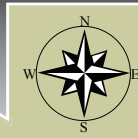


# Our Community News

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.

- Outdoor Safety Series: Family Hiking Safety, Sat., Aug. 1, 9-10:30 a.m.,
- Woodmoor Chipping Days, Sat., Aug. 1, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Western Saloon Night at WMMI, Sat., Aug. 1, 6-9 p.m.
- Color Splash, Annual Fine Art Exhibit Opening Reception, originally scheduled for Aug. 7 has been postponed until Spring, 2021.
- King's Deer Community Garage Sale, Fri.-Sun., Aug. 7-9
- Art Hop Returns, Thu., Aug. 20, 5-8 p.m.
- Hummingbird Festival, Fri., Aug. 21, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- WMMI: Outdoor Machine Demonstration Day, Sat., Aug. 22, 1-3 p.m.
- Downtown Monument Labor Day Weekend Street Fair, Sat., Sep. 5, 6 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Rocky Mountain Pig Jig, Sat., Sep. 12, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

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## Farm to Farmers Market



**Above:** One of our very local, organic certified, home-grown farms/vendors of the Monument Hill Farmers Market that work hard year-round is OneLuv Organics. Not only do they give to the area food banks through their nonprofit Patches of Hope, they work to create organic farm-grown food in the short growing season of Colorado. Avery Bortell, pictured, works at the farm and farmers market helping her family sell the best and freshest vegetables available. Her parents, Liza and Dean, coming from military and engineering backgrounds, have found their niche in the continuing resurgence of organic farming. The outdoor Monument Hill Farmers Market is open in downtown Monument every Saturday through Oct. 11, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*

NEPCO Inc., July 11

## NEPCO reports on local land development projects

By Marlene Brown

The Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) met for the first time in six months after meetings were suspended due to COVID-19 concerns, protecting their members by not having in-person meetings. It held its first virtual Zoom teleconferencing meeting July 11. The board decided too much time would be lost and the general membership would need to be updated on projects that were initiated in the area during the pandemic shutdown. Fifteen local homeowners associations (HOAs) joined the board in the virtual meeting, and it was business as usual.

### Board reports

Greg Lynd, president of NEPCO, opened the meeting and introduced the board. Larry Oliver, director of Membership and Community Outreach, reported that there are 47 active member HOAs with about 9,000 homes and lots within the boundaries of NEPCO service area in northern El Paso County, which includes the Tri-Lakes, Gleneagle and North Gate areas and Black Forest. The secretary and the treasurer gave their reports, which have been posted to the website [www.nepco.org](http://www.nepco.org). Matthew Nelson, head of the Wildfire Preparedness Committee, was absent because it was a Woodmoor Chipping Day. Oliver discussed an online chart that provided

wildfire preparedness links.

### Land Use and

### Transportation Committee

Paul Pirog of the Land Use and Transportation Committee reported on several projects that have been reviewed in the last six months. Pirog stated that in 2019 there were 43 new developments in the area, with 22 new developments in review to date this year. Some of the new ones include Willow Springs Ranch, with 396 lots at Old Denver Highway and Baptist Road. The Village is 84 acres of townhomes, single-family homes and commercial buildings just south of Highway 105 on both sides of Jackson Creek Parkway. Monument Academy, at the intersection of Highway 83 and Walker Road, has been approved by the State Board of Education and the Colorado Department of Transportation.

Two of several new proposed commercial projects are the Conexus Business Park and the Falcon Commerce Center. *For details, see the Monument Planning Commission Article on page 18.*

There is a need to continue oversight by a NEPCO committee and work with the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) to help increase mitigation of any corridor ob-

NEPCO (Cont. on 2)

D-38 Board of Education, July 20

## Board reviews back-to-school plan

By Harriet Halbig

Superintendent K.C. Somers and members of the district administration reviewed the fall 2020 Back-to-School Plan with the board at their July 20 work session. The entire plan may be seen in Boarddocs at [Lewis-Palmer.org](http://Lewis-Palmer.org) (go to board of education, meetings, meeting agendas).

As mentioned in last month's article, the district distributed surveys to staff, parents, and students seeking their opinions about reopening schools. Responses were due on July 6.

Since that time, the governor has mandated the use of cloth face masks by all individuals over age 10 in public spaces. This and other state Health Department recommendations will be followed during the reopening.

The staff survey was sent to all staff, teachers, and administrative personnel. They were satisfied with the testing protocols but concerned about taking the virus home. Hand sanitizer was seen as absolutely necessary. Face shields will be used in language classes so that the teacher's face can be seen.

Staff felt that volunteers should not be allowed to return, and adequate childcare was a concern.

Executive Director of Learning Services Lori Benton said that the rate of response was 40%.

The family survey asked about the number of students in family and grade levels. When asked to list their priorities, they responded that reduced class size and emphasis on cleaning were foremost. They also asked about

D-38 (Cont. on 4)

TLMFPD, July 22

## Fire Chief Truty retiring

By Natalie Barszcz

On July 22, the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board met at Station 1 and via Zoom virtual conference to hear Fire Chief Chris Truty announce his intention to retire, and to develop a process and plan for the search for his successor.

Treasurer Jason Buckingham was excused.

### Retirement announced

Truty announced his intention to retire at the end of the year. He said it had not been an easy decision by any stretch, but it would be best to leave before he became involved in another long project. The intent of the early notice is to give the board enough time to find a suitable replacement.

Vice President Roger Lance thanked Truty for his leadership and for moving the district forward in the right direction, "we owe you a debt of gratitude."

TLMFPD (Cont. on 7)