

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 27-31 for event locations and other details of these and many other local events.

- **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
- **Friends of Monument Preserve Trail Work**, Tue., Aug. 7, 6-8:30 p.m.
- **Neighborhood Meeting: Ramada Inn Change of Use**, Wed., Aug. 8, 6-8 p.m.
- **Northern El Paso County Non-Profit Council**, Thu., Aug. 9, 8 a.m.
- **Summer Concert Series at Forest Lakes**, Fri., Aug. 10, 6-9 p.m.
- **Black Forest Festival**, Sat., Aug. 11, 6:30 a.m.-9 p.m.
- **Return of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua**, Sat., Aug. 11, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **Art Hop**, Thu., Aug. 16, 5-8 p.m.,
- **Gleneagle Sertoma 17th Annual Patriot Golf Benefit**, Mon., Aug. 13, noon check-in.
- **Pickin' on the Divide**, Sat., Aug. 18, 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m.
- **Billy Bob Thornton & the Boxmasters at TLCA**, Tue.-Wed., Aug. 21-22, 7 p.m.
- **Summer Concert Series at Forest Lakes**, Fri., Aug. 24, 6-9 p.m.
- **Monument's Free Movie Night: Remember the Titans**, Fri., Aug. 24, 7 p.m.
- **Rocky Mountain Music Alliance Concert**, Sat., Sep. 1, 7 p.m.
- **Bill Nance Memorial Blood Drive**, Tue., Sep. 4, 1-5 p.m. ■



Above: Word of a proposed change of use for the Ramada Inn site to an inpatient drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility has sparked concerns among nearby residents. The inn, which is governed by El Paso County rather than the Woodmoor Improvement Association, is currently zoned Commercial 2 (C-2), which allows for a rehabilitation facility. In response to numerous emails to District 1 El Paso County Commissioner Darryl Glenn (darrylglenn@elpasoco.com), the county project manager, Len Kendall (lenkendall@elpasoco.com), and the land use consultant firm NES' project manager Katie Whitford (kwhitford@nescolorado.com), NES has announced a neighborhood meeting to discuss the details of the site development plan. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, Aug. 8, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center at 166 Second St., in Monument. Details on the project can be found at <https://epcdevplanreview.com/Public/ProjectDetails/103610>. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Triview Metropolitan District, July 10

Water and wastewater rate increases approved

By Lisa Hatfield

On July 10, the Triview Metropolitan District board approved increases in both water and wastewater rates, talked about "regionalization" efforts that would increase the shared use of utility infrastructure and the first phase of a rates and capital improvement plan study, and accepted the 2017 financial audit.

Director Jim Otis was absent. Triview is a Title 32 special district inside Monument that provides roads, landscaping, and open space maintenance, and water and sanitation services to Jackson Creek, Promontory Pointe, Sanctuary Pointe, and several commercial areas. The Town of Monument (organized under Colorado Revised Statutes Title 30) provides land

use planning, police, and general governance for Triview's property owners.

Water, wastewater rate hikes approved

Andrew Rheem, manager, and Brian Kirsch, senior consultant with Raftelis of Greenwood Village, a registered municipal advisor that primarily focuses on the areas of finance, organization, and technology, briefed the board on recommended changes in water, wastewater (WW), and tap fees. This Phase 1 preliminary water and WW financial plan outlined currently-planned Triview capital needs, proposed a 10-year series of annual water and WW rate increases, and showed potential typical monthly bills and projected financial results. Rheem and Kirsch also noted

TRIVIEW (cont. on page 4)

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, July 17

Directors explore "de-Gallagherizing," combining districts

By Jennifer Kaylor

The full Board of Directors attended the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District's July 17 meeting. Legal Counsel Matt Court guided the board regarding the potential impact of the Gallagher Amendment on future revenue if the residential assessment rate is lowered. The directors considered options for consolidating with Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) and possibly the Black Forest Fire and Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD). Chief Vinny Burns reflected on the budget work session held on July 9.

State laws threaten revenue for some special districts

The board discussed the fiscal challenges presented by the juxtaposition of Colorado's Gallagher Amendment and the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, or TABOR.

Background: The Gallagher Amendment dictates that Colorado's total property tax collected must maintain a balance of 45 percent residential and 55 percent nonresidential. The assessment rate for nonresidential properties is fixed at 29 percent, but the residential assessment rate is adjusted to maintain the 45/55 balance. TABOR limits Colorado's annual revenue growth and mandates that state and local governments cannot raise tax rates without voter approval. See www.colorado.gov/pacific/treasury/constitutional-provisions-0 and www.sdaco.org/2015-legislative-information, for in-depth explanations.

Rusnak explained that as the assessed values on residential properties—as determined by the El Paso County Assessor—increase, the residential assessment rate must ratchet down (to remain within the 45 percent boundary). He estimated that the residential assessment rate from two years ago was 7.9 percent, the current residential assessment rate is 7.2 percent, and the next adjusted residential assessment rate to be as low as 6.1 percent.

Over the long term, if assessed values on residential properties level off or decrease, the residential assessment rate can't simply be raised for districts to maintain baseline revenue. "That now gets forced into a TABOR vote," stated Rusnak.

Court informed the directors that the Special District Association created an interim committee to brainstorm legislation proposals. He added that other fire districts have communicated the potential funding dilemma to their respective communities via website

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Above: On a beautiful July evening, Miguel Dakota and his band played for a packed crowd at the 2018 Forest Lakes concert series. At least 100 cars were parked along Waterfront Park as folks streamed into the venue. Many brought camp chairs or sat in the manmade amphitheater to listen as Dakota crooned. Families in houses across from the park sat on their decks with friends enjoying the evening. Two more summer concerts are scheduled for August. For more information, see <https://classichomes.com/neighborhoods/forest-lakes/2018-forest-lakes-summer-concert-series/>. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*