

Snapshots of Our Community

Internship Symposium, Apr. 12



Above: Tri-Lakes area high school students attended an April 12 internship symposium hosted by Monumental Impact at the Grace Best Facility. Jeanette Breton is shown discussing semester work-based internships that are available year-round for area students interested in engineering and technology. Tasha Baker from the Pikes Peak Workforce Center also spoke on getting and keeping a job. *Photo by Mike Hinkle.*

LPHS presents *Drowsy Chaperone*



Above: Students at Lewis-Palmer High School performed the musical, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, on April 17, one of four performances. The live performance was limited to 150 socially distanced and masked attendees in the school auditorium. The performers also wore face masks and the live music provided by the school's orchestra was "piped in" from the band room. The music was remotely synchronized, using only audible cues (no visual cues between the singers and instrumental musicians). *Photo by Steve Pate.*

100+ Women Who Care, Apr. 21



Above: 100+ Women Who Care is committed to contributing \$100 two times a year to local Tri-Lakes charities, which will positively impact the communities by allowing them to give \$20,000 annually. It's a "big impact, without a big commitment." On April 21, the Tri-Lakes chapter met at the Woodmoor Barn to hear presentations and decide which of two nominated groups they would donate to. The charity/nonprofit with the most votes will receive all the money donated from that meeting. It's fast, simple, and amazingly effective. This time, the choice was between the Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance and Wild Blue Cats. Silver Alliance was chosen. The Tri-Lakes Board is, from left, Melinda Reichal, Annette Hagopian, and Cathy Wilcox. Their next meeting is the third Wednesday in October. See www.100womenwhocaretrilakes.com. *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*

Assessing fire danger, Apr. 12



Above: The week of April 12, crews from the North Group, a regional coalition of fire departments, rotated through seven sites from Black Forest to Palmer Lake, comparing notes on typical concerns in each district and strategies assessing various types of Home Ignition Zones. From left, Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District Driver/Engineer Jason Higdon, BFFRPD Lt. Jamal Davis, and Palmer Lake Fire Department Assistant Chief John Vincent discussed the site on Pinecrest Way in Palmer Lake. They used criteria in the Incident Response Pocket Guide to predict fire behavior and size up tactical hazards for structures, and whole streets, for when a wildfire comes. The key is to use "triage" concepts to assess, ultimately, if a particular structure can be safely defended—or not. *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*

MPD info night, Apr. 20



Above: The Monument Police Department held a meeting April 20 to detail its work, explain updates over the last year, and describe how the town pays for the department. From left are Mayor Don Wilson, Town Manager Mike Foreman, Monument Police Chief Sean Hemingway, and Commander Jon Hudson. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

By Allison Robenstein

The Monument Police Department held a meeting April 20 to detail its work, explain updates over the last year, and describe how the town pays for the department.

Monument Police Chief Sean Hemingway was joined by Mayor Don Wilson, Town Manager Mike Foreman, and Commander Jon Hudson, who spoke for over an hour. Twenty or so residents attended the meeting held at Lewis-Palmer High School.

Since coming to Monument, Hemingway has made a number of important changes, although he stressed there are still more to go. The town, comprising 4.6 square miles, is broken into three jurisdictions that are policed 24 hours a day. Each patrol shift is composed of a road commander and two to three officers.

Currently, the average response time for a priority one call, such as an in-progress assault, robbery or stabbing, is just over six minutes. Hemingway hopes his five-year plan will halve that response time. He hopes to have more officers in the department. Hemingway said his near-term goal is to add 10 more people to the 20 who work there now. He also hopes to add staff for training, crime analysis, and compliance.

Adding extra officers requires not

just the personnel but all the associated equipment, too. That includes a body camera, taser, and duty weapon, as well as a patrol vehicle outfitted with lights, sirens, and a computer. Hemingway wants to add procedural updates too, including crime reduction strategies and enhanced officer and supervisor training.

But these cost money. Last year, a ballot question asking town voters to approve a 0.5% sales tax increase to be spent on the Police Department failed. The \$1.4 million in revenues this would have generated could have gone a long way toward Hemingway's goals for the department.

He briefly discussed recent unfunded state mandates, such as Senate Bill 20-217, that require the police to funnel money into these new projects. The Enhanced Law Enforcement Integrity bill requires all local law enforcement agencies to issue body-worn cameras to officers by 2023 and limits use of force tactics. The bill includes \$6 million set aside in the state budget for the 2021-22 budget cycle. This is to be used to offset the cost of such purchases, but it was unclear whether the town would request financial assistance.

The town will hold additional Police Department meetings in the future. For more information, see the town's website, www.townofmonument.org.

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