

Our Community News

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



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Local Events

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

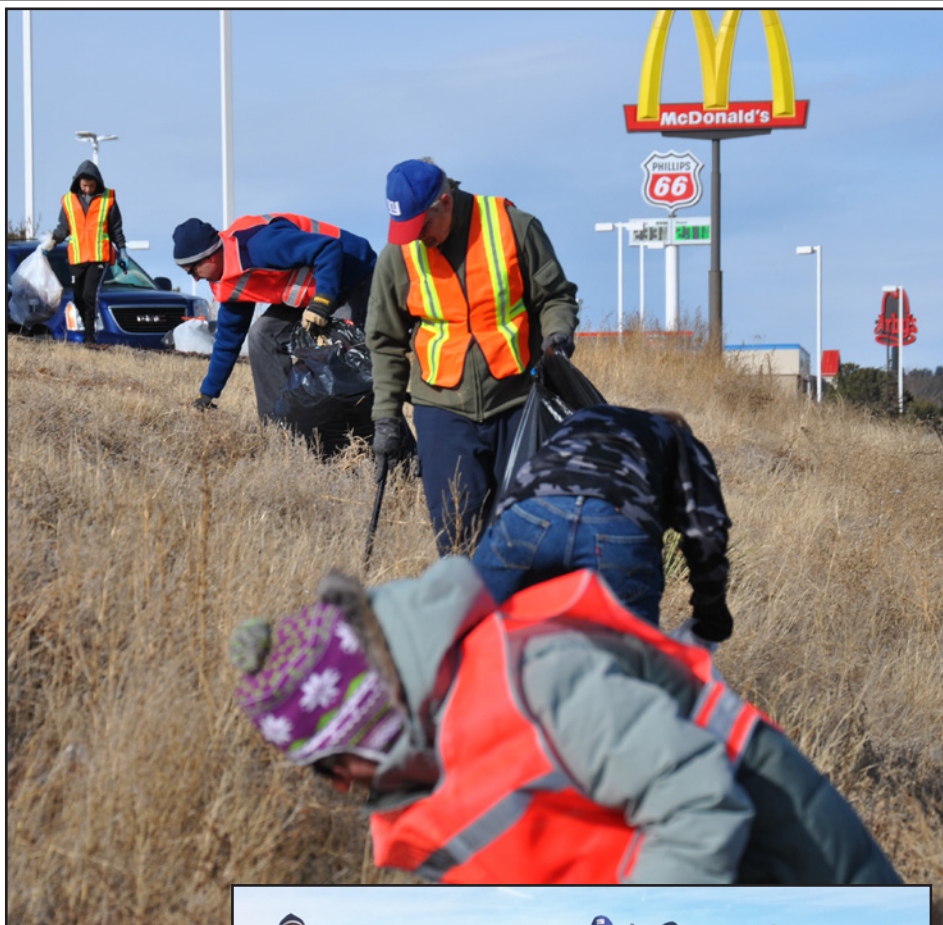
- **PLAG Winter Art Show & Sale** at TLCA, Tue.-Sat., noon-4 p.m. Ends Fri., Feb. 23,
- **D38 Deliberates: Community Engagement Opportunity**, Mon., Feb. 5, 6-7:45 p.m.
- **Tri-Lakes Land Use Committee Meeting**, Mon., Feb. 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- **High Altitude Gardening**, Wed., Feb. 7, 5-6:30 p.m.
- **CDOT Listening Session for I-25 Gap Project**, Thu., Feb. 8, 6:45-8:15 p.m.
- **12th Annual Free Chess Tournament**, Sat., Feb. 10, 8:15 a.m.-2 p.m.
- **Random Acts of Kindness**, Sat., Feb. 10, 1-4 p.m.
- **CDOT Listening Session for I-25 Gap Project**, Tue., Feb. 13, 5:30-7 p.m.
- **WMMI Lecture by V. Larry Frank, Jr.**, Tue., Feb. 13, 7 p.m.
- **PLHS: Restoration of D&RG 1889 Tourist Sleeper Car 470**, Thu., Feb. 15, 7 p.m.
- **WMMI Gold Mining Exhibit Opening**, Thu., Feb. 15, 7 p.m.
- **Lorrie Morgan Concert at TLCA**, Fri., Feb. 16, 7-9 p.m.
- **Landscape Design Principles**, Wed., Feb. 21, 5-6:30 p.m.
- **Winterfest on the Lake**, Sat., Feb. 24, 4-8 p.m.
- **Visions of Light Judge's Seminar at TLCA**, Thu., Mar. 1, 7 p.m.
- **Visions of Light Photography Exhibition Opening Reception**, Fri., Mar. 2, 6-8 p.m.

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Above — The Random Acts of Kindness (RAK) community service group “took to the hills” on Jan. 17 and worked three community service projects. One was a Palmer Lake-area leaf cleanup

and a second was a Mt. Herman-area horse stable work party. Shown here, RAK community volunteers worked at picking up trash along I-25 and Highway 105 on the long slope from the McDonalds/Village Inn and I-25 bridge area. Car parts, cardboard, more cups and wrapper stuff than you can count, and general debris most probably blown in from Utah in our high winds ends up next to I-25's slope up to the Palmer Divide. Many thanks to RAK folks for helping clean our community for a better view by folks traveling past Monument on I-25. Residents who either want to give RAK help or ask for help can contact Melinda Reichal at 719-313-0688 or mreihal@aol.com. *Photo courtesy of Gordon and Melinda Reichal.*



Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education, Jan. 18

Alternative uses for Grace Best facility debated

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education discussed uses for the Grace Best Education Center and received reports from the Gifted Education program and the English Language Learner program, along with an operations report from Monument Academy, at its Jan. 18 meeting.

Grace Best discussion

The board held a lengthy discussion of alternative uses for the Grace Best Education Center. As part of the long-term planning process, some alternatives were to demolish the entire building, demolish only the older part of the building, or repurpose the building into an elementary school.

The Long Term Planning Committee recommends adding two new elementary schools in the next few years. During a recent public deliberation meeting, attendees voted on the desirability of returning sixth grade to the

middle school and reconverting Bear Creek to a middle school, as it was originally built as a middle school. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#d38-1116 and www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#d38-1106.

The attendees at that meeting felt they did not have sufficient information to decide on the use of the Grace Best facility.

Board Treasurer Chris Taylor said that he appreciated the work of the Long Term Planning Committee but suggested that the administration seek a second opinion on the costs and use of Grace Best.

Superintendent Karen Brofft said it is difficult to get bids on such matters without extensive research, and it would be particularly challenging to get such information by the Jan. 30 deadline of the board work session.

Director Mark Pfoff said Grace Best was closed in 2010 due to the economic

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Jan. 16

Residents question, or attempt to question, Wescott board

By Jennifer Kaylor and Jim Kendrick

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) board mourned the deaths of former firefighters, contested one resident's comments and questions and refused to let another resident speak at all at the Jan. 16 meeting. The board also received kudos and settled regular business matters.

One brief mention was made of the May 8 board election in which four positions are up for election.

Director Bo McAllister was excused from the meeting.

Mentor and comrade mourned

Chief Vinny Burns expressed sorrow at the loss of former Wescott Chief Bill Sheldon, who died Jan. 4. Sheldon helped establish the fire district in northern El Paso County, transitioned the district from all-volunteer to paid, and served as Wescott's chief for 15 years before retiring in December 2005. Burns announced that Wescott would lead a fire apparatus procession to the U.S. Air Force Academy where Sheldon would be laid to rest with full military and firefighter honors on Jan. 19. Burns remarked, “Chief Sheldon was . . . a father figure to a lot of people, myself included . . . his loss hurts quite a bit.”

Burns noted that former firefighter Lt. Gasper Blea also died recently. Blea had volunteered with Wescott during the 1990s and became a career firefighter for the Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District before Woodmoor/Monument consolidated into the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (<http://www.ocn.me/v4n12.htm#fajwg>). Wescott firefighters attended his funeral Jan. 13.

One resident questions 2018 budget and approval process

Gleneagle North Home Owners' Association Treasurer Gary Rusnak asked about the upcoming board member election and then posed three basic questions. Had Wescott “only operated out of the one station, on Gleneagle,” had response times degraded because of this, and had Wescott solely served the northern sub-district during 2017?

Burns replied, “There are some times that we did open up (Station 2) when we had extra volunteers,” and, besides the northern sub-district, which is the main part of Wescott now, “the area that [Director Joyce Hartung] lives in, we still respond to,” Ridings added that when only one station was open, “our response times would increase to different calls.”

Note: The southern portion of the current DWFPD service area Burns referred to is south of Old Ranch Road as

D38 (cont. on page 7)

DWFPD (cont. on page 2)

DWFPD (cont. from page 1)

shown in the map on page 3.

Note: Annexation by the City of Colorado Springs has reduced DWFPD's service area and subsequent tax base. In November 2017, residents of the northern sub-district voted to approve a mill levy increase of up to 14.9 mills—from 7 mills to 21.9 beginning in 2018—to supplant lost tax revenue. Each year, the district certifies the mill levy amount to be assessed, which can

be less than or equal to the amount approved by the electorate. Wescott's board certified the full 14.9 mill levy for 2018 on Dec. 5.

At the second public comment period at the end of the meeting, Rusnak stated that he didn't get an opportunity to look at the budget before it was approved in December. <http://www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#dwfpd>

At the Nov. 21 DWFPD board meeting, Chief Vinny Burns explained that

he was waiting for the final 2017 property valuation numbers from the county Assessor's Office, which should be provided in seven to 10 days.

Resident and former DWFPD board member Dennis Feltz said during public comment that he had requested but not received notices of board meetings and meeting minutes and also requested a copy of the 2018 budget.

Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich apologized for the delay in meeting notices and minutes.

Board Chairman Greg Gent indicated that a budget would be made available (it was unclear if the budget would be made available to just Feltz

or to the public in general). Later in the meeting, Burns clarified that a budget would not be available until December. <http://www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#dwfpd>

At the Dec. 5 DWFPD board meeting, during the opening public comment session, resident Gary Rusnak also questioned the lack of public access to the final DWFPD 2018 budget draft proposal. Rusnak said, "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 budget review. My question is, 'Will we be provided a copy before your discussion or only afterwards?'"

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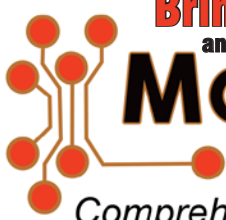


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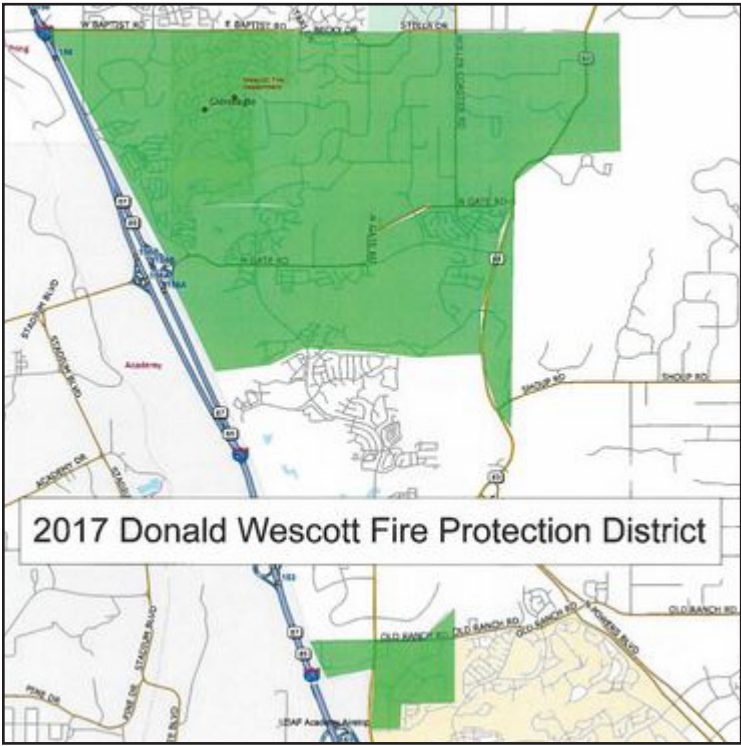
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Above: This 2017 Wescott service area map shows the isolated remaining southern portion of the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District that is east of I-25 and generally south of Old Ranch Road. This southern portion was not annexed by the City of Colorado Springs when the city annexed the Flying Horse Ranch addition. This map does not reflect the removal of the middle section of Wescott's service area which has occurred due to annexation by the city of Colorado Springs. In 2018, Wescott will be composed of the southern portion paying 7 mills and the northern sub-district, generally north of Northgate Boulevard, paying up to a voter-approved total of 21.9 mills. *Map courtesy of <http://wescottfire.org/about-wescott-fire/who-we-are/>.*

Board Chairman 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."

Note: The Colorado Revised Statute (C.R.S.) regarding special district notices of budgets and

hearings states in Title 29-1-106(1)(b) that a special district

must publish "a statement that the proposed budget is available for inspection by the public at a designated public office located within the boundaries of the local government, or, if no public office is located within such boundaries, the nearest public office where the budget is available; and a statement that any interested elector of the local government may file any objections to the proposed budget at any time prior to the final adoption of the budget by the governing body." DWFPD did not make the final proposed budget available to the public before the Dec. 5, 2017 public hearing for approval of the 2018 district budget and appropriation.

Note: C.R.S. 29-1-107. Objections to budget states, "Any elector of the local government has the right to file or register his protest with the governing body prior to the time of the adoption of the budget."

Note: C.R.S. 29-1-115. Violation is malfeasance—removal states that "Any member of the governing body of any local government or any officer, employee, or agent of any spending agency who knowingly or willfully fails to perform any of the duties imposed upon him by this part 1 or who knowingly and willfully violates any

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of its provisions is guilty of malfeasance in office, and, upon conviction thereof, the court shall enter judgment that such officer so convicted shall be removed from office.

Note: "Any elector of the local government may file an affidavit regarding suspected malfeasance with

the district attorney, who shall investigate the allegations and prosecute the violation if sufficient cause is found. It is the duty of the court rendering any such judgment to cause immediate notice of such removal to be given to the proper officer of the local government so that the vacancy thus caused may be filled."

Rusnak then implied that the full 14.9-mill levy did not need to be certified for the 2018 budget by the Wescott board at this Dec. 5 budget hearing and cited his calculations based on the 2018 approved budget that is now posted on the district's website (after it was approved by the board without public availability as required by Colorado state statute 29). Discussion between Rusnak and the board included:

- Rusnak—"I'm a little puzzled as to this much rollover after everything that was defended for the mill levy was, 'we need every cent to cover all of our expenses,' when in two years, we have saved and still supported the community, \$1 million. I can't figure that one out.... Numbers don't lie."
- Assistant Chief Scott Ridings—"You're shooting a bunch of numbers that are unsubstantiated, so there is no way to say that you are correct" and "... if we did not get the mill levy, remember we cut all overtime in the district, went short-staffed, went to skeleton crews, put firefighters in danger, so, absolutely, this 'we were running on perfectly normal' is absolutely false."
- Burns—"The money is unsustainable, it is a one-time shot and that will not sustain this fire district on its own for more than a few years."

- Chairman Greg Gent—"You can have your opinion, but at the end of the day, the board is going to make this decision. Also, last year we made a lot of sacrifices to make this entire thing happen. We asked guys not to do overtime, we asked guys not to have pay raises.... But you can't do that every single year and expect to retain people, expect that people are going to stay on. We asked them to do that, stick with us, make this happen, and see what the public wanted. The public wants us to be there for them. So, elections don't lie."

Chairman stops constituent from speaking during public comment

After Rusnak's final questions, former Wescott Board Chairman and resident Bill Lowes stood and asked Gent, "Do I need to go over to the microphone or can I talk from here?"

Gent replied, "You do need to go over to the microphone, yes."

Lowes said, "I was curious since you guys did not have to. Anyway"

Gent immediately interrupted Lowes, stating, "Excuse me, excuse me, excuse me. Public comments are over. I'm not going to put up with that! I put up with your lying through the entire election. I'm not going to put up with it. Public comment's over. OK, we need a motion to adjourn." Director Joyce Hartung moved to adjourn, Director Rachel Dunn seconded. All directors present voted in favor of adjournment.

As Lowes attempted to speak again, Gent said over him, "No, I'm not going to put up with it. I'm not going to put up with it. I'm not going to put up with it. You want to come in here, you want to lie through the entire election, you want to sit there and come in here and do this? No! Absolutely not! If you are going to come in here and do a public comment, and sit here in front of the board and do that, absolutely not. OK, we are adjourned at 7:35.... Don't do it. Don't do it. Meeting's over. Meeting's over. No, you can't talk to the chief. Meeting's over.... I'm surprised. You lied through the entire election and then you want to sit here and come in here and get some kind of say."

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Note: To see examples of Lowes' previous public comments and questions, search "Bill Lowes" at www.ocn.me.

Home loss prevented

Gent had reported that in December the barn on his property had burned, but due to the intervention of Wescott firefighters, his home had been saved. He said, "I came outside of our house and I thought for sure that our house was gone. (The barn) was completely engulfed in flames, and I want to thank the firefighters immensely..."

Fitness prioritized

Burns requested a special purchase of two commercial-grade treadmills, one each for Stations 1 and 2. He stated that the request comes as a result of the staff's short-, mid-, and long-range planning. Burns received a discounted price quote of \$7,299 per machine plus a \$150 delivery and installation charge, which includes removal of the current, non-functional treadmills.

Director Harland Baker asked if this purchase meant that Station 2 would be permanently staffed again. Burns responded that, "Yes, we will probably a little later this year. We've still got people to get hired." **Note:** In 2017, Wescott's Shamrock Station 2 on Highway 83 was staffed only intermittently, when volunteers were available, as a cost-saving measure. See www.ocn.me/v17n1.htm#dwfpd, www.ocn.me/v17n2.htm#dwfpd, www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#dwfpd.

The board approved the purchase of the treadmills.

Administrative business and calls reported

Burns provided the monthly financial report in Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich's absence. The district's fund balance for December totaled \$1.54 million, a decrease of \$125,690.

Assistant Chief Scott Ridings compared the call statistics of 2016 and 2017. The information reflects a 25 percent decrease for the whole district: 2,709 calls in 2016 and 2,020 calls in 2017. Ridings commented that a decrease in total runs was expected due to the loss of the southern portion of the district, but within the remaining northern sub-district, a 15 percent increase in service calls is expected over the next two years due to growth within that area.

May 8 election information made available

Four vacant positions are available for the May 8 election: the board chairman and three general director positions. Self-nomination forms may be obtained by contacting Stacey Popovich at spopovich@wescottfire.org or (719) 488-8680. Self-nomination forms may also be printed from the Department of Local Affairs website, <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dola/special-district-election-forms>. The self-nomination form submission deadline is March 2. The deadline to file an Affidavit of Intent to be a Write-in Candidate is

March 5.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

The next DWFPD Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 20, 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.

Jim Kendrick can be reached at jimkendrick@ocn.me. See related DWFPD article on page 6.



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Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, special meeting Jan. 26

2018 mill levies set again; 2018 budget hearing set for Feb. 20

By Lisa Hatfield

On Jan. 26, the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) board held a special meeting. Its posted purpose was “only to discuss the resolution to set mill levies for the district and the northern sub-district. This documentation is due to DOLA [the state Department of Local Affairs] by Jan. 31. No other district business will be discussed.”

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Director Harland Baker and Treasurer Joyce Hartung were excused.

The meeting lasted four minutes, and the agenda consisted of approving two resolutions levying property taxes for the purpose of meeting all general operating expenses for the year 2018 to help defray the costs of government for the DWFPD.

The first resolution was to set the mill levy for the whole district, including both the remaining southern island south of Old Stage Road and the northern sub-district north of Northgate Boulevard. As they had done Dec. 5, this mill levy was set at 7 mills upon each dollar of the total valuation for the assessment of all taxable property within DWFPD. It was adopted unanimously.

The second resolution was to set the additional 14.9 mill levy for the northern sub-district north of Northgate Boulevard, as they had done Dec. 5. It was adopted unanimously.

Director William “Bo” McAllister clarified that this was an additional 14.9 mills for the northern sub-district.

- See related articles for background:
- Nov. 21 meeting, after voters approved that DWFPD assess an additional 14.9 mills on the northern sub-district. www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#dwfpd.
 - Dec. 5 meeting where the board approved the 2018 budget and certified tax levies but did not

hold a public hearing on the budget. See www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#dwfpd

- Jan. 16 regular Wescott board meeting. See article on page 1.

The meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

After the special meeting adjourned, Fire Chief Vinny Burns told Chairman Greg Gent he was then able to announce that at the upcoming regular Feb. 20 board meeting, there would be a public hearing on the 2018 budget, which would be available for public inspection at the office, and residents could register any objections prior to the final ratification of the 2018 budget at that meeting.

Also on Feb. 20 they will do the final ratification and proper adoption of the 2018 budget.

Assistant Chief Scott Ridings said that public hearing information would be correctly and officially posted in the newspaper as well so that there would be proper public input.

The next DWFPD Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 20, 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.

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

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Jan. 24

Three director positions up for election

By Lisa Hatfield

On Jan. 24, the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board witnessed the swearing-in of four new staff members, approved a resolution related to this spring’s election of directors, approved a 15-year fleet replacement policy and schedule, and heard about a possible rebranding effort for TLMFPD, along with other updates from the chiefs.

Director Jason Buckingham was excused.

Four new staff members sworn in
Fire Chief Chris Truty read the oath of office to EMS paramedic Carrie Alarid and firefighters Matt Godson, Taylor Neill, and Hunter Ortuno and welcomed them to the district. Alarid’s two young daughters pinned on her badge this evening, while the three firefighters had already pinned them on at their academy graduation in Denver.

Three positions open for upcoming election
The directors voted unanimously to approve a resolution including these points:

- Three four-year board positions are expiring: those of President Jake Shirk, Treasurer John Hildebrandt, and Secretary Mike Smaldino.
- The regular polling place election on May 8 will be at the district’s offices, 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 103, Monument.
- Fire Chief Chris Truty will be the designated



Above: From left, firefighter Hunter Ortuno, EMS paramedic Carrie Alarid, firefighter Matt Godson, and firefighter Taylor Neill were sworn in Jan. 24 by Fire Chief Chris Truty as the four newest members of Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District. *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*

- election official (DEO).
- The DEO will appoint the election judges, who will be compensated at \$11 per hour.

Truty said that public announcements about board nominations would go out Jan. 29 on social media and the district’s website.

Self-nomination forms are due to the DEO’s office no later than the close of business on Friday, March 2.

Fleet replacement plan approved
Truty presented a fleet replacement schedule policy that identified how the next 15 years of fleet replacement might be planned, vehicle by vehicle. His goal was to show the public exactly how TLMFPD will plan to save and spend the considerable amount of money that these vehicles cost and also allow for the very long lead time it takes to take delivery on a vehicle.

The consensus of the directors was that it was better to have this plan than to buy vehicles in a piecemeal fashion.

However, Secretary Mike Smaldino emphasized that even though it would take a bit more time, it should be staff members on the fleet management committee who select and design specific vehicles, since they will be the ones driving them, instead of having the chiefs decide exactly what to order.

Truty said vehicles in poor shape should be considered for immediate replacement, and those in fair shape should qualify for replacement. Using these guidelines, he listed how TLMFPD’s current fleet stood today:

- Poor – Ambulance 1, 2201 (deputy chief), 2206 (fire marshal), 2207 (training)
- Fair – Engine 1, Engine 2, Engine 3, Brush 2, Brush 3
- Good – (none)

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- Very Good – Truck 1
- Excellent – Ambulance 4, Ambulance 5, Brush 1, 2200 (chief), 2202 (battalion chief)

The policy was approved unanimously, but not before considerable discussion and questions from the directors.

District rebranding under consideration

Truty said, “2017 was banner year. We accomplished an awful lot. Now it’s time to focus on the future. One element is rebranding, specifically relative to our organization’s name. We hear people drop the ‘Monument’ part of our name and just call us ‘Tri-Lakes.’ There is a history with ‘Tri-Lakes,’ and there may be an indication we want to put that behind us and move on.” He said Battalion Chief Kris Mola has been working on rebranding and trying to figure out “if it is just a name change or if there should be more to it.”

Hildebrandt commented it was important to consider “what the area is known as,” geographically. Truty said that one of the questions that had come up was “whether we want to be on a map. ‘Tri-Lakes’ does not come up as a specific pinpoint to say ‘this is where we are at.’ Those are the kinds of things [Mola] is evaluating [regarding] the pros and cons, as well as what else may come as a part of that such as colors of uniforms and those kinds of things.” Director Terri Hayes said it was important to consider the costs associated with this, too.

Truty said in the next couple of months he and Mola will report more progress on this idea.

Financial report

Hildebrandt read the financial report from Truty encompassing all of 2017, saying overall expenses were 100.29 percent of budget. For 2017 revenue, property taxes were \$4.48 million (100 percent of the budgeted amount), Specific Ownership Taxes received were \$604,665 (128.65 percent), and ambulance revenues were \$798,229 (99.78 percent).

Chief’s report

Deputy Chief Randy Trost said that Engine 2 was still waiting for its replace-

ment motor, and as soon as it was back in service, Engine 3 would go in for service. His goal is to spread out the purchases of large vehicles, but with two so close together in “fair” condition, one might have to be extended beyond its projected life span, or else more money had to be saved sooner to buy another vehicle sooner.

Trost said that asbestos abatement was complete at Station 1 and the firefighters had just moved back in. The next long-term project is to decide in what order to remodel the fire stations, “ask the troops how to design the remodel,” find an architect, and figure out temporary housing for the firefighters during remodeling.

Training updates

Battalion Chief Jonathan Bradley explained all the organizing he is doing, mentioning the timeline for five new hires starting the firefighter academy in Denver and the planning he is doing for specialized and refresher courses being offered within the district this quarter, including ice rescues, wild-land firefighting, and active shooter response training. Some training will be coordinated with other fire districts.

Other items discussed and approved

The board voted unanimously to approve a resolution changing its general liability, property, and workers’ compensation insurance to the Colorado Special Districts’ Liability Pool.

The board voted unanimously to approve the sale of two old ambulances and one old tender to the Ellicott FPD for \$5,000. Then they voted unanimously to approve the donation of old Brush Truck 1 to the Fire Rehab Group of the Pikes Peak Firefighters Association. Vice President Roger Lance was recused from that vote since he is an active volunteer with Fire Rehab.

Call volume summary for the year was included in meeting agenda packet but not discussed by the directors. Truty noted that for 2016 the district had 2,508 total calls, and in 2017 it had 2,482 total calls.

Public comments

President Shirk switched to his Monu-

ment Police Chief “hat” to thank TLMFPD for its help on the December Santa on Patrol event, which included “hundreds of kids and thousands of toys. It went very well!” See www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#photos.

Lt. Franz Hankins, president of Local 4319 of the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) union, spoke on behalf of all the employees of TLMFPD and thanked the board for the 2018 budget and the 25 percent wage increase it included.

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Feb. 28 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information, contact Jen-

nifer Martin at 484-0911. For upcoming agendas, see <http://tlmfire.org/board>.

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

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D38 (Cont. from page 1)

downturn. At that time, it was thought that the downturn would be short-lived. Over time, it appeared less likely that the building would again be used as an elementary school. All Grace Best Elementary students were moved to Bear Creek.

Taylor praised the district’s use of its resources during that challenging time but reminded the board that a great deal of development is underway.

Taylor said that Grace Best operated as an elementary school despite the fact that the bus barn was nearby, and the gasoline tanks and traffic were inconvenient. These are the primary arguments against returning it to use as an elementary. He said the building has become a money pit, with little maintenance and few decisions made.

Board President Matthew Clawson said it seems that elementary schools are a primary problem to solve in terms of planning. He said that the district should use the district-owned site next to Bear Creek to build a new elementary school in the area where the greatest growth is taking place.

Clawson said that, after seeing the interior of Grace Best, he would not want his children attending there. Perhaps there is a use for Grace Best in the district, but bringing it up to code would be very expensive, he said.

Board Secretary Sarah Sampayo said that most attendees at the pub-

lic deliberation session voted to tear down the old part of Grace Best.

Sampayo also commented that the district has an obligation to maintain its buildings, and Grace Best has always been the last priority for maintenance. Children are in the building for the Home School Enrichment Academy and the Transitions program, she said.

Sampayo said that apparently the district does not want to sell the building because of its central location, but traffic patterns make it less than ideal as an elementary school. She suggested that the district stress this consideration at the upcoming public deliberation session in February. She agreed with Taylor that getting a bid for alternative uses of the building would be wise.

Brofft said that it isn’t customary to ask for bids unless you are sure of funding for action.

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman agreed with Pfoff that the likelihood of reusing the building as an elementary is slight. Consequently, assets of the building such as whiteboards and lockers have been removed and utilized elsewhere in the district. The building was essentially mothballed to save on utility costs.

Pfoff said that not deciding on action is a decision in itself. He was concerned about not being proactive in this time of growth and said that the

board seems to agree on making Bear Creek back into a middle school and building an elementary on that site. If a decision can be made soon, the district can begin work on a bond issue for that

exclusive purpose.

Board Vice President Tiffney Upchurch agreed that a middle school and elementary school in the Jackson Creek neighborhood are needed. She

also shared concern about children in Grace Best in its current condition.

Pfaff said that a decision must be made in February. He suggested the possibility of a magnet school. The district would not have to provide busing, and the school could use an existing building. Failing to act soon would result in the use of modular classrooms, which are not secure.

Wangeman agreed that modulars are a bad idea and the district needs to accept that new subdivisions keep coming. The information being used by the Long Term Planning Committee is already outdated to an extent. As subdivisions come there are additional options for school locations.

Brofft agreed and said that Grace Best is not central to the area of greatest growth in the district. Parents of students from Grace Best were happy to have an elementary closer to their homes.

Pfaff suggested removing the option of Grace Best as an elementary from consideration.

Taylor agreed with Pfaff on the location of an elementary school near Bear Creek, as one was included there

in the plan for the site. He suggested consulting with the architect of Bear Creek on how to proceed.

Taylor proposed that the board get an independent architect to give a second opinion of costs of various uses of Grace Best. Sampayo supported Taylor in finding the architect for the second opinion.

The board agreed to revisit the discussion in February.

Monument Academy operations report

Monument Academy Executive Director Don Griffin reported on the status of the school, saying that the current enrollment is 913.82 full-time equivalent students, with 353 in the middle school.

After studying the students receiving exceptional student services, it was decided that several no longer required services.

The school's audit was clean, and all requirements for transparency were met.

In February, to celebrate Heart Month, all middle schoolers will become CPR certified.

When asked about waiting lists for enrollment, Griffin said that at the beginning of the year there is usually no waiting list, but later there is often a list of 20 to 28 students per grade. The school administers a placement test for all incoming students. The school retains 82 to 85 percent of its enrollment from one year to the next.

Taylor asked whether Griffin might be able to provide a second elementary school. Griffin responded that the school is currently focusing on its new high school.

Gifted education and English Language Learner reports

Executive Director of Learning Services Lori Benton reported on the district's gifted education services, saying that all students are evaluated by third grade to find whether they qualify for services, although some are evaluated at a much earlier age. There are large numbers of gifted students at the middle school and high school levels. She attributed this to the well-educated and supportive parents in the district.

Although the state does not provide a per pupil amount of funding, the state will provide \$98,528 while the district provides \$619,397 for the 2017-18 school year.

Director of Exceptional Student Services Rick Frampton reported that English Language Learners now comprise 3.9 percent of the student population. The district has received two state awards for promising programs and the Colorado Excellence award.

A new development in the English Language Learner program is an increase in unaccompanied minors entering the district, largely from South America and Africa.

The program offers a summer school program, parent advisory meetings, a homework club, and an adult literacy program. Trauma-involved instruction is also offered.

Policy discussion

Director of Personnel and Student Services Bob Foster moderated a discussion of four policies. The first, approved by the board, required that parents of students involved in incidents of violence, whether as a perpetrator or a victim, would be notified in a reasonable amount of time.

The second, policy JECC, involved assignment of students to schools and the procedure for requesting reassignment. This was the first reading of the policy and no action was taken.

Policy EGA, addressing the use of electronic signatures, was read for the first time and no action was taken.

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Policy GCBDA, addressing the superintendent meeting and conferring with representatives of the Lewis Palmer Education Association as the primary representatives of licensed staff, was discussed. Subjects discussed are limited to salaries, benefits, and grievance procedures. Sampayo observed that there are other professional organizations represented in the district.

Pfaff recommended eliminating the policy because it limits the actions of the superintendent.

No action was taken on the policies.

Community recognition

Brofft recognized Farmers Insurance agent Frances McLaurin for awarding \$100 per month to a school to be used at its discretion. Brofft said that such donations are especially welcome because many teachers spend their own money on supplies.

Superintendent update

Brofft read a proclamation from Gov. John Hickenlooper naming January as Board of Education Appreciation

month.

She said that there has been much conversation about the long-term planning process and emphasized that the administration is trying to show the community the range of options being considered. The final decision on action to be taken is up to the board.

Brofft stressed that the longer the district waits to act on needs, the higher the price of construction.

The board went into executive session at 10:15 to confer with legal counsel on the contract with Monument Academy, to discuss legal questions that might be involved with negotiation, and to discuss documents protected by attorney/client privilege.

The Lewis-Palmer District 38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month in the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be on Feb. 15.

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

D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee, Jan. 16

Committee hears reports on safety and the SEAC

By Harriet Halbig

The D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) received reports from the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) and the chief of Safety and Security, and added a meeting date at its Jan. 16 meeting.

Co-chair Anne-Marie Hasstedt said that due to the workload this year and the desire to limit meetings to 1 1/2 hours, a March meeting at Bear Creek Elementary School is being added to the schedule. The committee approved the revised calendar.

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Lewis-Palmer School District Staff Spotlight: Glenda Hawkinson

Glenda Hawkinson has served as the librarian at Palmer Ridge High School for ten years. Prior to the opening of Palmer Ridge in 2008, she was part of the school's core planning team and filled the librarian role at Lewis-Palmer Middle School. Mrs. Hawkinson plans to retire this year.

Glenda is from a small town in northwest North Dakota. After earning her undergraduate degree in music education, she attended graduate school at the University of Minnesota at Mankato where she received her Educational Media Specialist degree and her master's in music education. Prior to making the library her home during work hours, she taught music in North Dakota, Minnesota, Calhan, and Woodland Park. She especially enjoyed teaching music to Native American high school students in North Dakota. She provided many of these students with their

first musical experience and loved their desire to learn and to play for an audience.

Glenda has enjoyed watching PRHS grow and seeing the plans of the core planning team come to fruition. She is responsible for teaching information literacy, providing technology support and training, preparing and coordinating the necessary technology for state exams, and managing digital and print textbooks. When she finishes her tenure at PRHS, she plans on traveling, visiting family in Norway and perhaps a jog down to Italy where she will lay on the beach and read one of her favorites, "A Northern Light." Glenda plans on returning to the jazz trumpet and the piano and has even considered teaching adults. Her five grandkids will also keep her busy, and fortunately, they all live in Colorado Springs.



LPSD Upcoming Events

February 1: Pre-K and Kindergarten Registration

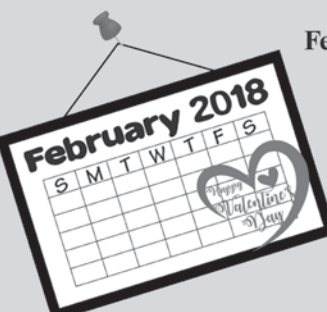
February 5: D38 Deliberates-Future Schools Options, 6 p.m.

February 7: 2-Hour Delayed Start/PLC Day

February 9: Pre-K through 6th Grade – No Classes


February 15: Board of Education Meeting, 6 p.m.

February 19: District Closed, Presidents' Day



D38 Deliberates: A Community Engagement Opportunity

The public is invited to a community engagement opportunity on Monday, February 5, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. in the District Administration Building. A very important topic of interest to the D38 and Tri-Lakes communities will be addressed: future school facilities options for D38 in response to growth in the Tri-Lakes area. A trained facilitator will lead small group discussions. Please join us and let your voice be heard. Please RSVP: dsimington@lewispalmer.org



SEAC activities, goals

Director of Exceptional Student Services Rick Frampton reported on the activities and goals of SEAC. The committee meets once a month and is charged with offering networking opportunities for parents of students receiving services from the district. District staff members and a Board of Education liaison also attend the meetings. The committee reports to the DAAC once a year on its activities. Frampton also said a new program will honor individuals who help students with disabilities. The goal is to develop a reward program for these individuals.

This year, SEAC will focus on offering a way for parents to provide feedback to the district regarding current practices, and on advocating on behalf of students currently receiving such services. A detailed parent questionnaire received 80 responses. A

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great majority of responses indicated that parents are pleased with the process of creating Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and their students are receiving good support. Frampton encouraged parents who expressed dissatisfaction to identify themselves so a dialogue could begin.

In keeping with this year's district theme of "through their eyes and in their shoes," the committee is encouraging all students in the district to imagine themselves as students with disabilities and how their school day and year would be experienced.

Exceptional Student Services Parent Liaison Michelle Nay explained the concept of family-student-community partnering. Advocated by the Colorado Department of Education, this program is defined as "the collaboration of families, schools, and communities as active partners in improving learner, classroom, school, district, and state outcomes."

Under this program, parents are equal partners with schools in achieving success for students. To achieve this, schools must offer a welcoming climate, and information must be shared in both directions between parents and schools. Parents must understand the education process and be empowered to support their students.

Safety and Security activities

Chief of Safety and Security Dennis Coates said district activities include the reprogramming of all radios and retraining of staff in their use, repositioning of the bus loop at Lewis-Palmer High School, and closure of one entrance to Palmer Ridge High School to ensure that each door has a monitor.

Ongoing activities include attention to emergency operation procedures such as lockdown and evacuation, reunification processes in the event of an evacuation, threat and risk assessments, use of the Safe2Tell program to express concerns, studies of traffic and parking issues in light of present and future development near schools, and professional development to keep all staff up to date on procedures. He hopes to hold drills that are not scheduled ahead of time to provide a more realistic experience for staff and students.

Coates briefly explained the Clair Davis Act, a recently passed law stating that the district has a responsibility to prevent any foreseeable act of violence. To achieve this, staff training for all individuals is offered. An additional precaution is to require an ID from anyone attempting to enter a school.

Coates reported that the district now has a second school resource officer (SRO), making it possible to have one at each high school. Because SROs are employees of the Sheriff's Office, they must sometimes be called away from the schools in the case of an emergency or to appear in court. With two of them in the district, better coverage is possible.

Plans include replacement of cameras beginning at the high schools and encouraging parents to update their contact information. The department is working on developing a procedure for notifying parents in the event of an emergency.

Coates said that he is willing at any time to speak to groups of parents about the district's security procedures.

Board liaison comments

Board of Education liaison Tiffiney Upchurch invited committee members to attend a board work session addressing the long-term planning process and a meeting on Feb. 5 using the deliberative process to discuss planning.

Upchurch said that curricula for Financial Literacy and a Socratic Seminar are available for review and public comment from Jan. 29 to Feb. 9.

Upchurch also reported on legislative activity including a review of the Gallagher Amendment, which determines taxation rates for residential and commercial property and funding for the Public Employee Retirement Administration (PERA).

The District Accountability Advisory Committee meets six times a year on the third Tuesday of the month from 7 to 8:30. Locations vary. The next meeting will be on Feb. 13 at Prairie Winds Elementary, 790 Kings Deer Pt., Monument.

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

Monument Academy School Board, Jan. 17

Board discusses marketing, revises open records policy

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board met on Jan. 17 to discuss its marketing strategy, revise its open records policy, and review the school year to date. Board members Julie Galusky and Matt Dunston were absent.

Marketing

As part of National School Choice Week, MA held a signature event regarding the "kindergarten round-up" program. Executive Director Don Griffin noted that MA is also doing a full-fledged marketing program that includes a blog by Principal Elizabeth Davis, a new Facebook page for kindergarten, and a promotional video. He said many parents will decide where their kids will go in August but are shopping in the first quarter of the year. The video was shown to the board and teachers' representatives in attendance and emphasized MA's Character First program, core knowledge curriculum, and parent involvement. The video is part of MA's effort to increase enrollment in its kindergarten for the 2018-19 school year.

Open records policy

The board discussed and unanimously approved modifications to Open Records Policy 1512. The changes, which were recommended by the Governance Committee, included the following:

- Title change from "Public's Right to Know/Freedom of Information Policy" to "Open Records Requests Policy" to better align with the purpose of the policy.
- Clarification that all requests are to be in writing.
- Clarification concerning the cost to recover or produce requested records.
- Clarification that requested records may be reviewed by the school's legal counsel prior to being released.

- Clarification that any fees to be charged for the recovery or production of requested records must be paid prior to the generation of those records.

The updated policy can be seen at <http://bit.ly/ma-policy1512>.

Other highlights

- Davis reported that December was filled with concerts and performances, which included a performance from the jazz band on the sidewalk for the parents doing pickup in the car line.
- Davis noted that the Curriculum Committee is in full swing and has done hundreds of hours of work outside of formal meetings. It is working on extracurricular offerings such as digital photography and the history of music as well as a unified approach to the skill of note taking starting in fourth grade.
- Griffin said he was honored to be appointed to the Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) board. BOCES authorizes charter schools and online schools and includes former state Board of Education members who are familiar with school choice.
- Griffin reported that planning is under way for the second annual Grandparents Day on Friday, March 16.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, Feb. 8 at the Monument Academy library at 1150 Village Ridge Point. The MA School Board usually meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Information on the MA School Board, including schedule, minutes, committee and finances can be found at <http://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board>.

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

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Monument Board of Trustees, Jan. 2

Trustees will participate in 2019 budget-related committees

By Lisa Hatfield

The Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) discussed committees on both overall town staff compensation and the 2019 budget and a new Public Works facility, and they approved a set amount for a water in-lieu-of fee on Jan. 2.

Also, Town Manager Chris Lowe's written report included information about several land use items and projects that will be coming before the town soon, an armed robbery that occurred in Monument, and a high-altitude and water-wise gardening class offered to the public this spring.

Trustee Greg Coopman was absent.

Budget, compensation and Public Works facilities committees

Town Manager Chris Lowe said he wanted to continue the momentum to have trustees participate much sooner in the budget-drafting process than they have so far, so that if they had significant recommendations to what professional town staff drafted, those changes could be considered calmly and with plenty of time. "We don't need to have what happened this year ever happen again! ... Staff would love to have input from the board earlier in the budget process so we don't have surprises at the end of the year."

Note: Lowe was referring to the surprise police salary increase demanded by the trustees in late November, when the 2018 budget was nearly finalized and ready for board approval. See www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#mbot.

Lowe also suggested that since compensation is a subset of the budget, it was not necessary to have trustees on two separate compensation and budget committees but to combine those into one committee. "But if the board wants another group, we are open to that," he said.

By having two trustees volunteer with the Budget and Compensation Committee, they could be involved before the budget needs to be approved next winter. The two trustees also would be a conduit of information to the rest of the board, Lowe said.

Mayor Jeff Kaiser and Trustee Kelly Elliott both volunteered to be on the Budget and Compensation Committee, which should start meeting in March and will include a review of other town salaries besides the police officers'.

Mayor Pro-Tem Don Wilson asked if there would also be a Facilities Committee that would discuss the needs of the Public Works Department, which has been asking for an upgrade to the size and safety of its building. Lowe agreed and said two trustees would need to volunteer for the Facilities Committee soon. See www.ocn.me/v17n6.htm#mbot0515.

Multiple comments on Public Works situation

Public Works staff member Monty Kuntz berated the trustees during public comments for the second time in two months. He said giving the police officers a large pay raise was discrimination against other departments that do equally dangerous jobs, such as digging deep repair holes containing gas mains, electric lines, and feces, or going up on the roof of the Town Hall on a 22-foot vertical ladder. He said he was troubled that there was not already a consistent pay practice among departments. Despite all the special certifications he holds, for example, "We are at poverty level," and he said that the cost of living in Monument was as high as in Denver. He said the trustees ignored input from their experienced and educated town manager and Public Works manager.

Later, during trustees' comments, Trustee Dennis Murphy confronted Lowe about Kuntz' accusations. "If we trustees make decisions based upon recommendations endorsed by the town manager, that is not discriminatory! That is in fact what we are supposed to be doing.... Do you, or don't you, have a process to tell your people, your directors, how to share their concerns with you? Is there no dialogue?" Lowe responded with frustration and sarcasm, saying, "I never talk to 'em!" Murphy retorted, "Thank you for that great response."

In-lieu-of fee for water rights set

Public Works Director Tom Tharnish presented a resolution approving a set in-lieu of water rights fee at \$10,000 per acre-foot. The town code already states that the town may accept a fee from developers in the event the water rights associated with the proposed development are insufficient. But the current resolution sets the exact cost per acre-foot instead of staff needing to ask the board to establish the fee each time

the issue arises.

Tharnish said this fee would set a specific baseline for those developments that are close to meeting water requirements. However, if a proposed development is significantly short on its water supply, "then we would re-evaluate the whole thing," he said. Lowe agreed that each development would definitely be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. When a piece of land is annexed into the town, it is required to turn over all its water rights to the town, Tharnish said.

The resolution was approved unanimously.

Town manager's report

The trustees did not discuss Lowe's written report that was included in the regular board packet.

Lowe's report mentioned that Nov. 14 was the Downtown Stakeholders Summit facilitated by Downtown Colorado Inc. It identified focus areas for businesses, nonprofits, arts and culture, education, and private developers. Topics included:

- "Placemaking" to shape visitor experiences
- Funding
- Engaging locals.

Regular monthly meetings will move these initiatives forward, he said.

Planning Department update

Principal Planner Larry Manning's report mentioned:

- The Conexus office warehouse project on Old Denver Road and a small residential replat on Beacon Lite Road near Town Hall were tentatively scheduled for the special meeting of the Monument Planning Commission (MPC) on Jan. 24. **Note:** See related article on page 14. For a summary of the Dec. 5 Conexus community forum hosted by the Tri-Lakes Chamber and Economic Development Corp., see www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#photos.
- Phase 2 of Sanctuary Pointe residential development is tentatively scheduled for the Feb. 14 MPC meeting. See related article on a related Classic Homes community meeting on page 12.
- The department has several ongoing conversations underway about residential and commercial projects of a variety of sizes that are expected to be restarted or come in as new projects in the next month or two.
- The market remains strong for both residential and commercial growth.
- The department is also working on long-range transportation improvements including Old Denver Road, Mitchell extension to the south, Jackson Creek Parkway widening, and the connection of Gleneagle Drive to the north and east (to Home Place Ranch and Sanctuary Pointe).
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) upgrades are an ongoing project.
- Requests for engineering inspections have continued as the weather has remained warm.

Police Department update

Police Chief Jake Shirk's written report included:

- We had an armed robbery at Domino's Pizza. Detective [Amanda] Molnar is working with the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) to file our case on the two armed suspects that CSPD arrested.
- Our officers have now been trained and are carrying Narcan. We received the Narcan free of charge from Aspen Point, and it is used for emergency treatment of a known or suspected opioid overdose.
- I have been meeting with Innova Recovery Services, an out-patient drug and alcohol counseling service, to discuss assisting us with individuals who may seek help with addiction issues.
- Discussing municipal court-ordered counseling for minors in possession. I will coordinate with our town attorney to see if there is an interest in this.
- I contacted the District Attorney's (DA) Office to discuss the Police Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI). Our DA liaison advised that he will confer with the District Attorney, Dan May. I advised them that the concept, while potentially good, is much bigger and would require more resources than what Monument by itself can accomplish.
- Shop with a Cop happened Dec. 22. About 20 kids who had been nominated as children in need met with our officers, who took them shopping at Monument Walmart.
- Santa on Patrol went out on its annual Christ-

mas run on Dec. 23. Lots of toys and lots of kids. For photo, see www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#photos.

Public Works update

Tharnish's report included:

- A new gardening series is being taught January through April. Town Gardener Cassie Olgren is



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teaching this Garden and Landscaping series, discussing high altitude gardening, landscape design principles, water-wise gardening, and gardening with kids. The class sessions are free to the public, and they filled up quickly. Only one class, Gardening with Kids, has some space left. Parents wanting to register for this class can email the Town Gardener at Colgren@tomgov.org. Due to the popularity of this series, the Town of Monument is considering hosting more classes in the fall.

- New wayfinding signage is being installed in historic downtown.
- This was the first year Public Works decorated the water office and the Lewis-Palmer District Administration "Big Red" building. We also added more lights to the town parks and Second Street west of Highway 105.
- Installed more crosswalks in historic downtown.
- Picking up trash, mowing and trimming right-of-way on Highway 105 near Safeway, across the bridge to Dirty Woman Creek. This right-of-way belongs to El Paso County and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), but town staff is performing this task based on the number of complaints that were received.

Front and Second Streets project overview

Engineering Assistant Tom Martinez summarized the storm sewer and road improvements project completed at the intersection of Front Street and Second Street in August through October. He said town staff encountered some unexpected challenges and did great problem-solving, and the project was completed within budget and very close to its scheduled timeline.

Water Department update

Tharnish's report included:

- Met with engineers for CDOT regarding the upcoming I-25 Gap (Monument to Castle Rock widening) project and some potential effects on town stormwater flows.
- Attended "Communicating with Ratepayers" meeting at the Denver Chamber of Commerce.
- Had a regionalization meeting with Woodmoor Water and Sanitation, Donala Water and Sanitation, and Triview Metropolitan District to discuss water issues we are all facing.

Consent agenda items

The consent agenda was approved unanimously, including the following components:

- Checks over \$5,000:
- Triview Metropolitan District, sales tax October 2017, motor vehicle tax November 2017, regional building use tax November 2017 – \$169,329
- Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, January 2017, April 2017, October 2017 – \$15,000
- Stonebrook Roofing Inc., re-roof old Town Hall (current Chamber of Commerce) – \$43,600
- Resolution designating official posting places for public meetings of the Town of Monument for 2018. The town clerk was instructed to post all meeting notices:
- On the bulletin board at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite

Road

- On bulletin board inside Monument Post office, 545 Third St.
- Town of Monument website, www.townofmonument.org
- Resolution awarding a contract to Velocity Constructors Inc. for the well 4/5 water treatment plant upgrade project, using \$924,436 from the Water Enterprise Fund. This will include improvements to these two wells, which contain heavier concentrations of iron and manganese that block the current filters. Tharnish's report said the new design has been approved by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), and it will allow those wells to pump 24 hours a day instead of the current four hours a day.

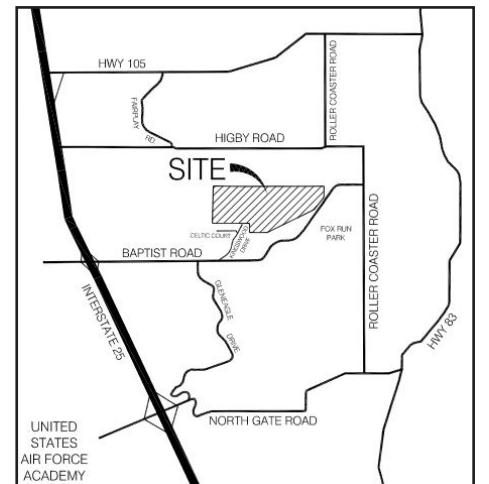
The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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

Classic Homes proposes new road plan for Sanctuary Pointe



Above: Andrea Barlow of NES Inc., left, and Joe Loidolt, president of Classic Homes, explained their new proposal concerning Sanctuary Pointe Phase 2 at a neighborhood meeting on Jan. 4. Photo by Lisa Hatfield. Map at right from 2006 courtesy of Town of Monument.



By Lisa Hatfield

On Jan. 4, about 30 residents from neighborhoods surrounding Sanctuary Pointe gathered at the Woodmoor Barn as Andrea Barlow of NES Inc. and Classic Homes President Joe Loidolt explained their new proposal concerning Sanctuary Pointe Phase 2, which will eventually become the center portion of Sanctuary Pointe, north of Baptist Road and the Kingswood neighborhood.

Classic Homes wishes to begin building homes in Phase 2 but first needs land use approval from the Town of Monument. The sketch plan ordinance approved in November 2006 by the Monument Board of Trustees specified that two lanes of the east-west collector road, Sanctuary Rim Drive, must be completed before Phase 2 of the project could be started. The 2006 plan called for the west end of Sanctuary Rim Drive to connect with a yet-unbuilt section of Gleneagle Drive in the Home Place Ranch development, west of Sanctuary Pointe and north of Promontory Pointe. See www.ocn.me/v6n12.htm#bot1120.

However, since Home Place Ranch has still not yet been developed, Classic Homes now proposes to the town that instead of building Sanctuary Rim Drive all the way to the west in a road

that goes "nowhere," Classic would build just the middle third of it for now and connect it south to Kingswood Drive near where it currently terminates in an emergency-only access gate at its north end.

The new proposal would create a second egress from Sanctuary Pointe using Kingswood Road until Sanctuary Rim Drive could be completed to the west to meet Gleneagle Drive in Home Place Ranch.

Neighbors were livid at the new proposal, saying Kingswood Drive was a poorly-maintained county road that is not wide enough for any more traffic. Barlow said it was always intended to be a main point of access into the site, but the gathered neighbors disagreed, quoting the 2006 town ordinance.

Classic's proposal is scheduled to come before the regular Monument Planning Commission meeting on Feb. 14 and after that at the Monument Board of Trustees.

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



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Monument Board of Trustees, Jan. 16

Mayor and trustee election slate is finalized

By Lisa Hatfield
The Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) conducted a very brief meeting on Jan. 16 that included thanks for the recent Planning 101 class and approval of several administrative items.

Also, by Jan. 22, the list of people running for mayor and trustee positions had been announced.

April 3 Monument election slate

Nomination petitions for the BOT election were due Jan. 22.

Two people are running for mayor. They are:

- Trustee Jeff Bornstein
- Mayor Pro-Tem Don Wilson

Five people are running for three open trustee positions. They are:

- Laurie Clark
- Trustee Kelly Elliott
- Jeff Lampman
- Trustee Shea Medlicott
- Ron Stephens

Town Clerk Laura Hogan explained that all elections in Colorado are conducted by mail ballot.

- Ballots returned by mail must be received by 7 p.m. on April 3.
- Ballots can also be dropped off in person at Monument Town Hall by 7 p.m. on April 3.
- The board room at Monument Town Hall will serve as a polling place from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Election Day for voters who choose to vote "in person."

To see if you live within the boundaries of the Town of Monument and can vote in this election, see map at <https://arcg.is/0TTjib>. Note: Some people with 80132 mailing addresses actually reside in unincorporated El Paso County but not within the town limits.

April 2 BOT meeting canceled due to April 3 election

Hogan suggested to the trustees that the regular April 2 meeting be canceled to allow more time for election judges to fulfill an additional, time-consuming requirement related to the election and reduce the number of hours that the election judges must remain at the polling location on the day of the election.

The cancellation of the regularly scheduled April 2 board meeting the evening before the election would allow for the uninterrupted and secured use of the board room for the election judges as described, Hogan explained. The trustees all agreed to this suggestion.

Planning 101 class

During trustee comments, Wilson thanked Principal Planner Larry Manning, Planner Jennifer Jones, and Town Attorney Alicia Corley for the Jan. 8 Planning 101 class. "There was a lot of good information in there," he said. See related

photo on page 16.


Trustee Greg Coopman

then thanked the town for posting the class online for

those who could not attend in person.


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- Unique Curriculum.....** PreK-8th grades use a sequenced curriculum and incorporate Character First instruction. Board opposition to Common Core State Standards.
- Small Class Sizes.....** MA's Kindergarten has 16-18 students per class, 1st-8th grade class size normally average 24 students or less per grade while our preschool maintains an 8:1 student to teacher ratio.
- Quality Faculty.....** Our staff are highly qualified, loving, and held accountable. MA's teachers are the very best there are.
- Award Winning Programs...** 5th-8th grade Bands, Choirs, and Orchestra, Drama, National Junior Honor Society, Forensics, Science Club, Math Club, Chess Club, Competitive Sports - over 30 more.
- Uniforms.....** MA emphasizes the importance of others, character, and instruction through our uniform policy.
- Balanced Learning.....** Every student takes Art, Music, PE, & Technology.
- Exceptional Student Services.....** Quality Special Education which serve IEP, 504, and ELL students. Gifted Education. Full-time licensed nurse. Grade-level and Special Education Paraprofessionals.



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the basic land use planning process used inside the Monument town limits, see <https://gaming.youtube.com/watch?v=qoUJcOUgP7c>.

Administrative items

Public Works Director Tom Tharnish presented an ordinance repealing and replacing Chapter 12.20 of the Monument Municipal Code – Street Trees and Shrubs. The trustees approved the ordinance unanimously.

Corley presented an ordinance amending Chapter 2.50 of the Monument Municipal Code regarding advisory committees and removal of reference to the Public Works Committee in Section 13.04.030. The rationale was that the two committees should be created by resolution instead of by ordinance. Corley will next draft resolutions to create the committees' budget and compensation, and on Public Works facilities. Due to the upcoming trustee election in April, it would be best to wait until after the new trustees and mayor are elected before creating the new committees, Corley's memo said. No members of the public spoke either for or against the item, and the ordinance was approved unanimously.

Area roads information from CDOT

During trustee comments, Mayor Jeff Kaiser's remarks on roads in the Tri-Lakes area included:

- It is pretty certain that the new third lane on I-25 between Monument and Castle Rock will be a toll lane. Some citizens felt they were not fully informed on this when they cast their votes for El Paso County Ballot Measures 1A and 5B this fall.
- The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will start work on the Douglas Avenue project to make it less steep and treacherous. See www.ocn.me/v15n12.htm#pltc1112.
- The Powers Boulevard extension is estimated to cost CDOT \$600 million, but only \$500 million has been allocated so far. CDOT is working on finding the remainder.
- An annual \$1 billion shortfall exists for CDOT projects, so it must prioritize projects each year.
- The U.S. Air Force Academy chapel, the top tourist attraction in Colorado, will be closed for three

to four years of renovations.
Consent agenda items approved
The consent agenda, which the trustees approved unanimously, included:

- Checks over \$5,000
- Triview Metropolitan District, sales tax, motor vehicle tax, regional building use tax – \$182,711
- Green Electric Inc., generator for Town Hall, second progress billing – \$11,896
- Green Electric Inc., generator, third progress billing – \$6,343
- CIRSA Insurance, first-quarter workers' compensation – \$24,985
- CIRSA Insurance, second-quarter liability – \$29,951
- Approval of a memorandum of understanding between the state Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG), and the town, for up to \$5,000 from PPACG to assist in downtown planning with Downtown Colorado Inc. This initiative will help with branding, signage, property assessment, placemaking/art, walkability and redevelopment as areas of focus for downtown revitalization.

At 6:43 p.m., the meeting went into

executive session for negotiations (regarding Village Center Metropolitan District) and to discuss the purchase, acquisition, lease, or sale or lease or transfer of real personal or other property interests. Hogan said no votes were taken nor announcements made after the meeting returned to open session.

The Monument Board of Trustees usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The next meeting is scheduled for Feb. 5. Note: the April 2 meeting has been canceled due to the April 3 election. 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.

To see if you live within the boundaries of the Town of Monument, see <http://arccg.is/0TTjib>.

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

Monument Planning Commission, Jan. 24

Conexus Industrial Development zone change recommended

By Kate Pangelinan

Three matters were discussed at the Jan. 24 Monument Planning Commission meeting: a proposed zone change and final plat for Eagleview Patio Homes, a sketch plan amendment for the Monument Ridge planned development, and

a zone change and preliminary PD site plan for the Conexus Industrial Development.

Melanie Strop was the only commissioner absent. Over 30 participants were present for at least some of the nearly four-hour meeting.

The zone change and final plat for Eagleview Patio Homes were approved by the Planning Commission, along with the zone change and preliminary PD site plan for the Conexus Industrial Development. Both proposals were approved unanimously and will now be recommended to the Board of Trustees. The sketch plan amendment for the Monument Ridge planned development will not be recommended, having lost the Planning Commission

vote 3-3. Commissioners David Gwisdalla, Michelle Glover, and Kenneth Kimple voted against.

Conexus Industrial Development recommended

The Conexus Industrial Development discussion was the most involved of the evening, lasting over two hours. It dealt with the fate of a 23.34-acre lot adjacent to I-25, across the highway from Walmart. The Wagons West housing development discussed at the Novem-

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MVEA BOARD NOMINATIONS

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During the Annual Meeting on June 7, 2018, at Calhan High School in Calhan, three directors will be elected to the Mountain View Electric Association, Inc. (MVEA), Board of Directors from the following districts:

District 1: Limon, Karval, Genoa and surrounding areas (*incumbent Joseph D. Martin*)

District 4: Calhan, Peyton, a portion of Black Forest and surrounding areas (*incumbent Milton L. Mathis*)

District 6: Falcon, Cimarron Hills, a portion of Black Forest and surrounding areas (*incumbent Barry R. Springer*)

The "Procedure for Director Elections and Member Voting" is available on MVEA's website at www.mvea.coop/annual-meeting.

Are you interested in being an MVEA Board of Directors candidate? A candidate must be an MVEA member and reside in the district where there is a vacancy. For additional candidate requirements, visit MVEA's Annual Meeting webpage at www.mvea.coop/annual-meeting. Click on "By-laws" and go to Article III, Section 2. Before applying, please contact either MVEA office at (719) 775-2861 or (719) 495-2283 to verify your district. A member may seek election by nomination by the nominating committee or by nomination by petition. To be nominated by the nominating committee, please contact a member of the committee or contact the MVEA Board Nomination Information Line as shown below. To be nominated by petition, you must have the petition signed by 15 members of MVEA. Petitions and procedures are available at the Limon Headquarters, 1655 5th St., Limon, or at the Falcon Operations Center, 11140 E. Woodmen Rd., Falcon, or online at the Annual Meeting webpage listed above. The petition, along with a completed candidate questionnaire must be returned to either MVEA office by 5:30 p.m., Monday, April 23, 2018. A candidate questionnaire must be completed for either nomination by the committee or nomination by petition. The questionnaire can be found on MVEA's website or you can pick one up at either office. If seeking election by nomination through the nominating committee, a candidate questionnaire must be received by the committee or submitted to candidate@mvea.org by 5:30 p.m., Thursday, March 29, 2018. If seeking election by nomination through petition, a candidate questionnaire and a petition must be submitted no later than 5:30 p.m., Monday, April 23, 2018. If you have questions, please contact a member of the nominating committee or contact the MVEA Board Nomination Information Line.

Nominating Committee

District 1: Steve Burgess • PO Box 383 • Limon, CO 80828 • (719) 760-0681

District 4: Byrel Woolsey • 824 Golden Street • Calhan, CO 80808 • (719) 347-2750

District 6: Dick Ayer • 12558 Meridian Road • Elbert, CO 80106 • (719) 495-4930

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ber 2017 Planning Commission meeting would be on the opposite side of Old Denver Road.

To begin the discussion, Planner Jennifer Jones explained a series of misconceptions and rumors to the assembled citizenry. She noted that, contrary to what might have been understood:

- Plans for the property have not been completely decided.
- The property has been zoned for industrial development (PID) since its annexation in 1987.
- The phrase “Business Park/Light Industrial” does not refer to factories or junk yards.

Jones said the goal of this rezoning is to turn the property from a Planned Industrial Development zone to a Planned Development (PD) zone. This would allow the applicant—Schuck Communities Inc., represented at this meeting by Andrea Barlow of NES—to customize the development. A PD zoning allows for the developer to submit a list of establishment category choices, tailoring a more precise vision of the project.

Barlow provided the applicant’s list of permitted uses for this development, reducing the number of uses greatly as compared to the current list under PID zoning. The list featured:

- Eating establishments, with no drive-through restaurants
- Industrial supply
- Recreational uses
- Kennels (as an accessory to a different establishment)
- Kiosk/mobile (food trucks were provided as a potential example)
- Light industrial and manufacturing, with a 50,000-foot limit, outside storage, and all noise and emissions confined to a building
- Personal/social services (which would mean something akin to a gym or spa)
- Offices
- Retail or commercial facilities, with a 2,000-square-foot maximum for a single use
- Research facilities
- Warehouses and wholesale
- Conditional utility lines

Barlow noted that the current PID zoning list of uses includes options like bottling and food processing, feed stores and lumber yards, which would not be included in the new PD zoning.

Barlow described other specific parameters established to tailor the business park’s development, and details about required landscaping and screening.

A traffic study was conducted, taking the neighboring Wagons West development into account. All roadways and intersections are expected to continue operating at acceptable/existing levels of service, Barlow said. New turn lanes would be

built soon to accomplish these proposed projects, including a northbound right-turn lane and a southbound left-turn lane. Improvements would be needed by the year 2040.

A point of contention for this business park development has been the road that will be built across the Santa Fe Trail to reach the property. However, Jones noted that El Paso County controls this trail, so the Town of Monument doesn’t actually have a say in what happens to it. The property intended for the business park development is “landlocked,” so this road cutting across the trail is needed to reach Old Denver Road. Barlow explained the Memorandum of Understanding between the county and Phoenix Bell Associates LLP regarding the crossing of Santa Fe Trail. Six total access points are permitted to run across the trail between Second Street and Baptist Road.

Commissioner Glover requested more detail on the definitions of potential busi-

ness categories and permitted uses. She opined that the town code can be vague when it comes to definitions, and items listed among the permitted uses could be interpreted in varying ways. Glover sug-

gested the town do more work up front defining terms to prevent future misunderstandings and so the citizenry can more easily provide meaningful input toward Monument’s future.

During public comment, citizen concerns included issues such as traffic, plots of land lying empty without businesses filling them, and the safety of using the Santa Fe Trail once a road is built across

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it. Residents were advised to go to the county level if they wish to further discuss the crossing of the trail. Other residents noted that the PD zoning would be beneficial to the area, and that it would be worse if the property were developed with one of the current PID uses. It was also suggested that this business park would cultivate a variety of jobs in the community.

This zone change and preliminary PD site plan were approved unanimously by the Planning Commission.

Eagleview Patio Homes

The Eagleview Patio Homes development is located along Beacon Lite Road, south of Monument Town Hall. The requested changes would transition this property from R-1 zoning to R-3 zoning and change the current single lot into four smaller lots. Both changes would allow for two one-story, ranch-style duplexes to be built on the property. As the land was originally platted in 1978, only one house can be built on the property. Anything other than this single-family detached home use would require rezoning.

The applicant, Darwin Anderson, said the design would include two-car garages, stucco on the outside of the buildings, and a 25-foot setback from the road.

Commissioner Glover asked if there were any other uses for an R-3 rezoning, and Jones responded that while there are, the code doesn't address single-family attached homes. To allow for the duplexes, R-3 zoning is the most relevant choice.

During the public hearing, citizens praised the ranch-style duplex plans but expressed agreement with Commissioner Glover's hope to clarify that only duplexes may be built on this property.

Revised Monument Ridge plan not recommended

The Monument Ridge development was discussed during the September Planning Commission meeting, where a proposal to set the density for a multi-family housing development passed. However, this proposal did not pass at the subsequent Oct. 2 Board of Trustees meeting, tying with a 3-3 vote. See www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#mpc, www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#mbot1002.

Due to this, the applicant, John Romero, returned to the Planning Commission with a different PD sketch plan amendment, lowering the proposed multifamily density from 20-24 dwelling units per acre to 16-20 dwelling units per acre. This decreased number of units is in keeping with the Vistas project on Jackson Creek Parkway. The Monument Ridge development would be located at the southeast corner of Baptist Road and Struthers Road, covering a 9.88-acre lot next to the Fairfield Inn. It would be served by four existing access points, and a traffic study indicated that the proposed housing density would

generate 1,251 external trips on an average weekday. As discussed during the September 2017 meeting, the Monument Ridge housing development is projected to generate less traffic than if businesses were built on the site instead.

During the public hearing, citizens expressed concerns regarding issues like the increase in traffic, as well as whether this development is in keeping with the town's comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Glover registered agreement when it came to the comprehensive plan, noting that apartment complexes were one thing a majority of Monument citizens polled for this plan opposed. She also commented on how few commercial centers currently exist for Monument.

The motion to approve this new Monument Ridge PD Sketch Plan Amendment failed, with Commissioners Glover, David Gwisdalla and Kenneth Kimple voting against. The item will still be considered by the Monument Board of Trustees.

Clearer definitions requested; vacancies exist

After the main discussions, Commissioner Glover suggested a resolution recommending the Board of

Trustees rework the zoning code to be clearer and include more cohesive definitions. Jones agreed to bring this to the commission at its next meeting. A reworked code is intended to provide a fair, smooth process to applicants.

The Planning Commission also elected officers for the coming year. Commissioner Ed Delaney was voted in as the chair, and Commissioner Gwisdalla was voted in as the vice chair. Both votes were unanimous.

The commission is seeking applications to fill a vacancy. Jones also noted that there are three similar vacancies to be filled on the Board of Adjustment.

The meeting adjourned at about 10:20 p.m.

The next meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 645 Beacon Lite Rd. Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of the month. Information: 884-8017 or <http://www.townofmonument.org/meetings/>

Kate Pangelinan can be reached at katepangelinan@ocn.me.

Monument Planning 101 Class, Jan. 8

An Overview of the Planning Process



On Jan. 8, the Town of Monument hosted a workshop titled "Planning 101, An Overview of the Planning Process from Start to Finish" for the Monument

Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Board of Adjustments, and the public at Monument Town Hall. From left at the front of the room are Jennifer Jones, senior planner; Alicia Corley, town lawyer, and Larry Manning, director of planning. Manning started the meeting with the purpose, scope and agenda, noting that this was not intended as a public discussion forum nor would it cover specific development projects. About 26 people attended the workshop. Jones talked about the Monument municipal code and the applicable regulations in Chapter 16 on subdivisions and Chapter 17 on zoning that the town must follow in regulating development. Jones followed with a discussion of the planning process from annexation, if required, to possible zoning changes, site plans, allowed uses, subdivisions, platting, variances, and permits. She showed a typical timeline of a project from initial contact through pre-application meetings, first submittal, referrals, review, negotiation, public notice and meetings, agreements and recordings, construction documents, land use permits and impact fees, and inspections to management of bonds. She noted that the process is very iterative and that the planning staff works intensively with applicants to address issues and synthesize information before the project is brought to the Planning Commission. Town lawyer Corley emphasized that Planning Commission and Board of Trustees meetings are quasi-judicial hearings and impose legal obligations on decision makers. Decision makers must avoid prejudgment, avoid ex parte communication once a formal application is received, and ensure that all evidence that may be considered is at the hearing. Manning, Jones and Corley wrapped up the meeting by touching on long-range planning, noting that the town recently updated its comprehensive plan, which is used when reviewing development projects. Long-range projects being considered include transportation planning and funding, El Paso County development project reviews, and downtown planning. A video of this workshop is available at <https://gaming.youtube.com/watch?v=qoUJcOUGP7c>. Photo by Jackie Burhans



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Palmer Lake Town Council, Jan. 11 and 25

Resolutions, ordinances enacted

By James Howald

The Palmer Lake Town Council met twice in January, on Jan. 11 and 25. Both meetings were primarily devoted to discussing and voting on resolutions and ordinances on a variety of topics.

Resolutions enacted for new year

- Resolution No. 1 of 2018 establishes the Palmer Lake Post Office and Town Hall as the official posting locations for notices of public meetings. Meetings are also posted on the town’s web page (<http://www.townofpalmerlake.com>).
- Resolution No. 2 of 2018 makes the regular town election scheduled for April 3 a polling place election rather than a mail-in ballot election.
- Resolution No.3 of 2018 schedules two Town Council meetings each month, on the second

- and fourth Thursdays of the month, and moves the start time of the meetings to 7 p.m.
- Resolution No. 4 of 2018 defines a standard for authorized signatures on the town’s checks. The town’s auditors have requested tighter controls over who can sign checks on behalf of the town. The resolution specifies Mayor John Cressman, Town Administrator Kathy Green-Sinnard, and the town clerk as authorized signers. (The town currently does not have a town clerk.) Town Councilor Paul Banta voted against the resolution, arguing that the town needed to require checks to be signed by a council member in addition to town staff.
- Resolution No. 5 of 2018 re-authorizes the Inter-governmental Agreement with El Paso County

- that provides emergency 911 service to the town.
- Ordinance updates town code**
- Ordinance 1 of 2018 updates the town code governing elections to conform to state statute relative to deadlines for candidate affidavits and other details.
- Ordinance 2 of 2018 vacates a 20-foot right of way between Verano and Largo Avenues.

The two meetings for February will be at 7 p.m. on Feb. 8 and 22 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.

Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility Joint Use Committee, Jan. 9

Wildlife experts drawn to bird haven at facility



Above: Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) Facility Manager Bill Burks said that representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Air Force Academy biology department were thoroughly impressed with the diverse waterfowl population at the facility when they visited the TLWWTF sludge lagoon and aeration basins as part of the national Audubon Society annual wild bird count on Dec. 15. Ring neck, mallard, common golden eye, northern pintail, green-winged teal, bufflehead, and American wigeon all paddle around at TLWWTF every year as part of their annual migration. The lagoons provide a stopover point and plenty of good food for them, said wildlife photographer Barry Mawson, who added, “I hope that this understanding of our great wildlife will be able to enlighten our youth to the wonder of our great state.” Caption by John Howe and Lisa Hatfield. Photo courtesy of professional wildlife photographer Barry Mawson, BC Wildlife Photography at barrymawson@yahoo.com.

By Lisa Hatfield

On Jan. 9, the Joint Use Committee (JUC) of the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) learned that a professional photographer and group of federal government officials visited the facility recently to observe the wide variety of waterfowl that regularly inhabit the facility’s aeration basins and activated sludge lagoon. The JUC also discussed TLWWTF’s monthly discharge monitoring, 2017 finances, and how to begin participation in a voluntary program that could result in an extension of its discharge permit compliance schedule.

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.

Bird count experts visit TLWWTF sludge lagoon

Facility Manager Bill Burks said five wildlife experts from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Air Force Academy biology department visited TLWWTF on Dec. 15 as part of the annual Audubon Society wild species bird count across the nation. The representatives were there specifically to count all the varieties of waterfowl that happily and healthily live around the sludge lagoon. “In the mornings, all the basins are completely covered with ducks,” Burks said. The wild bird population appreciates the quiet waterways and so much available food. “It’s just like ‘Quacker Barrel,’” smiled Monument Sanitation District Manager

Mike Wicklund.

Barry Mawson of BC Wildlife Photography volunteers for the Fish and Wildlife Service at the Air Force Academy and works with the U.S. Forest Service. He accompanied the representatives again this year to photograph and document the ring neck, mallard, common golden eye, northern pintail, green-winged teal, bufflehead, and American wigeon. Mawson told OCN that the good management of the wastewater plant and its lagoons and basins offers a safe haven for migratory birds every year.

The experts want to come back to TLWWTF every winter to observe the waterfowl during their migration, Burks explained, with a grin, to JUC and the other representative board members from MSD, PLSD, and WWSD.

Discharge monitoring report

During his presentation of the discharge monitoring report (DMR) for November, Burks said it was possible that WWSD’s above-normal level of waste solids in October and November was an anomaly, but the current amount of influent waste solids was still “a little bit elevated.” He added that the staff would monitor biological oxygen demand (BOD) as usual, along with the many other constituents the discharge permit requires. See www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#tlwtf.

Year-end finances summed up

Strom commented during the financial report that as of Dec. 31, overall expenses were only 90 percent of what had been budgeted for 2017 despite the fact that construction costs and engineering fees (for the chemical total phosphorus (TP) removal tertiary clarifier expansion) were over budget. He commended Burks for managing the other costs so well.

Note: Burks has not yet presented the final total cost of the chemical TP removal clarifier at a JUC meeting. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tlwtf.

Voluntary Incentive Program discussed

Strom asked Burks if he had talked yet with engineering consultant Tetra Tech about the cost feasibility analysis of the Colorado Water Quality Control Com-

mission (WQCC) Voluntary Incentive Program for Early Nutrient Reductions. WQCC established the program in October as a way for a wastewater treatment facility to get an extension in its discharge permit compliance schedule by volunteering “early” to reduce its discharged amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus below the already stringent levels of Colorado nutrient Regulation 85 and Colorado Reg. 31, the Basic Standards and Methodologies for Surface Water. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tlwtf , www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#tlwtf.

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Burks said he would continue working with TLWWTF's environmental attorney, Gabe Racz of Vranish & Raisch LLP, to create a draft letter to send to the state indicating interest in participating. However, information from the WQCC is not clear about when individual facilities would need to submit a letter of intention to participate or how soon they would be able to start earning credits in the program.

Stakeholder hoops continue to appear

MSD Environmental Compliance Coordinator Jim Kendrick did not attend the Jan. 9 JUC meeting due to his attendance at a concurrent meeting for TLWWTF regarding stakeholder issues around the state. However, Burks asked the JUC members to read Kendrick's Jan. 9 detailed monthly Colorado Wastewater Utility Council Representative's Report that Kendrick emailed to them before the JUC meeting. His monthly report included his additional research regarding new regulatory information briefed at the Jan. 8 WQCC meeting, as well as confirmations of the potential impacts on TLWWTF. See www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wqcc-january-8-2018-agenda.

Kendrick's report included news that was presented at the conclusion of the extended Jan. 8 WQCC

meeting regarding both naturally occurring radioactive material (NORM) and technologically enhanced naturally occurring radioactive material (TENORM), and two related state legislative bills that are being proposed. Kendrick's report said these topics would be discussed at the Jan. 10 meeting of the Colorado Wastewater Utility Council (CWWUC) with Martha Rudolph, director of environmental programs for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Kendrick also suggested that TLWWTF continue to participate in the continuing statewide stream and lake temperature study that environmental firm GEI is conducting for CWWUC that will conclude in 2018. He said being part of this GEI/CWWUC study would provide more data to defend TLWWTF against potential future claims that TLWWTF effluent is warmer than the stream and would therefore cause harm, when the complete opposite has been true to date.

AF CURE update

Burks reported on the discussion and decisions from the Jan. 2 meeting of the Arkansas River/ Fountain Creek Coalition for Urban/Rural River Evaluation (AF CURE), which included:

- Scott Campbell of the Nature Conservancy Initiative visited the meeting hoping to collaborate and share study data with local partners on a regional Nature Conservancy initiative regarding Fountain Creek Watershed health and management.
- AF CURE approved the Brown & Caldwell environmental engineers' 2018 Watershed Plan for E. coli sources within the Fountain Creek Watershed.
- President Mark Shea of Colorado Springs Utilities, Vice Chair Andra Ahrens of City of Pueblo Wastewater, and Vice Chair Jim Kendrick of Monument Sanitation District were re-elected to the executive committee that coordinates AF CURE. (www.afcure.org)

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. Feb. 13 at the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility, 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of the month and are open to the public. For information, call Bill Burks at 719-481-4053.

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

Triview Metropolitan District, Jan. 9

Water and roads are primary focuses

By Jennifer Kaylor

Discussions regarding water and roads dominated the Triview Metropolitan District Board of Directors' meeting on Jan. 9. Water discussions involved the purchase of water shares, initiation of an Integrated Water Resources Plan, and a potential solution to increase potable water treatment efficiency. The directors heard a presentation by Project Manager Jim Stewart of Schmidt Construction Co. about road replacement, repair, and maintenance recommendations.

Director James Otis was unable to participate in the meeting via conference call as had been originally planned.

Triview is a Title 32 special district within the 80132 ZIP code, and within the Town of Monument, that provides services such as water/sewer/drainage, parks and recreation, open space, mosquito abatement, and street maintenance to Jackson Creek, Promontory Pointe, Sanctuary Pointe, and several commercial areas (see <http://www.ocn.me/metro-districts.pdf> for district boundaries). The Town of Monument, however, provides land use planning, police, and general governance for Triview property owners.

15 renewable water shares approved

Water attorney Chris Cummins of Monson, Cummins and Shohet LLC reviewed a Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA) between Prairie Sun Village LLC and Triview. Note: In December 2015, Prairie Sun contracted for the purchase of 15 shares in the Fountain Mutual Irrigation Co. (FMIC) from Comanche Resources LLC and now desires to step out of the contract and assign the shares to another entity. Triview expressed willingness to accept the shares with all of its rights, responsibilities, and entitlements. Cummins described the small purchase as a way to enhance Triview's renewable water resources with a known entity, FMIC. The price tag on the shares is also much lower than the shares from the December 2015 purchase—\$3,300 per share compared to \$13,000 per share.

Cummins reminded the board that the shares are currently committed to the Comanche Resources Augmentation Plan, and the assignment is not an outright purchase. Triview's payment serves as earnest money and acceptance of closing obligations that won't occur until the Comanche-Sun Hills case is resolved, most likely in January 2019. After discussing the PSA in further detail and considering future needs, the board voted to approve the PSA.

Operational water initiatives taken

Interim District Manager Jim McGrady and Water Superintendent Shawn Sexton discussed progress that had been achieved since the December meeting. McGrady confirmed that he had begun work on an Integrated Water Resources Plan (IWRP). He stated that he will use an old IWRP as a template for the new Triview IWRP. McGrady informed the directors that he had finalized the scope of the professional services agreement with Raftelis Financial Consultants Inc. The directors approved the Raftelis proposal for a water and sewer financial plan, and a rate and tap fee study, at the December board meeting. Raftelis scheduled a workshop for Thursday, Jan. 11, and will begin gathering extensive data.

Sexton augmented the update with a report on the sanitary survey conducted by the state on Dec. 13. He stated that the results of this state inspection of the Triview water system were very good. The state's summation of the survey showed zero deficiencies. The district was cited with one violation: A report for backflow prevention was not completed in May. Sexton explained that this backflow report is the first of a new kind of now-recurring requirement by the state. By completing the report and notifying the public via a consumer confidence report, the district will be able to rectify the violation. Sexton also clarified that the sanitary survey pertains only to the water system and does not include wastewater.

Sexton described a plan to potentially increase water treatment efficiency. Because the flow of A-plant (a treatment plant) is slower than the flow of the two wells it treats, McGrady and Sexton plan to bypass A-plant and direct the water to the much faster B-plant, which has the flow capacity to meet the treatment demands of the two wells. The district's current infrastructure supports the proposed bypass. The potential benefits are numerous, i.e., minimal expense to initiate the change, improved flow capacity and efficiency, rotation of well use which prevents or decreases wear and tear, and fewer filters to purchase.

Additional operational updates

Progress in other operations included:

- Purchase and delivery of a generator for C-plant and a sander for a pickup truck.
- Well A8 was powered up and flushed.
- McGrady spoke with Cpl. Rob Stewart of the Monument police regarding traffic safety at Bear Creek Elementary School. As a result, Triview crews painted and stenciled "No Parking" signs on curbs according to Stewart's recommendations.
- McGrady met with Challenger Homes regarding Home Place Ranch, which is still in planning to be developed north of Promontory Pointe and west of Sanctuary Pointe. Extensive preliminary work must be completed before information will be available.
- Captain Innovations planned to provide website recommendations as of Jan. 10. The district is seeking to improve the website's user friendliness for the public and staff.
- Ground Floor Media provided a proposal for public relations work, including generation of a newsletter.
- The district is working with T. Charles Wilson Insurance Service to account for and ensure coverage for all district-owned assets.

2018 road repair and maintenance plans

Schmidt's Jim Stewart presented his ideas for addressing the district's road needs for 2018. He confirmed McGrady's comments from the December meeting that many of the roads would be well-served to receive an edge mill and overlay—a less costly repair—as opposed to a full mill and overlay. In an edge mill, the 6-foot edge of a road is removed, bringing it lower than the center. The center line of the old road is used a "base course" or foundation, so when the new asphalt is poured, the center has a "crown" and the edges slope, providing all-important drainage. Stew-

art promoted the need for an aggregate base course (ABC) under new roads, stating that ABC provides consistent load-bearing capacity, which translates to greater longevity for the road.

Finally, Stewart recommended using a pavement reinforcement system such as GlasGrid or Petrotac under a new asphalt layer. These interlayer systems dissipate the stresses that cause cracks, strengthen the road, reduce repair and maintenance needs, increase road life, and ultimately save money. These products are also designed to be easily milled once a road reaches the end of its life.

Sewer facility expansion question posed

Former Director and current resident Steve Remington inquired if the district had established reserve funds for Phase III of the sewer facility expansion. Note: Triview must make state-mandated upgrades to the Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility in the next few years. The directors did not provide specifics, but McGrady responded that the sewer expansion, as well as many other water and wastewater questions, is the reason for the Raftelis rate study.

May 8 election information posted

Triview's special district transparency information shows that three director positions with four-year terms will be up for mail ballot election May 8. President Reid Bolander, Mark Melville, and James Barnhart will complete their terms. Anyone interested in serving on Triview's Board of Directors may submit a self-nomination form to Triview by March 2. Affidavits of intent to be a write-in candidate may be submitted by March 5. Self-nomination forms can be printed from the Department of Local Affairs website, www.colorado.gov/pacific/dola/special-district-election-forms. The forms are also expected to be available on Triview's website; see www.colorado.gov/triview-metro. Triview can also be reached at (719) 488-6868. Additional information is expected at the February board meeting.

December financials reviewed

The board reviewed and unanimously approved the nine disbursements over \$5,000 to be paid by the district. They included:

- JDS Hydro - \$12,218
- Cardenas Concrete and Landscaping LLC - \$22,638
- Colorado Electric Power Systems - \$31,825
- Applied Ingenuity LLC - \$83,665 (well A8)
- Applied Ingenuity LLC - \$6,465 (well D1)
- Monson, Cummins and Shohet LLC - \$10,981
- Walker Schooler District Managers - \$13,000
- Donala Water and Sanitation District - \$160,482
- Velocity Plant Services - \$16,345

Curfew signs

The directors chose not to vote on whether to post curfew signs in all of the district's parks, but instead tabled the issue.

The public meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m. and the board entered into an executive session concerning legal advice and/or negotiations. No additional decisions were announced following the executive session.

The next Triview Metro board meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m. Feb. 13 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 Kitchen 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.
- Jennifer Kaylor can be reached at jenniferkaylor@ocn.me.*

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, Jan. 11

Board prepares for election; candidates sought

By James Howald

The Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District board met Jan. 11 to discuss the upcoming election of new board members, the district's plan to use available funds to pay off district debt ahead of schedule, and to resolve some issues relative to water augmentation plans.

Election resolution to be presented at February meeting

In her report, Attorney Erin Smith said she was drafting a resolution concerning the March 8 board election and would present it at the February meeting. The resolution will designate the election polling place and other details, she said. Smith said the Woodmoor Improvement Association's Barn served as the polling place for the previous board election, and that location had worked well. The board does have the option to hold the election using mail-in ballots, Smith said.

She asked the board to consider how they wanted to advertise the election to the public. State law requires a minimum of one notice, she said.

There will be three seats open, Smith said, adding that the election would be held only if there were more candidates than open seats.

According to Smith, anyone interested in running for an open seat can nominate themselves by submitting a form. Forms must be received by March 2, and can be obtained through Wynter B. Wells, the designated election official, by calling (303) 292-6400.

New tax law derails district's debt management analysis

For several months, the board has been debating how best to use additional revenue resulting from the high level of residential development in the district. Working with Raftelis Financial Consultants and other financial consultants, the board had designed a plan to pay off some debt ahead of schedule, with the intent of saving the district money over the long run. However, the tax legislation recently signed by President Trump made changes to the tax status of some advance payments and requires bondholders to pay taxes not anticipated in the district's plan. As a result, interest rates would need to be lower for the district's advance payment strategy to save the district money.

District Manager Jessie Shaffer told the board he was working with Raftelis to develop a financial strategy focused on 2021 that would determine if the district's funds can be used to retire debt then, and how many dollars should be allocated to that effort.

Richard D. Giardina and Rob Wadsworth, of Raftelis, told the board that the district was "in a very good position from a cash standpoint." Giardina and Wadsworth said the board might want to consider using dollars from the water fund, or from both the water and sewer fund, in 2021 to retire debt, and added this could be done without raising rates or issuing new debt.

The water fund is projected to have \$15 million above the amount needed to provide service to the district's customers, Wadsworth said, and that

amount could be applied to the district's debt, leaving about \$5 million in debt to be paid by 2036. The district would save \$6.7 million in interest using this approach, Wadsworth said, but would forgo the interest the district would earn if the funds were not spent. The net benefit to the district would be \$4.76 million, according to Wadsworth.

Giardina said dollars in the sewer fund could be applied to the remaining \$5 million of debt, yielding additional savings on interest paid.

In response to a question from Director at Large Brian Bush, Shaffer said these strategies might make it possible to eliminate the Renewable Water Investment Fund (RWIF).

The board decided to revisit these issues in a year. **Fee for water augmentation plan reduced**

Shaffer recommended that the board reduce the fee the district charges to process requests to augment water service from \$1,500 to \$500. President Jim Taylor approved the reduction. No vote was taken.

The board also agreed to pay for augmented water to address evaporation from the Augusta pit, since the district uses that water to serve its non-potable water customers.

The next meeting is scheduled for Feb. 8 at 1 p.m. Meetings are usually held at the district office at 1845 Woodmoor Drive on the second Thursday of each month at 1 p.m. See www.woodmoorwater.com or call 488-2525 to verify meeting times.

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

Donala Water and Sanitation District, Jan. 18

May 8 polling place director election approved

By Jim Kendrick

On Jan. 18, the Donala Water and Sanitation District board unanimously approved holding a polling place election for three of its five director positions on May 8 and adopted a continuation of its traditional annual meeting schedule of holding board meetings at 1:30 p.m. in the district offices at 15850 Holbein Drive in northeast Gleneagle on the third Thursday of the month with two exceptions (June 28 and Dec. 6.) Donala's posting locations for meeting notices will also remain unchanged.

Financial reports

District General Manager Kip Petersen gave a "95 percent" preliminary annual budget report for 2017. He said total 2017 operating revenues were down roughly 16.5 percent, from about \$8.65 million budgeted to about \$7.23 million. This was due primarily to using only about \$568,000 of \$2.46 million in available low-interest state capital construction loans because of very low water sales for the "wet" first half of 2017. Water sales revenues ended up matching the budget with a dry fall.

Some planned expensive 2017 capital improvement projects were postponed until 2018 and their completion this year should use up the rest of the available low-interest state loans. Planned construction within Donala has taken longer than expected to receive land use and site plan approvals. This has delayed Donala's receipt of new construction tap fees, but builders' existing plans to start these administratively delayed commercial construction projects in early 2018 are moving forward now. About half of Donala's 2017 budgeted total capital expenditures of \$3.1 million were postponed to 2018 to provide a \$1.6 million reduction in spending to offset these reduced 2017 revenues.

Overall, about 5 percent of the district's 2017 invoices and payments were still outstanding on Jan. 18. Petersen said 2017 expenditures will ultimately match but not exceed 2017 revenues.

Manager's report

Petersen noted that board President Dave Powell will be completing eight years of board service and is term limited. Director Bob Denny is completing his first four-year term and will run for re-election. Director Dennis Snyder is completing a brief appointment to

fill in the seat of a director who passed away, and he will be running for his first four-year term. A polling place election is considerably cheaper than a mail-in-ballot election in terms of printing costs.

Self-nomination forms for running for election for a board seat are available at the district office. A candidate must be a property owner or resident of the district and must have completed and submitted a nomination form to the district by March 2. If the designated election official (DEO) does not receive more nominations than the number of elected positions available, currently three, the DEO will cancel the election by the end of March. The DEO for this biennial special district election is Betsy Bray, now a part-time Donala consultant.

In other election news, Petersen reported that he had been re-elected to a second one-year term as president of the Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority (PPRWA). The authority's long-standing legislative consultant Dick Brown had advised him that there are not yet any bills being proposed during the current 120-day 2018 Colorado State Legislature Session that would have a large impact on Donala. Petersen reviewed Brown's initial in-depth biweekly state Legislature activity updates to PPRWA for the directors.

Petersen also reported that a Colorado State Supreme Court decision that Colorado had overcharged the state oil and gas industry for many years will force the state to refund these large cash amounts. State money for state grants and loans will dry up considerably during the multi-year repayment process. All state water roundtables, including the Arkansas River Basin Roundtable, will have much less funding for implementing the new Colorado State Water Plan.

Short-term Pueblo Reservoir storage contract renewed again

Petersen reported that Donala would be using another one-year temporary water storage contract between Donala and the federal Bureau of Reclamation for up to 250 acre-feet of renewable surface storage of Donala's Willow Creek Ranch renewable water in the bureau's Pueblo Reservoir. Donala's negotiations for long-term agreements with the bureau and Pueblo County will continue.

Note: Willow Creek Ranch is near Leadville, and Donala's snow-melt surface water is delivered to the

Pueblo Reservoir by the Arkansas River.

Petersen also reported that no decision has been made by Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) on a similar Donala request for a long-term contract for transport of Donala's Willow Creek Ranch surface water from the Pueblo Reservoir in CSU's Southern Delivery Sys-

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tem pipeline to a CSU surface water treatment plant and piping of this now-treated potable surface water to the CSU-Donala interconnect at Northgate Road for direct drinking water distribution by the Donala delivery pipe system. CSU currently provides yearly temporary agreements to Donala for temporary out-of-district service rates that are 50 percent higher than for those entities within the CSU service area.

Operations running smoothly

The fully-rehabilitated R. Hull Water Treatment Plant, which treats groundwater, and the Upper Monument Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility (UMCRWWTF) are operating normally. The third of three influent

screens for the wastewater facility will be replaced this year. These screens are large and heavy and replacement is challenging, requiring six months of lead time.

A small pilot plant will be constructed for determining if a proposed wastewater facility treatment method for removing arsenic will be optimal. The three districts that own UMCRRWWTF—Donala, Triview Metropolitan District, and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District—must upgrade its treatment capability to add specific arsenic removal capacity. The arsenic treatment upgrades, if the pilot plant is successful, are estimated to cost \$2.2 million. Donala’s share of this

cost would be \$836,000.

The meeting went into executive session for personnel matters at 2:34 p.m. No votes were taken and no announcements were made after the board came out of executive session and then adjourned immediately.

The next board meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Feb. 15 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.

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El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Dec. 28, Jan. 16 and 23.

Jackson Ranch development moves forward; more discussion of the I-25 gap project

By Helen Walklett

At the El Paso Board of County Commissioners’ (BOCC) Jan. 23 meeting, the commissioners approved final plat applications for Jackson Ranch Filings 3 and 4. At the Dec. 28 meeting, the commissioners ratified the submittal of the federal infrastructure grant application to assist with funding for the third-lane expansion of I-25 from Monument to Castle Rock. The commissioners also made decisions relating to the Monument Hill Road Safety Improvements Project, the Forest Lakes development, the Highway 105 Improvement Project and Black Forest Regional Park.



Above: Location of the Jackson Ranch development. Map courtesy of El Paso County Development Services.

Jackson Ranch development

At its Jan. 23 meeting, the BOCC unanimously approved two requests by Four Gates Land Development LLC for approval of final plats for Jackson Ranch Filings 3 and 4. The development is zoned RR 2.5 (Residential Rural) and is located east of Roller Coaster Road, north of Higby Road, and west of Sahara Road.

The final plat for Jackson Ranch Filing 3 is 26.21 acres and will create nine single-family lots, a single tract to be used for open space and drainage, and rights-of-way. Jackson Ranch Filing 4 is a 31.18-acre area and the final plat will create eight single-family lots, two tracts for open space and drainage and rights-of-way.

Water was found to be sufficient in both cases, and the applications were approved with 11 conditions and two notations. The El Paso County Planning Commission had recommended the applications for approval at its meeting on Jan. 2.

Progress has also been made with Jackson Ranch Filing 1. At the Dec. 28 BOCC meeting, the commis-

sioners approved the final release of the letter of credit for public improvements at the subdivision for \$8,600 following the completion and inspection of all the improvements. On Jan. 23, the commissioners approved an application to accept certain streets within the subdivision into the county road maintenance system.

I-25 federal infrastructure grant

The commissioners ratified the submittal of the federal infrastructure grant application relating to the I-25 expansion project at their Dec. 28 meeting. The Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant application for \$65 million was submitted on Nov. 2, 2017 by the county, which is acting as the regional applicant. The commissioners again stated their support for the project and opposition to any tolling of a third lane.

Commissioner Stan VanderWerf said, “We know that this decision about whether that third lane is tolled or not ... is not made yet but I want to make sure that CDOT [the Colorado Department of Transportation] identifies early and publicly ... when the points are where the public can interact with CDOT with regard to the different choices.”

Commissioner Darryl Glenn urged the public to make their views on the project known to CDOT. He said, “I think it’s also incumbent upon this board to initiate the meeting. I intend to hold several in my commissioner district. I think it’s also important to make sure our state transportation commissioner is there.”

At their Jan. 16 meeting, the commissioners recognised a resolution by the county Highway Advisory Commission designating the I-25 gap project as the highest-priority project for the Pikes Peak region.

Since the Dec. 28 BOCC meeting, CDOT has announced that it will hold a series of outreach meetings through late February to give the public several options to learn the latest information, ask questions, and provide comments. Two meetings are scheduled for the Monument area in February:

- Thursday, Feb. 8 at Monument Library, 1706 Woodmoor Drive, from 6:45 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.
- Tuesday, Feb. 13 at Natural Grocers, 1216 W. Baptist Road, from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Jennifer Irvine, county engineer, told the commissioners that CDOT expects to conclude its assessment of the options for the project later this spring.

Monument Hill Road Safety Improvements Project

At its Dec. 28 and Jan. 16 meetings, the BOCC approved four further requests relating to the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority’s (PPRTA) Monument Hill Road Safety Improvements Project, which ex-

pects to start construction this summer.

The BOCC approved four easements that the county Department of Public Works had identified as necessary to allow construction to be carried out. The first is a non-exclusive permanent easement from property owned by 1880 Properties LLC at Woodmoor Business/ Technological Park for the sum of \$24,000. The other three relate to property owned by Greater Europe Mission. One temporary construction easement is being obtained for \$2,300. A further temporary construction easement and a non-exclusive permanent easement are being obtained for \$6,750. All three are situated along Monument Hill Road.

Park Lands Agreement for the Forest Lakes Development

At its Jan. 16 meeting, the BOCC approved a Park Lands Agreement between the county, Forest Lakes Residential Development LLC, and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD). The owners of the development requested the agreement to address the refund of paid urban park fees in exchange for constructing urban park improvements. The fees of \$11,565 were paid at the time of the recording of the final plat for Forest Lakes Filing 2B in 2017 and are being refunded by county because the owner is completing park improvements of an equal or greater value. The agreement stipulates that the trail and park amenities be accessible to the public. The county Park Advisory Board unanimously endorsed the agreement at its meeting on Dec. 13.

The improvements, known as Waterfront Park, include a section of regional trail, trailhead parking for the park and trail, a gazebo, a small amphitheatre, a low-profile playground, a turf area, seating, and signage.

Other decisions

- Jan. 16 – approval of the award of a construction contract to Singletrack Trails Inc. for construction of new soft surface trails and trail drainage structures within Black Forest Regional Park that were damaged in the 2013 Black Forest fire. The contract stipulates a not-to-exceed cost of \$85,360.
- Jan. 23 – approval of a contract amendment to the intergovernmental agreement between the county and CDOT for the Highway 105 Improvement Project. The amendment modifies the agreement to incorporate new requirements and procedures required by the Federal Highway Association. The initial phase of the project extends from Woodmoor Drive to Lake Woodmoor Drive.

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Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations Inc., Jan. 13

Leaders propose new Regional Transportation Authority

By Jennifer Kaylor

El Paso County Engineer Jennifer Irvine provided transportation updates on 2018 planned projects, and Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) Program/Contracts Manager Rick Sonnenburg educated the membership about the history, governance, and scope of PPRTA at the Jan. 13 meeting of the Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations Inc. (NEPCO). The presentations served as a precursor to announcing NEPCO’s intention to—possibly—create a Tri-Lakes Regional Transportation Authority (RTA).

Engineer reviews 2018 capital projects

Irvine reported that PPRTA dedicated \$18 million and the federal government supplemented another \$4 million to expand State Route (SR) 105—from Interstate 25 to SR 83—to four lanes and add passing, intersection, shoulder, and sidewalk improvements. Phase one of construction, from Woodmoor Drive to Lake Woodmoor Drive, is expected to begin late in 2018.

Monument Hill Road will consume about \$4 million of PPRTA funds to upgrade shoulders, surface pavement, and intersections, and add a sidewalk. The

county hopes to capitalize on less congestion during summer months when there is less school traffic.

A third PPRTA-funded project is Beacon Lite Road. Another \$4 million will transform Beacon Lite from gravel to pavement and improve shoulders and intersections. Irvine added that a joint El Paso County-Douglas County effort will make improvements on County Line Road, as well.

Irvine addressed the Struthers-Gleneagle roundabout and acknowledged that some people “just don’t like roundabouts.” She described the Struthers-Gleneagle roundabout as having a “through” lane for



Above: NEPCO Vice President Tom Vierzba elaborates on the condition of roads in the Tri-Lakes area and proposes that NEPCO initiate research for a plan to establish a Tri-Lakes Regional Transportation Authority. *Photo by Jennifer Kaylor*

drivers turning north into Gleneagle. The question arose, “Does this mean that in the northeast area of El Paso County, that’s all we’re going to deal with in the future, is roundabouts instead of intersections?” Irvine assured her audience that each situation needs to be evaluated carefully and that roundabouts are not a “one-size-fits-all” solution.

Irvine encouraged residents to look for the new smart-phone-friendly Customer Engagement System that should be unveiled by the county sometime this quarter. For the current system of reporting transportation-related problems such as potholes, signs/signals, grader work, drainage, dead animals, etc., go to http://adm2.elpasoco.com/transprt/service_request.asp, email dotweb@elpasoco.com or call (719) 520-6460.

Manager explains the process of forming an RTA
With PPRTA’s history as a backdrop, Sonnenburg reviewed basic guidelines for creating an RTA that included:

- Form a “combination” of governments to comprise the RTA. A minimum combination is a mix of two or more municipalities and/or counties. A special district may join if the county/municipalities limit is met. The state may also join via the Transportation Commission. Five local governments—Colorado Springs, El Paso County, Manitou Springs, Green Mountain Falls, and Ramah—combined to form PPRTA.
- Define the RTA’s precise eligible activities and the types of transportation improvements it will fund. PPRTA solely funds capital, maintenance, and transit.
- Determine how the RTA will be funded, which can be any combination of a sales/use tax (up to 1 percent), property tax (up to five mills), visitors benefit tax (up to 2 percent), or vehicle registration fee (up to \$10 per vehicle annually). PPRTA is funded by a 1 percent sales tax.
- Establish financial guidelines

such as revenue shares, expenditure sub-categories, maximum administrative expense (if any), whether or not to de-TABOR revenue limits, if any funding or sub-category will be subject to sunset, if projects will be listed on the ballot measure, etc.

- Determine how the RTA will be governed, i.e., one of the member governments or a non-member agency or company. PPRTA is administered by the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG).
- Decide board representation and whether or not to commit to a citizens’ advisor committee.

Sonnenburg reminded NEPCO members that the steps presented are not all-inclusive and that the process is lengthy—the PPRTA member governments worked for more than two years to get established and receive voter approval. For more information about PPRTA, see <http://pprta.com/>.

Town and district perspectives provided

NEPCO Vice President Tom Vierzba spoke on behalf of Triview Metropolitan District’s Interim District Manager Jim McGrady and Monument Public Works Director Tom Tharnish, who were unable to attend. Vierzba stated that Triview expects to spend about \$1.6 million on road repairs in 2018, and those repairs will focus primarily on the east side, near the King Soopers plaza and Bear Creek Elementary School. He added that Jackson Creek Parkway falls under the responsibility of several governing bodies, which complicates maintenance, repair, and expansion efforts.

Representing Tharnish, Vierzba reported that the Town of Monument possesses 26.2 lane miles of road with a comparatively small budget of \$250,000 committed to maintenance. Projects for 2018 will most likely include chip-sealing roads and filling potholes.

Representatives invited to explore RTA possibilities

After highlighting the road repair and maintenance challenges in the area, Vierzba acknowledged having spoken “briefly” with representatives of the Town of Monument, Triview Metro-

politan District, and Palmer Lake, as well as El Paso County commissioners, to gauge the support and/or interest in establishing a Tri-Lakes RTA. Vierzba called for a show of hands of people interested in pursuing more information. Six or more individuals expressed interest.

Business items addressed

Some of the board positions changed since the December 2017 election. Members-at-large Mike Aspenson and Donna Dee agreed to fill the director of membership and director of community outreach positions, respectively. Chet Sawyer volunteered for the board observer position, and Duane Fitch was approved “on the spot” to fill the member-at-large position.

Membership updated on local development

Vierzba highlighted NEPCO’s involvement in some of the area’s building proposals that included:

- Working to influence the developer of Sanctuary Pointe regarding a safe juncture of Sanctuary Rim Drive and Higby Road.
- Communicating concerns that The Retreat at Timber Ridge will place undue infrastructure stresses on the neighboring Sterling Ranch development.
- Urging landscaping compliance from builders of Monument Hill Business Park.
- Arranged a compromise with a Jackson Creek developer to change the 2.5-acre lots to 5-acre lots or 2.5-acre lots that are adjacent to green space.
- Working cooperatively with the Trails and Open Space Coalition to propose installation of passive sensors along Santa Fe Trail to alleviate concerns of blind spots and visual distractions created by new development.

The remaining 2018 meeting dates are March 10, May 12, July 14, Sept. 15, and Nov. 10. The meetings are held from 10 a.m. to noon at Monument Town Hall conference room, located at 645 Beacon Lite Rd, off Highway 105.

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

Woodmoor Improvement Association Board of Directors, Jan. 24

Board discusses water augmentation plan, reviews finances

By Jackie Burhans

The Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board met on Jan. 24 to discuss a required water augmentation plan, review finances for 2017, and provide director highlights.

Water augmentation requirement

Vice President Brian Bush noted that, as part of a revision of Colorado water law, anyone who detains water that would flow into the Arkansas River must account for the evaporation of that detained water, otherwise they would be depriving senior water rights holders of their water. WIA received a letter from Doug Hollister, District 10 water commissioner for the Colorado Division of Water Resources, in mid-December inquiring about an augmentation plan for the six ponds owned by WIA. Bush, who also is director at large on the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) board, noted that WWSD had an augmentation plan that could easily be amended and that the response would be complete by March. Board Director of Common Areas Rich Wretschko had noted in his report that only Wild Duck pond and Lower Twin pond retain water.

Finance overview

The board noted that income had exceeded expenses in 2017, and the association is well funded. This supports the board’s earlier decision not to raise dues for 2018. Reserves are well funded for future projects. Income from new construction fees were more than anticipated, and the board credited the WIA staff for controlling expenses. The surplus money is used for participating in the Safe Routes to School grant in cooperation with the Lewis-Palmer School District (LPSD), improving common areas, and making the chipping events free to residents. The board is considering funding a new Woodmoor Public Safety station to alleviate crowding, paying for the upkeep of amenities, and future projects—all without raising the dues.

Board report highlights

- President Peter Bille was glad to see some snow and moisture as a reprieve from immediate fire danger but noted that taller grass and weeds in the summer can be expected.
- Bush reiterated that El Paso County is responsible for maintenance and snow plowing of the roads in

Woodmoor. He said residents can fill out a form online for a service request and get a response. The form can be found at <http://bit.ly/epco-service>.

- Outgoing Secretary and Community Outreach Director Jennifer Cunningham noted the Feb. 5 facilitated community engagement event by LPSD to facility collaborative decision-making on how to address growth and school capacity needs. The event will be at the district administration building “Big Red” at 165 N. Jefferson St. in Monument on Feb. 5 from 6 to 7:30pm.
- Cunningham also said the Colorado Department of Transportation will hold a series of listening

events in the community starting on Feb. 8 at the Monument Library and Feb. 13 at Natural Grocers. More information can be found at <http://bit.ly/cdot-gap>.

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 Feb. 28.

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.

January Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Unfortunately, the year has started off the same way we ended last year, generally dry and mild. Although we did finally get a real taste of winter on the 21st. Overall, temperatures were well above normal for the month, with only

one morning experiencing widespread below-zero readings, and several afternoons flirting with daily record highs. The one snowstorm helped to bring total monthly precipitation to about normal levels, but it would have been nice to see that spread out over the month

instead of all at once.

The first few days of the month saw temperatures hover right around average, with 30s to low 40s for highs and single digits to teens for lows. Temperatures then warmed steadily over the next several days, peaking with record highs in the low 60s on the 9th. No accumulating precipitation fell during the period, making it feel even more unusual. This warm period was finally interrupted by a storm system on the 10th and 11th. A very rare occurrence of rainfall accompanied this storm on the afternoon of the 10th when the precipitation first started. Rainfall almost never occurs above 7,000 feet around the Palmer Divide in January, so this demonstrated how unusual the weather pattern was. The rain quickly turned over to wet snow that afternoon, producing around an inch across much of the area by later that evening.

Average to slightly cooler than average conditions stuck around from the 11th through the 16th. Some light snow also managed to develop on the 15th, producing about a half-inch of snow. We also managed to dip below zero with this push of cold air as temperatures stayed below the freezing mark from the 15th to the mid-morning of the 17th.

Once again, this cold air retreated quickly and was replaced with well above normal temperatures for the next few days. Highs again reached well into the 50s on the 18th, touched the low 60s on the 19th and hit the upper 50s on the 20th. This time the warmth was ahead of a stronger storm system that was organizing

over the Four Corners region and was pulling down colder air from the north. This storm wound up just east of the Front Range, a perfect position to produce strong north winds and blowing snow for us. This is just what happened on the 21st, with snow starting in the morning and continuing all day.

The strong north winds enhanced the snow over the Palmer Divide, but subsequently depleted it going south into the Colorado Springs/Pueblo areas. This terrain-induced enhancement/depletion is referred to as orographic effects. It is always amazing to see the results of this in our region during these types of winter storms as a significant gradient in snowfall accumulation occurs. For this storm, accumulations of 10-12 inches were common along the Palmer Divide crest, with amounts quickly falling off to less than 2 inches around downtown Colorado Springs. Once this storm departed, we again saw a gradual rise in temperatures and a return to dry conditions through the end of the month.

The warm and generally dry pattern is associated with a La Nina pattern that is occurring in the Pacific Ocean. This pattern disrupts the normal circulations by allowing a stronger than normal ridge of high pressure to develop over the western U.S. This effectively blocks significant storms from moving in the region and keeps the cold air to our east. Storms are forced to move up and over the ridge, then down the back side of the ridge to our east. This produces all the cold and snow from the Midwest through the eastern U.S., but

generally leaves us high and dry.

A look ahead

February is often a dry and cold month for the region as we move toward the snowy and unsettled conditions of March and April. Precipitation averages less than an inch, with average high temperatures in the 30s. It can get very cold in February with Arctic air making strong pushes into the region. But days begin to get a little longer, which leads to some nice, sunny days, and snow melts faster.

January 2018 Weather Statistics

Average High	45.7° (+5.6°)
100-year return frequency value max	48.4° min 30.8°
Average Low	17.5° (+4.9°)
100-year return frequency value max	26.6° min 6.6°
Highest Temperature	62° on the 9th, 19th
Lowest Temperature	-2° on the 16th
Monthly Precipitation	0.65" (-0.06" 8% below normal)
100-year return frequency value max	1.56" min 0.01"
Monthly Snowfall	11.9" (-1.4", 12% below normal)
Season to Date Snow	22.5" (-30.1", 43% below normal)
Season to Date Precip.	3.71" (-1.52", 30% below normal)
Heating Degree Days	1035 (-62)
Cooling Degree Days	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.*

Kudos to my unknown neighbors

I wanted to tell everyone about something that happened to me recently that is heartwarming in a world that seems consumed with bad news.

Following the snowstorm over the weekend of Jan. 20, I was leaving to go to work and found out firsthand that side streets do not get immediate attention by snow plows. But hey ... I've got four-wheel drive; what could happen? I found out as I got stuck in a high drift and thought I'd be there most of the day.

Two gentlemen who live in the area (but whom I didn't know) stopped to help get me out of the drift and be able to proceed on my way to work.

I don't know who they are, but I want to say thank you so much to both gentlemen for stopping to help someone they didn't know. Another of many great reasons to live in Monument and the Tri-Lakes region.

Ken Sanders

Come to D38 meeting on school construction

Even after losing their board majority in last November's election, D38's insider club is still at it, insisting that taxpayers need to give them \$190 million to solve a crowding crisis that they have both exacerbated and exaggerated. Under the old board, D38 administrators were given free rein to stage a stacked deliberation process that concluded that Grace Best should not be reopened as an actual school. They want \$190 million instead (to build new school buildings and maintain the others), from a community that already owes \$69 million. The new amount would almost quadruple your current school building taxes.

Their excuses for discarding Grace Best have ranged from the believable to the absurd. As with many schools across America, Grace Best has asbestos. The asbestos, however, can be taken care of through a full renovation, and the district can even get federal grant money to help cover removal costs.

Commercial contractors have advised that Grace Best could be fully renovated for around \$7 million. Because renovation would be a fraction of the cost of building a new building, D38 administrators have had to pepper skeptics with a collection of silly excuses. Some of their silliest: It's outdated. Its location isn't central enough. Kids will have to cross I-25 every day. And, its "best" use would be as a pre-K "center" to provide preschool classes that taxpayers aren't obligated to provide!

Thankfully, the new board majority seems to be seeing through this charade and is asking the community for input. Come to the Administration Building at 146 Jefferson St. on Feb. 5 at 6 p.m. to show the new board that the community supports sound, fiscally-responsible management of our district.

Bruce Clark

A D38 mom and taxpayer questions building plan

As a D38 parent, and a taxpayer, I do not support the expensive consultant's (RTA) three new building, large tax increase plan for our school district. According to D38's own Oct. 1 headcount numbers, we are not in a crisis situation. A few of our buildings are reaching capacity, but there are other ways to resolve our crowding issues that are economical and responsible.

I recently toured Grace Best with district representatives, other parents and building and asbestos abatement contractors. There are portions of this building that are quite viable, and we should consider bids to improve this facility before any new building projects are considered. I would be open to completely bulldozing the older portions of Grace Best, settling the asbestos issue, and then rebuilding exactly what we need while still utilizing the newer part of the structure. I believe this is exactly what BEST grants were created for.

Additionally, we should deny enrollment to choice-in students for those buildings that are reaching capacity. This is common sense. Taxpayers in D38 do not need to shoulder the cost for out-of-district students. There is also no point in spending district money to advertise in other school districts in an effort to draw choice-in students, crowd our buildings, and overwork our teachers when we are reaching building capacity.

Only after we have explored every option to fully utilize our existing assets like remodeling and modernizing Grace Best and clarifying our enrollment numbers after choice-in students have returned to their home districts, would I support possible new district buildings. We have not been presented with the most efficient stewardship of our tax dollars at this point. I believe more information, discussion, bids on Grace Best, and ideas are needed before an expensive MLO, or bond issue, is placed on the ballot.

Elizabeth Turner

Supporting long-range planning by school board

I want to commend the Lewis-Palmer School District for their hard work the past two years to pull together all the essential information and present so many different scenarios to the school board, administration, and the community. The district formed a committee of many different community members to sift through all of the detailed information and public comments presented and the committee has made an educated, well informed, recommendation to the school board and now we await their decision at the February school board meeting.

It is time for the board to decide. We can see the explosive growth in our district, with more developments being brought before planning commissions and boards weekly. The longer we wait to address it, the more it will cost and the less we will get for our money. Construction costs are increasing, and inter-

est rates are rising. Meanwhile, our middle school and some elementary schools are at capacity.

This decision will impact families in the Jackson Creek area positively by alleviating the crowding at Bear Creek Elementary School. Building a new elementary in that area and a second on available land in Forest Lakes will bring smaller class sizes and accommodate the growth. Teachers will have actual classrooms instead of working out of converted conference rooms. Our teachers and students need more room.

As a community, we need to support and encourage the school board to move forward with a decision to properly accommodate the current and projected growth in our district over the next five years and beyond. I am proud to see our district working together towards providing the best schools for all of our current and future students. Again, the community needs to support our teachers, administration, and most importantly our students and families.

Chris Thomas

The elephant in the room

More jobs and better pay is the mantra of both political parties. But no politician talks about robotics and artificial intelligence (AI) and what it will mean for our future. Will it be good or bad for us?

First, let's see where we are at. We already have multiple companies developing self-driving cars and trucks. Millions of truck, cab, and even Uber drivers will lose their jobs. This is definitely the future in transportation. Restaurants, hotels and retail—they all are testing robots to do their unskilled work.

Factories have used robots for years, especially in car manufacturing. Since 1980, robots have replaced millions of workers in manufacturing. Adidas recently moved a plant from China to Germany—to save money! In China, the company used inexpensive labor to put their shoes together. In Germany, it will just be robots. Remember, robots work 24/7/365. No breaks, no sleep, no vacations, no sick days, and no benefits. And to the surprise of coal miners championed by President Trump, they are being replaced by robotic trucks and mining equipment for both safety reasons and cost.

Now, you might be thinking that skilled labor is safe. Well, not so much. Think about going to a medical robot that knows everything that has ever been recorded about all human disease, illness, or injury. Medical robots know how to do every surgery. They never make a mistake and learn from their continuing collective knowledge. Engineering? Accounting? Lawyers? They will all eventually be replaced by AI for less cost and with better results.

When can this happen? Multiple reports say this will occur as soon as 10 and no more than 20 years. Well paying jobs? How about any job. This is a real social issue. It's not science fiction. It is our immediate future.

Kent Jarnig

■

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Exciting new fiction in paperback

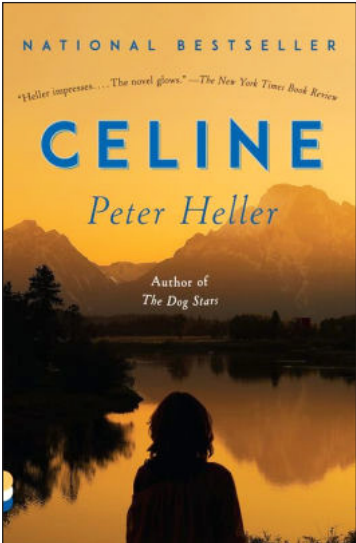
By the staff at Covered Treasures
“Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.”—Joseph Addison

Exercise your mind with exciting new fiction recently out in paperback.

Celine

By Peter Heller (Vintage) \$16

Local best-selling author Peter Heller has written a book based on his mother, her husband, and their real adventures in tracking down missing persons nobody else can find. Celine is not your typical private eye. Her background and her methods are unconventional but extremely successful. When a young woman employs her expertise, what was meant to be Celine’s last case becomes a scavenger hunt through her own memories, the secrets there, and the surprising redemptions. Celine and her partner follow a 20-year trail gone cold but soon realize that somebody desperately wants to keep this case closed.



and young daughter to the small mountain community in the majestic Italian Dolomites where his wife grew up, a close-knit community that does not take kindly to out-of-towners. As Salinger works to solve a 30-year-old crime, he unearths the long-kept secrets of this small town and the terrifying truth eventually revealed about the crime that marked an entire village.

The Perfect Nanny

By Leila Slimani (Penguin Books) \$16

When Myriam, a French-Moroccan lawyer, decides to return to work after having children, she and her husband look for the perfect nanny. They never dreamed they would find Louise: a quiet, polite, devoted woman who sings to the children, cleans their chic Paris apartment, stays late without complaint, and hosts enviable kiddie parties. But as the couple and the nanny become more dependent on one another, jealousy, resentment, and suspicions mount, shattering the idyllic tableau.

Midnight at the Bright Ideas Bookstore

By Matthew Sullivan (Scribner Book Co.) \$17

When bookshop patron Joey Molina kills himself, his favorite store clerk, Lydia, must unravel the puzzle he left behind. Lydia has been bequeathed his worldly possessions. But when she flips through his books, they seem to contain a hidden message. As Lydia untangles the mystery, she unearths a long-buried memory. Those details begin to circle back. Her distant father returns along with a local cop and a murderer who came into Lydia’s life long ago and never completely left.

Find Me

By J.S. Monroe (Park Row) \$15.99

Five years ago, brilliant Cambridge student Rosa jumped off a pier in the dead of night. Her death was

ruled a suicide. Rosa’s boyfriend is obsessed with proving that she is still alive. And then he gets an email. “Find me, Jar. Find me, before they do ...” As Jar digs into the past, he is thrust into the heart of a larger intrigue that may finally shed some light on Rosa’s death, even as it dangerously threatens his own life.

The Girl in Green

By Derek Miller (Mariner Books), \$14.99

One hundred miles from the Kuwaiti border, British journalist Thomas Benton meets American Private Arwood Hobbes. The two become embroiled in a horrific attack in which a young local girl in a green dress is killed as they are trying to protect her. Twenty-two years later, in another place, in another war, they meet again as changed men. Time, politics, or maybe fate is now offering an unlikely opportunity to redeem themselves when that same girl in green is found alive and in need of salvation. Or is she?

Where the Line Bleeds

By Jesmyn Ward (Scribner Book Co.) \$15

Written by the author of the bestseller Sing, Unburied, Sing, the story centers around twins Joshua and Christophe and the different paths they take as they wrestle with adulthood in a small Southern town, raised by a blind grandmother and a large extended family. It is a closely observed portrait of fraternal love and strife, the relentless grind of poverty, the toll of addiction on a family, and the bonds that can sustain or torment us.

“A book is a dream you hold in your hands.”
—Neil Gaiman

Enjoy some great new fiction, and, until next month, happy reading.

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

February Library Events

Learn about the health benefits of chocolate and about Chinese New Year customs

By Harriet Halbig

The library will offer a variety of opportunities to try something new in February. Teens are invited to learn about Chinese New Year foods and customs, and adults are invited to take a drawing class from members of the Palmer Lake Art Group or create spa items for gifts or personal use.

All patrons ages 18 and up are also encouraged to register in the Winter Adult Reading Program. The program runs until March 14. After reading four books, patrons receive a Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory chocolate bar and a bag of cheese popcorn. If you read eight books by March 14, you will also receive a handsome coffee mug. There will also be drawings for gift baskets and the grand prize of a Samsung Galaxy Tablet.

Family programs

The Fun for the Family program from 2:30 to 3:30 on Saturday, Feb. 10 will be Prince and Princess Day. All subjects are welcome to dress up as princes, princesses, or any other creature of the realm to partake of marshmallow castle building.

The Lego Build Club will meet from 10 to 11:30 on Saturday, Feb. 17. Build to your heart’s content with other enthusiasts.

Teen programs

The Monument Teen Creative Writing Group will meet in the study room from 6 to 7:30 on Tuesday, Feb. 6. This group for grades 6 to 12 offers the opportunity to meet fellow writers, share ideas, do writing exercises, and enjoy tasty snacks.

Teens are welcome to participate in an intergenerational knitting group, which will meet from 3 to 4:30 on Wednesday, Feb. 7 and 14. Practice materials are provided, but attendees are encouraged to bring their own projects. Some instruction provided to those new to the craft.

Free math tutoring is offered every Monday from 3:30 to 7 in the Monument meeting and study rooms. The Aftermath program pairs students with experienced adult tutors. The program is offered throughout the school year, following the D-38 calendar and

is open to students at all levels. There will be no Aftermath on Feb. 19 as the library will be closed for Presidents Day.

There will be a program for teens from 4 to 5 on Friday, Feb. 9 to celebrate the upcoming Chinese New Year. It’s the Year of the Dog! Join us to make Chinese paper lanterns, try your hand at calligraphy, eat Chinese snacks, and learn about the holiday. Reservations are recommended.

The Monument Library Anime Club will meet from 5 to 6:30 on Thursday, Feb. 22. Share your enthusiasm for anime with others, enjoy snacks, and help shape the anime club for future months. You can help decide what to watch—nothing rated above TV-14. This program is recommended for those 13-14 and up.

The Teen Arts and Crafts Studio for February is Mug Meals and Sharpie Mugs. The program from 4 to 5:30 on Wednesday, Feb. 28 will demonstrate cooking delicious mug meals in the microwave and decorating your own mug with Sharpies (to be baked in the oven to seal the design when you get home).

Adult programs

See above section for description of intergenerational knitting

Come to the library from 6:30 to 7:30 on Wednesday, Feb. 7 to hear Nutritional Health Coach Ginie Stowe tell how you can use chocolate to enhance your health. Chocolate-dipped strawberries will be served! Registration is required at 488-2370.

The Second Thursday Craft for February is Self-Care. Come to the library from 2 to 4 on Thursday, Feb. 8 to make bath bombs, body scrubs, and more to pamper yourself or someone else. Registration is required and opens a week before the craft.

The Monumental Bookworms book club will meet from 7 to 8:30 on Tuesday, Feb. 13 to discuss The Zookeeper’s Wife by Diane Ackerman. This book group, sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of the Library, is open to all. No registration necessary.

Have you wanted to try your hand at drawing? Members of the Palmer Lake Art Group will teach be-

ginning and intermediate drawing classes beginning on Thursday, Feb. 15 from 1 to 3. Some supplies will be provided, but please bring paper, pencil, and erasers if you have them. Space is limited and registration is required. Open to ages 18 and up.

The Monumental Readers will meet from 10 to noon on Friday, Feb. 16 to discuss Extraordinary Women of the Rocky Mountain West by the Pikes Peak Library District (PPLD). All patrons are welcome to attend this monthly book group.

Do you love photography? Maker-in-Residence Charlie Mussi will offer a fun, free class perfect for anyone seeking to find or share tips and techniques and engage in digital photography discussions. We will also learn more about the photography resources at PPLD. All adults are welcome, including beginners. Bring any camera or phone camera that you choose, but a camera is not necessary. All other supplies will be provided. The program will be from 2 to 4:30 on Friday, Feb. 16. Registration is required.

Art work on the walls and in the display case during February will be provided by students of Lewis-Palmer High School.

Palmer Lake Library events

The Palmer Lake Book Group meets at 9 a.m. on the first Friday of each month. The selection for March 2 is Commonwealth by Ann Patchett. All patrons are welcome to attend.

February’s Family Fun program on Saturday, Feb. 17 at 10:30 is The Party People: Imagination Magic. Enjoy this action-packed trip to a place where all secrets are kept—the place where you are limited only by your imagination—the library!

Palmer Lake Story Times are at 10:30 on Wednesdays, and Toddler Time is at 10:30 on Saturdays.

Please note that all PPLD facilities will be closed on Feb. 19 for Presidents Day.

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

Palmer Lake Historical Society, Jan. 18

Officers elected at annual meeting

By Sigi Walker

The Palmer Lake Historical Society held its Annual Potluck and Membership Meeting on Jan. 18. The Society furnished the ham, rolls, coffee and tea. Attendees brought a wide array of delicious side dishes, salads, and fruit. Jim Sawatski's film, *The Village on the Divide*, a history of Palmer Lake, capped off the evening.

The Membership Meeting began with the election of 2018 officers. The 2018 Board of Directors consists of Tom Baker, Arlene Fisher-Olson, Su Ketchmark, Michele Lawrie-Munro, Pat McCarthy, Barbara Morehead, Melissa Robohn, and Rodger Voelker.

PLHS President Tom Baker presented a slide presentation of the Society's 2017 activities and accomplishments. Programs informed us about Colorado coal baron John Osgood, Bob Easterly's grandfather and the GAR, the Alexander Film Co., Charles Goodnight in Colorado, hummingbirds and how to attract them, Pete Seeger's life and songs, historic homes in our area, a potpourri of Rich Luckin videos, and Sawatski's film, *Star on Sundance*. We hosted two events: the Annual Fathers' Day Ice Cream Social and the Annual Return of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua. All were free and open to all.

Education and outreach activities

The Society published three issues of the PLHS news-



Above: The 2018 Palmer Lake Historical Society board is composed of, first row, from left, Arlene Fisher Olson, Su Ketchmark, and Barbara Morehead. Second row, from left, are Michele Lawrie-Munro, Tom Baker, Melissa Robohn, and Rodger Voelker. *Photo by Mike Walker.*

letter; awarded two \$500 scholarships to Palmer Lake high school students; completed furnishing the interior of the Palmer Lake jail; maintained the PLHS website and two social media sites, Facebook and Nextdoor; supported the renovation and rededica-

tion of Palmer Lake's Crawford Memorial; supported the Coalition of Pikes Peak Historical Museums; and had PLHS information tables in support of the One Nation Walking Together Powwow and the Western Museum of Mining & Industry's "Restoration Day" and summer programs.

The 2018 Tri-Lakes Historical Calendar, featuring a cover painting by Joe Bohler and supported by our advertisers, was available at the meeting, as was the 2018 Programs and Events Schedule.

Mark your calendars for Thursday, Feb. 15, when John Engs will tell the story of the ongoing restoration of 129-year-old Pullman tourist sleeper car 470 to its original condition. Tourist sleepers brought workers to Colorado mines, ranches, and railroads and homesteaders to settle the West. On Saturday, Feb. 17 at 10:30 a.m., there will be a tour of the restoration site at the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum, 2333 Steel Drive. Engs has been a "Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR" volunteer for 20 years and site leader of the Car 470 restoration group since 2007.

This program is free and open to all. Feb. 15's venue is the Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the program begins at 7. Light refreshments are served after the presentation.

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Bird Watch on the Palmer Divide

Sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)

By Elizabeth Hacker

In January, I wrote about the largest of the three accipiters, the northern goshawk. Thanks to the beautiful photos submitted by Beth Courrau, I learned more about this remarkable bird.

As luck would have it, Sunday morning while filling my feeders, I caught a glimpse of what I suspected was a sharp-shinned hawk, the smallest of the three accipiter hawks. Unlike Beth, I am not a skilled photographer, so I draw what I see.

Much later that afternoon, a male sharp-shinned sat at the birdbath near my back door. Could it have been the one I saw earlier that day? I tried to stay hidden, but he must have known I was watching him because he kept one eye on the house and the other on the yard, possibly watching for a larger hawk or another little bird. Just before sunset, he flew off into a conifer tree.

After observing him for more than an hour, my guess is that he'd had his fill of dark-eyed juncos and was resting in a relatively safe spot while cleaning his feet and feathers at my birdbath before flying off to secure a safe perch for the night.

Description

Sharp-shinned hawks are small raptors with short, rounded wings, and a long rudder-like, squared-off tail. The male sharpie weighs about 11 ounces, a little larger than a blue jay, but the female is a third again as large, approaching the size of a crow.

The juvenile is brown on top and light underneath with dark brown streaks on its breast feathers. Adults have grayish feathers on top, and the underside is white with rufous (reddish-brown) barring. Juvenile eyes are yellow while adult eyes are red. Sharpies are speedy, acrobatic fliers.

Accipiter legs and feet are longer and skinny, which may explain why I never see them perched on a wire. As the sharpie at my birdbath stepped in and out of the water, I was able to get a close-up view of his long thin legs, nimble feet, and needle-like talons. They appeared almost delicate, but if I were a sparrow I might not describe them that way.

Habitat

Accipiters are forest dwellers. They can be found across most of North America. Unlike the other two accipiter species (goshawk and Cooper's hawk) that fly in or very near to a forest, sharp-shinned hawks are often seen in open fields, towns, and city parks.

Diet

The larger female will hunt birds as large as pigeons, but sparrow-size birds make up the bulk of a sharpie's diet. Less frequently, it will eat rodents and large insects.

Unlike owls, sharp-shinned hawks do not con-



Above: A juvenile sharp-shinned hawk: It isn't easy to judge the size of a bird in flight. *Illustration by Elizabeth Hacker.*



Above: An adult sharp-shinned hawk: a small bird with a big attitude. *Illustration by Elizabeth Hacker.*

sume feathers. A sharpie is so fast that it surprises its prey, impaling it with one of its long sharp talons. It carries its prey to a perch where it first eats the head, then removes the feathers before consuming the rest of the bird. On Sunday, I noticed a lot of feathers in my yard. Could it be that the sharpie perched on my birdbath had feasted on birds in my yard?

Nesting

Nesting occurs when migratory birds begin to arrive on the Divide, usually early in May. The male and female work together to build a nest of sticks and bark. Often they place it on top of an abandoned squirrels' nest. The female lays up to five eggs over a period of two weeks. She broods them for about a month while the male brings food to the nest. Within three to four weeks, the nestlings begin to venture out, walking along nearby branches. In another two weeks, the parents begin to fly by the nest with prey to entice the young to fly after them to get the food. In a few more weeks, the juveniles will have reached the size of their parents and will leave to establish their own territories.

Migration

As a species, sharp-shinned hawks migrate annually from Canada to the southern United States. However, many Colorado sharpies are year-round residents that move up and down in elevation, known as regional migration.

Conservation status

At one time, the numbers of sharp-shinned hawks, like bald eagles, were threatened due to the use of DDT. Since DDT was banned, like the eagles, their numbers are increasing.

2018 is the Year of the Bird

National Geographic, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and the Audubon Society have declared 2018 the Year of the Bird. This year marks the centennial for the ratification of the North American Migratory Bird Treaty (1918) between Canada and the United States that today protects 1,025 non-game birds worldwide.

Prior to the ratification of this treaty, non-game birds were hunted indiscriminately for sport and the fashion industry. Herons, favored for their long, elegant plumbs popular on lady's hats, were hunted to near extinction. The great blue heron became the symbol of the Audubon Society in its effort to save this and many other non-game birds.

To celebrate their Year of the Bird, National Geographic is featuring a series of essays by Jonathan Franzen on "Why Birds Matter." Biologist and conservationist Thomas Lovejoy, who introduced the term "biological diversity," believes, "If you take care of the birds, you take care of most of the big problems in the world."

In this very special year, it is indeed a privilege to write this column and share my observation about the birds that live in and migrate to the Palmer Divide. I always enjoy hearing from readers, so please contact me with your photos and stories!

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

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Success is local wisdom for local garden pioneers

By Janet Sellers

Most of us are pioneers in this forest area, meaning we are new to the forest habitat at such a high altitude, and our forests have a lot to teach us. While the ground outdoors is pretty much frozen solid now (I know because I attempted to dig a hole and it was rock hard), we have things we can do and learn now for when it warms up in a few months.

A lot of times we don't know things about the soil or habitat where we have just moved—or even if we lived in that place for a long time—and our gardening ways could be ineffective. Learning to use local gardening wisdom for our specific clime and micro habitat here in our high altitude will create a thriving personal outdoor space that respects our forests and our desires for a familiar garden. As the months warm up, I'll include more outdoor success secrets, but for

now ...

During the cold months, we can try our hand at indoor gardening. I am glad to report that the banana tea I wrote about last month—soak banana peels in water for one or two days—has worked wonders on my indoor flowering plants (I brought my porch pots of geraniums and other perennials indoors to my sunny windows.) More than the organic liquid fertilizer I bought for a pretty penny last year, this concoction treated my plants, and our household, to deep green leaves, flower buds ready to pop open, and new shoots.

Other ideas my readers and I have used to great success: adding such things to the soil as Epsom salts (just a smidge!) coffee grounds, and ground egg shells. After they are rinsed and dried, I just grind the things up in my blender and sprinkle a couple table-

spoons into a pot. I even put these things in the pots separately when I have them.

Some might want to experiment and be very exact in using this soil supplement to amend their soils. The lazy version is throwing the items in the plant pot separately or mixed—even without grinding—without concern for a highly specific mix or amount, just dump it in. Grinding will free up the nutrients faster, but there is no wrong way to do it. The plant soil in a pot will likely need no more than a couple table-

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

February is for art made with love



By Janet Sellers

I spoke with local wood artist Rick Squires about his new series of wooden bowls recently at Southwinds Fine Art Gallery as he was preparing his new exhibit there. Squires has been doing fine woodworking for quite some time, both for his home and for large outdoor art sculptures. He has a generous area of his acreage near his pond dedicated to the outdoor sculptures in wood.

Squires' interest in woodworking has been lifelong. His father was an accomplished master woodworker, and Squires' love of the work began back in Wisconsin in his early youth. In many of the bowls, he uses exotic and nonlocal woods, and he has by now turned more than 30 different types of wood. One of his current favorites is cedar, with its variety of colors throughout the wood. Some works have light blonde, red, and dark brown in the same bowl.

Since I am interested in and constantly thinking about our local ponderosa pine forests and culturally modified living trees, I asked him about using ponderosa pine. Although pine is not his favorite, he has made interesting bowls with it that show the grain of the wood, including using the tree rings as a pattern and the knots/areas where small branches were. He showed me a bowl he had turned while it was "green" that had slightly warped into an interesting part on the outer shape, although the inside looked smooth and perfect.

To begin, he took a ponderosa log from his wood stockpile and cut it down the center so it fell into two halves down the grain lengthwise. The critical thing with the wood is that he could have turned it on the lathe and almost finished the bowl, but at the end there is a possibility of hitting a knot or other part and that could have destroyed the bowl, rendering the entire project into pieces. So, there is a lot of skill as



Above: Rick Squires the wood turner and Marlene Brown, gallery manager for Southwinds Fine Art Gallery, hold some of Squires' newest fine art bowls as they prepare his premiere exhibit with the gallery. Squires will be at the gallery's Feb. 9 Friday night art event, "Second Weekends Champagne Tour 2018," to share his art and woodworking knowledge with guests. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

well as good fortune in working with the woods and getting to actually finish a wooden bowl. He said the ponderosa bowl he showed me is not for sale, because of the preciousity, saying, "it was a miracle that I could finish it." I suspect the spirit of the tree liked him and let him finish it, and I liked the pattern of lines from the growth rings in the way he used the wood.

Recently, on some of the bowls, he has added lids that include petrified wood or gemstone clusters such as amethyst, and he has inlaid turquoise in other

bowls. He said he sometimes looks at a log or piece of wood for months before beginning on the bowl, and then as he begins to work, under the bark, the tree's wood reveals itself to him, kind of soul to soul, as he works. He says in his artist statement that, "The pleasure of turning each piece and completing the entire work of art is like bonding two souls to create a new personality and a new friendship."

Art events to love for February

Gallery 132—Local artisan cooperative features art and ad hoc classes on site. Glassblowing demo Saturday, **Feb. 24**, 11 to noon by Jody Welch, and glass trunk show. Various other events available, details at the gallery at 251 Front St., Monument.

Southwinds Fine Art Gallery—Second Weekends Champagne Tour Friday, **Feb. 9**, 4-9 p.m., artist talk at 7 p.m. Showcase of the Ute Spirit Trees forest paintings exhibit has been extended, with a talk by the artist, Janet Sellers, at 7 p.m. and a guest appearance by wood artist Rick Squires, who will share his latest turned wood bowls; light refreshments. The Saturday afternoon tea Feb. 10 features the gallery's member artists.

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

Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts—Palmer Lake Art Group Winter Fine Art Show **Jan. 30-Feb. 23**, multiple artist members, sales benefit scholarship funds for local students. 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake.

Janet Sellers is an award-winning artist, writer, and speaker. She teaches art and creative writing locally in the studio and on location at local scenic spots.

Contact her at janetsellers@ocn.me

Snapshots of Our Community

Meals on Wheels



Above: Peggy Leidel, right, the Meals on Wheels (MOW) supervisor for Silver Key, delivers meals to Karen Proffitt, a MOW volunteer. The meals are picked up at Tri-Lakes Cares and then delivered to clients Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. MOW needs volunteer drivers. Anyone interested should fill out an application with Silver Key and pass a background check. For further information, contact Silver Key at 884-2370 or Sue Cliatt, the Tri-Lakes coordinator, at 481-3175. *Photo by Sue Cliatt.*

Legacy Sertoma rings the bell



Above: Collections from Legacy Sertoma's 78 hours of bell ringing at the Monument Walgreens for the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign are passed to Lt. Jennifer Larson by club President Denny Myers, left, and Eddie Kinney, event chairman, on Jan. 8. The bell ringers raised \$4,000.83. *Photo courtesy of Legacy Sertoma.*

Active Shooter class, Jan. 10



Above: Monument Police Chief Jake Shirk taught an Active Shooter class for local residents on Jan. 10. The class included a lecture, slides, videos, and questions and answers. The class focused on best practices for an active shooter event, what to do if one finds oneself in such an event, how to recognize the signs of potential violence, and what to expect after an active shooting takes place. Chief Shirk explained the importance of situational awareness for one's family is vital to survival. People should prepare and practice for their own safety, because police officers cannot get to a situation in time to prevent it, they are called after an event is going on. Shirk said we all should look at where we are through the lens of survival and make a plan before anything happens and rehearse it. It is a good idea to know where each family or group member will be, figure out a path of escape, and be prepared to escape, hide, or fight. More classes can be requested via the Police Department, and immediate further information is online at www.ready.gov/active-shooter. *Photo by Janet Sellers*

Patrick at Gallery 132, Jan. 13

Right: Acoustic guitarist Dave Patrick played a wide variety of music, ranging from The Girl from Ipanema to Moonlight Sonata at Gallery 132 in Monument on Jan. 13. Crowds gathered to listen, and some even pulled up chairs to sit and enjoy his relaxing style and selection. This was Patrick's first visit to the Tri-Lakes area, and he plans to return. *Photo courtesy of Jennifer Cunningham.*



The Blood Vessel, Jan. 16



Above: The Penrose-St. Francis Blood Bank brought its "Blood Vessel" to Monument in January. The mobile unit stopped at Monument Community Presbyterian Church on Jan. 16. Blood Bank staff had conducted a donation drive at St. Peter Catholic Church earlier in the week and planned to visit DePuy Synthes a few days after Community Presbyterian's blood drive. Donor phlebotomist Catherine Hanlon (pictured in the inset drawing blood from Susan Permut) stated, "Each pint can save up to three lives." Photos of recipient children adorn the walls inside the blood mobile. Their stories confirm that life's unpleasant surprises can involve hospitals and surgeries. The four-step process usually takes 20 to 45 minutes, but it depends on each donor's circumstances. The Blood Vessel provides a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere, and snacks provide post-donation energy. Penrose-St. Francis strives to schedule the Blood Vessel to be "on location" weekly. If your organization is interested in hosting a blood drive, call 719-776-5714. If you are interested in donating blood, visit the website www.penrosetstfrancis.org or call 719-776-5822.

Winter Woodland Wonders



Above: One chilly morning in January, children and adults explored Fox Run Park in search of wildlife. Mary Jo Lewis, Bear Creek Nature Center supervisor, led a two-hour hike Jan. 13, expertly pointing out plants and animals that live in the park. While we walked, we discussed winter survival techniques employed in nature. Two young adventurers in the group sought out and found big and small evergreens, including bearberry and ponderosa pines. If you smell the pine bark, you might get a whiff of vanilla or butterscotch! Fox squirrels followed us from high in the trees, chittering as we viewed the mess of pine cones below their nest. We sought out, but didn't find Abert's squirrels with their tufted ears, and porcupines, which also nest in trees. For information on hikes offered by El Paso County, go to www.elpasocountynaturecenters.com, then search through Programs and Classes. *Photo by Allison Robenstein*

Benet Hill concert, Jan. 14



Above: On Jan. 14, the Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery hosted House Parish Baroque, a quartet specializing in the music of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. The afternoon sun glimmered through the windows of Our Lady of Peace Chapel while the four played Elizabethan-era folk tunes. Artistic Director Elisa Wicks acted as emcee, explaining song origins and creating the baroque violin's ethereal, almost mysterious sound as bow was pulled across strings. Jennifer Carpenter's recorder and Pam Chaddon's cello kept bass undercurrents, while Eric Wicks' harpsichord created a crisp, sharp sound as if playing a crystal guitar. Soprano Amanda Balestrieri sang with the group, creating pleasingly coherent harmonies. In *Flow, My Tears* by John Dowland, Balestrieri's voice was the counterpart to the instruments' sound flowing along the ups and downs of a serene path. At times, listeners swayed to the music, and children snuggled with their parents. *Photo by Allison Robenstein*

Outpouring the news, Jan. 16



Above: Hannah Blick, editor of *The Tri-Lakes Tribune* since Dec. 6, 2017, spoke at the January 16 meeting of Outpourings organized by the Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church. She spoke before an audience of about 20 on “The role of small-town newspapers in today’s online world.” She noted that in today’s world we have many options for news, not all of which are accurate. Quoting from the June 2016 edition of the *Editor & Publisher Journal*: “Small community newspapers are not just surviving but thriving. Residents are eager for news about their own communities and 67 percent of residents in small communities read local papers from one to seven days a week.” She said she finds this encouraging as a journalist stepping into the field. Blick has been in the Colorado Springs area for 5 1/2 years and grew up on a farm in Kansas. She has worked at *The Gazette* since she moved here, focusing on community news for two years. She noted that *The Tribune* is under the Pikes Peak Newspapers (PPN) umbrella along with the *Pikes Peak Courier*, *The Cheyenne Edition*, and *The Woodmen Edition*, each of which provides hyperlocal news for its respective community. PPN, which was started in 2015, is an arm of *The Gazette* that is owned by Clarity Media. *The Tribune* joined PPN in 2016 to take advantage of resource sharing. Blick noted that *The Tribune* has been in print for more than 50 years and is a record of the region’s history as well as providing a chance to celebrate, investigate, and understand the community around us. She noted that the readership demographic for *The Tribune* skews older and has a higher socio-economic level. All driveways are supposed to get a paper, and the local office on Washington Street has bound issues that are also available in libraries. Blick described the Tri-Lakes area as a wonderful community but noted that residents are the least engaged compared to other small communities. She encouraged residents to send photos, write letters and guest columns, and submit event notices and tips. She said that a local newspaper is as much a community service as other roles. 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>. Photos by Jackie Burhans.

RMMA concert, Jan. 20



Above: Tsvetana Bandalovska, soprano, is a principal artist at the Sofia National Opera in Bulgaria. On Jan. 20, she joined Rocky Mountain Music Alliance (RMMA) Artistic Director Dr. Zahari Metchkov, piano, for a concert in the 2017-18 RMMA series. Music of the evening included a song cycle by Richard Strauss, songs by Rachmaninoff, Bulgarian folk songs, and opera arias by Dvorak, Verdi, Massenet and Wagner. RMMA’s last concert for this season will be March 16 at the Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church in Monument, when the Shaffer-Garibova-Kluksdahl Piano Trio will perform music by Haydn, Schubert, and Brahms. For more information and tickets, go to www.RMMAConcerts.org. Photo by Barbara Taylor.

Why advertise in OCN?

- **OCN is mailed FREE to every resident and business in the Tri-Lakes area.** We mail more than 17,500 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 Tri-Lakes area 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 **\$57,500!**
- **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 businesses.

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 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.

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.

Volunteers needed for El Paso County Board of Health, apply by Feb. 5

The Board of Health seeks one elected official from a municipality other than Colorado Springs who represents a small community. Applications are due by **Feb. 5**. The volunteer application is located at www.elpasoco.com. Click on the “Volunteer Boards” link. For more information, call 520-6436 or visit www.elpasoco.com.

Tri-Lakes Women’s Club Announces 2018 Grant Process, ends March 15

Tri-Lakes Women’s Club’s (TLWC) grant application for 2018 are available online through March 15 on the TLWC website, www.tlwc.net. Eligible organizations include non-profit 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.

D-38 seeks licensed preschool facilities, apply by March 19

Lewis-Palmer School District 38 is seeking to establish new contractual agreements with qualified, licensed child care/preschool facilities for the operation of preschool programs for high-risk children. Application packets are available in the Lewis-Palmer School District Administration Building’s Main Office, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Packets must be returned by March 19. For more information, please contact Julie Jadowski, LPSD early childhood coordinator, at 510-7440.

Yoga classes at Woodmoor Barn

Raleigh Dove is now teaching three weekly yoga classes at the Woodmoor Barn. Classes are open to everyone, and each class is a different level. For more information, visit www.yogapathwaysstudio.com. See ad on page 4.

Tri-Lakes Y Youth Spring Sports, register now
Practices begin April 2 for outdoor soccer, volleyball, and flag football; April 14 for indoor soccer. Financial assistance is available. Register at www.ppymca.org or at the Y, 17250 Jackson Creek Parkway, Monument. See ad on page 6.

Monument Hill Kiwanis grants, apply April 1-May 15

The Monument Hill Foundation, the charitable arm of the Monument Hill Kiwanis Club, has an annual granting program. Grants are awarded to charities as defined by the IRS, to various qualifying youth activities, and to schools for various educational activities and scholarships. Applications will be accepted **April 1 through May 15**. The grant application is available at www.monumenthillkiwanis.org/forms/mhlf_grants. See ad on page 19.

Free income tax help

Through its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, Pikes Peak United Way, in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service, provides free income tax preparation assistance to individuals and families with a household income of \$54,000 a year or less. To find out if you qualify or to schedule an appointment, call 2-1-1 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; or visit www.ppunitedway.org/vitaeitc.html.

Upcoming elections

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

2018 Trees for Conservation seedling tree program

The Colorado State Forest Service Nursery provides land-

owners with low-cost container and bare root seedlings to help achieve conservation goals such as restoring land after fires, floods and natural disasters; growing shelterbelts, windbreaks and living snow fences; providing wildlife and pollinator habitats; protecting homes, cropland and livestock; and stabilizing soil and controlling erosion. Order online until **April 4** at <https://csfs.colostate.edu/buying-seedling-trees>.

MVEA board nominations open

The board election will take place during the annual meeting **June 7**. If you are interested in being a candidate, find application details at www.mvea.coop. For more information, phone 719-494-2528 or email candidate@mvea.org. See ad on page 14.

Host families needed

Become a host family for only one month this summer! Host a student from Europe in June/July. Family will receive a stipend to support activities. For more information, phone 481-4412 or visit www.xploreUSA.org. See ad on page 4.

Air Force Academy construction project at South Gate Bridge, through June 2019

The New Santa Fe Regional Trail will remain open through the construction site; all trail users must use the metal connect box tunnel. All bicycle and horseback riders must dismount before entering the tunnel. Periodic trail closures at the South Gate Bridge will be scheduled and posted in advance. When a scheduled trail closure is in place, the trail will be blocked and closed only at the South Gate Bridge. Trail users are encouraged to check the Northgate Trailhead and Ice Lake Trailhead for information regarding construction and closure information and updates. For questions regarding the project and trail closures, contact Construction Superintendent Fred Langan, 719-213-1332 or Fred.langan@Tepa.com; or El Paso County Project Manager Jason Meyer, 520-6985 or jasonmeyer@elpasoco.com.

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. To volunteer, call 488-3495.

Monument Academy now enrolling

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

St. Peter Catholic School now enrolling

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. Call or visit: 124 First St., Monument; 481-1855; www.petertherock.org. See ad on page 2.

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, attend a CASA 4-1-1 Hour, **Feb. 5**, 5:30-6:30 p.m., 418 S. Weber St., Colo. Springs; contact Uriko Stout, 447-9898 ext. 1060, urikos@casappr.org; or visit www.casappr.org.

Free 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

Mountain Community Transportation for Seniors is a non-profit, 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 Mountain Community Senior Services at mc-seniorservices@gmail.com or call the MCSS dispatch hotline at 488-0076.

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 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.

Expanded hours at the Senior Center

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.

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://yourenergy.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. ■

MISTY ACRES METROPOLITAN DISTRICT NOTICE OF AMENDED 2017 BUDGET

NOTICE is GIVEN that an amendment to the 2017 budget has been submitted to the Board of Directors; a copy of such proposed amended budget is on file at 1845 Lantern Tree Grove, Monument, CO 80132, where the same is open for public inspection.

Such proposed budget and amended budget will be considered at a public hearing during a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors to be held at 1845 Lantern Tree Grove, Monument, CO 80132 on Thursday, February 15th at 6:00 PM. Any interested elector of the Misty Acres Metropolitan District may inspect the proposed budget or amended budget and file or register any objections thereto at any time prior to the final adoption of the amended budget.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
MISTY ACRES METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

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

- **Forest Lakes & Pinon Pines Metropolitan Districts Board Meeting**, Mon., **Feb. 5**, 10:30 a.m., 6385 Corporate Dr., Suite 200, Colo. Springs. Meets 1st Mon. each month. Info: 327-5810.
- **D38 Deliberates: Community Engagement Opportunity**, Mon., **Feb. 5**, 6-7:45 p.m., 146 N. Jefferson St. Share your thoughts and ideas and learn more about future school facilities options. RSVP & Info: dsimington@lewispalmer.org, info@lewispalmer.org. See ad on page 9.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., **Feb. 5**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., **Feb. 6**, 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.
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Thu., **Feb. 8**, 1 p.m., 1845 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 488-2525, www.woodmoorwater.com.
- **Monument Academy School Board Meeting**, Thu., **Feb. 8**, 6 p.m., school library, 1150 Village Ridge Point, Monument. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 481-1950, www.monumentacademy.net/school-board.
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Meeting**, Thu., **Feb. 8**, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee Meeting**, Tue., **Feb. 13**, 10 a.m., 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Bill Burks, 481-4053.
- **Triview Metropolitan District Board Meeting**, Tue., **Feb. 13**, 5 p.m., 15275 Struthers Rd. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: 488-6868, www.colorado.gov/triviewmetro.
- **D-38 Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) Meeting**, Tue., **Feb. 13**, 7-8:30 p.m., Prairie Winds Elementary School, 790 Kings Deer Point, Monument. Meets 2nd Tue. each month, location varies. Info: 488-4700, www.lewispalmer.org.
- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Feb. 14**, 9 a.m., 120 Middle Glenway. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2732. www.plsd.org.
- **Donala Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Thu., **Feb. 15**, 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., **Feb. 15**, 6 p.m., Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 488-4700, www.lewispalmer.org.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., **Feb. 20**, 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., **Feb. 20**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **Wescott Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Tue., **Feb. 20**, 7 p.m., Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Normally meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: 488-8680.
- **Monument Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Feb. 21**, 9 a.m., 130 2nd St. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-4886.
- **Academy Water and Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Feb. 21**, 6 p.m., Wescott Fire Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-0711.
- **Forest View Acres Water District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Feb. 28**, 6 p.m., Monument Sanitation District board room, 130 Second St. Normally meets 4th Wed. each month, Info: 488-2110, www.fvawd.com.
- **Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Feb. 28**, 6:30 p.m., TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105. Meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: Jennifer Martin, 484-0911, www.tlmfire.org.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., **Feb. 28**, 7 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. 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 Feb. 19 for Presidents’ 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 Glen-

way. 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.

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.
- **The Wine Seller Free Wine Tastings**, every **Sat.**, 1-4 p.m., 2805 Roberts Dr., Monument. Info: 488-3019, www.thewineseller.net. See ad on page 3.
- **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.americanlegiontrilakespost911.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.fuelchurch.org. See ad on page 10.
- **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. Info: 488-1365, www.tlumc.org. See ad on page 3.
- **Cathedral Rock Church** Sunday Service, every **Sun.**, 10 a.m., Tri-Lakes YMCA, 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy, Monument. Info: www.cathedralrockchurch.org. See ad on page 11.
- **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.townofpalmerlake.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.
- **Artfully Speaking Toastmasters**, every **Mon.**, 5:45 p.m., DeVry University, 1175 Kelly Johnson Blvd., room 13. Info: Jon Walsh, 640-9428; www.artfully-speaking.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: \$10 adults, \$9 military/AAA, \$8 seniors & students, \$6 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. 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.

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.
- **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.lewispalmer.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.
- **Group of Artists (GOA) Meetings** at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, Sat., **Feb. 3**, 10 a.m.-noon, 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Lively discussions about art topics, general studies on creativity. Meets 1st Sat. each month. Info: 481-0475, info@trilakesarts.org, www.trilakesarts.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Land Use Committee Meeting**, Mon., **Feb. 5**, 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. Meets 1st Mon. each month. Info: TriLakesluc@gmail.com.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber Monthly Education Series: Developing Your Online Marketing Strategy**, Tue., **Feb. 6**, 9-11 a.m., 166 Second St., Monument. Free. Register online, www.trilakeschamber.com/events-calendar.htm. Info: 481-3282.
- **Gleneagle Sertoma Luncheon Meeting**, Wed., **Feb. 7**, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., Liberty Heights, 12105 Ambassador Dr., Colo. 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**, Thu., **Feb. 8**, 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., **Feb. 8**, 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., **Feb. 8**, 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., **Feb. 8**, 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., **Feb. 9**, 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.
- **El Paso County Hazardous Materials & Recycling Collection Facility**, Sat., **Feb. 10**, 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_Manage-

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- ment.
- **Palmer Lake Art Group**, Sat., **Feb. 10**, 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., **Feb. 10**, 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., **Feb. 10**, 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.
 - **Palmer Divide Photographers Group: Wandering Through Southern New Mexico**, Mon., **Feb. 12**, 7 p.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Jim and Marjorie Van Hoy will present a program about their trips to the Tularosa Valley in Southern New Mexico. All are welcome. Meets 2nd Mon. each month. Info: www.pdphotographers.com.
 - **Chess Nuts**, Tue., **Feb. 13**, 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., **Feb. 13**, 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., **Feb. 14**, noon, Black Forest Lutheran Church, 12455 Black Forest Rd. Hilary Valdez from Penrose Hospital will speak on heart health. All ages welcome. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: Stan, 596-6787, or www.aarpchapter1100blackforest.weebly.com.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Wed., **Feb. 14**, 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 Tea**, Thu., **Feb. 15**, 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: Restoration of D&RG 1889 Tourist Sleeper Car 470**, Thu., **Feb. 15**, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. This program is free and open to all, refreshments served. Tour the restoration site Feb. 17 (see Special Events), 10:30 a.m. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 559-0837, www.palmerdividehistory.org.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., **Feb. 16**, 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., **Feb. 17**, 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. Info: 592-9420. See ad on page 5.
 - **Tri-Lakes Parkinson’s Disease Support Group**, Sat., **Feb. 17**, 10 a.m.-noon, Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St, Monument. Come for socializing, discussions on Parkinson’s-related issues including available support, and occasional speakers. Meets 3rd Sat. each month. Info: John Farley, 481-2364, robun2good@gmail.com; or Syble Krafft, 488-2669.
 - **Amateur Radio W0TLM** (Tri-Lakes Monument Radio Association), Mon., **Feb. 19**, 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.
 - **Outpouring: TLUMC Supporting our Community**, Tue., **Feb. 20**, 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., **Feb. 21**, 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., **Feb. 21**, 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., **Feb. 21**, 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., **Feb. 21**, 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., **Feb. 21**, 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.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., **Feb. 23**, 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.
 - **Chess Nuts**, Tue., **Feb. 27**, 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.
 - **Senior Social**, Wed., **Feb. 28**, 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.
 - **Free Lunch and Learn: Multi-Systemic Therapy**, Wed., **Feb. 28**, 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.
 - **Monument Homemakers Club Monthly Potluck Lunch & Meeting**, Thu., **Mar. 1**, 11:30 a.m., Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, 166 Second St., Monument. Meets 1st Thu. each month except Jan. and unless D-38 is delayed or closed. Newcomers welcome. For a ride to the meeting, call Faye Brennehan, 488-0076. RSVP & Info: Irene Walters, 481-1188, or Bev Wells, 488-3327.
 - **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers**, Thu., **Mar. 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., **Mar. 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.
 - **Group of Artists (GOA) Meetings at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA)**, Sat., **Mar. 3**, 10 a.m.-noon, 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Lively discussions about art topics, general studies on creativity. Meets 1st Sat. each month. Info: 481-0475, info@trilakesarts.org, www.trilakesarts.org.
 - **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

- **Blues and Brews**, Sat., **Feb. 3**, 5-8 p.m., Historic Pinecrest, 106 Pinecrest Way, Palmer Lake. Palmer Lake Fireworks is hosting this fundraiser for ages 21 and older, with music; pasta dinner catered by The Villa; and beers, wines, and spirits to sample. Cost: \$40. Tickets available at www.eventbrite.com.
- **Palmer Lake Art Group Winter Art Show & Sale**, Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. The show runs **through 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 pluginfo@palmerlakeartgroup.com.
- **D-38 Pre-K and Kindergarten Registration Begins**, Mon., **Feb. 5**, 7:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m., 146 N. Jefferson St., Monument. Please bring copy of birth certificate and immunization record, proof of residence, \$50 deposit for preschool and full-day kindergarten (not required for half-day kindergarten, Special Education preschool, or CPP students). Info: 488-4700, registration packets at www.lewispalmer.org/Page/1360.
- **CASA 4-1-1 Hour**, Mon., **Feb. 5**, 5:30-6:30 p.m., 418 S. Weber St., Colo. Springs. CASA volunteers advocate for abused and neglected children in the community and in the courtroom. Find out how you can lift up a child’s life. RSVP to Uriko Stout, 447-9898, ext. 1060, ustout@casappr.org, www.casappr.org.
- **D38 Deliberates: Community Engagement Opportunity**, Mon., **Feb. 5**, 6-7:45 p.m., 146 N. Jefferson St. Share your thoughts and ideas and learn more about future school facilities options. RSVP & Info: dsimington@lewispalmer.org, info@lewispalmer.org. See

- ad on page 9.
- **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.
 - **Black Rose Acoustic Society: The Aaron Walker Quartet**, Fri., **Feb. 9**, 7-9 p.m., doors open at 6:15. Black Forest Community Center, 12530 Black Forest Rd. at Shoup Road. Cost: \$10 general, \$5 BRAS members, \$5 non-member students with ID. Info: Joe Maio, 528-6119, jrmtn@comcast.net, www.blackros-eacoustic.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. Info: Carley Lehman, 502-3242.
 - **Colorado Department of Transportation Listening Session for I-25 Gap Project**, Thu., **Feb. 8**, 6:45-8:15 p.m., Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Learn about the project and how it will affect you. You can take an on-line survey: www.codot.gov/projects/i-25-south-monument-castle-rock-ea. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **12th Annual Free Chess Tournament**, Sat., **Feb. 10**, 8:15 a.m.-2 p.m., Lewis-Palmer Elementary School, 1315 Lake Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Open and free to all K-12 students who attend D-38 schools or live within the D-38 boundaries. Chess sets provided. Participants may bring their own snacks. Pizza and sodas will be available for purchase at lunch. All participants will receive a medal or trophy, so RSVP to Steve Waldmann, 488-9887 or huskerc@gmail.com so that he knows how many to order.
 - **Gallery 132: Cassidy MacIssac, harpist**, Sat., **Feb. 10**, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., 251 Front St., Monument. Live music at this local artisan cooperative. Classes have begun. Registration & Info: 375-8187, info@gallery132.com, www.gallery132.com. See ad on page 10.
 - **Colorado Department of Transportation Listening Session for I-25 Gap Project**, Tue., **Feb. 13**, 5:30-7 p.m., Natural Grocers, 1216 W. Baptist Rd., Monument. Learn about the project and how it will affect you. You can take an on-line survey: www.codot.gov/projects/i-25-south-monument-castle-rock-ea. Info: 487-0448.
 - **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.
 - **Stroke & Heart Attack Awareness**, Wed., **Feb. 14**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Black Forest Lutheran Church, 12455 Black Forest Rd. Black Forest AARP will host this presentation by Chief Rebitzki from the Black Forest Fire and Rescue. All are invited and welcome to stay for the lunch and meeting at noon. Hilary Valdez from Penrose Hospital will discuss how to maintain a healthy heart. Info: Stan, 596-6787, or www.aarpchapter1100blackforest.weebly.com.
 - **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI): Gold Mining in Colorado Exhibit Opening**, Thu., **Feb. 15**, 7 p.m. (doors open 6 p.m.), 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). Stan Dempsey, Jr. will lecture on “Policy and Organizational Update from the Colorado Mining Association.” Light refreshments served. The award-winning exhibit runs Feb. 15-June 9. Cost: members free, general admission \$5 for lecture and exhibit. RSVP & Info: 488-0880, rsvp@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.
 - **Lorrie Morgan Concert at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts**, Fri., **Feb. 16**, 7-9 p.m., doors open 6 p.m., 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Tickets & Info: www.trilakesarts.org, 481-0475.
 - **Emmet Cahill Concert**, Fri., **Feb. 16**, 7:30 p.m., Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church, 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. Cahill is one of Ireland’s most exciting young tenors and a principal vocalist with the Irish music show Celtic Thunder. Purchase tickets online at www.emmetcahill.com/tour-dates/ or at the church. Info: (972) 523-2878.
 - **Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery: Create a Prayer Journal**, Sat., **Feb. 17**, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 3190 Benet Lane. This unique retreat day brings together prayer, journaling, and creativity. Cost: \$65, fee includes journal and art supplies. Online registration is requested: www.benethillmonastery.org. Info: 633-0655. See ad page 12.
 - **Palmer Lake Historical Society: Tour of the restoration site for D&RG 1889 Tourist Sleeper Car 470**, Sat., **Feb. 17**, 10:30 a.m., Pikes Peak Trolley Museum, 2333 Steel Dr. (south of C&C Sand and Stone). Info: 559-0837, www.palmerdividehistory.org.
 - **Gallery 132: Alpaca Experience**, Sat., **Feb. 17**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., 251 Front St., Suite 8, Monument. Visit

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

By Oswald Garagorry

Over the past four months we have been discussing the subject of the Most Important Commandment and arrived at the question last month: “Why have you never heard a teaching about the Most Important Commandment proceeding from the *Gospel of Mark 12:28-30*”? Last month, I promised to offer you my opinion...however, I am hereby asking that you don’t take my opinion; to the contrary I am encouraging you to research and study the subject to arrive at your own opinion. I will be praying to the living God of Israel that he will lead you in researching and studying the initial question and the following facts relating to this subject.

The New Testament *Gospel of Mark 12:28-30*, is in complete harmony with the teachings of Moses in *Deuteronomy 6:4*, where we have one verbatim statement written exactly the same in both places. Moses statement came first: “God is One.” Then we have Mark reporting Messiah’s own words also stating “God is One.” I hereby propose to you the only reason you have never heard a teaching about the Most Important Commandment proceeding from the *Gospel of Mark* is because the Lord Jesus Christ himself stated that “God is One,” which is contrary to the man-made Doctrine of the Trinity.

On July 4, 325 A.D., 318 bishops assembled in the City of Nicea (located in today’s Turkey) under the hospitality of Emperor Constantine the First for a meeting that lasted just over two months. At this very first council of church leaders, two major changes were made to God’s written instructions:

1. God was defined as Triune (three in one) God-head (Trinity)
2. Sunday was made the day of rest instead of Saturday because God changed his mind

They reasoned together how the mystery of God could be explained to humans in a proper and better way by using a more comprehensive language than the description used by God himself. Because as has been pointed out up to this time, God was saying through the teachings of Moses that God is One and through Jesus stating the same thing in the *Gospel of Mark*. Even so, they created the Doctrine of the Trinity.

These same wise bishops didn’t disagree with the concept of having one day in seven separated for rest. Yet, they disagreed with the purpose of the day: “Remember the Sabbath to set it apart for God”. *Exodus 20:8*.

In today’s culture, it is typical for Sabbath (changed to the calendar name, Saturday) to be a day for shopping, running errands, watching or playing sports, getting together with friends, doing odd jobs around the house, and generally catching up with life. And immediately someone may say who is God to impose His purpose on our lives and tell us what to do on Saturday? Yet the purpose of God for the Sabbath was to keep it “Holy.” And yes, each one of us needs an answer about what to do with our Saturdays. I personally found my answer in His word: “Keep the Sabbath Holy...” *Exodus 20:8-11, Genesis 2:3, Leviticus 23:3, Mark 2:27-28*.

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
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- **Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery: *Embracing the Spirit***, Tue. evenings: **Feb. 20-Mar. 13**, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.; or Wed. mornings: **Feb. 21-Mar. 14**, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., 3190 Benet Lane. This four-week class invites participants to renew, refresh and deepen their understanding of the influence and impact of the Holy Spirit in their personal spiritual journey. Online registration is requested: www.benethillmonastery.org. Info: 633-0655. See ad on page 12.
- **Landscape Design Principles**, Wed., **Feb. 21**, 5-6:30 p.m., Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, 166 2nd St., Monument. A free class to help you make smart design choices for a healthy, appealing landscape; coffee and snacks. Repeats Mar. 6, 10 a.m. RSVP & Info: Cassie Olgren, 481-2954, colgren@tomgov.org.
- **Black Rose Acoustic Society: *The Side Hustlers***, Fri., **Feb. 23**, 7-9 p.m., doors open at 6:15. Black Forest Community Center, 12530 Black Forest Rd. at Shoup Road. Cost: \$10 general, \$5 BRAS members, \$5 non-member students with ID. Info: Joe Maio, 528-6119, jrmtn@comcast.net, www.blackroseacoustic.org.
- **Winterfest on the Lake**, Sat., **Feb. 24**, 4-8 p.m., Palmer Lake. S’mores on a bonfire, food, games, music, ice skating if weather permits. Info: 481-2953.
- **Judge’s Seminar at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts**, Thu., **Mar. 1**, 7 p.m., 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Joe Roybal, judge for the *Visions of Light* exhibition, will conduct the seminar. Pre-registration required. Cost: \$30. Register at www.pdphotographers.com.
- **Visions of Light Photography Exhibition Opening Reception**, Fri., **Mar. 2**, 6-8 p.m., Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Celebrate the opening of the annual juried photography show; runs Mar. 2-23. Info: Lynn Roth, 649-4241, lynn.pd-photographers@gmail.com, www.trilakesarts.org, 481-0475.
- **Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery Chamber Concert: *Lúthien String Quartet***, Sun., **Mar. 4**, 2:30 p.m., 3190 Benet Lane. Haydn’s *Seven Last Words of Christ*. Cost: \$20 adults, \$15 seniors and students. Buy tickets online: www.benethillmonastery.org. Info: 633-0655. See ad on page 12.
- **Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery Free Film: *The Student Body***, Fri., **Mar. 9**, 6:30 p.m., 3190 Benet Lane. Explores the complex and controversial truths of the childhood obesity debate. Benet Hill is partnering with the Rocky Mountain Women’s Film Institute. Online registration is requested: www.benethillmonastery.org. Info: 633-0655. See ad on page 12.
- **12th Annual Break-A-Thon: Benefit for Children’s Hospital Colorado Foundation**, Sat., **Mar. 17**, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., 221 E Kiowa St., Colo. Springs. U.S. Taekwondo Center hosts this fundraiser for a Children’s Hospital in Colorado Springs. Info: 488-4321, www.ustcbreakathon.com.
- **42nd Annual Pine Forest Spring Show & Sale**, Sat.-Sun., **Apr. 7-8**, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday; 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday, Lewis-Palmer High School, 1300 Higby Rd., Monument. Tri-Lakes Women’s Club’s popular fundraiser features Artfest, antiques, home decor, garden exhibits, gourmet food trucks, “The Bakery,” raffle, and MOPS Kid’s Corner. Bring in ad or a can of food for Tri-Lakes Cares for \$1 off admission. All proceeds benefit nonprofit service organizations and public schools in the Tri-Lakes community. Info: www.tlwc.net.

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 orga-

nizations. 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.

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 solely 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.

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, and grammar; however, please note that *OCN* does not research the accuracy of the author’s statements.



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