

# The Advocate Newsletter

Volume 46; Number 6

November 2022

## Aurora Historical Society

Aurora, Colorado



### Embrace your city, your past

#### November President's Letter

I hope you are all enjoying the beautiful Fall weather we have been having. It helped me find some days to dig up and separate Iris plants in my yard and at Centennial House. The garden at Centennial House still needs some major work and if we don't get to it all it will still be waiting in the Spring. If any of you are gardeners and can volunteer a few hours at Centennial House now or in the Spring, please let me know!

At our November meeting our speaker will be giving us the history of DIA. It sounds like an interesting program. We will also be having our annual potluck dinner in January and Dr. Gordon Tucker will be talking to us about his work doing an Archeology dig in Israel.

*Lynne Evans*

Aurora Historical Society President



**Regular AHS meeting** November 29<sup>th</sup> at the Aurora History Museum 6:00 Stacey Stegman will talk about the History of DIA.



#### IT'S TIME TO PAY YOUR 2023 MEMBERSHIP DUES

It is time to send your dues payments for year 2022 to Michael Lockwood, 1100 Windflower Lane, Woodland Park, CO 80863. Our membership dues come due in January each year now and with the New Year arriving please send your dues payment. (*Note: The society changed its bylaws at the March 2022 meeting. The dues categories have changed.*)

#### Memberships:

Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$20.00
Contributing	\$30.00
Business/Corporate	\$200.00
Life	\$200.00
Newsletter mailing	\$5.00

You can now pay your dues online at the AHS website on the join today page using PayPal if you would like, or you can mail them in.

<http://aurorahistoricalociety.org/join-today/>

#### Historical Society Officers

President, Newsletter, & Website: Lynne Evans  
720-560-2490 [lyevans@comcast.net](mailto:lyevans@comcast.net)  
Vice President: Nadine Caldwell  
Secretary: Gregg Chase

Treasurer, Historian, Membership: Michael Lockwood  
Directors: Susan Hicks, Karen Schwieder  
Hospitality: Vacant  
Program Committee: Susan Hicks  
Education: Vacant  
Publicity: Vacant

If anyone is interested, please contact Lynne Evans 720-560-2490 [lyevans@comcast.net](mailto:lyevans@comcast.net)



Trivia Question Answers:

1. b 2) c 3) b 4) a 5) c



**Remembering Aurora**

***Michael Lockwood, Aurora Historical Society***

An Aurora native, a graduate of the Aurora Public Schools (Vaughn Elementary, North Middle School & Aurora Central High School) and still living less than 2 miles from where I grew up, Aurora has been a big part of my life ever since I was born. Having grown up here, I have several memories that I'd love to provide for your reading pleasure via The Advocate newsletter. For those of you who have Aurora connections that go back as far as the 1950's the recollections presented may bring back waves of nostalgia. And while I have 60 years of memories to relate, if you have some stories you'd like to share, please feel free to contact us at the Aurora Historical web site: [www.auroracohistoricalsociety.org](http://www.auroracohistoricalsociety.org)

REMEMBERING: I-225

It sometimes amazes me how long it takes for some things to get finished. I-225 construction was started on May 1964 when I was only 8 years old. Driving at the time was well beyond my comprehension. My sister, no doubt, was 7 years older than me and I'm sure she couldn't wait to be free to go where she wanted. Traveling from the northern part of Aurora to anywhere to the south meant going through the city streets, which could take some time, especially as Aurora grew and expanded. By the time I reached driving age in 1971 (16 at the time), I-225 was STILL under construction. I'm sure I wondered if that was ever going to be completed. I-70, by comparison, had started at the Kansas state line in 1967 and was completed by 1972, a total of 5 years. Yet here was I-225 at 7 years and still a ways away from being done. It wouldn't be completed until May 1976 taking 12 years to be finished. A long wait but how great it was to hop on the highway and be from the northern part of the city and without hitting a single stop light be in the southern part of the city within minutes. Mind you, down south meant as far as Belleview at the time and the population was around 75,000 compared to the 348,000 today so traffic on the highway was much lighter.

Time waits for no man and our history eventually becomes shared memories of people and places. Preservation can help keep those memories a little more tangible so that we can share with future generations.

## City of Aurora Trivia Questions

1. When did the Aurora Fox theatre open for the first time?
  - a. January 1945
  - b. October 1946
  - c. June 1947



2. Who was the founder of the Aurora Public School system?
  - a. William Colfax
  - b. William Hinkley
  - c. William Smith



3. What was the purpose of the Historic Commission established in 1970 by Mayor Beck?
  - a. To document and preserve Aurora's historic places
  - b. To establish a history museum
  - c. To educate the population of Aurora's history



4. Why did Aurora sever ties with the Denver Water Board?
  - a. Opening of Homestake Reservoir
  - b. Opening of Quincy Reservoir
  - c. Opening of Spinney Reservoir



5. Where was the Titan Missile Launching site located?
  - a. Army Air Corps bombing range
  - b. Buckley Air Force base bombing range
  - c. Lowry bombing range





Did you know that the Town of Fletcher/City of Aurora have had 45 Mayors since its beginnings back in 1891? With each issue of the Advocate Newsletter, we'll take a quick look at each of them.

### MAYOR #35

- Served from 1965 – 1967
- She was born in June 1928 in Las Animas, Colorado
- She graduated from South High School
- She attended Colorado Women's College
- Married to Thomas Walker on March 20, 1949
- They had 3 children
- She lived at 450 Iola and 2241 Moline
- Colorado Governor at the time she was Mayor was John Love
- While she was in office:
  - Annexed 3,000 acres to the east
  - Appeared on the 1<sup>st</sup> episode of "Who's Line Is It" on Nov. 14, 1965
  - Helped stabilize Aurora's water supply overseeing a \$60 million reservoir project
  - Served on the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee
  - Instituted a pay cut for the City Council members
  - Instituted a pay raise for the police and firefighters
  - A flash flood on the South Platte River kills 28 people and inflicts over \$500 million in damage.

*Excerpt for The Oregonian Nov. 6, 2016*

### Norma O. Walker

**Norma O. Walker** was the first female mayor of an American city larger than 60,000 people. When She was 37 years old, she was elected mayor of Aurora, Colorado



from November 8, 1965 until November 13, 1967. As mayor, she is remembered for her work on stabilizing Aurora's water supply. Later, she went on to serve on the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee, where she served until 1969.

Born in Las Animas, Colorado, in 1928.

She annexed 3,000 acres to east and the area of Aurora approached 25 square miles. Population was pushing toward the 70,000 mark. Her daughter is proud of her mother because Mother never was too busy to make the school assemblies.

Mayor Walker was so novel, she received a telegram the week of her election inviting her to New York for an episode of "What's My Line?" In it a celebrity panel would attempt to guess the contestant's line of work through several rounds of questioning. Walker stumped them for 10 rounds and won \$50. Walker graduated from Colorado Women's College and taught first grade for three years before leaving the workforce when she had her 3 children.



When Walker announced her candidacy for mayor, she was unprepared for the backlash. “I had calls from a lot of women who felt I was overstepping the bounds of housewifery.” I had calls from people who did not like my earrings or the length of my skirt.”

People continued to berate her for doing one thing or another through her term. She just smiled and said, “Thank you very much for your comment.” Her house was burglarized several times, and someone threw a rock through the front window that lodged in the dining room wall. She received phone threats that either she or her children would be kidnapped.

As Mayor, Walker instituted a pay cut for city council members and a pay raise for police and firefighters. She oversaw a \$60 million reservoir project that secured Aurora’s own water supply, and in 1967 President Lyndon B Johnson appointed her to the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee.

She was challenged at every turn. The City council was split with 5 Republicans and 4 Democrats during her term. She was faced with a dismissive attitude.



She ran for re-election but lost. She said she ran again because she did not want women to think she was chased off. When Hilary Clinton ran for President, Norma said, “It’s 51 years later from when I was ridiculed for earrings or dress length or Blah, Blah, Blah, and it’s still going on,” she said. “What must we do to change that? I don’t know. 51 years later....geez.”

## From Colorado Historic Newspapers

<Back to search result list The Aurora Advocate, Volume 18, Number 9, January 20, 1966 # - Untitled [ARTICLE+ILLUSTRATION]



THE WEEK OF JAN. 23-30 has been officially proclaimed YMCA Week in Aurora by Mayor Norma O. Walker. Participating in brief ceremonies this week were l-r, Dr. John Fuhr, vice-chairman of the board of managers of the Aurora organization; Dr. R. James Hart, chairman of the board of managers; Mayor Norma O. Walker; and H. L. (Gil) Gillispie, executive secretary of the Aurora YMCA.

## Our November Speaker

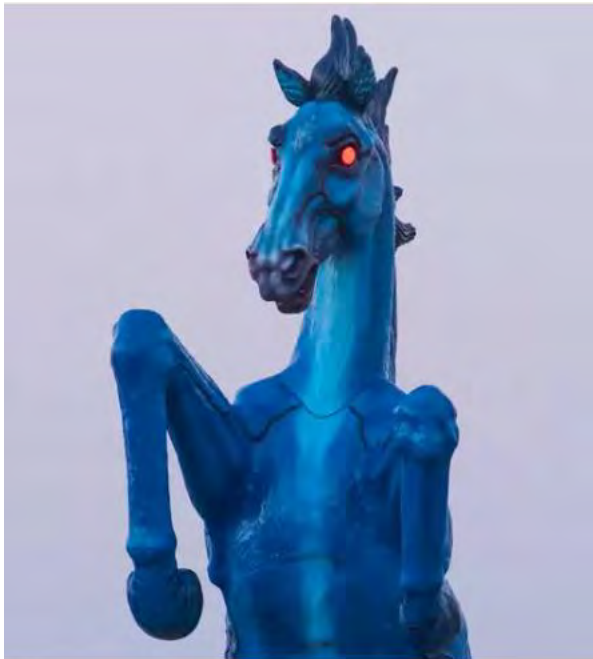


### Stacey Stegman

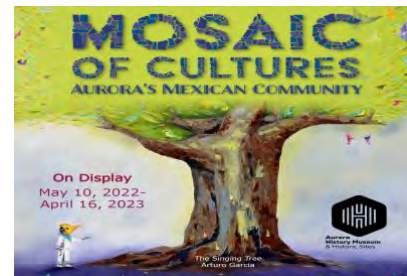
Senior Vice President, Communications, Marketing and Customer Service.

Stacey Stegman is the senior vice president of communications, marketing, and customer experience for the world’s 3rd busiest airport – Denver International Airport (DEN). Stegman

guides the airport’s customer experience efforts as well as media relations, marketing, brand, social media, website, communications, public art and events on a local, national and international level. Stegman joined DEN in December 2012 after serving nearly 17 years with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), where she became the agency’s public relations director in late 2001. Prior to her career at CDOT, Stegman worked in radio promotions and as an on-air talent.



**Aurora Museum Exhibits**



The Aurora History Museum and the city of Aurora Office of International and Immigrant Affairs celebrate Aurora’s Mexican population with a new exhibition, “Mosaic of Cultures: Aurora’s Mexican Community,” set to run through April 16, 2023.

The people of Mexican descent who call Aurora home come from all walks of life and have their own individual stories of immigration or a long family history that predates Colorado statehood.” Today, Aurora is a true mosaic of cultures. One in

five Aurorans are foreign-born. According to the 2020 census, 20.24% of the city of Aurora's population has family origins in Mexico.

"Mosaic of Cultures" is a series of exhibitions that promote understanding of the increasing cultural diversity in the city and incorporate the voices of local communities into Aurora's History Museum. The new exhibit aims to increase awareness of the Mexican community's contributions to the overall history of the city, including highlighting individuals, business owners, cultural traditions, and history.

Admission to the Aurora History Museum is always free. The museum is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information and to stay up to date on related programming, visit [AuroraMuseum.org](http://AuroraMuseum.org).

### Growing Home & Trolley Trailer No. 610

Growing Home is a permanent exhibit about Aurora's history featuring Trolley Trailer No. 610, a fully-restored 1913 historic trolley trailer. The exhibit highlights people, places, and events from Aurora's history. It features over 100 historic photographs and objects, and the fully restored 1913 historic Trolley Trailer No. 610 in the new Ruth Fountain gallery. Go inside the trolley and experience 100 years of history first-hand. The exhibit was designed by Dennis Meyer of Filament Design/Build with support from museum staff.

In October 2012, the Aurora City Council approved funding for the construction of a new gallery and addition at the Aurora History Museum. Council resolved to name it in honor of Ruth Fountain, a former city councilwoman, community activist and museum supporter.

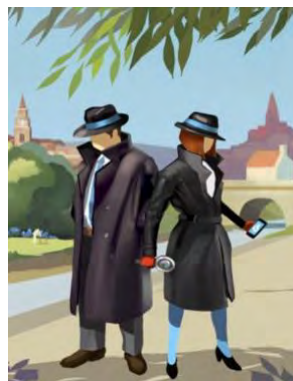
The Aurora Museum Foundation was instrumental in raising funds and in-kind donations through grants and support from local businesses, organizations and individuals. The 1,630 square foot gallery was completed in November 2014. The addition was designed by Humphries Poli Architects and built by Palace Construction.

#### ***Murder at the Museum Interactive Performance***

Sundays 11-6 through 11-27 from 4:00pm-5:30PM at the Aurora History Museum.

A high tea is being hosted at the Museum to unveil the next mascot for the city. Hosted by Edna Mosely, the

first African American Councilwoman, some important historical figures have also gathered namely Donald Fletcher, Billie Preston, and Bill Nakaoka, the first Japanese pharmacist in Aurora. As all eagerly await the entrance of the mysterious mascot, a murder is committed, that of the mascot itself.



Through comedic and interactive discourse, in smaller groups, the guests must help Schnerbock Moans, a dancing detective, to find out who the killer is and win the coveted prize of being the "Detective" of the year.

This event is a partnership between the Aurora History Museum & Historic Sites and Roshni-an Aurora based non-profit using art to uplift, heal, inspire, and create inclusion and empathy.

\$10 with discounted rates for Seniors, Students, and Veterans. Tickets go on sale soon! Check back regularly. You must visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/murder-at-the-museum-tickets-389583714377> to purchase tickets.

The logo for "Ask a Historian" features the text "Got Questions?" in a small font, followed by "Ask a Historian" in large, stylized letters. A quill pen is positioned to the right of the word "Historian". Below the text is a white box containing the text "Aurora Historical Society" and "mdlkel@aol.com". To the left of the logo is a vertical book cover with the text "WALL CIVIL WAR REFUGEES" and an image of a person.

### Member Discounts

#### FOX discount

We have a discount for 20% off tickets for just this sort of thing. The discount code is CULTURAL. Anyone can use that for our Season shows online or over the phone (not valid for special events, cabaret's, or rentals).

Remember AHS members also get in free to the "Lunchtime Lectures" at the Aurora History Museum.

**The Aurora Museum Foundation presents...**

Opening Event  
November 10, 2022

Wreaths on Display  
November 7 to  
December 9, 2022

**23rd**  
Annual  
*Festival of Wreaths*

**JOIN US FOR A GREAT NIGHT OF FUN & EDUCATION!**

Sit-Down Holiday Dinner \* Festive Entertainment\* Live Wreath Auction  
Purchase tickets here: [Eventbrite](#)

Proceeds from this year's event will provide assistance to pay for the planning and eventual construction of the Aurora History Museum's New Entrance. In addition, a portion of the funding will also go to support the museum's education programs and community events.

Visit the Actual Wreaths:

In Person: Aurora History Museum, 15051 E Alameda Pkwy, Aurora, CO 80012

On Line : [Bidding Owl](#) ( Click this Link )

Proceeds from this live auction pay for support to the museum.