

# NEWSLETTER

Fall 2018

## What's Happening:

## Pikes Peak Historical Society Annual Auction

The annual PPHS Auction is just over the horizon! The auction provides the main source of funding for the Pikes Peak Historical Society's museum mortgage and insurance expenses. It's been the key to success in our efforts to keep our museum and other programs free to the public!

This year live bidding starts at 2:00 pm, on Saturday, October 20, at the Lake George Charter School. Items to be auctioned will be available for viewing starting at 12:00 noon. Lunch will be available for purchase as you preview the items starting at noon

Other than bidding often and bidding a lot—after all, *it is for charity*—how can you help? And why wouldn't you want to help with this fun and exciting community event?

First, it takes many people, with many different talents, to put on the auction. Availability is the key ability and we guarantee we can find you a place to help!

Second, we need people willing to canvas local businesses who have donated previously to stop by and request their support again this year. We already sent a preparatory letter to every business that has helped in the past, to remind them. We just need follow-up.

Third, you can donate. Gifts utilizing your special talents are a superb donation and often create lasting friendships. Your custom baked goods, automobile detailing, mineral collecting trips, quilting instruction, guided local history tours, or special dinners in your home all make

great auction items. We would love to see more.

Gift certificates from local or out-of-town stores, merchants, guides, or other specialty businesses with which you have a relationship are also a great idea.

We try to auction classy items that people want or need; it's not a rummage or garage sale! So all used electronic items must have a user's manual, all cables, and be totally functional. Donations must be clean, in good condition, and complete. Please remember: NO appliances, mattresses, bedding, pillows, or blankets; however, a hand-made quilt would be welcome. Furniture that is in very good condition and antique or otherwise unique could be considered. PPHS must reserve the right to otherwise utilize your donations if they are not suitable for the auction.

Want to help, but not sure what to donate? Cash donations are always welcome, and anyone making a cash contribution to the auction will have their name **in the front of the auction booklet!**

Contact John Rakowski or Scott Adams at 719-748-8259 for more information.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 PPHS Annual Auction
- 2 Calendar of Events; Board of Directors; What's Up?
- 3 Geocaching: Where's Kaelin?
- 4 John M. Hensley
- 5 Photo from Last Year's Auction
- 6 Membership Info; Thanks!; Amazon Smile; Florissant Pioneer Cemetery Info
- 7 Membership Form

# 2018 Calendar of Events

## **Amazing Culturally Modified Trees**

Andy Weinzapfel

Sunday, September 30, 2:00 pm

Florissant Library

## **PPHS Annual Auction**

Saturday, October 20, 12:00 pm

Lake George Charter School Gym

## **Veterans Day Ceremony**

Sunday, November 11, 10:00 am

Florissant Pioneer Cemetery

## **Birds of Florissant**

Debbie Barnes-Shankster

Sunday, November 18, 2:00 pm

Florissant Library

## **PPHS Holiday Party**

Saturday, December 15, 12:00 noon

Florissant Library

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We all start to slow down in the fall and winter,  
but there are still fun, informative, and  
interesting PPHS events to attend.

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How many of the Chautauquas  
were you able to attend this year?

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## Get out and Enjoy Autumn in Colorado!

### Newsletter Committee

Darice Zimmermann

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Robyn Proper

robbynproper@gmail.com

Donna Knudten

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*Chautauquas are a public service of the Pikes Peak Historical Society. There is no admission charge and refreshments are served. Chautauquas are normally held at the Florissant Library unless otherwise noted.*

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## 2018 PPHS Board of Directors

John Rakowski, *President*

Scott Adams, *Vice President*

Barbara Hickok, *Secretary*

Carolynne Forster, *Treasurer*

### **Members at Large**

Wayne Johnston, *Facebook & Website Chair*

Brian Stewart, *Membership Chair*

Lois Voeltz, *Membership in training, pphsmembers@gmail.com*

Jeanne Gripp, *Chautauqua Chair*

Diane Burton, *Board Member at Large*

### **Other Chairs**

Andy Weinzapfel, *Culturally Modified Trees Chair*

Sheila Naviasky, *Museum Docent Chair*

Kathy Perry, *Geocache Chair*

### **Advisory Board:**

AJ Hotchkiss

Lenore Hotchkiss

Celinda Kaelin

Sally Maertens

Andy Weinzapfel

Susan Weinzapfel

### Editorially Speaking:

## What's Up?

Don't miss the upcoming Chautauquas! Our Annual Auction is coming up on October 20, noon, at the Lake George Charter School Gym. The PPHS Holiday Party is Saturday, December 15; a great opportunity to visit with your fellow volunteers and PPHS members.

The cost for a plot at the cemetery will be going up in 2019; reserve your space now to save money. Before December 31, 2018, it is a requested donation of \$300 for a full burial, \$150 for cremains; January 1, 2019, the donation goes up to \$400 for a full burial, \$200 for cremains.

Kay Bishop has assumed the Museum Gift Shop management from Doris Kneuer, and she is looking for Florissant-labeled items to sell in the Shop. Thank you, Doris, for your time managing the Gift Shop, and welcome to the job, Kay!

# Geocaching: Where's Kaelin?

Kathy Perry

As reported in the previous newsletter, our travel bug, Kaelin, was picked up by a geocacher named "Hives," who took him to several states on the way back to his home state of Minnesota. By July, Kaelin had traveled 2,743 miles.

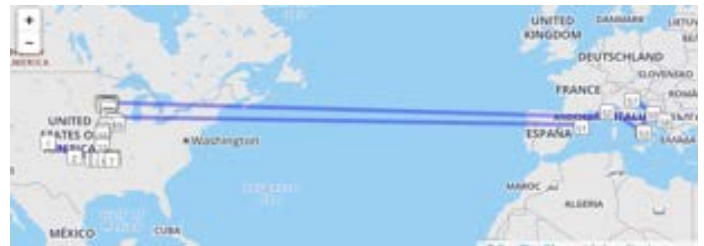
In early August Kaelin left with Hives for more adventures to geocaches in Europe. His first stop was to visit Sagrada Familia (temple) in Cataluna, Spain. His next stop was Monopoly Nice geocache in Provence, France. Then he went to Limoni d' Amalfi geocache in Campania, Italy, where he got to learn about gelato.

His next stop was to an Earthcache: Mt. Vesuvius, Pompeii Ruins, also in Campania. A geocache Earthcache involves learning about basic geology in the field and is placed at unique geoscience features or aspects of the earth. The nearest one to us is at the Florissant Fossil Beds.

From there he traveled to Croatia to the Cathedral of Saint Dominus geocache. The Cathedral of Saint Domnius, consecrated at the turn of the 7th century AD, is regarded as the oldest Catholic cathedral in the world that remains in use in its original structure. As you

can see, Kaelin is having great adventures. His next one was to Veneto, Italy, where he visited I giardini di Venezia which are Napoleonic gardens built in 1807 under the rule of Napoleon Bonaparte. Then to a geocache in Venice near the Ponte della Libertà (Freedom Bridge) before going on to Budva: old town geocache in Montenegro. He got back to the United States, and a week later did a puzzle cache several hundred miles from Hives' home in Minnesota. Total miles traveled so far is now 14,468.2 miles. Seems like he's fulfilling his mission and I can't wait to see where else his travels will lead.

Also, the total number of visits to our geocaches is now 800.



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Thank you Jeffrey McCammon for the great photo of a Corvette Club visiting our Museum this summer.



# John M. Hensley

By Donna Knudten

John M. Hensley was a Florissant pioneer, Civil War veteran, and a very determined man. Like the other Civil War veterans buried in the Florissant Pioneer Cemetery, Hensley applied for a pension as an invalid, but it is not known if he received it.

Prior to moving to Florissant in 1880, Hensley lived in Mason County, Illinois. He married Elizabeth Proctor, and the couple moved to Indiana. When the Civil War broke out, Hensley, now 37 years old, enlisted in Co. H, 99<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry. That same year—1862—President Lincoln issued the order that allowed black soldiers to serve in the army. Although black soldiers could now fight, they remained in segregated units officered by whites. Hensley transferred to the 59<sup>th</sup> Colored Infantry, serving as a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant.

Did Hensley make this move because he was hoping for a promotion or higher pay? Possibly, as white officers commanding black regiments were promoted more rapidly than white officers commanding white regiments. Whatever the reason, it was a dangerous move. If a white officer commanding black troops was captured by the Confederates, he could be shot and his black

soldiers returned to slavery.

Hensley was promoted to the rank of Captain in 1864. He and his troops spent the war fighting in Mississippi. Hensley was mustered out of service on January 31, 1866. Fifteen years later, Hensley and his wife came west to find their fortune. They established a ranch about a mile southwest of Florissant, just across the road from the Florissant cemetery. Hensley hoped to find gold on his homestead. Wisely, he planted potatoes and boarded travelers, but all the while he dug for gold in his potato patch.

On February 12, 1891, The Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph printed an exciting announcement: “The Reported Gold! A Gazette Representative Visits the Florissant Mine.”

The excitement was palpable. 150 claims were staked in Hensley’s potato Patch. The Midland Railroad ran extra trains to Florissant to accommodate potential prospectors. Imagine the excitement in our town back then—we’re going to get rich right here in Florissant!

But Florissant residents quickly had their hopes dashed to the ground. A sobering article appeared in the Gazette. A reporter wrote: “I



took Hensley's ore to the lab at Colorado College. Strong Nitric acid was poured on the suspected flakes of gold. They promptly dissolved. The metal was only copper."

Hensley, ever the optimist, wasn't deterred by such scientific evidence. He threw all his strength into sinking a shaft, dug by hand, through solid granite, still convinced there was gold to be found.

On September 9, 1894, the following article appeared in the Daily News, Denver:

## **The Body Removed**

**The Hensley Mine Cleared of  
Choke Damp and the Remains  
of Its Owner Are  
Raised to the Surface.**

Special to The News.

FLORISSANT, Colo., Sept. 7.—The Hensley mine was sufficiently cleared of choke damp by 6 o'clock this

morning to allow Miles McDonald to descend. He found Captain Hensley wedged into the crevice opened by the last shot put in Wednesday. The task of getting the body out was very difficult as the bottom of the shaft was too small to allow more than one man to get down to him and he was a very large man. When recovered the body was found to be badly bruised and gashed and the head crushed. He had probably fallen fifty feet. The work he has done, the sinking of an eighty-six foot shaft through solid granite all alone and under the discouragement of all his friends, is probably the most marvelous feat ever accomplished by one lone man, especially by a man who is above 70 years of age. The funeral will be Saturday afternoon.

Quite the fellow, don't you think? A Civil War Veteran, A Florissant pioneer, and a man who kept his dream alive until the very end.

## **Photo from Last Year's Auction**





## Gee, Thanks!

We always have people and businesses to thank for their contributions to PPHS in the form of money, time, energy, materials; so:

## Thanks!

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Thank you to Lois Voeltz who is understudying Brian to take over as Membership Chair.

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Thank you to Doris for all your work managing the Museum Gift Shop, and to Kay Bishop for volunteering to take over

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Thank you to all our wonderful docents and volunteers for all you do!

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What can you do to help PPHS?

## Wanted:

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One or two people are needed to learn how to set up and take down the tipi at the museum. Contact Jeanne Gripp [woodespryte@gmail.com](mailto:woodespryte@gmail.com).

## Amazon Smile Program

Do you shop on Amazon? Did you know that you can benefit the Pikes Peak Historical Society every time you shop? Amazon has a program to support your favorite charity: Amazon will donate 0.5% of most purchases to your chosen charity, and PPHS is now registered as participating charity. Just go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) to get started, and select Pikes Peak Historical Society from the list of charities.

### Membership Information

If you have questions or need to make changes to your contact information, members may call 719-748-8259 and leave a message for a call back; or call President John Rakowski at 719-748-3861; or contact Brian Stewart, Membership Chairman, at [jbcstewart@msn.com](mailto:jbcstewart@msn.com); or use the 'Contact Us' form via the website:

[www.pikespeakhsmuseum.org](http://www.pikespeakhsmuseum.org).

March 1st is now the expiration date for all dues paying members. Your expiration date is shown on the address information of this newsletter. Memberships may be renewed either online through the PPHS website using PayPal or via the U.S. mail (PO Box 823, Florissant, CO 80816).

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**ATTENTION!** The Editor is always looking for articles, old clippings, old photos, and story ideas for upcoming newsletters. Email the Editor with your submission. [daricezimmermann@gmail.com](mailto:daricezimmermann@gmail.com)

### FLORISSANT PIONEER CEMETERY

Florissant's cemetery received its first permanent "guest" in 1874. This is not surprising, since the town of Florissant was established by Judge James Castello in 1870. What is surprising, however, is that Frank, James' son, waited until 1886 to incorporate a Florissant Cemetery Association. This was probably in anticipation of the boom that would come to the area with the arrival of the Midland Railroad. The Pikes Peak Historical Society maintains this tradition of stewardship with its management of the Florissant Pioneer Cemetery on behalf of Teller County. If you meet the residency requirements; you may also secure a final resting place in this historic cemetery. Donations of \$300 are requested for a full burial, and only \$150 for cremains. These rates will be increasing in 2019 to \$400 and \$200, respectively, so be sure to reserve your space now.

Call Pikes Peak Historical Society at 719-748-8259 to secure your future at this historic site.

## MEMBERSHIP



The Pikes Peak Historical Society (PPHS) is a non-profit corporation organized under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3). The purpose of the Society is to encourage the preservation of the history of Florissant and the West Slope of Pikes Peak, and to educate the public regarding this historical legacy.

Pikes Peak Historical Society is funded solely through memberships and donations, and supports its mission through volunteers who serve on its numerous committees.

PPHS owns and operates two museums: The Pikes Peak Historical Society Museum, at 18033 Teller County Road CR1 (across from the Florissant Post Office) and the Schoolhouse Museum, located at Teller County Roads CR31 and CR3 (Wildhorn Rd.).

Our Cemetery Committee manages the 1874 Florissant Pioneer Cemetery on behalf of Teller County. Our Beautification Committee sponsors an area-wide clean-up each spring and plants flowers throughout the town of Florissant. Our Chautauqua Committee sponsors free educational programs during the year and our Tree Committee researches and records Native American Culturally Scarred Trees. In addition, we maintain a fund for returning representatives of the Ute tribe to their sacred mountain, Tava, each year. If you become a Docent (Museum Volunteer), you act as host at the Museum, and meet wonderful, exciting people from all over the world.

The volunteers and members of the Pikes Peak Historical Society make all of these community projects possible. Your membership entitles you to our tri-annual newsletter. Life Members receive a 10% discount on all items at the Museum Gift Shop.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (please print):

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail1: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail2: \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer Newsletter by: Email\_\_\_\_, US Mail\_\_\_\_, both Email and US Mail\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERSHIP TYPE

### COMMITTEE INTERESTS

___ Sustaining	\$20/year	___ Auction	___ Cemetery	___ Chautauqua
___ Family	\$30/year	___ Geocaching	___ Heritage Day	___ Hwy 24 Cleanup
___ Supporting	\$50/year	___ Kiosk	___ Museum	___ Trails
___ Castello Life	\$200	___ Trees		

CHECK ENCLOSED FOR \$ \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO: PIKES PEAK HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 823  
FLORISSANT, CO 80816

OR JOIN ONLINE AT:  
[www.pikespeakmuseum.org](http://www.pikespeakmuseum.org)

For more information, call John at 719-748-3861. Thank you.

(Updated 6/8/2017)



Pikes Peak Historical Society  
P.O. Box 823  
Florissant, CO 80816

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*Addressee or Current Resident*