

August Library Events

Summer reading program closes with a party

By Harriet Halbig

The *Summer Adventure* reading program ended on July 31, celebrated with a gala party on the Village Green in Palmer Lake on July 20. Those attending enjoyed snacks, crafts, music, face painting, and such features as the Zoomobile and the Bookmobile and a gold panning program from the Western Museum of Mining and Industry.

Over 1,500 young patrons participated in the program.

The library wishes to thank our many teen volunteers for their help in the library throughout the program and at the party.

Family programs

Weekly children's programs will return to their regular schedule in August, including Story Time on Tuesdays at 10:30 and 11:15.

Lego Build will be on Saturday, Aug. 18 from 10 to 11:30.

Teen programs

Every Wednesday from 3 to 4:30 in the study room, teens and adults are welcome to attend an intergenerational knitting group. Practice supplies will be provided, but participants are encouraged to bring their own projects.

The Monument Teen Creative Writing Group will

meet from 6 to 7:30 on Tuesday, Aug. 7 in the study room. Join us to meet fellow writers, share ideas, do writing exercises, and enjoy tasty snacks.

The Teen Arts and Crafts program for August, on Wednesday, Aug. 29, is Fidget Spinners. The program from 4 to 5:30 will offer the chance to design your own fidget spinner. All materials will be provided, and registration is required. This program is recommended for ages 9 to 18.

The Monument Library Anime Club will meet from 5 to 6:30 on Thursday, Aug. 30. Come to view anime with others who love it and enjoy snacks. This program is recommended for ages 13-14 and up.

Adult programs

See above for a description of the weekly intergenerational knitting group.

The Second Thursday Craft for August is Watercolor. Join us with Deb Ross from 2 to 4 on Thursday, Aug. 9 to learn watercolor painting. All materials are provided, and registration is required.

The Monumental Bookworms will meet from 7 to 8:30 on Tuesday, Aug 14 to discuss *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. All are welcome to attend this book club sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of the Library,

The Monumental Readers will meet from 10

to noon on Friday, Aug. 17 to discuss *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde. All are welcome to attend, and no registration is required.

The Monument Library Spinning Group will meet from 1:30 to 3:45 on Thursday, Aug. 23.

On Thursday, Aug. 24 from 3 to 4, join us for *The Elephant in the Room*, a hospice 101 program with professionals from Pikes Peak Hospice and Palliative Care.

The display case will feature Depression Glass from Roberta Hankins. On the walls will be an exhibit titled *The First 100 Days* by Bill Thomas of Special Collections.

Palmer Lake Library Events

Families are encouraged to bring their elders to the annual Ice Cream Social on the Village Green in Palmer Lake on Aug. 11 from 1 to 2:30. Featuring Rock House Ice Cream, join us to step back to a simpler time when an ice cream cone was all you needed for a perfect summer afternoon. This event is sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of the Library and the Palmer Lake Historical Society. Please come, rain or shine. Check out the Palmer Lake Library District Book Trike while you're there!

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Palmer Lake Historical Society, July 19

Presentation honors Woody Guthrie

By Sigi Walker

Woody Guthrie's life and songs took center stage as Dan Blegen presented his "docu-concert" *Hard Travelin'* on July 19 as part of the Palmer Lake Historical Society's monthly history series. Blegen is an author, poet, playwright, and retired teacher, and a great storyteller. His "docu-concerts" combine American history and amply-illustrated biographical vignettes with music we can sing along to, including *Good Night, Irene, This Land Is Your Land, and So Long It's Been Good to Know You*.

Guthrie was born Woodrow Wilson Guthrie on July 14, 1912 in Okemah, Okla. In 1920 it became an oil boom town, only to suffer severe economic depression when the oil ran out. During his early years there, Woody experienced a series of immensely tragic personal losses: the accidental death in a fire of his older sister Clara; the family's financial ruin; and the institutionalization and eventual loss of his mother. He left home at 17 and rambled around the county in the 1930s like a hobo, hitchhiking, riding freight trains, and even walking, connecting with Americans from all walks of life and dignifying their lives in simple but evocative songs. These experiences made a lasting impression on him, and heightened his awareness of social, political, racial and environmental issues.

In 1940, Woody Guthrie joined his friend, Pete Seeger, to form a quartet called the Almanac Singers. The group appeared at union halls, farm meetings,

and wherever their populist politics were welcome. After serving in WWII, he continued to perform for farmer and worker groups. He wrote nearly 3,000 songs, enriching America's musical landscape for generations.

In 1954, it was discovered that he suffered from Huntington's disease, the incurable degenerative nerve disorder from which his mother had also suffered. He died on Oct. 3, 1967, in Queens, NY.

Mark your calendars

On Saturday, Aug. 11, from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m., the Historical Society will present the 2018 *Return of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua*, in the Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent, and on the Village Green. Enjoy a full day of fun with demonstrations of vintage folk arts and crafts, guided walking tours of the area, portrayals of notable figures from Colorado's past, screenings of *Summer Sojourn* (a movie on the history of Colorado Chautauqua), music from a brass band and a barbershop quartet, and gold panning and other activities for kids. After lunch, be sure to join the Friends of Tri-Lakes Library for its annual community ice cream social. Chautauquas began in New York state in 1874. In 1887, Palmer Lake was the site of The Rocky Mountain Assembly, the first Chautauqua in Colorado and west of the Mississippi; it ran for almost 20 years. This event is free and open to all. For more information, visit our website at www.palmerdividehistory.org. ■



Above: Dan Blegen after his "docu-concert" performance. Photo by Su Ketchmark.

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Forests and gardening: wonderful for your brain, love life, and fitness

By Janet Sellers

Local ponderosa forests offer us forest bathing as we slow down and stroll through the woods, languidly absorbing its wild goodness (it's not destination-based). Forest bathing is the eco therapy of just being in the woods. Japanese scientists have proven its benefits to lower heart rate and blood pressure, reduce stress hormone production, boost the immune system, and improve overall feelings of wellbeing. Research shows the pines themselves release many substances that support health for their lives and ours.

Forest bathing is said to be the new yoga. Immerse yourself in the forest for just one to three hours and your body soaks in the benefits including phytoncides (essential oils), freedom from visual stressors, and feelings of wellbeing that promote human health. Our local First Nations knew the benefits to life in the

forest, and they lived there, of course. Habitual forest bathing helps us decrease risks of psychosocial stress-related diseases. It is now popular likely because of a backlash against technology and office culture.

At home, we can mimic effects of forest bathing with gardening. Living in green areas shows an increase in healthy body and brain function, and a measurable decrease in disorders such as dementia, coronary disease, and colon cancer, according to studies at Michigan State University. Adding just 10 percent of green space near a home helps reduce health complaints so much that we effectively add five years to our life. Green space as a home garden reaps even more happiness.

Why does gardening make us happy? Gardening is associated with many feel-good boosts: mental clarity, physical fitness, mood elevation, hormone

balancing. I suspect no gym has ever improved property values like gardening has, where we decrease our waistlines as we increase our health. With forest wisdom no-till methods using local pine needle straw and wood chips, we support environmental health, too.

Food garden harvesting triggers the release of dopamine. Researchers hypothesize that over a 200,000-year human evolution, when food was found a "harvest high" flush of the dopamine pleasure response was released in the human brain triggering bliss or mild euphoria by the sight, smell or plucking of a fruit or berry. Alas, contemporary big retailers and advertising exploit these biological process findings of dopamine triggers when we shop. The "harvest high" biological process is played on us at our expense and is found at the core of compulsive consumer disorders.