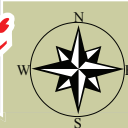


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Local Events

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

- **WMMI Family Day: Geology**, Sat., Jan. 5, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
- **County's Annual TreeCycle**, Sat.-Sun., Jan. 5-6, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
- **El Paso County Hazardous Materials & Recycling Collection Facility**, Sat., Jan. 12, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.,
- **NEPCO Meeting**, Sat., Jan. 12, 10 a.m.-noon, County planning.
- **Tri-Lakes Community/Centura Blood Drive**, Tue., Jan. 15, 3-7 p.m.
- **D-38 Preschool Registration Night**, Tue., Jan. 15, 5-6 p.m.
- **D-38 Kindergarten Information Night**, Tue., Jan. 15, 5-6 p.m.
- **New Parent Night at Monument Academy**, Tue., Jan. 15, 6-7 p.m.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber Education Series: Basics of Bookkeeping**, Wed., Jan. 16, 9 a.m.-noon
- **Crime and Safety Briefing**, Wed., Jan. 16, 6-7:30 p.m.
- **Strong D38 Community: Continuing the Conversation**, Thu. Jan. 17, 6-8 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society: Annual Potluck Dinner and Membership Meeting**, Thu., Jan. 17, 6:30 p.m.
- **Rocky Mountain Music Alliance Concert: Music of Light & Darkness**, Sat., Jan. 19, 7 p.m.
- **Monument Academy Kindergarten Round Up**, Fri., Jan. 25, 1:30 p.m.
- **St. Peter School Open House**, Sun., Jan. 27, 12:30-2:30 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Art Group Winter Art Show & Sale Opening Reception**, Fri., Feb. 1, 6-8 p.m. ■

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Kids come first for first responders



Above: On a snowy Dec. 22 in Monument, first responders from the Monument Police Department, Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Palmer Lake Police Department, Shield 616, and the Manitou, Elizabeth, and Woodland Park Police Departments, rallied in a convoy of 27 emergency vehicles, lights flashing and sirens blaring, alerting children to the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus. With the help of first responder elves, they made their rounds delivering gifts to children in Monument and Palmer Lake. Hot cocoa and candy canes were the order of the day, generously provided by the "Emergency Incident Support Team." Each year, the need is greater and this much-appreciated tradition founded by Monument Police Chief Jake Shirk shows the generosity of the communities that donated over a thousand toys, books and games to make the season brighter for local children. Shaylynn Bell receives gifts from Santa and Mrs. Claus and the first responder elves. *Photo and caption by Natalie Barszcz.*

Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education Special Meeting and Work Session, Dec. 3

Board discusses short-term solutions to growth; Superintendent to retire

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education met on Dec. 3 to approve the mill levy certification for the coming year and to discuss solutions to address growth in the wake of the November election.

A bond issue to fund construction of an elementary school, conversion of a current elementary into a middle school, and security improvements at all locations was defeated. A mill levy override to fund security personnel also was defeated.

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman requested that the board approve a levy of 44.068 mills for the coming year, compared to 44.651 the previous year. The decrease was made possible by rising property values. The board approved the measure.

The board went into executive session to discuss personnel matters. It was learned the following day that Superintendent Karen Brofft informed them that she plans to retire at the end of the school year.

The board passed a motion to allocate a health benefit dividend to allow district employees to have a one-month holiday from payments, and the remainder would go into general fund unassigned reserves. Both the district and employees pay into the Colorado Employees Benefit Trust.

Work session: Short-term solutions to address growth

Brofft introduced the subject of growth by saying that Lewis-Palmer Middle School is now at capacity and several elementary schools are near capacity. Law requires that the district offer open enrollment, but applications can be declined if schools are at capacity.

D38 SPECIAL (cont. on 6)



Above: It was announced Dec. 4 that Superintendent Karen Brofft plans to retire at the end of the 2018-2019 school year. *Photo taken at the October 2018 board meeting by Harriet Halbig.*

*El Paso Board of County Commissioners,
Nov. 29, Dec. 4, 11, 18, and 20*

Neighbors' appeal against rehabilitation facility denied

By Helen Walklett

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has denied an appeal relating to the proposed drug and rehabilitation facility in Woodmoor. The commissioners have also adopted the 2019 county budget and made decisions on the Gleneagle golf course infill development.

Mountain Springs Recovery appeal denied

At the Dec. 20 BOCC meeting, the last of the year, the commissioners denied by 3 votes to 1 an appeal relating to the planned Mountain Springs Recovery (MSR) drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility on Woodmoor Drive. Commissioner Mark Waller voted against the motion to deny the appeal. Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez was excused.

The appeal was brought by Sharon "Sam" Schafer, chair of Take Action El Paso County LLC, which opposes the facility. It specifically appealed the determination by Craig Dossey, executive director, Planning and Community Development Department, that the proposed facility at the former Ramada Inn property on Woodmoor Drive meets the definition of a "rehabilitation facility" as defined in the county's land development code. This determination was made at the same time as the site development plan was approved in November 2018 (see www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm?zoom_highlight=rehabilitation). Under county land development appeals procedures, the granting of a site development plan cannot itself be appealed.

Lori Seago, senior assistant county attorney, opened the hearing by setting out the grounds for the appeal and stating that the burden was on the appellant to establish that the executive director's decision was erroneous.

Cole Emmons, senior assistant county attorney, began by saying, "The information I am going to give you today is hard. This is a difficult, potentially emotional topic." He outlined the federal anti-discriminatory laws that underlined the hearing and which, he said, would result in a more restrictive hearing than normal. He said, "The patients that will use the rehabilitation facility are a protected class in that the law classifies them as handicapped." He stated that this classification applied to drug addicts and alcoholics as well as those recovering from addiction and that federal laws prohibit discrimination against them.

Emmons told the commissioners, "I am very concerned about what I perceive to be discriminatory statements made by the appellant in the materials

BOCC (cont. on 2)

BOCC (cont. from 1)

that they have submitted, and I am concerned with regards to statements that may be made by the public that you will hear." He continued, "... The concern is that if those discriminatory statements are made and you take them into account in your decision-making, then the case law indicates that those discriminatory statements, discriminatory evidence can be attributed to you."

Emmons had identified some evidence presented by the applicant as discriminatory and therefore advised that it should not be considered. This included statements in the applicant's appeal, some attached news items, and the petition statement. He cautioned that testimony should focus on the narrow issue of whether the use is that of a rehabilitation facility.

Schafer opened the appellant's presentation, moving first to strike the language of the appeal as it stood and replace it with statements relating to definitions within the land development code. She stated that the definition of a rehabilitation facility within the code does not mention private entities and instead specifically states "an institutional use type facility" which is also defined in the code as not including private entities. She said the BOCC should restrict the definition of a rehabilitation facility to only those entities

that fall within the definitions listed in the code, arguing that MSR, as a private, for-profit facility, does not meet that definition.

Schafer requested that the board direct the Planning Department to look into the zoning requirements of rehabilitation facilities and place a moratorium on all applications for such facilities until the department had reported its findings.

In the public comment part of the hearing, opponents once more voiced safety concerns, stating the proximity to local schools and fears that the facility would attract criminal activity. They also questioned the reputation of Sunshine Behavioral Health (SBH), MSR's parent company, and pointed out that the facility's proximity to a popular local bar was unsuitable for recovering addicts.

Brian Connolly, attorney for SBH, stated that the appeal statement contained no legal basis whatsoever for the appeal and was discriminatory. He argued that the language of the definitions in the code was explanatory, not limiting, and did not therefore exclude any particular entity. He stated that under Colorado law relating to zoning, zoning cannot regulate the ownership of property, only the use of it.

Jared Raymond from SBH said his firm was currently working on the licensing process for the facility, that it

would be fully licensed when it opened and would far exceed the minimal licensing standards. He stressed SBH was not a sober living provider nor would the facility be licensed for methadone treatment. It would provide inpatient rehabilitation services only to clients who voluntarily admitted themselves. He ended by saying, "We honestly look forward to being a lasting community resource for this area."

Commissioner Darryl Glenn said that he didn't believe the appellant had met the burden of proof for the appeal to be upheld. He said, "I find it hard to believe that the appellant, and I'm saying this respectfully, wants us to be able to take testimony that was not presented in the [written] appeal and use that as a basis for approving the appeal." He then made a motion to deny. Seconding this, Commissioner Stan VanderWerf said he also felt the fact that the property was zoned commercial implied for-profit was a possibility.

Commissioner Peggy Littleton said it was a very difficult decision that was based on interpretation of the code. She urged SBH to take into consideration some of the points that were said during the hearing and to ensure that the neighbourhood and children were protected.

Commissioner Mark Waller voted against denying the appeal. He said that while he appreciated his colleagues' interpretation of the code, he also thought "it reasonable to interpret that it [for-profit] isn't contemplated in the code and that a for-profit entity doesn't meet the definition of a rehabilitation facility."

2019 budget approved

At its Nov. 29 meeting, the BOCC

unanimously approved the 2019 budget of \$374.5 million. This is an increase of slightly more than \$11 million from the 2018 budget.

Presenting it to the commissioners, Sherri Cassidy, the county's chief financial officer, said, "the daily cost per citizen is about 48 cents."

The budget includes money for additional staff for the Board of Health, Coroner's Office and District Attorney's Office, sets aside funds for neighbourhood and homeless camp clean-ups, and allocates money for transportation and high-impact road projects. The BOCC will be responsible for determining how the money for the high-impact road projects is allocated.

Commissioner Gonzalez said, "The decisions are hard, but I was very pleased to see that we are taking care of our roads budget. That's one of the things that I think for constituents is a big priority and definitely the thing I get a lot of calls on."

Commissioner Waller thanked county staff and the citizens of El Paso County, remarking that the last recession had caused tremendous cuts to county services. He said, "We wouldn't be where we are today, being able to put more money towards personnel, being able to put more money towards roads and bridges, had the voters not approved the TABOR retention in 2017 and so I think certainly the citizens of El Paso County ... should be commended for their support."

Gleneagle Golf Course**redevelopment moves forward**

The commissioners approved the final release of two letters of credit pertaining to grading and erosion control and public improvements at the Gleneagle

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Golf Course infill development during December. At the Dec. 4 meeting they approved a letter of credit for \$475,394 relating to lots 23 to 44 of the development. On Dec. 18, the commissioners approved the release of a further letter of credit for \$64,638 relating to grading and erosion control and public improvements at lots 1 to 22.

At their Dec. 11 meeting, the commissioners approved an application for preliminary acceptance of certain streets within the golf course redevelopment into the county road maintenance system. The roads involved are Silver Rock Place and Spyglass Hill Place. The latter connects to Mission Hill Way.

Glenn's contribution recognized

At the Dec. 20 meeting, Commissioner Waller recognized Commissioner Glenn for his service to the citizens of El Paso County ahead of his departure from office on Jan. 8. He has represented District 1 for the past eight years. Holly Williams is the District 1 county commissioner-elect and will take her seat on Jan. 8. Commissioner Littleton was also recognized for her eight years of service and also steps down on Jan. 8 with Cami Bremer taking the seat.

Other decisions

- Dec. 11—The commissioners approved the

final release of a check for \$2,489 for grading and erosion control at Northgate Estates Filing No. 3. This follows the completion and satisfactory inspection of the improvements at the development.

- Dec. 18—Approved the issuance of an ambulance service license to the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District. The license runs for one year from Jan. 1, 2019.
- Dec. 18—Approved the award of a construction contract and purchase order to RMC Consultants for the New Santa

Fe Regional Trail flood repairs at a cost not to exceed \$289,650. The project includes repairs to 37 county park locations damaged in 2015 flooding on or adjacent to the

trail, which runs between the Town of Palmer Lake and the City of Colorado Springs.

Helen Walklett
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*El Paso County Planning Commission, Dec. 4 and 18***Water master plan approved***By Helen Walklett*

The El Paso County Planning Commission voted unanimously to adopt the county's new water master plan following a second public hearing at its meeting on Dec. 18. This followed a seven-hour public hearing at its Dec. 4 meeting, described by Chair Jim Egbert as an information-gathering meeting at which no action was taken.

The plan is intended to guide growth and land use decisions in the future and through that process encourage best management practices for water demand management, efficiency, and conservation. Its ultimate objective is to help ensure that all existing residents have a reliable water supply and that the water supply to all new development is considered at an earlier stage in the development process. It will become an element of the new county master plan,

which is currently under development.

The public hearings at the Planning Commission followed the presentation of the draft master plan to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) in November (see www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#epbocc).

The hearings

Introducing the plan at the Dec. 4 meeting, Craig Dossey, executive director of the El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department, explained that the water plan is the first step in a two-step process, the second being the development and adoption of the overall land use master plan.

Dossey told the commissioners that the issue of water and growth in the county continually comes up in discussions with county commissioners and county administrators. He said that one of the questions often raised about growth is "where's the water going to come from?" and commented, "We can't expect resources to last forever if we don't change what we are doing." He continued, "Without understanding where we are with water supplies and understanding where we are and where we should go with regard to water supplies, I don't think we can intelligently plan for land uses in the future."

Dossey urged the commissioners to keep in mind

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that they were considering a planning document rather than regulation during the hearing, emphasizing that the water master plan contains goals and policies that are intended to guide decisions by the BOCC and Planning Commission in the future and that these must be able to be applied to the broad spectrum of land use applications.

Mark Gebhart, deputy director, Planning and Community Development Department, who managed the project, gave an overview of the steps taken in preparing the draft plan. He outlined the role of the steering committee, the public participation program, which had included an open house, and a water providers' survey. He stated that a draft was put out for public comment ahead of the presentation to the BOCC in November.

Will Koger of the county's consultants Forsgren Associates provided a detailed overview of his firm's work on the project and detailed the public feedback received. The afternoon session saw the county staff talk the commissioners through the goals and policies of the plan. The commissioners examined the information and suggested potential modifications. Comments by Commissioner Kevin Curry saw the wording of the county's position on any future discussion of the 300-year rule substantially modified. He said the original wording implied a strong preference to change the rule when he felt there were good reasons for it and that, while changes might be appropriate in certain, narrow circumstances, he wanted to see the discussion cut back and the tone more balanced.

At the second hearing on Dec. 18, Gebhardt provided the commissioners with additional information and clarification arising from the first hearing. They then worked again through the policies and goals to ensure that all modifications were included to their satisfaction.

There were two opportunities for public comments during the Dec. 4 hearing. Judy von Ahlefeldt, a longtime resident of the Black Forest who also spoke at the BOCC presentation, said that she had given the draft careful review and, while acknowledging all the work that had gone into it, said, "I don't feel it to be a master plan ... I think it's a great start but I don't think it's the finished product." She continued, "I think there are some problems with the process in terms of involving the public and getting the word out. I think there needs to be much more public participation."

Responding, Commissioner Joan Lucia-Treese said, "You cannot compel the public to respond. It's not their [the majority of the population's] burning personal issue. As long as they can turn on their tap and the water comes out, that's all they care about."

Von Ahlefeldt spoke again at the Dec. 18 hearing, questioning the thoroughness of the public review period and urging the commissioners to hold off on the plan's adoption until the new county commissioners take their seats and to allow for further discussion. Terry Stokka, chairman of the Black Forest land use committee, also addressed the commissioners stat-

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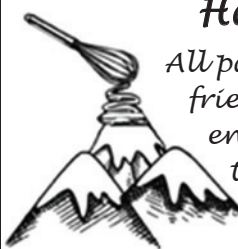
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ing that he didn't think it was right to permit higher densities just because renewable water is available. He urged them not to change the 300-year rule in the future and also spoke to the plan's goal of protecting private property rights, arguing that drilling deep wells close to property lines violates the rights of the neighboring property owner.

The Planning Commission voted 6-0 to adopt

the plan. Curry stated that he had had some reservations after the first hearing but that these had been addressed by the subsequent amendments. The document with amendments shown, a final version of it, and all public comments can be viewed here: <https://epcdevplanreview.com/Public/ProjectDe->

tails/110995. Under state statute the Planning Commission is the final approval authority for the plan. There will be no BOCC hearing.

Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.me.

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JANUARY 1-15, 2019

D38 SPECIAL MEETING (Cont. from 1)

Wangemahn enumerated available funds for the board's use in addressing growth. These included funds in various reserves and those set aside for the opening of a new elementary proposed in the failed ballot initiative. Wangeman estimated that a total of about \$7 million.

TABOR (Taxpayers' Bill of Rights) requires that the district maintain a predetermined amount of reserves. The board had previously voted to retain the \$1.2 million received for the land for Monument Academy's new high school to be spent on land for future schools.

Brofft cautioned that funds must be held back to pay for security improvements and the conversion of Bear Creek into a middle school when that becomes possible.

Wangeman said that all principals had been consulted and she was preparing a presentation for the Dec. 17 board meeting that enumerates options for dealing with growth in the short term.

Brofft said that modular classrooms would need to be ordered in January because it often takes six months to receive them.

Secretary Mark Pfoff said that the middle school must be the priority because it is already at capacity. He said that only 40 students at the middle school are from outside the district, so closing admission would not make a significant difference.

He said that some of the students at the middle school have been attending Lewis-Palmer schools since kindergarten and some are staff children.

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Brofft said that the school would be closed only to those students not already in attendance. Those in seventh grade would be able to stay until the end of eighth grade, but current sixth-graders may not be able to get in. Perhaps a lottery could be considered, she said.

Pfoff said he fears that some would accuse the district of claiming a lot of growth to change policies. There were portable classrooms at the middle school in the past.

Brofft said that the new modular classrooms would have to have plumbing for security reasons and would have to be placed in the front of the building on either side of the main entrance. Modulares are a bad investment, but cannot be avoided under the circumstances, she said.

Vice President Tiffiney Upchurch said that the District Accountability Advisory Committee voted at its recent meeting to encourage the board to put a bond issue on the 2019 ballot.

Wangeman said that there is a dry portable at Killmer that is currently used for storage and a four-plex at the Lewis-Palmer High School that is used as a senior center.

Brofft said the modular at the high school cannot be divided in half and there is not enough space for it at the middle school.

The board discussed various options for the use of existing modulares and moving some preschool students from one school to another to maximize space.

When asked about the cost of modulares, Wangeman said that District 20 leases two modulares at \$1,000 per month, but that does not include Wi-Fi and security. Cost is location-specific, as Bear Creek already has an infrastructure in place.

Board President Matthew Clawson asked whether any grants were available for modulares. Wangeman said she would inquire whether BEST (Building Excellent Schools Today) grants would be available. These grants are applicable to schools of a certain age and are usually used for roofs or boilers.

Election discussion and next steps

Treasurer Chris Taylor reminded the board that when Monument Academy's new school opens in 2020 it will include grades six to eight and therefore free up some seats in those grades at Lewis-Palmer Middle School.

Pfoff commented that if the district puts a similar measure on the ballot in 2019, it will have the same result. Election results imply that the public is not concerned about security (a portion of the bond and MLO regarded security upgrades), and therefore the new bond should only be for a new school building.

Upchurch said that three board seats would be up for election next year and wondered if that would make it more difficult to support a bond.

Pfoff suggested that the board use a petition to determine support for the bond.

Director Theresa Phillips said she was concerned about the morale of teachers and staff and that the district may lose some of them. She said there are people who are willing to work for passage of a single school bond.

Pfoff suggested that board members may wish to meet with teachers at their school staff meetings to listen and provide support.

Upchurch suggested hosting a board coffee at a time of day when staff can attend.

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

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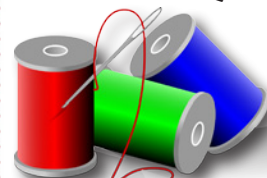
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Lewis-Palmer School District 38 District Accountability Advisory Committee, Nov. 27

Committee discusses election results, urges new vote in 2019

By Harriet Halbig

The District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) of Lewis-Palmer D-38 discussed possible actions following the recent election, including a call for a new bond election in November 2019, and received in-depth information on the workings of the Gifted Education Leadership Team and the Assessments Department at its Nov. 27 meeting at Palmer Lake Elementary School.

The committee's discussion of a response to the November election defeat of the bond and mill levy override (MLO) issues began with Board of Education Liaison Tiffiney Upchurch's report. The bond was intended to fund the construction of a new elementary school and the conversion of Bear Creek Elementary back into a middle school, contribute to the construction of part of the campus of Monument Academy's new high school, and add security improvements to all campuses. The MLO would have funded security personnel.

Upchurch said that a candid conversation on the subject would occur at the board's Dec. 3 special meeting and that action could be taken at the board's Dec. 17 meeting. It is not possible to say what the next steps will be at this time, she said.

Upchurch explained the district's proposed use of the online survey instrument Thoughtexchange to solicit opinions from stakeholders, students, parents, and staff. The goal is to learn why people voted as they did.

Upchurch also stressed the need to honor teachers and students to show them that they are valued.

One of the issues the district faces is the location and number of preschools. The population of Kilmer Elementary is growing faster than anticipated. A D-38 Deliberates session was scheduled for Dec. 5 to discuss the choice between a centralized preschool and the current ones. Many decisions will have to be made by February, said Upchurch, because modular classrooms are not immediately available. Centralization of the preschools would result in freeing classrooms in several elementaries for the use of older students.

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman commented that the district doesn't know how many years it might have to make do without a bond.

A representative from Lewis-Palmer Middle School, which is now at capacity, said that parents are unhappy about the prospect of modular

classrooms due to security concerns, and that some parents are considering moving their children to District 20. She encouraged the board to make decisions on modulares by January so that parents can decide whether to stay in the district or leave during the open enrollment period.

Karen Heater of Lewis-Palmer Elementary said that the Board of Education had not presented a united front during the run-up to the election, often voting 3 to 2 or 4 to 1 on motions involving the wording of the ballot initiative. She felt that more forceful leadership could have made a difference. She mentioned that there could be several new board members elected in 2019, further complicating the situation.

Tammie Oatney of Lewis-Palmer Middle School said that the mention and inclusion of the Monument Academy's (MA) new high school on the bond also caused confusion. She said that many empty-nesters in the community do not understand that MA is a separate entity and felt that the district would have a new school due to the MA construction plans.

Karin De Angelis of Lewis-Palmer Elementary said that district officials should talk with those of other districts who successfully passed funding initiatives this election.

DAAC Chair Deb Goth said that people had asked her to put a bond on next year's ballot, as the feeling was that the district should take advantage of its volunteer momentum and act now.

A motion was passed to strongly recommend that the Board of Educa-

tion should vote at its next meeting to put a question on the November 2019 ballot to address school capacity and long-term growth.

Gifted education and assessment presentation

Annette Bass, a teacher on special assignment to the Gifted Education Leadership Team (GELT), explained the process of identifying students who qualify for services and how they are monitored throughout their time at LP. She said the percentage of students who qualify for services is higher in this

district than in many others. GELT considers social and emotional characteristics as well as academic performance.

Communication about a student's performance is shared through facilitator meetings, identification review meetings, parent meetings, and surveys about students' Advanced Learning Plans.

Bass encouraged those interested to consult the district's website for details.

Michael Brom, a teacher on special assignment to Assessment and Accountability, explained the array of

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tests used to monitor students’ progress through their school careers. He stressed that students are encouraged to participate in all testing so that any problems can be identified as early as possible and corrected.

When asked about which scores counted when students take a test such as the SAT multiple times, he said that the highest score is counted.

Brom explained the process through which new materials are selected and approved, saying that teachers initially select the materials, which are then available for community review before being approved by the Board of Education.

Goth commented that sometimes parents are unhappy that a resource is chosen before they can express an opinion.

Wangeman said that the philosophy is that the teachers are the experts and will be the ones to use the resources.

Brom explained the new emphasis toward multiple pathways to graduation including emphasis on workplace readiness as well as college readiness. Included in this philosophy is the offering of programs in bio-medics and other technologies and careers at local colleges, work-based learning, and internships.

The district recognizes that all students are not best suited for college but can learn a career that will provide a good lifestyle by pursuing these alternate routes.

The District Accountability Advisory Committee meets six times a year. Locations vary. The next meeting will be held in the Sunset Multipurpose Room of Palmer Ridge High School, 19255 Monument Hill Road, on Jan. 15 at 7 p.m.

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

D-38 Deliberates: Centralized vs. site-based locations for preschool, Dec. 5

Community members and staff discuss preschool growth

By Harriet Halbig

Facilitator Carrie Bennett of Learning Through Difference returned to Lewis-Palmer D-38 on Dec. 5 to moderate a discussion of options for preschool services in the district.

The room was divided into several tables of a mixed group of community members, parents, and district staff, with a trained moderator at each table to direct the conversation. A little over 40 people participated. Of those, a majority favored a hybrid option for

preschool in the district.

Preschool Coordinator Julie Jadomski opened the event with an explanation of the importance of preschool and the fact that, over time, it has become increasingly critical for the future of students because preschools now offer skills formerly taught in kindergarten such as language development, math concepts, science, and social studies. Children learn to get along, take turns, and make predictions regarding the outcome of a story.

Jadomski explained the district is required to offer preschool services without cost to children identified as needing special help due to disabilities and those determined to be at risk due to family factors. This second group, known as the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP), is state funded through vouchers. The district now has 47 funded slots. The former group is federally mandated.

Each preschool is required by law to include a mix of those with exceptional needs, CPP, and non-disabled students. The Colorado Department of Education encourages that a preschool classroom serve at least 50 percent non-disabled students. Non-disabled students pay tuition.

Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman pointed out that although the district invests a significant amount in preschools for the disabled, this in-



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This is only a partial listing!



Above: Superintendent Brofft, left, counts votes. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

vestment pays off over time for families and taxpayers.

Wangeman said that the fastest-growing areas in terms of population are to the west in the Forest Lakes area and south of Kilmer Elementary to the east.

The district now has a total of 195 preschool students throughout the district. The Palmer Lake preschool students are served at the Palmer Lake Early Childhood Center near the administration building. Other locations are Bear Creek, Lewis-Palmer, and Kilmer elementary schools.

Due to accelerating growth in the area, the use of these classrooms for preschool is causing capacity problems for older students in schools where many other spaces have already been repurposed into classrooms. Due to the failure of a bond issue and mill levy override in the November election, which would have supported the construction of a new elementary school, creative solutions must be sought.

Superintendent Karen Brofft introduced principals from Bear Creek, Prairie Winds, Palmer Lake and Kilmer Elementaries and members of the administration and Board of Education who were present to answer any questions during the discussion.

Facilitator Bennett explained that the purpose of the evening was to advise leadership of public opinion to help in their decision making.

Participants were instructed to consider three options: centralized preschool at a single location, site-based preschool as is current, and other options such as leasing space in the community or using the current senior citizen modular at Lewis-Palmer High School as a preschool.

Each participant was supplied with a placemat-size document listing the pros and cons of the three options (centralized, site-based, and other).

Following discussion on the centralized option, conclusions included:

- Opportunities for professional connections between teachers and service providers such as occupational therapists would be enhanced.
- Best use of resources.
- Three people preferred centralized preschool.

Following discussion on site-based preschools (present model), conclusions included:

- Convenience for parents who must provide transportation.
- Children being in same school as older siblings.

- Concern for safety for youngest kids in modular.
- Kilmer is a great place for site-based because they are familiar

with neighborhood. Following discussion on the hybrid option, the conclusions included:

- Use two main centers, Grace Best

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Palmer Lake Elementary School
Prairie Winds Elementary School
Ray E. Kilmer Elementary School

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D38 preschool registration is only open to D38 residents.

Lewis-Palmer School District 38 preschools participate in the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP).

LPSPD January Events

January 1: District Closed

January 8: Students Return


January 14: Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Administration Building

January 15: 2019-2020 Kindergarten Information Night, 5:00-6:00 p.m., Elementary School Locations

January 15: 2019-2020 Preschool Registration Night, 5:00-6:00 p.m., Preschool Locations

January 21: District Closed

January 30: 2-Hour Delayed Start/PLC



- and Kilmer, to address geography.
- Keep pre-kindergarten on site and centralize preschool.
 - No room for centralization to hap-
- pen.
 - Limit population at site-based preschools to not impede on K-6 classes. Send overflow to a central

location.

After the discussion, 13 individuals voted for site-based preschools, 24 voted for a hybrid, and two supported the

centralized option.

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

Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board of Education, Dec. 18

Board acts on near-term growth solutions, hears security update, discusses future bond issue

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education passed a plan to address near-term growth in the district, discussed a new bond issue, signed a contract for a superintendent search in light of Superintendent Karen Brofft's plan to re-

tire, and approved the district's annual audit at its Dec. 18 meeting.

Near-term growth solutions

Following a discussion at the board's special meeting and work session on Dec. 3 (see article on page 1 of this is-

sue), the board was presented with a report from Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman with alternative solutions to the capacity problem among the district's facilities.

Following several meetings and discussions with elementary and middle school principals, Wangeman said that a great deal of data had been collected, including security concerns, data from Metrostudy regarding demographics and anticipated growth, and consultation with the architects and engineers for the proposed new elementary school.

Brofft said it would be impractical to do redistricting before 2020 and that the Thoughtexchange polling completed on Dec. 16 indicated that parents do not favor the centralization of preschool services. (Thoughtexchange is an online survey that was made available for 12 days earlier in the month.) (See D-38 Deliberates article on page 8.)

Wangeman presented a proposal that modular classrooms be installed at Lewis-Palmer Middle School, Bear Creek Elementary School, Kilmer Elementary School, and Lewis-Palmer Elementary School.

Each modular would contain two classrooms with a restroom for each classroom, Wi-Fi, cameras, and swipe-card access for security reasons. A major objection to the use of modulares had been security concerns if students would need to go from the modular to the building during the school day. Fencing and lighting would also be provided.

Wangeman said that the middle school has room for up to five modulares, but the population increase of 280 students would put a strain on the common areas such as the library and lunch facilities. She therefore suggested the placement of two modulares at the middle school.

Because of growth, Wangeman said that Bear Creek Elementary needs additional space for its preschool. Prairie Winds and Palmer Lake Elementaries had repurposed rooms in their schools to accommodate preschool growth, as had Lewis-Palmer Elementary.

The first option was to place two modulares (for preschool) at Bear Creek, one at Kilmer for sixth grade, and one modular for two traditional classrooms at Lewis-Palmer Elementary, in addition to the two at the middle school. (New building codes make it impossible to move the modular classrooms from Grace Best to another location.)

The fourplex at Lewis-Palmer High School, currently used as a senior center, could be used but not moved.

If more than two modulares were placed at Bear Creek, the playground would need to be moved.

Prairie Winds Principal Aileen Finnegan said that teachers support the use of modulares. Site-based preschools are heavily favored. Modulares also create support for k-6 services, as teacher spaces had been repurposed as classrooms.

Finnegan said that preschool registration opens on Jan. 15, so it is urgent that a decision be made.

Option two would move the Bear Creek preschool to the modular at the high school. The deliberation indicated

that parents don't want their youngest kids at the high school.

Wangeman explained that the initial cost of each modular would be \$102,000 to \$108,000, or an approximate one-time expense of \$709,000. Once installed and equipped with security, the modulares would be leased by the district. This would meet the district's needs until 2021, according to Metrostudy's analysis. It would also avoid the need to redistrict.

The board approved the first option.

Security update

Chief of Safety and Security Dennis Coates reported that there were three goals for his department last year:

- Improvement of physical buildings to include restricted access, alarms, and cameras that could be monitored remotely.
- Maintenance of preparedness and communication.
- Attention to the well-being of staff and students.

Coates said that one position was added in his department this year.

Some activities included upgrading of high school cameras, training in reunification if a school is evacuated, promotion of the Safe2Tell program allowing students and others to express concern about an individual or a situation, threat assessments, new drills, and attention to the Claire Davis Act, a law requiring that school districts be proactive in protecting students.

Upcoming activities will include cameras installed in the middle school over Christmas, cameras in the elementary schools to be installed during the summer, and improved backup communications to deal with poor cell reception at Bear Creek Elementary, Lewis-Palmer High School, and the stadium.

Coates said that some additional thoughts included:

- Monitoring of mental health. Many parents in the district, but not all, take care of this for their own families.
- Traffic—too many cars in parking lots when students are there.
- Vape pens are being used every day in the schools, sometimes even in class. When detected they are confiscated.
- Increased use of drugs and alcohol by a wider demographic of students.
- Overcrowding.
- Mentioned RAD (real alternatives to alcohol and drugs) program at the Y, providing a place for kids to go in the evening.

Superintendent update

Brofft said that she would recognize many schools for their awards this year at the January meeting of the board but stressed that all schools in the district are doing well and showing strong scores on assessments.

She detailed the results of the Thoughtexchange survey. The question was what should the district learn from the bond/MLO defeat in November. Most common comments:

- Ballot language was unclear on exactly what the funding would be used for.

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COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS FOR EDUCATION & OVER-CROWDING IN D38

D38 proposed an expensive bond/MLO costing over \$65M over the life of the loan to address over-crowding. **There is a solution to D38's capacity issues — with no new property taxes or MLO's — which will help create 900+ new seats for D38 students.** Instead of increasing property taxes, D38 has approximately \$2M in reserves from the recent sale of a school site and funds allocated specifically to buildings. D38 should put these funds towards a building on Monument Academy's new school site. This investment in a **D38 public charter school** will help create new elementary seats, middle school seats and high school seats — **with no new property taxes to D38 taxpayers.**

SOLUTIONS WITH NO NEW TAXES:

- + 900 new classroom seats
- + Solves capacity problems
- + Maintains quality local education
- + No additional property taxes to D38 taxpayers

DO THE MATH:

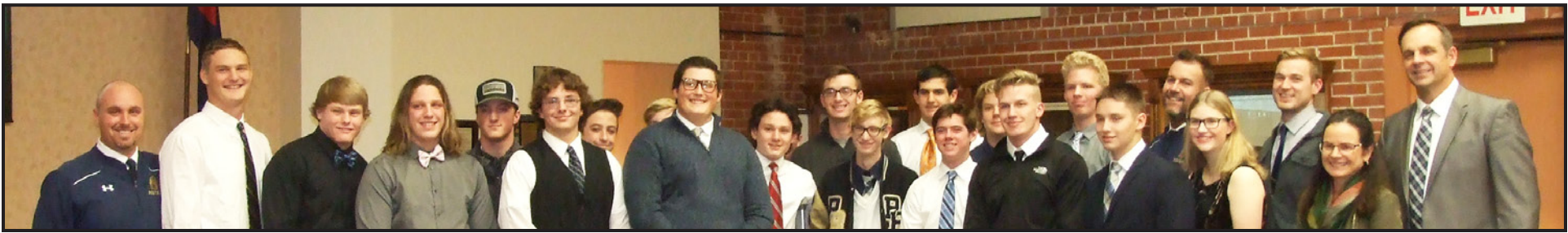


New taxes/\$65M+ new debt/MLO costs = 600 seats @ \$108,000/seat



No new property taxes/\$2M existing D38 funds = 900 seats @ \$2,222/seat

D38 TAXPAYERS FOR EFFICIENT, EXCELLENT & RESPONSIBLE EDUCATION



Above: The Palmer Ridge High School football team with coach Tom Pulford, left are State 3A champions. The Lewis-Palmer High School volleyball team was also recognized for being 4A state champions, but players were unable to attend the meeting due to a schedule conflict. *Photo by Harriet Halbig.*

- Developers should contribute more to the cost of schools. Different government entities provide different amounts.
- Make the urgency of the situation more clear in the ballot language. Say what options were considered.
- People don't realize that the board did not determine the language in the Blue Book, which gave no opinion whether the bond and MLO should be passed.
- The board should decide in a more timely manner if placing initiatives on ballot.

Wangeman reported that the district can now begin work on the Safe Routes to School Trail that will go from Palmer Ridge High School to Lewis-Palmer Elementary. The trail is partially funded through a grant and partially by Woodmoor Improvement Association.

Bond discussion

The board, aided by architects and engineers involved with the design of the proposed elementary school and by members of the audit committee, discussed the amount that should be sought with a new bond issue, recognizing that that cost of construction increases each year.

Also discussed were financing options.

While the proposed cost of the school would be about \$30 million, Brofft cautioned that it would be necessary to include a contingency fund in the case of unexpected increases in the cost of materials or labor.

The board did not vote on a final amount but

was assured by the architect and engineer that the money spent on design was worthwhile and major changes would not be necessary unless there was a change in the building codes.

Superintendent search

Brofft plans to retire at the end of the 2018-19 school year. Randy Black, director of Superintendent Searches, explained the services offered by the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) in finding a new superintendent to begin on July 1, 2019.

Board Secretary Mark Pfoff commented that the last two superintendents were found through CASB and that their methods were sound and respectful of the candidates as well as the district.



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February 2019:
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Monument Academy

Kindergarten Round Up

All little buck-a-roos entering kindergarten in 2019 and their parents should attend the Monument Academy Kindergarten Round Up on **January 25**. Y'all join us in the Multi-purpose Room where you can meet our teachers, receive enrollment information and visit our kindergarten classrooms. The round up begins at **1:30 pm**. No need to RSVP.



New Parent Night

Want to learn more about Monument Academy?

Join us Tues., Jan. 15, 6-7 p.m. for our new and prospective parent information night.

Monument Academy serves preschool through 8th grade.

Monument Academy is a charter school established in 1996 and is located at 1150 Village Ridge Pt. Monument CO, 80132

To see more of what is happening at Monument Academy visit us at **MonumentAcademy.net**

The process involves several steps, including engaging the board with basic questions, asking the community for its opinions, gathering information about desired qualities and qualifications in a superintendent, creating a flier to publicize the search, and screening applicants.

CASB handles the Human Resources work and collects applications. The board decides how many applicants it wishes to interview and will have a community interview team.

The cost of the search will be \$12,000 plus expenses.

Upchurch commented that District 20 is also seeking a superintendent, so the sooner District 38 begins, the better.

Black recommended that the board answer the basic questions before its January meeting so that the call could go out nationwide, and hopefully interviews could be conducted in March. Black said that if the selection doesn't work out, CASB will do another for free.

The board approved the contract with CASB.

Audit approved

The board approved the re-

sults of the annual audit. Recognitions

The board recognized the Palmer Ridge High School football team for its second consecutive 3A State Football Championship and the Lewis-Palmer High School Girls Volleyball team for its fifth 4A State Championship in six years.

The board also recognized David Prejean of Farmers Insurance for his contributions to the district through participation in the Business Advisory Council and donations to cover "wish list" items for three schools each month.



Above: David Prejean of Farmers Insurance was recognized for his contributions. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education usually meets on the third Monday of the month at its Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Due to

a conflict with Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the board will meet on Monday, Jan. 14 at 6 p.m.

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

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Dec. 4

2019 budget changed then approved, including some raises

By Allison Robenstein

At its regular meeting on Dec. 4, the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) board discussed the 2019 budget for over two hours. Before finally approving an amended budget, arguments erupted between the board, the administration, and residents. Topics such as monthly financials and run reports, which the board normally discusses, were postponed until January.

Director William "Bo" McAllister was excused, so Secretary Mark Gunderman ran the meeting. One highlight to the meeting was when Mary Gunderman, chairwoman of Gleneagle Women's Club, thanked the staff for helping with their annual craft fair.

2019 budget changed then approved

As the budget discussion opened, Chief Vinny Burns updated the board with the new property tax numbers that had come in since the November meeting, modifying the revenues identified in the paper budget received by the public. Director Gary Rusnak asked Burns to explain the updated version of the budget to the board, since neither it nor the public had copies of it.

Rusnak also asked staff to clarify whether the incoming revenues were gross or net of the treasurer's fees required to be paid from property tax income. This has been a continuing point of contention among Rusnak, Assistant Chief Scott Ridings and Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich. Popovich and Ridings say the assessor's checks are net after the fees have been removed. However, Rusnak said, "The revenue is gross of the fees, I confirmed this with the assessors." He also expressed frustration that he was not privy to the associated assessor paperwork, saying, "I am a new board member and I am entitled to see that information." Ridings insisted that he was sharing all relevant information with Rusnak.

The differentiation in salary increases between administrative staff and firefighters took up the lion's share of the budget discussion. In October, Burns and Ridings initially asked for Wescott salaries to increase significantly across all ranks to match the base salaries of Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District's in case of a merger. At that time, Ridings said all employee po-

sitions would see an increase, with basic entry-level firefighters seeing the most change with a 52 percent increase in salary. See www.ocn.me/v18n11.htm#dwfpd.

However, at the November meeting, Burns and Ridings scaled down salary requests, saying the administrative assistant would receive a \$9,000 raise, exempt employee (firefighters) salaries will increase 21 percent, and non-exempt employee (supervisors) salary totals will increase 11 percent in 2019. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#dwfpd.

And in a partial turnaround, on Dec. 4, the budget reflected a \$50,500 line item increase in the exempt employee (chiefs) item. Note: The chiefs salary line item has not increased since 2016. Comparably, Simpson calculated the non-exempt employees (firefighters) were receiving only a 2.2 percent raise for 2019, and he suggested these increases should be equitable across the board for administration and firefighters. After Simpson reminded the chiefs, "leaders eat last," Rusnak said, "I'm uncomfortable with the salary increases that are here right now," making clear he would

prefer to go with a straight salary increase across the board.

Burns expressed his disappointment that the board was bringing up salary increase concerns now, saying without the increases the chiefs built into the budget the board is taking away his ability to operate. Ridings said they created a 10 percent salary increase and built promotional opportunities into the non-exempt line item for those firefighters who had been "asked for years to perform in positions probably above where they were at."

Director Larry Schwarz agreed with Simpson and Rusnak, saying he didn't support a large pay increase for the chiefs and was in favor of helping the firefighters get a fair amount of pay.

Rusnak, Gunderman and Schwarz all agreed the entire compensation package, including health insurance, salary and pension payments, should be considered and continued to push for more equitable increases for all employees.

Capt. Sean Pearson asked why Wescott firefighters couldn't be paid comparable salaries to those of TLMFPD or of Colorado Springs, saying,

"We are still grossly underpaid" and asking, "Is my job any different from theirs?"

Schwarz clarified the revenue source for Wescott is being "whittled down" as the district shrinks and the alarm load drops, saying in order for their salaries to increase, "The department needs to find ways to grow." He said, "Unless we annex or merge, this would always be a stepping stone fire department." Rusnak said Wescott should only do what it could afford to with salaries and not to try to keep up with neighboring departments.

The board suggested all employees should receive a 10 percent raise, so they decreased the total of the three salary line items—administrative assistant and exempt and non-exempt employees—by \$61,000 to be put into reserves until final 2018 figures are known. Burns said this doesn't take into account the promotions they wanted to give to firefighters, but Rusnak said the board doesn't control line items and the chiefs could redistribute the remaining increases anyway they see fit. Attorney Matt Court confirmed the chiefs have discretion over the money to move it in any way they like. Treasurer Joyce Hartung said it was not fair to cut firefighter salaries.

Note: The final 2019 budget shows the non-exempt line item representing firefighters' salary was decreased by \$60,000, and \$1,000 was removed from the administrative assistant line item. The chiefs retained their total increase in the exempt employee line item. The money removed by the board was put into the committed funds as promotions. To see the 2019 budget, see http://wescott-fire.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2019_budget.pdf.

The board agreed not to decrease the pension or death and disability line items, which typically follow as a percentage of salary. Simpson suggested there were budget line items that could be reduced to augment the district's reserves. He noted some insurance-related items, such as dental and health benefits that are provided by external



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entities, are trending upward and could be reduced by going out to bid. "It's not a spending concern," Simpson said, but a budget number issue, and he suggested budgeting more conservatively. He also suggested restructuring the way financials are presented to the public to make comparisons more efficient, such as using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and making it easier to get copies of the information.

His questions garnered criticism from Hartung who defended the budget as is, saying the department isn't spending on items they don't need. "I have been here nine years. You haven't been here long enough to know what is going on," Hartung said to Simpson while pointing at Director Gary Rusnak who seemed to be troubled by this, saying "please don't point at me ma'am."

Ridings said the department works very hard to take a conservative, lean accounting approach and takes pride in using cash reserves that have been carefully curated over years to make capital purchases rather than using loans. Rusnak expressed concern that there should be more going into savings, saying "We're setting our capital reserves too low." He also said the actual rollover amount from 2018 would not be known until 2019 and that the district was "really in the red." Simpson stressed to the group, "Budget very conservatively, and escrow very liberally."

Rusnak expressed frustration that some expenses that had been agreed upon at previous meetings had also changed, and it was unclear if the changes reflected the updates to revenues. After hearing of the deviations from the budget provided to the public, resident and former DWFPD board member Dennis Feltz asked, "Can we get the new budget?" Attorney Court said, "Terminology is important here. It's not a new budget" but the same one the board has been discussing over the last few months. He stressed it can absolutely change over time before the board approves it.

The changes Rusnak identified included:

- The administrative staff request increased from \$40,000 to \$50,000, making the 2019 raise a 25 percent increase from 2018. Ridings said every other administrative assistant around the area makes more than this position.
- IT Infrastructure and Network increased by 50 percent to \$7,600, which Burns explained will pay for Panasonic Toughbooks.
- The health insurance account was increased \$12,000 from the last time the board met for a total of \$245,000, an increase of 22.5 percent. Ridings said they

intend to do a thorough review of their health care in 2019.

Gunderman worried about how Gallagher might reduce 2019 revenues. The Gallagher Amendment is a voter-approved measure that requires 45 percent of the state's total property tax burden to be paid by residences and the other 55 percent paid by nonresidential (commercial) property. A Colorado General Assembly committee is reviewing the amendment to determine how it will

change over time. See www.ocn.me/v18n11.htm#dwfpd.

Court made clear the purpose of the meeting was to establish the budget expenses and revenue needed and then certify the needed mill levy. Rusnak asked if budget efficiencies allowed, could the board certify a mill levy lower than the one approved by voters for one budget year. Court said no, telling him if they voted tonight to decrease the levy, it would require a vote of the people to regain those extra

mills in the future. Burns, Ridings, and Gunderman agreed with Court, saying once a district certifies a lower mill levy, it is locked in.

After much discussion, the amended budget was adopted, revenues and expenditures were appropriated, and the full voter-approved mill levies of 7.00 and 14.90 were certified by votes of 3-1. Hartung voted no on all budget-related resolutions.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 pm.

The next Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Jan. 15 at Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meetings are usually on the third Tuesday of each month. For information, call Executive Administrator Stacey Popovich at 488-8680 or see www.wescottfire.org. The district is also on Facebook.

Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Dec. 5

Front Range fire risk a stark reality; another new engine, pay raises in budget

By Natalie Barszcz

On Dec. 5, the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board approved the 2019 budget, including a pay raise for all staff and the purchase of another engine. Fire Marshal/Administrative Battalion Chief Jamey Bumgarner presented the dire findings from the Colorado State Forest Service November report to the board.

TLMFPD board President Jake Shirk and Director Jason Buckingham were excused.

Front Range—millions of people at fire risk

Bumgarner discussed the report from the Forest Service study released in November 2018 that found that 2.9 million people have moved into the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI, the point where the forest meets development) in Colorado since 2012, a 50 percent increase.

"The stark reality is that with the Waldo Canyon and Black Forest Fires and most recently the California, Paradise (Camp) Fire, we are still in a fire regime and this area sometimes burns very well," said Bumgarner. He added, "We want to prevent fires that start in a neighborhood and keep them from spreading house to house; our goal is to take steps before a fire starts in a community through mitigation efforts with a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), tailoring specific needs to each community with FirewiseUSA."

He said some local homeowners' associations have fire risk reduction strategies already devised, but to achieve a "fire adapted community," more residents need to do actual work on their own property in every neighborhood. If you need advice on mitigating your property, you can arrange a home mitigation inspection by calling Bumgarner at 719-484-0911. See www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/By-topic/Wildfire/Firewise-USA.

Budget 2019 includes engine purchase

Chief Chris Truty presented the final proposed 2019 budget for approval, taking particular note of the following important features:

- The need to certify the full 18.4 mills approved by voters in 2017. (In contrast, for the 2018 budget, TLMFPD certified 18.1 of the possible 18.4 mills. See www.ocn.me/v18n11.htm#tlmfpd).
- A 3 percent COLA increase on Firefighter 1 salary, which is increasing from \$52,496 to \$54,071 in 2019. All other higher-ranking salaries are calculated using formulas starting with that base rate.
- New fleet and equipment purchases including two new engines, one arriving soon and another just ordered.
- The remodel of Station 1.
- Funds set aside for future capital purchases.



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Offered at \$99,000 (each)

that will eventually replace Engine 2111 to the 2019 budget. The TLMFPD board voted unanimously to authorize the lease-purchase of a duplicate firefighting vehicle to replace engine 1, from Pierce Manufacturing, putting down a deposit of \$100,000. It will be financed over 10 years.

The board subsequently approved and adopted all resolutions presented in the final 2019 budget, 5-0.

Note: When voters approved the mill levy increase in the 2017 election, TLMFPD's publicized objectives were to increase the budget for wages, building capital outlay, communications, equipment, and create a separate savings fund for future purchases. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tlmfpd.

Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) negotiation

Truty said, "Speaking from my perspective we have had two favorable meetings with the union and excellent discussions."

Engineer Mike Rauenzahn, who is the union representative for the Local 4319 International Association of Firefighters (IAFF), responded, "The meetings and the collaboration have been good, and we are moving forward in a positive direction for the community."

"There is no financial reason for backtracking on the CBA and January 1st will be the start date for negotiations," said Hildebrandt. Truty said decisions made could be retroactive to Jan. 1.

The collective bargaining idea was first introduced at TLMFPD in March.

See www.ocn.me/v18n4.htm#tlmfpd, www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#tlmfpd.

Gallagher update

Truty gave an update on the potential effects of Gallagher amendment legislation, which limits how much residential property taxes local governments can collect. He is unsure that any constitutional amendment will come out of the current legislative session, which is due to end mid-May.

If TLMFPD were to propose a ballot question for the November 2019 election to ask voters to "de-Gallagherize" TLMFPD, the county would need to be notified by the end of July with a final submission date of Sept. 1. For more information regarding the Gallagher amendment, visit: <http://tlmfire.org/gallagher>.

Wescott consolidation update

Truty said the current status of negotiations with Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) on the potential merger is as follows:

- There has been no formal update in the previous two weeks regarding whether or not they will go forward with a merger.
- It is unknown if any further progress will be made before the Jan. 23 TLMFPD board meeting.
- The DWFPD board will need to approve the budget for 2019.
- The only sticking point is about DWFPD's financials and when those questions will be answered.
- At the January TLMFPD board meeting, a discussion will be held in executive session to determine

the next step in the consolidation process and where it goes from there.

Treasurer John Hildebrandt said he had received some email communication from a DWFPD board member in early November and otherwise had been relying on OCN to garner any further information on the process in the interim.

Latest financial report

Hildebrandt updated the TLMFPD board on the October financials, which represent 83.33 percent of the year to date.

- Property taxes received were \$7.497 million, 99 percent of the budgeted \$7.560 million.
- Specific Ownership Taxes received were \$729,781, 143 percent of the budgeted \$510,000.
- Ambulance revenues were \$727,088, 90 percent of the budgeted \$800,000.
- Impact fees (from development) were at \$156,955, 209 percent of expected revenue of \$75,000.

Expenses continue to climb or go over budget in categories including total overtime, training, equipment, vehicle maintenance, medical, and administration, but Hildebrandt didn't elaborate on the causes. Truty's report said, "Total overtime expenses have dramatically diminished. Since our new people have come on line, we are no longer 10-15 percent above annual budget and now down to 3 percent for the year." Hildebrandt said the bottom line is TLMFPD is under budget for

overall expenses by 3-4 percent for the year to date.

Other good news

- Director Tom Tharnish said the Town of Monument had approved funding to purchase a boat and shed for Monument Lake, which will be available to TLMFPD for water rescue training in 2019.
- Tharnish said that when the town builds its second water tank, in Forest View Estates, it could be possible to add fire hydrants on the pipeline's route along Red Rock Ranch Road and down Highway 105 to Station 1.
- Vice President Roger Lance said that Pikes Peak Regional Fire Rehab Services is rebranding as "Emergency Incident Support Team," so its mission to "rapidly provide food and rest to first responders during emergencies" is more clear to the public. To volunteer or contribute, see www.pikespeakfire.org/fire-rehab/.

The TLMFPD board adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Jan. 23 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information, contact Office Administrator/HR Jennifer Martin at 719-484-9011. For upcoming agendas, see <http://tlmfire.org/board>.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.me.

Monument Board of Trustees, Dec. 3

Town attorney and seventh trustee sworn in; interim town manager named

By Allison Robenstein

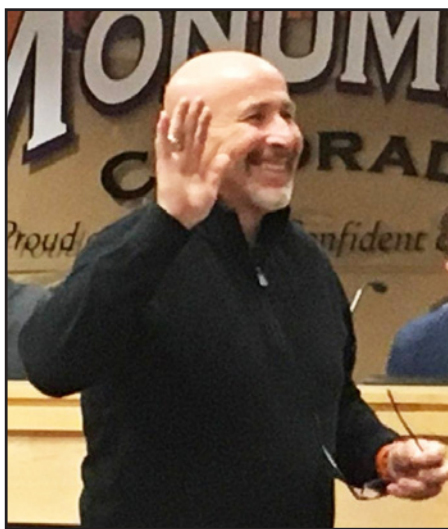
The Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) held a productive meeting on Dec. 3, filling several positions that had been vacant or unappointed. These included the seventh trustee position, the town attorney and the treasurer. The board also agreed to bring in an in-

terim town manager.

Trustee Laurie Clark was noted absent.

Most empty positions filled

Jim Romanello was sworn in as the seventh trustee on the board in a seat left vacant when Don Wilson became mayor. Romanello was voted into the



Above: Jim Romanello was sworn in as the seventh trustee on the board in a seat left vacant when Don Wilson became mayor. Romanello was voted into the seat in the Nov. 6 election defeating Ken Kimple and Ann Howe. Photo courtesy the Town of Monument.

seat in the Nov. 6 election defeating Ken Kimple and Ann Howe.

Joseph Rivera of Murray, Dahl, Beery and Renaud LLP was appointed special counsel to the town. At the Oct. 15 meeting, the board had heard from four legal firms willing to represent the town as contract attorneys. The town has been without legal counsel since Sept. 4 when Alicia Corley left for another job. See <https://www.ocn.me/v18n11.htm>.

Tonight, Pamela Smith was appointed as town treasurer after her appointment to the position was denied by the board at its May 7 meeting. See <https://www.ocn.me/v18n6.htm>.

Before she was designated treasurer though, Trustee Greg Coopman suggested postponing the appoint-

ment after the BOT was directed by El Paso County Sheriff's Office to retain records for an ongoing criminal investigation. Neither he nor Mayor Don Wilson seemed to know the root of the investigation, and Wilson suggested it could be regarding a developer or vendor and not be specific to Smith. He also reminded the board they can make changes to an appointment at any time. Trustee Jeffrey Bornstein said people are innocent until proven otherwise, and Coopman said later that there's no insinuation of guilt until someone is found guilty.

Trustee Ron Stephens said the board has been "delaying this appointment far too long." Romanello motioned to appoint Smith as town treasurer, and the motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott. It passed 4-1-1 with Coopman voting no and Bornstein abstaining.

At the beginning of the meeting, the board voted unanimously to add an executive session before Item 7, which were discussion items about the town manager and town treasurer. The board went into a brief executive session at 7:42 p.m. to "conference with an attorney for the purpose of receiving legal advice with regard to the Board of Trustees," according to Wilson.

When the board returned, and after some discussion, they decided to hire Mike Foreman as the interim town manager. The vote was 5-1 with Coopman voting against, saying, "No, I cannot." Foreman was one of six managerial candidates interviewed by the board at the Aug. 13 meeting. See www.ocn.me/v18n9.htm#mbot0813.

The town has been without a full-time manager since Feb. 2, when then manager Chris Lowe was put on administrative leave and then fired June 4. Smith has been the acting town



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manager during this time. See <https://ocn.me/v18n3.htm#mbot> and <https://www.ocn.me/v18n7.htm#mbot>.

Bornstein suggested they wait until March 2019 and just bring on a full-time manager, skipping the interim manager step altogether, but Elliott said they should act sooner rather than later to take the pressure off Smith having to do two jobs. She suggested the board work with the interim town manager to help them hire a permanent manager. Foreman is on a 120-day contract.

2019 budget approved although challenging

Smith presented the trustees with the final version of the 2019 budget, saying that legally, the board can spend only the expected revenue.

The board unanimously approved all budget-related ordinances including adopting the budget, appropriating money to the various funds for the town, and certifying the property tax mill levy.

Coopman said this year's budget process was difficult and challenging but that he was happy for all the dialogue. He said part of the problem was that the town needs so much and they have delayed approving so many requests. He asked that next year, the directors initiate discussions with the board when they need something. During their Nov. 29 budget workshop, Coopman said in the past, the board used a dry erase board where the public could put up comments and suggestions, and he hoped the public could participate in the process.

- The budget includes:
- General Fund—\$7.66 million
 - 2A Water Acquisition, Storage, Delivery (ASD)—\$3.47 million
 - Water Enterprise Fund—\$4.37 million
 - Traffic Impact Fee—\$211,198
 - Storm Drainage Impact Fee Fun—\$142,450
 - Community Development Fund—\$97,189
 - Conservation Trust Fund—\$68,607

Items funded in the 2019 budget include:

- For the Police Department:*
- Two new police officers were approved by the board during their Nov 29 budget workshop bringing the total officers to 20.
 - \$153,000 for police vehicles.
 - For the Public Works Department:*
 - \$306,538 for asphalt repairs.
 - \$100,000 for Well 9 engineering for radium removal through the water enterprise fund.
 - \$42,000 for a truck replacement.
- Additional requests made that were not included in approved 2019 budget:*
- Four additional police officers plus a code enforcement officer were requested but not fund-

- ed.
- Ballistic shields, a high priority request from Shirk were not funded for \$1,200.
 - \$300,000 was requested for the design of a new Public Works building but not funded. Public Works Director Tom Tharnish said the building will cost \$3 million, so he took 10 percent of that number as design. Coopman said he was not willing to finance this project, and that it should come out of cash on hand.
 - Capital projects that were not completed in 2018 coming from the water enterprise fund were not funded. Coopman said these projects are in the budget but that "this budget doesn't necessitate funding of these projects." These include:
 - Booster station, \$800,000
 - Repairs to existing water storage tank roof, \$132,000

- Wells 4 and 5 building rehab, \$150,000
- During public comments, resident and trustee candidate in the November election Ann Howe expressed her frustration that the public was not able to comment on the budget during workshops, "to say the public had input is a lie and a farce." At the board's Nov. 29 budget workshop, Howe asked if they would be taking public comments, but Wilson told her no. She then asked why the public was invited to the meeting, and he said they are invited to all public meetings held by the BOT, but public comments would only be taken during specific times in regular meetings.
- Monument Police Chief Jake Shirk thanked the board for the budget. Bornstein thanked Smith for facilitating the budget process and said although this process is never a win when there's compromise, he thought this year went very well.
- To review the 2019 budget,*

see <https://townofmonument.org/367/Town-Financials>.



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Land decisions made for new development and business

Three land use decisions were unanimously approved by the board. The first was the final site plan and final plat for Jackson Creek North filing no. 1.

This 11.5-acre parcel, which sits north of Leather Chaps Drive, will hold 31 single-family homes and three tracts of landscaping. The existing part of Harness Road will be extended from the Remington Hill neighborhood to Jackson Creek Parkway.

The applicant developer, Vision Development Inc., will use funding from Triview Metropolitan District to pay for the road development and improvements like sidewalks, as well as water and sewer improvements.

Planner Jennifer Jones told the board there was a lot of discussion at the November Planning Commission board meeting regarding sidewalk safety, where it was suggested that if snowplows push all the snow from the road onto the sidewalk, children walking to the high school would have to walk in the street, making their trip unsafe. Mike Taylor, the applicant's representative, said Triview confirmed they will make every effort to clear the sidewalks for pedestrians. Triview will maintain the open spaces and landscaping installed by the developer. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#mpc.

Bornstein asked if the developer would install any xeriscaping, and Taylor said they intended to follow the landscaping municipal code. Later in the meeting during board comments, Bornstein suggested the board should work to tighten up the landscaping ordinances, and agreed to discuss the existing land-

scaping municipal code during a January meeting. The current ordinance can be found at https://library.municode.com/co/monument/codes/code_of_ordinances (search for landscaping).

Resident Nancy Swearengin asked if the irrigation systems installed would have rain sensors so they would not turn on if there's already moisture. Taylor said they could discuss it with Triview, but no decisions have been made.

The second land decision was for an ordinance approving a zoning change to the planned development and final PD site plan for the Cipriani addition. Property owner Cipriani LLC requested a zone change to build a new 3,700-square-foot restaurant on the 0.6 acres southwest of the existing strip. The lot was previously platted as Tract A of the Monument Villa Townhomes.

The Planning Commission unanimously approved this request at its Nov. 14 meeting. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#mpc. The BOT also unanimously approved this request.

Finally, the board approved a site plan for Abra,

an auto care and body shop to be built on 1.46 acres in the Jackson Creek Market Village along Baptist Road. ABRA's representative Paul Tucci answered the board's questions including many from Bornstein who was concerned about the traffic burden on local residents. Tucci said a traffic study had been completed as required by the town and found the traffic to be much less than the traffic into and out of the nearby 7-11.

Tucci said there will be 100-120 vehicles outside the building awaiting estimates or body work, but all work will be done within the building to decrease noise. The ordinance was approved 5-1 with Bornstein voting against.

Bornstein said, "Tonight was a really good meeting. And it was a pleasure to see that," thanking Smith for her work in preparing the budget. Elliott agreed the night was very productive. Wilson thanked Smith for her work in preparing the budget.

Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

Monument Planning Commission, Dec. 12

Delaney to step down; Sanctuary Pointe Filing 5 Final Plat approved

By Kate Pangelinan

Vice Chairwoman Michelle Glover presided over the Dec. 12 Monument Planning Commission meeting, owing to the absence of Chairman Ed Delaney. Had he been able to attend, this would have been Delaney's final MPC meeting. He has served the Town of Monument in various volunteer positions for 18 years, and Glover thanked him for this service. The commission will vote on a replacement chairperson at the next meeting. In following the established procedure of the commission, eligible candidates will be Glover and Commissioners John Dick and Kenneth Kimple.

The appointed Planning Commission members and alternates will also become official as of January.

The Dec. 12 Monument Planning Commission meeting is available to watch on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1Plk07QQ-o. Documents related to the meeting are available on the Town of Monument website at <https://monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com/>.

Final Plat of Sanctuary Pointe Filing 5

Sanctuary Pointe Filing 5 is described as fairly small, comprising nearly 16 acres and located on the north side of Sanctuary Rim Drive. Phase 2 of the Sanctuary Pointe housing development was approved in March. A condition of that approval was that no more than 40 land use permits may be approved in this development before the extension of Sanctuary Rim Drive to Gleneagle Drive is complete. (See www.ocn.me/v18n4.htm#mbot0319.) These land use permits are not related to the platting of the development, so the topic of this meeting was not beholden to this condition. Presumably, 40 homes could be fully constructed in Phase 2 before this condition becomes a deterrent factor.

Filing 5 itself includes 53 single-family residential lots, three tracts and three streets. It is consistent with the planned development (PD) site plan, and its boundary to the south is Sanctuary Rim Drive. Loren Moreland, vice president/project manager of Classic Homes, was present to answer questions during this meeting.

When Kimple asked planning staff whether there is a planned starting time for construction on Sanctuary Rim Drive, Planner Jennifer Jones answered that the construction drawings have been reviewed for both Sanctuary Rim and the connection piece, and that they were in the planning office ready to be signed at the time of the meeting. Those papers were expected to be approved in the next couple days, after which construction could begin. This construction could start up "soon," Jones said.

Glover asked Moreland about park plans within the development, and it was explained that there is a park located within PD Site Plan 2 Phase G, which will be the last portion constructed. This area is currently being used as a dump site for excess dirt during construction. There will be a playground featured as part of this park. This land is located south of Filing 5.

A significant portion of the discussion at this meeting focused on construction traffic and the safety of nearby roads during this development's progress. Concerned citizens noted that the roads are already not safe for children heading to bus stops, with vehicles speeding and other issues. Comments were



Above: Monument Planning Commission Chairman Ed Delaney has served the Town of Monument in various volunteer positions for 18 years, including the Planning Commission, the Monument Sanitation District board, and the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility Joint Use Committee. Photo by Lisa Hatfield.

made about how unappealing "10 years of construction vehicles" passing through would be for the community.

On the topic of whether Classic Homes would be willing to devise an alternate plan for construction traffic, Moreland stated that the company has already made all the concessions it is currently willing to make. It is building beyond its general expectations, off of its development property, in putting in the amount of new roadway that has been agreed upon. It was also noted that Classic Homes has been in contact with the director of transportation for District 38 regarding temporary school bus stops to help with safety concerns. Glover encouraged Moreland to include the community in this planning process, because many of the same citizens that are concerned about school bus safety now might have insight into the best placement for these temporary bus stops.

The anticipated route of the project's construction vehicles was also discussed, as Commissioner John Dick noted that not all vehicles necessarily have to be competing with school buses on Gleneagle Drive. Some construction traffic could head up Baptist Road. Moreland stated that this would largely depend on which direction proved the easiest path for the vehicles exiting the progressing development.

In the end, the motion to recommend approval for this final plat passed 3-2, with Commissioners Chris Wilhelmi and Kimple voting against.

The Planning Commission will view a presentation on the particulars of planning during the January meeting, although it was unknown as of this meeting whether there will be other business. The next Monument Planning Commission meeting will take place at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 9 at 645 Beacon Lite Rd. Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of the month. Information: 884-8017 or www.townofmonument.org/meetings/

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

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Monument Board of Trustees, Dec. 17

Interim town manager starts work

By Allison Robenstein

Monument now has an interim town manager, Mike Foreman, who was sworn in Dec. 14. During the Dec. 17 meeting that he attended, the Board of Trustees (BOT) approved a 2018 budget restatement and discussed workflow for the town attorney and the North Monument Creek Interceptor and how it might conceivably benefit the town's water supply.

Trustees Greg Coopman and Laurie Clark and Town Treasurer Pamela Smith, who has been filling in as acting town manager since February, were absent.

Interim town manager

Our Community News received a press release on Dec. 14 from the Monument Police Department Commander Steve Burk introducing Mike Foreman as the interim manager for the Town of Monument. Foreman was previously city manager for Craig, Colorado and for Celina, Texas. He is fulfilling a 120-day term at which point a permanent town manager will be selected.

Smith was reappointed as treasurer at the Dec. 3 meeting after the board had an executive session to "conference with an attorney for the public entity for the purpose of receiving legal advice with regard to the board of trustees." See www.ocn.me/v18n6.htm#mbot, www.ocn.me/v18n6.htm#mbot.

During public comments, resident Ann Howe took issue with the Dec. 3 executive session, claiming it violated the Colorado Sunshine law because, according to her, the session was intended for "the appointment of a person to fill the office of a member of the local public body." See related Dec. 3 Board of Trustees meeting on page 14.

Town attorney exposes work request issue

Town counsel Joseph Rivera, who was sworn in at the Dec. 3 BOT meeting, asked that the board agree to a structure to determine from whom he would receive work requests. This came about after he revealed he had been receiving emails from single board members asking him to complete tasks. As a contract employee, Rivera gets paid based on the work he completes, but he said perhaps some of the requests could have been completed in-house instead. Trustee Jeffrey Bornstein seemed surprised by this revelation and said all communication should be transparent, so "no one is left out of the circle."

Mayor Don Wilson said that in the past, work requests came from the town manager who would identify whether board questions could be answered by in-house staff or if they need to be referred to legal counsel.

The board agreed this should continue and requested that Foreman take on this duty. Foreman confirmed he will ensure all questions from the board would be answered and provided to all trustees.

2018 budget restatement

Human Resources Director Robert Bishop presented two ordinances to re-appropriate 2018 budget funds. According to one ordinance, it is necessary to restate the 2018 final budget, "due to financing that was expected" for projects in 2018, but the debt funding was not approved by the board. Specifically, money within both the Capital Improvement Project fund and the Debt Service fund money had to be reallocated back to the General and Water Enterprise funds. This step was taken in order to "not create a TABOR violation and negate the enterprise status of the water fund. This will affect the balance forward on the Water Enterprise Fund for 2019 by a negative \$1,289,186," Smith wrote in the ordinance language.

Bishop presented a second ordinance, "allocating the expenditures approved to the funds they will be paid from." This budget amendment (restatement) and re-appropriations were needed to fulfill the law that the town must remain budget-neutral, and the approved revenues must cover expenditures. Both ordinances were unanimously approved with no public comment or questions asked by the board.

Background: In September, the board did not approve a \$1.8 million loan that had been expected by the original 2018 budget for two water-related projects. The Well 4 and 5 upgrade project was unanimously approved in the board's Jan. 2, 2018 consent agenda, and the \$924,436 contract was awarded to Velocity Constructors Inc., with money initially coming from the Water Enterprise Fund. The second, a booster upgrade project, was to have cost \$625,000 that had been expected to be financed. The Well 4 and 5 project commenced, so the Water Fund's cash was depleted and needed to be supplemented by the General Fund when the loan never materialized.



Above: Mike Foreman was selected Dec. 3 as interim Town Manager. Mike is a graduate of the University of Texas at Arlington, with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Texas at Arlington. He has over 30 years' experience in varying aspects of local government and served as the City Manager of Craig, Colorado, as well as the City of Celina, Texas. Photo and caption information courtesy the Town of Monument.

Smith also said in September that the board shouldn't have gone forward with well 4 and 5 contract approval in January without approving related funding, but Tharnish said then that the intention of approving the project before the money was available was to increase the town's water capacity and make the plant operational before summer and that there was no time to ask for a loan then.

Besides the booster station project, four other projects in the 2018 Capital Projects Fund totaling \$345,000 also did not get started due to the lack of anticipated financing. See www.ocn.me/v18n2.htm#mbot, www.ocn.me/v18n9.htm#mbot, www.ocn.me/v18n9.htm#mbot0820, www.ocn.me/v18n10.htm#mbot, www.ocn.me/v18n10.htm#mbot0917.

Should the town provide a municipal court?

The board reviewed the need to maintain an in-house municipal court after Bornstein said, "Based on the cost of our operation fees with personnel and what we bring in, we're in the red. It costs us money to run that." Foreman said many municipal courts have a negative balance sheet, and that he has started working with staff to understand the town's court procedures.

dures.

After a discussion, Rivera was tasked by the board to research subcontracting options and to bring discussion items to a January meeting. Foreman, Shirk and Smith will continue to review the process.

North Monument creek interceptor

Tharnish has been attending meetings with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) to develop the North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) project. The venture is an effort by CSU to take all the wastewater that would normally be treated by existing plants in the Tri-Lakes area—the Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (UMCRW-WTF) and Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF)—and send it to one of CSU's treatment

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plants via a new pipeline using gravity-driven flows. All wastewater from Palmer Lake Sanitation District, Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD), Monument Sanitation District (MSD), and Triview Metropolitan District—which all cover sections of the Monument—goes to either the TLWWTF or UMCRW-WTF. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#msd, www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#tvmd.

Tharnish said that the town is not in the wastewater business, but he hoped CSU would also make agreements with local water districts including the town to return clean water back. That will involve a separate level of more complicated legal negotiations. He said the town has a right to certain return flows, and if water treatment is done at a CSU treatment plant, they need to figure out how to provide return flows as either non-potable water or drinking water. Currently the town uses excess return flow for paper water exchanges.

Tharnish said this project could mean the town would not need to construct the reuse treatment plant that he has previously discussed, possibly saving the

town up to \$9 million. This solution, which has not yet been approved by CSU, could mean the town would have to invest in a return-flow pipeline with shared costs among several water entities of \$1 million to \$2 million. “This is a major financial advantage if we can make this happen,” said Tharnish.

The only disadvantage to this project that Tharnish could foresee is having to find a way to store more water than the town does now.

Checks over \$5,000

Checks written for over \$5,000 since Dec. 17:

- Triview Metropolitan District—Sales tax for October, Motor Vehicle Sales Tax for November, Regional Building Use tax for November, \$198,860
- AECOM Technical Services, \$6,626

Public comments

During public comments resident Nancy Swearengin asked that since the town has its own legal counsel onboard now, if Clark, who has said in meetings she is consulting her own personal attorney, would use the town’s counsel instead. She wished Clark had

been in attendance at the meeting so she could ask her directly.

Eric Metzger, owner of Simple Computer Repair, requested that the board shop locally, especially with respect to the town’s IT department. Metzger said he’s seen the amount of money spent by the town for IT services contracted with an Aurora business and said he could meet six of out the eight objectives set out by the town for its IT department.

The Monument Board of Trustees usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Monday of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The next meeting is scheduled for Jan 7. Call 884-8014 or see www.townofmonument.org for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for BOT or to download audio recordings of past meetings see, <http://monumenttownco.minuteson-demand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

Palmer Lake Town Council, Dec. 13

Bridge project receives extension

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

The Palmer Lake Town Council’s final meeting of 2018 began with a moment of silence in remembrance of Kevin Rudnicki, a local youth whose disappearance brought the community together in a prolonged search for him, and whose remains were recovered earlier in December near Mount Herman. Then the council heard information about the status of the planned bridge that will link the town of Palmer Lake with the adjacent park and voted on a resolution setting the town’s mill levy for 2019. Finally, progress was reported on the issue of parking at the trailhead to Limbaugh Canyon, a topic that provoked many comments and proposed solutions from the local hiking community in previous council meetings.

Bridge construction gets final extension

In response to a question from resident Dee Banta, Town Administrator Cathy Green-Sinnard told the board she had filed for a 15-month extension on the bridge construction project, the final extension that would be allowed. Several issues remain to be resolved, she said, including the use of a flagman provided by the railroad during construction of the bridge and a charge from the railroad related to the

airspace over the bridge.

Green-Sinnard also said an additional \$75,000 to \$100,000 must be raised to complete the project, adding that Awake the Lake had committed to raising the necessary funds.

According to Green-Sinnard, these issues, and others, are covered by the contract between Awake the Lake and the general contractor.

Speaking on behalf of Awake the Lake, Cindy Graff pointed out that most of the issues preventing completion of the bridge project were due to unexpected requirements imposed by the railroad.

Mill levy for 2019 adjusted

Town Finance Officer Valerie Remington told the council that she had received financial information from the state that relates to the town’s mill levy. In the previous year, she said, the mill levy had to be temporarily adjusted downward to 21.135 to avoid exceeding the upper limit on revenue increases that the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) imposes. For 2019, the mill levy could return to 21.238 without exceeding the TABOR limit, Remington said.

The board unanimously passed Resolution 17 of 2018, establishing 21.238 as the mill levy for 2019.

Hikers get improved parking at trailhead

During public comments, Carissa Gallardo, speaking on behalf of the hiking community, told the council that issues about parking at the Limbaugh Canyon trailhead had been resolved through discussions with the Forest Service and with the town of Palmer Lake. The road at the trailhead is actually on National Forest property, she said, and the Forest Service wanted to allow parking for three to four cars.

Green-Sinnard said the barriers to parking presently in place would be removed, and signs indicating where to park would soon be installed.

The council is scheduled to hold two meetings in January 2019, on Jan. 10 and on Jan. 24 at 6 p.m. at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, with the second meeting organized as a working session. Information: 481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.
Jackie Bruhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

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

2019 budgets approved; O&M costs climbing as expected

By Natalie Barszcz

The 2019 budgets were among many resolutions approved Dec. 3 by the boards of Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) and Pinon Pines Metropolitan Districts 1, 2, and 3 (PPMD 1, 2, 3). The boards held public budget hearings, made amendments to the 2018 budgets, and discussed the rising operation and maintenance (O&M) costs happening as the district grows. The districts’ manager, Ann Nichols, said, “FLMD will not be asking for any water rate increase or service development fees until they know the true cost of running the Surface Water Treatment Plant.” All mill levies for “The Pinons” will remain unchanged for 2019.

FLMD is the half-acre operating district that owns and is responsible for the public infrastructure, water, wastewater, storm drainage, parks and trails, landscaping, and streetlight services for the residents of PPMD 1 and PPMD 2, the residential districts, which are in unincorporated El Paso County, and PPMD 3, the commercial district, which lies mostly within the southwest town limits of Monument. “The Pinons” are financing districts and provide no services except to collect property taxes.

Board members for FLMD, PPMD 2 and 3 are: President George Lenz, executive vice president of finance of Classic Homes; Secretary James Boulton, vice president/project manager of Classic Homes; Assistant Secretary and Treasurer Doug Stimple, CEO of Classic Homes; and Assistant Secretary Joe Loidolt, president of Classic Homes. One board member vacancy exists in all three of these districts.

PPMD 1 board Directors include residents Mike Hitchcock and Mike Slavick alongside Lenz, Stimple and Loidolt.

Ann Nichols is the manager for all four districts. At this meeting, the board unanimously approved

Nichols’ professional administrative services contract for 2019.

FLMD and PPMD 3 amended budgets for 2018

Nichols informed the board of her only amendment to the 2018 FLMD budget, an increase of \$1.098 million for the funding of surface water treatment plant engineering. The proposed increase brought the General Fund expenditures for the operations of FLMD to a total of \$11.938 million for 2018.

Nichols explained that PPMD 3 has begun to collect a public infrastructure fee (PIF) from the Pilot/Flying J Travel Center. The PPMD 3 2018 budget shows an increase of \$123,000 in anticipated revenue from the Pilot Station for the PIF, she said. The Falcon Commerce Center portion of PPMD 3 pays sales taxes to the Town of Monument and a separate PIF to PPMD 3. See www.ocn.me/v17n6.htm#flmd.

The FLMD and PPMD 3 board approved the amended 2018 budgets and the resolutions, 4-0.

PPMD 1 budget for 2019

Nichols presented her opinion on the forecasted PPMD 1 2019 budget, stating the following:

- The mill levy for General Operating Expenses would remain 11.0564 mills for 2019.
- The General Fund Operations and Maintenance Property Tax revenue is expected to be \$76,266 compared to the \$64,000 collected in 2017. “It is climbing as it should,” said Nichols.
- The Debt Service Fund mill levy will remain at 44.222 mills for 2019. Due to the Gallagher Amendment, the mill levy will likely need to be certified at a higher level next year if an anticipated drop to 6.5 percent occurs in the property tax rate for 2020. In case property tax and the facilities development fees aren’t generating suffi-

cient revenue to service the debt, there is a “Gallagherized” cap of about 63 mills, so residents wouldn’t have more property tax exposure than that.

- In 2018, PPMD 1 paid \$420,000 in interest on the \$8.33 million bond for infrastructure. It can’t service all the debt until there is more development to generate enough revenue, so there is also a debt service reserve fund to make up the difference. The 2019 \$305,000 debt service mill levy is totally pledged to pay off the 2016 bonds issued to pay for part of the infrastructure.

The board unanimously approved and adopted the 2019 budget and appropriated those funds for PPMD 1. They also certified the General Operating Expenses mill levy at 11.056 mills and the Debt Service mill levy at 44.222 mills.

FLMD, PPMD 2 and PPMD 3 2019 budgets

Nichols said there are 177 houses in PPMD 1 connected to FLMD’s water and wastewater system now, with 51 more anticipated in 2019. She listed all the estimated cost increases to the 2019 budgets:

- Connection of the Arapahoe aquifer well to the plant is estimated to cost \$300,000 to complete. Ten years ago FLMD drilled the well, and it would be efficient to complete the connection at this time and blend that ground water with surface water. This is separate from the Arapahoe well water currently being piped from PPMD 3 commercial area, said Stimple.
- The surface water treatment plant cost is estimated to be \$107,000 this year. Unknown start-up costs are anticipated by February, when renewable water from Bristlecone Lake begins to be treated and used for drinking and irrigation.



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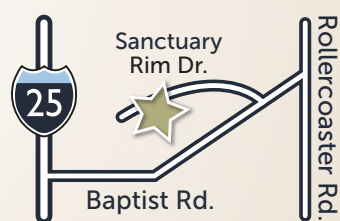
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Bed: 4 Bath: 4.5 Garage: 2
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Sq. Ft.: 3,880 Finished
Price: \$562,989
Available: October



VANTAGE HOMES

MLS: #3528886
Floor Plan: The Riverwood
Address: 1670 Summerglow Ln.
Bed: 4 Bath: 6 Garage: 3
Style: Ranch
Sq. Ft.: 4,412 Finished
Price: \$899,000
Available: Now



CLASSIC HOMES

MLS: #7625420
Floor Plan: Telluride
Address: 16383 Woodward Ter.
Bed: 4 Bath: 4 Garage: 2
Style: Paired-Patio Ranch
Sq. Ft.: 3,110 Finished
Price: \$495,000
Available: Now



SADDLETREE HOMES

MLS: #9595150
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Address: 1745 Catnap Ln.
Bed: 5 Bath: 4 Garage: 3
Style: Ranch
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FOREST LAKES (Continued from 18)

- See www.ocn.me/v18n5.htm#flmd.
- Donala Water and Sanitation District costs are likely to increase to \$114,000 due to day-to-day running costs of operating both the surface water and wastewater treatment plants for FLMD.
 - \$160,000 is budgeted to deal with wastewater treatment operations including arsenic issues that are best dealt with at individual water treatment plants, before influent is sent on to the wastewater treatment plant.
 - New tap fees, inspections, and water service have been lower than expected and currently estimated at \$71,910. Average monthly water use per residence was originally estimated at 12,500 gallons per month, but it is actually on average about 10,000 gallons per month.
 - PPMD 2 has no development within it yet and so there is very little financial activity.
 - PPMD 3 is generating significant revenue from the PIF, but more commercial business there will generate more revenue.

Annual administrative and management costs are paid to FLMD by each district. PPMD 1 is now generating higher O&M costs and the mill levy is generating more revenue. The budget reflects an increase to \$73,000 for PPMD 1. PPMD 2 will be charged \$4,300 and PPMD 3 \$25,000.

The FLMD, PPMD 2 and 3 board approved the resolutions for the 2019 budgets, 4-0. No mill levy is certified for FLMD, but for “The Pinons” financing districts, PPMD 2 and 3 were both set at 10 mills for O&M and 40 mills for debt service.

Regionalization might save money in the future

The board briefly discussed the proposed wastewater collector that could connect the Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (UMCRWWTF) to the Colorado Springs Utilities J. D. Phillips treatment plant. All three districts using UMCRWWTF, and also all three districts using the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility, have recently been offered the option of “regionalizing” their smaller wastewater systems and saving a lot of money in the long-term by taking advantage of economies of

scale. The board also discussed possibilities regarding drinking water return flows. No formal commitments have been made yet. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#msd.

The FLMD board moved into executive session at 10:59 a.m. to receive legal advice from District Counsel Russel Dykstra regarding the contract for the FLMD Water Treatment Plant. The board received instructions to negotiations only during the session. No further votes or decisions were made after the executive session ended, Nichols told OCN.

PPMD 1 meetings, followed by the joint meeting of FLMD and PPMD 2 and 3, are usually scheduled for 10 a.m. the first Monday of each month in the Classic Homes office at 6385 Corporate Drive, Suite 200, Colorado Springs. Official meeting notices are posted on the district website <http://forestlakesmetrodistrict.com>, and at the Forest Lakes mailbox notice board. For general questions, contact Ann Nichols at 719-327-5810 or at anicholsduffy@aol.com.

Natalie Barszcz can be contacted at nataliebarszcz.ocn.me.

Donala Water and Sanitation District, Dec. 6

2019 budget approved; water rates up 4 percent, wastewater up \$2 per month

By Helen Walklett

At its Dec. 6 meeting, the Donala Water and Sanitation District board unanimously approved the 2019 budget. The board also approved another three-year agreement with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) and a draft contract for storage in Pueblo Reservoir and discussed the possible consolidation of wastewater treatment plants. Director Wayne Vanderschuere's absence was unanimously excused.

Financial reports

District General Manger Kip Petersen told the board that as of the end of November, 8.37 percent of the water operating revenue budget remained. The target is 8.4 percent. He said, “We still have a month to go so I think things are going to work out real well in terms of our estimates for revenue for 2018.”

Turning to expenditures, Petersen reported 22.45 percent of the budgeted amount was remaining, largely due to projects that haven't yet been started or completed. The target is 8.4 percent. He said that utilities had come in over budget and would continue to do so because the district had pumped its wells a lot more than had been anticipated at the end of the summer.

Petersen said that he had no concerns with the financials for the wastewater plant. On expenditures, he reported that the district has not spent the capital projects funds, which is why 41 percent of the budget remains. He said that amounted roughly to \$450,000, some of which would be spent in 2018, some in 2019.

2019 budget adoption

Petersen detailed changes that had been made to the budget since his original presentation to the board in October.

For the water budget, these included a \$1 a month increase to the water service rate, which assists the district in covering the administrative costs of operations. This is the first increase since 2012 and follows higher-than-anticipated water sales in 2018 due to warmer and drier weather. Petersen also told the board that James Barash, one of the original developers of Gleneagle and the developer of Academy Gateway, had paid off his agreement with Donala earlier than anticipated and so this item had been removed from the 2019 water budget.

Funds for arsenic removal had been moved out of the wastewater budget and placed into water capital for 2019 because this was now being mitigated at the R. Hull water production plant. The repair and maintenance item in the wastewater budget has been increased to accommodate a need to purchase specific, redundant pieces of equipment to have on hand in case of failure.

The board then unanimously approved five resolutions to adopt the 2019 budget, setting both Donala 2019 property tax mill levies (unchanged), a 4 percent increase across all six water use rate tiers, a \$2 per month sewer service rate increase to \$35 per month, and the 2019 appropriation. The construction water rate will increase from \$14.84 to \$15.43 per 1,000 gallons in 2019, the same as the third-tier drinking water rate, and no construction water will be sold for use out of Donala's area in 2019.

Total estimated 2019 expenditures are \$12.249 million, down from \$12.730 million in the 2018 budget. Total estimated revenues are \$29.193 million, up from \$22.730 million in the 2018 budget. The first of two property mill levies, which applies to all district property owners except those in Chaparral Hills, had a 2019 budget year valuation for assessment of \$78.731 million. The board's resolution certified a property tax of 21.296 mills to the El Paso Board of County Commissioners, which will produce total revenue of \$1.676 million in 2019. The second property mill resolution applies to those district property owners in Chaparral Hills who receive either Donala water or sewer service. It had a 2019 budget year valuation for assessment of \$287,020. The resolution certified a property tax of 10.648 mills to the county commissioners, which will produce total revenue of

\$3,056 in 2019.

The 2019 budget and rates can be viewed on Donala's website at <http://www.donalawater.org/>.

Water service agreement with CSU

The board unanimously approved another three-year agreement with CSU for the transportation, treatment, and delivery of Willow Creek Ranch water ahead of the expiration of the current agreement at the end of 2018. Petersen said that the terms and conditions of this agreement are similar to previous years but have been amended to reduce the monthly system use fee.

Donala's goal has been to develop a long-term (20-year) agreement with CSU but this has not been possible to date because of conditions that Donala must meet first. The first condition, that Donala have a long-term contract with the Bureau of Reclamation for the storage of its water in Pueblo Reservoir, was met at the Dec. 6 meeting (see below).

However, Petersen said that the second requirement, that Donala obtain compliance with Pueblo County's 1041 requirements, will take more time. Donala's request for an exemption, or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), has been denied by Joan Armstrong, Pueblo County planning director. Donala filed a request for reconsideration of this decision with the Board of Pueblo County Commissioners and the Planning Department on Nov. 21. Petersen said that as of Dec. 6, he had heard nothing further.

Storage in Pueblo Reservoir

The board also unanimously approved a draft 40-year contract between Donala and the Bureau of Reclamation for storage in Pueblo Reservoir. The process to achieve this started in 2011. An environmental assessment (EA) was completed as part of the work. The final contract will be signed once the EA has been signed to ensure consistency. The board agreed to accept the contract subject to it being reviewed by Petersen and the legal team. The EA is expected to be signed after the holidays. See www.ocn.me/v11n10.htm#dwsd915.

Possible consolidation of wastewater treatment plants

Petersen also reported that discussions are continuing with CSU on the possibility of the wastewater treatment plants on Monument Creek consolidating into a single interceptor line, with CSU treating all of

Donala's wastewater flows.

Petersen said that Donala needs to be certain that it can access all of its return flows, determine what impacts such a consolidation may have on augmentation plans, and address other concerns that may impact a consolidation.

One advantage of consolidation is the potential to eliminate a necessary capital upgrade to its Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility to enable Donala to meet a requirement to remove phosphorous and nutrients from wastewater flows before they leave the plant by 2027. CSU's JD Phillips Water Reclamation Facility can already remove these and arsenic. Also, Donala would be able to decommission the Northgate lift station, eliminating a maintenance concern.

Happy New Year!
Thank you so much for all of the business in 2018, by far my best year yet!
If I can do anything to help you in 2019 with your real estate needs, please call, text, or email. I will be more than happy to help!
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Petersen stressed that no final decisions have been made, stating that there are many unknowns yet to be resolved. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#msd.

New director appointed

Three candidates were interviewed during the meeting for the vacant position left by Director Bob Denny's resignation in October. Following discussion among board members, Kevin Deardorff was appointed for the remainder of the term, which runs until May 2020.

Additional items

- Petersen reported that demand on the district's water supplies has reduced to seasonal numbers, with most irrigation having ceased. He said that water is currently being produced by

- the R. Hull water plant and Willow Creek Ranch.
- The board heard that the capital project tying together the Jessie Booster station and the R. Hull plant has been completed. Work to treat for arsenic at the R. Hull plant is moving forward, with consultants GMS reverse engineering the timeline to ensure that the October 2019 deadline is met.
- Petersen reported that the Gleneagle water main replacement project is continuing. Work has moved from the easterly terminus at Mission Hills Road down to the Gleneagle/ Westchester area. The work on Struthers Road to replace the 6-inch water main with an 8-inch pipe has been

- completed.
- Petersen provided Colorado's most recent U.S. Drought Monitor report. While the Front Range has seen a reduction in the drought classifications, the southwest part of Colorado remains in exceptional drought. Petersen said that while snowpack reports are positive, it is too early to make any predictions on what this winter will bring.

The meeting adjourned at 3.55 p.m.

The next board meeting will be held on Jan. 17 at 1:30 p.m. in the district conference room at 15850 Holbein Drive. Information: (719) 488-3603 or www.donala-water.org. Meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of the month.

Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.me.

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, Dec.10

Board wraps up work on 2019 rates and budget

By James Howald

At its December meeting, the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) board did a final review of water and sewer rates for 2019 and concluded its work on the budget for 2019. The board also approved the management contract between the Chilcott Ditch Co. and the district. The board heard an update on the revegetation project underway at the Woodmoor Ranch (previously called the JV Ranch). Finally, the board heard reports from district staff.

Water and sewer rates remain unchanged

The December meeting began with a public hearing on proposed water and sewer rates for 2019. Richard D. Giardina of Raftelis Financial Consultants, the company that advises WWSD on rates, told the board that, based on the guidance Raftelis had received from the board, and in accordance with the preliminary review of the rates from the November board meeting, Raftelis recommended no changes to water and sewer rates for 2019. He added that the district could afford to reduce the Renewable Water Infrastructure Fee (RWIF) by \$1 a month, to \$41.

There were no comments from the public on the proposed water and sewer rates for 2019.

After concluding the public hearing, the board voted unanimously to approve Resolution No. 18-06, making the proposed rates final.

Proposed budget for 2019 approved

The board heard a presentation of the second draft of the budget for 2019 at its previous meeting in November. Details about the 2019 budget can be found in the December issue of OCN. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#wwsd.

At the December meeting, the board continued the public hearing from the previous month on the proposed budget; there were no comments from the public.

The board voted unanimously to approve Resolution 18-07, which finalized the budget for 2019.

Contract with Chilcott Ditch Co. renewed

District Manager Jessie Shaffer asked the board to consider an updated contract between WWSD and the Chilcott Ditch Co. Shaffer told the board the company uses district staff and reimburses the district for the costs of doing so. Few changes were made to the new version of the contract, Shaffer said.

The board voted unanimously to approve the contract as presented.

Revegetation efforts proceed apace

Paul Flack of RBI Inc., the company hired by WWSD to manage the revegetation efforts at Woodmoor Ranch, updated the board on progress made in 2018 and set expectations for how the work will proceed in 2019.

Because WWSD is converting the water rights at the ranch from agricultural purposes to municipal purposes, the district is required to revegetate the land with native plants and grasses to prevent soil erosion.

Flack told the board that he expected to continue irrigating at the ranch through Veterans Day, by which time the grasses will have gone dormant for the winter.

The revegetation project seeded and irrigated 235 acres in 2018, Flack said, and did weed control on 1,500 acres, fertilized 52 acres, and did pest control, primarily for grasshoppers, on 200 acres. In all, 890 acres of land were revegetated as required in 2018, Flack said.

Flack said he thought 50 percent of the district's commitment to revegetate will be completed by the end of 2019. He also said the board's decision to lease a portion of the ranch to a solar energy company would reduce the acreage that the district must revegetate.

Flack said the revegetation should be completed in four more years.

Highlights of staff reports

- District Assistant Manager Randy Gillette told the board that the improvements to the augmentation station that diverts water from Fountain Creek to the Chilcott Ditch are proceeding as planned. The improvements include reinforcing the banks 120 feet upstream and 80 feet downstream of the station to prevent erosion from flash floods from disabling the station.
- Pump testing is complete at Well 21, the district's new well in Misty Acres. Test results show the well is producing at or above 300 gallons per minute.

The next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 14, 2019 at 1 p.m. Meetings are usually held at the district office at 1845 Woodmoor Drive on the second Monday 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.

Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility Joint Use Committee, Dec. 11

Biosolids unexpectedly high for Palmer Lake Sanitation

By Lisa Hatfield

The Joint Use Committee (JUC) of the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) discussed heavier-than-expected biosolids loading from Palmer Lake Sanitation District on Dec. 11.

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. JUC President and MSD board Chairman Ed DeLaney was excused, and PLSD

Vice Chairman Patricia Smith, who is JUC vice president, ran the meeting. WWSD board Director Lee Hanson, JUC secretary/treasurer, attended. Other board and staff members of the three owner districts also attended, including MSD Manager Mike Wicklund, PLSD Manager Becky Orcutt, and WWSD Assistant Manager Randy Gillette.

Excess use compensation formula

Facility Manager Bill Burks said for the first time, PLSD was the district with the highest measure of pounds of biological oxygen demand (BOD) per day of all three districts. This was an unexpected spike for PLSD and was also a surprise since PLSD owns the smallest percentage of BOD capacity of all three districts.



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Although TLWWTF is owned in equal one-third shares, some costs are divided by current owned treatment capacity for treating hydraulic flows and removing biosolid wastes: WWSD-64.28 percent, MSD-19.79 percent, PLSD-15.93 percent. These are defined in the Joint Use of Facilities Agreement (JUA). See www.ocn.me/v15n5.htm#tlfjuc0414.

Burks and the JUC discussed how to adjust the excess use compensation formula in the JUA to properly account for cost-of-living changes since the document was last updated. In November, PLSD used 107 percent of its current owned BOD capacity and so will owe TLWWTF about \$15,000 for this exceedance.

The members directed Burks to notify any district that experiences a BOD spike two months in a row, since this could trigger the need for that district to lease or buy more capacity or request plant expansion. Also, if TLWWTF reaches 80 percent of its organic capacity, it would need to make big decisions too. See www.ocn.me/v18n7.htm#tlwtf.

Orcutt said she would have conversations with businesses within PLSD

and compare them to the sampling timeline to see if she could track down the source of the BOD spike the same way WWSD investigated this summer. See www.ocn.me/v18n9.htm#tlwtfjuc.

Wicklund also mentioned that PLSD's overall flow volume was up at a time when MSD and WWSD's were down. The group theorized that it might have something to do with the Town of Monument's new water treatment process for Wells 4/5 which was completed this year and discharges into PLSD's collection lines. Orcutt will also talk to the Town of Monument water supervisors to see if a slug of organic material might have been dislodged in PLSD's system. See www.ocn.me/v17n6.htm#mbot0515, www.ocn.me/v18n10.htm#mbot0917.

Plant manager's report

Burks presented the October Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) and the November Flow-BOD Report. He said the TLWWTF plant is operating at just 28 percent of its design flow capacity and at 62 percent of its organic BOD capacity, and there were no excursions in any of the sampling, which is normal for the plant.

Burks said that he had written to

the Water Quality Protection Section of the Water Quality Control Division of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) concerning the failed Whole Effluent Test (WET) from August. The WET effluent samples collected the week of Nov. 4 were split and sent to two laboratories, both of which yielded passing results. He said he informed CDPHE that he wanted to continue splitting future samples and sending them to two labs, since there was some question about whether TLWWTF's August failure might have been a false negative generated by one lab.

Regional stakeholders report

Burks' comments on the Dec. 4 Arkansas River/Fountain Creek Coalition for Urban/Rural River Evaluation (AF CURE) meeting included:

- Newly-elected officers: Andra Ahrens of City of Pueblo Wastewater – chair, Colorado Springs Utilities water attorney Mark Shea – vice chair, and Fountain Sanitation District Manager Jim Heckman – vice chair.
- Environmental engineers Brown & Caldwell (B&C) continue on contracts with AF CURE includ-

ing the watershed plan update, the nutrient modeling project, and the periphyton study.

- Andrew Neuhart of B&C outlined the 10-year road map on Regulation 22, including a 200-page document discussing possible changes to discharger regulations on stream temperature.

Wicklund said that at the November meeting of the Colorado Wastewater Utility Council, they said TLWWTF's environmental attorney Gabe Racz of Vranish & Raisch LLP is actively involved in rewriting Regulation 22, which controls all permitting for wastewater treatment facilities. A concern of stakeholders is that political changes in Denver might require treatment plants to refrigerate the treated effluent before discharging it to the stream.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. Jan. 8 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, Dec. 11

District commits to roads and North Monument Creek Interceptor

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Triview Metropolitan District Board of Directors conducted public hearings for the 2019 draft budget and the proposed water and wastewater rate increases at its Dec. 11 meeting. The board reviewed and approved multiple resolutions.

Director James Otis was able to participate for the first hour via conference call.

Triview is a Title 32 special district inside Monument that provides road, landscaping, and open space maintenance, and water and wastewater services to Jackson Creek, Promontory Pointe, Sanctuary Pointe, and several commercial areas. The Town of Monument provides land use planning, police, and general governance for Triview's property owners. Triview Metropolitan District is not to be confused with Triview No. 2, Triview No. 3, or Triview No. 4, which were created solely to pay for road bonds in Promontory Pointe, Home Place Ranch, and Sanctuary Pointe, respectively. The Dec. 11 board packet is available at <https://triviewmetro.com/boardDocuments>.

Review of budget generates tweaks, warnings

President Mark Melville opened the public hearing for the 2019 budget. District Manager Jim McGrady explained the estimated income and expense amounts assigned to the district fund and the enterprise fund, and the capital projects associated with each fund.

Notable differences between the 2018 budget and the proposed 2019 budget lie chiefly in capital projects. District capital expenses included:

- Road rehabilitation for the remaining residential streets in Jackson Creek and the proposed project to widen Jackson Creek Parkway effected \$1.7 million and \$4.5 million estimates, respectively. The directors and McGrady confirmed the two projects as high priorities.
- \$250,000 for the purchase of a steel building to store and maintain equipment and create office space

at the district's A-yard located on Jackson Creek Parkway to extend the life of the stored equipment.

- \$500,000—earmarked for streetscape improvements to boost the visual appeal along Leather Chaps, Lyons Tail, and Kitchener—which drew cautionary responses from Directors Anthony Sexton and Marco Fiorito. They expressed discomfort with spending a large sum on a secondary priority before having bids for the multi-million-dollar road projects. McGrady and the board reached a consensus to reassess the district's ability to fund streetscape improvements once bids for the Jackson Creek Parkway widening project had been received.

The primary enterprise fund capital expenses included:

- \$416,00 for the purchase of 32 renewable water shares from the Fountain Mutual Irrigation Company (FMIC) that were approved in October and will close in January (see www.ocn.me/v18n11.htm#tvmd)
- \$400,000 for regional water and wastewater design and permitting for the district's connection to the Colorado Springs Utilities' (CSU) North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI)
- \$400,000 for preliminary wastewater infrastructure—preparatory steps that must be taken prior to connecting to the NMCI (see next section).
- McGrady also proposed capital purchases to mitigate some of the district's contracted services such as snow removal, materials hauling, and welding repairs.

In conclusion to McGrady's budget overview, the directors credited the district's strong financial position to the sound judgment and financial planning of previous boards.

Resident and former Director Steve Remington, the only person to comment during either public hearing, emphatically repeated his warning that

the district must develop a long-term financial plan and admonished the board noting that he did not see Preble's mouse habitat fees incorporated into the Jackson Creek Parkway widening project.

After the public hearing was closed, the directors approved the resolution that adopted the 2019 budget, certified the 2019 mill levy at 35 mills, and appropriated the 2019 expenditures.

Future looks bright for North Monument Creek Interceptor

Among the several resolutions considered, the directors approved resolution 2018-07 in which the district agreed to cooperate and participate with CSU and other entities to create and use the NMCI as one complete project from the J. D. Phillips Water Reclamation Facility to the outfall lines of the Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (UMCRWWTF) and the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF). Triview is a partner-owner of UMCRWWTF with Donala Water and Sanitation District and Forest Lakes Metro District (FLMD). Monument Sanitation District (MSD)—part owner of TLWWTF—approved a similar resolution in November. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#msd.

If the remaining northern El Paso County sanitation districts—Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD), Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD), Donala, and FLMD—participate in the NMCI, the districts involved could reap promising financial benefits. In the current NMCI design plans, wastewater would be moved by gravity, potentially eliminating the need for expensive electrically powered lift stations. "This is a big deal," stated McGrady. Participating districts would also share the associated costs of constructing the pipeline, thus, as the number of participants increases, the cost per district decreases. Expanded collaboration could also augment possible solutions to the current dilemma of delivering return flows of reusable water.

Enterprise revenue, water shares, professional services established

The public hearing for the 2019 water and wastewater rates immediately followed the budget hearing. McGrady acknowledged that although regionalization with CSU would be substantially cheaper than upgrading and expanding the district's share of the UMCRWWTF, he recommended that some of the cost of pipeline participation be incorporated into the utility costs and proposed 5 and 9 percent increases in water and wastewater rates, respectively. Directors endorsed the 2019 rate increases but stipulated that future increases be postponed until CSU pipeline obligations come into focus.

Remington denounced the rate increase and recalled his fervent complaints from the July 10 board meeting. See www.ocn.me/v18n8.htm#tvmd.

In a separate but related topic, McGrady confirmed that the district's \$11.16 million in revenue bonds sold on Nov. 19 at an interest rate of 4.03 percent. The bond sale refinanced former loans and eliminated a \$3.4 million balloon payment due in 2031 which "saved" the district about \$300,000 annually in immediate cashflow.

Remington objected to McGrady's use of the term "savings" in reference to the bond sale. Agreeing that cashflow improved for a few years, Remington reminded the board that the bond term had been extended, resulting in an increase in the net cost of the original loans. McGrady acknowledged the extra expense of extending the term but added, "We got a very good interest rate ... we avoided the balloon payment which would have been substantial for the district to meet.... The bond refinancing was all about mitigating [water and wastewater] rate increases."

The board approved additional resolutions including:

- The purchase of 10 FMIC renewable water shares for \$13,000 per share.
- A professional services agreement with the Law Offices of Gary Shupp, P.C. for the district's 2019

- general counsel services.
- A professional services agreement with Fromm and Co. for 2019 accounting services.
 - Adoption of 2019 administrative guidelines detailing meeting times, locations, notification posting places, etc.
 - An engagement letter with Stockman Kast to conduct an audit of the district's 2018 financial posi-

tion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. Directors entered an executive session §24-6-402(4)(b)(e) Legal Advice, Negotiations.

McGrady informed OCN of an action taken after executive session: "A motion was made by Director Fiorito to transfer, from the General Fund to the Enterprise fund, \$6,554,450 collected from January 1, 2004 until October 31,

2018 that was derived from a 1989 Bal-lot initiative that implemented a 1% sales tax, of which the District receives half of the revenue collected. This money shall be used for Water Purchases and Water Infrastructure as Monument Voters intended. The motion was seconded by Director Barnhart. The motion passed unanimously".

The next Triview board meeting will

be held at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 15. Board meetings are generally scheduled on the third Tuesday of the month at the district office, 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 300, Monument. Information: 488-6868 or visit www.triviewmetro.com. See also "Triview Metropolitan District" on Facebook, or Twitter. [com/@TriviewMetro](https://twitter.com/TriviewMetro).

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

Woodmoor Improvement Association Board of Directors, Nov. 28 and Dec. 19

Board hears updates on Walters Open Space, rehab facility, and The Beach

By Jackie Burhans

The Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board met on Nov. 28 and Dec. 19 to hear a brief update on the Walters Open Space property, hear a request by residents on the Sunshine Behavioral Health facility, and approve documents for The Beach at Woodmoor.

Walters Open Space

In the November meeting, Tish Norman, co-chair with Chris Williams of the Walters Open Space committee, gave a brief update on efforts to preserve the Walters property in South Woodmoor. This land occupies about 100 acres and winds through South Woodmoor behind Lewis-Palmer High School. She noted that, per WIA, covenants do not allow a neighborhood assessment, so the money will have to come from donations.

The committee is negotiating with the owners to purchase the land to save it from being sold to a developer. Details are not available during negotiations but as soon as they have an agreement with the owners, the committee will provide fundraising information.

Norman noted that they hope to close by spring 2019.

Mountain Springs Recovery

The board heard a presentation by Hilary Brendenmuhl of Take Action El Paso County (TAEPC) on the group's efforts to stop the Sunshine Behavioral Health's Mountain Springs Recovery inpatient rehabilitation center from opening in the former Ramada Inn location on Woodmoor Drive. She spoke about the group's concerns and asked that the board consider informing the community via email. Board member Peter Bille indicated that he wanted an opinion from the homeowners' association's lawyers but was in favor of disseminating information to the residents. On Dec. 12, WIA sent out an informational email on "Available Information on Ramada Inn," which pointed to the TAEPC website.

On Dec. 20, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) denied the appeal by TAEPC to the original ruling that Mountain Springs Recovery met the definition of a rehabilitation facility. See related BOCC article on page 1.

The Beach

The board unanimously approved and adopted documents related to The Beach at Woodmoor development, including an amendment to documents provided for in the settlement class-action (The Beach Redesignation); declaration of covenants, conditions, and restrictions of The Beach at Woodmoor; and project and design standards manual, part V, exhibit E—The Beach at Woodmoor. These documents were reviewed and vetted by the WIA attorney as well as Architectural Control Committee (ACC) administrator Bob Pearsall. The documents were also reviewed at the ACC meeting on Dec. 11.

The development, approved by the BOCC on March 27, will include 35 single-family residential lots built on two parcels of land to the north and south side of Lake Woodmoor Drive between Lower Lake Road and the Lake Woodmoor spillway. (See www.ocn.me/v18n4.htm#epcpc and www.ocn.me/v18n4.htm#epcbocc).

Board report highlights

- School District 38 received notice to proceed with the Safe Routes to

- School project from the state.
- WIA has applied for a grant for noxious weed spraying of common areas, with the possibility of receiving monies for homeowners as well.
- WIA will begin construction of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant restroom upstairs in The Barn starting Jan. 3.

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 has been moved to Jan. 30.

The annual meeting will be on Jan. 28 at 7 p.m. (sign in at 6:30 p.m.) at Lewis-Palmer Middle School, 1776 Woodmoor Drive.

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.

December Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

A little bit of everything occurred in December, with several tastes of winter interrupted by dry and mild conditions. We were just missed by several snow storms but still managed to get several days of lighter snowfall. Overall, temperatures ended slightly warmer than normal and precipitation was below normal.

The first few days of the month were cold, with light snow each day from the 1st through the 3rd. Temperatures stayed below freezing each day as well, then only touching just above freezing for a few minutes on the afternoon of the 4th. This was a prolonged cold spell for the area, but unfortunately only 1 to 2 inches of snow accumulated in the region over the period.

As the cold air retreated, temperatures jumped to the upper 40s on the 5th, but the warmup was brief as another quick moving cold front rushed into the area around 3 p.m. on the 5th. Low clouds and fog filled in behind the front, but only a dusting of snow fell. Highs were cold on the 6th, barely reaching the low 20s that afternoon.

Dry and mild conditions returned over the next few days, with temperatures reaching the upper 30s and low 40s from the 7th through 9th, then upper 40s to low 50s from the 10th through the 12th.

This warm spell was interrupted by a quick shot of snow and cold on the afternoon of the 12th through the 13th. Temperatures were held below freezing on the 13th with 2 to 3 inches of snow accumulating from the evening of the

12th through the early morning of the 13th.

Dry and mild conditions then quickly moved back in from the 14th through the first day of winter, Dec. 21st. Temperatures during this period ranged from the low 40s to the mid-50s. Temperatures peaked on the 21st, reaching 58 F. This was ahead of the first sign of a chance that affected the region for the remainder of the month.

Temperatures dropped to the 30s on the 22nd with about an inch of snowfall across the area. Unsettled conditions stuck around for the next few days, but we were generally on the northern edge of the storminess as a series of powerful storms moved through Arizona and New Mexico. Each of them brought cooler air to the region and light snow at times, with a couple more inches accumulating from Christmas Eve through the 29th. In fact, the only day during that period that didn't receive snowfall was Christmas Day. High temperatures ranged from the mid-40s on the day after Christmas to the upper teens on the 28th. We also had our first widespread below-zero readings on the morning of the 29th, with most areas around 5 to 10 degrees below zero.

Temperatures warmed quickly on the 30th as cold air was replaced by mild westerly winds. Highs jumped to the upper 40s and low 50s that afternoon. However, this was ahead of the coldest air of the season that arrived during the morning of the 31st. The high temperatures on the 31st occurred just after midnight, with falling



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temperatures occurring through the remainder of the day. Temperatures reached below zero by the time we turned the calendar to 2019.

The bigger story with this cold air mass was the snow and wind that accompanied the storm. Generally light snow fell, with 1 to 3 inches during the day, but the cold temperatures allowed the strong winds to blow the storms around and produce some drifts. Wind chills reached minus 20 degrees, making for some dangerous conditions in the area.

A look ahead

January can bring the coldest temperatures of the year, but there is often a proverbial “January thaw” where mild temperatures make brief appearances.

Precipitation is on the low side, with amounts generally less than an inch. The month provides numerous sunny and windy days, with quick shots of snow in between.

December 2018 Weather Statistics

Average High	39.9° (+1.6°)
100-year return frequency value max	50.5° min 32.6°
Average Low	14.0° (+1.7°)
100-year return frequency value max	22.4° min 5.4°
Monthly Precipitation	0.39”
	(-0.61”, 60% below normal)
100-year return frequency value max	2.82” min 0.00”
Monthly Snowfall	11.2”
	(-5.2”, 26% below normal)

Highest Temperature	58° on the 21st
Lowest Temperature	-5° on the 29th
Season to Date Snow	40.8”
	(+1.3”, 3% above normal)
	(the snow season is from Oct 1 to Sept 30)
Season to Date Precip.	2.92”
	(-0.51”, 15% below normal)
	(the snow season is from Oct 1 to Sept 30)
Heating Degree Days	1181 (-46)
Cooling Degree Days	0 (0)

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me.

Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters are on page 31.

Disclaimer: The information and opinions expressed in *Letters to Our Community* are the responsibility of the letter writers and should not be interpreted as the views of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.

Don’t be fooled by deceptive “solution”

Elsewhere in this issue of *OCN*, you will see an ad proposing “cost-effective” solutions for overcrowding in D38. This ad is dishonest in several ways.

The ad poses itself as the work of a group named “TriLakes Taxpayers for Excellent, Efficient and Responsible Education.” In fact, there is no such group registered with the Colorado Secretary of State. The ad is the work of former Monument Academy board

President Scott Saunders, based on the fact that he posted it on social media platforms. Apparently, Saunders thought his ideas would be more believable coming from a fictitious group.

Saunders calculates the cost of seats in MA and in traditional public schools using methods that are intended to sound plausible but are in fact deceiving to the taxpayers he is trying to persuade. When calculating the cost of traditional public schools, Saunders uses the maximum repayment cost of building the school. When calculating the same cost for MA, Saunders uses only the \$2 million he is asking D38 to give to MA, not the total cost of the school MA proposes to build, not including any interest, and he inflates the number of seats. Not surprisingly, this approach

makes MA seem cheaper.

As of Dec. 21, MA has not obtained financing for their proposed school, so Saunders has no honest way of calculating its cost.

Finally, there is one other snag with Saunders’s proposal: It violates state law. Public school districts may not give funds directly to private corporations such as Monument Academy Building Corp., the company that owns MA’s current building.

At its last board meeting, D38 announced that four of its schools will need portable classrooms added next year to accommodate growth. D38 needs its reserve funds for this purpose, among others.

James Howald

■

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Kicking off the new year right

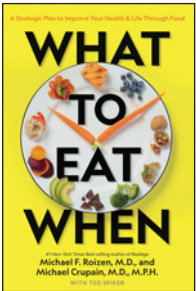
By the staff at Covered Treasures

Here are some great books to help you start the new year with true healthy lifestyle changes.

What to Eat When: A Strategic Plan to Improve Your Health & Life Through Food

By Michael F. Roizen M.D. and Michael Crupain M.D., M.P.H. (National Geographic Society) \$28

What if eating two cups of blueberries a day could prevent cancer? When is the right time of day to eat that chocolate chip cookie? This revolutionary guide by internist Michael Roizen and preventive medicine specialist Michael Crupain reveals how to use food to enhance our personal and professional lives—and increase longevity to boot.



Why We Sleep: Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams

By Matthew Walker (Scribner) \$17

Preeminent neuroscientist and sleep expert Matthew Walker provides a revolutionary exploration of sleep, examining how it affects every aspect of our physical and mental well-being. Charting the most cutting-edge scientific breakthroughs, and marshalling his decades of research and clinical practice, Walker explains how we can harness sleep to improve learning, mood, and energy levels, regulate hormones, prevent cancer, Alzheimer’s and diabetes, slow the effects of aging, and increase longevity. He also provides actionable steps toward getting a better night’s sleep every night.

Lose Weight with Your Instant Pot: 60 Easy One-Pot Recipes for Fast Weight Loss

By Audrey Johns (William Morrow & Co.) \$25.99

You can enjoy your favorite food with the speed and ease of the Instant Pot while losing weight. After a lifelong struggle with fad diets and constant weight gain, Audrey Johns changed the way she ate, lost 150 pounds in 11 months, and successfully kept it off. Included are plenty of tips and tricks to help you get the most out of the Instant Pot, combining all-new dishes with skinny takes on classic favorites.

Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts.

By Brené Brown (Random House) \$28

Bestselling author Brené Brown has taught us what it means to dare greatly, rise strong, and brave the wilderness. Now, based on new research, she’s showing us how to put those ideas into practice so we can step up and lead. Brown writes, “One of the most important findings of my career is that daring leadership is a collection of four skill sets that are 100 percent teachable, observable, and measurable. It’s learning and unlearning that requires brave work, tough conversations, and showing up with your whole heart. Easy? No. Worth it? Always.”

The Point of It All: A Lifetime of Great Loves and Great Endeavors

By Charles Krauthammer (Crown Forum) \$28

Created and compiled by Charles Krauthammer before his death, this is an intimate collection of the columnist’s most important works. It spans the personal, political, and philosophical, including never-before-published material. This is the most profound book yet by the legendary writer and thinker, and a lasting testament to his belief that anyone with an open and

honest mind can grapple deeply with the most urgent questions in politics and life.

Danielle Walker’s Eat What You Love: Everyday Comfort Food You Crave; Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, and Paleo Recipes

By Danielle Walker (Ten Speed Press) \$35

Bestselling author Danielle Walker is back with 125 recipes for the food you want to eat every day, made healthful and delicious with Walker’s proven techniques for removing allergens without sacrificing flavor. With meal plans and grocery lists, dozens of sheet-pan suppers and one-pot dishes, and an entire chapter devoted to make-ahead and freezer-friendly meals, following a grain-free, paleo, and even GAPS diet just got a little easier.

You Are a Badass Every Day: How to Keep Your Motivation Strong, Your Vibe High, and Your Quest for Transformation Unstoppable

By Jen Sincero (Viking) \$20

For anyone who has ever had trouble staying motivated while trailblazing toward badassery, this is the companion to help you power through obstacles, overcome doubts, and keep the fires of determination roaring while you reach your goals. In 100 exercises, reflections, and cues, this guide will show you how to keep the breakthroughs catalyzed by Sincero’s iconic books *You Are a Badass* and *You Are a Badass at Making Money* going.

Happy New Year! We at Covered Treasures wish each of you a healthy, and interesting, 2019.

Until next month, happy reading.
The Covered Treasures staff can be reached at books@ocn.me.

January Library Events

Start the new year with a new activity

By Harriet Halbig

Start off your new year by trying something new! Join one of our discussion groups or try yoga for the first time. The library offers a variety of experiences.

Family programs

Regularly occurring programs at the Monument Library include:

- Paws to Read* with service dogs on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4 to 5.
- Story Time* for children 3 and up to stress use of shapes, sounds, rhythms, and rhyme each Tuesday at 10:30 and 11:15.

- Toddler Time* for 1- and 2-year-olds and their adult, 9:30 and 10:30 on Thursdays.
- Book Break* on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:30 to 10:50 is a brief read-aloud session for preschoolers

Coloring for Everyone is offered each month. Join friends and family to color themed coloring sheets. Colored pencils and markers are provided. Drop in and stay as long as you like on Friday, Jan. 11 at 4.

Come make your favorite characters of Perler beads on Saturday, Jan. 12 from 10:30 to 11:30. Registration is not required.

The *Third Friday Crafts for Kids* program will be on Friday, Jan. 18 from 2:30 to 3:30. We will have a different craft each month.

Lego Build will take place on Saturday, Jan. 19 from 10 to 11:30. Come use our large collection of Legos to build with other enthusiasts.

Teen and Tween programs

See above for a description of *Coloring for Everyone*.

The *Teen Advisory Board* will meet from 2 to 3 on Saturday, Jan. 5. TAB members discuss how to make the teen area better, share ideas for book displays, and plan events for teens. You will earn volunteer hours

for attendance at the meetings in the study room. Drop in and find out what’s happening.

Take advantage of free math tutoring with *AfterMath* on Mondays from 3:30 to 7. Experienced adult tutors will help students at any level. No appointment required. *AfterMath* follows the D-38 schedule and will not be offered on Monday, Jan. 21 when the library is closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

The *All Ages Knitting Group* meets each Wednesday from 3 to 5 in the study room. Practice materials are provided and you are encouraged to bring your own project.

The *Paper Tiger Origami Club* meets on the third Friday of each month (Jan.18) from 4:30 to 5:30. Open to teens, tweens and adults, the group learns to make new projects each month. All materials are provided. Registration is encouraged but not required.

The *Teen Arts and Crafts* program in January is *Marshmallow Wars*. We’ll be waging war with one another with marshmallow-launching catapults. All materials provided and registration is required. The program is open to ages 9 to 18.

The *Monument Library Anime Club* will meet from 5 to 6:30 on Jan. 31. Share anime with others who love it. We will watch videos—nothing rated above TV-14—and enjoy tasty snacks. This program is recommended for those 13-14 and up. No registration required.

Adult programs

Regularly occurring adult programs are:

- *Socrates Café* discussion group on Tuesdays from 1 to 3.
- *Senior Chats* on Wednesdays from 10 to noon.
- Beginner yoga class on Thursdays from noon to 1.

See the above for descriptions of *Coloring for Everyone*, *All Ages Knitting*, and the *Paper Tiger Origami Club*.

Life Circles is a group devoted to writing memories of life experiences. This supportive group provides discipline, inspiration and structure to help you meet your writing goals. Normally meeting on the first and third Monday of the month, this month’s meeting will be on Jan. 7.

The *Monumental Bookworms* will meet on Jan. 8 from 7 to 8:30 to discuss *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane* by Lisa See. All are welcome to attend this group sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of the Library.

The *Second Thursday Craft* for January is *No-Sew Fleece Scarves*. We’ll be making fleece scarves to get us through the winter with no sewing required! All supplies are provided and registration is required. Registration opens two weeks before craft day.

In collaboration with the *Who Gives a Scrap Creative Reuse Center*, we are hosting an arts, crafts, and hobby material exchange. Bring in your new, clean/gently used and unwanted materials and exchange them for “tickets” to “purchase/exchange” new-to-you craft supplies. Please only bring items in good condition and not those considered trash. We will

also have an up-cycling craft going on so you can take your time and check for new inventory. No registration required.

The *Monumental Readers* will meet from 10 to noon on Friday, Jan. 18 to discuss *The Diary of Mattie Spenser* by Sandra Dallas. All are welcome to attend this monthly book club and no registration is required.

History Buffs will meet from 1:30 to 3:30 on Wednesday, Jan. 23. Discuss history with other buffs! This year’s discussion topic is *Origins of Modern Europe (500 to c. 1500)*. No registration required.

The *Monument Library Spinning* group will meet from 1:30 to 3:45 on Thursday, Jan. 24.

Palmer Lake Library Events

Palmer Lake Family Story Time is each Wednesday at 10:30.

Palmer Lake Toddler Time is on Fridays at 10:30.

Lego Build at Palmer Lake is at 4 p.m. on Thursday, Jan 17.

The *Third Saturday at Palmer Lake Library*, at 10:30 on Jan. 19, is a yoga class for children. Space is limited so please register early at 481-2587.

Please note that all Pikes Peak Library facilities will be closed on Monday, Jan. 21 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

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

Bird Watch on the Palmer Divide

Spotted towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*)



By Elizabeth Hacker

As I walk along a trail in the Pike National Forest, I hear scratching in the underbrush. At first all I see is movement in the leaves but then I see it: a spotted towhee!

The spotted towhee is a striking sparrow found in thickets and sunbaked landscapes of the Western United States. It nests in El Paso County and although it doesn’t frequent bird feeders, it isn’t unusual to see one at a bird bath or on the ground under a feeder. Spotted towhees will be attracted to and nest in yards with scrub oak and overgrown grasses. Often, when I’m hiking, I observe them among flocks of dark-eyed juncos in long grasses at the edge of a trail.

Description

Slightly smaller than a robin, the spotted towhee is larger and more colorful than the other 15 sparrow species found in North America. It has a black head and back, its wings are black with white spots, and its tail is long and black with white outer feathers. Its breast is white in the center with distinctive rufus-colored sides. Its eyes are a dark red that really stand out against the black feathers on its head.

Nesting

Towhees are ground nesters, but they occasional will nest in the lower branches of a shrub. They begin their courtship in late March to mid-April when the males aggressively begin to defend their territories and often will fight with their own reflection.

The female builds a nest in the ground by scratching out a depression so the rim will be slightly above the ground concealing the eggs. In late April to mid-May, she will lay two to five eggs and brood them for up to 15 days while the male feeds her. Both parents forage to bring back food for their hungry hatchlings. Chicks will fledge the nest in about 15 days. Depend-



Above: Spotted towhee in the underbrush. Illustration by Elizabeth Hacker.

ing on conditions and length of the season, towhees may nest more than once.

Interesting facts

When a towhee flies, it spreads its tail and the outer tail feathers flash white. When a hawk gives chase, the white tail feathers draw the predator’s attention and while the hawk is momentarily distracted, the towhee may escape into the underbrush, possibly missing a few tail feathers.

Early in the breeding season, male spotted towhees spend their mornings singing their hearts out, trying to attract a mate. Male towhees have been recorded spending 70 percent to 90 percent of their mornings singing. Once a mate is attracted, the male’s attention shifts to defending its territory, and they spend very little time singing.

The spotted towhee and the very similar Eastern

towhee used to be considered the same species and were referred to as the rufus-sided towhee. The two forms still occur together in the Great Plains, where they sometimes interbreed. This is a common evolutionary pattern in North American birds, a holdover from the time when the great ice sheets split the continent down the middle, isolating birds into eastern and western populations that then evolved separately.

Fun bird book:

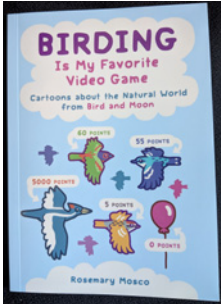
Birding Is My Favorite Video Game

I’ve been told I’m a difficult person to give a gift to and while there may be an element of truth to that sentiment, I enjoy all the bird socks and T-shirts, the latest bird feeder, suet cakes, bird books, and other bird gifts I receive each year.

This year my son won the “best gift award” for Rosemary Mosco’s *Birding Is My Favorite Video Game*. This book is a delightful collection of comics combining weird science facts, funny cartoons of odd little animals, sharp wit, and a strong environmental message. Apparently, he’s followed her cartoons for a number of years on Facebook and knew that I would enjoy this book.

Mosco is a science writer and cartoonist, skills she combines into a unique style to inform and humor both young and old readers alike. This book is irresistible, and I highly recommend it. I plan to read her other books and email her to see if she has a speaking engagement in Colorado in 2019.

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



High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Forest bathing, space travel, and indoor air

By Janet Sellers

Forest bathing as a practice is usually a slow and mindful walk in the forest habitat of leaves, soil, and roots that clean the air and help us stay well. In olden days, we absorbed this by being out in nature most of the time, but now we madly search for ways to feel better while indoors.

In studying the benefits of plants and indoor air as ecological life-support systems for space travel, NASA research scientist Bill Wolverton measured the filtering capacity of specific plants in the 1980s and 1990s. “We found that the most effective plants had a high transpiration rate—that is, they emit more moisture into the environment This is the result of a natural pumping action. As plants pull air down to their roots, they pump moisture out.” His rule of thumb was

two or three house plants in 8- or 10-inch pots for every 100 square feet of floor space. Anecdotal evidence suggests health improvement for sufferers of asthma and “sick building syndrome” such as headache and sore throat.

We have a primordial relationship to being with nature. A wilderness vision quest to intuit one’s life purpose is a rite of passage since ancient times, relating not only to intuition but also to health and well-being in strengthening the brain, body, and mind. Our ability to balance our nervous system in the presence of trees and plants may be related to experiences that begin at the microbial level and act optimally with our immune system to become resilient facing nature’s complexities. Our immersion in the forest along with the root and soil microbes is key, and indoor plants

offer similar benefits.

Forest immersion and house plants can also make us smarter because they allow us to stay alert and reduce mental fatigue. Indoors, we are the hapless recipients of toxins from carpet, inks, plastics, and more. House plants help clean indoor air and improve well-being. The plants take in carbon dioxide and particulates, and through photosynthesis release oxygen back into the air and to us.

Some easy-care houseplants are superb at cleaning the air, but toxic to pets if ingested. Garden mums are tops at cleaning up ammonia, benzene, formaldehyde, and xylene. Peace lily and pothos remove ammonia, benzene, formaldehyde, and trichloroethylene (TCE), commonly found in craft paints, aerosols, cleaners, vinyl, and more.

Pet-friendly indoor plants are important to many households. My favorite lazy gardening houseplant is the butterfly orchid. Its flowers last for months and it needs just three to five ice cubes in the pot twice a week for watering. I always have them around in various stages of bloom or rest. Pet-safe plants also include areca palm, bamboo palm, purple waffle plant, gerbera daisy, Boston fern, money tree, African

violet, spider plant, and lily turf. Many of these plants are easily leaf propagated in water for more plants around the house. Next month, we'll get out our seed packets and plant our windowsill greens, so save your eggshells and used coffee grounds to power up the potting soil. Also, we'll review ways to help plan safe alternatives for upcoming Woodmoor Improvement Association

and other homeowners' associations' current budget plans for toxic weed mitigation with Our Toxic Strive for Perfection: effects of glyphosates on humans and animals, plus safer alternatives. Janet Sellers is a writer, artist, and ethnoecologist posing as a nature-led lazy gardener giving talks and garden workshops for successful gardening in our forest ecology. janetsellers@ocn.me.

Art Matters

Why tech leaders have their kids in artful pursuits



By Janet Sellers

Who would have guessed that making art and being in art class is the new disruptive “technology”? Art is a creative, engaging involvement to life, and making art and using the hands fingers combined with observing—participating in three dimensions—help brain development and flexibility. It also helps with interpersonal relationships in many ways. The act of drawing is directly from our minds to the page, wholly spontaneous, and for that reason it is important to creativity and imagination. It is the closest connection of the immaterial imagination to manifesting the idea into material form. Even the words “to draw” indicate pulling ideas into physical form. Once learned, the creative efficiency of the pencil or brush with the human mind at the helm is extremely efficient for sharing ideas. It often exceeds other methods of effort, even electronic. Kids and adults that engage in art and creative activities have shown they are good at self-regulating, partly because they must develop their project with failures and successes and partly because they actively build other interests as well, offshoots of the creative process. And the interest in art making is having a high-profile comeback, too. *The New York Times* reported that after reading the book *The Growth of the Mind*, Pierre Laurent, a former Microsoft and Intel marketing manager, did some research and started connecting with the artfully based Waldorf Schools, which his children soon

attended. Laurent saw that, “Waldorf teenagers had a different way of approaching adults and were very interested in the world, and we decided that there’s no harm in not exposing children to screens until they’re big enough, that it can only be beneficial. Young children like stories, to play with things, sing, make things, build and be in nature. So that’s what we did. They haven’t complained.” Laurent also related that (tech) looks like it’s soothing your child and keeping them busy so you can do something else, but that effect is not very good for small children. “There isn’t an intent to harm children, but media products are designed to keep people engaged and have a powerful hooking effect ... it stops them discovering the world with their senses. And there’s a risk to attention When you engage with these devices, you don’t build that capacity. It’s computer-aided attention; you’re not learning to do it.” He let his kids start interacting with computers around age 12. Chris Anderson, father of five and former editor of *Wired* and co-founder of 3D Robotics, a drone maker, while allowing screen time, instituted time limits and parental controls on every device in his home. “We have seen the dangers of technology firsthand. I’ve seen it in myself, I don’t want to see that happen to my kids.” He referred to harmful content such as pornography, bullying, and “becoming addicted to their devices, just like their parents.” Most parents agree that limiting screen time is

parent-led but prefer their children to develop good judgment with practice. The American Academy of Pediatrics discourages any screen time for the first two years of life, but after that recommends no more than one to two hours a day, no screens in children’s bedrooms, and enforcing meal-time and bedtime media-device curfews. Pediatricians are encouraged to take a media history and ask two media questions at every well-child visit: How much recreational screen time does your child or teenager consume daily? Is there a television set or Internet-connected device in the child’s bedroom? Parents are encouraged to establish a family home use plan for all media. At my house, for all our artful life of keeping the art, violin lessons and outdoor time at optimal levels (it did make a difference for good) with screen time minimal, we still succumbed to some television and computer games. I ended up cutting the TV cord, literally, and wow was that a noisy discovery one night. My kids, now grown and on with their professional lives, still love long hikes, cross country runs, gourmet cooking, and no screen time after a long day of it at work. I’d like to say I don’t, either. I’d rather walk my dog in our beautiful forests here where we live—and paint those scenes, too. Janet Sellers is a local artist, art teacher, and writer. Her artwork is exhibited in Colorado galleries, museums, and outdoor public art. Contact her at JanetSellers@ocn.me.

Snapshots of Our Community

Caption correction



Please note the following corrections regarding the Snapshots of Our Community caption that ran with the photo headlined *Child Trafficking Widespread* on page 28 of our Dec. 1 issue. **Above left:** This is the photo that should have been associated with the caption that ran in the paper: “The Rev. Dr. Becca Jordan-Irwin, left, Monument Community Presbyterian Church, and Patti Neely, Sarah’s Home Volunteer Coordinator, share helpful information at the child trafficking seminar. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*” **Above right:** This is the photo that ran in the paper. The caption for it should have read: “Representatives of the Southern Colorado Human Trafficking Task Force presented Colorado’s child trafficking statistics and ways to provide or support safe sanctuary homes for rescued kids. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*” OCN regrets the error.

Forest View Acres passes budget



Above: On Nov. 28, the Board of Directors of Forest View Acres Water Department unanimously passed its 2019 budget. From left are John McGinn, Clyde Penn, Martin Taylor, Heck Zimmerman, Joel Meggers, Brad Hogan, Nancy Wilkins, and Hans Zimmerman. *Photo by John Howe.*

Community supports kettles



Left: The Salvation Army’s Red Kettle Campaign got support from Monument Hill Kiwanis volunteer Richard Bjarke, who rang the holiday bell in front of the Monument Walmart on Dec. 1. Kiwanis and high school Key Club volunteers also collected donations at King Soopers and Safeway. All proceeds were given to the Salvation Army (SA) of El Paso County. The international SA movement provides food programs, social services such as addiction rehabilitation, youth services, emergency disaster services, shelter and housing, and church ministries all “motivated by the love of God.” Part of SA’s goal is to “meet the human needs of vulnerable members of our community in His name without discrimination.” See <https://coloradosprings.salvationarmy.org/>. For more information about Monument Hill Kiwanis, visit www.monumenthillkiwanis.org/mhk/ *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*

Sertoma donates to officer’s family



Left: Gleneagle Sertoma Board President Greg Maxwell spoke Nov. 28 about the El Paso County Sheriff’s Office Foundation’s dedication to helping the families of fallen officers. Gleneagle Sertoma made a gift of \$16,000 to the foundation, a nonprofit organization led by a volunteer board of directors, that is committed to “supporting local law enforcement, dedicating the time and resources to bridging the gap where the annual budget stops and specific project needs begin.” The foundation received the designated funds on behalf of Deputy Sheriff Micah Flick’s family. Flick suffered fatal gunshot wounds during an auto theft investigation Feb. 5, 2018. *Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.*

Hugs & high-fives at Limbach Park



Above: Hundreds of parents and children greeted Santa and Mrs. Claus for high fives and hugs amid the bright lights of a police cruiser and fire truck for the grand entrance at the annual Monument holiday tree lighting ceremony at Limbach Park on Dec. 1. *Photos by Janet Sellers.*

Talking with teens, Dec. 4



Above: On Dec. 4, Lewis-Palmer School District 38 hosted a panel discussion for its Connection and Conversation series. Dr. Mark Mayfield presented a short overview redefining success, understanding and supporting the social and emotional wellness of our youths. The panelists addressed questions submitted in writing by the audience. Topics included nutrition, social media monitoring (the average teen watches 9.5 hours a day), and excessive emphasis on academic achievement causing stresses and anxiety and depression among our youths. Panelists are, from left, Todd Walker, Mark Haug, Erika Nash, Gwen Simbeck, Ryan Eells, Mark Mayfield, and Karen Brofft. See related Art Matters column on page 26. *Photo by John Howe.*

Dakota Blonde at TLCA, Dec. 14



Above: On Dec. 14, Dakota Blonde returned to the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA), offering a mix of songs that left the sold-out audience wanting for more by the evening's end. Dakota Blonde band members Ernie Martinez, Don Pinnella, Mary Huckins, and Tony Raddell performed a song list that included fan favorite originals Dig Real Deep, The Ballad of Mary's Car, and The Wing Jig, covers such as I've Just Seen a Face by the Beatles and Dooley by the Dillards, and seasonal songs Little Drummer Boy and Feliz Navidad. With strong lead vocals by Huckins and instrument play particularly by Martinez, who was awarded 2018 Instrumentalist of the Year by the Western Music Association, Dakota Blonde demonstrated the versatility and range that make them a TLCA and Colorado Springs-area favorite. *Photo by David Futey.*

Wreaths Across America, Dec. 15



Left: On Dec. 15, the Ladies Auxiliary VFW Post 7829 organized participation in the national program Wreaths Across America. More than 100 people attended Monument Cemetery to witness and help with laying a wreath on each veteran's grave. The program included speeches by Monument Mayor Don Wilson, Rep. Terri Carver, and coordinator of the event, Kathy Carlson. *Photo by John Howe.*

Over 1,500 attend North Pole event



Above: Rose Dunphey, left, leads students and parents from the Home School Enrichment Academy in traditional holiday songs. *Photo by Harriet Halbig.*

By Harriet Halbig

About 1,570 people attended the Monument Hill Kiwanis Club's 13th annual North Pole at Tri-Lakes Arts and Crafts Fair on Dec. 1 at the Grace Best Education Center. Program manager Bob Nissen reported that the event was a great success. Seventy-seven vendors offered their wares including quilted items, treats, clothing, and various other gift offerings.

Eight entertainment groups performed during the event, including Miguel Dakota, finalist on America's Got Talent, the Tri-Lakes Methodist Brass Ensemble and students from Kilmer Elementary, the Lewis-Palmer Homeschool Enrichment Academy, Palmer Ridge High School, and a dance group from the Dance Art Academy.

The Tri-Lakes United Methodist Women's Cookie Walk, offering homemade cookies and other treats, attracted a large crowd in the gymnasium, selling out by 1:30 p.m.

Proceeds from this event benefit the Tri-Lakes Community Nurse, Crawford House Quilters, Palmer Divide Blanket Brigade, and the Days for Girls Project.

Tri-Lakes Cares benefitted through the donation of 684 pounds of food, \$764 in cash and a large bin of toys. Booth rental fees support District 38 school programs, and the use of the facility is donated by the district.

Keaggy wows TLCA audience, Dec. 7



Left: On Dec. 7, Phil Keaggy performed the first of two sold-out shows at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA). Starting with *Nellie's Tune*, an instrumental about his grandmother, Keaggy played for nearly two hours without intermission, much to the delight of the audience. Using a foot pedal board with 12 pedals, Keaggy was able to add sounds and do a studio mix on the fly that provided choreographed background music to his phenomenal guitar playing. He learned to play guitar at age 10 after his brother brought home a Sears Silvertone guitar. He then learned guitar licks by playing 45 rpm records at 33-1/3 speed. It was that humble start in his hometown of Youngstown, Ohio, that led to over 40 years in the music industry with over 60 albums that span rock to Christian music. Information on upcoming events at TLCA is at www.trilakesarts.org. *Photo by David Futey.*

Fa La La La! Dec. 16



Above: The Tri-Lakes Music Association presented a series of Christmas concerts in December at Palmer Ridge High School, Monument. Concert-goers were treated to renditions of *Frosty the Snowman*, *Dance of the Reed-Flutes*, and *Jesu Bambino*, *O Holy Night*. The orchestra and choir came together to deliver *Holly Jolly Christmas*, *Sing Noel*, and *Give Me Christmas*. The concert also included performances of *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* and *Mary Did You Know?* The well-attended concerts were free to all attendees, and monetary donations were gratefully accepted by Tri-Lakes Cares and Tri-Lakes Music Association at all the events. *Photo and caption by Natalie Barszcz.*

Kiwanis shares magic of reading



Left: Kiwanian Bob Evans reads to Lewis-Palmer Elementary School first-graders. Dec. 17 marked a day of stories for kindergartners and first- and second-graders at Lewis-Palmer Elementary School. Ofie Lopez organized seven members of Monument Hill Kiwanis who volunteered their time to read to different classes. Lopez plans to organize more throughout the school year. *Photo provided by Lewis-Palmer Elementary School Principal Jenny Day.*

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.palmerdividehistory.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 Vandenburg, left, and his father, Jeff Vandenburg, 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.ppylmc.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 ■

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., **Jan. 7**, 10 a.m., 6385 Corporate Dr., Suite 200, Colo. Springs. Usually meets 1st Mon. each month. See www.forestlakesmetrodistrict.com to confirm meeting location/dates. Info: 327-5810.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., **Jan. 7**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month in the Town Hall board room. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **El Paso Board of County Commissioners Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 8**, 9 a.m. Centennial Hall, 200 South Cascade Ave., Suite 150, Colo. Springs. Meets every Tue. and Thu. Info: 520 6430, <https://clerkandrecorder.elpasoco.com/clerk-to-the-board/board-of-county-commissioners-meeting-agendas/>
- **Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 8**, 10 a.m., 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Bill Burks, 481-4053.
- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 9**, 9 a.m., 120 Middle Glenway. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2732. www.plsd.org.
- **Monument Planning Commission Meeting, CANCELED:** Would normally have been held Wed., Jan. 9, 6:30 p.m.. Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets 2nd Wed. each month. Livestreamed at <http://bit.ly/2uZxjfa>. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **Monument Academy School Board Meeting**, Thu., **Jan. 10**, 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., **Jan. 10**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Mon., **Jan. 14**, 1 p.m., 1845 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Now meets 2nd Mon. each month. Info: 488-2525, www.woodmoorwater.com.
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board Meeting**, Mon., **Jan. 14**, 6 p.m., Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Normally meets 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 488-4700, www.lewispalmer.org.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 15**, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (off Union Blvd & Printers Pkwy). Meets 1st & 3rd Tue. (if required) each month. Find agendas: <https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com/el-paso-county-planning-commission/planning-commission-2018-meetings/>. Info: 520-6300.
- **Triview Metropolitan District Board Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 15**, 5:30 p.m., Triview Metro office, 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 300, Monument. Meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: 488-6868, <https://triviewmetro.com>.
- **D-38 Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 15**, 7-8:30 p.m., Palmer Ridge High School, 19255 Monument Hill Rd., Monument. Normally meets 2nd Tue. each month, location varies. Info: 488-4700, www.lewispalmer.org.
- **Wescott Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 15**, 7 p.m., Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Normally meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: 488-8680.
- **Monument Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 16**, 9 a.m., 130 2nd St. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-4886.
- **Academy Water and Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 16**, 6 p.m., Wescott Fire Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-0711.
- **Donala Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Thu., **Jan. 17**, 1:30 p.m., 15850 Holbein Dr. Workshop is open to the public. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 488-3603, www.donalawater.org.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 22**, 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.
- **Forest View Acres Water District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 23**, 6 p.m., Monument Sanitation District board room, 130 Second St. Meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: 488-2110, www.fvawd.com.
- **D-38 Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)**, Wed., **Jan. 23**, 6:30 p.m., Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Info: 433-5672, MNay@lewispalmer.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 23**, 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 Annual Meeting**, Mon., **Jan. 28**, sign in at 6:30 p.m., Lewis Palmer Middle School, 1776 Woodmoor Dr., Info:

488-2693, www.woodmoor.org.

- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 30**, 7 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: 488-2693, www.woodmoor.org.

LOCAL LIBRARY EVENTS

Please note that all Pikes Peak Library Facilities will be closed on Monday, Jan. 21 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

For information on library events, see the library events column on page 24 and visit www.ppld.org.

- **The Palmer Lake Library hours** are Tue.-Fri., 10 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sat., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587, www.ppld.org.
- **The Monument Branch Library hours** are Mon.-Thu., 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri. & Sat, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun., 1-5 p.m. 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.

WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS

- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Club Breakfast Meeting**, every **Sat.**, 7:30 a.m., D-38 Admin Building, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Guests are welcome at weekly meetings featuring speakers on a variety of topics and a free continental breakfast. Memberships open to the public. Join the 150+ men & women of the Tri-Lakes area who work together to make a difference for youth and our community. Info: RF Smith, (719) 210-4987, www.MHKiwanis.org. See ad on page 11.
- **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**, most **Sat.-Sun.**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Join Janet Sellers' painting demo, followed by art class at local cultural, gallery, and nature spots. For weekly location: 357-7454, janetsellers10@gmail.com.
- **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 16.
- **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.
- **Black Forest Community Church** Sunday Worship, every **Sun.**, 10 a.m., 6845 Shoup Rd. All are welcome to the family friendly services. Info: www.bfcc-ucc.org. See ad on page 6.
- **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.**, 10 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, Silver Alliance 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., Silver Alliance 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 p.m., 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. Res-

ervations 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. Military & Teacher Appreciation Day, 20% off regular priced items on Saturdays. 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.
- **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.
- **Peak Reader Children's Literacy Program**, every **Tue. & Thu.**, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Free one-to-one tutoring for children reading below grade level. To enroll your child or volunteer as a tutor, visit www.childrensliteracycenter.org or call 471-8672.
- **Act II Thrift Shop**, open **Tue.-Fri.**, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Proceeds benefit Tri-Lakes area non-profits. Info: 487-3268, cara@mynorthlandchurch.org, www.mynorthlandchurch.org/act-ii.
- **Tri-Lakes Church of Christ** Wednesday Night Fellowship Meal (Free) & Classes, every **Wed.**, 6-7:30 p.m., 20450 Beacon Lite Road, Monument (Corner of Beacon Lite & County Line Roads). Info: 488-9613, gregsmith@trilakeschurch.org, www.trilakeschurch.org.
- **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.
- **Overeaters Anonymous Big Book Study**, every **Thu.**, 7-8 p.m., Natural Grocers, 1216 W. Baptist Rd., Monument. Info: Beth, 773-682-1223; or Nancy, 640-3343.
- **Live Music at the Speedtrap**, every **Thu.** open mic 7-9:30 p.m., musicians every Fri. & Sat., 8-11 p.m., 84 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Info: 488-2007, www.speedtrapbistro.com.
- **Peak Reader Children's Literacy Program**, every **Tue. & Thu.**, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Free one-to-one tutoring for children reading below grade level. Meets every Tue. & Thu., 5:30 p.m. To enroll your child or volunteer as a tutor, visit www.childrensliteracycenter.org or call 471-8672.
- **Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS)**, every **Fri.**, 8 a.m., Monument Chamber of Commerce, 166 2nd St., Monument. Info: Terry, 684-4912, or visit www.TOPs.org.
- **Group of Artists (GOA) Meetings** at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, Sat., **Jan. 5**, 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.
- **Pikes Peak Music Teachers Association Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 8**, 9:30 a.m., Graner Music, 4460 Barnes Rd., Colo. Springs. Music teachers and students meet for coffee, a meeting, and program presentation at 11 a.m. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Susan Marten,




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- **Chess Nuts**, Tue., **Jan. 8**, 5-9 p.m., Silver Alliance 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.
 - **Black Forest AARP Potluck Lunch & Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 9**, noon, 12455 Black Forest Rd. Officers installation, speaker on changes to tax law. All ages welcome. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. RSVP & Info: Stan, 596-6787, www.aarpchapter1100blackforest.weebly.com.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Wed., **Jan. 9**, Silver Alliance Senior Center located across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on the Lewis-Palmer High School campus. A registered nurse examines your feet and provides foot care advice, toenail trimming. Cost: \$30 for a 30-min. visit. Meets 2nd Wed. and last Fri. each month, by appointment only. Info & appointments: call the Visiting Nurse Association, 577-4448.
 - **Senior Bingo**, Thu., **Jan. 10**, Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake, after the senior lunch. Come for lunch at noon, then stay and play. Free! Prizes! Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: Maggie Nealon, 488-3037.
 - **Bridge**, Thu., **Jan. 10**, 1-4 p.m., Silver Alliance 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.
 - **Ben Lomond Gun Club**, Tri-Lakes Chapter, Thu., **Jan. 10**, 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.
 - **Faithful Friends**, Thu., **Jan. 10**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. A Ladies' Dessert with an inspirational speaker each month. Normally meets 1st Thu. each month. Cost: \$7. RSVP & Info: Sandi King, 719-237-3359.
 - **La Leche League Meeting**, Fri., **Jan. 11**, 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., **Jan. 12**, 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. Bring a nonperishable food item for Care and Share. Info: 520-7878, http://adm.elpasoco.com/Environmental_Services/Solid_Waste_Management.
 - **Palmer Lake Art Group**, Sat., **Jan. 12**, 9 a.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. A variety of art programs are offered after the social gathering and business meeting. Guests welcome. Meets 2nd Sat. each month. Info: 487-1329, www.palmerlakeartgroup.com.
 - **Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group**, Sat., **Jan. 12**, 9:45-11:30 a.m., The First National Bank of Monument, 581 Hwy 105. Meets 2nd Sat. each month. Info: Gail, 481-3711.
 - **NEPCO Meeting**, Sat., **Jan. 12**, 10 a.m.-noon, New Monument Town Hall & Police Building, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Topic and guest speakers: County Engineer, Jennifer Irving and Mark Gebhardt, deputy director, Planning and Community Development Department. All are welcome to this meeting of local homeowners associations. Info: 481-2723 or visit www.nepco.org.
 - **Palmer Divide Photographers Group: It's Not Just Black-and-White Photography**, Mon., **Jan. 14**, 7 p.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Six winners of the recent Monochrome Photography Exhibition will teach about the art of monochrome photography. All are welcome. Meets 2nd Mon. each month. Info: 649-4241, www.pdphotographers.com.
 - **Outpouring: TLUMC Supporting our Community**, Tue., **Jan. 15**, 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.
 - **Tri-Lakes Chamber Monthly Education Series: Basics of Bookkeeping**, Wed., **Jan. 16**, 9 a.m.-noon, 166 Second St., Monument. Free. Register online, www.trilakeschamber.com/events-calendar.htm. Info: 481-3282.
 - **Gleneagle Sertoma Luncheon Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 16**, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., Liberty Heights, 12105 Ambassador Dr., (off Voyager Blvd in Colorado Springs). Interesting speakers and programs; all are welcome. Meets 1st & 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Garrett Barton, 433-5396; Duane Gritzmaker, 481-2424; www.gleneaglesertoma.org.
 - **Senior Bingo**, Wed., **Jan. 16**, 1-2 p.m., Silver Alliance Senior Center, Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Sue Walker, 464-6873.
 - **Drummers!** Wed., **Jan. 16**, 6:30-8 p.m., Yoga Pathways Studio, West End Center, 775 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Free and open to all ages. Bring any kind of

- drum or other hand percussion instrument. Beginners welcome! Now meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Nan, 466-1257, nananddon@hotmail.com.
- **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7829**, Wed., **Jan. 16**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. New members welcome. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Post Commander Joe Carlson, 405-326-2588, jcarlson@vfw7829.org, www.vfw7829.org.
 - **VFW Auxiliary to Post 7829**, Wed., **Jan. 16**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. New members welcome. If you are a male or female relative of a veteran who served on foreign soil during war or other military action, you may be eligible. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Kathy Carlson, 488-1902, carlsonmkc@aol.com.
 - **Senior Tea**, Thu., **Jan. 17**, 12-1:30 p.m., Silver Alliance Senior Center at Lewis-Palmer High School (across from the YMCA). Come early to socialize. Volunteers needed. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Reservations required: contact Sue, 464-6873, sue@monumentalfitness.com.
 - **Palmer Lake Historical Society: Annual Potluck Dinner and Membership Meeting**, Thu., **Jan. 17**, 6:30 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. The PLHS furnishes the ham, rolls, coffee and tea. Please bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to share and enjoy local entertainment. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 559-0837, www.palmerdividehistory.org.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., **Jan. 18**, Silver Alliance 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.
 - **Silver Alliance Book Club**, Fri., **Jan. 18**, 11 a.m., Senior Center located across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on Lewis-Palmer High School campus. All are welcome to join this new club. Coffee & snacks served. RSVP & Info: Sue, 330-0241.
 - **The Breakfast Club**, Sat., **Jan. 19**, 8:30 a.m., The Ridge at Castle Pines North (Ridge Grill and Bar), 1414 Castle Pines Pkwy. Single people 50+ meet new friends and have fun. This active social group enjoys activities ranging from card games to white water rafting, international/domestic travel to bowling and golf. Meets 3rd Sat. each month. Info: 303-815-8428, www.TBC50plus.org.
 - **Monument Hill Farmers Market Winter Indoor Market**, Sat., **Jan. 19**, 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., **Jan. 19**, 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.
 - **Monument Essential Tremor Support Group**, Sat., **Jan. 19**, 1-3 p.m. Movement disorder support group. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Now meets quarterly. Info: Margaret, lumargaret@aol.com.
 - **Amateur Radio WØTLM** (Tri-Lakes Monument Radio Association), Mon., **Jan. 21**, 6 p.m. social time, 7 p.m. meeting. 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.WØTLM.com.
 - **Chess Nuts**, Tue., **Jan. 22**, 5-9 p.m., Silver Alliance 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., **Jan. 23**, 1-4 p.m., 12455 Black Forest Rd. Meets 4th Wed. each month except Nov. & Dec. Info: aarpchapter1100blackforest.weebly.com.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., **Jan. 25**, Silver Alliance 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.
 - **Group of Artists** (GOA) Meetings at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA), Sat., **Feb. 2**, 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 Chamber Monthly Education Series: Developing and Optimizing Your Business' Website**, Tue., **Feb. 5**, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., 166 Second St., Monument. Free. Register online, www.trilakeschamber.com/events-calendar.htm. Info: 481-3282.
 - **Faithful Friends**, Thu., **Feb. 7**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. A Ladies' Dessert with an inspirational speaker each month. Meets 1st Thu. each month. Cost: \$7. RSVP & Info: Sandi King, 719-237-3359.

- **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

- **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI) Family Day: Geology**, Sat., **Jan. 5**, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). Learn about Colorado's minerals and mining, try your luck at "Keep What You Find" gold panning. Cost: \$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. See ad on page 5.
- **County's Annual TreeCycle**, Sat.-Sun., **Jan. 5-6**, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Baptist Road trailhead, Baptist Road & Old Denver Hwy. Recycle your Christmas tree. Trees are ground into mulch that is given away free. Remove all decorations from your tree before dropping it off. Bring your own tools and containers for mulch. Cost: \$5, benefits community youth sports programs. Info: 520-7878, www.TreeCycleCOS.org.
- **Monument Pies & Grinders Opening**, Mon., **Jan. 7**, 11 a.m.-9 p.m., 15910 Jackson Creek Pkwy, #120, Monument. Info: 481-8444, piesandgrinders@gmail.com, www.piesandgrinders.com. See ad on page 32.
- **Art after Hours at Gallery 132**, dates and times vary, 251 Front St., Suite 8, Monument. Check the website for low-cost two-hour classes in the Art after Hours series; enjoy refreshments and hors d'oeuvres while creating a unique piece of art. Info: 375-8187, info@gallery132.com, www.gallery132.com. See ad on page 5.
- **Suicide Prevention: Question, Persuade, Refer**, Tue., **Jan. 8**, 7 p.m., Pikes Peak Brewing Company, 1756 Lake Woodmoor Dr. All are welcome to attend this free presentation, part of the Tapping into Theology series. Colorado has one of the highest suicide rates in our country. Learn how we can all save lives by intervening with those most vulnerable. RSVP online, www.petertherock.org, or to Stephanie Kemp, 481-4355.
- **The Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery: Rocky Mountain Women's Film Institute Shorts Night**, Fri., **Jan. 11**, 6:30 p.m., 3190 Benet Lane, Colo. Springs. Free, online registration is requested: www.benethillmonastery.org. Info: 633-0655, ext. 132. See ad on page 10.
- **Black Rose Acoustic Society: Blue Canyon Boys**, Fri., **Jan. 11**, 7-10 p.m. Black Forest Community Center, 12530 Black Forest Rd. at Shoup Road. Cost: \$10 general, \$5 BRAS members, \$5 nonmember students with ID. Info: Joe Maio, 528-6119, jrmtn@comcast.net, www.blackroseacoustic.org.
- **Trails, Tails and Ales**, Sat., **Jan. 12**, 10:30 a.m., Black Forest Section 16 Trailhead, 8510 Burgess Rd. Grab your dog and join this special hike! After the hike, head to Black Forest Brewing to enjoy a beer. Learn how to taste beer by picking out malt and hops in both flavor and aroma, and learn the basics on how a beer is made from a certified beer judge. Cost: \$3 per person, \$2 for members of Black Forest Trails Association and for Friends of El Paso County Nature Centers. Info: 520-6977, theresadello@elpasoco.com, www.elpasoco.com/naturecenters.
- **The Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery Chamber Concert Series: Flute and Friends** with Nancy Andrew, Sun., **Jan. 13**, 2:30 p.m., 3190 Benet Lane, Colo. Springs. Cost: \$20. Buy tickets online: www.benethillmonastery.org. Info: 633-0655, ext. 132. See ad on page 10.
- **Yoga Nidra with Raleigh Dove**, Sun., **Jan. 13**, 4-5:30 p.m., 755 Hwy 105, Unit 22, Palmer Lake. Start your week with deep relaxation and stress release. Info: 481-4137, www.YogaPathwaysStudio.com. See ad on page 4.
- **Bethesda Gardens Winter Wonderland**, Sat., **Jan. 15**, 2-4 p.m., 55 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. All are invited: balloon artist, face painter, crafts, games, small craft fair. Info: 719-247-4400, bethesdagardensmonument.com.
- **Tri-Lakes Community/Centura Blood Drive**, Tue., **Jan. 15**, 3-7 p.m., Bloodmobile at Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St., Monument. No appointment needed, just walk in. Please bring driver's license or ID. Info: 776-5822.
- **D-38 Kindergarten Information Night**, Tue., **Jan. 15**, 5-6 p.m., Bear Creek, Lewis-Palmer, Palmer Lake, Prairie Winds, and Ray E. Kilmer Elementary Schools. Info: 488-4700, www.lewispalmer.org. See ad on page 9.
- **D-38 Preschool Registration Night**, Tue., **Jan. 15**, 5-6 p.m., Bear Creek, Lewis-Palmer, Ray E. Kilmer Elementary Schools, and Palmer Lake Early Childhood Center (106 N. Jefferson St., Monument). Info: 488-4700, www.lewispalmer.org. See ad on page 9.
- **New Parent Night at Monument Academy**, Tue., **Jan. 15**, 6-7 p.m., 1150 Village Ridge Pt., Monument. Info: 481-1950, www.monumentacademy.net. See ad on page 11.
- **Crime and Safety Briefing at Wesley Owens Coffee**, Wed., **Jan. 16**, 6-7:30 p.m., 1744 Lake Woodmoor Dr., Monument. El Paso County Sheriff Officer Brent Ambuehl will present a briefing, followed by Q & A. Info:

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- 238-0725.
- **Strong D38 Community: *Continuing the Conversation*.** Thu. **Jan. 17**, 6-8 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Follow up from the recent school bond and MLO election and discussion of concerns and issues raised by the ThoughtExchange community survey. Info: StrongD38Community@gmail.com.
 - **Kinzer Estate Sale**, Fri.-Sun., **Jan. 18-20**, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., 2790 Vandenberg, Monument. Jewelry, sterling, art, furniture, Dresden china, tools, and more. See ad on page 8.
 - **Rocky Mountain Music Alliance Concert: *Music of Light & Darkness***, Sat., **Jan. 19**, 7 p.m., The Church at Woodmoor, 18125 Furrow Rd., Monument. Pianist Dr. Zahari Metchkov will perform works of Liszt and Messiaen. Tickets: adults \$12 online at www.rmma-online.org or \$15 at the door. Students with ID, and children 12 and under are free. Info: Coleen Abeyta, 630-8165, Coleen.Abeyta@gmail.com, www.rm-maconcerts.org. See ad on page 5.
 - **The Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery Human Trafficking Series: *Familial Trafficking in the U.S.***, Tue., **Jan. 22**, 6:30-8:15 p.m., PPLD 21C, Venue Room, 1175 Chapel Hills Dr., Colo. Springs. There are nearly 21 million victims annually in what is a \$32 billion industry. This series on human trafficking offers powerful information, education, and tools for prevention of this crime in our families and communities. Free. RSVP & Info: 633-0655, ext. 132, www.benethillmonastery.org.
 - **Monument Academy Kindergarten Round Up**, Fri., **Jan. 25**, 1:30 p.m., 1150 Village Ridge Pt., Monument. Visit classrooms, meet teachers, get enrollment info. Info: 481-1950, www.monumentacademy.net. See ad on page 11.
 - **Black Rose Acoustic Society: *Circus No. 9***, Fri., **Jan. 25**, 7-10 p.m. Black Forest Community Center, 12530 Black Forest Rd. at Shoup Road. Cost: \$10 general, \$5 BRAS members, \$5 nonmember students with ID. Info: Joe Maio, 528-6119, jrmtn@comcast.net, www.blackroseacoustic.org.
 - **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI): *Winter Writer's Nonfiction Writing Class***, Sat., **Jan. 26**, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). A non-fiction writing class with Steven Veatch and Ben Elick for teachers and learners of all ages. Cost: \$35 adults (\$30 for members), \$7 students age 21 and under. Advance registration required. RSVP & Info: 488-0880, info@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.
 - **St. Peter School Open House**, Sun., **Jan. 27**, 12:30-2:30 p.m., 124 First St., Monument. Find out about education for Preschool through 8th grade. Info: 481-1855; www.petertherock.org. See ad on page 2.
 - **The Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery Human Trafficking Series: *The Scope of Human Trafficking in our County***, Tue., **Jan. 29**, 6:30-8:15 p.m., PPLD 21C, Venue Room, 1175 Chapel Hills Dr., Colo. Springs. This series on human trafficking offers powerful information, education, and tools for prevention of this crime in our families and communities. Free. RSVP & Info: 633-0655, ext. 132, www.benethillmonastery.org.
 - **Palmer Lake Art Group Winter Art Show & Sale Opening Reception**, Fri., **Feb. 1**, 6-8 p.m., Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Come celebrate the opening of the show and meet the local artists. The show runs Jan. 29-Feb. 22, Tue.-Sat., noon-4 p.m. Proceeds benefit art scholarships for School District 38 high school seniors. Info: www.palmerlakeartgroup.com or email plaginfo@palmerlakeartgroup.com. See ad on page 32.
 - **The Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery Human Trafficking Series: *A Call to Action: What the Military Can and Should Do About Sex Trafficking***, Mon., **Feb. 4**, 6:30-8:15 p.m., PPLD 21C, Venue Room, 1175 Chapel Hills Dr., Colo. Springs. This series on human trafficking offers powerful information, education, and tools for prevention of this crime. Free. RSVP & Info: 633-0655, ext. 132, www.benethillmonastery.org.
 - **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Family-to-Family**, Wed., **Feb. 6-May 1**, 6:30-9 p.m., Monument. A free 12-week course for family caregivers of individuals with mental illness. Meets once weekly.

Support Our Community Advertise in OCN!

Our Community News (OCN), with a circulation of 19,000, is a unique all-volunteer monthly newspaper mailed FREE to every resident and business in the Tri-Lakes area. OCN is a primary source for Tri-Lakes area news that gives advertising preference to Tri-Lakes area businesses. OCN's contract-free low ad rates and monthly publication schedule help stretch your ad budget while supporting an important Tri-Lakes-focused effort to present factual, comprehensive news to all Tri-Lakes area residents and business owners.

For advertising information, contact John Heiser, (719) 488-3455, ads@ocn.me, or visit www.ocn.me.

- Registration required: call 473-8477 or email info@namicoloradosprings.org.
- **Heartsaver CPR/AED/First Aid Certification Course**, Sat., **Feb. 9**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church, 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. American Heart Association course. Reservations required. Wear comfortable clothes, bring a sack lunch. Info: epg@tlumc.org. See ad on page 6.
 - **The Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery Human Trafficking Series: *Protecting Our Precious Cargo***, Mon., **Feb. 11**, 6:30-8:15 p.m., PPLD 21C, Venue Room, 1175 Chapel Hills Dr., Colo. Springs. Free. RSVP & Info: 633-0655, ext. 132, www.benethillmonastery.org.

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

Look for our next issue Saturday, Feb. 2

Ad space reservations due: **Fri., Jan. 11**
Finished ad artwork due: **Fri., Jan. 18**
Letters to the editor due: **Fri., Jan. 18**
Calendar items due: **Fri., Jan. 25**

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



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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 a twelve month period. To submit a letter, please:

- Email your letter, preferably as an attached Microsoft Word document, to editor@ocn.me or mail a copy to Our Community News, P.O. Box 1742, Monument, CO 80132-1742.
- 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 that summarizes the topic you are addressing.
- Limit letters to no more than 300 words.
- Include your full name, home address, phone numbers, and email address, if you have one. Only your name will be published.
- Send your letter at least 14 days before the "first Saturday of the month" when the paper is published. Later submissions may be deferred to our next monthly issue.

If you have not received an acknowledgement two days after your email submission or one week after you mailed your letter, please contact Lisa Hatfield, Managing Editor, at (719) 339-7831 or editor@ocn.me. At OCN's sole discretion, letters may be edited for grammar and we may ask you for clarification of your statements. Include references, such as website links, in your letter for any facts and figures you cite. Letters containing personal attacks will not be published.

The Rabbi's Corner

Right or Wrong, Part II

By Rabbi Oswald Garagorry

In part I of this series which began last month, we asked the question: If the Messiah was right or wrong in affirming He was God when speaking to his contemporaries. We determined that the response depended upon who was responding to the question. Today we will elaborate on the response from the Jewish perspective which would likely be that he was wrong; because God is a spirit and not a human being. That response has some logic in it, yet it is not consistent with the Holy Record. In *Genesis 1:8-9*, it describes God walking in the Garden and making noise as he was walking. How does a spirit walk around making noise without a body? It seems evident that walking involves a physical aspect.

In *Exodus Chapter 3*, Moses sees a bush that was burning, but the elements providing the fire were not consumed. So he moved closer to observe it better. And to his surprise there in the midst of the fire was God himself, speaking to him and giving him directions. Normally, spoken words proceed from a tangible mouth somewhere.

In *Numbers Chapter 22* we have the report of the messengers of Balak, coming to Balaam. But also in the same text we have the report of God himself coming to Balaam. And the text goes further to describe the two of them having a detailed conversation. The text does not tell us how or in what manner God came to Balaam. The important thing is that God was able to come (in some manner) and spoke words giving instruction to his prophet. "Who are those men with you?" (*Exodus 22:9*). After getting the response from Balaam, God carried on the conversation with Balaam as He expressed His view or perception of the messengers, telling Balaam: "You are not to go with them; you are not to curse the people because they are blessed." (*Number 22:12*). Therefore the speaking God is able to come, speak, give instructions and not hang around thereafter. Elsewhere in the Tanakh (Old Testament) we are told of 14 times, by several different authors who affirmed seeing God themselves.

The heart of the matter as David expressed in *Psalms 63:1-4*, is to seek God with all your heart, mind and strength: "O God, you are my God; I will seek you eagerly. My heart thirsts for you, my body longs for you in a land parched and exhausted, where no water can be found. I used to contemplate you in the sanctuary, seeing your power and glory; for your grace is better than life. My lips will worship you."

May you make David's prayer your personal prayer, because he was able to see God himself.

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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Visitors are welcome!



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.

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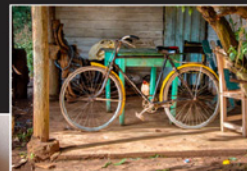
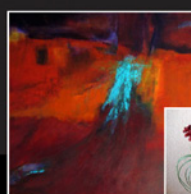
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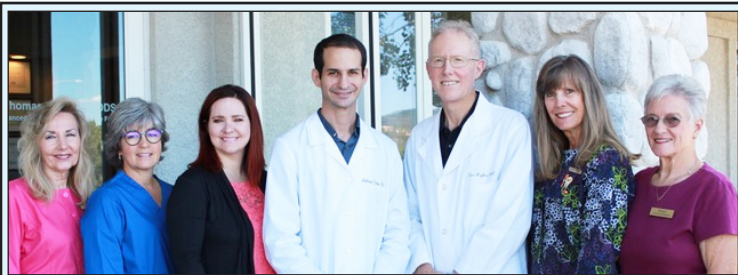
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