

Our Community News

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



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Local Events

Many local events continue to be canceled, suspended, or are being conducted on-line or by conference call. See pages 28-31 for details.

The unpredictability of the COVID-19 situation presents scheduling challenges for area governance entities and other organizations. Because OCN is a monthly publication, readers should assume that event information published in this issue is subject to change and information should be confirmed a day or two before the event by calling the information number or checking the organization's website.

Dates are shown for events even though the event has been canceled or suspended. The date indicates when the event was planned to be held or when it would normally have been held.

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

- **Downtown Monument Holiday Open House**, Fri.-Sat., Nov. 6-7
- **WMMI Lecture Series**, Tue., Nov. 10, 7-8 p.m. Dr Rick Sauers presents, Some of the Hidden History of Cripple Creek.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber Monthly Education Series: Creating Operational Efficiencies in Your Small Business**, Tue., Nov. 12, 9-11 a.m.
- **Monument Impact Open House/ Internship Symposium**, Mon., Nov. 16, 4-5 p.m. High school students interested in technology, engineering, and entrepreneurship.
- **WMMI Assay Seminar Classes, Beginner/Advanced**; Sat., Nov. 28, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Fire Department Annual Chili Supper & Star-lighting Festival but To Go!**, Sat., Nov. 28, 4:30-7 p.m., star-lighting at 7 p.m.
- **Downtown Monument's Small Town Christmas**, Sat., Dec. 5, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

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Monument Safe Trick or Treat



Above: Monument Downtown hosted a safe trick-or-treat for community kids on Halloween. Sparky the Firehouse Dog was on hand with the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Department to greet kids with candy. Black Forest Deli gave out freshly baked cookies, Lollies ice cream shop shared cider and candy, while Covered Treasures Bookstore (pictured above) had a long line of happy celebrants in costume. Photo by Janet Sellers.

Lewis-Palmer District 38 Board of Education, Oct. 26

Board discusses continued impact of COVID-19, approves refinancing bonds

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer District 38 Board of Education discussed the continued impact of the coronavirus on school practices, refinancing of bonds, district communications practice, and the future of the Grace Best Education Center site at its Oct. 26 meeting.

The meeting was held on Zoom due to the extreme weather and school closure on that day.

Superintendent Dr. K.C. Somers notified the board that there is now a COVID-19 dashboard on the district website (lewispalmer.org), to be found under COVID Resources on the left side of the home page. The dashboard reflects the number of positive cases of the virus at each location, the number of students and staff quarantined and the number in isolation.

Somers referred to a letter sent to the *Colorado Springs Gazette* by the Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association, a group including 20 superintendents from the area who have been meeting regularly and sharing ideas since the spring. The group recommends that state-level standardized tests be suspended in the spring of 2021 due to logistical problems and doubtful value of the results due to the school shutdown in the spring. SAT and PSAT tests would remain. No formal decision was made, and the recommendation would require action at the state level.

Regarding instruction under the READ act (Reading to Ensure Academic Development, passed in 2012 to have all students reading at grade level by fourth grade), Somers said instruction will continue, but it is not possible to complete new training for staff at this time. The district is requesting an extension of the deadline to complete training and will try to embed the training within the program.

Somers said that the reopening of schools 100 percent in person is not recommended at this time due to problems with social distancing. Elementary students are attending full time, while secondary students are attending two days a week.

Due to increased case numbers of the virus, it would be unwise to open further at this time, but Fridays, which are now flex days, may offer an opportunity for more in-person time.

Somers said that the district is serious about the mental and emotional impact of distance learning. In answer to a question, Somers said that a student with concerns about mental health or emotional issues could contact Safe2Tell (877-524-7233). Any tips received are referred to the district, which will then implement an outreach. If parents have a concern, they can call the student's teacher.

Board President Chris Taylor asked if there are any plans to offer testing for

D38 BOE (Cont. on 2)

Monument BOT, Oct. 5

Request for high mill levy concerns board

By Allison Robenstein

During its regular meeting on Oct. 5, the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) approved financing for the design of Jackson Creek Parkway improvements north of Higby Road. The board also approved the Falcon Commerce Center site plan and a newly formed Jackson Creek Metropolitan District.

Jackson Commercial Metropolitan District service plan

Town Manager Mike Foreman introduced a request for approval of a new Jackson Creek Metropolitan District (JCMD) that will collect 35 mills to create public improvements, such as streets, sewer, water, drainage, parks, and 10 mills for maintenance. The 100-acre development will be composed of 89 acres commercial property and the rest residential.

The district was approved to charge a total mill rate of up to 154.265 because it overlaps with numerous existing taxing districts. These include:

- District 38 schools, 41.430 mills
- Triview Metropolitan District, 32.000 mills

MONUMENT BOT (Cont. on 7)

Monument gets drive-through COVID-19 test site



Above: As COVID-19 numbers increased at a concerning rate, county, city, and public health officials issued a call to action and warned of potential restrictions on Oct. 19. Dr. Robin Johnson, El Paso County Public Health medical director, said, "We know that reducing the size and frequency of social gatherings is one of the best ways to stem the tide of COVID-19. As temperatures cool and people head indoors, wearing a mask and staying home when sick will become even more critical." On Oct. 28, the Public Health Department opened a drive-through COVID-19 test site at the corner of Lincoln and Jefferson in Monument. Community Emergency Responses Training (CERT) volunteers assisted with traffic control. Tests are free, and no insurance or doctor referrals are required. For hours, see www.elpaso-countyhealth.org/covid-19-testing-information. Photo by Lisa Hatfield.

WHERE TO FIND OFFICIAL COVID INFORMATION

<https://covid19.colorado.gov/>