

# 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.

- **Solar Oven Cooking Informal Demo**, Sun., Apr. 7, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
- **Acoustic Eidolon Live at TLCA**, Fri., Apr. 12, 7 p.m.
- **Black Rose Acoustic Society: Pint and a Half**, Fri., Apr. 12, 7-10 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, Thu., Apr. 18, 6:30 p.m.
- **Coffee with a Cop**, Sat., Apr. 20, 10 a.m.-noon
- **Palmer Lake Easter Egg Hunt**, Sat., Apr. 20, 10 a.m.
- **Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department Pancake Breakfast**, Sun., Apr. 21, 7-11 a.m.
- **Friends of Fox Run Park New Volunteers Meeting**, Thu., Apr. 25, 5 p.m.
- **D38 Aliorum De Award Ceremony**, Thu., Apr. 25, 7-8:30 p.m.
- **Black Rose Acoustic Society: Thunder n' Rain**, Fri., Apr. 26, 7-10 p.m.
- **Great American Cleanup**, Sat., Apr. 27, 9 a.m.-noon
- **Saloon Night at WMMI**, Sat., Apr. 27, 6 p.m.,
- **43rd Annual Spring Into Vintage Show & Sale**, Sat.-Sun., Apr. 27-28
- **Black Forest Arts & Crafts Guild 55th Annual Spring Show & Sale**, Thu.-Sun., May 2-5
- **Sawyer Fredericks Concert at TLCA**, Fri., May 3, 7 p.m.

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## Circulation

Print Run: 21,150  
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Our free circulation area now includes over 1,600 mailboxes in Black Forest!

## Red Cross shelter saved lives



Above: U.S. Army Spc. Jacob Nguyen from Fort Carson was one of 155 people sheltering at St. Peter Church in Monument, where he took this photo during the bomb cyclone. Red Cross volunteers opened emergency shelters at St. Peter and Kilmer Elementary School. Stranded travelers could find shelters using [www.redcross.org/shelter](http://www.redcross.org/shelter), 1-800-REDCROSS, or text SHELTER and ZIP code to 43362 (4FEMA). The Tri-Lakes Red Cross Shelter Team needs more volunteers to become trained for "next time" to share this very rewarding work among more people. Please contact John Hartling at (719) 338-9552 or [LCDRJHON@yahoo.com](mailto:LCDRJHON@yahoo.com) for information. *Photo by Jacob Nguyen.*

By Volunteer Red Cross Shelter Manager  
John Hartling

This was truly the most gratifying of all the deployments I have been on. The clients were amazing and pitched in to cook sausage and pancakes for 155 people, put their own cots together, roll out the wrestling mats (took 12 men), bring cots and blankets in from the trailer in three feet of snow, drive people back to abandoned cars, shovel paths for fire trucks to get closer to the shelter, help clean up the facility, and put cots and blankets back in the trailer. We got a standing ovation on three occasions. I got worn out with folks constantly wanting to hug me.

We literally saved one young woman's life when her car got stuck, and she tried to walk to the shelter but could not find us because of the whiteout. She lay down in a snow bank and covered herself with a blanket. Fortunately, she had a cell phone and let us know approximately where she was. Our ham radio operator Jeremy Schwartz used his Jeep to look for her. After about 30 minutes, he found her about one block from the facility. She was also about 10 feet from a 75-year-old Uber driver who had been missing for 11 hours. They were both very cold. She broke down in hysterics when she realized how close she was to expiring.

The most frustrating part was trying to get people back to their vehicles. Some

of them did not know where their vehicles were.

Special kudos to Red Cross team members Carl Allen, Patti Hettler, Ed Hettler, and Rob Hoette. They stayed awake for as many as 38 hours to get the shelter set up, register newcomers, feed the crowds, and keep it running through the storm, even at 4 a.m. as stranded people kept coming in.

More thanks to these volunteers: Schwartz, the ham operator who was up all night doing whatever was needed including rescuing the girl; Abe Johnson, a client who drove numerous people back to their cars and was up all night helping as needed; Peggy at McDonald's who whipped up 300 sausage sandwiches for breakfast on short notice; Nathan Shumway, a pediatric doctor who helped with several medical issues and overly stressed clients, including a pregnant lady; and Father Gregory and St. Peter for use of their facility and all the supplies and food. Father Gregory would not accept reimbursement from me or the Red Cross.

And thanks to those who responded to my NextDoor.com plea for help and to the Knights of Columbus who helped folks return to their cars on Thursday afternoon. Not only did they drive, they also helped dig cars out of ditches full of wet snow. ■

Tri-Lakes Monument FPD board meetings, Feb. 27, Mar. 27

## Storm report and Master Plan recommendations

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District board meetings held on Feb. 27 and March 27, board members heard about the bomb cyclone after a storm report from Chief Chris Truty and received a presentation on a possible Master Plan.

### District had action plan before the storm

Truty recapped the events of the rare hurricane-level storm that began on March 13, saying that rescue crews were stretched to the extreme. Fortunately, TLMFPD was not caught off guard due to the creation of an Incident Action Plan

(IAP) two days prior, which doubled staffing levels, carried out extra checks of all vehicles, and allowed TLMFPD to move its command center to the Monument Town Hall, which has a working generator, when the power went out.

TLMFPD were able to respond to 126 calls over the course of 48 hours, the majority of which were from stranded motorists. The 1987 Sno-Cat logged 85 miles over 18 hours, assisting with awkward rescues when firefighter crews had to proceed on foot.

Throughout the storm, TLMFPD, the  
**TLMFPD (Cont. on 2)**

Donald Wescott FPD board meeting, March 19

## Bomb cyclone adds work and personnel to shifts

By Allison Robenstein

During the March 19 meeting, the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) board discussed the district's response to the blizzard and heard updates on the possible merger with Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD). The board asked Chief Vinny Burns to decide how to use the 2018 wildland revenues to benefit the firefighters and furthered their discussion on creating board bylaws started at their February meeting.

Treasurer Joyce Hartung was absent.

### Blizzard planning paid off

Assistant Chief Scott Ridings updated the board on the department's response to the recent blizzard, and Burns congratulated the whole team for a "very professional" job. Ridings said the incident action plan he prepared ahead of the storm outlined goals they would try to meet, and they succeeded in doing so. The team of extra staffers took 49 calls for service over the storm's 48 hours. The department dug cars out of the snow and took people to

**DWFPD (Cont. on 4)**

Ronald Henrikson, 1940-2019

## Thanks for being you, Ronald



Ronald Henrikson volunteered with *Our Community News* from 2001 right up until he helped us mail our March 2019 issue, and he was proud to support independent journalism. His son Erik said, "Dad never did anything halfway." This was true of his career as a pediatrician and commander in the Air Force, Boy Scout leader and guide, spinning class instructor, supporter of the arts, long-distance cyclist, and encourager and teacher to his wife, children, and grandchildren. "Why you do something is as important as what you do," he said. It is well with his soul, but we will miss him. *Photo courtesy of Ronald's daughter, Sonja Beaudoin.*