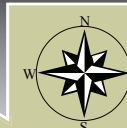


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Local Events

**See pages 26-31 for details of
these and many other local
events.**

- County's Annual Treecycle, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 30-31; Jan. 6-7, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
- Christmas Tree Recycling with WMMI and Boy Scout Troop 78, Sat.-Sun., Jan. 6-7, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Town of Monument Workshop: Planning 101, An Overview of the Planning Process from Start to Finish, Mon., Jan. 8, 5:30 p.m.
- Tri-Lakes Land Use Committee Meeting, Mon., Jan. 8, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Monument Police Department Active Shooter Class, Wed. Jan. 10, 10 a.m.-noon
- Winter Woodland Wonders Walk at Fox Run, Sat., Jan. 13, 10 a.m.-noon
- Tri-Lakes Community/Centura Blood Drive, Tue., Jan. 16, 3-7 p.m.
- Senior Trip: Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum, Fri., Jan. 19, bus leaves 9 a.m.
- Warriors Ice Fishing Tournament, Sat., Jan. 20, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- NEPCO Meeting, Sat., Jan. 20, 10 a.m.-noon. Trails and Open Space.
- Rocky Mountain Music Alliance Concert, Sat., Jan. 20, 7 p.m.
- Tri-Lakes Chamber Monthly Education Series: Multi-Channel Marketing Panel, Wed., Jan. 24, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
- WMMI Winter Writer's Nonfiction Writing Class, Sat., Jan. 27, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- High Altitude Gardening, Tue., Jan. 30, 10-11:30 a.m.
- 2017 State of the Region Lunch, Wed., Jan. 31, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
- Community Emergency Response Training (CERT), Wed.-Sat., Jan. 31-Feb. 3, 6-10 p.m. Wed.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Sat.
- Palmer Lake Art Group Winter Art Show & Sale Opening Reception, Fri., Feb. 2, 6-8 p.m. ■

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Above—Santa on Patrol: Santa, Mrs. Claus, and lots of elves descended upon the Tri-Lakes area on Saturday, Dec. 23. They came to town just a bit ahead of schedule in support of the Monument Police Department's annual Santa on Patrol event. Sleigh bells and reindeer hooves were replaced on this festive and sunny morning with equally exciting police sirens and flashing lights. A well-coordinated parade of police vehicles and fire trucks made its way from the Monument Police Department to several local neighborhoods, the unmistakable blaring sirens of each vehicle heralding the arrival of the Head Elf himself. Kids and parents excitedly ran from their homes along the parade route and in the neighborhoods where the parade made planned stops. Santa and Mrs. Claus, aided by police and fire personnel from several area units, handed out toys to wide-eyed kids as well as gift cards and other needed items to parents. Monument Police Chief Jake Shirk helped create this event to serve local children in some of the communities served by the Monument Police Department and the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Department. The event takes weeks of work and planning by volunteers to collect and sort donated toys. On the morning of Dec. 23, the event came together in the parking lot of the Monument Police Department, where, after trucks and vehicles were loaded beyond full with toys, books, and games, Chief Shirk donned white beard and red suit. He gathered the volunteers to swear them in as "honorary elves" in a moving ceremony that reminded many of the magic of the season as seen through the eyes of children. *Photo by Erin Poole.*

Monument Board of Trustees special meeting, Dec. 2

Resolution increasing police base salary approved

By Lisa Hatfield

The Monument Board of Trustees had to hold a special meeting on Saturday, Dec. 2 to finalize discussion of its budget draft for 2018 so the trustees would be able to approve it on Dec. 4. The budget must be turned in to county and state on time to avoid possible sales and property tax revenue withholding, town Treasurer Pamela Smith said.

The additional meeting was necessary because at a budget workshop on Nov. 18, which OCN did not attend, Trustee Jeff Bornstein introduced last-minute changes to the Monument Police Department (MPD) salary schedule that had not previously been in any of the budget drafts. His goal was to make Monument more competitive when recruiting police officers. And at

the Nov. 20 board meeting, the board directed town staff to revise the 2018 proposed budget to reflect an increase in base salary for MPD sworn officers to \$52,000 and to draft a resolution they could formally vote on to increase police base pay. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#mbot.

Note: In 2015, newly hired officers earned a \$43,000 base salary, and in mid-2017, Police Chief Jake Shirk apparently requested this be increased to \$46,000. Several officers have left in the last few years, one empty officer position has been unfilled for over a year, one candidate who had applied recently just withdrew his application, and Shirk has reported difficulties in finding qualified candidates to apply.

MONUMENT (cont. on page 4)

**Donald Wescott Fire Protection
District, Dec. 5**

2018 budget and resolutions adopted; transparency questioned

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) Board of Directors on Dec. 5 reviewed and approved the district's 2018 budget and passed resolutions that certified tax levies, appropriated funds, appointed a designated election official (DEO), and established 2018 board meeting dates. All directors were present for this end-of-year meeting.

Chief provides review of 2018 budget

Chief Vinny Burns reported that there was very little difference between the 2017 and 2018 budgets. He noted that the general property tax revenue had been separated into two categories: one for the northern sub-district—which is taxed at 14.9 mills—and one for the "underlying or ... standing" district—which is taxed at 7 mills. Other budget features included:

- Estimated 2018 revenue of \$2.36 million, about 2 percent less than budgeted for 2017.
- Estimated 2018 expenditures of \$2.36 million, about 20 percent more than budgeted for 2017.
- A 50 percent increase in payments to Social Security for when additional part-time firefighters are hired.
- A 20 percent increase in overtime to better account for "red flag" days and cover the station if more than two firefighters are out.
- A 9 percent increase from the 2016 budget to reinstate training classes, tuition, and workshops. Training funds were unavailable during the 2017 fiscal year.
- A 24 percent increase in station operations to reopen Station 2.
- Savings of about 25 percent on property and vehicle insurance.
- Savings of about 31 percent on workers' compensation due to completion of a claim.

Burns stated that he is not requesting raises for any of the employees except for a 23 percent increase for the "horribly underpaid" administrative assistant position. He added that he plans to postpone firefighter raises at least one more year to establish stability and sustainability of the district's revenue stream.

Directing the board's attention to the 2017 budget, Burns requested a one-time retention bonus from the budget reserve for the remaining employees. The reserve is generally rolled into the next fiscal year. Estimating a rollover of \$500,000 to \$600,000, the board approved \$60,000 from the 2017 budget reserve to be divided among

DWFPD (cont. on page 2)

DWFPD (cont. from page 1)

the 16 paid firefighters. Access a link to the approved 2018 DWFPD budget at <http://wescottfire.org/board-of-directors-2/budget>.

Budget draft availability questioned

During the opening public comment session, resident Gary Rusnak questioned the lack of public access to the DWFPD 2018 budget draft. Rusnak pointed out that "last year we were able to provide it [the budget] to the public and we had discussions during the timeframe, now we have an agenda where we're limited to comments before and comments after, so I have to assume that the public's not allowed to make any comments during the bud-

get review. My question is, 'Will we be provided a copy before your discussion or only afterwards?'" Board President Greg Gent stated, "We only provide those to the public after they've been approved." Rusnak continued, "But we have no opportunity to comment on that draft, is that correct, since we don't get a copy until after you've approved?" Burns confirmed, "I believe that's correct; it's a working document still."

Resident Dennis Feltz commented after the meeting that the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) made its 2018 draft budget available. See www.tlmfire.org/board, 2017 NOV 15 Agenda/Minutes or 2017 OCT 25 Agenda/Minutes. See also <https://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/>

[files/images/olls/crs2016-title-32.pdf](https://www.tlmfire.org/sites/default/files/images/olls/crs2016-title-32.pdf).

2018 resolutions approved

The board approved resolutions to:

- Appropriate sums of money to the various funds and spending agencies for the district and northern sub-district, for the 2018 budget year: General Fund of \$1.334 million (district) and \$1.466 million (northern sub-district), (beginning) fund balance of \$1.488 million, a Special Ownership Tax of \$75,000, Miscellaneous Income of \$108,822 and Total Revenue of \$3.006 million. Note: \$622,805 of the 7 mills levied will be paid by the City of Colorado Springs to Wescott at the end of 2018. Therefore, when the funding is received it is added to the reserve and not budgeted as revenue.
- Certify tax levies against the district's net assessed valuation of \$191.6 million at 7 mills (generating property tax revenue of \$1.334 million) and the northern sub-district's net assessed valuation of \$98.372 million at 14.9 mills (generating total property tax revenue of \$1.466 million).
- Appoint a designated election official (DEO) to exercise the authority of the board in conducting the 2018 election. The board named Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich as the DEO for the regular special district election scheduled for May 8, 2018.

District meeting dates for 2018

Gent reported that the DWFPD board meetings for 2018 will usually be held on the third Tuesday of every month. Because Wescott is separated into a district and sub-district, there is an ob-

ligation to announce at all board meetings that the meeting is open to the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District and Donald Wescott Fire Protection Northern Sub-District or to schedule two special meetings specific to the northern sub-district in the same manner as the pension meetings.

The meeting dates cited by Gent included: Jan. 16, Feb. 20, March 20 (northern sub-district meeting), April 17 (pension meeting at 6:30), May 15, June 20, July 17, Aug. 21, Sept. 18 (pension meeting at 6:30), Oct. 16, Nov. 20, and Dec. 4 (northern sub-district meeting).

Administrative and other matters

Popovich reported that Wescott's funds total \$1.66 million. The board approved the November minutes without revision or correction. Assistant Chief Scott Ridings announced that the November run report would be combined with the December statistics in the January 2018 report to highlight year-end activities. Lt. Bryan Ackerman stated that volunteers had undergone agility tests the previous week and were scheduled to be interviewed in December. Ackerman anticipated bringing on three to five new volunteers in January.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

The next DWFPD Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 16, at 7 p.m. at Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Drive. Please call (719) 488-8680, a non-emergency number, for more information, or visit www.wescottfire.org. Wescott is also on Facebook and Twitter.

Jennifer Kaylor can be reached at jenniferkaylor@ocn.me.

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Dr. Metchkov is an Associate Professor of Music at the Colorado State University, Pueblo, Colorado.

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Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Dec. 6

2018 budget includes 25 percent base wage increase

By Lisa Hatfield

The Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board included a 25 percent salary increase in the base wage for district firefighters in the 2018 budget it approved on Dec. 6. It was able to do this because TLMFPD voters approved the board's proposed mill levy increase in the November district special election.

Director Jason Buckingham was excused.

Mill levy certified and budget approved

As they had at the November meeting, the directors discussed the exact amount to set for the 2018 property tax mill levy. Voters just approved an increase of "up to 6.9 mills," but Truty explained that since assessed property valuation from El Paso County was slightly higher than expected, staff had used an additional 6.6 mills instead (for a total of 18.1 mills) to create the 2018 budget, since that would generate the amount of revenue the district needed. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tlfmpd.

Vice President Roger Lance again voiced his opinion that TLMFPD should use the full mill levy increase that was approved, which would generate an extra \$130,000, and put the revenue toward uses such as vehicle maintenance, for example.

Treasurer John Hildebrandt said he could

see both sides, but it was always a possibility that the district might have to go back to voters in the future for an additional mill levy increase, so it would be better to just use what was needed for the 2018 budget.

Director Terri Hayes said to remember that 40 percent of the voters did not vote yes on the mill levy increase, and it was important to "build trust with them by taking just what was needed and not all you can."

The consensus was that since the mill levy would be recertified each year, the 2019 budget process would be a good time to re-evaluate how much of the "up to 6.9 mills" increase to use.

The 18.1 mill levy certifica-

tion resolution was approved 5-1, with Lance voting no.

Then, since the budget had been discussed in more detail at prior meetings, the directors unanimously approved the final 2018 budget as well as a resolution appropriating sums of money to the funds in the 2018 budget. The final budget included:

- Projected revenue – \$9.081 million (about a 47 percent increase over 2017's \$6.154 million).
- Budgeted expenses – \$8.867 million.

New firefighter wage schedule set

Truty said 2017 salaries were about 25 percent below the 2017 Mountain States Employment Council/Special District Association wage survey. He

said that the proposed 2018 wage schedule was consistent with the figures that he has presented throughout the entire 2017 mill levy project and 2018 budget process. It would add 25 percent to the

2017 Firefighter 1 (base) wage upon which most other district salaries are calculated using formulas prescribed in the schedule. Hildebrandt commented that this meant about a \$10,000 raise in base pay.

Happy Holidays!



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The new wage schedule was approved unanimously. "This substantial increase will get our guys up to average wage (\$52,496). We expect a significant impact in hiring and retention now that salaries are more competitive than we have been in the Front

Range," Truty said.

Note: This topic is completely separate from the Town of Monument Police Department pay raise discussed in the Monument Board of Trustees Dec. 2 and Dec. 4 articles on pages 1 and 6.

Board elections coming in 2018

Three director positions are up for election in the May 2018 election. TLMFD will find out in January if President Jake Shirk, Treasurer Hildebrandt, and Secretary Mike Smaldino will submit self-nomination forms to run again and if any other district residents will also run for the TLMFPD board.

Truty said the last board election had only a 9 percent return on the mail ballots, so he is considering doing a polling place election in 2018 to save money, possibly coordinating polling places with other special districts also holding elections in May.

Kudos to TLMFPD

Truty and Hildebrandt both spoke high praises for the new situation in TLMFPD since district residents approved the mill levy increase.

Truty thanked the board and said TLMFD had "turned a corner." He commended the top-notch emergency services and firefighting staff who have done so much extra work and continued to shine despite hurdles. "Room for improvement exists, but we don't plan to rest on past accomplishments."

Hildebrandt reviewed his time with TLMFPD, which began in 1997 with a total budget of \$147,000 for the then-named Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District. At that time, neighboring districts Woodmoor-Monument, Wescott, and Palmer Lake "were ganging

up on us," but he and Charlie Pocock persisted and did "as much as we could with what we had." He said he is thrilled to see the department go forward now.

For information back as far as 2002, see the *Our Community News* website at www.ocn.me and search for any desired keywords surrounded by a pair of quotation marks and click on the "All Words" button in the upper-right portion of the OCN home page to learn more about the tempestuous battles between the local fire districts.

Unanticipated fire engine repair needed

Deputy Chief Randy Trost explained that one of the district's fire engines needs a brand-new motor that will cost \$50,000, which the district had not been planning on spending until 2019.

Truty said the cost could be absorbed in the 2018 budget, which includes \$245,000 in a vehicle replacement line item that has been created using some of the mill levy increase.

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Jan. 24 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information, contact Jennifer Martin at 484-0911. For upcoming agendas, see <http://tlmfire.org/board>.

Lisa Hatfield can be reached at lisahatfield@ocn.me.

MONUMENT (Cont. from page 1)

After two hours of discussion on Dec. 2, the trustees unanimously voted to approve the resolution setting the new annual base salary for a police officer. Those numbers could be revised in the draft budget, and they were prepared to vote on the final budget at the next meeting. See related Dec. 4 article on page 6.

Base salary resolution discussed and approved

The resolution setting the annual base salary for a police officer position in the Town of Monument was initially included in the consent agenda for the meeting, which is ordinarily approved without discussion. But Mayor Pro-Tem Don Wilson made a motion to move that item to the regular meeting agenda so it could be discussed after the workshop on the proposed budget. This motion was approved by a 4-3 vote, with Trustees Jeff Bornstein, Greg Coopman, and Shea Medlicott voting against Wilson's motion.

Smith then presented ideas she and Town Manager Chris Lowe suggested to remove certain items from the budget to be able to add almost \$200,000 for the increase in police officer base salary, if the trustees approved that, and still allow the budget to be balanced as required by state statute.

On Nov. 20, Smith had said that the trustees should come to the Dec. 2 meeting with their own

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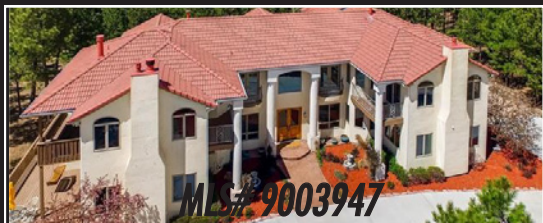
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Above: On Dec. 2, the Monument Board of Trustees approved an increase in base salary for Monument Police Department officers. Police Chief Jake Shirk, left, agreed that this move should attract more candidates to apply for positions in the department, which has lost several officers and is having trouble attracting new applicants. Public Works Director Tom Tharnish, right, saw \$200,000 worth of projects removed, at least for now, from his 2018 parks improvements budget to pay for the police salary increases. In 2018, a salary review committee made up of town staff and trustees will review all other town staff salaries. *Photo by John Howe.*

ideas about items that could be cut, and she would prepare a new budget draft that was purposely not balanced and would highlight some items that could be cut. But instead she brought a new draft budget that included the cuts she and Lowe suggested, and when Medlicott began making suggestions about other items that might be cut instead, Smith said it would be better "not to micromanage line by line" but to wait make any changes during 2018 as the budget could still be restated after information on actual revenue is known. "Staff is incredibly good at keeping things in line," she said.

After an extended discussion, it boiled down to several public works parks and other projects that were cut in order to find the budget for the late-breaking request for the police officer base pay increase. These included: permanent bathrooms at Monument Lake, a downtown Wi-Fi project, a pocket park for Washington Street, dock extension at Monument

Lake, solar lights at Limbach Park, improvements at Limbach Park playground, and an electronic ticketing system for police.

Also, millions of dollars in "unfunded" projects that were not included in the 2018 budget but had been listed for consideration included: a floating bridge at north end of Monument Lake, a xeriscape demonstration garden, new sports fields at Park Trail Park, a mill overlay project, an all-new public works facility, a new welcome arch on Second Street, and part of the cost for new water tank and transmission line.

Sgt. John Hudson and Sgt. Amanda Molnar both spoke in favor of the base salary increase, affirming that it would help the current officers as well as attract more qualified applicants. "Yeah, my guys are struggling," Hudson said.

During public comments, resident Nancy

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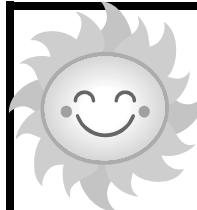
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Swearingin presented information to the trustees about the lack of affordable housing in Monument, saying that even at \$52,000 a year base pay, "Monument has nothing an officer could afford to buy."

This reporter asked Smith to clarify her comment about decreasing the amount of the 1 percent sales tax revenue approved by voters in 1989 that is going into the 2A Water Acquisition, Storage and Delivery (ASD) fund. Smith said since TABOR limits what percentage of money the town can put into the enterprise fund, the revenue will still be used for water-related capital

improvement projects but not necessarily ASD projects. "It will still be about \$800,000," she said.

The board consensus was that at the Dec. 4 meeting, the trustees would be ready to approve the 2018 budget as currently drafted, with the plan that the details would be looked at more closely during 2018 and various of the deleted items might be added back in.

Also, the trustees have committed to sending two representatives to participate in a compensation committee next year to analyze the rest of the town staff's salaries to see if any need adjustment. Two trustees

will participate on budget planning committee and report back to the rest of the trustees on that, too. This way, when Smith starts the 2019 budget process with department heads next summer, the trustees will already be in the loop on planning and collaboration, "instead of forcing a last-minute change when all the work has already gone into it," as Wilson summed up.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Lisa Hatfield can be reached at lisahatfield@ocn.me.

Monument Board of Trustees, Dec. 4

2018 budget approved; Wagons West moves along

By Lisa Hatfield

On Dec. 4, the Monument Board of Trustees approved its 2018 budget, approved several development steps for Wagons West including annexing it into the town, and discussed plans in 2018 to analyze needs related to general capital improvement and all town employee compensation beyond the police officer salaries.

2018 budget adopted at last

Town Treasurer Pamela Smith presented the trustees with an ordinance approving the final version of the 2018 budget that had been subject to unexpected debate and discussion over the last month. See related Dec. 2 Monument Board of Trustees article on page 1.

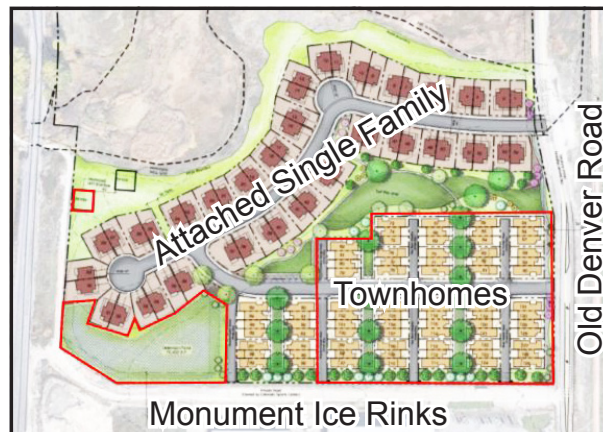
No members of the public spoke at the related public hearings. The trustees unanimously approved the ordinances adopting the budget, appropriating money to the various funds for the town, and authorizing the certification of the property tax mill levy for 2018 at 6.225 mills. The biggest funds and related expenditures include:

- General Fund – \$5.96 million
 - Water Enterprise Fund – \$1.69 million
 - 2A Water Acquisition, Storage, Delivery (ASD) – \$2.64 million
 - Capital Improvement – \$2.76 million
- Smith's report mentioned:
- The sales and use tax is the single largest revenue stream for the town, making up about 60 percent of general fund revenue, "which is kind of dangerous."
 - A substantial increase was made in the Step and Grade salary program for the Police Department, resulting in raises of up to 27 percent for officers from year one to five of employment and a 17 percent average increase for officers from year six to 10 of employment.
 - Water Acquisition, Storage, and Delivery (ASD) fund expenditures included new water tank and transmission lines, Area 3 reservoir preparation work, and return-flow water management sampling (reuse project).

- If grants are received from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), then two projects would include a new sidewalk on Beacon Lite Road and a splash park and some other improvements at Limbach Park.

For all the financial details, see the Dec. 4 board packet on the town website or contact Smith at psmith@tomgov.org.

Wagons West annexed; project mostly approved



Above: Wagons West Preliminary Site Plan.

Principal Planner Larry Manning presented the trustees with an ordinance approving several land use planning stages related to the Wagons West development, including its annexation into the town, planned development (PD) zoning, and preliminary PD site plan. This ordinance was unanimously approved by the Monument Planning Commission (MPC) on Nov. 8. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#mpc.

Note: The final PD site plan, the last step before construction could begin, still needs to be reviewed by both the MPC and the BOT later.

Andrea Barlow of NES Inc., the new co-owner of NES, said Wagons West is a 35-acre parcel on the west side of Old Denver Road north of the Monument Ice Rinks and south of the Trails End development. Wagons West LLC plans to include 131 total dwelling units, townhomes first and then duplexes on the north side, built in two phases, priced from about \$230,000 to \$280,000. (<http://www.neslandscapearchitects.com/gazette-december-5-2017/>)

The annexation agreement stated that the domestic water supply will be provided by the town and a tract well site will be dedicated to the town for use in the future. Barlow said the property has 61 acre-feet per year of water available, but it will only use an

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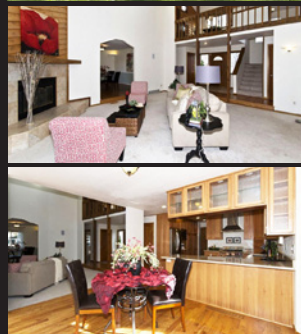
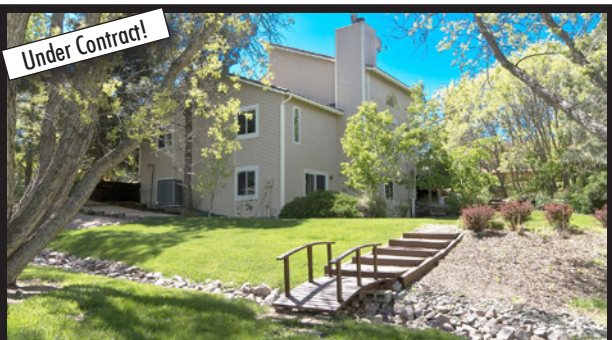
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estimated 49 acre-feet per year. The water rights will all be deeded to the town.

Wastewater service will be provided by the Monument Sanitation District, which is a separate Title 32 government entity.

More plans include:

- Since it is a flood plain and Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat, about 16 acres on the north half of the property will not be developed.
- A two-acre private park is planned on the southeast side.
- The town will approve a metro district if it is in accordance with town requirements and expectations. This may help pay for the wastewater lift station construction, maintain open spaces, and possibly maintain the exterior of the townhomes.
- The development will generate about \$1.5 million in tap fees, Barlow said.

The MPC recommended items to be resolved at the final PD site plan review:

- A temporary stormwater facility.
- A crosswalk across Old Denver Road to provide access to the Santa Fe trail.
- Continuance of the sidewalks on the west side of the Old Denver Road along the entire frontage of the project.
- Phase 1 should include a portion of the private park area.
- A utility easement from the property to the south and the southern public road.
- Conflicts with the driveways to the south and a future four-way intersection where the southern access to the project intersects Old Denver Road.

Barlow said her data analysis showed that an income of \$62,000 per year would be enough to qualify to purchase a \$250,000 home. In the last several years, there has been an increase in the median sales price in the Tri-Lakes area, from \$395,000 to \$436,000. She said the median household income for the Tri-Lakes area is \$90,000. "This product will meet a need here," she said.

The reason the development petitioned for annexation into the town was to gain access to water and sanitation services. It also allowed a zoning change from residential rural 5-acre lots (RR-5) in El Paso County, to PD, which is tailored for individual development on a case-by-case basis by the town.

Trustee Greg Coopman asked who or what entity is liable to provide water to homeowners when the aquifers run dry. He said this development will house 400 to 600 people on 17 acres and compose 17 percent of Monument's population. He was also concerned that the density was too high and therefore not in compliance with the comprehensive plan.

Trustee Dennis Murphy said he wanted to see something tangible done on the five-year water capital improvement plan (CIP) before he would be convinced that "what we laid out is real and will subsequently improve our water supply."

Note: The trustees approved a policy direction on staff efforts toward a five-year water CIP on Oct. 16. See www.ocn.me/v17n11.htm#mbot10. It included:

- Immediately find a way to manage return flows (water reuse).
- Continue pursuing the Area 3 reservoir for renewable water storage, possibly in the Home Place Ranch area of Triview.
- Acquire renewable water rights.
- Continue updating the town's 20-

year water master plan as development changes.

Town Attorney Alicia Corley said the annexation agreement says the town will provide water to this development and that water engineer Bruce Lytle of Lytle Water Solutions said there is more than sufficient water for this project.

Public Works Director Tom Tharish agreed, saying, "It is indeed the town's responsibility. We have presented to this board on many occasions how we are going to supplement our water supplies. A 10 percent increase in current capacity is well within our wet water available." He said the estimate of only eight to 11 years of water left in the aquifer was done several years ago. "Since then we have made several large gains in water conservation and efficiency, so I am guessing it is longer than that. It depends on how much water we use, how smart we are, how much we conserve, water reuse, and procuring renewable water." He said he is comfortable providing a 100-year water will-serve letter from the town to Wagons West as part of the annexation agreement.

Three people spoke in favor of the project during the public hearing, and none spoke against it.

- Nancy Swearengen favored having more affordable housing options as well as moving ahead on the indirect potable water reuse project.
- Andrew Sherman, owner of the ice rink, supported it.
- Terri Hayes, president and CEO of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Corp., said local businesses, including Johnson & Johnson that has 30 to 40 open positions, told her they had trouble finding workers for \$12 to \$15 an hour since affordable housing was scarce here.

The ordinance covering the annexation, zoning, and preliminary PD site plan for Wagons West, including the recommendations from MPC, was approved by a vote of 5-2. Trustees Greg Coopman and Dennis Murphy voted no.

Public works salary and facility status questioned

During general public comments near the end of the meeting, Public Works staff member Monty Kuntz admonished the board for failing to see the dangers faced by employees other than the police officers who will now be getting a "big city pay grade." He explained how much money the expertise of public works employees has saved the town, but meanwhile they have to work in a dangerous, outdated Public Works facility. "This (police pay raise) was a slap in the face.... I have put my all into everything for this town. I am pretty disappointed in the way we are being treated."

Kuntz had left the meeting by the end when Coopman reminded the audience that the new town employee compensation committee would meet in 2018, composed of trustees and staff, to review the entire employee compensation structure.

Kuntz also did not hear Mayor Pro-Tem Don Wilson's question regarding "What do we need to do about the Public Works facility?" Town Manager Chris Lowe said, "Last time we spoke about this, the majority of the trustees, at least four people, said they did not want to hear about it again." Murphy said he did not remember that discussion or decision by the trustees, although they did ask about building the new facility in stages. Lowe said the board had taken action on the water CIP, but not on other CIP issues, and he was waiting until the board requested it. For several recent discussions relat-

ed to the new Public Works facility, see www.ocn.me/v17n6.htm#mbot0515, www.ocn.me/v17n11.htm#mbot10.

Lowe said that more recently he had recommended that a few trustees also volunteer to be on a Public Works facilities committee doing analysis and communicating with the other board members toward the general CIP during the next year before the budget process. The board consensus was to authorize Lowe to move forward on all the general fund CIPs to achieve consensus on the direction for those projects. And the employee compensation review committee will also begin work in 2018.

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

The Monument Board of Trustees usu-

ally meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The regular Dec. 18 meeting was canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 18. Call 884-8014 or see www.townofmonument.org for information about live video streaming of meetings.

To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for the Board of Trustees or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutesondemand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

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Lisa Hatfield can be reached at lisahatfield@ocn.me.

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Palmer Lake Town Council, Dec. 14

Several personnel changes announced

By James Howald

The Palmer Lake Town Council met once in December, on Dec. 14. Mayor John Cressman, Town Administrator Kathy Green-Sinnard and Trustee Glant Havenar were not present at the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Rich Kuehster presided over the last council session of the year.

The close of 2017 brought changes to the staffing of the Palmer Lake town government, with two longtime employees leaving their posts, and a new employee, former Triview Metropolitan District Manager Valerie Remington, coming on board as chief financial officer. The council

voted to send the town's budget on to the state of Colorado on schedule, and to give Remington the authority to sign checks. The council also set the 2018 mill levies and replatted three lots owned by local developer Kurt Ehrhardt.

Berreth and Radosevich leave town employ

Town Lawyer Maureen Juran and Kuehster briefly summarized the personnel changes in the town government. According to Juran, Town Clerk Tara Berreth resigned her position in December. The town issued Berreth a severance check of \$24,500, and Berreth agreed not to sue the town, Juran said.

Remington was authorized to sign the severance check.

Kuehster reminded the council and others present that personnel matters must be kept confidential.

Deputy Town Clerk Bob Radosevich retired in December as well, Kuehster said.

Budget for 2018 approved

The council voted unanimously to send the town's 2018 budget on to the state of Colorado, in compliance with the deadline at the end of December.

The budget is published on the town's website (<http://townofpalmerlake.com>).

Mill levies set for 2018

The council voted unanimously to approve a resolution setting a new mill levy of 21.135 mills for 2018. In 2017, the mill levy was slightly higher, at 21.24 mills. According to Juran, the 2018 mill levy was reduced because the valuation of most houses was higher than expected, and the needed revenue could be generated using a lower mill levy.

Three lots replatted

Ehrhardt asked the council to make minor changes to the lot lines for three lots he planned to develop to make all three lots buildable. Ehrhardt plans to build 1,500 to 2,000-square-

foot houses on the lots, he said. Ehrhardt requested altering the boundary of one lot by 10 feet, to enlarge the adjacent lot by the same amount.

The Planning Commission had already voted to approve the change, and the Town Council voted unanimously to approve the change.

The two meetings for January will be at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 12 and Jan. 26 at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

Lewis-Palmer D-38 special meeting, Dec. 29

New members installed; board reorganized



Above: The current Board of Education members are, from left, are Vice President Tiffiney Upchurch, Treasurer Chris Taylor, Director Mark Pfoff, President Matthew Clawson, and Secretary Sarah Sampayo. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

By Harriet Halbig

Following county certification of the November election, the Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education met Dec. 29 to swear in two new members and determine office holders for the coming year.

Newly elected members Tiffiney Upchurch and Chris Taylor were sworn in and signed affidavits of confidentiality during the meeting.

The new officers are: Matthew Clawson, president; Upchurch, vice president; Sarah Sampayo, secretary; Taylor, treasurer; and Director Mark Pfoff.

Also during this meeting, the board certified the mill levy for 2018. Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman explained that the 1999 mill levy override provides \$4 million per year to the district.

The assessed value of property has risen by 7.2 percent, according to information provided by the county and the Colorado Department of Education.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.



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Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education, Dec. 21

Board recognizes state champion athletes, learns of communications program

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education, at its Dec. 21 meeting, recognized four state championship teams and several individuals for their achievements in 2017. Board members also received an update on the district communications program and discussed several policies.

Those recognized for athletic achievement were:

- Palmer Ridge Field Hockey state champions (a district team playing under Palmer Ridge colors) under coach Paul Lewis. Palmer Ridge's Jordyn Isner is the Gazette's Field Hockey Peak Performer of the Year, and Coach Lewis is the Gazette's Preps Field Hockey Coach of the Year.
- Palmer Ridge 4A Cross Country champions with Coach Rob Collins. The boys' team was first in the state and the girls' team was second.
- Palmer Ridge 3A state champion football team with Coach Tom Pulford. Pulford was the Gazette's 3A football coach of the year, and quarterback Ty Evans was selected as Colorado Gatorade Football Player of the Year and Gazette Peak Player of the Year.
- Lewis-Palmer 4A Volleyball

champions and coach Wade Baxter.

- Palmer Ridge volleyball coach Jessen Miller was named Colorado Preps 4A Volleyball Coach of the Year.

Communications update

Public Information Officer Julie Stephen updated the board on the activities of her department. She stressed that community engagement includes both internal and external communication, and the department strives to offer information in several different formats.

A current emphasis is on creating better branding for the district. The department is striving to change the brand from LP to D-38. As a result, the new banners appearing at the schools, while still containing the mountain and the rising star, now say "D-38 on a great path."

The district is increasing the use of radio to broadcast public information spots on safety in school zones and is stressing that that best source of information on closures and delayed starts is the district website.

Stephen spoke of community involvement through such programs as Emergency Responders Appreciation Day and Veterans Day programs,

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Teacher Spotlight: Kris Scarsbrook

Lewis-Palmer Elementary School's Kris Scarsbrook is in her twelfth year of teaching. She comes from a family of teachers: her grandmother, brother, and uncle are all teachers. Kris taught for five years in Arizona before trading classroom chalk for sidewalk chalk when she had children. When her family moved to Monument and her kids were older, the classroom called her back. Kris taught LPES second graders for four years before teaching third graders, which she has done for two years now.



Mrs. Scarsbrook enjoys third graders, especially observing their thinking processes and seeing them become independent learners. She also enjoys the continent studies where the students write to their foreign pen pals. This year, her class is writing to children in Argentina; last year the pen pals were from Scotland.

Kris' high school sweetheart, her husband, built their house in Woodmoor, and their children attended Lewis-Palmer Elementary. She loved the school so much that she applied for a job there. Kris values Monument's small town feel and working with the LPES team.

Kris and her family spend much of the snowy season skiing in Winter Park. She is a fair weather runner, a weekend YMCA warrior, and a closet Steeler's fan. Kris completed the Steamboat Springs Triathlon and joins her son on his quest to climb all of the 14ers - at 16, he's conquered 19 of them. When not scrapbooking, hiking, or reading, she can be found planning the family's next trip, either somewhere with sandy beaches or Italy. She would also like to finish her master's degree; having it half-done seems silly.



Pre-K and Kindergarten Registration 2018

Lewis-Palmer School District begins registration for 2018-2019 pre-K and kindergarten at all elementary locations on Thursday, February 1.

For specific times and further information check www.lewispalmer.org>Enrollment icon>Student Registration or call (719) 488-4700.

LPSD Upcoming Events

January 1: District Closed, New Year's Day

January 9: Monument Academy Students Return

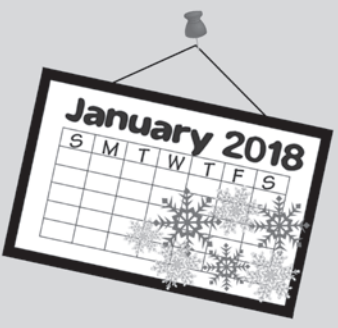
January 10: All Students Return

January 15: District Closed, MLK Day

January 18: Board of Education Meeting, 6 p.m.

January 24: 2-Hour Delayed Start/PLC Day

February 1: Pre-K and Kindergarten Registration





Above: Palmer Ridge 4A state champion cross country team with Coach Rob Collins. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

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Above: Palmer Ridge (district team under Palmer Ridge colors) state champion field hockey team with Coach Paul Lewis. Photo by Harriet Halbig.



Above: Lewis-Palmer 4A state champion volleyball team with Coach Wade Baxter. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

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contact with churches, homeowners associations, and such local organizations as the Kiwanis and the Tri-Lakes Women's Club. Students also participated in fundraisers for Tri-Lakes Cares and other groups.

She said that newspaper articles in the *Tribune* and *Our Community News* profiled district employees. Board Vice President Tiffney Upchurch asked whether individuals could nominate subjects for these profiles, and Stephen said yes.

Director Mark Pfoff commented that district advertising pays for itself through increased enrollment and the state revenue that results from that increase.

Treasurer Chris Taylor asked whether the district is pro-growth. Stephen responded that the district needs to respond to the needs of the community and the community is growing.

Superintendent Karen Brofft commented that people are moving to the area, and the district wants them to know there are good opportunities here for their children.

Secretary Sarah Sampayo said the district is entering the open enrollment period. She said that perhaps the district should not be investing advertising dollars in increasing enrollment when the schools are nearing capacity. Brofft responded that the board will need to discuss what types of promotion it prefers.

Stephen said that she has concentrated more on positive stories than on recruitment recently.

Policy discussion

The board discussed the first reading of policy JICCD regarding violent and aggressive behavior, edited to include wording requiring that parents whose students have been subjected to an act of violence will be notified by school administrators within a reasonable period.

Policy JECC regards the assignment of students to schools and explains the process of submitting a written request to attend a school other than that in a

student's neighborhood. The district establishes maximum enrollment figures for each location.

The board approved policy JLCD, which involves administration of medication on district property. At a previous meeting, the board suggested adding wording to require that the necessary forms be renewed and submitted at the beginning of each school year.

Superintendent update

Brofft commented that there are a number of examples of the students in the district giving back to the community, such as the Harvest of Love drive to benefit Tri-Lakes Cares that raised \$4,000. Many families were adopted by schools and the administration building to provide gifts for children in need.

Three district schools were awarded the James Irwin School of Excellence Award this year. They are Prairie Winds Elementary, Kilmer Elementary, and Lewis-Palmer High School. This award acknowledges academic achievement and growth in English, math, and science.

Brofft said that the district is working on the contract with Monument Academy and the academy's recent audit.

Brofft said National Signing Day in February is not a big deal, but that she would speak with the athletic directors about acknowledging students who signed with colleges on the basis of participation in club sports, not just school sports.

District officials are working on alignment of graduation requirements to include work-based learning. There is also discussion of a curriculum in social media.

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman said that she has met with the Monument Academy financial staff to discuss cash flow, grants, and other concerns.

Wangeman also mentioned the D-38 Deliberates program and that 20 members of the staff and several



Above: Palmer Ridge 3A state champion football team with Coach Tom Pulford. Photo by Harriet Halbig.



Above: Palmer Ridge volleyball coach Jessen Miller is presented an award by Superintendent Brofft, left, and board President Matthew Clawson. Photo by Harriet Halbig.



Above: Prairie Winds kindergartner Henry T. reads his writing project with the help of Principal Aileen Kennedy. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

members of the public attended a recent training session.

Wangeman has also requested additional information on a new subdivision planned for the border between Districts 38 and 20.

The board voted to approve the superintendent's evaluation. President Matthew Clawson suggested that in the future, the evaluation be complete in such a way that new members of the board may be familiar with the superintendent's performance before being required to vote.

Demonstration of learning

Prairie Winds Elementary Principal Aileen Kennedy explained that her school has recently used the Lucy Calkins Writers Workshop as a basis for teaching writing throughout her school. Several students read their work.

Board comments

Taylor said he had met with Monument Academy representatives and congratulated them on their clean audit. He expressed concern that the district's audits are done later in the year than those of many districts. He said that he had attended the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) convention and brought a handout on how boards can improve their

methods. He suggested that the board should assess itself.

Secretary Sarah Sampayo also commented on the CASB convention. She spoke with a doctor who had talked about the subject of later start times for schools and said that the doctor was willing to speak to the board. She said that she had received a complaint that student ID numbers were breached for those involved in concurrent enrollment in local colleges. She praised the district for using such stress-relieving activities as yoga and board games during exam week.

Upchurch also attended the CASB convention. She has visited several schools and is impressed by their different personalities.

Clawson congratulated the athletes and thanked Sampayo for creating binders of information for incoming board members.

Consent agenda

A consent agenda item regarding a new Socratic Seminar and work study were discussed. Executive Director of Learning Services Dr. Lori Benton said that the courses appear in the consent agenda, while the curriculum requires a vote of the board. Once a course is approved, district staff determines the appropriate curriculum for public review and board approval.

The board approved the consent agenda.

The board went into executive session at 10 p.m. to discuss the lease or sale of real property and negotiations with Monument Academy. No further business was conducted after the executive session.

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be on Jan.18.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at
harriethalbig@ocn.me.

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Forest Lakes Metropolitan District and Pinon Pines Metro Districts 1, 2, and 3, Dec. 4

Budgets approved; elections and wastewater rates adjustment planned

By Lisa Hatfield

The 2018 budgets were among the slew of resolutions approved on Dec. 4 by the combined boards of Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) and Pinon Pines Metropolitan Districts 1, 2, and 3 (PPMD 1, 2, 3). They also discussed the upcoming board elections and decided that the February meeting will include a public wastewater rates and fees hearing.

Forest Lakes, at the western end of West Baptist Road, is a Title 32 service district in El Paso County established in 1985. FLMD is the half-acre operating district responsible for the public infrastructure and utility and general governmental services—which actually collect the property taxes—for the residents of PPMD 1, 2, and 3. FLMD holds joint board meetings with PPMD 1, 2 and 3, which were established in 2004.

Clarification on the entity boundaries: The residential sections, PPMD 1

and 2, are in unincorporated El Paso County. However, PPMD 3, the commercial section, lies mostly within the southwest town limits of Monument. One small parcel of PPMD 3 is in the county, which allows the county to have sole jurisdiction over all four of these metro districts, through their county metro district service plans. Since it is inside the town boundary, the Falcon Commerce Center portion of PPMD 3 will pay sales taxes to the town of Monument and a separate public infrastructure fee (PIF) to PPMD 3.

Note: FLMD has no relationship with the separate Forest View Acres Water District in the foothills west of Monument and north of Forest Lakes. See photo on page 14.

Board members for all four of these five-member metro district boards are President George Lenz, executive vice president of finance of Classic Homes; Secretary James Boulton, vice president/project manager of Classic

Homes; Assistant Secretary and Treasurer Doug Stimple, CEO of Classic Homes; and Assistant Secretary Joe Loidolt, president of Classic Homes. One board member vacancy exists now in each of these four boards, and elections will be held this spring.

Ann Nichols is the manager for all four districts. Attorney Russell Dykstra, district counsel for each of these four boards, and Tom Blunk of CP Real Estate Capital, representing Forest Lakes LLC and Forest Lakes Residential Development, also attended the Dec. 4 meeting.

2017 budget amended

No members of the public spoke at the hearing for an amendment to the 2017 FLMD budget. Nichols said that water, wastewater, roads, and drainage infrastructure was conveyed from Forest Lakes Residential Development LLC to FLMD, so expenses that had been budgeted for \$7.28 million would actually be \$10.2 million. She said public roads are dedicated to the county and written off the district's assets, and Blunk said the payable would be passed on to the Forest Lakes LLC.

The amended budget was approved, including an estimate of up to \$350,000 toward any initial bills from Velocity Constructors for the surface water treatment plant contract.

2018 budgets approved

The board discussed and approved eight resolutions to approve budgets and appropriate funds for the separate 2018 expenses for FLMD and PPMD 1, 2, and 3.

FLMD enterprise fund's budgeted expenditures include:

- \$593,851 – operating expenses
- \$8.385 million – capital expenditures (includes \$7.62 million for the new surface water treatment plant)
- \$1.587 million – interest on long-term debt

PPMD 1's budget included \$54,000 for operations and maintenance and \$440,000 toward debt service on 2016 bonds, Nichols said. PPMD 2 and 3 have minimal activity currently. For all the financial details, contact Nichols at 719-327-5810 or at anicholsduffy@aol.com.

Mill levies set for 2018

The board unanimously approved the resolutions to set mill levies for 2018 for FLMD and PPMD 1, 2, and 3. All four will be 11.056 mills for operations and maintenance and 44.222 for debt service. Although in 2017 the mills were 10 and 40 respectively, Stimple said the assessed valuation had dropped from 7.96 to 7.2 percent, and the board could "Gallagher-ize" the mill levies so that the amount of tax revenue from each property is constant. "It's revenue neutral to the district."

Note: For comparison, the mill levy for the neighboring Triview Metropolitan District is 35 mills, but is strictly and solely used to finance Triview debt. Triview's operational budgets have to survive on sales tax and water and wastewater rates and fees. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tvmd

Board self-nomination forms due March 2

Nichols said for FLMD, there is still one board vacancy open to district residents, and Boulton and Loidolt's terms are up for re-election, for a total of three four-year positions for the May 8 election. For each of PPMD 1, 2, and

3, there is also one board vacancy open to district residents, and Boulton's term is open also; both would be four-year terms.

Residents interested in running should contact Nichols at 719-327-5810 or at anicholsduffy@aol.com. Self-nomination forms are due by March 2. Dykstra said if there are not more candidates nominated than the amount of open positions, the election could be canceled by the first week in March.

Citizens Advisory Committee update

The county is currently requiring Forest Lakes, through its service plan, to attempt to create a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the search has been on since last summer. See www.ocn.me/v17n6.htm#flmd.

County Development Services Department Project Manager Ramiere Fitzpatrick has been in contact with Boulton and Nichols, but progress has been slow, Boulton said, "Even though we have homeowners that have signed up to be on this committee!"

After a discussion about the lack of purpose of the CAC and the overall lack of residents running for the current boards, the consensus was to request of Fitzpatrick that instead of creating a CAC, any district homeowner could run to fill the board vacancy this spring, or if no one new runs, the Forest Lakes homeowners' association could designate a representative to the board.

Wastewater rate adjustments hearing coming in February

Nichols said that her analysis of the commercial wastewater rate structure for the district showed that revenue would not be sufficient to cover operations and maintenance costs projected by the new Pilot Travel Center that will be built south of Baptist Road in the Falcon Commerce Center in PPMD 3. Note: Pilot's zoning, final plat, and final PD site plan were approved on Sept. 5 by the Monument Board of Trustees. See www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#mbot.

Nichols suggested that instead of a flat monthly fee, a new structure that charges by volume should be discussed in a public hearing at the February meeting.

Nichols also recommended that the monthly residential wastewater fee increase by \$5 to \$35 per month. She will provide more justification for this cost at the February meeting, including comparisons with neighboring Triview and Donala as well as Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) fee structures. "Even though CSU is a different world," she added.

Nichols said potable water rates will stay the same for now, at \$4.50 per 1,000 gallons. In the future as the surface water treatment plant is completed and those operating costs are known, the board should discuss adjusting wa-



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ter rates too, she said.

Auditor, transparency notice, and more

Nichols said Hoelting & Co. has been the districts' auditor for eight years, and the consensus was that FLMD's history was too complicated for another auditor to learn about in a cost-effective way. However, Dykstra said that the state recommends rotating auditors every five years or so. The engagement letter for 2018 with Hoelting was approved unanimously.

The board approved the 2018 transparency notices that state that all official district notifications will be posted at points including:

- The district website <http://forestlakesmetro-district.com>
- 3625 Mesa Top Drive, Monument (an open space tract owned by all four districts)
- The Forest Lakes mailbox kiosk.

It also approved the 2018 funding agreement between FLMD, PPMD 1, 2, and 3, and Forest Lakes Residential Development LLC. This mechanism is necessary as the LLC advances about \$6.62 million in funds to pay for the surface water treatment plant, Nichols said. The districts will cover the other \$1 million, and all four of them are involved since "we don't know which one will issue bonds for that in the future," Dykstra said.

Village parcel sale pending; blanket easement to be terminated

Blunk is still working on the sale of the 159-acre "village parcel" in the southeast section of PPMD 2. If the sale goes through after certain contingencies are met, including approvals from Colorado Springs Utilities and the Colorado Springs City Council, the relatively inaccessible parcel will then be excluded from PPMD 2 and developed by the new owner with "under 10 homes" for a family compound. See www.ocn.me/v17n11.htm#flmd.

Nichols and Dykstra mentioned that a small portion of the village parcel was in PPMD 3, the commercial area. "We have to have that nexus in the county," because otherwise the entirety of PPMD 3 would be inside the Monument town limits, and "then we would have to change jurisdiction over the service plan (from the county) to the town of Monument," Dykstra said.

The board also approved a termination agreement of the 1989 blanket easement for the village parcel, contingent upon the actual sale to the current interested buyer. That agreement had created a blanket easement of 25,000 square feet, allowed for a 30-foot road, etc. to have access to water rights owned by Forest Lakes LLC. However, Blunk said a new well access site agreement

has been designed with the help of JDS-Hydro consultants to preserve the district's right to get that site if it were ever needed and cost-effective.

Note: This is a different blanket easement than the one

the board discussed in October. That one belongs to the Town of Monument and is in the residential tract west of where homes are being built now. www.ocn.me/v17n11.htm#flmd.


Fats, oils and grease hurt the wastewater treatment system

Nichols said that residents should not pour fats, oils, or grease into the sewer system

because it adds extra expenses to the treatment process and can cause clogs in home plumbing.


The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

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The next joint meeting of FLMD and PPMD 1, 2, and 3 is scheduled for 10 a.m. Feb. 5 in the Classic Homes office at 6385 Corporate Drive, Suite 200, Colorado Springs. Meetings are usually held the first Monday of each month. Official meeting notices are posted on the district website <http://forestlakes->

metrodistrict.com, at 3625 Mesa Top Drive, Monument (an open space tract owned by all four districts), and at the Forest Lakes mailbox kiosk. For general questions, contact Ann Nichols at 719-327-5810 or at anicholsduffy@aol.com. *Lisa Hatfield can be contacted at lisa-hatfield@ocn.me.*

Forest View Acres Water District, Dec. 6

Board discusses budget and upcoming election



Above: Forest View Acres Water District held its monthly meeting on Dec. 6 (which was postponed from Nov. 22) at the Monument Sanitation District conference room. The directors discussed the budget for 2018 as well as upcoming maintenance issues and the need for notification of the upcoming election. Some of the present members are term-limited and will be completing their time in office. From left are Jim McGrady, Brad Hogan, Ann Bevis, John McGinty, Clyde Penn, Eugene Ashe, Hans Zimmerman, and Eckehart Zimmerman. *Photo by John Howe.*

Donala Water and Sanitation District, Dec. 7

2018 budget approved; water rates up 4 percent, wastewater up \$2 per month

By Jim Kendrick

On Dec. 7, the Donala Water and Sanitation District unanimously approved five resolutions for the 2018 budget—the 2018 appropriation, setting both Donala 2018 property tax mill levies (unchanged), a 4 percent increase across all six water use rate tiers, and a \$2 sewer service rate increase to \$33 per month. The construction water rate will increase from \$14.27 to \$14.84 per 1,000 gallons in 2018, the same as the new third-tier drinking water rate. Construction water will not be sold for use out of Donala's service area.

The three districts that own Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Facility (UMCRWWTF)—Donala, Triview Metropolitan District, and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District—must upgrade its treatment costs to remove arsenic from the waste flow. The arsenic treatment upgrades are estimated to cost \$2.2 million. Donala's share of this cost will be \$836,000.

Director Dennis Snyder's absence was unanimously excused.

Financial reports

District General Manager Kip Petersen reported that total 2017 revenues, down 23 percent through the end of November, are expected to be about 11 percent less than the total amount budgeted by the end of 2017. Planned construction within Donala has taken longer than expected to receive land use and site plan approvals, but plans to start construction are moving forward now.

Donala's 2018 total capital expenditures will be reduced by about 11 percent to maintain a balanced budget. As a result, some planned Donala capital expenditures on infrastructure have been postponed until 2018. However, Donala's reserve of low-cost state loan money from the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority will remain available for helping to finance these deferred projects.

2018 mill levy, budget, appropriation, and rates/fees resolutions approved

Petersen reported that one citizen provided comments at the Oct. 18 Donala board meeting during the open portion of the public hearing on the preliminary 2018 Donala budget. Some modifications were made to the preliminary budget in response to this citizen's comment on multifamily common irrigation systems (noted below in the paragraphs on the resolution regarding rates and fees) as well as some directors' comments from the Nov. 16 Donala long-term planning workshop. There were no citizen comments on the final 2018 Donala budget at this Dec. 7 meeting. The board then considered five 2018 budget-related resolutions.

Petersen first presented Donala's two property mill levies in separate resolutions, noting that neither will change in 2018. The first resolution was for Area A of Donala and applies to all district property owners except those in Chaparral Hills. Area A had an assessed 2017 valuation of \$78.369 million. This resolution certified a property tax of 21.296 mills to the El Paso Board of County Commissioners, which will produce total revenue of \$1.669 million in 2018.

The second resolution was for Area B of Donala and applies to those dis-

trict property owners in Chaparral Hills who receive either Donala potable water service or wastewater service. Area B had an assessed 2017 valuation of \$281,270. This resolution certified a property tax of 10.648 mills to the county commissioners, which will produce total revenue of \$2,995 in 2018.

These two mill levy resolutions were unanimously approved.

The board next unanimously approved the third resolution for the 2018 balanced budget as presented. Total estimated 2018 expenditures are \$12.730 million, up from \$11.9 million in the 2017 budget. Total estimated revenues are \$22.730 million, up from \$20.7 million in the 2017 budget. Petersen said the difference represents money already held in reserve by Donala in several mandatory cash reserve accounts.

The board unanimously approved the fourth resolution for the 2018 appropriation of this overall total of \$22.703 million as presented.

The board also unanimously approved the fifth resolution for 2018 fees and rates as presented. The amendments to this rate resolution for 2018 that take effect on Jan. 1 in this resolution were noted above in the first paragraph.

The board also approved an amendment to the rate resolution as presented that will change how the district charges individual customers with individual water meters living in a multifamily unit that has a single common irrigation account for their share of irrigation flows. Common irrigation account flow volume fees are only charged May 1 through Sept. 30.

Dividing the total irrigation flow volume for the common irrigation account by the number of individual customer water accounts that are part of the separate common irrigation account will lower the billing tier and rate applied to each multifamily customer's share of the common irrigation account flows. Donala's total 2018 common irrigation revenue from these multifamily units is estimated to decrease by a total of \$166,000 as a result of each multifamily customer being in a lower cost rate tier after May 1.

Petersen officially recognized Donala accounting staff member Cristina Hawker, new Donala Office Manager Tonja Smith, and Betsy Bray, who is retiring from the Donala office manager position on Dec. 31 after 20 years of service to the Donala community. He thanked them for their hard work in preparing the thick stack of documentation required for board approval of these five annual budget resolutions. The directors concurred and gave Hawker, Bray, and Smith a round of applause.

Manager's report

The board next unanimously approved a motion to appoint Bray to be the designated election official as a part-time consultant for the biennial special district election scheduled for May 8.

The board unanimously approved the 2018 addendum for the third year of a three-year agreement for month-to-month potable water treatment service by Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) for Donala during 2018. CSU transports and treats Donala's renewable surface water from Willow Creek Ranch near Leadville. The ranch water is first collected from the Arkansas River and

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stored in the federal Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation's Pueblo Reservoir, then transported in CSU's Southern Delivery System pipeline to a CSU water treatment plant. After treatment by CSU, this now-potable water is transported to an interconnection with Donala's distribution system for direct delivery to Donala's water customers.

Draft long-term Pueblo Reservoir storage contract previewed
Petersen distributed copies of a draft long-term 40-year renewable surface

water storage contract between the federal Bureau of Reclamation and Donala. He asked the board who should sign the final long-term contract for Donala once the bureau has approved it. The board unanimously approved a motion that either the Donala board president or district general manager could sign the final contract for Donala.

Operations report
Petersen reported that the R. Hull water treatment plant is now rehabilitated with all new control systems and elec-

tronic upgrade and replacement work completed. The plant was recommissioned on Nov. 27. Water demands are currently being met by the Holbein plant. Well 4 was repaired after the pipe from the well to the transmission pipe pulled apart. Well 8 is still down, and repairs will start before the end of 2017. The Doral Way water line project had been completed except for a few items sent by consultant GMS engineering to each contractor and subcontractor to ensure that impacted individual prop-

erties would be restored.

The next board meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Jan. 18 in the district conference room at 15850 Holbein Drive. Information: 488-3603 or www.donala-water.org. Meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of the month.
Jim Kendrick can be reached at jimkendrick@ocn.me.

Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility Joint Use Committee, Dec. 12

Waste solids loading higher than normal

By Lisa Hatfield
On Dec. 12, the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) Joint Use Committee (JUC) discussed October's unexpectedly high concentration of waste solids, continued JUC discussions about the potential benefits of participating in the new state nutrient incentive program, and heard reports about regional wastewater stakeholder meetings. Members also stated their appreciation for the work done by those who continue to dedicate so much time and energy in support of wastewater treatment facilities in an attempt to keep up with new and unexpected regulations by monitoring state and federal environmental legislation processes.

TLWWTF operates as a separate joint venture public utility and is owned in equal one-third shares by Monument Sanitation District (MSD), Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD), and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD).

The three-member JUC acts as the board of the facility and consists of one director from each of the three owner districts' boards: WWSD board Director at Large Rich Strom, president; MSD board Chairman Ed DeLaney, vice president; and PLSD board Director Pat Smith, treasurer/secretary. Other board and staff members of the three owner districts also attended, including MSD District Manager Mike Wicklund, PLSD District Manager Becky Orcutt, and WWSD Assistant District Manager Randy Gillette.

Organic loading discussed
During Facility Manager Bill Burks' discharge monitoring report, extra discussion focused on the very noticeable spike in the organic load going through the facility that came from South Woodmoor in October. This 20 percent jump was previously discussed at the November meeting, and while the exact measurement of the jump has now been determined and billed to Woodmoor, no new information on the exact cause was presented at the December meeting. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tlwtf.
Burks said that in October, biological oxygen demand (BOD), or waste solids loading, was at 90 percent of

organic capacity for the whole facility, but the overall average for the year was still just 61 percent of the organic capacity. The facility was just at 30 percent of hydraulic flow capacity as usual, he said.
Note: The Colorado Water Quality Control Act requires that if a facility has more than three individual months in a row at 80 percent of either of these two rated capacities,

it would be required to start engineering design for expansion construction to meet the higher influent waste solids treatment demand.
Burks said this was the first time ever that Woodmoor's wastewater was actually more concentrated than MSD's. The group's comments included:
• North Woodmoor lines are also contributing to this situation. Most of

Woodmoor's growth has been on the north side.
• New construction requires low-flow toilets, so building code changes are now resulting in wastewater that is more concentrated than the plant was originally designed and constructed to handle.
• WWSD has fewer leaks in its sanitary sewer collec-

tion system now, which also would make its wastewater stronger due to less infiltration dilution from groundwater.
Nutrient incentive program discussed
At the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) Oct. 10 rulemaking hearing on the Colorado nutrient Regulation 85 and Regulation 31 Section 31.17, the WQCC adopted



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Above: Triview Metropolitan District's interim district manager, Jim McGrady, demonstrates the Geographic Information Systems map that provided accurate repair and cost analysis for the district's 2018 budget. *Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.*

police, and general governance for Triview property owners.

Public abstains as 2018 budget approved

Interim District Manager Jim McGrady presented Triview's 2018 budget. No residents were present to comment or ask questions during the public hearing. Because McGrady had presented a summary of revenue and expenses at the Nov. 14 Board meeting, budget questions and comments were minimal (see www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tvmd).

President Reid Bolander, who was excused from the November meeting, stated that McGrady had addressed his questions and concerns. Director Jim Otis cautioned that the board must remain fiscally diligent and "strike a balance" of input since the responsibility for budget preparation had changed from the board to the district manager. McGrady stated that he provided additional explanation on certain line items, i.e., the number, type, and reason for trucks in the Vehicles line item.

McGrady addressed the higher-than-anticipated road repair expense line item by identifying areas on a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) map where work had been completed in 2017 and will be completed in 2018. The map provided an exact measure of a road's square footage, which allowed for accurate cost estimation. The proposed budget included mill and overlay (removing the existing asphalt pavement, then replacing it with a new layer to strengthen and extend the life of the road) on Lyons Tail and older areas of the district. McGrady explained that a comprehensive assessment revealed that some streets may be better served with an edge mill, which is cheaper and likely to provide savings. He also mentioned the possibility of seal coating (applying a mix of emulsion and aggregate to seal rough pavement, fill minor cracks, protect against the environment, and provide a smooth finish) on the roads in Promontory Pointe.

McGrady also enlisted an expert's assessment of the district's current insurance coverage. The evaluation revealed a need to adjust coverage in some areas. As of Dec. 19, the Special District Association (SDA), a pool from which Triview purchases insurance, will have assessed all areas. McGrady stated that SDA would further modify insurance coverage as a result of the assessment. Otis noted that workers' compensation for road construction workers is significantly more expensive than the same level of coverage for road maintenance workers and that the budget needed to reflect the correct insurance code.

The board approved resolution 10-2017 summarizing, adopting, and appropriating revenues and expenditures for the 2018 budget and certifying the General Fund mill levy for the 2018 calendar year.

To review Triview's 2018 approved budget, see <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/Triview%20Adopted%202018%20Budget.pdf>. Note that the budget is separated into three funds: the General Fund; the Water, Waste Water and Reuse Enterprise Fund; and the Capital Projects Fund.

New directors to be elected

The board discussed and passed resolution 09-2017 concerning the regular election of Triview's Board of Directors to be held May 8. Three Triview director positions will be open. Secretary/Treasurer Marco Fiorito suggested hosting a meet-and-greet gathering and posting biographical information of nominees on the district's website. McGrady confirmed that Kurt Schlegel, CEO of Special District Solutions, will be Triview's designated election official (DEO).

Triview's Special District Transparency Information states, "Any eligible elector of the special district who desires to be a candidate for the office of special district director must file a self-nomination and acceptance form or letter with the designated election official." Self-nomination forms will be available on the district's website at www.colorado.gov/triviewmetro.

Proposal by utilities consultants

Although the Raftelis Financial Consultants Inc. proposal—a cost of \$29,386—was included in the 2018 budget, McGrady requested official approval from the board. The Raftelis website states, "We provide the tools and expertise to help utilities function as sustainable organizations while providing the public with clean water at an affordable price" (see <http://www.raftelis.com>). Bolander expressed enthusiasm for the proposal, which provides a means to create a long-term water plan; tie a cost-to-service study with revenue requirements; determine major projects; and evaluate cost, payment options, and debt service. Concurrently, McGrady requested approval of the ETwater centralized landscape irrigation proposal (see www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tvmd) that had been presented in November. The board granted approval for McGrady to initiate the two proposals.

Public absent for commentary

Residents remained absent during the public comments session. But Fiorito donned two resident "hats"—Promontory Pointe Home Owners' Association (HOA) representative and Neighborhood Watch representative.

Fiorito revisited Promontory Pointe's request to install a privacy fence in the neighborhood, which had been approved at a prior meeting. The board required a plan—and that the HOA's manager coordinate with the district. Fiorito also inquired about curfew signs in the parks that allow for additional citations against violators and may consequently reduce vandalism (Note: If a sign is not posted, violators can only be cited for breaking curfew. If a sign is posted, violators can be cited for trespass in addition to breaking curfew). The board decided to include the issue on January's meeting agenda and vote at that time. Fiorito reminded the board that split-rail fence repairs are needed throughout the district.

End-of-year business items approved and recognized

The board approved the audit proposal from Stockman, Kast, Ryan and Co. LLP to perform Triview's 2017 financial audit.

Engineer John McGinn of JDS Hydro Consultants Inc. informed McGrady and the board that engineering is outpacing the financing regarding the western interceptor—a significant sewer link that potentially opens the northern and western parts of Triview to new construction (use link www.ocn.me/v17n7.htm#tvmd or www.ocn.me/v17n8.htm#tvmd if you want to know more about that project). Four developers have entered into a reimbursement agreement to fund the interceptor. McGinn reminded McGrady and the directors that Triview needed to finalize and administer the funding.

Water attorney Chris Cummins requested and received board approval for McGrady to send the annually renewable lease for treated effluent to the Arkansas Groundwater Users Association. The lease provides a source of revenue to Triview for water that has the potential to be reused but is currently unsupported by the district's infrastructure. Cummins

stated that rates had been updated to reflect Triview's standard cost acceleration.

Referring to a discussion about plowing around mailboxes from the Nov. 14 meeting, the board concluded that Triview is responsible for plowing around the communal mailboxes, and residents are responsible for shoveling if they have a mailbox specific to their home.

Progress reports

Water Superintendent Shawn Sexton reported that his crew was feverishly preparing for the Dec. 13 Sanitary Survey. Sexton expressed confidence that he and his staff were ready for the state evaluation. Additional water-related updates included:

- Well A8 had been completely reassembled, and the department is completing a new telemetry system, which is part of the Culver Contract for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) upgrades.
- Well D1 had been inspected.
- Booster pump 2 had been reinstalled, restoring the district to 100 percent on the booster station. All three pumps now run automatically, which allows for greater efficiency.
- Sexton was researching the purchase of a used diesel, noise-attenuated-container generator for C-plant.

Public Works Superintendent Gerry Shisler announced that two Public Works employees were hired on Nov. 20. Shisler praised new hires Drew Perry and Ron Ross for their breadth of knowledge and experience, as well as their confidence and eagerness in tackling the district's challenges. Additional Public Works updates included:

- Weekly snowplow readiness activities.
- Regular park inspections.
- Timely submission of the \$25,000 Great Outdoors Colorado grant application.

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- Completion of 70 percent of the landscaping action plan and creation of a man-hour matrix that coincides with the landscape maintenance guide.
- The public meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m. and the board entered into an executive session concerning legal advice and negotiations. No additional decisions were announced following the executive session.
- *****

The next Triview Metro board meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. Jan. 9 at the Fairfield Inn, Mt. Herman Conference Room, 15275 Struthers Road, Colorado Springs. Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of the month. Information: 488-6868 or see www.colorado.gov/triviewmetro. Triview is also on Facebook.

Triview official posting locations are:

- El Paso County Clerk and Recorder’s Office

- Park at intersection of Venison Creek and Kitchener Way
 - Park on Gold Creek and Creekside Drive
 - Mailboxes at Burke Hollow and Talus Road
 - Park on Old Creek Drive and Toreva Drive
 - Triview office: 16055 Old Forest Pt., Suite 300, Monument, CO 80132
- Jennifer Kaylor can be reached at jenniferkaylor@ocn.me.*

Monument Sanitation District, Dec. 13

2018 budget and judgment mill levy approved

By Jim Kendrick

On Dec. 13, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board held public hearings on the final 2018 district budget and certification of a one-time 7.734 mill judgment mill levy from MSD to El Paso County. Both were unanimously approved as presented. No members of the public were present for any agenda hearing item, and no public comments were submitted in writing.

2018 budget approved

District Manager Mike Wicklund gave an overview of the proposed final 2018 budget and answered directors’ questions. He noted that there would be an extra sludge removal cycle at Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) in 2018, which are normally performed every other year. The MSD share of this extra sludge removal cost was budgeted at \$30,446.

TLWWTF will then return to a normal biennial sludge removal schedule in 2019, 2021, and so on. There was also a \$50,000 budget expense item for new district Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) and IT network. The expense and appropriation line items for the judgment mill levy were \$377,035.

TLWWTF operates as a separate joint venture public utility and is owned in equal one-third shares

by Monument Sanitation District (MSD), Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD), and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD). See related TLWWTF JUC article on page 15.

The 2018 budget resolution and 2018 appropriation for \$1.212 million were both unanimously approved as presented.

2018 judgment mill levy certified

Wicklund presented a completed form titled “Certification of Tax Levies for Non-school Governments” that was prepared with Joan Fritsche of the Collins Cockrel & Cole law firm in Denver. The law firm specializes in representing governments and special districts in Colorado. This official document certifies that MSD’s gross and net assessed valuation for 2017 are both \$48.745 million for the budget/fiscal year 2018. The sole purpose of MSD’s total property tax revenue derived from a one-time mill levy of 7.734 mills against this net assessed valuation is for payment of Judgment Case 2015CV30521, a total of \$376,997 pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute 24-10-113(3).

Note: For more information on the history of this lengthy dispute regarding the TLWWTF total phosphorus chemical removal clarifier expansion’s cost overruns and cost sharing, see all the links listed in

<http://www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#msd>.

2018 meeting times, dates, and locations approved

There was board consensus to make no changes in the meeting schedule for 2018. Meetings are normally held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month in the district conference room at 130 Second St.

Security camera installation and network update

Wicklund reported noted that all contracted work completed to date is working very well with 1080P HD video quality for the security cameras. Wicklund also said that Monument Computer’s upgrade of the district’s computer network sustainability and reliability upgrades are under way and being coordinated with I&C Design’s SCADA upgrades. The district will now have cloud storage as an additional backup to dual backup hard disk drives.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 130 Second St. Monument. For information call 481-4886.

Jim Kendrick can be reached at jimkendrick@ocn.me.

El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Nov. 30, Dec. 5, 12, 19, and 21.

Commissioners oppose I-25 third-lane toll

By Helen Walklett

At the El Paso Board of County Commissioners’ (BOCC) Dec. 21 meeting, the commissioners ratified a resolution declaring their opposition to tolling the third-lane expansion of I-25 from Monument to Castle Rock. Earlier in December, the commissioners unanimously approved the 2018 budget. They also made decisions relating to the Monument Hill Road Safety Improvements Project, the Black Forest Basin drainage and bridge fund, the Northgate Estates development, and “tiny houses” and camping restrictions.

Commissioners oppose tolling the third-lane expansion of I-25

At its Dec. 21 meeting, the BOCC ratified a resolution declaring its opposition to tolling of the third-lane expansion of I-25 between Monument and Castle Rock.

Dave Rose, the county’s chief public information officer, had introduced a draft resolution for discussion under Staff Emergency Items at the Dec. 19 meeting, stating there was confusion between the various partners in the project and among the public surrounding the Colorado Department of Transportation’s (CDOT) proposal to include tolling for any new lane built as part of the I-25 “gap” project. Rose suggested that the confusion had arisen from a misunderstanding of federal highway funding requirements that mean CDOT must consider managed lanes in connection with any major highway expansion, though it was pointed out that the requirement did not specifically mention tolls. At the Dec. 19 meeting, all the commissioners expressed support for the draft resolution.

The BOCC’s Dec. 21 resolution notes that CDOT is assessing the impacts of three possible options for the 17-mile I-25 gap project. These options involve doing nothing, adding a third lane to match the current configuration before and after the gap, or adding a toll-managed express lane in each direction.

The county is serving as the regional applicant for a federal infrastructure grant to assist with funding for the expansion project. Documentation prepared by county staff for the application acknowledged that CDOT is required to consider the impact of managed express lanes in connection with any major expansion. However, the BOCC’s resolution makes it clear that recognition of the requirement “does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the third-lane

managed toll configuration for this project.”

The question of whether the commissioners supported tolling the third lane was first raised at the Dec. 12 meeting during discussion surrounding the 2018 budget. During public comment, Deborah Stout Meininger, who describes herself as a community advocate and citizen scientist, said, “On this budget resolution it talks about the money for the I-25 expansion. One thing that was not delineated when this was brought up on the ballot, or in any of the publicity about this item, was the fact that part of the I-25 expansion was actually going to be toll roads. That made a lot of people feel very betrayed.” Responding, Commissioner Darryl Glenn said, “You’re misrepresenting the opinion of this board. At what point did this board take a position that we supported tolling for that extra lane?”

The other commissioners also voiced their opposition to tolling. Commissioner Mark Waller said, “We were able to ... identify the monies necessary without a tolling provision, so I would prefer to see this project go forward without a tolling provision.” Commissioner Stan VanderWerf added, “I concur with that. Certainly, there’s a lot of citizen concern and I agree with that concern. I did not go into this ballot measure with the understanding that there was going to be a tolled lane.”

In the Dec. 21 resolution, the commissioners called on CDOT to recognize that configuring the third-lane expansion as a managed lane would be inconsistent with the configuration at both ends of the gap and would constitute a form of double taxation for county residents. Residents have already agreed to help pay for the project by passing the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) excess revenue ballot item last November. Of the \$14.5 million voters agreed to allow the county to keep and spend above the TABOR cap, \$6 million is being used to create a pool of local matching funds to accelerate the I-25 widening. A further \$1.5 million from TABOR excess revenues will be used to help secure additional federal funding and to accelerate the project.

At the Dec. 21 meeting, Commissioner VanderWerf reported that he had requested that CDOT provide multiple further opportunities for the public to have input into the project and urged citizens to make their views heard. Commissioner Waller said it was important that people not lose sight of what everyone was

working to accomplish. Reminding everyone that this 17-mile, two-lane section of I-25 had been a factor in thousands of vehicle crashes resulting in nearly 1,300 injuries and 13 fatalities from 2011 through 2015, he said, “This is a significant public safety issue that we all have the responsibility to address. We are in a position now where we are going to break ground on this project next year.” He continued, “This project is going to get built and it’s going to save lives.”

The BOCC ratified the resolution 4-0. Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez was absent. The BOCC understands that CDOT will make its decision in January.

2018 budget approved

At its Dec. 12 meeting, the BOCC unanimously approved the 2018 budget, which projects revenues of \$363.1 million.

The budget has two main parts. Its unrestricted general fund accounts for about 40 percent of the total budget. For 2018, the budget projects revenues of \$143.3 million for this fund, about \$66.7 million of which will go to support the public safety and criminal investigation functions of the offices of the sheriff, district attorney and coroner. Other offices and departments supported by the unrestricted general fund include the assessor, treasurer, clerk and recorder, County Parks, Information Technology, Planning and Community Development, and fleet.

About 60 percent of the 2018 budget is made up of restricted funds over which the BOCC has little or no discretionary authority. These funds can be used only for specific purposes based on sources of revenue, voter direction through specific ballot questions, and the services and programs mandated by state and federal requirements.

In compliance with voter approval of the TABOR excess revenue ballot item in November, the 2018 budget reserves \$6 million for the I-25 gap project and sets aside an additional \$1.5 million for that project from TABOR excess revenues to help secure additional federal funding and to accelerate the project. Also, in compliance with the ballot item, the budget invests \$1.5 million in park improvements, makes a provision for just over \$1 million for fire and flood recovery projects, and earmarks \$6 million to begin to address a backlog of county road maintenance and improvement projects.

Monument Hill Road Safety Improvements Project

At its Dec. 12 meeting, the BOCC approved two further requests relating to the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority's (PPRTA) Monument Hill Road Safety Project, which expects to start construction in summer 2018.

The BOCC approved two easements that the Department of Public Works had identified as necessary to allow construction to be carried out. The first is a temporary construction easement relating to property owned by Monument Hill Church and being obtained for the sum of \$4,600. The second is a non-exclusive permanent easement being obtained from property owned by Willow Park Way for \$22,000. It had previously approved two easements relating to this project at its Oct. 31 meeting (see <http://www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#epbocc>).

Disbursement of the Black Forest Basin drainage and bridge fund

Also at the Dec. 12 meeting, the BOCC unanimously approved a resolution to allow disbursement of the Black Forest drainage and bridge fund to GEB Investment Group LLC and Larkspur Properties LLC. As the member entities of Struthers Ranch Development LLC, which was dissolved by the BOCC in October

2007, these two companies were assigned the remaining assets of that development, including credits and/or reimbursements, at a 50 percent interest rate each. The two companies have previously received three partial reimbursements.

On this occasion, each received \$46,767 from the drainage fund and \$1,273 from the bridge fund. The remaining credit is \$167,134 in the drainage fund and \$377,500 in the bridge fund. The two companies remain first in line to be paid this credit when revenue funds become available.

Other decisions included:

- Nov. 30 - the final release of letter of credit for grading and erosion control of Northgate Estates Filing No. 3 subdivision for \$17, 060 following completion and inspection of all the public improvements in this subdivision.
- Dec. 12 - an amendment to a 2010 resolution that prohibits camping on county-owned property. The revised resolution now includes the occupation of motor or recreational vehicles in the definition of camping and prohibits camping along county rights-of-way. The resolution does, however, allow for camping in such vehicles along county rights-of-way for up to 48 hours in the case of an emergency.
- Dec. 12 - approval of amendments to the county

Land Development Code to facilitate the uses and occupation of "tiny houses" in the county. Prior to these amendments, tiny houses were classified as recreational vehicles and as such could not be used as a residence.

Nov. 7 District 20 election result update

In other county news, the Clerk and Reporter's Elections Department reported on Nov. 30 that a recount did take place of all the ballots in the election to Academy School District 20's Board of Directors. The recount was triggered by the narrow margin between candidates Doug Lundberg and William Tenby. After the recount, Lundberg remained ahead of Tenby, increasing his margin from 0.164 percent to 0.193 percent, and took the third seat available on the board in this election. The other two directors elected were Karin Reynolds and Thomas LaValley.

The recount was triggered by the narrow margin between candidates Doug Lundberg and William Tenby in third and fourth place and not by the margin between Lundberg and LaValley as reported in last month's OCN.

Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.me

Woodmoor Improvement Association Board of Directors, Dec. 13

Board approves North Bay replat, will review Tri-Lakes Comprehensive Plan

By Jackie Burhans

The Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board met on Dec. 13 to approve the replat of parcels for the North Bay development and responded to a request to review the Tri-Lakes Comprehensive Plan updates.

Board approves North Bay replat

The board unanimously approved a motion to conditionally replat parcels 7114-04-111 and 71114-00-008 into North Bay at Woodmoor contingent upon final review of all application documents and governing documents by the WIA's attorney and Architectural Control Committee administrator. The North Bay development proposal is for 28 luxury townhomes between The Cove and Autumn Way on the north end of Lake Woodmoor.

Board will assist with Tri-Lakes Comprehensive Plan

A volunteer for the Tri-Lakes Land Use Committee noted that the committee is working on updating the Tri-Lakes Comprehensive Plan, last published in 2000. She requested assistance from the board and WIA in reviewing and updating any section associated with Woodmoor. The board suggested working with Architectural Control Committee Administrator

Bob Pearsall and board Director of Common Areas Rich Wretschko.

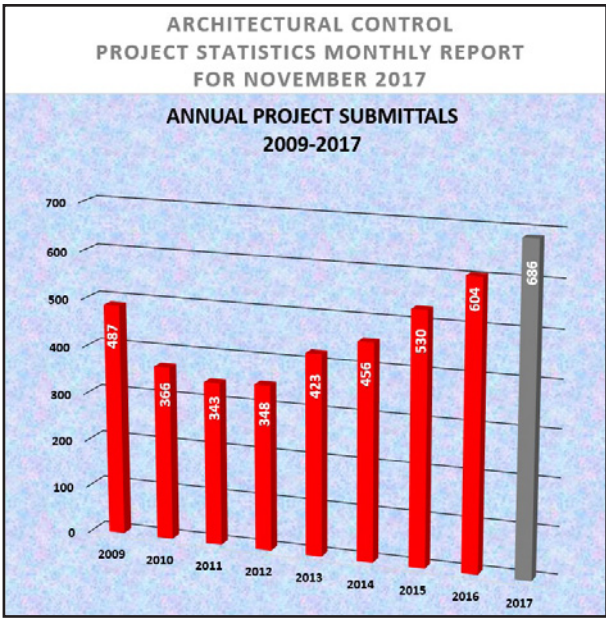
Board report highlights

- More wildlife is being seen in the area; residents are advised to drive carefully.
- WIA is running 3.5 percent under budget for spending.
- Annual dues invoices will be sent in the next week.
- The WIA annual meeting will be held at Lewis-Palmer Middle School on Jan. 29 at 7 p.m.; light appetizers will be served.
- There are four candidates for three open board positions.
- There have been 686 projects for 2017, which exceeds other years; 98.4 percent have been approved.

The WIA Board of Directors usually meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Barn at 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next regular meeting will be on Jan. 24.

The WIA calendar can be found at <https://www.woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/>. WIA board meeting minutes can be found at <https://www.woodmoor.org/meeting-minutes/> once approved and posted.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.



Above: Year-by-year comparison of projects submitted to the WIA Architectural Control Committee. Chart courtesy of the WIA.

December Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

The snow drought continued through December, continuing our trend of below-normal snowfall since the beginning of October. Temperatures were once again above normal for the month as well. This was in stark contrast to the eastern two-thirds of the country, where extreme cold gripped most of that region.

A very persistent pattern occurred as a ridge of high pressure dominated the West Coast and a strong area of low pressure was stuck over southern Canada and the upper Midwest. Colorado and the Palmer Divide region were stuck between these two weather patterns. This resulted in strong northwesterly flow across the area. Unfortunately, for the Palmer Divide region to get moisture, snow, and consistent cold, we need winds to come from the north through the east. The northwest flow kept the cold air just to our east, where much of eastern Colorado was stuck in the cold. There were a couple of exceptions when the arctic air mass was at its deepest. This allowed some of the cold air to briefly push into the region.

The month started off mild and dry, with highs reaching the upper 50s and low 60s from the 1st through the 3rd. Cooler air moved in over the next few days, knocking temperatures down to normal and slightly below from the 4th through the 7th. Also, there were some light snow and flurries from early afternoon through the evening of the 7th. Highs were held below freezing on the 6th and 7th as areas of low clouds and fog hung in as well.

Mild air then returned again from the 8th through the 20th as high temperatures reached into the mid-40s to upper 50s. This warm period was interrupted by two quick-moving intrusions of cold air. The first arrived just before midnight on the 13th, with light snow and flurries producing 1-2 inches of snowfall on the 14th. Temperatures were also held below freezing that afternoon. The next brief visit of cold air moved in on the morning of the 17th, with some areas of fog and low clouds.

Deeper cold air began to affect the region starting on the first day of winter, the 21st. The cold air was firmly entrenched over the lower eastern plains of Colorado and made several runs into the Front Range. This pattern continued through the end of the month. During this period, some incredible temperature extremes and temperature changes took place. This all depended on how deep the cold air pool was and what direction the low-level winds were blowing.

There were several days with temperature gradients greater than 30 degrees Fahrenheit over only a few miles. In these cases, elevation made all the difference. This results from the fact that cold air is denser than warm air and therefore hugs the lowest elevations in the same way water flows. So, on several days, the cold air hung over the lower elevations such as the Arkansas River Valley, the I-25 corridor, the Fountain Creek watershed, etc., while at the same time the higher elevations of the Palmer Divide were mild and sunny.

These contrasts were most pronounced around Christmas and during the final few days of the month. On the 29th and 30th, most areas on the Palmer Divide above 6,500 feet reached the upper 50s to low 60s, while areas all around us were stuck in the teens. The colder air was able to dominate most evenings when winds calmed down and the atmospheric profile allowed cold air to take over.

Overnight lows were in the single digits above and below zero almost every morning from the 21st through the 31st. During this time, we received some light snowfall at times, but just a dusting. The last and strongest cold front came through around 7:45 p.m. on the 30th, as the cold air rushed into the region and dropped temperatures from near 60 to the teens in a little over an hour.

So, even though the month was very dry with no major storms moving through the region, that doesn't mean there weren't plenty of excitement and extreme conditions.

A look ahead

January can bring the coldest temperatures of the year, but there is often a proverbial "January thaw" where mild temperatures make brief appearances. Precipitation is on the low side, with amounts generally less than an inch. The month brings numerous sunny and windy days, with quick shots of snow in between.

December 2017 Weather Statistics
Average High **46.5°** (+8.2°)
100-year return frequency value max **50.5°** min **32.6°**
Average Low **17.0°** (+4.7°)
100-year return frequency value max **22.4°** min **5.4°**
Monthly Precipitation **0.17"**
(-0.84", 84% below normal)
100-year return frequency value max **2.82"** min **0.00"**

Monthly Snowfall **2.8"**
(-14.9", 84% below normal)
Highest Temperature **62° on the 30th**
Lowest Temperature **3° on the 24th**
Season to Date Snow **10.6"**
(-29.3", 73% below normal)
(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip. **3.06"**

(-2.17", 41% below normal)
(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)
Heating Degree Days **1031** (-196)
Cooling Degree Days **0** (0)
Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident.
He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me.

Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters to the editor are on page 31.
Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in Letters to Our Community should not be interpreted as the views of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.

No tolls on I-25

For decades, Colorado roads have been neglected despite the 2005 approval of Colorado-wide Referendum C, “The Colorado Economic Recovery Act,” providing \$18.8 billion for education, healthcare, and roads, and 2017 SB-17-267, “Sustainability of Rural Colorado,” also funding education, rural healthcare, and roads to the tune of \$1.9 billion. Only \$49 million (Ref C) and \$450 million (SB-17-267 pending) was spent on roads.

El Paso County voters passed \$7.5 million in Referendum 1A, and Colorado Springs-area voters approved \$10 million in Referendum 5B. So why are we hearing about yet another Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) request for money in the form of tolls?

Priorities. It is that simple. Yet funding and building roads are a core government function.

Fixing the Gap, which connects the two largest cities in Colorado, was a 2014 campaign promise by Gov. John Hickenlooper. Out of the \$32 billion state budget, Hickenlooper has not requested one General Fund dollar be allocated to improve Colorado roads.

Significant traffic delays or incidents occur every day along this corridor. Improving the Gap should be a top economic, quality of life, and safety priority.

CDOT should not be able to hold the people of Southern Colorado hostage, demanding the long overdue expansion of the Gap consist of a toll lane. The point they seem to miss: The addition of a third general use lane, not a toll lane, will make all the difference to ensure trip reliability, reduce congestion, and improve safety.

Citizen engagement, such as the Facebook group “Fix I-25 Now!,” has ensured transportation issues are

being addressed. Progress has been made with the acceleration of the two studies necessary for work to start. In October, the Colorado Highway Transportation Commission, which oversees CDOT priorities, approved \$250 million to be used toward the Gap, pending approval of a federal INFRA grant.

We must not let up!
Ann Howe

Is our military big enough?

First, I am a war veteran, having served honorably as a combat medic in Vietnam. My wife and I fly an American flag outside our home 24/7/365. I consider myself a patriot and am proud to have served my country.

However, I do have a question about how much money our government is spending in the military budget. President Trump just signed a bill to increase the military budget to \$825 billion. That’s over 50 percent of our federal discretionary budget and our second-highest expenditure over all (Social Security is No. 1 at a little over \$1 trillion).

First, that is three times more than the No. 2 country, China, (last I heard, not a military adversary) and larger than the next eight largest world militaries combined. Russia is a low third at \$87 billion—just 10 percent of the U.S. And, in 2006, Congress added a military line item for OCO (a discretionary fund with no oversight). It started at \$300 million and is now \$19 billion.

In today’s type of wars, where we use jets and drones to wipe out the enemy (along with uniquely trained personnel like Special Forces and Team 6), what type of weapons do we really need? Do we need battle tanks? We have 8,800. Russia has just 820. When the U.S. Air Force can deploy men/women, equipment, and support in hours, why do we even need a Navy (sorry Navy). In times of crises, it takes weeks to send the same personnel and equipment to the required area by sea. And what does an aircraft carrier cost? Currently \$4.6 billion. Just for one.

What if we were just twice as big as the next largest military? That would save \$270 billion—\$2.7 trillion over 10 years. That’s a lot of tax dollars.

Kent Jarnig

Thank you for opening your hearts on Christmas Day

This is a letter of thanks to the whole family of La Rosa restaurant in Palmer Lake, especially Marina La Riva, the owner.

For many people, the Christmas holidays are a religious or spiritual time, and a time to be with family and loved ones, filled with high hopes and cheerful times or hoping for cheerful times. But for some, it can be a very difficult time for many reasons and they may be alone or unable to join their loved ones. Marina La Riva and her family—and employees and volunteers—opened their hearts and opened the restaurant on Christmas Day to help people in our Tri-Lakes community celebrate the holiday with kindness and a delicious, traditional Christmas Day meal for free.

Nope, it was not for people who just didn’t want to cook for the day, it was specially created for those who did not have loved ones to be with and some who also needed a ride to be able to attend. This and more were lovingly provided. Volunteers served food, washed dishes, offered transportation and cheerful smiles for the afternoon. I was there and met people from our community who were truly thankful and happy to have such a lovely day and be with others in fellowship for the afternoon.

I think some of the other local restaurants also donated food, as did many locals themselves donate or volunteer for the event. So, I’d like to take this time to thank each and every one of you who helped make a happy memory for many of our community who truly appreciate your kindness for a special day that will be long remembered.

Janet Sellers

■

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Start off the new year right

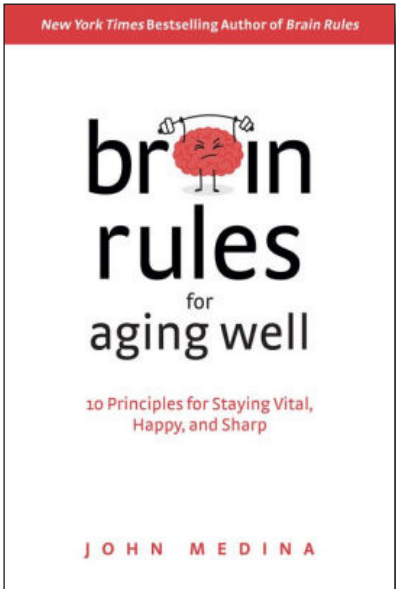
By the staff at Covered Treasures
“I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes. Because if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You’re doing things you’ve never done before, and more importantly, you’re doing something.”—Neil Gaiman

Here are some great books to start the year:

Brain Rules for Aging Well: 10 Principles for Staying Vital, Happy, and Sharp

By John Medina (Pear Press) \$27.99

Developmental molecular biologist Dr. John Medina gives you the facts and the prescription to age well. He has two previous best-sellers. In *Brain Rules*, Medina showed us how our brains really work, and why we ought to redesign our workplaces and schools to match. In *Brain Rules for Baby*, he gave parents the brain science they need to know to raise happy, smart, moral kids. Now, in *Brain Rules for Aging Well*,



Medina shares how you can make the most of the years you have left. It is organized into four sections, each laying out familiar problems with surprising solutions.

The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World

By Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu with Douglas Abrams (Avery) \$26

Nobel Peace Prize Laureates His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu have survived more than 50 years of exile and the soul-crushing violence of oppression. Despite their hardships—or, as they would say, because of them—they are two of the most joyful people on the planet. In 2015, they spent a week together. This book offers us a rare opportunity to experience their unprecedented week together, from the first embrace to the final goodbye. We get to listen as they explore the Nature of True Joy and confront each of the Obstacles of Joy—from fear, stress, and anger to grief, illness, and death. They then offer us the Eight Pillars of Joy, which provide the foundation for lasting happiness. Finally, they share their daily Joy Practices that anchor their own emotional and spiritual lives.

Everything You Need You Have: How to Be at Home in Your Self

By Gerald Kite (Harmony Books) \$17

Kite reveals 10 steps to finding a secret, peaceful, and permanent place inside yourself that you can access at all times. You’ll see that you already have what you need to be happy and well.

Goddesses Never Age: The Secret Prescription for Radiance, Vitality, and Well-Being

By Christiane Northrup, M.D. (Hay House) \$16.99

Blending personal stories and practical exercises with the latest research on health and aging, Dr. Northrup lays out the principles, tools, and inspiration of ageless living. Explaining that the state of our health is dictated far more by our beliefs than by our biology, she brings it all together in a 14-day Ageless Goddess Program.

The Youth Equation: Take 10 Years Off Your Face

By Jeffrey Dover, M.D., Cara Birnbaum (Wiley) \$24.95
Renowned dermatologist Jeffrey Dover shares his secrets, offering options to suit a range of skin types and budgets. He walks readers through how to create a customized do-at-home plan anyone at any age can follow simply by picking up a few products at the local drugstore.

The RBG Workout: How She Stays Strong and You Can Too!

By Bryant Johnson (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), \$14.99

One of America’s most admired women is octogenarian Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. She stays healthy in part due to workouts with her personal trainer, Bryant Johnson, whom she’s called “the most important person” in her life. This simple but challenging workout will have you getting fit in no time. It also contains tips from the bench and sidebars with Bryant’s folksy wisdom on getting fit and staying healthy.

The Miracle Morning: The Not-So-Obvious Secret Guaranteed to Transform Your Life (Before 8 AM)

By Hal Elrod (Hal Elrod) \$19.95

Elrod shows how to wake up each day with more energy, motivation, and focus to take your life to the next level. It’s time to wake up to your full potential.

"Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year."—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Happy New Year! And, until next month, happy reading.

The Covered Treasures Bookstore staff can be reached at books@ocn.me.

January Library Events

Volunteer for the Teen Advisory Board or enjoy a craft scrap exchange

By Harriet Halbig

Try something new or enhance your experiences at the library in January.

Family programs

Enjoy the Snow Show with Denise Gard and her dog Sienna on Saturday, Jan. 13 from 2:30 to 4. Joey gets lost during a snowstorm and can't find his way home. Will Sienna rescue him? Participate in some snowy tales and discover a snow troll in this fun show.

Lego Build will take place from 10 to 11:30 on Saturday, Jan 20. Build with Legos to your heart's content with other enthusiasts.

Teen and tween programs

Join an intergenerational knitting group on Wednesday, Jan. 10 and 17 from 3 to 4:30. Practice materials are provided, but attendees are encouraged to bring their own projects. Some instruction is provided for those new to the craft.

Teens and tweens are welcome to kick off the new year from 3:30 to 5 on Friday, Jan. 19 at a Teen Gaming Night. We will bring in the Wii U console and reprise our video game program from June. You will get to choose from games like Super Smash Brothers, Mario Kart, and Tatsunoko vs. Capcom Ultimate All Stars. There will be snacks! Open to ages 9 to 18.

Are you challenged by math? Come to the library each Monday from 3:30 to 7 to take advantage of free tutoring by experienced adult tutors. All ages and all math levels are welcome. No appointment is necessary. AfterMath follows the D-38 schedule.

Are you interested in participating in planning at

the library? Come to an information meeting about the Teen Advisory Board and learn how you can get volunteer hours while you help plan teen events and book displays. Drop by the Study Room from 4:30 to 5 on Tuesday, Jan. 25 to learn about this opportunity.

Join the Monument Library Anime Club on Thursday, Jan. 25 from 5 to 6:30 and enjoy a chance to share anime with others. Snacks will be provided and a movie will be shown (nothing rated above TV-14). You can help decide the next movie title. This program is recommended for ages 13/14 and up.

Come to the community room from 4 to 5:30 on Wednesday, Jan. 31 to do some (anti-) Valentine's Day crafts as we gear up for the holiday (plus enjoy some tasty snacks). No registration is necessary.

Adult programs

See the above section for information about intergenerational knitting.

The Monumental Bookworms Book Club will meet from 7 to 8:30 on Tuesday, Jan. 9 to discuss *The All-Girl Filling Station's Last Reunion* by Fannie Flagg. This group, sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of the Library, is open to all.

The Second Thursday Craft on Jan. 11 from 2 to 4 is embossing powder. We will work with embossing powder to create gold designs on paper. Registration is required and opens one week before craft day.

Calling all crafters: On Saturday, Jan. 13 from 10:30 to 1:30 the library, in collaboration with Old Colorado City's Who Gives a SCRAP, will host a free craft material exchange. Bring your unused and un-

wanted craft materials and exchange them for "tickets" to "purchase" new-to-you craft supplies! No registration required.

Achieving your healthiest weight is not about dieting or even pure will power, but rather about understanding how certain foods affect blood sugar levels and appetite. Hear a nutritionist speak about cravings and weight gain and the blood sugar rollercoaster on Wednesday, Jan. 17 from 5 to 6. No registration required.

The Monumental Readers will meet from 10 to noon Friday, Jan. 19 to discuss *Faithful Place* by Tana French. All patrons are welcome to attend this monthly book group.

Are you interested in learning to spin? The library's spinning group will meet on Thursday, Jan. 25 from 1:30 to 3:45. Bring your own materials or come to observe experienced spinners.

The artwork on the walls of the library and in the display case in January will be provided by artists from Palmer Ridge High School.

Palmer Lake Library Events

The Palmer Lake Library Book Group meets at 9 a.m. on the first Friday of each month. All patrons are welcome to attend this monthly group. Please call 481-2587 for the latest selection.

Story Times are on Wednesday at 10:30. Toddler Time is on Friday at 10:30.

All branches will close Jan. 15 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

Bird Watch on the Palmer Divide

Northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentillis*)

By Elizabeth Hacker

The northern goshawk is a medium-size hawk. It is a secretive bird that typically lives on large tracks of forests across the Northern Hemisphere. It's also a fierce predator that stays well concealed and is difficult to find, which is why it is highly sought after by birders who want to add it to their life-list.

The northern goshawk is the largest of the North American Accipiters, a family of medium-size hawks that include the sharp-shinned, Cooper's, and northern goshawk, all of which can be found from time to time in the Tri-Lakes area. Accipiters differ from their high soaring and bulkier cousins the Buteos, a hawk family that includes the red-tailed hawk. Buteos are like the buzzard and will eat carrion and steal prey. Accipiters grab their prey with their talons and eat only fresh prey they have killed.

Size

The goshawk body length ranges from 18 to 26 inches with a wing span of 38 to 46 inches. As with most raptors, the female is larger than the male. Judging by the size of the bird in the accompanying photos, taken in South Woodmoor by Beth Courrau, I would venture to guess that it is a second-year female that will soon be looking for a mate.

Plumage

Plumage is remarkably different between the age classes of juvenile and adult. The goshawk in these photos have a blue-gray upper body, the streaking on the lighter underbelly is fading, the white eye stripe is distinct, and its eyes are orange, transitioning from pale yellow to intense red. These traits are indicative of a bird nearing adulthood.

A juvenile goshawk is similar in size and has the same bold posture as the adult, but the feathers on its back are dark brown rather than gray-blue, its upper wing covert and white underbelly have dark streaks, its eye stripe is not yet distinctive, and its eyes are pale yellow. To me, the juvenile and adult goshawk look like different species.

Feeding behavior

The northern goshawk stays hidden by moving between mid-level branches of conifer trees. Less often, it will fly through the forest, maneuvering its body between the trees. It moves effortlessly with agility and speed through heavily treed forests. Its long tail



acts like the rudder on a small plane, directing its movement. The goshawk's rounded wings contract in and out so it can avoid running into trees. When a target is chosen, the bird flies to the ground in a powerful short burst of speed, surprising its prey.

Did I mention that the goshawk is fierce hunter? Most raptors kill their prey before consuming it. The goshawk is the only bird that I've seen eat its prey while it is still alive trying desperately to escape the

talons of its captor.

Diet

According to Hawk Watch International, the northern goshawk is the only accipiter that hunts for mammals and is valuable in keeping the rodent population in check. When Beth Courrau sent these photos, my first thought was that it was a Cooper's hawk. But the size, longer legs, bold posture, as well as the fact that it was eating a squirrel, was a red flag.

Even though goshawks are known to nest here, they are secretive and difficult to find, and even getting a glimpse is good because it's gone in a flash. These photos provide insight into the life of this remarkable bird. Beth said that she would be happy to have it stay in her yard and hunt for more pesky squirrels, a sentiment that may be shared by many residents.

Nesting

Goshawks form a life-long pair bond and will choose another mate only when the first mate dies. Unlike other hawks where the male courts the female, goshawk females perform aerial dances to attract males. The goshawk is a solitary bird and only joins its partner during spring and summer to mate and nest.

Once a bond is established, the pair works together to build a platform-type nest in a crotch of a tree. Two months later, the female begins laying a clutch of up to four eggs in two-day intervals. The female sits on the eggs, but the male will give her breaks so she can stretch her wings and hunt for food. Thirty-six days after the last egg is laid, the first egg hatches.

The female stays at the nest while the chicks are small and helpless. The male brings food to the nestlings and the female. Both parents protect their nest and viciously attack any bird, animal, or person that ventures too close.

A little more than a month after hatching, the chicks are big enough to venture from the nest along branches of the tree. Within three months, the chicks will grow into full-size birds and at this point, the juveniles will be completely independent.

Interesting facts

The name "goshawk" is derived from the European term for "goose hawk," although they are not known to hunt geese.

The bird was featured on the PBS series *Nature*,



“H Is for Hawk: A New Chapter,” by author and falconer Helen Macdonald, which aired in the fall of 2017. It is a powerful and gripping story about Helen training her goshawk named Lupin.

Watch for snowy owls

This year there was a big irruption (an irregular migration of large numbers of birds to areas where they

aren’t typically found) of snowy owls born in the arctic. Large numbers of juvenile snowy owls have been reported in northern states across the Midwest, but they have also been seen in Texas. Sadly, many will not survive to adulthood due to the stress of their long flight, scarcity of food and habitat, and collisions with vehicles. If you are fortunate enough to see them, they

are a truly a sight to behold. I would implore viewers to keep a good distance so as not to add additional stress on this already stressed-out species.

Elizabeth Hacker can be reached at elizabethhacker@ocn.me.

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Of singing forests and thriving gardens

By Janet Sellers

Since the 1970s, the ecovillage community of Damenhur, Italy, has been researching the connection between people, plants, and their environment, and plants’ reactivity and ability to learn and even to communicate via electronic potential using a specially outfitted midi (musical instrument digital interface) music device. The plants appear to learn with the midi and make responses to human-generated sounds such as singing and playing stringed instruments.

When the midi device is set to audible frequencies humans can hear, the plants interact with humans and the device and actually “learn” to make the frequencies that generate sound on the device that we can hear. The researchers use a variation of the Wheatstone bridge, an electrical circuit used to measure electrical resistance, and provides extremely accurate measurements. One of the Wheatstone bridge’s initial uses was for soil analysis and comparison.

Plants adapt and make choices in their environment in order to thrive—they send out signals to beneficial insects to remove predators. Our local ponderosas send out essential oils to bathe themselves and the forest in protections from harmful microbes and bugs, and their roots seek out nutrients in the soil via cell growth and direct the growth to water and nu-

trients. Ecologist Susan Simard’s 30 years of research shows plants and trees even have a mother tree or plant that guides, teaches, leads, and feeds their offspring and fellow forest plants to sugars and nutrients, and the communication is called the “Wood Wide Web.”

I suspect many of us hear, in some way, the ponderosa’s song when we are in the woods with them and somehow we are able to have a feeling or a sense of connectedness. But I did not realize that plants can make beautiful music with people! And it is beautiful music, too.

Plants are complex, and they have complex feeding behaviors. Just like animals, plants are on a constant hunt for food, in ways aggressive or passive, any way they can get it. Just like foraging animals, the roots will seek out nutrients like an animal walking along to get its food, but the plant actually develops growth cells to move along and get its fill of nutrients instead of locomotion.

While our winter is a rest time for the garden, it is planning time for us, and we can easily optimize our potted and garden plants, even in January. After learning about how trees and plants think, communicate, and even sing, it seems natural that we help them out with some of their needs, especially if we’ve plopped

them into a pot indoors away from their habitat.

Handy garden hints and news

Cloche (mini-greenhouse): Cut off the bottom of a soda bottle, tent baby plants in soil or pot.

Banana-rama tea: Banana peels offer nutrients your plants need: Potassium, phosphorus, calcium, and other minerals. Put banana peels in a large jar, fill with water, let brew for two days. Use this tea to water your plants indoors or out; place peels under the garden soil.

Treecycle: Christmas trees are chipped up into free, helpful garden mulch. Get yours this month!

Monument Community Garden: For 2018, it will be a demonstration garden with tours, so check out the Facebook page for handy hints and local events: facebook.com/monumentcommunitygarden

Free gardening courses: Contact the Monument town gardener at COLgren@tomgov.org or (719) 884-8026. Begins Jan. 30.

Janet Sellers is an avid lazy gardener (aka leave-it-natural) and active ethnoecologist promoting the dynamic relationships between people, biota, and environments from the cultures of the past and immediate present. She can be reached at JanetSellers@ocn.me.

Art Matters

All in good spirits for 2018



By Janet Sellers

A new sparkle for the old bubbly: Southwinds Fine Art Gallery will start 2018 with its *Celebration Art! Champagne Tour* weekends. The monthly events will offer a Second Friday artist salon from 4 to 9 p.m. with an art talk at 7 p.m., and continue the weekend fun with a next-day (Saturday) spotlight on a guest artist with a reception from 1 to 4 p.m.

The new programming is in addition to the weekly Saturday studio time for (costumed) figure drawing. The gallery group will be preparing to increase its events for its spring/summer extravaganzas that will include art shows, plein air events, an art with organic farmers market, and more in its inimitable and beautiful forest setting.

I spoke with gallery Director Thia Lynn and gallery Manager Marlene Brown about the direction the programming will be taking this year. Lynn said they look to include more guest artists each month as well as showcase their member artists. The lineup has some familiar names coming in for the monthly Second Friday/Second Saturday events, and they are calling on the fun of champagne bubbles for a sense of lively inspiration for its Champagne Tour weekends. Sounds good to me!

Mid-winter, Southwinds will seek to develop its warm

community rapport with exceptional art shows and open studio times. The figure drawing Saturdays with costumed models have been popular since it started up last summer, and the new Second Friday art talks and salon style conviviality will include Saturday afternoon tea and more with the spotlighted artists.

As the weather warms up, and especially on those random but much anticipated warmer days of winter and spring, they can add in some ad hoc outdoor art events such as plein air days and hikes, and look to have plein air “paint outs” with endgame shows that are so popular nationwide. The gallery is nestled in the ponderosa forest, so visitors can be indoors or outdoors to enjoy some art time.

Art events

Bella Art and Frame Gallery—showcasing member artists, 183 Washington St., Monument.

Clay n Colors artist coop—Open to the public Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and “when the flag is out!” 251 Front St., Suite 1, Monument.

Gallery 132—Local artisan co-op. Jewelry trunk show Jan. 27 all day. 251 Front St., Suite 8, Monument.

Southwinds Fine Art Gallery—*Celebration Art! Champagne Tour weekends*. Kickoff is Jan.12 and 13. Janu-

ary speaker is Atomic Brunette, aka artist Thia Lynn; January featured artist is Janet Sellers’ “Spirit Trees and Animals of Our Local Forests” including Spirit Trees from her recent show at the Air Force Academy’s Permanent Professors’ Gallery. Southwinds Fine Art Gallery, 16575 Rollercoaster Road at Baptist Road.

Open Studio Saturdays—Southwinds’ weekly costumed figure drawing studio sessions 10 a.m. to noon, \$10/session, (open studio, no instruction). Southwinds Fine Art Gallery, 16575 Roller Coaster Road at Baptist Road. 719- 481-6157.

Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts—Annual member and resident artist show through Jan. 26. 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake. The next call for Artists: Visions of Light photography show, early deadline is Jan. 15. View website for details: www.TriLakesArts.org.

Janet Sellers is an award-winning artist, writer, and speaker. She teaches art and creative writing in the studio, on location, and in local college classes. Contact her at janetsellers@ocn.me.

Snapshots of Our Community

Palmer Lake Star shines brightly



Above: with the festively lit Rockhouse in the foreground, the Palmer Lake Star shines brightly for the holiday season. Photo by David Futey

Handbell Choir concert, Dec. 9



Above: The Tri-Lakes Community Handbell Choir performed on Saturday, Dec. 9 at the Monument Community Presbyterian Church. The nave of the church was filled with attentive listeners as the handbells chimed out numerous Christmas songs and hymns as well as other holiday songs. Photo by John Howe.

Hazel Miller at TLCA, Dec. 1



Above: On Dec. 1, the Hazel Miller Band returned to the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts with an uplifting and inspiring Christmas-oriented show. Miller said, “We came to celebrate” and celebrate they did with a variety of Gospel and Christmas songs. They performed Gospel songs such as He’s an Awesome God, I Cried and I Cried Until I Found the Lord, and Are You Ready for a Miracle? The Christmas-oriented songs included Stevie Wonders That’s What Christmas Means to Me and from the Peanuts Christmas Special Christmas Time is Here and the instrumental Linus and Lucy. Regarding the band’s song selection, Miller said “my heart is dancing and my outside needs to match my inside.” With unparalleled vocals from Miller and her accompanists along with tight instrumentation from the band, audience members could not help but dance inside and out as well. *Photo by David Futey*

Monument Small Town Christmas



The shops in downtown Monument were decked out in holiday décor for the annual Small Town Christmas held Saturday, Dec. 2. A nativity scene on Beacon Light Road greeted passersby as they headed downtown. Lots of customers snapped photos of the holiday adornments before ducking into festive stores. Merchants said the crowds were large this year despite the mild, not-so-wintery feel to the weather. Many stores offered discounts and refreshments like hot cocoa for the kids and wine for the adults. Families were encouraged to shop with the little ones, who got some special attention with face paint-

ing and balloon animals. Santa posted himself and Mrs. Claus at a local restaurant for the day, while his reindeer frolicked in the town square. Even Santa’s alpacas were present, holding court at the toy store. And there were wood and ice carving demonstrations in the park ahead of the evening’s tree lighting. **Above Left:** This downsized train engine got a holiday makeover. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.* **Below:** Cupid the baby reindeer met many local children who enjoyed petting and talking to the 6-month-old reindeer calf. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*



North Pole Craft Fair draws 1,600



Above: Lewis-Palmer High School graduate Miguel Dakota entertained shoppers during the fair. Dakota, who now lives in Denver, appeared on *America’s Got Talent*. *Photo by Harriet Halbig.*

The 12th annual North Pole at Tri-Lakes Craft Fair, hosted by the Monument Hill Kiwanis, was held at the Grace Best Education Center on Dec. 2.

Project Manager Bob Nissen reported that there were 73 vendors from throughout the state selling items from clothing to food to handcrafted items of wood and other materials.

During the course of the fair, an estimated 1,600 shoppers passed through the halls, donating almost \$750, 580 pounds of food, and a bin of toys to benefit Tri-Lakes Cares.

Eight music and dance groups entertained the shoppers in addition to Miguel Dakota, who performed Christmas music and some original compositions.

The Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church Cookie Walk was a success, selling over 8,000 cookies and raising \$2,600 for their charities, including Tri-Lakes Cares Neighborhood Nurse, Days for Girls, Palmer Divide Blanket Brigade, and the Crawford House Quilters.

Proceeds from the fair go to fund programs in the Lewis-Palmer D38 School District.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

Monument Tree Lighting Ceremony

Right: Downtown Monument’s annual Tree Lighting Ceremony was held Saturday Dec. 2 in Limbaugh Park. The afternoon included holiday performances by local groups in the bandshell. A local food truck provided refreshments, and Monument Police and Tri-Lakes Fire were there to ring in the holidays, too. Kids climbed into the fire trucks, ran through the nearby playground, and waited in line to talk with Santa and Mrs. Claus. There was a festive feeling in the air as the holiday season approached. The cheerful mood was contagious as a group of singers prepared to entertain the audience just before the lighting. Some who haven’t attended previous ceremonies might think it would be a single tree lighting, but they’d be mistaken. Almost every tree in the park gets lit!



A food drive was held benefitting Tri-Lakes Cares, a community-based, volunteer supported resource center. For more information, call 719-481-4864 or see trilakescares.org. *Photo by Allison Robenstein*

Right: Tri-Lakes Leos charter member Kendal VanDenHoek helped hand out free stuffed animals at the Monument Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 2. The Leos partnered with the Monument Branch Library to collect stuffed animals donated by the public and planned to share extras with Santa on Patrol. The Leos, a community-based service club for students ages 12-18, is supported by the El Paso County Tri-Lakes Lions Club and raises money for people having vision trouble, including those who need glasses or seeing-eye dogs. For more information, call or text Carol Reece, Tri-Lakes Leo Club advisor, (678) 836-3895, tlleoclub@gmail.com. *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*



Conexus Community Forum, Dec. 5



Above: On Dec. 5, the Tri-Lakes Chamber and Economic Development Corp. hosted a Community Forum to learn about a potential new 23-acre commercial development going in on Old Denver Road, north of Baptist Road and east of the Santa Fe Trail to I-25. The development would be called Conexus and would be a business park with offices, light manufacturing, and minimal retail. Steve Schuck of Schuck Communities and Andrea Barlow, co-owner of land planning firm NES, gave an overview of what they envision and addressed community concerns. Schuck said they understand this is the front door to Monument, and they are trying to attract primarily major employers who will provide jobs to Monument residents and contribute to the tax base. He noted that there would be future development on 150 acres

of land north of this area depending on the success of this first phase. Barlow noted the sensitivity of the visual impact of any development when viewed from the highway. About 60 community members attended this meeting and raised concerns about water availability, traffic on Old Denver Road, impact to Santa Fe Trail use, compliance with the Dark Skies initiative for lighting and design guidelines, and coordination with the Wagons West residential development on the west side. Triview Metropolitan District will provide water and sewer; the developer is responsible for providing turn lanes into the site. The types of businesses will be defined on the development plan but there will be no marijuana businesses, which are prohibited by the town. The development will come to the Planning Commission in a special meeting on Jan. 24



and is expected at a Board of Trustees meeting in February. The developers hope to break ground in August or Sep-

tember with initial building construction happening in late fall. *Photos by Jackie Burhans.*

John Adams at TLCA



Above: On Dec. 8, John Adams and his John Denver tribute band returned to the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. Once Adams heard Leaving on a Jet Plane in the mid-1960s, it not only changed the course of his music listening but also his musical career. Adams met Denver 12 or more times throughout his life and thus could impart background into Denver and his songs. Introducing the song Perhaps Love, Adams said Denver “could write songs anywhere, in the shower, having tea in Shanghai, and this one while sitting in a parking lot in Utah.” Along with other well-known Denver songs such as I Guess He’d Rather be in Colorado, Adams performed lesser-known ones such as Whispering Jessie from an album released in Australia. Adams also complimented the audience, saying, “Palmer Lake, you sing beautifully” as they sang along with a number of songs during the evening. *Photo by David Futey.*

Ice Carving at Gallery 132



Above: Donning rubber boots and a similarly coated apron, ice carver Julian Drummond entertained a small crowd by transforming an ordinary—and very large—block of ice into a stout snowflake under unusually summerlike temperatures. Drummond’s equipment consisted of a small chainsaw and numerous shaving tools, all of which created varying degrees of chunks, chips, and spray when they were applied to the ice. The ice carver’s wife, Linda Drummond, assisted by clearing carved ice chunks from underfoot and showing Julian the carving pattern from which he was working. The Drummonds’ efforts were sponsored by Gallery 132, a local artisan cooperative, located at the shops of 251 Front St. *Photos and caption by Jennifer Kaylor.*

The Story of Christmas, Dec. 15



Above: The Tri-Lakes Music Association presented *The Story of Christmas* on Dec. 15 at Palmer Ridge High School. Attendees were welcomed in the lobby by the carolers, conducted by Ellen Finley. When the program began in the auditorium, there was standing room only. The appreciative audience warmly welcomed the holiday music presented. *Photo by John Howe.*

Community Caroling, Dec. 15



About 30 students and family members attended a community caroling event Dec. 15 at Antelope Trails Elementary School in Gleneagle. Groups of carolers wandered the neighborhoods around the school, going from house to house singing a variety of Christmas songs including, *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, *Deck the Halls*, *Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer*, and *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*. Many neighborhood residents were surprised when they answered the door to find a group of children standing and singing on their doorstep. Carolers returned to the school after about an hour and a half of singing to enjoy hot chocolate and cookies. The annual event was sponsored by ATE. **Above:** Antelope Trails Elementary School kindergarten student Wyatt Van Wyhe drinks hot chocolate and eats cookies with his father Scott Van Wyhe after caroling in the Gleneagle neighborhood. Scott said, "It was a great community event. I met some new people and helped spread Christmas cheer." *Photo by Chrystie Hopkins.*

Outpourings, Dec. 19



Above: Thomas Csrnko, CEO/president of Veterans Squaring Away Veterans (VSAV), spoke at the Dec. 19 meeting of Outpouring: A Local Version of TED Talks sponsored by Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church. Csrnko noted that there are 22 million veterans in the U.S. today, with an estimated 50,000 who are homeless and a suicide rate of 22 per day that hasn't changed in 15 years. He said traditional Veterans Affairs services are overwhelmed with the sheer volume of transitional service members. Also, the bureaucratic nature of organizations is overwhelming for vets in need and can be impossible to navigate. The unique solution that VSAV, a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization, offers includes peer advisors who are veterans themselves who have dealt with these issues and are committed to providing assistance. Csrnko said VSAV complements existing veteran service organizations with a results-driven approach. VSAV is an all-volunteer organization and can use donations, peer volunteers, auxiliary volunteers, and referrals. VSAV assists service members and their families with the challenges of transitioning from active service and integrating with civilian communities. More information on VSAV can be found at <http://www.vsav.org>. Outpouring talks are held on the third Tuesday of each month at Pikes Peak Brewing Company. More information on these talks can be found at <http://tlumc.org/outreach/outpouring>. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

St. Peter Christmas Concert



Above: On Friday, Dec. 15, St. Peter Catholic Church hosted a free Christmas concert to benefit Tri-Lakes Cares (TLC). The quartet, composed of vocalist J. J. Kaelin, violinist Theresa Phillips, cellist Pam Chaddon, and pianist Robert Lambrecht, played two sets to a packed house. Paul Zmuda acted as emcee for the evening. All four performers participated in the first selection, a medley of traditional songs. Next, Lambrecht played selections from the *Nutcracker Suite* solo with exquisite perfection, receiving rousing applause. In *Christmas Jig*, arranged by Yo-Yo Ma, Phillips flawlessly kept the quick beat, encouraging the audience to clap along. After a short intermission, Kim Jordan harmonized with J.J. Kaelin in *Carol of the Bells*. In the final selection, the audience sang along to *Silent Night*. Haley Chapin, executive director of TLC, spoke about supporting our community during the holidays. Over \$3,000 was raised from the concert. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

Yule Log Hunt, Dec. 17



Above: The annual Palmer Lake Yule Log Hunt was held Dec. 17, starting at Town Hall. Gary Athens has been working on the event for 35 years and said this was the 84th annual hunt. They expected about 350 people to attend, with many participating in the hunt while others stay indoors keeping warm. Five of the "hunters to be" are, from left, Robin Beachy-Richards, Erin Richards, Jeff Richards, Scott Richards, and Mark Richards. Many wished them well as they went forward in their red/green capes, which signified they were registered to hunt the Yule Log. *Photo by John Howe.*

USTC pie toss fundraiser, Dec. 22



Left; Master Jay Lee, left, CEO of US Taekwondo Center (USTC), observed as Lead Instructor Charles Day gave Master Ho Jun Park a pie to the face at USTC's Dec. 22 pie toss. The school is hosting events like this to draw public attention to, and raise money for, the Children's Hospital Foundation of

Colorado Springs. The pie toss allowed USTC to raise over \$11,000 in December, and Master Lee is committed to donating \$250,000 over the next four years to the hospital. USTC's mission is to contribute to a safe and peaceful community while encouraging respect for others and helping develop men and women who are positive, respected and contributing members of society. *Photo courtesy of US Taekwondo Center.*

Treecycle available thru Jan. 7



Left: Thayer Guida, left, and Jadon Guida helped at the El Paso County Youth Sports' Annual Treecycle on Dec. 30 at the Monument location at Baptist Road Trailhead on Old Denver Road. These boys and their teammates volunteered their time and muscle power as a fundraiser for the Lewis-Palmer District 38 lacrosse team, which accepted donations for each tree dropped off.

Treecycle is available two weekends, the last weekend in December and the first weekend in January, ending Jan. 7. The trees will be chipped into mulch, which will be distributed free to anyone who can bring their own containers and bring the mulch back home to supply nutrients to their own landscape areas. The tree mulch will not only help to naturally eliminate weeds but also keeps moisture in the soil, and it allows rain and snow to settle into the earth and keep the trees and landscape healthy. The nutrients from the chipped trees will eventually decay and offer the cycle of nutrients to help trees and plants grow. While the native habitat in our area is basically ponderosa and oak, which need their own species-specific nutrients, using this kind of mulch is cost-effective and environmentally friendly. It will support not only the plants and trees but also wildlife, children and pets, in terms of keeping the ground safe from harmful chemicals. Contrary to common belief, nothing in the pine needles or pine will cause acidic soil, because once the soil has been created from the material decay, it is relatively neutral. Pine and our scrub oaks have some essential oils that keep out unwanted bugs and weeds, and that is very garden-friendly. For information on Treecycle, 520-7878, www.csyouthsports.net/treecycle. *Photo by Lisa Hatfield. Caption by Janet Sellers.*

Random Acts of Kindness



Above: The Random Acts of Kindness group (RAK) has blossomed into the wider Tri-Lakes community after it started with a group of five families at Family of Christ Lutheran Church this fall. RAK meets the second Saturday of each month to reach out into the community. Service so far has included collecting food for Tri-Lakes Cares, collecting toys for Santa on Patrol, raking leaves, visiting residents of Bethesda Gardens Assisted Living Center, cleaning gutters, and retrieving a wind-blown gazebo. Residents who either want to give help or ask for help can contact Melinda Reichal at 719-313-0688 or mreichal@aol.com. *Photo by Gordon Reichal.*

Our Community Notices

By Judy Barnes, Events Editor
Although we strive for accuracy in these listings, dates or times are often changed after publication. Please double-check the time and place of any event you wish to attend by calling the information number for that event.

Join the Y for free, ends Jan. 15

The Pikes Peak YMCA is offering a promotion: pay no join fee if you register by **Jan. 15**. See ad on page 6. Register at www.ppymca.org; or at the Y, 17250 Jackson Creek Parkway, Monument; or phone 481-8728.

Tri-Lakes Meals on Wheels needs drivers

Meals on Wheels in the Tri-Lakes area needs regular and substitute drivers to deliver meals Monday, Wednesday, and Friday each week. Volunteers will have to complete an application with Silver Key and then undergo a background check. For more information, phone Sue Cliatt, 481-3175.

Meals on Wheels

If you're a homebound senior age 60 or older, you might qualify to receive meals delivered to your home through Silver Key. See ad on page 5. To register or volunteer, call 884-2370.

Tri-Lakes Y winter basketball, register now

Registration is now open for winter basketball, preschool through grade 8. The season begins **Jan. 8**. Financial assistance is available. Register at www.ppymca.org; or at the Y, 17250 Jackson Creek Parkway, Monument; or phone 481-8728.

2018 Visions of Light Photographic Exhibition Call for Entries, apply by Jan. 15

Photographers of all levels are invited to submit their original photography for consideration by **Jan. 15**. For details, visit www.trilakesarts.org or email info@trilakesarts.org.

Sundance Ninja

Sundance Studio is offering a new American Ninja Warrior course for ages 4 through 17. For details, contact the studio: 481-8208, info@thesundancestudio.com.

www.thesundancestudio.com, or www.thesundancestudio.com.

Tri-Lakes Women's Club Announces 2018 Grant Process, Jan. 15 through March 15

Tri-Lakes Women's Club's (TLWC) grant application for 2018 will be available online **Jan. 15** through **March 15** on the TLWC website, www.tlwc.net. Eligible organizations include nonprofit and public service organizations and public schools that serve the Tri-Lakes area. Special program and project requests are welcomed. The application package includes the instructions as well as other important qualifying information. For more information, contact Barbara Betzler, bbetz@me.com.

MVEA Scholarships, enter by Jan. 16

Each year, MVEA awards \$1,000 scholarships to 14 graduating high school seniors. Applications are due by **Jan. 16**. For entry qualifications and to complete an online entry form, visit www.mvea.coop/youth-programs.

April elections

Make sure your voter registration is up to date at www.govotecolorado.com.

County commissioners prohibit camping in vehicles

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously to revise a 2010 illegal camping resolution to include the occupation of motor or recreational vehicles in the definition of camping and stipulates that such vehicles cannot be occupied for more than 48 hours in county rights of way. The county could adapt an "encroachment permit" to accommodate short-term visitors of residents who come to town in large recreational vehicles that may not fit in driveways and need to park along roads and rights of way for longer than 48 hours. A video of the full discussion on the new camping restrictions is posted on the county YouTube channel at: <https://youtu.be/NZ0wxjISdH4>.

Tiny homes now permitted in many county zones

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners has unanimously approved

modifications to county land use regulations to accommodate the current popularity of so-called "tiny homes." Changes will allow the placement of tiny homes in many El Paso County zones where residential housing is permitted if they meet certain safety, functionality, and appearance requirements. Certain "length of stay" restrictions have been removed for approved RV campgrounds. Tiny homes are permitted in zoned mobile parks and may be used as principle dwelling places in certain county residential zones. They will also be permitted as "accessory structures" in other zones subject to compliance with other requirements established for specific subdivisions and developments.

Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Thrift Store needs volunteers

Volunteers are needed for various tasks. The store is located at 755 Highway 105, Suite N, in the West End Center and is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. See ad on page 32. To volunteer, call 488-3495.

Save your sewer system! Fats, oils, and grease problems

Pouring grease down your drain can cause clogs in home plumbing and adds extra expenses to the wastewater treatment process. Grease from cooking, gravy, cooking oil, and sauces may look harmless as a liquid, but when it cools it gets thick and sticky. If you pour grease down your drain, it sticks to pipes and eventually can cause clogs and messy overflows. Prevent backups in your home by pouring all grease from bacon, fried chicken, and other cooking grease into a can, putting in the freezer, then tossing it in the trash.

Monument Academy now enrolling for 2017-18 school year

Monument Academy, a free public school of choice, features academic excellence, award-winning programs, and more. See ad on page 13. For more information or to schedule a tour, call 481-1950 or visit www.monumentacademy.net.

St. Peter Catholic School now enrolling for the 2017-18 school year

The school offers full and half-day preschool, Core Knowledge Curriculum with small class sizes, Christ-centered education, athletics, and more for preschool-eighth grade. See ad on page 3. Call or visit: 124 First St., Monument; 481-1855; www.petertherock.org.

LEAP—Help for heating bills

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) is a federally funded program that provides cash assistance to help families and individuals pay a portion of winter home heating costs. The eligibility period for LEAP runs Nov. 1-April 30. Application packets will automatically be mailed to residents who received LEAP assistance last year at the address where they were living at that time. To find out if you qualify for LEAP, call 1-866 HEAT-HELP (1-866-432-8435) or visit www.colorado.gov/cdhs/leap.

Residence vacation check

The El Paso County Sheriff's Office will conduct vacation checks of homes of county residents who are on vacation. This is a great way to add security to your home when you're away for multiple days. Either a deputy or trained volunteer will visit your home while you're away and check it periodically. To add your home to their schedule, visit www.epcsheriffsoffice.com. Info: 520-7151.

Monument text alerts

Text "Monument" to 41411 to receive updates and news of meetings, weather alerts, openings and closings, as well as other important town information to your phone or personal mobile device.

Volunteer weather observers needed

The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network is seeking volunteer weather observers in this area. The nationwide network is made up of volunteers who help measure and record precipitation in their areas. Learn more and sign up on the network's web page at www.cocorahs.org.

Monthly arts and crafts group forming

The Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Senior Center is looking for anyone interested in various types of arts and crafts such as needlework, knitting, beading, coloring, or quilting. If you're interested in any of these activities or have a suggestion of your own, contact Sue, 464-6873.

County Planning and Development's new website

The county's new Electronic Development Application Review Program (EDARP) allows immediate access to documents, and development application processing. This is part of an ongoing county-wide effort to give residents easier access to data and improve transparency. EDARP is an internet-based platform that uses Cloud storage through Microsoft Azure and allows users access to all county development applications dating back to 1947. The public, consultants, and developers can see and download electronic copies of applications for rezoning, subdivisions, and more. The program also allows electronic submittal of development-related applications, which will reduce costs to applicants and the county. For more information, visit epcdevplanreview.com.

Become a CASA volunteer

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) offers a volunteer opportunity like no other. As appointed representatives of the court, CASA volunteers are empowered to make a lifelong difference in the lives of abused and neglected children. To learn more visit www.casappr.org or contact Uriko Stout, 447-9898 ext. 1060, urikos@casappr.org.

Free transportation and handyman services for seniors
Mountain Community Senior Services offers free transportation and handyman services to Tri-Lakes seniors. If you need a ride to a medical appointment, grocery shopping, or the local senior lunches, a volunteer driver will be happy to help you. Call 488-0076 to leave a message for the dispatcher. If you need grab bars in the bathroom, a ramp to your door, or repair of stairs or railings, please call Cindy Rush, 488-0076, and leave a message or visit www.coloradoseniorhelp.com.

Volunteer drivers needed for seniors' transportation service
Mountain Community Transportation for Seniors is a nonprofit, grant-funded organization that provides free transportation to Tri-Lakes seniors 60 years old and over. The program needs additional volunteer drivers. For information, email MCSS at mcseniorservices@gmail.com or call the MCSS dispatch hotline at 488-0076.

Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Senior Center, new expanded hours
The Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Senior Citizens Center is next to the Lewis-Palmer High School Stadium (across from the YMCA). With the addition of 16 morning exercise classes, the new hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturday, 8:45-10 a.m.; and Sunday, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. The facility has a lounge, craft room, game room, and multipurpose room. Programs include bridge, pinochle, bingo, national mah-jongg, Zumba, line dancing, yoga, chair yoga, tai chi, Pilates, total body strength, better balance and strength, and many more! There's also ping-pong, Wii video games, puzzles and board games, refreshments, a lending library, computers with internet connections, and an information table. For information about programs for seniors, visit www.TriLakesSeniors.org or call Sue Walker, 719-330-0241.

Senior Beat newsletter—subscribe for free

Each monthly *Senior Beat* newsletter is full of information for local seniors, including the daily menu of the senior lunches offered Mon.-Fri. at the Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Highway 105, Palmer Lake. It also contains the schedule of the classes and events for the month at the Senior Citizens Center and senior-friendly library programs. To subscribe, send an email with your name and mailing address to SeniorBeat@TriLakesSeniors.org. *Senior Beat* can also be viewed online at www.TriLakesSeniors.org.

County expands services to vets
Three county agencies providing services to veterans now have satellite offices at the Mount Carmel Center of Excellence, 530 Communications Circle, Colorado Springs. The Veterans Service office at Mount Carmel is open Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4 p.m. and closes noon-1 p.m. for lunch. Call 667-3816 for an appointment. The Pikes Peak Workforce Center Mount Carmel office is open Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (closed for lunch noon-1 p.m.), and is staffed with two Workforce Center employees who help veterans with their employment needs. Call 667-3729 for an appointment. The county Department of Human Services also has a Mount Carmel office open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Help the Black Forest Animal Sanctuary (BFAS) rescue animals
Southern Colorado Animal Rescue BFAS is an animal rescue and rehab farm that has been helping animals since 1994. The all-volunteer organization has rescued thousands of horses, farm animals, dogs, cats, and various small wild animals and birds. BFAS provides rescue operations, adoption programs, foster and sponsorship programs, a student/horse education program, service dogs to veterans, and local and national rescue efforts. They also work with local schools and scouts. Donations are needed for supplies, and volunteers are needed for day-to-day operations. To find out how you can help, call 494-0158, email BFASFarm@gmail.com, or visit www.bfasfarm.org.

County launches new community website
Check out all the interesting county data available for you at <http://community.spatialest.com/co/elpaso/>.

CSU Extension launches "Your Energy" website and blog
The Colorado State University Extension now has a "Your Energy" website to help Coloradans make more informed energy decisions. The site includes decision tools, fact sheets, and a blog. The decision tools can help you figure out energy savings from using more efficient lighting, low-flow showerheads, heating and cooling systems, water heaters, and more. Other tools can help you understand how much you spend on heating, cooling, and baseload electricity and your bottom line if you install a wind turbine or solar array. Visit the site at <http://yourenegy.extension.colostate.edu/>.

Free gun-lock kit
The Monument Police Department is offering free firearm safety kits to local residents through a partnership with Project ChildSafe, the nationwide firearms safety education program. Each kit contains gun safety information and a cable-style gun lock that fits most types of handguns, rifles, and shotguns. The Police Department administrative offices at 645 Beacon Lite Rd. are open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Drop by during those times to pick up a free gun-lock kit. For information, phone 481-3253. ■

Why advertise in OCN?

- **OCN is mailed FREE to every resident and business in the Tri-Lakes area.** We mail more than 17,400 copies every month and put another 700 copies in stacks throughout the area. *OCN* has the largest mailed circulation and the third-largest circulation among local newspapers in El Paso County after *The Gazette* and *The Colorado Springs Independent*. We put copies of *OCN* into the hands of those people most likely to buy your products or services: local residents and businesses.
- **OCN is a primary source for Tri-Lakes area news.** Since 2001, *OCN* has been presenting unbiased, detailed coverage of Tri-Lakes area governmental entities and their deliberations and actions. Credibility is key. Advertising in a credible medium typically rubs off on the advertisers in that media.
- **OCN gives preference to Tri-Lakes area businesses.** As part of *OCN's* long-standing commitment to encouraging the economic health of the Tri-Lakes area, we offer a significantly discounted ad rate to local businesses as a way to help local businesses like yours succeed.
- **OCN's low ad rates and monthly publication schedule help stretch your ad budget.** *OCN* has one of the lowest ad costs per printed copy of any local publication. Since *OCN* is a monthly publication, your ad is out there for a month—more than four times longer than other local papers. Many of our advertisers tell us they're still getting calls in the third and fourth week of the month.
- **OCN doesn't use contracts.** You aren't tied down. Adjust your advertising month-to-month to meet your changing needs. Our advertisers advertise with us because they see benefit in it, not because they're bound by a contract they signed months before. To reward frequent advertisers, *OCN* has a Frequent Advertiser Bonus (FAB) rewards program. You earn up to 10% of your ad cost as a reward you can use to reduce the cost of future *OCN* advertising. The more you advertise with *OCN*, the more you save. Thanks to our FAB rewards program, *OCN* advertisers have saved more than **\$57,000!**
- **You are supporting a good thing.** Your advertising dollars support a unique all-volunteer, Tri-Lakes-focused effort to present factual, comprehensive news to all Tri-Lakes area residents.

And the best reason of all: It works!

- Randi and Dale Sehestedt, Woodmoor Handyman and Snow Plowing** - "OCN is the only paper we advertise in and it consistently brings us plenty of good local customers. Great paper and great people to work with."
- Joan Powers, Powers Pet Porters** - "Your ad is a great value and I get calls nearly every month from it."
- Melissa Riesling, LPC** - "Advertising with the *OCN* has been terrific! I have so many people tell me 'I saw your ad!' The *OCN* is a very affordable way to promote your business in the community."
- Kerri Bohler, The Villa Restaurant** - "Thanks for all you have done for us. Our ad with *OCN* was the best thing we ever did for advertising. It outshines all the rest."
- Valorie Havercamp, Purple Mountain Jewelry** - "I want you to know that you are truly appreciated...as is all of the great *OCN* staff! Thanks to all for what you do for the community!"
- Mary Sue Hafey, Fringe Benefits Custom Interiors** - "Since I starting advertising with *OCN* years ago, it has helped brand my company while consistently increasing my exposure and sales!"
- Elba D'Asaro, Spa Medica** - "OCN ads work!"
- Sarah Groh, Sarah Groh Music Studio** - "Your paper has been the best press I have ever had. Thanks to the *OCN* ads my plate is full and I don't think I could take on any more clients right now."
- Cathy Thompson, Johan Hair Studio** - "OCN is my paper of choice for advertising. The ads John has helped me design have provided a constant stream of new clients. My ads have paid for themselves many times over! Thanks John!"
- Mike Reaster, Guitar Lessons** - "Ads in *OCN* work great for me. I tried other local papers and got no response. Thanks to my ads in *OCN*, I can work from home and make a decent living. All my work comes from my ads in *OCN*."
- Donna Mallon, Donna's Dolphins swim school** - "This is the best advertising money I've spent! *OCN* is the best paper in town and readers look forward to every issue. I have seen a big response to my ad in this paper. I do not need to advertise anywhere else as my other advertising is word of mouth! Thank you *OCN* for your hard work to make this paper stand out from the rest in our community!"
- For more information on advertising, go to www.ocn.me/advertise.htm or contact John Heiser at (719) 488-3455 or ads@ocn.me.**

Our Community Calendar

By Judy Barnes, Community Calendar Editor
Although we strive for accuracy in these listings, dates or times are often changed after publication. Please double-check the time and place of any event you wish to attend by calling the info number for that event.

GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

- **Town of Monument Workshop: Planning 101, An Overview of the Planning Process from Start to Finish**, Mon., **Jan. 8**, 5:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument.. The public is invited to this workshop of the Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, and Board of Adjustments. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 9**, 10 a.m., 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Bill Burks, 481-4053.
- **Triview Metropolitan District Board Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 9**, 5 p.m., 15275 Struthers Rd. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: 488-6868, www.colorado.gov/triviewmetro.
- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 10**, 9 a.m., 120 Middle Glenway. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2732, www.plsd.org.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Workshop**, Wed., **Jan. 10**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Thu., **Jan. 11**, 1 p.m., 1845 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 488-2525, www.woodmoorwater.com.
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Meeting**, Thu., **Jan. 11**, 6:30 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 2nd & 4th Thu. each month. Info: 481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 16**, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (off Union Blvd & Printers Pkwy). Meets 1st & 3rd Tue. (if required) each month. Info: 520-6300, <http://adm2.elpasoco.com/planning/agendas/pc/pc-agn.asp>.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 16**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017, www.townof-monument.org.
- **D-38 Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 16**, 7-8:30 p.m., optional LPMS campus tour 6:30-7 p.m., Lewis-Palmer Middle School, 1776 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Meets 2nd Tue. each month, location varies. Info: 488-4700, www.lewispalmer.org.
- **Wescott Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 16**, 7 p.m., Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Normally meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: 488-8680.
- **Monument Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 9 a.m., 130 2nd St. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-4886.
- **Academy Water and Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 6 p.m., Wescott Fire Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-0711.
- **Monument Academy School Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 6 p.m., school library, 1150 Village Ridge Point, Monument. Normally meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 481-1950, www.monumentacademy.net/school-board.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **D-38 Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 6:30 p.m., Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 785-4208, cpetersen@lewispalmer.org.
- **Donala Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Thu., **Jan. 18**, 1:30 p.m., 15850 Holbein Dr. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 488-3603, www.donalawater.org.
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board Meeting**, Thu., **Jan. 18**, 6 p.m., Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 488-4700, www.lewispalmer.org.

- **Forest View Acres Water District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 24**, 6 p.m., Monument Sanitation District board room, 130 Second St. Normally meets 4th Wed. each month, Info: 488-2110, www.fvawd.com.
- **Monument Planning Commission Special Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 24**, 6:30 p.m.. Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 24**, 6:30 p.m., TLM-FPD Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105. Normally meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: Jennifer Martin, 484-0911, www.tlmfire.org.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 24**, 7 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: 488-2693, www.woodmoor.org.

LOCAL LIBRARY EVENTS

For additional information on library events, see the library events column on page 23 and visit www.ppld.org. All branches will close Jan. 15 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

- **The Palmer Lake Library hours** are Tue.-Fri., 10 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sat., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587, www.ppld.org.
- **The Monument Branch Library hours** are Mon.-Thu., 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri. & Sat, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun., 1-5 p.m. 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Book Break**, every Mon., Wed., & Fri., 10:30-10:45 a.m. A short read-aloud session for preschoolers. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Paws to Read**, every Mon. & Wed., 4-5 p.m. Let your child practice reading to a Paws to Read dog. No registration required. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Storytime**, every Tue., 10:30-11 a.m. & 11:15-11:45 a.m. Children ages 3 and up, with a favorite adult, experience stories through books, flannelboards, puppets, songs and activities. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Peak Reader**, every Tue. & Thu., 5-6 p.m. Children's Literacy Peak Reader program. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Palmer Lake Library: Storytime**, every Wed., 10:45-11:10 a.m. Children ages 3 and up, with a favorite adult, experience stories through books, flannelboards, puppets, songs and activities. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Toddler Time**, every Thu., 9:30 a.m. & 10:15 a.m. Rhymes & rhythms for one- and two-year-olds. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Palmer Lake Library Family Fun: Lego Build**, Sat., **Jan. 6**, 10:30 a.m. Legos provided, please do not bring your own. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library Family Fun: The Snow Show with Denise Gard**, Sat., Jan. 13, 2:30 p.m. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Teen Gaming Night**, Fri., **Jan. 19**, 3:30 p.m. Ages 9-18, video games and snacks. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: LEGO Build**, Sat., **Jan. 20**, 10-11:30 a.m. Build Legos with fellow enthusiasts. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library Teens: Teen Advisory Board: Interest Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 23**, 4:30-5 p.m. Earn volunteer hours and share your ideas. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Anime Club**, Thu., **Jan. 25**, 5-6 p.m. Ages 13/14+, eat snacks, help plan the new anime club. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.

- **Monument Library Teen Arts and Crafts: Anti-Valentine's Day Crafts**, Wed., **Jan. 31**, 4 p.m. Snacks and crafts. Supplies provided. Registration required. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Meets last Wed. each month. RSVP & Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Kinderspark**, Sat., **Feb. 3**, 10 a.m.-noon. Discover fun ideas to help your child get ready for kindergarten. For ages 5 and under with an adult. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 531-6333, x2403; www.ppld.org.
- **Palmer Lake Library Family Fun: Lego Build**, Sat., **Feb. 3**, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Legos provided; please do not bring your own Legos. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587, www.ppld.org.
- **Pikes Peak Library District's Kids Web and PPLD Teens: Kids Web** at www.ppld.org features resources for school reports and homework, Tumblebooks--free online read-along books, and a Fun & Games link. A "grown-ups" link has information about local school districts, home-schooling, and more.
- **Adult programs**
- **Monument Library: Socrates Café**, every Tue., 1-3 p.m. This group focuses on philosophy, religions, spirituality, and the common threads among humanity. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: German Conversation Group**, every Tue., 3:15-4:15 p.m. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Senior Chats**, every Wed., 10 a.m.-noon. Seniors, share conversation and a cup of coffee. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Knitting**, every Wed., 3-4:30 p.m. Adults and teens, practice materials and some instruction provided. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: Tarah, 531-6333 x1838, 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Monumental Bookworms**, Tue., **Jan. 9**, 7-8:30 p.m. All are welcome to this evening book club sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of PPLD. This month's book: *The All-Girls Filling Station's Last Reunion* by Fannie Flagg. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Second Thursday Craft--Embossing Powder**, Thu., **Jan. 11**, 1-3 p.m. Materials provided, registration required. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. RSVP & Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: La Leche League Meeting**, Fri., **Jan. 12**, 10 a.m., Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Mothers, babies, and mothers-to-be are all invited. Meets 2nd Fri. each month. Info: Kelley, 440-2477, kdghorashi@gmail.com.
- **Monument Library: Scrap Exchange--Who Gives a SCRAP**, Sat., **Jan. 13**, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. A free craft material exchange. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Palmer Divide Quiltmakers Sewing Bee**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Cravings, Weight Gain, and the Blood Sugar Rollercoaster**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 5-6 p.m. Learn from a nutritionist how nutrients affect blood sugar levels and appetite. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Baseball Club of Monument**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Plan events to support Palmer Ridge Bears Baseball. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Monumental Readers Book Club**, Fri., Jan. 19, 10 a.m.-noon. All are welcome to this spirited group. This month's book: *Faithful Place* by Tana French. Meets 3rd Fri. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Monument Essential**

- Tremor Support Group**, Sat., **Jan. 20**, 1-3 p.m. Movement disorder support group. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: History Buffs Book Discussion Group**, Wed., **Jan. 24**, 1-3 p.m. Meets 4th Wed. each month, Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Spinning Group**, Thu., **Jan. 25**, 1:30-3:45 p.m. Explore hand spinning. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Undersea Wonders**, Thu., **Jan. 25**, 7-8:45 p.m. Dr. Pat Shahan presents a DVD of beautiful underwater images from the warm oceans of the world. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Bonfils Blood Center Blood Drive**, Sat., **Jan. 27**, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Coloring for All Ages**, Fri., **Feb. 2**, 3-5:45 p.m. Drop in once a month for coloring and light conversation. Pages and coloring tools provided. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: W0TLM Radio Association FCC Amateur Radio Service License Examinations**, Sat., **Feb. 3**, 12:30-2:45 p.m. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Free and open to the public. Info: Joyce Witte, 661-9824, Joycewitte@gmail.com; www.W0TLM.com.
 - **The Library Channel** (Comcast 17) broadcasts 24/7. See live simulcasts of programs, recorded presentations, a schedule of Library events, children's storytimes, an adult literacy program, El Paso County Commissioners meetings, and much more. Find the schedule online at www.ppld.org, then click on the link "Happenings @ Your Library," then click on the "Comcast 17" link to search the schedule.

WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS

- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Club Breakfast Meeting**, every **Sat.**, 8 a.m., D-38 Administration Building, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Guests are welcome to the weekly meetings that feature speakers on a variety of topics and a free buffet breakfast. Join the 140+ men and women of the Tri-Lakes area who work together on projects to support our community. Info: Bob Hayes, 481-9693, www.monumenthillkiwanis.org.
- **Southwinds Fine Art Gallery Open Studio Saturdays**, every **Sat.**, 10 a.m.-noon, 16575 Roller Coaster Rd. (at Baptist Road). Weekly costumed figure drawing studio sessions, no instruction. Cost: \$10. Info: 481-6157.
- **Bingo by the American Legion**, every **Sat.**, game sales start at 6 p.m., games start at 7 p.m., the Depot Restaurant, in Palmer Lake. Proceeds go to scholarships and other community support activities. Info: 481-8668, www.american-legiontrilakespost911.com/bingo.htm.
- **Watercolor Painting Demo**, with art class afterward, every **Sat.-Sun.**, 3-5 p.m. For watercolor art for fun and good health, join Janet Sellers and get free local scene coloring pages while she demos at local cultural, coffee, and food spots. RSVP & Info: janetsellers10@gmail.com, 357-7454.
- **Fuel Church** Sunday Service, every **Sun.**, 9:30 a.m. fellowship with free donuts and coffee, 10 a.m. main service; 14960 Woodcarver Rd. (just west of I-25 off Baptist Road). Non-denominational, spirit-led. Info: info@fuel.org, www.fuel-church.org.
- **Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church** Worship Hours, every **Sun.**, traditional services 8 & 11 a.m., contemporary service 9:30 a.m., Sunday school, all ages, 9:30 a.m., 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. See ad on page 3. Info: 488-1365, www.tlumc.org.
- **Cathedral Rock Church** Sunday Service, every **Sun.**, 10 a.m., Tri-Lakes YMCA, 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy, Monument. See ad on page 11. Info: www.cathedralrockchurch.org.
- **St. Matthias Episcopal Church** Holy Communion, every **Sun.**, 10 a.m., 18320 Furrow Rd. (1/2 mi. N of 105). Info: 426-9809, www.saint-matthias.org.
- **Tai-Chi Class**, every **Mon.**, 9-10:30 a.m., Palmer

- Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Cost: \$5. Drop-ins welcome. Info: 481-2953, www.townof-palmerlake.com.
- **Seniors: Tai Chi Classes**, every **Mon.**, 11-noon, Senior Center at Lewis-Palmer High School (across from the YMCA). This soft, slow, and gentle form of exercise has many benefits. Registration required. \$3 suggested donation. RSVP & Info: 464-6873.
 - **Seniors Monday Movie Matinee**, every **Mon.**, 1-4 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center located on Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Free movies and snacks. See the schedule of films in Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance *Senior Beat*.
 - **Sew Motion Knitting & Crochet Social Group**, every **Mon.**, 3-5 p.m., 862 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Drop in, work on your yarn related projects. Info: 481-1565, www.sew-motion.com.
 - **Artfully Speaking Toastmasters**, every **Mon.**, 5:45 p.m., DeVry University, 1175 Kelly Johnson Blvd., room 13. Info: Jon Walsh, 640-9428; www.artfullyspeaking.toastmastersclubs.org.
 - **Women's A.A. Step Study**, every **Mon.**, 6 p.m. Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 W. Baptist Rd. Info: 481-0431.
 - **Yin Yoga Classes**, every **Mon.**, 6:30-7:45 p.m., Yoga Pathways Studio, 755 Hwy 105, West End Center, Suite A (3/4 mile west of Safeway). A slow yoga practice; all levels welcome. First class always free. Info: Deb Harano, 338-8467; DimensionsYoga@gmail.com.
 - **Monument Hill Kiwanis Bingo**, every **Mon.**, 7:30 pm, Carefree Bingo, 3440 N. Carefree Circle, Colo. Springs. All proceeds benefit those in need in the Tri-Lakes Community. Info: mark.zeiger@gmail.com.
 - **Adult Literacy Class**, every **Mon. & Wed.**, 6-7:30 p.m., D-38 Admin. Building, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Open to the public. Info: 488-4700.
 - **Senior Citizen Luncheons**, every **Mon.-Fri.**, 12-12:30 p.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. See the menu for the month in the Senior Beat newsletter. A \$2.25 donation is requested. Stay for bingo the 2nd Thu. each month. Reservations are requested, phone 884-2304.
 - **Western Museum of Mining & Industry** (WMMI), open **Mon.-Sat.**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). Daily guided tours at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Cost: \$9 adults, \$8 military/AAA, \$7 seniors & students, \$5 children 3-12, free to children under 3 & museum members. Info: 488-0880, info@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.
 - **Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Thrift Store**, open **Mon.-Sat.**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 755 Hwy 105, Suite N, in the West End Center. Seniors 62+ get a 20% discount on Wednesdays. All proceeds support Tri-Lakes Senior Programs. To donate furniture, call 488-3495 for a pickup. See ad on page 32. Info: www.TriLakesSeniors.org.
 - **Tri-Lakes YMCA Senior Coffee**, every **Tue.**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy, Monument. Members and non-members are welcome. Socialize, have coffee and snacks in the front lobby. Free. Info: 630-2604, hbrandon@ppymca.org, www.ppymca.org.
 - **Al-anon Meeting: Monument Serenity**, every **Tue.**, 7:30-8:30 p.m., Ascent Church, (formerly the Tri-Lakes Chapel) 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. Info: Kay, 481-9258.
 - **Act II Thrift Shop**, open **Tue.-Fri.**, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; **Sat.**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Proceeds benefit Tri-Lakes area non-profits. Info: 487-3268, cara@mynorthlandchurch.org, www.mynorthlandchurch.org/act-ii.
 - **Tri-Lakes Awana Club**, every **Wed.**, 6-7:45 p.m., 14960 Woodcarver Rd. (just west of I-25 off Baptist Road). For kids ages 5-12, club hosted by Fuel Church. Info: www.trilakesawana.org.
 - **Tri-Lakes Church of Christ** Wednesday Night Fellowship Meal (Free) & Classes, every **Wed.**, 6-7:30 p.m., 20450 Beacon Lite Road, Monument (Corner of Beacon Lite & County Line Roads). Info: 488-9613, gregsmith@trilakeschurch.org, www.trilakeschurch.org.
 - **D-38 Home School Enrichment Academy**, every **Thu.**, 8:20 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Grace Best Education Center, 66 Jefferson St., Monument. Use east entrance on Adams Street. Info: ctanner@lewispalmer.org, or enroll online at www.lewis-palmer.org/domain/543.
 - **Al-anon Meeting: Letting Go**, every **Thu.**, 9-10:10 a.m., Tri-Lakes Chapel, room 209, 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. Info: Kay, 481-9258.
 - **A.A. Big Book Study**, every **Thu.**, 7 p.m., Family

- of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 W. Baptist Rd. Info: 481-0431.
- **Tri-Lakes Land Use Committee Meeting**, **Mon., Jan. 8**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 166 2nd St., Monument. Get involved: give input on proposed developments in the Tri-Lakes area to influence the direction of growth. All are welcome. Normally meets 1st Mon. each month. Info: TriLakesluc@gmail.com.
 - **Palmer Divide Photographers Group**, **Mon., Jan. 8**, 7 p.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Award-winning sports photographer Dougal Browning will talk about "The Decisive Moment" in action photography. All are welcome. Meets 2nd Mon. each month. Info: www.pdphotographers.com.
 - **Chess Nuts**, **Tue., Jan. 9**, 5-9 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center. Any age, any skill. Learners welcome. Drop in and leave when you want. Bring your own board and pieces if you have them. Meets 2nd & 4th Tue. each month. Info: www.TriLakesSeniors.org/chess.
 - **Pikes Peak Music Teachers Association meeting**, **Tue., Jan. 9**, 9 a.m., Graner Music, 4460 Barnes Rd., Colo. Springs. Music teachers and students, meet for coffee, a meeting, and program presentation. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Susan Marten, 231-9272, www.ppmta.org.
 - **Black Forest AARP Potluck Lunch & Meeting**, **Wed., Jan. 10**, noon, Black Forest Lutheran Church, 12455 Black Forest Rd. All ages welcome. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: Stan, 596-6787, or www.aarpchapter1100blackforest.weebly.com.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, **Wed., Jan. 10**, Senior Center located across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on the Lewis-Palmer High School campus. A registered nurse examines your feet and provides foot care advice, toenail trimming. Cost: \$30 for a 30-min. visit. Meets 2nd Wed. and last Fri. each month, by appointment only. Info & appointments: call the Visiting Nurse Association, 577-4448.
 - **Senior Bingo**, **Thu., Jan. 11**, Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake, after the senior lunch. Come for lunch at noon, then stay and play. Free! Prizes! Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: Maggie Nealon, 488-3037.
 - **Bridge**, **Thu., Jan. 11**, 1-4 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center located on Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Walk-ins are welcome. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Reservation suggested: call Judy, 626-399-2733.
 - **Legacy Sertoma Dinner Meeting**, **Thu., Jan. 11**, 6:30 p.m., Monument Hill Country Club, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. New members and visitors welcome. Meets 2nd & 4th Thu. each month. Info: Ed Kinney, 481-2750.
 - **Ben Lomond Gun Club**, Tri-Lakes Chapter, **Thu., Jan. 11**, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes Fire Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 481-3364.
 - **La Leche League Meeting**, **Fri., Jan. 12**, noon-1 p.m., Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Mothers, babies, and mothers-to-be are all invited. Meets 2nd Fri. each month. Info: Kelley, 440-2477, kdghorashi@gmail.com.
 - **Southwinds Fine Art Gallery Champagne Celebration Art Tour**, **Fri., Jan. 12**, 4-9 p.m., Art Talk 7 p.m., 16575 Roller Coaster Rd. (at Baptist Road). January speaker is Atomic Brunette, aka

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- artist Thia Lynn. Meets 2nd Fri. each month. Info: 481-6157.
- **El Paso County Hazardous Materials & Recycling Collection Facility**, Sat., **Jan. 13**, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 3255 Akers Dr., Colorado Springs. Open the 2nd Sat. each month as well as Mon.-Thu., 7 a.m.-5 p.m., accepts porcelain fixtures, common recyclable items, household hazardous waste, various electronics, and TVs up to 19-inch diagonal. Accepts documents from private households for shredding, up to two legal paper-sized boxes. Bring a nonperishable food item for Care and Share. Info: 520-7878, http://adm.elpasoco.com/Environmental_Services/Solid_Waste_Management.
 - **Palmer Lake Art Group**, Sat., **Jan. 13**, 9 a.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. A variety of art programs are offered after the social gathering and business meeting. Guests welcome. Meets 2nd Sat. each month. Info: 487-1329, www.palmerlakeartgroup.com.
 - **Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group**, Sat., **Jan. 13**, 9:45-11:30 a.m., The First National Bank of Monument, 581 Hwy 105. Meets 2nd Sat. each month. Info: Gail, 481-3711.
 - **Random Acts of Kindness**, Sat., **Jan. 13**, 1-4 p.m., location and activity varies each month. Join other community members to collect food or toy donations, rake leaves, shovel snow, or whatever the need is. Meets 2nd Sat. each month. Info: Melinda Reichal, 719-313-0688, mreichal@aol.com.
 - **Southwinds Fine Art Gallery Afternoon Tea & Champagne**, Sat., **Jan. 13**, 1-4 p.m., 16575 Roller Coaster Rd. (at Baptist Road). January spotlight artist is Janet Sellers showing her Spirit Trees and Animals of our local forests. Meets 2nd Sat. each month. Info: 481-6157.
 - **Amateur Radio W0TLM** (Tri-Lakes Monument Radio Association), Mon., **Jan. 15**, 7 p.m.. All amateur radio operators or those interested in becoming amateur radio operators are welcome. Meets 3rd Mon. Info: Joyce Witte, 661-9824, joycewitte@gmail.com; www.W0TLM.com.
 - **Fibromyalgia Support Group**, Tue., **Jan. 16**, 5 p.m., Police Station, 7850 Goddard (1 block off Academy on Kelly Johnson near Chapel Hills Mall), Community Room just inside main entrance. A DVD will play 5-6 p.m.; meeting starts at 6 p.m. Share concerns and success stories and talk to a D.O. Learn how you can become pain-free. No charge, no products sold. Meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: 481-2230.
 - **Outpouring: TLUMC Supporting our Community**, Tue., **Jan. 16**, 7 p.m., back Barrel Room at Pikes Peak Brewing Company, 1756 Lake Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Everyone is welcome. Meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: LWeber1971@aol.com; for current speaker info go to <http://tlumc.org/outreach/outpouring>.
 - **Gleneagle Sertoma Luncheon Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., Liberty Heights, 12105 Ambassador Dr., (off Voyager Blvd in Colorado Springs). Interesting speakers and programs; all are welcome. Meets 1st & 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Garrett Barton, 433-5396; Duane Gritzmaker, 481-2424; www.gleneaglesertoma.org.
 - **Senior Bingo**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 1-2 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center, Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Sue Walker, 464-6873.
 - **Drummers!** Wed., **Jan. 17**, 6:30 p.m., Yoga Pathways, Suite A, West End Center, 755 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Free and open to all ages. Bring any kind of drum or other hand percussion instrument. Beginners welcome! Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Nan, 466-1257, nananddon@hotmail.com.
 - **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7829**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument, New members welcome. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Post Commander Joe Carlson, 405-326-2588, jcarlson@vfw7829.org, www.vfw7829.org.
 - **VFW Auxiliary to Post 7829**, Wed., **Jan. 17**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. New members welcome. If you are a male or female relative of a veteran who served on foreign soil during war or other military action, you may be eligible. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Kathy Carlson, 488-1902, carlsonmkc@aol.com.
 - **Senior Tea**, Thu., **Jan. 18**, 12-1:30 p.m., Senior Center at Lewis-Palmer High School (across

- from the YMCA). Come early to socialize, bring a side, salad, or dessert to share. Volunteers needed. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: Sue, 464-6873.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society: Annual Potluck Dinner and Membership Meeting**, Thu., **Jan. 18**, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. The PLHS provides ham, rolls, coffee, and tea. Bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to share. This program is free and open to all. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 559-0837, www.palmerdividehistory.org.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., **Jan. 19**, Senior Center located across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on the Lewis-Palmer High School campus. A registered nurse examines your feet and provides foot care advice, toenail trimming. Cost: \$35 for a 30-min. visit. Meets 2nd Wed., 3rd and last Fri. each month, by appointment only. Info & appointments: call the Visiting Nurse Association, 577-4448.
 - **Monument Hill Farmers Market Winter Indoor Market**, Sat., **Jan. 20**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Grace Best, 66 Jefferson St., Monument. Many new vendors plus all your old favorites. Meets every 3rd Sat. through April. See ad on page 5. Info: 592-9420.
 - **NEPCO Meeting**, Sat., **Jan. 20**, 10 a.m.-noon, New Monument Town Hall & Police Building, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Find out about current actions pertaining to Northern El Paso County Trails and Open Space. All are welcome to this meeting of local homeowners associations. Info: 481-2723 or visit www.nepco.org.
 - **Tri-Lakes Parkinson's Disease Support Group**, Sat., **Jan. 20**, 10 a.m.-noon, Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St, Monument. Normally meets 3rd Sat. each month. Info: info@co-parkinson.org, www.co-parkinson.org.
 - **Chess Nuts**, Tue., **Jan. 23**, 5-9 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center, across the street from the YMCA. Any age, any skill. Learners welcome. Drop in and leave when you want. Bring your own board and pieces if you have them. Meets 2nd & 4th Tue. each month. Info: www.TriLakesSeniors.org/chess.
 - **Tri-Lakes Chamber Monthly Education Series: Multi-Channel Marketing Panel**, Wed., **Jan. 24**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., 166 Second St., Monument. Free. Representatives from local media will help with your marketing and advertising options. Register online, www.trilakeschamber.com/events-calendar.htm. Info: 481-3282.
 - **Senior Social**, Wed., **Jan. 24**, 1-4 p.m., Fellowship Hall of the Black Forest Lutheran Church, 12455 Black Forest Rd. Meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: aarpchapter1100blackforest.weebly.com.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., **Jan. 26**, Senior Center located across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on the Lewis-Palmer High School campus. A registered nurse examines feet and provides foot care advice, toenail trimming. Cost: \$35 for a 30-min. visit. Meets 2nd Wed., 3rd and last Fri. each month, by appointment only. Info & appointments: call the Visiting Nurse Association, 577-4448.
 - **Free Lunch and Learn: Self Harming**, Wed., **Jan. 24**, 1:30-2:30 p.m., INNOVA Recovery Services, 1824 Woodmoor Dr., Ste. 101, Monument. Please RSVP so they know how much food to order, 719-445-9330. Info: www.innovarecovery.com.
 - **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers**, Thu., **Feb. 1**, 6:30 p.m. social, 7 p.m. meeting, Trinity Lutheran Church 17750 Knollwood Dr., Monument. Meets 1st Thu. each month. Info: pdq504@gmail.com.
 - **Tri-Lakes Lions Club**, Thu., **Feb. 1**, 6:30 p.m. social, 7-8 p.m. meeting, The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. Meets 1st Thu. each month. Info: David Prejean, 434-7031.
 - **Lupus Support Group**. If you suffer with an autoimmune disease and want to connect with others, you are welcome to join this group. Info: dmbandle@hotmail.com.
 - **Myasthenia Gravis Association** of Colorado Support Group. Location varies. Info: Carolyn, 488-3620, www.4-mga.org, 303-360-7080, 4mga@4-mga.org.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **County's Annual Treecycle**, Sat.-Sun., **Jan. 6-7**, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Baptist Road trailhead, Baptist

- Road & Old Denver Hwy. Recycle your Christmas tree. Trees are ground into mulch that is given away free. Remove all decorations from your tree before dropping it off. Bring your own tools and containers for mulch. Cost: \$5, benefits community youth sports programs. Info: 520-7878, www.TreeCycleCOS.org.
- **Christmas Tree Recycling with WMMI and Boy Scout Troop 78**, Sat.-Sun., **Jan. 6-7**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (Exit 156 and East from I-25). Please remove all lights, tinsel and ornaments from your tree. Trees will be ground into mulch to help with erosion control at the USAFA B-52 Scout campsite. Donations accepted. Info: 488-0880.
 - **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI): Holiday Model Railroad Exhibit**, through Sat., **Jan. 27**, open Mon.-Sat., 9 a.m.-4 p.m., daily guided tours at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). A holiday-themed model railroad exhibit of model railroad trains in operation. Free with museum admission: \$8 adults, \$7 military/AAA, \$6 seniors & students, \$4 children 3-12, free to children under 3 & museum members. Info: 488-0880, info@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.
 - **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI) Family Day: Geology**, Sat., **Jan. 6**, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). Learn about Colorado's minerals and mining, try your luck at "Keep What You Find" gold panning. Cost: \$8 adults, \$7 military/AAA, \$6 seniors & students, \$4 children 3-12, free to children under 3 & museum members. Info: 488-0880, info@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.
 - **Town of Monument Workshop: Planning 101, An Overview of the Planning Process from Start to Finish**, Mon., **Jan. 8**, 5:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument.. The public is invited to this workshop of the Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, and Board of Adjustments. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
 - **Monument Police Department Active Shooter Class**, Wed. **Jan. 10**, 10 a.m.-noon, Tri-Lakes Chamber Of Commerce, 166 Second St., Monument. Chief Jacob Shirk will present ways to respond to an active shooter situation. RSVP & Info: Laura, 481-3282, www.trilakeschamber.com/events-calendar.htm.
 - **Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery Free Film: To the Moon and Back**, Fri., **Jan. 12**, 6:30 p.m., 3190 Benet Lane. The story behind the Russian Adoption Ban. Benet Hill is partnering with the Rocky Mountain Women's Film Institute. Online registration is requested: www.benethillmonastery.org. See ad page 12. Info: 633-0655.
 - **Winter Woodland Wonders Film at Fox Run**, Sat., **Jan. 13**, 10 a.m.-noon. Explore the trails at Fox Run Regional Park to discover what wildlife lives here in the winter and how they survive. All ages welcome. Cost: \$3 members, \$4 general. Prepaid registration required. Register online at www.elpasocountynaturecenters.com, click on 'ONLINE REGISTRATIONS,' then under Activities click on 'Bear Creek Nature Center.' Info: Mary Jo Lewis, 520-6387.
 - **Gallery 132: Dave Patrick, Acoustic Guitarist**, Sat., **Jan. 13**, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 251 Front St., Monument. Shop locally made items at this local artisan cooperative. See ad on page 10. Classes have begun. Registration & Info: 375-8187, info@gallery132.com, www.gallery132.com.
 - **Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery Chamber Concert: Parish House Baroque**, Sun., **Jan. 14**, 2:30 p.m., 3190 Benet Lane. Baroque violin and cello, recorders, harpsichord, and guest soprano. Cost: \$20 adults, \$15 seniors and students. Buy tickets online: www.benethillmonastery.org. See ad page 12. Info: 633-0655.
 - **Tri-Lakes Community/Centura Blood Drive**, Tue., **Jan. 16**, 3-7 p.m., Bloodmobile at Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St., Monument. No appointment needed, just walk in. Please bring driver's license or ID. Info: 776-5822.
 - **Senior Trip: Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum**, Fri., **Jan. 19**, bus leaves 9 a.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center, across the street from the YMCA. Bring a sack lunch. Cost: \$12. Registration required. See page 2 of the January Senior Beat newsletter. Info: Sue, 719-330-0241, sue@monumentalfitness.com.
 - **Warriors Ice Fishing Tournament**, Sat., **Jan. 20**, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Monument Lake. Have a fun

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- morning fishing, win prizes, benefit our Wounded Warriors. Register online at www.warrior-sicefishing.com. Info: Bill Miller, 291-3500.
- **Rocky Mountain Music Alliance Concert**, Sat., **Jan. 20**, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church, 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. Award-winning soprano Tsvetana Bandalovska collaborates with pianist Dr. Zahari Metchkov. Tickets: adults \$10 online at www.rmmaonline.org or \$12 at the door. Students with ID, and children 12 and under are free. See ad page 2. Info: Coleen Abeyta, 630-8165, Coleen.Abeyta@gmail.com, www.rmmaconcerts.org.
 - **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI): Winter Writer's Nonfiction Writing Class**, Sat., **Jan. 27**, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). A non-fiction writing class with Steven Veatch, for teachers and learners of all ages. Cost: \$35 adults (\$30 for members), \$7 students age 21 and under. Advance registration required. RSVP & Info: 488-0880, info@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.
 - **Gallery 132: Jewelry Trunk Show**, Sat., **Jan. 27**, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., 251 Front St., Suite 8, Monument. Shop locally made items at this local artisan cooperative. See ad on page 10. Info: 375-8187, info@gallery132.com, www.gallery132.com.
 - **St. Peter Catholic School Open House**, Sun., **Jan. 28**, 12:30-2:30 p.m., 124 First St., Monument. Preschool through 8th grade, academics, athletics, and more. See ad on page 2. Info: 481-1855, petertherockschool.org.
 - **High Altitude Gardening**, Tue., **Jan. 30**, 10-11:30 a.m., Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, 166 2nd St., Monument. A free class on best practices and plant selection to handle wildlife and wild weather; coffee and snacks. Repeats Feb. 7, 5-6:30 p.m. RSVP & Info: Cassie Olgren, 481-2954, colgren@tomgov.org.
 - **2017 State of the Region Lunch**, Wed., **Jan. 31**, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Great Wolf Lodge, 9494 Federal Dr., Colo. Springs. Commissioner Darryl Glenn and other elected officials will speak. Advance registration required. Cost: Members, \$37; nonmembers \$42. RSVP & Info: 481-3282, www.trilakeschamber.com.
 - **Community Emergency Response Training (CERT)**, Wed.-Sat., **Jan. 31-Feb. 3**, 6-10 p.m. Wed.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Sat.; Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church, 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. Learn the basics of how to respond to a disaster or emergency in this free course given by the El Paso County Office of Emergency Management. Register at www.epccertfeb17.eventzilla.net. See ad on page 10. Info: Robin, 575-8858.
 - **Palmer Lake Art Group Winter Art Show & Sale Opening Reception**, Fri., **Feb. 2**, 6-8 p.m., Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Come celebrate the opening of the show and meet the local artists. The show runs Jan. 30-Feb. 23, Tue.-Sat., noon-4 p.m. Proceeds benefit art scholarships for School District 38 high school seniors. Info: www.palmerlakeartgroup.com or email plaginfo@palmerlakeartgroup.com.
 - **High Altitude Gardening**, Wed., **Feb. 7**, 5-6:30 p.m., Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, 166 2nd St., Monument. A free class on best practices and plant selection to handle wildlife and wild weather; coffee and snacks. RSVP & Info: Cassie Olgren, 481-2954, colgren@tomgov.org.
 - **Heartsaver CPR/AED/First Aid Certification Course**, Sat., **Feb. 10**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Tri-Lakes

- United Methodist Church, 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. Reservations required: send \$30 and your e-mail or phone number (for registration confirmation and inclement weather notice) to Carley Lehman, 17630 Woodhaven Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80908, by **Feb. 5**. American Heart Association course. Wear comfortable clothes, bring a sack lunch. See ad on page 6. Info: Carley Lehman, 502-3242.
- **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI) Speaker's Bureau: V. Larry Frank, Jr.**, Tue., **Feb. 13**, 7 p.m., museum library. 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). Frank, former curator of WMMI, recently published Colorado's Great Depression Gold Rush: The Oliver Twist Tunnel. Cost: \$5 per lecture, members free. This new lecture series meets 2nd Tue. each month, Feb.- Nov. Info: 488-0880, info@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.

Our community calendar carries listings on a space-available basis for Tri-Lakes events that are sponsored by local governmental entities and not-for-profit organizations. We include events that are open to the general public and are not religious or self-promotional in nature. If space is available, complimentary calendar listings are included, when requested, for events advertised in the current issue. To have your event listed at no charge in Our Community Calendar, please call (719) 339-7831 or send the information to calendar@ocn.me or P.O. Box 1742, Monument, Colorado 80132.

Look for our next issue **Saturday, February 3**

Ad space reservations due: **Fri., Jan. 12**
Finished ad artwork due: **Fri., Jan. 19**
Calendar items due: **Fri., Jan. 26**
Letters to the editor due: **Fri., Jan. 26**

Visit our website to read, download, and search all the back issues at
WWW.OCN.ME

Content

Articles in *Our Community News* focus on the deliberations of Tri-Lakes area governmental bodies such as the Monument Board of Trustees, Palmer Lake Town Council, and many of the local water, sanitation, fire, and school district boards.

Unlike papers that try to figure out what the "story" is and then get quotes on each side to presumably lead the reader to conclude what the "truth" is, *OCN's* role is to report in detail on public meetings of local governmental entities. We report what was talked about and what was decided. By reading *OCN*, you can find out what you might have learned if you had attended those public meetings. In this context, "truth" is that the articles accurately represent what transpired at the meetings.

The content of ads and inserts in *OCN* is the responsibility of the advertisers who place those ads and inserts. The appearance of an ad or insert in *OCN* does not imply endorsement of the ad or insert's content or purpose. While *OCN* does not knowingly run false ads or inserts, we do not research the accuracy of that content. Readers are encouraged to do their own research prior to committing to use the products or services offered.

Contact Lisa Hatfield, Managing Editor, at editor@ocn.me or (719) 339-7831 with any questions.



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Event information: calendar@ocn.me

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The Rabbi's Corner The Most Important Commandment—Part IV

By Oswald Garagorry

In the first two parts of this study we established the basis for this subject by affirming that the majority of Jews and Christians don't have a full knowledge of the Most Important Commandment. In Part 3 (from last month's issue of *OCN*) we covered the understanding of the Most Important Commandment from the Jewish perspective using the Torah as the foundation for their understanding because Jews place a higher value on the content of the Torah. In this article we will begin to cover it from the Christian perspectives using the New Testament as the foundation for their understanding because they place a higher value on its content. However, this partial knowledge of the Commandment has more serious implications for the Christians than for the Jews. Those implications will be discussed in depth in Part 5 (next month's issue of *OCN*).

So the typical, Christian response to the question: "What is the Most Important Commandment?" is answered by quoting *Matthew 22:37*: "Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (KJV), because they honestly believe it to be the correct response and because it is what they have been taught along the way. Yet this teaching they have received is a partial and selected teaching. It is sad for me to state it here, but this is the case. Please allow me to ask you some questions: How many times have heard messages or reference made to the Most Important Commandment during all the time you have been following the Lord's instructions? What has been the basis used for the teaching about the Most Important Commandment beside *Matthew 22:37*? Have you heard of a second text where Messiah is confronted and asked this same question in *Mark 12:28-30*? His response here in Mark is a direct quotation from the instructions of Moses found in Deuteronomy 6:4, and 5. But...from all the teachings and messages you have heard during your years of being instructed from the New Testament was there ever a time you heard a teaching about the Most Important Commandment from *Mark 12:28-30*? If not, why do you think you haven't? Why have you only been taught what Matthew says? Mark is also in the New Testament, why you haven't been given his teachings too? I will offer you my opinion in the next issue of *OCN*. See you then.

Shalom to you.

Dr. Garagorry is the Rabbi of Aliyah Congregation that meets on Saturdays at 10 a.m. at the Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Highway 105, Palmer Lake, CO 80133
www.aliyahcongregation.com • **(719) 330-2382**
Visitors are welcome!



Letters to Our Community

Our Community News welcomes letters to the editor on topics of general interest to readers in the Tri-Lakes area. We do not knowingly print letters that are substantially the same as letters that have been submitted to other publications. To ensure that *OCN* contains a variety of viewpoints, each letter writer is limited to a maximum of six letters within any twelve month period. To submit a letter, please:

- Identify your submission as a letter to the editor and confirm that it has not been submitted to any other publication.
- Include a suggested headline or title.
- Limit letters to no more than 300 words.
- Include your full name, home address, day and evening phone numbers, and email address, if you have one.
- Email your letter to editor@ocn.me or mail it to P.O. Box 1742, Monument, CO 80132-1742.
- Send your letter at least 10 days before the "first Saturday of the month" when the paper is published.
- If you are not at least 18 years old or an emancipated minor, provide a written statement from a parent or legal guardian that you have permission to submit the letter.

If, after two business days from the date of your submission, you have not received an acknowledgement of your letter, please contact Lisa Hatfield, Managing Editor, at (719) 339-7831 or editor@ocn.me. Letters may be edited for length, grammar, and accuracy.

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Our Community News (OCN), with a circulation over **18,200**, is a unique all-volunteer monthly newspaper mailed FREE to every resident and business in the Tri-Lakes area. *OCN* is a primary source for Tri-Lakes area news that gives advertising preference to Tri-Lakes area businesses. *OCN's* contract-free low ad rates and monthly publication schedule help stretch your ad budget while supporting an important Tri-Lakes-focused effort to present factual, comprehensive news to all Tri-Lakes area residents.


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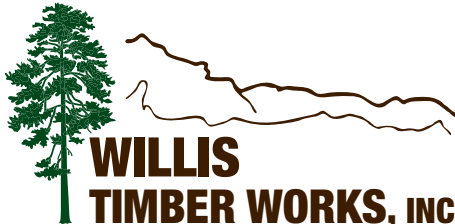
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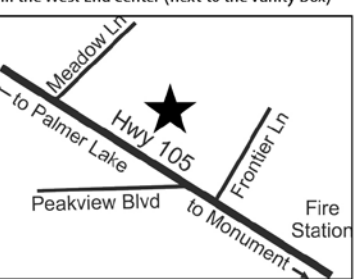


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