

Our Community News

Volunteers reporting on community issues in Monument, Palmer Lake, and the surrounding Tri-Lakes area



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Local Events

See pages 28-31 for details of these and many other local events.

- Sundance Studio Annual Open House, Sat. Aug. 5, 3-5:30 p.m.
- Lorrie Morgan Concert at TLCA, Sat., Aug. 5, 7 p.m.
- Tri-Lakes Land Use Committee Meeting, Mon., Aug. 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- D-38 Home School Enrichment Academy Open House, Tue., Aug. 8, 5-7 p.m. Repeats Aug. 14, 10 a.m.; Aug. 17 & 23, 6 p.m.
- Foot Care Clinic, Wed., Aug. 9
- Friends of Monument Preserve Trail Work Night, Wed., Aug. 9, 6-8:30 p.m.
- Tri-Lakes Chamber seminar Beyond Customer Service, Thu., Aug. 10, 10:30 a.m.-noon
- Monument's Free Movie Night: The Secret Life of Pets, Fri., Aug. 11, 7 p.m.
- El Paso County Hazardous Materials & Recycling Collection Facility, Sat., Aug. 12, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Rocky Mountain Chautauqua, Sat., Aug. 12, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Early Bird Coffee with Chris Lowe, Tue., Aug. 15, 7-9 a.m.
- Lunch Break with Chris Lowe, Wed., Aug. 16, 1-3 p.m.
- Art Hop, Thu., Aug. 17, 5-8 p.m.
- Foot Care Clinic, Fri., Aug. 18
- Foot Care Clinic, Fri., Aug. 25
- Community Service: Wood Chipping, Sat. Aug. 26, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Taste of Palmer Lake, Sat., Aug. 26, 1-4 p.m.
- Monument's Free Movie Night: Finding Dory, Fri., Sep. 1, 7 p.m.
- Sawyer Fredericks Concert at TLCA, Fri., Sep. 1, 7 p.m. ■

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Above: Volunteers with the Friends of Monument Preserve work on re-routing an eroded trail in July. Photo by Chris Tirpak.

By Erin Poole

If you are like many Coloradans, your weekend plans probably regularly include leaving your chores behind for a trek through the woods or a hike up a mountain. Pine sap, sunscreen, and trail mix run through our veins. Some of the most beautiful hiking escapes on the Front Range are right here in Monument. With all of us using these trails nearly year-round, though, they take a lot of abuse and require regular maintenance to remain safe and operational.

The dedicated volunteers of the Friends of Monument Preserve meet monthly, May through September, for trail work sessions to preserve and protect the trails and historic artifacts of the U.S. Forest Service Fire Center

area. They work in partnership with the USFS to do chores including trimming scrub oak and grading new trails.

During their latest work day on July 12, 18 volunteers worked in intermittent rain to re-route a badly eroded section of trail in the center of the preserve and close the eroded portion of the old trail. The group will continue restoration efforts in this area during the coming months, with the next work session scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 9.

To learn more about this nonprofit organization or to find out where their next work site will be, go to www.fomp.org.

Erin Poole can be contacted at erinpoole@ocn.me.

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, June 28 and July 26

Tri-Lakes Monument district will ask for mill levy increase

By Lisa Hatfield

At its June and July meetings, the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board voted to ask residents for a mill levy increase in November, celebrated several promotions and hirings, and approved a new battalion chief of training position. The directors also discussed the June structure fire in Wissler Ranch, the impact fees impasse in El Paso County, and future budget planning, and they approved moving district administrative offices to a new space in the Jackson Creek area late this year.

TLMFPD sets ballot language for 6.9 mill levy increase

In June, Larry Smith represented the citizen's advisory group that voted 13-0-1 in favor of putting forth a November mill levy ballot initiative asking residents to approve a 6.9 mill increase from the current 11.5 mills. He said the committee and the responses from over 1,000 public opinion surveys returned indicated that the background information provided by the district presented a compelling case for the need for additional funding.

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Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, July 19

Mill levy hike on November ballot

By Jennifer Kaylor

Fifteen guests including firefighters, residents, and non-residents attended the July 19 Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) board meeting. Discussion focused primarily on the proposed mill levy increase on which the board continued to receive public comment. The board approved a resolution to put the mill levy increase proposal on the November ballot.

All board members were present except Secretary Harland Baker, who was excused. Assistant Chief Scott Ridings was also excused.

Board approves mill levy resolution

Director Bo McAllister reiterated his support for the mill levy increase and reminded the audience that the increase essentially would place DWFPD on par with surrounding districts. He added that the current disparity between Wescott and other districts makes the possibility of a merger or other kind of alliance impractical.

Chief Vinny Burns explained that if voters do not approve the mill increase, DWFPD will be reduced to three professional firefighters. The staff would be parsed to one professional firefighter per day, plus a chief, and however many volunteers can be mustered. Grants and mitigation programs will disappear and the ability to respond to a wide variety of emergencies will be seriously compromised. Burns stated, "Twenty-one point nine mills ... there's a reason for it, and that's the cost of doing business, of putting an organization on the street that's effective." Burns urged residents to consider the facts

(Continued on page 2)



Above: On July 15 at the regular Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations Inc. (NEPCO) bimonthly meeting, NEPCO Treasurer Greg Lynd, left, honored Donald Wescott Fire Protection District with a certificate of membership that was accepted by Wescott Fire Chief Vinny Burns. Burns said, "I really do appreciate this. Any time that the fire service gets recognized, it's a good day for me, so thank you everybody." Photo by Jim Kendrick.