

the author of more than 120 books, including *Star Wars*, *Dune*, *X-Files*, *Batman*, *Superman*, *Star Trek* and his new bestseller *Clockwork Angels* based on the new album by the rock group Rush and his new humorous horror stories featuring Dan Shamble, Zombie PI.

Anderson will talk about growing up in a small town and wanting to be a writer. Copies of his novels will be available at the event, with a portion of the proceeds going to the library.

The Monumental Readers will meet from 10 to noon on Friday, Nov. 16, to discuss *Postcards from a Dead Girl* by Kirk Farber. All patrons are welcome to attend this monthly book club.

The AARP Mature Safe Driving Program will be offered on Saturday, Nov. 17, from 1 to 5 p.m. This is a driver refresher course for drivers ages 50 and over, and participants may present their course completion certificates to insurance agents for a discount. Cost of the four-hour course is \$12 for AARP members and \$14 for nonmembers. Class size is limited and registration is

required.

New math tutoring available

Free math tutoring for all ages will be offered at the Monument Library each Monday from 4 to 8 p.m. beginning Nov. 5 and ending Dec. 17. Tutoring is available for students and for those adults who need a brush up before a GED or GRE exam. No appointment is necessary.

November is National Novel Writing Month. Come to our meeting room on Saturday, Nov. 10, from 10 until 3 and plan to write as long as you like. Open to all ages. No registration required.

On the wall during November will be *The Great Outdoors*, photography by Paul Pease. In the display case will be homemade cards by Charlotte Miller.

Palmer Lake Library events

Research has shown that children's reading fluency improves when they practice reading to a calm and patient audience. Read with Misty, the tiny Sheltie on Thursday, Nov. 4, from 4:30 to 5:50. Read with Misty and select a prize.

On Saturday, Nov. 17, at 10:30, meet the poet laureate for the Pikes Peak Region, Price Strobridge, who will present an intergenerational poetry activity. All ages welcome!

The Palmer Lake Knitting group meets each Wednesday from 10 until noon. Bring your project and enjoy the company of other knitters of all skill levels. No registration is required.

The Palmer Lake Book Group meets at 9 a.m. on the first Friday of each month. New members are welcome. Please call 481-2587 for the current selection.

Enjoy nature photography by local artist Claudia Goddec. On display in the Children's Room will be works by Palmer Lake Elementary School students.

All Pikes Peak Library facilities will close at 6 p.m. on Nov. 21 and remain closed on Nov. 22 for Thanksgiving. Facilities will reopen for regular hours on the Nov. 23.

Harriet Halbig can be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

Palmer Lake Historical Society, Oct. 18

Tracking the history of local railroads

By Bernard L. Minetti

Speaking on Oct. 18 to about 100 railroad history buffs and Palmer Lake Historical Society members, Mel McFarland, engineer and chief conductor for the Pikes Peak Cog Railway, presented a history of the various railroads that occupied the local area. While the early railroads were responsible for the growth of a number of local towns and commercial industries, specifically on the Palmer Divide, most are gone now, he said.

While towns like Monument and Palmer Lake grew, others, like Husted in the vicinity of the North Gate at the Air Force Academy, have faded into memory. The same can be said about industries such as the timber, potato, and ice industries. The early railroads moved large amounts of lumber, ice, and agricultural goods from the area. However, as some of the railroads faded into history, so did the local industries they supported.

McFarland said the area was mostly settled by folks who came by train, including his parents, and that the railroads were mainly responsible for the population growth of the region. He noted that Gen. William Jackson

Palmer built the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad, which originated in Denver and came through the Palmer Lake area.

During the building of the railroad, the town now known as Palmer Lake was called Divide. The town now known as Divide, which is west of Manitou Springs, took that name when Palmer Lake took its current name. McFarland also noted that Gen. Palmer was responsible for surveying and laying out the town of Colorado Springs.

McFarland noted that Colorado Springs was in existence for 16 years before the railroad was convinced to build a station building there.

He showed a photo of a station building and the adjacent tracks. Noting that there were three rails instead of two, he explained that this was done to accommodate both narrow gauge and standard railcars on one set of tracks. He added that the narrow gauge system through Colorado Springs was eliminated just over 100 years ago.

Originally, McFarland noted, the Rio Grande and the Santa Fe railroads each ran its own trains on its own tracks through the area. The federal government at that time wanted to enhance efficiency and directed that the tracks be consolidated so that the trains could move faster. To illustrate, he noted that at that time there were two sets of tracks going through Palmer Lake. The one on the west side was for southbound trains and on the one on the east side was for northbound trains.

During the early times of the building of rail systems, the towns where trains were routed insisted that the stations be built of stone. That was to preclude the moving of the station building at some later time.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, Nov. 15, at 7 p.m.



Above: Mel McFarland prepares to provide interesting insight into the history surrounding the railroad systems that traversed southern Colorado. Photo by Bernard Minetti.

at the Palmer Lake Town Hall. The public is invited to attend. The title of the presentation is, "Pioneer Weapons." Jerry Wlodarek and Johnny Mulligan will display and discuss some of the weapons used by the early inhabitants and settlers for hunting and protection.

Bernard Minetti can be contacted at bernardminetti@ocn.me.

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Special Events and Notices

By Judy Barnes, Editor Emeritus

Although we strive for accuracy in these listings, dates or times are often changed after publication. Please double-check the time and place of any event you wish to attend by calling the info number for that event.

Wednesday Senior Lunch at Big Red November Menu

Nov. 7—Chicken Dijon over rice and salad

Nov. 14—BBQ chicken sandwich, tater tots, and cole slaw

Nov. 21—NO LUNCH, Big Red closed for Thanksgiving break

Nov. 28—Ham, scalloped potatoes, and salad

Rolls and butter are served with each meal except sandwiches. Dessert is also provided.

Senior Lunch is an activity of Tri-Lakes Health Advocacy Partnership. Meals are provided by Pinecrest Catering, Palmer Lake; Nikki McDonald, executive chef, 481-3307.

Apply by Nov. 16 for Community Development Advisory Board

The El Paso County Board of Commissioners is seeking a community-minded citizen volunteer from Commis-

sioner District 1 to serve on the Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB). Applications for the open position are due by **Nov. 16**. Members are appointed to the CDAB for five-year terms and are limited to serving two consecutive five-year terms. Applicants should reside in Commissioner District 1, which includes the northwest portion of the county north of the U.S. Air Force Academy, including the areas of Monument, Palmer Lake, and Black Forest. The volunteer application is located at www.elpasoco.com and can be accessed by clicking on the "Volunteer Boards" link. For more information, call 520-6436.

Coat drive at Wescott Fire Department through Dec. 10

Donate your extra coats to Coats for Colorado Springs and El Paso County. You may drop off new or gently used coats at Wescott Fire Department, 15415 Gleneagle Dr., through Dec. 10. Coats will be distributed to those in need through the support of Partners in Housing and the Salvation Army. For more information, contact Fire Marshal Margo Humes, 488-8680 or e-mail mhumes@wescottfire.org.

Singers and musicians needed for