

Happy Holidays! from the all-volunteer staff at

Our Community News

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



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Local Events

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

- The Hazel Miller Band Concert at TLCA, Fri., Dec. 6, 7 p.m.
- Monument Hill Kiwanis Club's 14th Annual North Pole at Tri-Lakes Arts and Crafts Fair, Sat., Dec. 7, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Downtown Monument's Small Town Christmas, Sat., Dec. 7, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Celebration of the life of Barbara Cusack, Sat., Dec. 7, 2-4 p.m., O'Malley's
- Monument Tree Lighting, Sat., Dec. 7, 3-6 p.m.
- Annual Palmer Lake Yule Log Hunt, Sun., Dec. 8, 1 p.m.
- Song Spinners Christmas Show at Jackson Creek Senior Living, Sun., Dec. 8, 1-2 p.m.
- Black Forest Community Potluck & Tree Lighting, Sun., Dec. 8, 5:45 p.m.
- El Paso County Master Plan Workshop, Wed., Dec. 11, 6-8 p.m.,
- Black Rose Acoustic Society Holiday Show/Singalong Potluck with Dakota Blonde, Fri., Dec. 13, 7-9:30 p.m.
- Wreaths Across America, Sat., Dec. 14, 10 a.m.
- Oasis Band at Jackson Creek Senior Living, Sat., Dec. 14, 3-5 p.m.
- Christmas Handbell Concert, Sat., Dec. 14, 7 p.m.
- Annual Palmer Lake Yule Log Hunt, Sun., Dec. 15, 1 p.m.
- Brian Usher at Jackson Creek Senior Living, Thu., Dec. 19, 4-6 p.m.,
- Tri-Lakes Music Association Choir and Orchestra Annual Christmas Concert, Fri.-Sat., Dec. 20-21, 7 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 22, 2 p.m.
- County's Annual TreeCycle, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 28-29; Jan. 4-5, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

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Our free circulation area now includes over 1,600 mailboxes in Black Forest!

Palmer Lake Chili Supper and Star Lighting



Above: Every year since 1935, excluding the years during WWII, the star lighting has been a part of the holiday season in Palmer Lake. The idea inspired by B.E. Jack and Bert Sloan came to fruition through hard volunteer labor to dig post holes, hand-carry poles, cement, and cables up Sundance Mountain. That process took over three months in 1935. The latest rework in 2002, using a helicopter, took three hours to haul needed supplies uphill. This year the nearly 500-foot star was lit by Terri Hayes who won the drawing at the chili supper on Saturday, Nov. 30 where 60 gallons of chili were consumed by the enthusiastic crowd. The star is maintained by the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department and the chili supper provides funds for supplies and repairs. The festivities included hayrides, raffles, and plenty of food and socializing. *Photo by Steve Pate.* The traditional annual Palmer Lake yule log hunt will take place on Sun., Dec. 15 at 1 p.m.

Monument Board of Trustees, Nov 18

Separation agreement for Treasurer, Home Place Ranch approved, All Kratom sales banned

By Allison Robenstein

The board agreed to separate employment with Treasurer Pamela Smith. No reasons were given publicly for the separation agreement. The Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) approved a strongly contested development and banned all Kratom sales at their Nov. 18 meeting. New Finance Director Rosa Ooms was introduced during a budget workshop that preceded the regular meeting.

Treasurer dismissed

After a lengthy executive session that followed the regular meeting, the board voted 5-1 to instruct Town Manager Mike Foreman to draw up a separation agreement for Smith. Trustee Laurie Clark voted against the motion.

Smith was put on administrative leave at the Mar 4 board meeting when Foreman acknowledged an on-

going El Paso County Sheriff's Office investigation. See www.ocn.me/v19n4.htm#mbot. Then, during the Mar. 18 board meeting, Town Attorney Joseph Rivera advised the board both the FBI and IRS were working on the same investigation. See www.ocn.me/v19n4.htm#mbot0318.

Home Place Ranch

continuation ends in approval

At the Sept 16 BOT meeting, Home Place Ranch developers requested approval of the Preliminary/Final PD Site plan for Phase 1 of the 130-acre, 300-home development (see vicinity map on page 3). The trustees asked many questions of the developer indicating several areas of concern with the project as proposed. No trustees made a motion on the proposal, so it failed due to lack of a vote. See ocn.me/v19n10.htm#mbot.

Then, during the Oct. 7 meeting Rivera asked the board to continue the hearing after he explained town municipal code 2.04.030 requires the board to make clear the reason they are rendering decisions. He said they should either approve the request, approve it with conditions or deny it.

The board has been concerned about emergency access points and drainage. Although tonight's discussions didn't yield much new information, the developers brought additional diagrams to aid in their arguments for approval of the request.

Bryan Kniep, Goodwin Knight vice president of planning and community development, said they had confirmed the emergency access points were sufficiently safe as per the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District.

MONUMENT (Cont. on 2)

Nov. 5 Election Results

Final Official Results updated November 21.

Winning votes are shown in boldface type.

Lewis-Palmer Consolidated School District 38 - District 2
Theresa Phillips 10,361 (100%)

Lewis-Palmer Consolidated School District 38 - District 4
Ryan Graham 6,146 (48.24%)
Ron Schwarz 6,594 (51.76%)

Lewis-Palmer Consolidated School District 38 - District 5
Matthew Clawson 7,275 (55.47%)
Adam Cupp 5,841 (44.53%)

Proposition CC (Statutory): (Remove state revenue limit)
Yes/For 67,979 (38.20%)
No/Against 109,999 (61.80%)

Proposition DD (Statutory): (Sports betting)
Yes/For 82,533 (46.54%)
No/Against 94,789 (53.46%)

Lewis-Palmer Consolidated School District 38 Ballot Issue 4A: (Bond issue)
Yes/For 6,998 (45.06%)
No/Against 8,532 (54.94%)

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Ballot Issue 6A: (Adjust mill levy to maintain tax revenue)
Yes/For 7,414 (56.89%)
No/Against 5,618 (43.11%)