

# 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 event locations and other details of these and many other local events.

- **Intro to Blacksmithing at Western WMMI**, Sat., Jul. 7, 10 a.m.-noon
- **Concerts in the Park**, every Wed. (except Jul. 4), through Aug. 1, 7-9 p.m.
- **WMMI Lecture**, Tue., Jul. 10, doors open 6 p.m., lecture 7-8 p.m. Colorado mines.
- **Summer Concert Series at Forest Lakes**, Fri., Jul. 13, 6-9 p.m.
- **NEPCO Meeting**, Sat., Jul. 14, 10 a.m.-noon. D38.
- **El Paso County Fair**, Sat.-Sat., Jul. 14-21
- **Tri-Lakes Community/Centura Blood Drive**, Tue., Jul. 17, 3-7 p.m.
- **Investing at Retirement Seminar at WMMI**, Tue., Jul. 17, 7 p.m.
- **A Day At the Races**, Thu., Jul. 19, 11:30 a.m.
- **Art Hop**, Thu., Jul. 19, 5-8 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, Thu., Jul. 19, 7 p.m. Woody Guthrie.
- **Monument's Free Movie Night: Grease**, Fri., Jul. 20, 7 p.m.
- **Summer Concert Series at Forest Lakes**, Fri., Jul. 27, 6-9 p.m.
- **Monument's Free Movie Night: Coco**, Fri., Jul. 27, 7 p.m.
- **Tri-Lakes Cruisers 16th Annual Benefit Car Show**, Sun., Aug. 5, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
- **35th Annual National Night Out**, Tue., Aug. 7
- **Black Forest Festival**, Sat., Aug. 11, 6:30 a.m-9 p.m.
- **Gleneagle Sertoma 17th Annual Patriot Golf Benefit**, Mon., Aug. 13, noon check-in, 1:30 p.m. tee-off ■



Above: The founder of Tri-Lakes Cares (TLC), Celia Snyder (center) and her husband the Rev. John Snyder are shown at a TLC client appreciation day on June 11 with Haley Chapin, TLC executive director, surrounded by Monument Community Presbyterian Church volunteers who helped set up the event to honor the couple for having been their clergy in the 1980s. Photo by Janet Sellers.

### Monument Board of Trustees, June 4

## Town manager fired in unanimous vote

By Allison Robenstein

After a three-hour executive session, the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) fired the town manager during its June 4 meeting. Trustees also appointed a town clerk, brought the town attorney and treasurer back from administrative leave, and voted to hold a Nov. 6 election to fill the vacant trustee position. Financing was approved for three public works projects as well.

Unresolved debate about legality of May 16 special meeting  
Trustee Greg Coopman moved that the consent agenda be amended to remove the minutes of the "unauthorized" May 16 special meeting. He appeared incensed that the meeting had happened at all since neither he nor Trustees Jeffrey Bornstein or Laurie Clark attended. He claimed opening a meeting cannot occur without a quorum, nor can any ac-

tions be taken, such as the call to order. He also objected to the occurrence of the discussion about town business after the meeting was adjourned in what he called "villainizing" public comment.

**Note:** Colorado statute 24-6-402, known as Colorado's open meeting Sunshine law, states, "all meetings of a quorum or three or more members of any local public body, whichever is fewer ... are declared to be public meetings open to the public at all times." Mayor Don Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott, and Trustee Ron Stephens did open and attend the May 16 meeting, but Wilson said no official business could be conducted then since a majority, or four of six trustees, was not present. See [www.ocn.me/v18n6.htm#mbot-cx](http://www.ocn.me/v18n6.htm#mbot-cx).

A vote to amend the consent agenda to remove the May 16 minutes failed 3-3, with Wilson, Elliott, and Stephens vot-

ing no. Elliott then moved to approve the consent agenda as it stood, but this also failed in a tie, with Bornstein, Clark, and Coopman voting no. Next, Coopman asked for a second vote on his original motion, but Town Clerk Laura Hogan and Clark stopped the discussion—identifying this as identical to his first motion. Finally, Coopman asked to continue the consent agenda approval until June 18 when they could receive legal advice, which passed unanimously.

### Town manager fired; town clerk appointed

After a three-hour executive session to receive legal advice related to the investigation of Town Manager Chris Lowe, the board unanimously agreed to terminate Lowe's employment and contract. The investigation had been going on since Feb. 5 when the board directed Town Attorney

MONUMENT (cont. on page 2)

### Palmer Lake Town Council, June 14

## Mayor announces effort to consolidate fire departments

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

The Palmer Lake Town Council met once last month, on June 14. The meeting ended on a note of controversy when Mayor John Cressman told those attending that he and Trustee Mitchell Davis were beginning a discussion about possibly consolidating the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department (PLVFD) with the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD). The council also decided to cancel the Fourth of July fireworks due to the current Stage 2 fire alert, and heard presentations from the Awake the Lake committee, from the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) and from the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department. In addition, Palmer Lake's enforcement of its own regulations was reviewed.

### Cressman and Davis open discussion on future of PLVFD

Although the topic was not on the agenda for discussion, in his comments at the end of the meeting Cressman told those present that he and Davis were planning to discuss merging PLVFD, the town's fire department, with the much larger TLMFPD on June 27.

PLVFD serves the town of Palmer Lake and receives all its funding from the town. TLMFPD serves a much larger area east of Palmer Lake and Rampart Range, north of the Air Force Academy, Baptist Road and Hodgen Road, west of Black Forest Road, and south of County Line Road.

**Note:** Palmer Lake voters approved a ballot initiative in 2015 to increase their tax-

es by 10 mills to better fund the PLVFD.

"This is hard," Cressman said, acknowledging the dedication of PLVFD and the many contributions it has made to Palmer Lake. Cressman went on to point out that PLVFD did not have a paramedic on its staff, did not have a fire chief, had a deteriorating firehouse, and had inadequate equipment. "God bless these kids trying to do their best, but we need a lot more than that, and it's going to cost money," Cressman said.

Trustee Paul Banta recalled the ballot initiative passed in 2015 and said at that time many believed the PLVFD would require a larger increase in tax revenues to be properly funded, but that the conclusion was the voters were unlikely to

PALMER LAKE (cont. on page 7)

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