

Yule Log Hunt, Dec. 16



Left: Claire Bowlin prepares to take her victory ride back to the Palmer Lake Town Hall after being the first child to find the Yule Log. Palmer Lake residents and guests celebrated an 85-year tradition known as the Yule Log Hunt on Dec. 16. *Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.* **Below:** Adults and kids donned red or green capes for luck and followed bagpiper Sam Swancutt as he led hunters to their starting position, the Palmer Lake Reservoir trailhead. Seeking a 10-foot by 18-inch log that sported a red ribbon, hunters scoured the glen section of the trail. Sharp eyes and quick feet shortened the search to a few minutes. Theo Clayton initially found the

log but graciously deferred the winner's title to Claire Bowlin who trailed closely behind. The winner, if he or she chooses, and other kids may ride the log back to Palmer Lake Town Hall to close the festivities with wassail made according to the original recipe and served in the traditional silver cup. The Palmer Lake Historical Society Annual Potluck and Membership Meeting will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 17 at Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Doors open at 6 p.m. The PLHS furnishes the ham, rolls, coffee, and tea. Attendees are asked to bring either a salad, side dish, or dessert. PLHS will present an overview of its 2018 activities, and there will be musical entertainment throughout the evening. Visit www.palmerdividhistory.org for more information. *Photo by Sigi Walker.*



Santa and Wescott deliver cheer



Above: Santa and his team of firefighters and kids prepare to drive through the neighborhood bringing good cheer. The Donald Wescott Fire Department has been running the Santa Patrol operation for over 25 years. They ride through local neighborhoods, playing Christmas carols, blowing the horn, and handing out candy. Chief Vinny Burns said it's a great way to introduce people to the department at a time when there isn't an emergency. **Inset:** Donald Wescott Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich and a herd of kids prepare to ride the ladder truck through the neighborhood as part of Santa Patrol. *Photos by Allison Robenstein.*

TreeCycle accepting trees



Left: Jack Vandembussche, left, and his father, Jeff Vandembussche, were the first volunteers to run the annual TreeCycle event at the Monument location of Baptist Road Trailhead and Old Denver Highway on Dec. 29. They started out with temperatures at minus 1 Fahrenheit and by the time their two-hour shift was over, skies were sunny and the lot was filling up with trees. This end-of-year fundraiser benefits Colorado Springs Youth Sports Inc., El Pomar Youth Sports Park, and other local Youth Service Programs. Jack and his lacrosse teammates from School District 38 volunteered to man the TreeCycle, earning about \$100 an hour to support the D38 spring lacrosse program. The lot will take your tree for a suggested minimum donation of \$5 on **Jan. 5-6** from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For information on TreeCycle, call 520-7878 or see www.csyouthsports.net/treecycle. *Photo and caption by Natalie Barszcz.*

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.

Volunteers needed for Park Advisory Board, apply by Jan. 11

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners is seeking a community-minded citizen volunteer to serve on the Park Advisory Board. Applications are due by **Jan. 11**. 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.

2018 Visions of Light Photographic Exhibition

Photographers of all levels are invited to submit their original photography for consideration by **Jan. 14**. The show will run Mar. 1-Apr. 26 at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. For details, visit www.trilakesarts.org or pdphotographers.com.

MVEA scholarships

Each year, MVEA awards \$1,000 scholarships to 14 graduating high school seniors. Applications are due by **Jan. 15**. Apply online at www.mvea.coop/youth-programs.

Tri-Lakes Women's Club's 2019 Grant Process, Jan. 15-Mar. 15

Tri-Lakes Women's Club's (TLWC) grant application for 2019 will be available online **Jan. 15 through Mar. 15** on the TLWC website, www.tlwc.net. Eligible organizations include nonprofit and public service organizations and public schools that serve the Tri-Lakes area. Special program and project requests are welcomed. The application package includes the instructions as well as other important qualifying information. For more information, visit www.tlwc.net.

Call for Artists for Palmer Lake Art Group's Winter Show

Local artists are invited to submit their artwork by **Jan. 19** for the annual show that runs **Jan. 29-Feb. 23**. Entry form and details are located at www.palmerlakeartgroup.com.

Tri-Lakes Y winter basketball

Registration has opened for winter basketball, preschool through grade eight. The season begins **Jan. 19**. Financial assistance is available. Register at www.pymca.org; or at the Y, 17250 Jackson Creek Parkway, Monument; or phone 481-8728. For new member membership discounts, see ad on page 6.

Warning: Skimmer devices found in local gas pumps

On Dec. 9, about 2 p.m., Monument police officers responded to the Diamond Shamrock gas station at 1310 W. Baptist Rd. where they discovered that illegal skimmer devices had been placed in three of the gas pumps. Such skimmers are used to store information obtained from credit/debit cards used at the pumps. This information can then be retrieved by the suspects and used to commit fraud and identity theft. The skimmers may have been placed on the gas pumps as early as **Dec. 5**. Suspects might have driven a dark green van or a white pickup truck. If you have information related to these skimmers, call the Monument Police Department, 481-3253.

Christmas light roundup

Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA) wants to help you make the energy efficiency switch this holiday season. By **Jan. 31**, drop off your incandescent C7 and C9 Christmas light strands at an MVEA office and receive a \$5 per strand bill credit on up to 10 strands per MVEA member. You could earn up to a \$50 credit on your next electric bill. C7 bulbs measure over

2 inches, while C9 bulbs are just under 3 inches, base to tip. These are the large, traditional Christmas lights. Rebates are offered for other LED bulbs also. The Monument MVEA office is at 15706 Jackson Creek Parkway, Ste. 100. For more information, call 800-388-9881. See ad on page 15.

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/mhf_grants. See ad on page 11.

Cadet chapel to close for renovation, June 17

The Air Force Academy Cadet chapel renovation has been delayed, giving the public until **June 17** to visit the iconic landmark before it closes for four years. Visitors can see the chapel from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. until the June closure. To get there, take exit 156 off Interstate 25 and head west. Visitors need valid ID and vehicle documents and can expect a search. For more information, visit www.usafa.edu/academics/facilities/cadet-chapel/

Roundtrip bus service to Denver Tech Center on Bustang

Bustang, the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) interregional express bus service, began service between Colorado Springs and the Denver Technological Center (DTC) in December. The new circulator route will run four times each weekday, twice in the morning from Colorado Springs to the DTC and twice in the afternoon from the DTC to Colorado

Spring. It will stop at 16 locations between Arapahoe Road/Yosemite Street and the RTD Light Rail Belleview Station. A one-way fare between El Paso County and the DTC will be \$9. For more information, including route schedules and fares, and to purchase tickets, visit www.ridebustang.com or download the Bustang mobile app, JustRideBustang, for iOS or Android.

Free tutoring in reading at the library

Children's Literacy Center offers free one-to-one tutoring for children reading below grade level. Tutors are volunteers from the community, 14 years of age and older. Tutoring is held every Tuesday and Thursday, 5:30-6:30 p.m., at the Monument Library. For more information, go to www.childrensliteracycenter.org, call 471-8672, or contact Liz Eden at Liz@childrensliteracycenter.org.

Town of Monument offers gardening classes

High Altitude Gardening is offered **Jan. 29**, 10 a.m.; **Feb. 5**, 5 p.m., and **Feb. 19**, 10 a.m. Covers best practices and plant selection to handle wildlife and wild weather.

Landscape Design Principles is offered **Feb. 8**, 10 a.m. Whether working with a new or established landscape, this course will help build your confidence to make smart design choices for a healthy, appealing landscape.

Water-wise Gardening is offered **Feb. 26**, 10 a.m., **Mar. 5**, 5 p.m. and **Mar. 15**, 10 a.m. Maintaining a landscape affordably and responsibly in our area means making wise choices in how we design and irrigate our landscapes. This course will help you create a smart, classy landscape using less water.

For information, contact Cassie Olgren, Landscape Supervisor, 884-8026 (ofc), 325-9793 (cell), or colgren@tomgov.org ■