

The Monumental Readers Book Club will meet on Friday, April 20, at 10 a.m. to discuss Cutting for Stone by Abraham Verghese. All patrons are welcome to join.

Fabulous Friday Fun will explore the Dewey Decimal System through activities and games on Friday, April 20, at 4:15 p.m. There will be snacks and rewards for finding answers. Every participant earns a free book. Suggested for upper-elementary and middle school students.

There's fun for all at the monthly Lego club on Saturday, April 21, from 10:30 to noon. We'll provide the Legos and you bring the creativity. Please do not bring your own Legos. Bring your camera to record your creation—all pieces used remain the property of the Pikes Peak Library District.

On the afternoon of Saturday, April 21, from 1 to 5 p.m. the library will be offering the AARP Mature Safe Driving Program. The program is a refresher course designed for motorists ages 50 and older. Graduates may present their course completion certificate for their insurance agent for a discount. The charge for the four-hour course is \$12 for AARP members and \$14 for non-members. Class size is limited and registration is required.

"Victory, Victory, Victory!" So begins an actual letter dated April 29, 1862, from Charley H. Morrison, a Marine stationed on board the U.S.S. Brooklyn during the Civil War. Share Charley's experiences during the Battle of New Orleans through several of his carefully preserved letters read by students from the Palmer High School honors history class. Katherine Sturdevant, professor of history at Pikes Peak Community College, will discuss why saving original documents and studying the ordinary man's Civil War are so important. Join us on Sunday, April 29, at 2 p.m. for this fascinating program, "Letters from the Civil War."

On the walls during April is Springs Beat: the Photo-journalism of Stan Payne 1947-1960. In the display case is a demitasse collection from Europe.

**Palmer Lake Library events**

Come to the library and read with one of our Paws to Read dogs. Reading to a patient dog can improve fluency and confidence in young readers. Read with Misty, the tiny Sheltie, on Thursday, April 12, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Read with our golden retriever friend Kirby on Saturday, April 28, from 11 to noon.

April's Family Fun program is Lions, (no Tigers), and Bears—OH MY! Living safely with Colorado Wildlife. Wildlife officer Steve Cooley will give a brief introduction to Colorado wildlife and their habitats. He will tell us how to bear-proof our homes and teach us what to do if we encounter bears or lions. Officer Cooley will bring lots of interesting wildlife objects for a fun hands-on experience. Join us on Saturday, April 21, at 10:30 a.m.

The Palmer Lake Library Knitting Group welcomes knitters of all skill levels on Thursdays from 10 until noon. Bring your project and enjoy the company of other knitters.

The Palmer Lake Book Group will meet at 9 a.m. on Friday, May 4 to discuss The Postmistress by Sarah Blake. New members are welcome and no registration is required.

On the walls in the library, view works from Expressions of Beauty-Shared, photography by Laurisa Rabins.

Please note that all Pikes Peak Library facilities will be closed on April 8 to observe Easter.

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

# Effort begins to list Palmer Lake Star on historical registries

*By Bernard L. Minetti*

Jack Anthony, a retired Air Force colonel, historian, and Palmer Lake Historical Society Board member, announced March 15 that the process was underway to nominate the Palmer Lake Star for listing in the State Register of Historical Properties and the National Register of Historical Places.

The intention is to have the nomination ready by June so that it might be presented to the State Review Board that meets in September.

Anthony told attendees at the meeting of the Palmer Lake Historical Society that the idea for the star originated with B.E. Jack, regional manager of Mountain Utilities one summer day in 1935. On a drive to Palmer Lake from his office in Colorado Springs to check on the progress of his line crew and as the early morning sun lit up the mountain on the horizon ahead of him, he again pictured an idea that he had many times before. This time he vowed to share this idea with someone else before the day was done. It was on this cool morning in early June that the Palmer Lake Star had its real beginning.

On his coffee break, he met with Bert Sloan in Sloan's Café. They discussed the idea. Jack then took Sloan for a ride so that they could view the mountain and envision the idea from a distance while looking at the site. The idea that this would be a memorable sight each holiday season took hold, and the idea began to be put into place.

Volunteers put the structure in place by the fall of that year. When the star was first lit, there was a fuzzy aura around it due to the high wattage of the bulbs used. The wattage then was reduced. The star, made up of 91 bulbs, was lit formally for the first time on Dec. 1, 1936, and remained on until Jan. 1, 1937.

The Star of Palmer Lake is also called the "Star of Bethlehem." It is lit each Memorial Day as well as each Christmas holiday season.

In 2002, a nearly total renovation was required. Project engineer Todd Bell organized and directed the project. The 50 volunteers included volunteer firefighters, Palmer Lake Historical Society members, town officials,



**Above:** View of the Town of Palmer Lake from the Palmer Lake Star. *Photo by historian and retired Air Force Col. Jack Anthony.*

and other Tri-Lakes area residents. During the work, the lights were repositioned to make them more symmetrical and a bulb was added.

The star is well known in the region and has become, to some, a historical landmark.

Bill Reich, who was scheduled to present "Colorado Railroad Ice Houses" at the meeting, was ill and could not attend. In his place the DVD film There Was a Time was presented. It depicted Denver in the 1940s as residents supported the war effort with War Bond sales, dealt with rationing, and performed the required blackout drills.

Many were employed in the defense industry at the Remington Arms factory and the Continental Airlines modification center where bombers were completed.

The film emphasized that the veterans returning from World War II came home with ideas and the energy that began to build Denver into what it is today. It showed the evolution of Denver into a major industrial city.

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The next meeting will be at 7 p.m. April 18 at the Palmer Lake Town Hall. Membership is not required to attend. The April presentation will be "Trails to Interstate: Transportation Systems Across the Palmer Divide." Lee Whitely will trace the history of the routes across the divide to their evolution into I-25.

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

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