



Celebrating National Poetry Month

1 message

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Artwork by Christy Mandin. For more free poetry resources, visit: Poets.org/npm.

Colorado Humanities Newsletter

April 15, 2025

According to the Academy of American Poets, since its inaugural celebration in 1996, **National Poetry Month** has become the largest literary celebration in the world. Tens of millions of readers, students, K-12 teachers, librarians, booksellers, literary event curators, publishers, families, and poets mark poetry's important place in our lives.

Poetry has a unique and powerful way of helping us express and understand what it means to be human. As the Library of Congress U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón recounted, "Again and again, I have been witness to poetry's immense power to reconnect us to the world, to allow us to heal, to love, to grieve, to remind us of the full spectrum of human emotion." As you consider the role of poetry in your life, especially through times of change, uncertainty, and transition, I invite you to read her poem:

“Instructions on Not Giving Up”

by Ada Limón

More than the fuchsia funnels breaking out
of the crabapple tree, more than the neighbor's
almost obscene display of cherry limbs shoving
their cotton candy-colored blossoms to the slate
sky of Spring rains, it's the greening of the trees
that really gets to me. When all the shock of white
and taffy, the world's baubles and trinkets, leave
the pavement strewn with the confetti of aftermath,
the leaves come. Patient, plodding, a green skin
growing over whatever winter did to us, a return
to the strange idea of continuous living despite
the mess of us, the hurt, the empty. Fine then,
I'll take it, the tree seems to say, a new slick leaf
unfurling like a fist to an open palm, I'll take it all.

Poetry matters because it voices our deepest emotions, connects us to one another, and helps us imagine new possibilities even in the most trying times. Limón's poem shows us how nature's quiet resilience can inspire our own, offering a vision of renewal and hope. Colorado Poet Laureate Andrea Gibson similarly reflects, “I spent so much time writing about what was wrong with the world, now I write about what I dream the world can be.” Poetry not only helps us process the present but also allows us to dream of the future we hope to create.

Mary Hickey

Director of Programs

We Thank You for Your Support

On April 3, news broke that DOGE gutted the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), terminating the operating grants of all 56 state and jurisdictional humanities councils across the United States, including ours here at Colorado Humanities. Since then, we have received an outpouring of support from our friends and partners. Your phone calls, emails, social media shares, and donations mean the world to our staff. Although uncertainty looms, we are working tirelessly to preserve the public humanities programming and resources on which the people across all regions of our state depend. Please continue to **support our efforts**.

Sarah Olivier

Search for the Next Colorado Poet Laureate

As host of the Colorado Center for the Book, Colorado Humanities proudly supports poetry in the state through the annual Colorado Book Awards and Colorado Poet Laureate programs. The current **Colorado Poet Laureate**, Andrea Gibson, has shared their poetry with K-12 schools, higher education institutions, senior centers, community organizations, and more since the start of their term in September 2023. Gibson's term will end in December 2025, and the next Colorado Poet Laureate will soon be selected, so stay tuned for more information.



Upcoming Author Talks

2024 Colorado Book Awards Children's Literature finalist Ana Crespo will be at Pueblo City-County Library on April 19 from 1 to 5 p.m. to celebrate **El Día De Los Niños y Libros**. People who attend will be able to take home free books, talk to community organizations that serve families, and learn about Ana's birthplace, Brazil. In addition, Crespo and illustrator Dow Phumiruk will share their book *Hello, Tree* at the Denver Botanic Gardens on April 27 from 12 to 3 p.m. for **Rooted in Reading**, a celebration of books, art, and plants. Ideal for children ages 6 to 12, Rooted in Reading includes an activities backpack, drop-in activities, and instructional sessions on drawing and writing.

Highlands Ranch and Parker Residents Met Rosie the Riveter and Eleanor Roosevelt

Two captivating **History Speakers Bureau** presentations took place this month. Chautauquan scholar-performer Gail Beaton portrayed Gail Murphy, a composite Rosie the Riveter character drawn from the records and memories of women war workers, at Wind Crest Senior Living in Highlands Ranch. Susan Marie Frontczak brought Eleanor Roosevelt to life at the Parker Historical Society where she told the story of a little girl who lost both parents before the age of 10, a debutante who felt trapped by society's expectations, and a young wife who raised five children before emerging as one of the 20th century's most influential women.

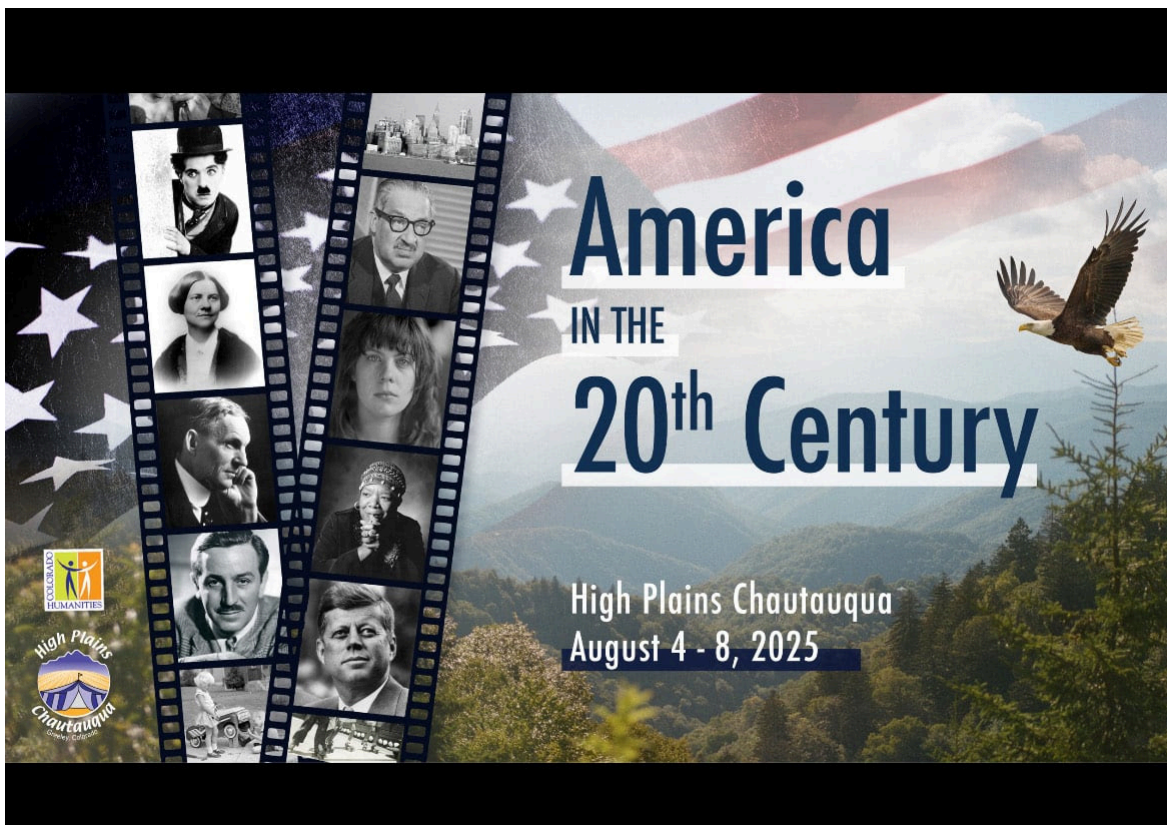
Youth Spotlights at Western Slope Young Chautauqua

Families and community members cheered on 3rd- through 5th-grade students from Delta County School District and Mesa County Valley School District 51 as they presented their portrayals of characters from Colorado history, science, technology, arts, and world history at Mesa County Libraries Central Library. Congratulations to the young scholar-performers!

We Can't Do It Without You

Humanities education is fundamental to democratic societies, and Colorado Humanities' dynamic programming stimulates the informed civic dialogue and community engagement that shape a thriving Colorado. It's vitally important to preserve and support our valued traditions so they can inform our growth as a society from generation to generation and illuminate our path into the future. Our humanities programs help provide a context for envisioning the impact—positive and negative—of new ideas in our cultural, political, and social lives. They are designed to help Coloradans consider life's surprises and challenges and to make informed decisions when they happen. Even as federal funding cuts make our future uncertain, we at Colorado Humanities continue to work diligently to provide programs for community-based humanities learning and present our community members with opportunities to explore and discuss ideas.

Please **DONATE** today to support and protect our work.



Other News

Open•Set Bookbinding Exhibition

John Giordanengo Book Release and Talks

Open•Set is a prestigious triennial exhibition and competition celebrating the art of finely crafted design bookbindings. This traveling exhibition will arrive in Denver at the University of Denver's Anderson Academic Commons building on May 2, with an opening reception on May 9 from 6 to 8 p.m. More information is available at [American Academy of Bookbinding](#).

Meet Camille T. Dungy

The History Colorado Center will host a special reading and talk with 2024 Colorado Book Awards finalist Camille T. Dungy at 7 pm. on April 17. She is the author of *Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden*, which documents Dungy's seven-year journey to resist the policies restricting her ability to diversify her garden in Fort Collins, Colorado. This is a [ticketed](#) event.

Crested Butte Mountain of Words

The [Mountain Words Festival](#) is a multi-day literary celebration at 9,000 feet, featuring readings, workshops, kids' events, parties, panel discussions, live theater, and more. The festival starts on May 22 and runs through May 25. As a proud sponsor of the festival, we hope to see you there.

2023 Colorado Book Awards finalist John Giordanengo released the second edition of *Ecosystems as Models for Restoring Our Economies (To a Sustainable State)*, which unpacks nature's blueprints for rebalancing our economies in a turbulent century. Giordanengo interweaves decades of experience in business, ecology, and conservation with the necessary economic evidence to outline not simply the structure of a sustainable economy but the policies and programs available to build it. Giordanengo will host a talk to celebrate the release on April 15 at [Old Firehouse Books](#) in Fort Collins at 6 p.m.

***Nothing Safer* at the Pueblo Film Fest**

Nothing Safer, a film by Ajar Film Productions, recently aired on Rocky Mountain PBS and has been selected to feature in the [Pueblo Film Fest](#), which runs April 24 to 27 in Pueblo. This remarkable documentary explores the Prison Trained K-9 Companion Program, where incarcerated women gain skills, self-esteem, and income by training rescue dogs. Launched by Colorado Correctional Industries in 2002, the program helps inmates reintegrate into society while providing trained dogs for children with medical needs, offering both dogs and women a second chance.

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