

**When We Were Young & Brave**

By Hazel Gaynor (William Morrow & Co.), \$27.99

Bestselling author Hazel Gaynor sets her unforgettable new novel in China during WWII, inspired by true events surrounding the Japanese Army's internment of teach-

ers and children from a British-run missionary school. As Gaynor says in the Afterward, "No matter the time or distance from an historical event, the universal themes of love, grief, friendship, regret and resilience are what connect us all across the decades."

Until next month, happy reading.

The staff at Covered Treasures can be contacted at [books@ocn.me](mailto:books@ocn.me).

**September Library Events**

**In-person, curbside, and virtual services available**

By Harriet Halbig

The Monument Library enters fall with the ability to welcome our patrons back into the library to enjoy such services as use of a computer and printing and copying services. Also, feel free to simply browse and check out a new movie for the weekend or the latest in new book titles.

All programs, including literacy and math tutoring, are suspended for the remainder of the calendar year. This is due to the unavailability of meeting rooms and the requirement of social distancing in the library.

For those who are hesitant to come inside, curbside service is also available to pick up patron holds. You can call ahead (488-2370) to ensure that your materials are ready and waiting, or simply drop by and ring the door-

bell on the table outside and we will come to you.

Please see our website ([ppld.org](http://ppld.org)) for a wide variety of virtual programs including yoga, story times, and book groups. Some of these programs are interactive and others are available to view at any time on our Facebook page.

Returned library materials are quarantined for four days before being processed, so please place any returns in the outdoor book drop on the north side of the building before entering.

In keeping with state and county Health Department mandates, all patrons over the age of 2 are required to wear masks in the library. There are large hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the library and staff will sanitize computers and self-check devices frequently

during the day.

The Palmer Lake Library remains closed at this time. The district Bookmobile will visit the site on Mondays from 9 to 11 and Wednesdays from 2:15 to 4. The book drop is still available at all times.

Palmer Lake patrons may no longer specify Palmer Lake as the pick-up location for their holds. They will instead be delivered to the Monument Library, 4 miles east on Highway 105. If you prefer to have your holds come via the Bookmobile, please call 531-6333 extension 2313.

Please refer to the website for any changes in schedule or services.

We hope to see you soon at the library.

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**High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)**

**Let's make a local seed library!**

By Janet Sellers

Victory gardens had a mega-boost early on in 2020, as backyard gardens gave us our own food at arm's reach and people wanted to make sure they would have food at hand during the pandemic. Many places ran out of garden seeds and supplies quite early, stemming from that surge of garden activity.

Inspired by the national movement promoting backyard books and seed libraries at [littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org), we're looking to have a little organic seed library exchange: People bring organic food and flower seeds, dried, packed and marked in new paper envelopes (safest from mold). We'll exchange them at the Farmers Market at Southwinds Fine Art Gallery, 16575 Rollercoaster Rd., Friday, Sept. 11. Bring your own exchangers' blank envelopes for seeds, too.

**Fall planting**

The beans are still producing and the corn is almost ready, tomatoes are still green, so we'll have to look for other open spots for our fall crops: Arugula in fall grows into lush plants; dwarf bok choy grows from seed to table in six weeks, also chard, collards, kale, lettuces, mustard, radishes, spinach, turnips, and my 55-day zucchini seeds—these are our last fast crops. I'm just waiting to harvest my bolted plant seeds to do it!

**Handy hints for September**

- Compost kitchen scraps for optimal kitchen garden soil. See sidebar.
- Prudent watering with a hose timer and targeted

sprinkler: no forgetting or overwatering.

- Use pine needles as mulch—weed seeds can't get in or take hold, soil stays moister.
- Pop some banana peels in water overnight for a bloom booster.
- Protect plants from heat: Make a screen by draping burlap or a shade cloth.
- Protect plants from cold snaps: Cover with cloche, floating row tunnels, or even a bedsheet.

Janet Sellers is a self-declared ethnoecologist and avid gardener, following Mother Nature's age-old wisdom of indigenous science. [janetsellers@ocn.me](mailto:janetsellers@ocn.me).



**Kitchen under-the-sink composter**

1. Using a lidded bucket, make five or eight 1/8-1/4-inch holes in lid 1 inch or so apart for air circulation, helping materials break down.
2. Cover holes by hot gluing a nylon screen on the underside, keeping bugs from getting in—and out—of the bin. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*
3. Layer soil on the bottom, then shredded newspaper; fill with kitchen scraps as you cook or clean out the fridge, uncooked is best. Chopped up, it decomposes faster. Alternate shredded newspaper layers; use no animal or dairy materials. Coffee grounds, crushed raw eggshells, banana peels, etc., make great additions. The dry matter keeps smells down, but a carbon filter hot glued between the screen and the lid holes eliminates them.
4. Add this to your outdoor compost pile or put out in the garden. If it's only partly decomposed, bury it a few inches down and it will continue to create rich soil underneath. Rinse and repeat.



**Art Matters**

**Making art: Flow for the pursuit of happiness**

By Janet Sellers

*"When we are involved in (creativity), we feel that we are living more fully than during the rest of life."*

—Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, PhD, Claremont Graduate University

Using our hands to create things has a hugely beneficial effect on people, known for millennia as a calming, regulatory outcome similar to meditation. The immersion in crafting and art is known as "flow," where we are so absorbed in the creative activity that nothing else seems to matter. Flow, according to Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Claremont Graduate University's Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Management, is the secret to happiness—a statement he supports with decades of research.

"There's promising evidence coming out to support what a lot of crafters have known anecdotally for quite some time," says Catherine Carey Levisay, a clinical neuropsychologist and wife of crafts.com CEO John Levisay. "And that's that creating—whether it be through art, music, cooking, quilting, sewing, drawing, photography, (or) cake decorating—is beneficial to us in a number of important ways."

Most everybody with a smartphone enjoys the digital craze in modifying photographs, videos, interactive art, and just having fun with images. The phone does a lot of technologically advanced work such as modifications into paintings or drawings mixing the new media visuals including sound, video games, and biotechnology.

Digital practices appear to make a person adept, but

are they capable of creativity with lasting value or merely a stream of electronic dabbings? While highly engaging, are people actually creating with it or just going down another rabbit hole?

As we become more dependent on electronics and screen time, will we also lose natural abilities to use our minds and bodies for our benefit? Downsides of screen time for all ages include weight gain, poor sleep, and brain atrophy. Screen time degrades our physical and mental agility.

A National Endowment for the Arts study showed the powerful positive intervention effects of community-based art programs run by professional artists. It points to true health promotion and disease prevention effects, "In that they also show stabilization and actual increase in community-based activities in general among those in the cultural programs, they reveal a positive impact on maintaining independence and on reducing dependency. This latter point demonstrates that these community-based cultural programs for older adults appear to be reducing risk factors that drive the need for long-term care." Key here is such programs are run by professional artists, those that are in the art field actively creating, and actively creating within flow puts us in that happiness driver's seat.

Enter old-school technologies—pencil, paper, paint and clay, or woodworking, knitting and needlework. Yes, just picking up a pencil to draw from observation enhances our faculties, enhancing memory and retrieval, being present cognitively and socially, making our lives

more enjoyable—and happy.

Janet Sellers is a professional artist, writer, and speaker, shows her paintings in Colorado galleries, and her sculptures in Colorado cities and museums. She teaches locally. She can be contacted at [JanetSellers@ocn.me](mailto:JanetSellers@ocn.me)



**Above:** A smaller than usual but happy public enjoyed coming back to the Art Hop on Aug. 20. Janice Dahl, left, and Bill Dahl shared their large format photography as the featured artists at Bella Art and Frame. Member artists of the gallery were also in attendance, as were artists and craftspeople outside the shop with festive, art-filled booths to welcome the public to the art festivities. Art Hop returns Sep. 17. See the ad on page 12. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*