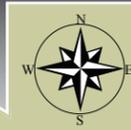


Our Community News

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



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WHERE TO FIND OFFICIAL COVID INFORMATION
<https://covid19.colorado.gov/>

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.

- WMMI, open Mon., Wed., Fri., Sat., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.,
- Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Thrift Store, open Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Essentrics Fitness Program, Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m. & Thu. at 8 a.m.
- Chess Nuts, Tue., Mar. 9 and Mar. 23, 5-9 p.m.
- Foot Care Clinic, Wed., Mar. 10, Fri. Mar. 19, and Fri., Mar. 26
- Ben Lomond Gun Club, Tri-Lakes Chapter, Thu., Mar. 11, 7 p.m.
- County Hazardous Materials & Recycling Collection Facility, appointments required, phone 719-520-7878 or check the website to book online, Sat., Mar. 13, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Faithful Friends, Sat., Mar. 20, 3-4:30 p.m.
- Tri-Lakes Chamber Monthly Education Series: *Employee Retention*, Tue., Mar. 23, 11:30 a.m.
- WMMI Spring Break STEM Camp, Mon.-Fri., Mar. 22-26
- Friends of Fox Run Park, Zoom meeting, Thu., Mar. 25, 6-7:30 p.m.

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Palmer Ridge High holds Snowball "Dance"



On Saturday, Feb. 20, Palmer Ridge High School held its annual Snowball Dance in an unusual venue—Don Breese Stadium. In a year when the COVID-19 pandemic has canceled or altered many events, the Student Council facilitated Snowball Week that started on Feb. 16 with specially themed spirit days where students could wear ski gear, pajamas, and outfits in ski run colors by grade level. The week culminated in an outdoor event that was previously held in the school gymnasium. The "dance" was only for PRHS students from 7 to 8:30 p.m. and the dress code was informal to allow for bundling up. The field at Don Breese Stadium was divided and groups were separated into cohorts. Hot chocolate and games were available, and music blasted from stadium speakers. Students enjoyed the event in 37-degree weather with light snowfall. *Photo by Jackie Burhans*

Lewis-Palmer District 38 Board of Education, Feb. 22

Board discusses impact of COVID-19 and plans for reopening

By Harriet Halbig

The Board of Education of Lewis-Palmer District 38 devoted most of its Feb. 22 meeting to evaluating the impact of COVID-19 on student progress and options for reopening to in-person learning on the secondary level.

Discussion of reopening to in-person learning

Superintendent K.C. Somers called on members of the administration to present information on the impact of the pandemic on the education of the district's students. Grades K through 6 have been engaged in-person full time for all of this school year. This is possible because each class defines its own cohort and contact tracing in the event of positive testing for the virus is relatively straightforward.

On the secondary level, where students change classes frequently and teachers are exposed to many more students a day, tracing becomes much more involved and required quarantines can remove a large number of teachers and students from the classroom. Despite the fact that county health authorities now require a 10-day rather than a 14-day quarantine, at times the number of teachers unavailable threatens the ability of schools to function efficiently.

Chief Academic Officer Lori Benton reported on changes in grade distribution in 2019 versus 2020 to demonstrate the impact on student performance at the secondary level during the current hybrid schedule where students are in the classroom two days a week, doing synchronous learning two days a week (attending

class in real time online), and having Flex Fridays where those who need additional help can receive it.

Benton found that the failure rate in 2020 was not much higher than in 2019 with regard to subjects required for graduation. Grades for electives tended to suffer because electives often require more in-person interaction.

The district seeks to ensure that high school students complete the graduation requirements so that they may graduate on time. Flex Fridays are being used to provide any additional help needed to keep students on track.

When asked about testing, Benton said that the district administered a local PSAT test last August to determine the rate of retention of the previous year's teaching. She cautioned that this test is usually done in September or October after students have been back in the classroom. She said that 80 percent of students participated and that those who did not participate deprived the district of data to be used for planning.

National PSAT and ACT tests will be administered in April, but results will not be available until a month or so later. Advanced Placement (AP) tests will be in April and May, but results will not be available until summer, with families receiving the results first.

Referring to a recent survey of parents and students, the respondents by a large margin said that they would prefer a return to in-person learning, while at the same time expressing concern about increased quarantining due to county health requirements. Many said that the current hybrid system is work-

Monument Sanitation District, Feb. 17

District may refuse town's TENORM treatment wastewater

By Allison Robenstein and Lisa Hatfield

At the Feb. 17 meeting, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board discussed creating a contract to stop the town of Monument from sending wastewater containing radium (TENORM) to the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF), of which MSD is one-third owner. The board also approved lease agreements for another year, heard engineering reports, and reviewed financial statements.

Note: Reporter Allison Robenstein was able to call in to the meeting, but phone audio quality continues to be incomprehensible. So she also dropped off a recorder to the meeting room to review it to hear what was said. Reporter Lisa Hatfield tried to access the meeting using the Google Meets information posted on the district website but was never admitted to the meeting.

Radium removal from Monument Well 3/9

Background: All Denver and Arapahoe water wells have some level of radionuclides. Naturally occurring radioactive material (NORM) that has been concentrated due to treatment is called technologically enhanced naturally occurring radioactive materials (TENORM). See page 40 of Monument Town Colorado | Documents-On-Demand (documents-on-demand.com).

D38 (Cont. on 2)

MSD (Cont. on 7)