

125 YEARS OF PEACHES- 50 PEACH FESTIVALS

Celebrating delicious Palisade peaches with a summer festival—usually in August—has been a long-time tradition in Colorado. There were “Peach Day” celebrations starting in the 1890s, including a number held in Grand Junction.



1895 Grand Junction
Peach Day Souvenir

The first “Peach Festival” held in Palisade was September 16th 1930. It was sponsored by the East Orchard Mesa Women’s Club. It included displays of fruit, vegetables, peaches, flowers, and farm products of the Western Slope. There was also a “delicious chicken dinner” served at noon, two bands, and a dance in the evening on the United Fruit Growers’ platform. Peaches were distributed to as many as 3,000 people, and prizes were awarded for the best entries in over three dozen categories, including various varieties of peaches, grapes, and even walnuts. It was successful, and the East Orchard Mesa Women’s Club sponsored another Peach Festival in 1931.

In 1938, Palisade’s Dorothy Tharp was crowned Peach Queen at what was touted as the “Second Annual Peach Festival” at Lakeside Park in Denver. It was sponsored by the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad at the beginning of Colorado Peach Week from August 27 to September 3, as proclaimed by Governor Teller Ammons.

No festivals were held in the 1950s or 1960s, although in 1954, *The Palisade Tribune* sponsored a

August 2018

Peach Recipe Contest with prizes, including tickets to the Elberta Theater for the best recipes each week.

In the mid-20th Century, most everyone in Palisade was needed to work during harvest and few would have extra time to plan and execute a festival. Also, the devastating winter kill of 1962-63 which destroyed peach trees and many orchards—and other freezes in the next few years drastically reduced the size of our peach crops—likely contributed to the lack of formal peach festival celebrations. During that time however, the Town and the Palisade Lions Club consistently held July 4th events with a parade, booths, races, the traditional Firemen’s water fight, and other activities before the three-week Standard Elberta peach harvest in August.

After years of intermittent celebrations, Peach Festival was revived in 1975. It was sponsored by the Palisade Chamber of Commerce and held in Palisade Park. Jacque Gerhard was the Peach Queen. Kitty Hines was the 1976 Peach Festival Queen. There were no festivals held in 1977, 1978 or 1979. In 1980, the festival was called Palisade Days with a peach recipe contest, bake sales, artists, clowns, and sidewalk sales.



1921 Peach Queen Juanita Strong and her court which included Mary Edith McKay; Dorothy Echnernach; Dorothy Nuckolls, Helen Swisher, Mary Mosier, Ruth Wolfe, Jo Schneible, and Agnes Eyer.

The August 16, 1984 event was described as the 10th Peach Festival – “Peach of the West,” though no peach festival was held in 1974. Dixie Burmeister revived the peach recipe contest in 1984
(continued)

and gave the Peach Festival much-appreciated momentum for the next 33 years.

The first Town Grouch contest was held during Peach Fest in 1987. That year, there were lots of activities, including booths, a Peach King and Queen, a dog contest—with prizes for several categories, a softball tournament, a baby contest, horseshoe pitching, a river raft race, a barbecue, Farmers' Market, a dance, Amateur Talent Contest, and a concert in the Park by the Centennial Band.

Palisade has been the Peach Capital of Colorado for more than 125 years, and there have been at least 50 Peach Festivals to celebrate this magnificent fruit!

This year's Peach Festival will be held **August 16th - 19th**. The event starts with an Ice Cream Social on Thursday, booths on Friday and Saturday, a parade at 9:00 on Saturday morning, plus 1, 5, and 10 K races, Feast in the Fields, Tours, a Car Show, Peach Eating Contest and more. For more information, look at <https://palisadepeachfest.com/>

Peach Festivals featuring “world famous” Palisade peaches are also held on Colorado's Eastern Slope. The Lafayette Festival is scheduled the same weekend as the Palisade Peach Festival.

Look for the Palisade Historical Society's booth in Riverbend Park on Friday afternoon and Saturday. We will have peach wrap-packing demonstrations both days to show how peaches were processed 50 years ago, as well as entries in the Saturday parade.



Wrap-packing peaches. (Photo courtesy of the Washington Duncan Collection)

CLARK'S ORCHARDS AND JR'S CARRIAGE SERVICE ADD PALISADE HISTORY TO TOURS

Two horse-drawn carriage tour services serving Palisade requested historic information about the area for their drivers to share with guests. The Palisade Historical Society is thrilled to have this additional exposure of Palisade's unique history. Bob Edmiston of Clark's Orchards narrates tours on a route highlighting the Vineland on Saturdays during the summer.

Bob Edmiston drives and narrates Clark's Orchard's buggy horse-drawn buggy tours.



Drivers for Joe Burtard's JR's Carriage Service offer a variety of signature tours with different routes including downtown Palisade, to various wineries, orchards, and fruit stands, as well as weddings and other customized tours. Learn more from <http://jrscarriage.com/> about how to schedule a memorable tour and also enjoy Palisade history.

JRs Carriage Service buggy in front of the former Harvey Ball house/White Lilly Ranch on G Road on a Palisade Tour.



(Photo courtesy of JR's Carriage Service)

Look for us on Facebook:

Palisade Historical Society

NEW FIBER ART STUDIO AND YARN SHOP OPENS

Cayenna Hanna has opened Spun, a fiber art studio near Bower and 3rd Street in Palisade. She offers a wonderful assortment of yarn, knitting, and weaving supplies as well as classes and workshops.

Spun has quickly become a popular home for local knitting groups. Spun is located at the Martin House (Stop #29 in our Palisade Historic Walking Tour brochure). Over the years, the Spun building has served as a garage, mother-in-law cottage, and fruit stand.



Cayenna Hanna owns Spun, the new Fiber Art Studio in Palisade. It is open Thursdays – Sundays this summer.

The Martin House was built in 1903 by Clint H. Martin, the first publisher of *The Palisade Tribune*. It was owned by J. H. Sayles in 1904, and later, Dr. J. H. Larson, a mayor of Palisade. It was the home of long-time physician Dr. F. H. Weidlein, and then became a boarding house operated by Mrs. Weidlein. The Hanna family has owned the property since April 1978.



A clever outdoor fiber sculpture decorated the Martin House lawn just west of Spun at 237 South Bower Avenue.

PALISADE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AT THE JULY 4TH 2018 PARADE

Dave Cecuga, Gayle Madden, and Priscilla Walker dressed in old fashioned attire to ride in the 1930 Model A Ford.



Kent Brown and Frank Nemanich led the July 4th parade entry with the Historical Society banner.



Hugo Madden took the photo below of the Model A, driven by Priscilla in the July 4th parade. Gayle and Dave are sitting in the rumble seat, and Bruce Walker in the front passenger seat.



2018-2019 Directors of the Palisade Historical Society

Ralph Branch – branchcolorado@gmail.com

Jaime Cox – jaimejcox@gmail.com

Barb Hampton – blh93@hotmail.com

Gary Hines – gwhines@msn.com

Nancy Morrison – nancykmorrison@gmail.com

Frank Nemanich – westiecolorado@bresnan.net

Kaylan Robinson – kaylanmrobinson@gmail.com

Priscilla Walker – pbwalker630@acsol.net

Charlene Weidner – charw@acsol.net

AMAZON SMILE PURCHASES BENEFIT THE PALISADE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

For your on-line shopping on Amazon Smile, please designate the Palisade Historical Society as your charity of choice. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon Smile purchases. Start shopping at <https://smile.amazon.com>



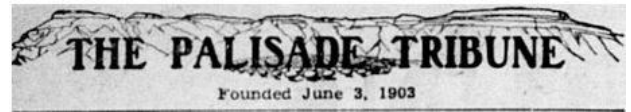
Sign Up or Renew Your Membership Today!

We are an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. Everyone is invited to belong to the Palisade Historical Society—through volunteer time with committees and projects—and by membership.

Annual memberships in the Palisade Historical Society start at just \$25 for Individuals, \$50 for Families, \$100 for Businesses, and \$500 for Patrons. There are also 10-year memberships for \$200 and Lifetime memberships for \$400. If you haven't signed up—or it's time to renew your membership—please do so today! Mail your tax-deductible checks to the **Palisade Historical Society, P.O. Box 631, Palisade, CO 81526.**

Volunteers welcome!

Please contact us if you're interested in meeting new people, want to learn more about Palisade history, and/or work on committees, projects, and fundraising for the new permanent home for the Historical Society. Contact a board member to find out how you can help.



Thanks to generous donors, and grants from CHRAH and the Colorado State Virtual Library, we have raised funds to digitize over 2,000 issues of *The Palisade Tribune* for the Colorado Historic Newspaper database website: www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org

Please help us get more issues digitized!

__ Yes, I would like to help digitize historic
Palisade Tribune newspapers

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

- ☐ \$100.00
☐ \$1,000.00
☐ \$10,000.00 Or \$_____ enclosed

Please enclose check or money order **payable to the Palisade Historical Society** and mail to:
P.O. Box 631, Palisade, CO 81526

Historical Guided Walking Tour



Tour guide Dave Cecuga, aka "Col. Bower" with Lana and Beth, participants in the Town Recreation Program's July 12 "An Hour with Colonel Bower" Guided Walking Tour on 3rd Street.