

Our Community News

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



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Free

Local Events

MVEA Essay Contest, due Nov. 18
Monument Hill Farmer's Market every Sat., 8:00 a.m. Winter Market Nov. 15
Free Tai Chi in the Park every Sat., 9-10 a.m. weather permitting
Meditations from Around the World every Fri., in Sep., 6-8 p.m.
Palmer Lake Library: Palmer Lake Knitting Group, every Thu., 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
The Flying W Wranglers at The Church at Woodmoor Sun., Sep. 7 10 a.m.
HAP-py Feet Foot Care Clinic. Wed. Sept. 10, Senior Center.
Ice Cave Creek Trail Building, Sat., Sep. 13, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Monument Library: Family Fun - Meghan Casey, Ventriloquist, Sat., Sep 13, 1:30-3 p.m.
Slash Disposal Drop-off Day, Sat., Sep. 13, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Front Range Open Studios Tour Weekend, Sat.-Sun. Sep. 13-14 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
Amateur Radio WOTLM (Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Radio Assoc., Mon., Sep. 15, 7 p.m.
Tri-Lakes Community Blood Drive, Tue., Sep. 16, 3-7 p.m.
Art Hop (last of the season!) Thur., Sep. 18, 5-8 p.m.
Bines & Brew Hopfest, Sat., Sep. 20, 1-5 p.m.
Monument Library: History Buffs Book Discussion Group, Wed., Sep. 24, 1-3 p.m.
Palmer Lake Art Group's 41st. Annual Christmas Arts & Crafts Fair, Fri., Oct. 3-5, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.
Craft Club, Sat., Oct. 4, 11 a.m.- 2 p.m.
Empty Bowls Dinner & Silent Auction, Wed., Oct. 5, Lewis-Palmer High School 5-7 p.m.
Wine and Roses 2014, Sat., Oct. 25, 6:00 p.m.

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Above: Miguel Dakota performs Aug. 2 at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA). Dakota, from Monument, steadily rose through the America's Got Talent (AGT) competition to semi-finalist by the time of his TLCA concert. Opening the sold-out concert with a solo performance, Dakota performed a mix of his songs along with a few covers. One of his songs included the lyrics, "It's a new day, It's a new life for me," perhaps indicative of his rise to fame through the AGT show. He also covered the Beatles' *With a Little Help From My Friends*, acknowledging not only those in the concert audience but perhaps recognizing those who have helped him along his journey. Besides his sultry voice, accomplished guitar playing, and lyrics that seem mature beyond his youthful 21 years, his genuineness and appreciation of where he came from and now finds himself came through with each song. Upcoming events at the TLCA are listed at www.trilakesarts.org. Photo by David Futey.

Tri-Lakes Facility Joint Use Committee, August 12

Phosphate removal cost increases to \$2.87 million

By Jim Kendrick

On Aug. 12, Tetra Tech engineer Steve Tamburini presented the final draft of his 20-year nutrient expansion plan to the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility Joint Use Committee (JUC). Phase 1 would add total phosphorus treatment equipment to comply with new nutrient limits imposed by state Control Regulation 85 at a cost of \$2.87 million. This was a substantial additional increase from Tetra Tech's initial estimate of \$1 million that was increased to \$2.007 million in September 2013. No money will have to be spent at this time to meet Reg. 85 limits for total inorganic nitrogen (TIN).

The proposed Phase 2 cost for upgrading the existing Tri-Lakes biosolids and headworks facilities was \$12.64 million. The proposed Phase 3 cost for further treatment equipment expansion to meet even tighter Regulation 31.17 total phosphorus (TP) and total nitrogen (TN) discharge restrictions that take effect in 2022 was \$7.58 million. The total proposed nutrient expansion cost was \$23.09 million.

Monument Sanitation District Manager Mike Wicklund noted that his district had closed on a \$400,000 loan in December to pay its share of the phosphate design and construction cost based on Tetra Tech's previous \$2.007 million estimate and would have to borrow more money now. Palmer Lake District Manager Becky Orcutt said she would also

have to arrange a loan to pay her district's share of the additional \$863,000 Phase 1 increase.

After Tamburini's presentation, the JUC unanimously approved a Phase 1 design contract with Tetra Tech for \$252,000.

The Tri-Lakes facility operates as a separate public utility and is jointly owned, in equal one-third shares, by Monument Sanitation District, Palmer Lake Sanitation District, and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District. The three-member JUC acts as the board of the facility and consists of one director from each of the three owner districts' boards. Woodmoor's alternate JUC member, Director Jim Taylor, filled in for Director Rich Strom, who was excused from this JUC meeting.

Plans for phosphorus removal will cost much more than expected

Background: RTW Engineering, a Denver company, was Tri-Lakes' original engineering firm. RTW designed and supervised construction of the existing EPA-award winning Tri-Lakes activated sludge facility in 1998. RTW merged with Tetra Tech in 2008. Tetra Tech is the engineering consultant of the EPA. The owners of RTW—Mike Rothberg, Joe Tamburini Sr., Joe Tamburini Jr., and Steve Tamburini—now work for Tetra

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Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Aug. 27

Chief presents mill levy increase option to balance budget

By Lisa Hatfield

On Aug. 27, The Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protect District board postponed its vote on charging increased fees for emergency services provided within the town of Palmer Lake as long as the town is making progress toward being included into the district. Chief Chris Truty presented the directors with several five-year plan budget options, including potential mill levy increases that would be necessary to sustain the current and future desired expanded staffing as well as staff pay increases and additional capital improvements. He recommended restructuring the district budget to separate operating and capital costs and emergency reserves and increasing the goals for those reserves.

Palmer Lake assessment fee decision postponed

Over the past several months, the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department (PLVFD) has been holding committee meetings about its future. It needs to evaluate its options to deal with the strained budget and the bad condition of its building. See related articles at www.ocn.me/v14n7.htm#plvfd0607 and www.ocn.me/v14n8.htm#plvfd0719.

Meanwhile, Truty has been discussing various options with Palmer Lake Fire Trustee Rich Kuehster so that TLMFPD could continue to provide ambulance service to Palmer Lake citizens. Currently, this is done at no charge, as first outlined in a contract between the two entities in early 2009. However, Truty says this is not sustainable, and in order to contribute to TLMFPD's "ambulance readiness" costs for wages, maintaining stations and vehicles, and insurance, Palmer Lake citizens could either hold an election for inclusion into TLMFPD, or if that process fails, TLMFPD could assess a yearly assessment fee to the Town of Palmer Lake for providing emergency medical service (EMS).

The Palmer Lake Town Council was scheduled to hold a special meeting Sept. 4, after OCN went to press, to discuss possible wording of an "advisory ballot" in November about the future of PLVFD. Truty recommended that if Palmer Lake is "short of any significant formal steps toward inclusion within TLMFPD," the district would proceed to collect an EMS assessment fee from the Town of Palmer Lake of \$75,000 a year for 2015 and 2016, and \$100,000 for 2017. These fees would be re-evaluated for the 2018 budget.

Truty said if Palmer Lake were included into TLMFPD, the district would earn about \$320,000 a year in extra revenue, ambulance service would

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