

# Our Community News

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



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Free

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## Local Events

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

- **Black Forest Arts & Crafts Guild 55th Annual Spring Show & Sale**, Thu.-Sun., May 2-5
- **Black Forest Seedling Giveaway**, Sat., May 4, 9-11 a.m.
- **A Taste of Tri-Lakes Cares**, Wed., May 8, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Slash and Chipping Days**, Fri., May 10, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- **Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive**, Sat., May 11
- **Hazardous Materials & Recycling Collection**, Sat., May 11, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- **Antelope Trails Elementary and DWFPD's Health & Safety Fair**, Sat., May 11, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- **Rufus Cappadocia, world-renowned cellist, at TLCA**, Sat., May 11, 7-9 p.m.
- **County Master Plan Tri-Lakes Workshop**, Mon., May 13-14
- **Friends of Monument Preserve Trail Work Night**, Tue., May 14, 6-9 p.m.
- **Art Hop**, Thu., May 16, 5-8 p.m.
- **Historical Society: The History of the Singing Cowboy**, Thu., May 16, 6:30 p.m.
- **NEPCO**, Sat., May 18, 10 a.m.-noon. HOA legal and legislative issues.
- **Community Firewise Day in Palmer Lake**, Sat., May 25, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- **Monument Memorial Day Ceremony**, Mon., May 27, 10 a.m.
- **Picnic-N-Planes at WMMI**, Thu., May 30, 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
- **Kids Fishing Derby**, Sat., Jun. 1, 8-11 a.m.

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## Circulation

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

## Rescuing our forests and us from the worst of litterbugs



**Above:** At the Santa Fe trailhead at Third Street in Monument, after registering for the Great American Cleanup and getting their bags, gloves, and vests, everyone went out into the neighboring areas to pick up trash and clean up the area. People of all ages volunteered, left, while the Focus on the Forest Tri-Lakes volunteers, right, cheered them on, all the while sharing about the year-round volunteer work they do, especially on Mt. Herman Rd./Front Range. They are "dedicated to cleaning up our national forests" from trash dumping, vandalism, and gunfire dangers. Our local neighborhoods as well as our forests and mountains are cared for by these volunteers. They volunteer year-round, and Focus on the Forest has two special cleanup periods, Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day weekend, as they've found that people tend to keep up and pick up after themselves if they come to a clean place, but where there is trash, it begets more trash. Last year, the volunteers of Focus on the Forest took out over 250,000 pounds of trash, including papers, bottles, dumped appliances, toilets, and more. Volunteers are welcome to join these groups. For details, visit [www.focusontheforest.org](http://www.focusontheforest.org). *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

Monument Board of Trustees, April 1

## Town manager made permanent; Monument becomes 2nd Amendment sanctuary

By Allison Robenstein

During its April 1 meeting, the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) appointed a permanent town manager. The trustees also proclaimed Monument a Second Amendment sanctuary town and postponed a Goodwill merger request that seemed initially to be a name change but was questioned with regard to the associated \$17 million 2014 bond.

Public works and police staff, and Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District staff were recognized for their efforts during the March 13 blizzard.

### Town manager becomes permanent

Mike Foreman was unanimously appointed as town manager after the board returned from executive session at the end of the meeting. He signed the contract with Mayor Don Wilson present on April 5. Foreman was originally brought on in September as an interim town manager after Town Manager Chris Lowe was fired last June. See [www.ocn.me/v18n7.htm#mbot](http://www.ocn.me/v18n7.htm#mbot), [www.ocn.me/v18n10.htm#mbot](http://www.ocn.me/v18n10.htm#mbot).

### Board proclaims Monument "Second Amendment preservation town"

Monument Police Chief Jake Shirk asked the board to pass a proclamation preserving the Second Amendment in Monument. He told the board, "I am very, very concerned with what our

state Legislature is doing to take away our citizens' rights to bear arms .... We need to deal with the mental health crisis separately from guns."

Wilson confirmed the proclamation is an effort to support El Paso County Sheriff Bill Elder, who wants to fight the "red flag" bill in the courts if passed by the Legislature.

MONUMENT (Cont. on 9)



**Above:** Mike Foreman became Monument's permanent town manager on April 5 when he signed his contract with the town. He has been the interim manager for the town since September, but the board unanimously voted to offer him the permanent position after its April 1 meeting. Pictured from left are Mayor Don Wilson and Foreman. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

El Paso County Planning Commission, April 2 and 16

## Second phase of Forest Lakes development recommended for approval

By Helen Walklett

The El Paso County Planning Commission recommended for approval a rezoning application and preliminary plan for the second phase of the Forest Lakes development in April. It also made recommendations relating to the Redtail Ranch development in Black Forest, a guest house special use application in the Overlook Estates neighborhood, and a lot in the Flying Horse North development.

### Forest Lakes Phase II application recommended for approval

The Planning Commission heard the application for a rezoning of the PUD (planned unit development) at the Forest Lakes Phase II proposed development over two meetings after it lost its quorum at the April 2 meeting and had to continue the item to April 16. The request included approval of the PUD development plan as a preliminary plan. The development is located at the west end of Baptist Road and the second phase is at its western-most part.

At the beginning of the April 2 hearing, Commissioner Kevin Curry recused himself, saying, "I understand that Classic [Homes] has raised some concerns that I might be biased against them based on an anticipated objection to one of their unrelated future applications." Although confident he could consider the application objectively, his recusal followed discussions with the County Attorney's Office.

### Background

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved the Forest Lakes PUD and preliminary plan in February 2002. The 977-acre PUD plan included 467 dwelling units, a 10-acre school site, 450 acres of open space, and 32 acres of tracts for utilities, public facilities, and parkland. Development was expected in two phases and Phase I, which includes Filings 1 through 4 and totals 272 lots, is now about 80 percent complete. (See <https://www.ocn.me/v2n6.htm#forestlakes>)

The rezoning request is for 180 single-family homes within the second phase, which represents an increase of 46 dwelling units in this area over those in the 2002 approved PUD plan. Classic Homes, the developer, revised its plans for this application following feedback at neighborhood meetings and because of technical constraints on the previous proposals. Classic had initially proposed 231-lot then 199-lot configurations. The applicant also intends to separate the southern portion of the PUD plan to add a third phase that would include 61 lots.

COUNTY (Cont. on 2)