Some of our readers may not realize that *OCN* is the product of volunteers. If you like the contribution *OCN* makes to our community, now is the time to step forward and help us provide accurate information each month to over 15,300 Tri-Lakes area households and businesses.

We need additional reporters to help cover meetings of local governmental bodies. The reporting assignment is "What did they talk about and what did they decide?" If you get down the facts, *OCN's* skilled copy editors will help you refine your article for publication.

Like to take pictures? We need digital, slide, or print photos to illustrate future articles.

We also need various other kinds of help including preparing the mailing.

If you can spare a few hours to help make an important difference in our community, please contact John Heiser at (719) 488-3455 or [johnheiser@ocn.me](mailto:johnheiser@ocn.me).



**Our Community News**  
Volunteers reporting on community issues in Monument, Palmer Lake, and the surrounding Tri-Lakes area

**Live outside our free delivery area\*?  
Want prompt delivery every month  
direct to your mailbox?  
Subscribe to OCN!  
\$17 for 12 issues**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**City, State Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail this form with a check or money order to  
Our Community News  
P.O. Box 1742  
Monument, Colorado 80132-1742**

**To pay by credit card: [www.ocn.me/subscribe.htm](http://www.ocn.me/subscribe.htm)**

**Questions? Call John Heiser, (719) 488-3455**

\*County Line Rd. to Northgate Rd., Palmer Lake to Hwy 83.

Support Our Community!  
Shop Tri-Lakes.