

Palmer Lake Historical Society, Sep. 19

Student details lives of Doc Holliday, Kid Curry

By Sigi Walker

On Sept. 19, the Palmer Lake Historical Society welcomed Discovery Canyon High School sophomore Bethany Bonser's presentation on her favorite subject: *Outlaws and lawmen of the Wild West*. The standing-room-only crowd in turn gave her a standing ovation. In the audience were her grandmother, Phyllis Bonser, and her history teacher, Shawn Mitchell.

Bethany concentrated on two individuals in particular: Doc Holliday and Kid Curry. Both are buried in Glenwood Springs' Linwood Cemetery. But, while both had run-ins with the law, Doc was a flawed but basically good individual while the Kid had "not one good bone in his body."

Holliday: Born John Henry Holliday in 1851 into a well-to-do family in Georgia, he lost his mother to tuberculosis when he was 15. He was educated as a dentist, but unfortunately was diagnosed with tuberculosis at age 22, which he most likely caught from his mother. Holliday moved to the Southwest, first Texas then farther west to Kansas, Wyoming, New Mexico, Colorado, and Arizona. He had frequent brushes with the law and was even shot and injured. In Fort Griffin, Texas, he met Kate Horony, aka "Big Nose Kate." Together they went to Tombstone, Ariz., and joined Wyatt Earp and his brothers. There Doc was a participant in the now-famous Gunfight at the OK Corral in 1881. For the rest of his life, Holliday bounced between Western boomtowns, sometimes opening a dental practice, drinking and gambling until his health gave out. He died in Glenwood Springs in November 1887.

Today, people decorate his grave on his birthday.

Curry: The "real American outlaw and gunman" was born Harvey Alexander Logan in Iowa in 1867 but moved to Missouri when he was 9 after his mother died. He and his three brothers worked as ranch hands in Texas, where they met George Curry and took his last name. From Texas, they rode to Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, getting into shootouts and robbing banks, post offices, and trains. They often killed lawmen to avoid capture. When caught and jailed, they escaped. After robbing a passenger train, they holed up at the hideout of Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch at Hole-in-the-Wall, Wyoming. Following numerous other robberies and escapes, Kid Curry traveled to San Antonio, Texas, where he met Della Moore in a brothel and became romantically involved with her. His outlaw activities continued until he was wounded near Parachute, Colo., in June 1904. Unable to escape, he shot himself to avoid capture.

Mark your calendars for Thursday, Oct. 17, when the Palmer Lake Historical Society Monthly History Series will present well-known author and historian Jack Anthony telling the story of the *Long Ago Communities of the AF Academy*. Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent, is the venue. Doors open at 6:30; the program begins at 7 p.m. Palmer Lake Historical Society events and programs are free and open to all.

Mike and Sigi Walker may be reached at mikensigi@comcast.net.



Above: Bethany Bonser, presenter of the Sept. 19 Palmer Lake Historical Society program *Outlaws and Lawmen of the Wild West* stands with her grandmother, Phyllis Bonser. Photo by Mike Walker.

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Mullein, a backyard fountain of youth

By Janet Sellers

Indigenous science/traditional use of mullein has benefited people throughout the ages. Some consider mullein an invasive weed, but it's a good friend to have at home and a favorite of pollinators. It's been used for thousands of years—even Western pharmacopoeia touts mullein's myriad benefits.

Mullein's polyphenol antioxidants clean the blood of free radicals (which are linked to aging and a host of diseases) and treat many health issues for colds (upper respiratory issues), digestion, and skin. A tea made with the flowers and leaves is fragrant, sweet, and flavorful. The leaves' optimal flavor is in the pre-flowering stage, likely because the plant has its sugars focused in the leaves before sending its sugars to power up the flowers and seeds.

Scientists at the Department of Pharmacy, University of Swabi, Pakistan, published a research paper and wrote in the abstract, "The medicinal herb contains various chemical constituents like saponins, iridoid and phenylethanoid glycosides, flavonoids, vitamin C, and minerals. It is famous in various communities worldwide for the treatment of various disorders of both humans' and animals' ailments. A number of pharmacological activities such as anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anticancer, antimicrobial, antiviral, antihepatotoxic and anti-hyperlipidemic activity have been ascribed to this plant. The plant is used to treat tuberculosis, also earache and bronchitis."

For tea, it's traditionally steeped with a teaspoon of mullein leaf in a cup of water for five minutes. Obviously, we'd want to know as much as possible before trying it, only using organic mullein.

Most of us have some in the yard or close by; herbalists sell a pound of the wildcrafted dried leaves for about \$30 to \$50, while \$10 buys a smudging wand (the smoke is medicinal) often combined with herbs such as wildcrafted mullein, pineapple weed (wild chamomile), and yarrow to eliminate airborne pathogens. With many applications for remedies, there are also many methods for using this herb as well.

Fall gardening reminders

Leaving some leaves and pine needles to overwinter in place will help protect the native pollinators and other living things requiring such habitat, including our beloved pine trees that need their needles to turn into mulch and soil. Over-grooming the garden, even chopping up the leaves for mulch, will destroy these most important friends of the garden—and our planet.

I've been collecting and drying the mullein lately. The white clover as planet saver really makes me smile. In Minnesota, the state pays up to \$500 per home if they change to clover lawns.

Janet Sellers is an ethnobotanist and "lazy gardener" with an eye to Mother Nature's ways for living with forest climate landscaping. Send her your nature and organic gardening tips: janetsellers@ocn.me.

Right: Jokingly referred to as cowboy toilet paper, our local mullein plants have dozens of uses including: the stalk dipped in wax for a torch (aka miner's candle) and old-timey remedy tea or smudge: antioxidant, analgesic for pain relief, suppress muscle spasms, prevent coughs, soothe mucous membranes, expectorant, heal wounds, cuts, and abrasions. Photo by Janet Sellers.



Art Matters

Visual culture: ranching and the ecology of art



By Janet Sellers

October is *Arts Month*, a Pikes Peak region tradition each October that began over six years ago. The Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region (COPPr) started Arts Month "as a way to elevate the visibility and importance of arts and culture in our community. The official call to action during Arts Month is to "have at least one new cultural experience with family or friends during the month of October!"

In that vein, I visited artist and gallerist Mary Welty at her ranch near Black Forest.

The historic ranch is named "Point of Rocks Ranch" with classic Colorado vistas that include hay

fields, tree-lined streams and ponds, and rocky mesas covered in ponderosa pine and cedar. Herds of elk roam the land, as do cattle, horses, a couple of adopted llamas and, at one point, I spied a feral donkey down in the valley from the top of the mesa.

The day I visited, we rode all over the ranch to check out good locations for plein air painting for guest artists. I watched the process of cutting and baling hay into large, round bales on the gently terraced landscape. The sky seemed to go on forever, and standing on the top of one of the ranch's mesas, we could see Black Forest and farther out to the Front Range and Pikes Peak.



Above: Artist Mary Welty holds her painting of horses on one of the rocky mesa outcrops of her ranch. Just in time for October Arts Month, she is reopening her eclectic Colorado art gallery, this time on the ranch itself. Photo by Janet Sellers.