

## Fire recovery needs help



**Above:** Eddie Bracken spoke to the audience at the 2017 Black Forest Together fundraiser, the first of its kind since the 2013 fire. *Photo by Nancy Trosper.*

*By Nancy Trosper and Lisa Hatfield*

Although much progress has been made since the June 2013 Black Forest Fire, there is still much to do for recovery and proactive wildfire risk reduction to help prevent another catastrophic forest fire, said Black Forest Together's (BFT) Eddie Bracken, who is board chair and an active volunteer. He and Bill Mantia, Recovery Projects board director and another very active volunteer, explained at BFT's first-ever fundraiser, held Oct. 7, that they need more help to cover operating expenses so that BFT can remain open and continue to support the community.

The fire resulted in the loss of two lives, burned over 14,000 acres of the forest, destroyed 500 homes, and forced the evacuation of 38,000 residents. BFT, a grassroots 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, has led cleanup and restoration efforts in the community since August 2013 and continues organizing work projects to clean up more burned trees and do fire mitigation to reduce the risk of another fire.

BFT has completed over 300 recovery, restoration, and proactive fire mitigation projects, leading 40,000-plus hours of volunteer labor, representing about \$1 million of in-kind contributions back to the community. BFT's Resource Center and projects have been made possible by the Pikes Peak Community Foundation, American Red Cross, El Pomar Foundation, Mountain View Electric Association, Black Hills Energy, and many more local organizations and private donors. BFT also received federal Community Development Block Grant funding for temporary staffing of two paid positions to assist the community, but funding for these positions ends in June 2018.

Mantia explained on Oct. 7, "There is no federal, state, or county money. If we want help to keep clearing the damage, we have to do this ourselves."

Interested individuals and organizations are encouraged to support BFT and can find more information at their website [www.blackforesttogether.org](http://www.blackforesttogether.org) or call 719-495-2445. ■

## Shawn Colvin at TLCA

**Right:** On Oct. 18, Grammy Award winning singer-songwriter Shawn Colvin graced the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) stage in celebration of the 20th anniversary release of her album *A Few Small Repairs*. The album propelled her career in 1997, and this is her first major tour with a full band since its release. In between opening with Tom Petty's *Wildflowers* and doing an encore that included a Beatles song, Colvin and her all-star band performed each song from the album in order. They started with *Sonny Came Home*, the song that epitomizes her artistic depth. Throughout the evening, Colvin guided the audience by providing insight into the background inspiration of certain songs and the process she uses in her songwriting (writing her lyrics in longhand and making adjustments to follow the work in progress) while receiving numerous standing ovations in return. Information on upcoming events at the TLCA is at [trilakesarts.org](http://trilakesarts.org). *Photo by David Futey.*



## Bumper Jacks at TLCA



The Bumper Jacks brought their American roots music to the Tri-Lakes Center of the Arts stage on Oct. 23. Clarinetist, washboard player, and vocalist Jess Eliot Myhre said band members "come from all different and unique [backgrounds], New Orleans jazz, swing, hip-hop, country and together we have developed our own sound." An example of the uniqueness in background is guitarist and vocalist Chris Ousley. Ousley said "I started

playing banjo at square dances in western PA, met Jess with her New Orleans sound, starting playing old-time tunes then gradually melded the other band members into the sound." The result is a lively and refreshing sound that encompasses originals such as *I Like Bacon on Everything* and covers like *Dirt Road Blues* by Bob Dylan in their own style. Information on upcoming events at the TLCA is at [trilakesarts.org](http://trilakesarts.org). **Pictured above:** Jess Eliot Myhre and Chris Ousley are two of the Bumper Jacks quintet that performed at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. *Photo by David Futey.*

## Palmer Lake .5K Fundraiser

**Right:** The annual Awake Palmer Lake .5K (yes .5) was held on Oct. 8. This fundraiser event for Awake Palmer Lake included 1,660 feet of semi-cardio-workout along the west side of Rockin the Rails Park in Palmer Lake, a "donut aid station" at the halfway point, and beer after the finish line. Organizers said they wanted to help people start bulking up for the long winter ahead while getting together for a good cause and actually get "a little" exercise. See <http://awakepalmerlake.org/>. *Photo by John Crouse.*



## Outpouring: Boomers' Impact

*By Lynn Weber*

Kent Mathews from the Family Caregiver Support Center spoke at Outpouring, the Tri-Lakes area's version of TED Talks, on Oct. 17. Mathews' presentation was titled "Evolution of Caregiving: The Boomer's Impact."

Mathews said that most everyone will be a caregiver or need a caregiver at some point in their life. Modern medicine often produces a living death. Baby boomers will need help and care for longer periods of time. In 2010, 70 percent of those 80 or more years old had some kind of disability, with 55 percent having a severe disability. Today the 80s are considered the high-risk years for aging. The oldest boomers begin to reach their 80s in the 2020s. All the Boomers will enter their 80s from 2030 to 2050. The ratio of caregivers to care receivers transitions from 7.5 to 1 in 2010 to 2.5 to 1 in 2050.

Being a caregiver has significant demands on one's health, finances, and time, Mathews said. Women experience more severe impacts since they are more likely to be caregivers and are less likely to have adequate resources. Currently, most caregivers perform medical/nursing tasks without any preparation or training. Boomers are known for fighting the aging process.

All of this means more caregiving will be needed with fewer resources unless we adjust for the boomer impact. Possible options are expanding long-term care options, more paid caregivers, time banks, and increasing the use of technology.

If you have concerns about caregiving or need help with your caregiving situation, please contact Kent at 719-471-7080 ext. 115 or [kmathews@ppacg.org](mailto:kmathews@ppacg.org) for more information.

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The Outpouring speaker on Nov. 21 will be Irv Halter, who will present "Current Population and Economic Trends in Colorado and Its Effects on Rural and Small Communities." Halter is the executive director of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and a member of Gov. John Hickenlooper's Cabinet. DOLA supports communities throughout Colorado by partnering with local governments and community service organizations. Halter is responsible for a statewide team that annually distributes over \$300 million through grants and other funding programs that support community development and affordable housing.

For more information on Outpouring and future programs, go to <http://tlumc.org/outreach>. Outpouring is sponsored by Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church and meets the third Tuesday of each month in the Barrel Room at Pikes Peak Brewing Co. ■

## Free pumpkins, Oct. 21



**Above:** Despite the chilly winds Oct. 21, kids and their families from the Tri-Lakes area descended upon the Free Pumpkin Event held at the Tractor Supply Co. on Jackson Creek Parkway. Sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, the event supplied visitors with a pumpkin, a bit of candy and popcorn, a peek into a fire truck and police car, and an opportunity to learn about the district's ballot issue on the November election. *Caption by Jennifer Kaylor. Photo by Janet Sellers.*