



From Time To Time

A Quarterly Publication of the Commerce City Historical Society

Spring 2014
Volume 5, Issue 1



The late Jean Klein is the inspiration for the CCHS's annual Angel Awards which honors those in the community who have worked tirelessly to improve our community.

From Time to Time Luncheon

Jean Klein Angel Award winners to be honored at annual CCHS luncheon

Do you have your ticket for the Commerce City Historical Society's annual From Time to Time Luncheon?

The CCHS will be honoring people from our community who have made a profound impact on the city and residents in Commerce City.

In 2010, we held our first event and started the *Jean Klein Angel Award* in memory of Jean Klein who passed away in 2009.

Jean was a long-time resident of Commerce City who served on many boards and worked tirelessly to improve the water in Commerce City.

This year we are

honoring former State Senator Bob Martinez, The Teter Brothers, Kid's First, the Commerce City Charter Delegates and Paskey Teto. A special business award will also be given to Hi-Lo Employees Corporation.

This event will be held at Salon Madrid, located at 6495 Monaco St. (formerly the Edelweiss Club), at 1 p.m. on Sunday, April 27, 2014.

Please come and help us honor these people in our community.

If you need a ticket, please call Debra Bullock at 303-946-3426.

Tickets are \$20.

Commerce City Historical Society progress

Almost five years ago CCHS was organized and became a 501(C)3.

There were many goals we named at that time. Some of the goals were to have *a history museum, educate the community about our history and honor great people from our past.*

The board and members of CCHS have been very busy during this time and have much success in reaching for these goals.

We are negotiating with the city of Commerce City to lease the Conter Community Building for our first museum and business offices.

We have also been successful with the education goals. We give coloring books full of pictures of our history to all second graders every year. We have formed a history club for students of Adams City High School.

We honor many people who have made profound and



The CCHS Board of Directors have been in negotiations for use of the Conter Community Center as a museum and business office.



lasting difference in our city and community.

We also fundraise to help

accomplish these goals. We want to thank all who helped with these projects.

CCHS helps Kemp 2nd graders learn history



Commerce City Historical Society Historian June Younger and CCHS Charter Member and Commerce City Mayor Pro Tem Rene' Bullock passed out CCHS's "The History of Commerce City" Coloring Book and crayons Jan. 31 to second graders at Kemp Elementary. The students are learning about local history and had fun telling the two what they liked most about living in Commerce City.

CCHS, History Club visit national repository

Members of the Commerce City Historical Society and the Adams City High School History Club were given a rare inside look at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's National Eagle and Wildlife Property Repository on the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge on Feb. 18.

Members got to see many items that have been confiscated when people tried to illegally bring them into the United States. They learned what happens to these items as well as what happens to Eagles that are found dead anywhere in the country.



Above, a representative from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife explains how the repository works. At right, members of the ACHS History Club examine confiscated items.



CCHS annual meeting, board election results

CCHS Annual Meeting was held on Feb. 21, 2014, at Our Savior Lutheran Church.

The bi-annual election of board members was held and Debra Bullock, June Younger and JoAnn Stevenson were re-elected. They were elected to four-year terms.

Bullock received 39 votes, Younger received 37 votes, Stevenson received 28 votes and challenger Judy Tunis received 12 votes.

There were a large number of members present. A report of our last year was presented to the members. It was a very good meeting.

What can you save for the cost of a...

Donate today!



Commerce City Historical Society
Building Fund
10671 Nucla Ct.
Commerce City, CO 80022
or donate at www.cchistoric.com



A Moment in History...

Commerce City Charter Delegate History



(Front row) City Attorney Bob Gehler, Marge Christianson, Alfred Krogh, Sybil Ratcliff, Al Williams, Harold Kite, Floyd Templeton, Ivan Jergenson, Casey Hayes, John Roebuck. (Back Row) Roland Russell, Richard Vigil, Warren Kerls, Robert Clavert Jr., Harry Tate, Jean Klein, Laverne Franzen, Leroy Fields, Leo Younger and Dale Graham. (Not Pictured) Larry Ford and Charles McCune.

Prior to the Commerce City Charter, the city operated as a statutory city under the laws of the state of Colorado (State Legislature).

The city was in a category of being in a second-class city with statutes pertaining to them. If we had a problem, it was up to the Legislature to change the law and what was perceived as a problem in Commerce City didn't exist in other towns, so the reply was *don't bother us*.

The city had an elected city clerk and an elected city treasurer. Sybil Ratcliff was the city clerk and Casey Hayes was the treasurer

at a salary of \$100 per month.

The delegates were elected by the city residents on Nov. 4, 1969. They developed the proposed Charter and signed it on March 24, 1970. It was submitted to the vote of the people and an election was held on May 5, 1970.

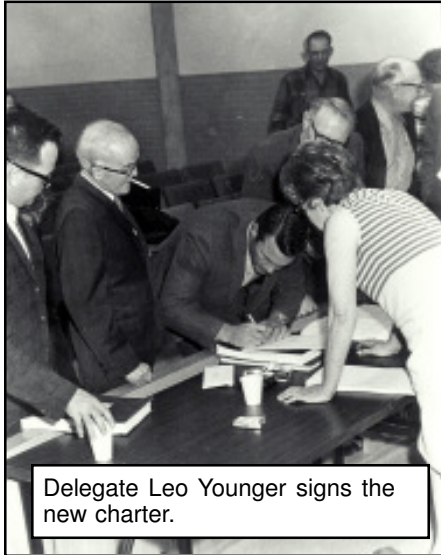
Most of the delegates had full-time jobs and it was very difficult to juggle schedules; but, they took the necessary time off to complete this task. The individuals

Continued on next page

Charter Delegates *Continued from previous page*

represented a cross-section of the city and expressed many different viewpoints; but, came together with an excellent guideline for the common good of the people of Commerce City.

They took on a big commitment. First, meeting once a week and then had to move it to twice a week. A third day was added to be able to complete the proposed charter.



Delegate Leo Younger signs the new charter.

They met at City

Hall which was located at 5291 East 60th Ave., currently the Adams 14 School District Administration Building. (The school district purchased the building from the City of Commerce City in 2007 when the city moved City Hall to its new location at 7887 East 60th Ave.

The Charter Delegates were represented by Bob Gehler, the city attorney. He advised the delegates concerning all the legal ramifications and advised them in the philosophy and practical intent of the issues by researching several other city charters. He would then draft alternate provisions and take them back to the delegates to review and choose the provisions they preferred (one section at a time).

Other cities that had charters such as Thornton, Littleton, Golden, Westminster, Aurora and Englewood (to name a few) were a guideline for charter research for

Commerce City.

Considering the proposed charter, the delegates took on the task of the immediate city challenges and looking into the needs of the people for the future. They wanted future city councils to have a document that would give them the tools to remedy problems and plan for a more productive and enjoyable lifestyle for the people of Commerce City.

As a result, a charter was written that has provided an effective and efficient form of government and led to becoming a Home Rule City.

Within the 50 years of this charter, it has been amended six times by the voters of Commerce City during city elections.

**Join us at the
50th Annual
Commerce City
Memorial Day
Parade**

***Honoring Those Who
Serve Our Nation***

**Monday, May 26
at 10 a.m.**

**We need cars, candy
and volunteers to walk
and hand out programs**

Call Debra Bullock at 303-946-3426

CCHS Out and About

The Commerce City Historical Society has been out in the community documenting and saving history as well as fundraising for future programs and having some fun!



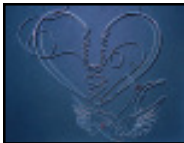
Members of the Adams City High School History Club have been busy making history displays and trying to recruit new members. At left, they put together a display of Hi Lo Market which is located at Hi Lo Check Cashing in Derby. Below left, they helped restore a history display at the high school after the case was repaired after an accident earlier in the year. Above right, they have resurrected the school's newspaper, the *Eagle Eye*. They have also participated in the 8th Grade Family Night telling future freshmen and their families about all the fun activities the club has done over the past school year.



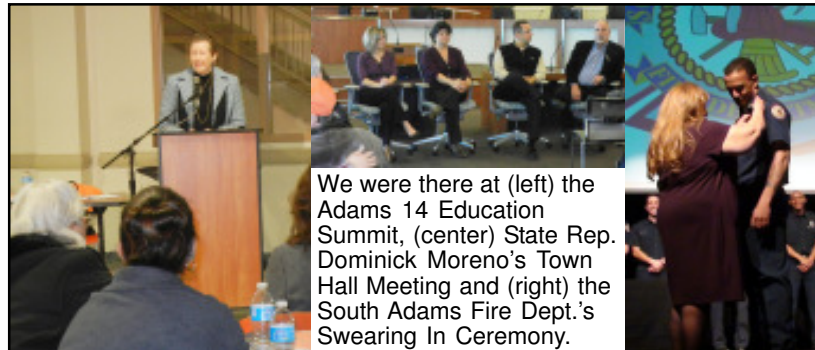
The Commerce City Historical Society was there as the Commerce City Business & Professional Association named their Citizen and Business of the Year Awardees Jan. 16. Long-time community supporters Tony and Judy Tunis were named Citizens of the Year and North Forest Office Space received the Business of the Year. CCBPA also unveiled a new award, the Shirley Leeper Outstanding Leadership Memorial Award, in which Shirley's husband, Harlow Leeper, accepted in Shirley's honor. Congratulations to all the winners!



The Commerce City Historical Society was one of 28 local non-profits who received grants from the Quality Community Foundation during a recent City Council meeting. The Historical Society received two grants totaling \$1,900 for our Commerce City History Coloring Book program and general operating expenses.



We attended the Commerce City Cultural Council Adams 14 Art Show.



We were there at (left) the Adams 14 Education Summit, (center) State Rep. Dominick Moreno's Town Hall Meeting and (right) the South Adams Fire Dept.'s Swearing In Ceremony.

In memoriam...

ROBERT JOHNSON

Robert (Bob) Johnson passed away on March 13, 2014, at the age of 88. Bob was born in Denver in August of 1925 to his parents Axel and Lillie Johnson, owners of the I.X.L. Dairy on 56th Avenue. He graduated from Union High School in 1943 and was drafted into the Army in 1945. He was assigned to D company, 310th Infantry Regiment of the 78th (Lightning) Division. He served during the occupation in Berlin, Germany, until October of 1946 and was one of the last two members of the regiment when it was deactivated after the war.

On returning home, he helped his father and uncle with the dairy and trained to become an auto mechanic. He opened his garage, Johnson Alignment and Brake Shop, on the family



property in 1955. The business flourished with many third and some fourth generation customers. He operated the business until retiring in 1989.

Bob married Wilma, a teacher, in June of 1958 in Portland, Ore., where she was working. They lived in north Denver for a time and then bought a house in Westminster where they raised their sons.

Upon retirement, Bob travelled with his wife. Some favorite destinations were New Mexico and California. He also enjoyed photography, something he picked up while stationed in Germany.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Wilma. He is survived by his sons Bruce and Stuart (Tammy); grandsons Kimble and Jonah; a sister, Ann; and, brother Jerry.

Services will be held March 18 at Nativity Lutheran Church, 12500 East 104th Avenue in Commerce City. In Lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to TRU CommunityCare in Lafayette, TruCare.org.

In Memoriam continued on next page



We're headed to the hills



Cost
\$10
Limited Seating
Contact Esther Hall
303-249-1930
for tickets



Leaving
Our Saviour
Lutheran Church
6770 Monaco St.
at 1 p.m.
Returning at 7 p.m.

CASINO TRIP

The Reserve Casino -- Central City, CO
Sunday, May 18, 2014

In memoriam...

DONALD CHAMBERS

Donald Joseph Chambers, 58, died Feb. 12, 2014, peacefully at home with his family by his side. Don was born April 8, 1955, in Denver to Freeman and Amelia Chambers.

Don spent his career as a tow truck driver/partner of Chambers & Sons Towing with his brother, Dave. Don also enjoyed and participated in the Masonic Lodge, Eastern Star, Shriners, Consistory and Jobs Daughters. He enjoyed all the time he could have with his family.

He was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife Heidi; daughter Brandy (Tommy) of Strasburg; grandkids Amelia, TJ, Shelby and Audra, all of Strasburg; a sister, Sherri Choromokos; brother Dave Chambers (Kris); nephew Michael Chambers; and, nieces Amie, Morgan and Michelle.

Funeral Services were held on Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2014, at the Aspen Magnolia Chapel in Commerce City.



MARY GOMEZ

On Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2014, Mary E. Gomez, 80, a four-year resident at The Villas at Sunny Acres, passed away as she was surrounded with love by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mary was born July 16, 1933, in Denver to the wonderful parents of Ambrose Alirez and Susie (Gomez) Alirez. Mary met her wonderful husband, Daniel Gomez, growing up in Denver. They were married on Jan. 12, 1951, in Raton, N.M. Mary and Daniel moved to Commerce City where they resided for 54 years.

Mary's life mainly consisted of being a loving wife and mother to her seven children. Mary loved everyone in her life and touched the hearts of many. She always made sure her husband,



Daniel, was happy and did everything she could for her family. Mary was definitely family oriented. Her outside jobs consisted of working at the Chili Factory, The Ramada Inn in housekeeping and a Great Avon Representative for about 20 years and held the Presidents Club Status.

Mary was very active in her parish, Our Lady, Mother of the Church. She did various jobs to help around the church. She helped to clean the church one day a week, was a Eucharist Minister and was very active in Lady's Auxiliary for over 25 years. She even helped with Vacation Bible School. She was very active in the Cursillo Movement.

Mary truly lived a great life filled with faith, family and friends and was known as "Grandma Gomez." Mary's devotion was to the Infant of Prague and Our Mother Mary. She would sit with her children every night and pray the Rosary with them. She was truly a "faith-filled" woman and loved the Lord! Mary will be remembered through all the motherly love and wisdom she gave to everyone.

She is survived by siblings Joe L Alirez (Josie), Fred Alirez, Arthur Alirez (Theresa), Bertha Quintana, Harold Alirez (Marianne), Rosalie Lopez; children Lillian Mora (Phillip), Daniel Gomez Jr., Ernest Gomez (Cristiane), Carmen Rivera (Toby), Robert Gomez (Lorrie), Sharon Howell (Tim), Catherine Dashiell (Gene); grandchildren and great grandchildren Edward Mora (Alyssa, Vanessa, Paul), Rene Gomez, Carlos Mora (Melody, Cortez, Monte), Michelle Gomez (Jairzinho), Jenaya Breadon (Alona, Juhliah), Gabriel Mora (Dawnette, Gabe Jr, Sabrina, Athena), Brian Mondragon (Dominick, Mariah), Amber Casas (John, Lorenzo, Jazmine, Juana, Franco), Ambrosia Durham (Joel, Isabella, Joel Jr.), Justin Howell, Tinisha Gomez (Frankie, Brieanna, Frankie Jr., Xavier), Susan Howell, Denise Gomez (Severen), Chad Gomez, Felicia Dashiell (Max, Max II, Vicente, Salvino), Tiffany Gomez (David, Matthew) and Robert Gomez Jr.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Ambrose and Susie Alirez; her loving husband, Daniel Gomez; son Edward Joseph Gomez; grandson Brian Mondragon Jr.; siblings Frances Lucero (Eugene), Theodore Alirez (Carol), Gilbert Alirez, Manuel Quintana, Betty Alirez and Leo Alirez.

Services were held Feb. 3, 2014, at Our Lady, Mother of the Church in Commerce City.

In memoriam...

CORA DURAN

Cora Duran was born on Aug. 23, 1926, in Clayton, N.M., and died on March 6, 2014, in Thornton. Cora moved from Sterling, Colo., to the community of Commerce City after her husband Raymond passed away in January 1957.



She worked hard to provide for her family. She would wake up every morning at 5 a.m. so that she could catch the bus to work at 7 a.m. Cora took pride in her family and we were her life. She loved us all very much and she would always be sure to tell us just how much she loved us before she would hang up the phone or before we could walk out the door. She was never too busy to spend time with everyone that would come to visit or call her. She never knew a stranger.

In her spare time, Cora was known for spending time grooming her garden with flowers and taking care of her lawn. There were countless days that she would spend the entire day working on her flowers. She even went to the extreme as to try and trim the edges of her lawn with a pair of scissors, until one of her sons saw her and bought her a pair of shears to make it easier.

Although Cora is no longer with us and is now with our Heavenly Father, she will always be close in our hearts and her memories will always be cherished.

"Those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day,
Unseen, unheard, but always near,
Still loved, still missed and very dear".

Author Unknown

Cora is survived by her children Richard (Ida) Duran, Vic (Liz) Duran, Alva Duran, Tony Duran, Roberta (John) Grant, Keith (Shirlee Rae) Duran, Joe (Lisa) Gonzales, and stepchildren, Joe (Eleanor) Duran and Mary Becerra. She also had twenty-two grandchildren, thirty-eight great grandchildren, five great-great grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews and extended family members. She was preceded in death by her parents, Santiago and Teresa Sanchez; husband Raymond Duran; son

Ray Duran; sister Josie; brother Jim; and, stepchildren Cecelia and Henry.

VICTOR A. BEDAN

Victor A. Bedan of Commerce City passed away Jan. 31, 2014. He born Aug. 14, 1962.

He is survived by his parents, Arthur and Beatrice; children Valerie, Victor Jr. and April; siblings Rick, Arthur Jr. and Chris; and, grandchildren Jaden, Andrew and Lucas.

A Rosary/Mass was held on Feb. 7 at 11 a.m. at Our Lady Mother of the Church in Commerce City.

KEITH KEPHART

Keith Kephart passed away March 5, 2014. He was born April 3, 1935.

He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Shirley; children Knicoli Jean Kephart and Richelle DeAnn Kephart; brothers Gary Kephart, Ronald (Rita) Kephart and Randy (Susan) Kephart; sisters Judy Loode, Nancy Markel and Kathy Frailey; sister-in-law Ruth Kephart; daughter-in-law Shirley Jurgens; ten grandchildren; and, fifteen great grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his parents Ralph Kephart and Dorothy Frailey; son Michael Leroy Jurgens; daughter Christine LaRae Jurgens; and, brother Joe Kephart.

Chaplain Will Reller officiated the memorial service at Aspen Mortuary in Commerce City on March 11, 2014.



JACK SWEET JR.

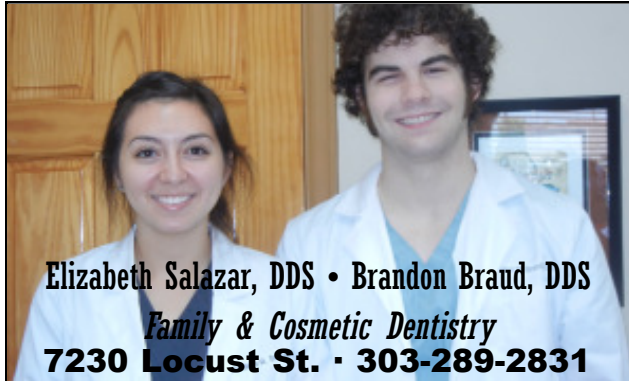
Jack Joseph Sweet, Jr., 52, of Aurora died on Saturday, March 8, 2014. He was born Sept. 7, 1961.

Surviving are his fiancé, Alicia James; parents, Ellen and Jack Sweet; sons, Kyle J. (Samantha) Sweet, Paul Kelly and Tristan James; brother, Patrick Stroub; and, sister, Lola Stroub. Also survived by his nephews, Jacob and Lucas Stroub; and, grandchildren, Kyle J. Sweet Jr., Mariah, Annie and Mathias.

A Memorial service was held on Monday at Aspen Magnolia Chapel in Commerce City.

CCHS appreciates our business members

As a new feature in our newsletter, the Commerce City Historical Society is adding this Business Membership Page featuring advertisements for those businesses who have either a Business/Corporation Membership or a Lifetime Membership in the CCHS.



Elizabeth Salazar, DDS • Brandon Braud, DDS
Family & Cosmetic Dentistry
7230 Locust St. • 303-289-2831



7280 MONACO ST. 303-286-3982

**MAGNOLIA
ENTERPRISES**
 HARLOW LEEPER, OWNER

7290 MAGNOLIA STREET




7887 E. 60th Avenue
 Commerce City, CO 80022
 303-289-3600
**Commerce
CITY**



**SOUTH ADAMS COUNTY
WATER & SANITATION DISTRICT**
6595 E. 70th Avenue
303-288-2646



Pam Meier
 Broker Associate
 with the Knoll Group
 303-901-7486 Direct
 303-780-7454 Cell
 303-942-7233 Fax
 pjmeier17@gmail.com
 600 Grant St., Ste. 900
 Denver, CO 80203

ADAMS 14
Inspire. Educate. Empower.
Adams 14 School District
 5291 East 60th Avenue, Commerce City, CO 80022
303-853-3200



RE/MAX MOMENTUM
Arlene Castro
 Broker Associate, ABR
 2227 Prairie Center Pkwy #D
 Brighton, CO 80022
 303-506-6742
 www.realestatebyarlene.com
 arlenec@msn.com
 www.facebook.com/RealEstateByArlene



Commerce City Historical Society

Application for Membership

NAME: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ home _____ cell _____

E-Mail _____

Business Name _____ Date Paid _____

Annual Dues

*Please make checks payable to: Commerce City Historical Society,
6130 Ivanhoe Street, Commerce City, Colorado 80022*

Individual	\$10.00	_____ (per year)
Family	\$25.00	_____ (per year)
Business/Corporation	\$100.00	_____ (per year)
Life Membership	\$500.00	_____ (one time)
Senior Lifetime Membership (Age 65 Plus)	\$250.00	_____ (one time)

How would you like to be notified of meetings and the Newsletter?

Email _____ phone _____ mail _____

Donations

I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Commerce City Historical Society:

*Please make checks payable to: Commerce City Historical Society,
6130 Ivanhoe Street, Commerce City, Colorado 80022*

NAME: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ home _____ cell _____

E-Mail _____

Business Name _____

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> General Operating Fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Future Building Acquisition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Future Land Acquisition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Specific |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Building Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Mailing Address:
10671 Nucla Ct.
Commerce City, CO 80022

Building Address:
7450 Highway 2
Commerce City, CO 80022
303-288-6749

Email: cchistoricalsociety@yahoo.com
Website: cchistoric.com

Editor: June Younger



follow us on
twitter

Scan with your
smartphone for
our latest news
and events



Our Mission

"To Preserve the Commerce City Area History"

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