

Palmer Lake Historical Society, Mar. 17

Early automobiles in the Pikes Peak Region



By Sigi Walker

On March 17, members of the Palmer Lake Historical Society and guests gathered at the Palmer Lake Town Hall for the second program of the 2016 Monthly History Series. Dwight Haverkorn, historian for the Colorado Springs Police Department and president of the El Paso County Pioneers' Association, gave a slide presentation about the early autos in the Pikes Peak Region. He showed slides of the first gasoline-powered vehicle to travel through Palmer Lake and Colorado Springs en route to Canon City. The problem was, it kept running out of fuel!

His presentation covered the period from the late 1800s through the early 1900s. Slow to start, automobiles in Colorado Springs increased rapidly as they became more affordable—the beginning of the automobile craze.

It was interesting to note that most of the early cars were steam-powered or electric.

Haverkorn illustrated his talk with slides of historical records. His description of early traffic ordinances, traffic controls, and licensing of drivers and vehicles elicited many a chuckle. Early city traffic ordinances were very strict and fines were quite high, especially for speeding. For example, speed limits in the city were from 5 to 8 miles per hour, with speeding tickets costing between \$200 and \$300. This is the equivalent of about \$2,000 and \$3,000 today.

Haverkorn's presentation included a description and slides of a 1903 coast-to-coast auto race between a Packard and a Winton. The Packard passed through Colorado Springs and Palmer Lake but lost because it was slowed down by having to travel over the Rockies, while the Winton took the northern route through Cheyenne. He also included the first ascent of an automobile to the top of Pikes Peak in his presentation.

Initially, there were more trolleys, wagons, bicycles, and pedestrians than automobiles in Colorado Springs. Collisions between trolleys and automobiles were spectacular events. And cars often ended up in ditches because of careless or drunken drivers speeding on poor roads.

The next program in the Historical Society Monthly History Series will be on Thursday, April 21 at 7 p.m. at the Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent, Palmer Lake. Charlease Elzenga-Bobo will present a program on "Spinning in the Western Region." Learn about the origins of



Above (L to R): Dwight Haverkorn, historian for the Colorado Springs Police Department and president of the El Paso County Pioneers' Association, and new PLHS president Tom Baker. Photos courtesy of the Palmer Lake Historical Society.

spinning, the development of spinning tools and the spinning wheel, and the movement of spinning wheels from China/India to Europe to the American colonies and the West. Elzenga-Bobo will bring her full-size spinning wheel to demonstrate spinning techniques.

Monthly History Series programs are free to the public. Light refreshments are served. For more information, visit our website at www.palmerdividehistory.org or call 719-559-0837.

Western Museum of Mining & Industry, Mar. 12

Museum hosts Science Day

By David Futey

On March 12, the Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI) hosted its annual Science Day, providing an educational and fun experience for all attendees. Attendees interacted with the Pikes Peak Soaring Society with activities as flight simulators for attendee use, model plane flight demonstrations in the museum's orchard area, balsa wood plane kits for attendees to assemble, and 3D printing demonstrations.

The Air Force Academy Physics is Phun team demonstrated physics principles through various activities while Air Academy High School's Chemistry Club used a silver process to coat the inside of Christmas tree ornamental bulbs for giveaways to attendees.

Also, Colorado Springs Utilities showed the dangers of high voltage with its street scene exhibit and museum staff operated historic steam engines and had an exhibit on the electrical uses of different types of light bulbs.

Upcoming events at the museum can be found at www.wmmi.org.

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Above left: USAF Capt. Jessica Ullom of Physics is Phun demonstrates electrical principles to attendees of the WMMI Science Day. Above right: Colorado Springs Utilities exhibitors demonstrate the dangers of high voltage. Photos by David Futey.



High Altitude Natural Gardening

Really big HANG gardens—our ponderosa forests

By Janet Sellers

In Tri-Lakes, we live in the ponderosa forest environment. I'm still on a roll learning about the Ute sacred prayer trees in our area; I keep looking for the prayer trees and researching the amazing ponderosas we live among. Many of us don't realize that encroaching on old growth ponderosa, changing the natural ecosystem via logging in the 1800s and even current well-intended fire mitigation efforts, are issues damaging to the forest. An interesting fact is that old growth ponderosa are fire-resistant. While some of the oldest ponderosa pines in the Front Range can be as old as 600 years, that is rare, and we commonly see trees more than 200 years old above 6,500 feet elevation; even 300-year-old to 500-year-old trees are frequent.

The biggest danger to our ponderosa forests is ... us, the humans that moved in on them. According to studies

by the USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station, "the best way to curb the danger we pose is to restore an ecologically sustainable landscape that resembles the patterns that existed before Euro-American settlement—patterns that encourage the survival of old trees."

I recently learned of the "forest bath" or Shinrin Yoku custom from Japan. The natural volatile oils from forest trees such as our very own ponderosa pines offer a healing quality as we breathe in the forest air. Studies have shown that the "forest bath" of immersing ourselves in the forest air for a half hour to two hours of exposure to nature positively creates calming neuro-psychological effects through changes in the nervous system.

Also, the level of the hormone serum adiponectin is also increased with forest bathing. Tragically, when this hormone is only present in low concentrations it is linked



Left: A Ute Burial Tree (with two 90-degree bends) that Dr. Jefferson, Southern Ute tribal elder, and John W. Anderson, author of the book *Ute Indian Prayer Trees of the Pikes Peak Region*, visited in late March of this year. The tree grows amid ponderosa pine forest habitat on private property near the Black Forest area. (The tree behind it was struck by lightning, which makes this a sacred place, according to the Ute beliefs). Photo and caption information courtesy of John W. Anderson.