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



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Issue #243 — Volume 21 Number 5 — Saturday, May 1, 2021

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WHERE TO FIND OFFICIAL COVID INFORMATION
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Local Events

The COVID-19 situation continues to present scheduling challenges for area governance entities and other organizations. 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.

- **Black Forest Arts & Craft Guild sale**, Thu.-Sun, **Apr. 29– May 2**
- **Monument Land Development Code and Zoning Map Update Public Open House**, Tue., **May 11**, 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- **Ready Set Go! - Wildland Fire Prevention/Mitigation Day**, Sat. **May 15**, 9-noon.
- **Friends of Fox Run Park for Holly-Day**, Sat., **May 15**, 11-1 p.m. County Commissioner Holly Williams.
- **Shred Event**, Mon.-Sat., **May 17-22**
- **Colorado Springs Philharmonic Guild Listening Club**, Tue., **May 18**, 2p.m.
- **Art Hop**, Thu., **May 20**, 5-8 p.m.
- **Monumental Impact's Community of Support**, Thu., **May 20**
- **Cherry Creek Crossing Garage Sales**, Sat. **May 22**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **Service in the Parks Day at Palmer Lake**, Sat., **May 22**, 9 a.m.-noon.
- **Memorial Day Ceremony**, Mon., **May 31**, 10 a.m. Monument Cemetery.
- **OCN mailing days**, **June 2-4**. We need your help for an hour or two.
- **MVEA Telephone Town Hall Annual Cooperative Meeting**, Thu., **June 3**, 6 p.m.

In this issue

Due to snow, many of the governmental meetings we customarily cover were postponed past our deadline for this issue. Coverage for those meetings will be included in our June 5 issue.

D38 School District News 1-6
Fire District News 1, 6-10
Monument News 10-14
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Weather, letters, and columns 21-24
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Sandstone Ranch Open Space



Above: Sandstone Ranch Open Space in Larkspur is a 2,038-acre ranch that borders the Pike National Forest. Hikers, cyclists, and those on horseback can experience spectacular views, expansive hay meadows, red rock formations, and wildlife habitat from the 12-mile trail in the eastern portion of the ranch, for non-motorized use only. Two major loop and several shorter loop trails are available to accommodate a variety of users. 9605 S. Perry Park Road. See www.douglas.co.us/dcoutdoors/openspace-properties/sandstone-ranch/sandstone-ranch-trail/. Photo by Lisa Hatfield.

Monument Academy School Board, April 8

COO Herrera resigns; board hears Highway 105 update

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held a special board meeting on April 2 to accept the resignation of Chief Operating Officer (COO) Christianna Herrera. MA held its regular board meeting on April 8, when members got an update on the Highway 105 project and listened to prospective board member presentations.

MA also held special meetings on April 16 and 26 to receive legal advice on a specific legal matter related to policy questions and potential changes related to the passage of new laws. Brad Miller, who serves as MA's lawyer, attended the April 16 meeting while Eric Hall of Sparks Wilson PC, who also serves as the Rocky Mountain Classical Academy lawyer, attended the April 26 meeting. No action was taken after either meeting, with board President Melanie Strop noting that the board was just trying to understand the potential impact of pending legislation and how to protect MA.

COO resigns

The MA board met on March 30 and April 2 in special meetings that went directly into executive sessions to receive legal advice on specific legal matters, to discuss negotiating positions, to advise negotiators, and to discuss personnel matters related to facility financing, charter contract matters, and performance

of school administrators. Attorney Brad Miller confirmed that the meeting would discuss Herrera as well as Principals Charlie Richardson and Julie Seymour.

No action was taken after the March 30 executive session; however, after the April 2 meeting, board Strop announced that Herrera had resigned as of the end of her contract in June. She noted that Herrera would be available to help with the process of choosing her successor. The board unanimously voted to accept her resignation and to declare a vacancy and initiate a process to select her successor. An email was later sent out to the MA community with a personal note from Herrera.

Highway 105 update

The board heard from Cory Beasley, who works with HDR Engineering representing El Paso County, on the Highway 105 road widening project which will impact Monument Academy. He said he was working closely with the school to find some resolution on its concerns. The main objective of the project is to deal with a growing community and increased traffic and to address the morning and afternoon queuing safety issues around MA.

He said he would keep the board aware of next steps as he coordinates with the School Board and with MA Elementary School

MA (Cont. on 2)

*Black Forest Fire/Rescue
Protection District, April 21*

Replacement staff hired; new engine for 2022

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD) board meeting on April 21, the board heard about newly hired personnel, received a presentation for a new apparatus proposal, and discussed the future of an existing apparatus.

Fire Chief PJ Langmaid was excused.

Staffing update

Deputy Chief James Rebitski said the crews conducted the interviews and selected the final six new staff members to replace the six personnel who left over a period of two months to pursue alternative careers. Hopefully, the six new qualified personnel will stick around, and we can keep boosting our numbers and the overtime needed to maintain minimum staffing can be reduced, said Rebitski. The board held an executive session to discuss staffing at the Jan. 20 meeting. See www.ocn.me/v21n2.htm#bffrpd.

Apparatus purchase

Firefighter/Paramedic Brandon Jones, the lead member of the Apparatus Search Committee (a four-

BFFRPD (Cont. on 6)

MA (Cont. from 1)

Principal Richardson. He said he would send a conceptual option for consideration, comments, and input from the board and parents. Beasley said the county is willing to support this option and wants to move the project along and is

looking for a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the school and the county. The MOU would be reviewed by the School Board and the school lawyer and would define the obligations on each side for construction of the circulation plan. He said the goal is to follow up in either the May meeting or a special meeting and get the MOU signed by May.

Principal Richardson cautioned that he did not see getting the MOU signed in the next 30 days because there were too many open questions. He said MA needs to take it slow since the project impacts the ingress and egress to the elementary school and could have a significant impact. He encouraged the board to move deliberately and slowly as the viability of the elementary school is

at stake. Richardson said issues of timing, responsibilities, and funding were to be determined. Funding would come from the county, state and federal levels, the latter of which would add layers of bureaucracy. He said the board needs immediate legal advice from someone who knows property laws and will need to hire someone to supervise the project on MA's behalf.

Richardson noted that the county has seen tremendous growth and that the Knollwood and Highway 105 intersection is already backed up through no fault of MA. He said the church with whom MA shares ingress and egress wants that to go away, which would put all the traffic onto Knollwood Drive. He said eliminating this would be huge but is the church's right. Strop brought up financial concerns, noting that MA was already using its reserve funds and asked if the county could help. Beasley said he would take this under advisement and discuss it internally with his team. Board member Megghan St. Aubyn said that she would like to see a safe solution to the traffic problem and encouraged parents to provide input when they are emailed. The board discussed creating a committee with two board members, a parent, and Richardson.

More information can be found at <http://bit.ly/epc-hwy105>.

Prospective board members

Two MA board positions are open, including that of Strop, who is term limited, and the vacancy that was not filled when Susan Byrd stepped down. The board heard brief pre-

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sentations from the four parent candidates: Lindsay Clinton, Daymen Tiffany, Janae Winkelman, and John Buczkowski. Each candidate spoke about their ties to MA and the community and their backgrounds and the skills and values they would bring to the board.

St. Aubyn laid out the next steps in the board election—candidates' headshots and essays were put on the website at www.monumentacademy.net/school-board/board-members/ along with a link to their answers to a questionnaire. MA held a virtual

candidate forum for the MA community on April 20 and posted a recording at <https://youtu.be/pAgglQ8OgDQ>. Voting will be done electronically, using the My Direct Vote website, and parents will receive an email with an individualized key. If needed, a runoff election will be held on May 3. The two winning candidates will be asked to attend the May 13 meeting as non-voting board members.

Highlights

The following items were highlighted at the board meeting:

- The board reviewed and unanimously approved the 2021-22 budget as presented by Chief Financial Officer Marc Brocklehurst who said he was using a conservative increase of 6% in the per pupil revenue and includes a proposed 5% increase for all staff. The budget will be revised after the October student count.
- The board discussed forming a committee to hire its next COO to include all stakeholders including parents and teachers. Once final

candidates are chosen, the community will have an opportunity to meet them. Board members hope to have someone in place by the end of May.

- Herrera reports that MA had its Colorado Charter School Program (CCSP) visit on April 7 as part of the grant process. She thanked D38 Superintendent K.C. Somers, staff who were part of

the tour, and students who spoke with the Colorado Department of Education representative.

- Herrera spoke about the Education Alliance of Colorado (EAC), a charter advocacy organization, and its meeting with the county Health Department to learn about lines of authority. She said EAC had also been prepared to advocate against

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SB21-182, a state Senate bill on school discipline that has been postponed indefinitely.

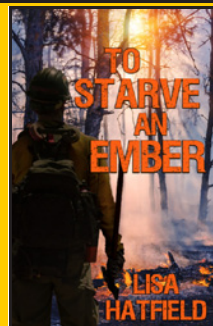
- Herrera said that she thought a distance learning plan would be needed for the coming year, but that MA would not need four platforms. It would need to support those who choose distance learning or are not comfortable returning to school but also to lighten the load on teachers.
- Board member Chris Dole said the end-of-year survey window would open on April 29 and close on May 6. He shared some rewards being considered for kids based on survey participation to improve the response rate. St. Aubyn noted that more participation means a more valid survey and makes it easier to see trends on a year-to-year basis.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 13

Wildfire Novel

coming Oct. 2021

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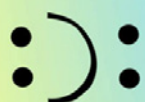

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Pure Romance

By Amy Yocom-Vos

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at 6 p.m. The MA School Board usually meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings may be held in-person and/or via Zoom, which will be streamed to the MA YouTube channel. For more information on how to join the meeting in person or virtually or to submit a public comment, see <https://bit.ly/ma-boe>.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

Lewis-Palmer D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee, April 13

Panel hears reports on Gifted Education, Home School Enrichment Academy

By Harriet Halbig

The District Accountability Advisory Committee received a number of reports at its final meeting of the school year. The meeting was held virtually.

Home School Enrichment Academy

Learning Service Coordinator and Home School Enrichment Academy Principal Davonne Johnson reported on the scope of activities at the Home School Enrichment Academy, located at Grace Best Education Center.

The academy, now in its ninth year, serves 143 students in grades K through 8 each Thursday. Students are offered programs in areas where home-schooled students might otherwise not be able to participate. Among these are drama, music, physical education, and art. In music,



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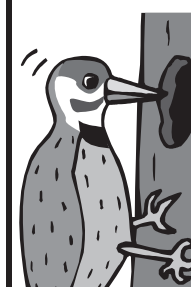
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for example, students receive instruction in guitar and other instruments, and there is a choir. Field trips are also offered.

Programs for students in grades 6 through 8 were recently added. As yet there is no high school option.

Beginning in the 2021-22 school year, a second day will be added, with a different group of students for each day.

Melissa Gibson Steiner is the new principal of the Home School Enrichment Academy following Johnson's selection as principal of Lewis-Palmer Elementary School.

Grace Best Master Plan

During his update, Superintendent K.C. Somers reported on progress on the Grace Best Facility Master Plan. A detailed report was presented to the Board of Education at its April 6 work session. Information can be found on the website lewispalmer.org/gracebestplan.

A steering committee of 42 including community members, district staff, teachers, and parents has met three times. A community survey received 576 responses with opinions on the best use of the facility. Many of the respondents either attended school at the facility or had children who did so.

The top two preferred uses of the building are for Career and Technical Education or as a flex space that could be used in a number of ways by the district and community. The current users of the space, including the Home School Enrichment Academy, Bearbotics, the Transitions Program, and storage of some district materials such as science kits, would not be displaced.

Community input is encouraged.

Representatives of Anser Advisory and Co-operative Strategies presented the report. Acting as owners-representatives, they are coordinating all meetings and collection of bids for future work. It is hoped that construction could begin over the summer if approved.

Please follow the website for updates.

Schneider Electric energy audit

Representatives of Schneider Electric reported on progress in their investment grade audit of district energy use. Somers reported briefly on this information.

Schneider Electric has surveyed district staff and others on their concerns. Among these were flickering lights and air quality.

Some proposals include replacing all lights with LEDs, adding security vestibules at Lewis-Palmer Elementary and Prairie Winds Elementary, and adding walls at those schools to make it possible to lock down classrooms.

A new building automation system would allow electrical outlets to be shut down completely to avoid a slow use of electricity by computers and other electronics.

Air quality could be improved at Lewis-Palmer Middle School by including a new cooling system along with a new boiler.

Schneider representatives said that some funding could be provided by a state BEST grant for the boiler and federal funds to upgrade air

circulation.

Their report also included a study of facility use. All current facilities are being used at 80 to

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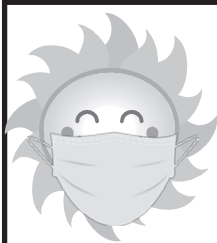
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100 percent capacity. As a result, it was recommended that the current modular classrooms be removed for energy savings and the safety of students. This decision will be made at the May meeting of the Board of Education.

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Somers commented that the expected increase in student population that prompted acquisition of the modulars has not materialized. The lease of the facilities is on a month-to-month basis, so removal would not prompt a penalty.

Other features of Somers' update included an award for a Best Community for Music Education from the National Association of Music Merchants, the hiring of Kathleen Overton as the district's new chief financial officer, and the mandate of mask use until the end of the school year. Graduations will be held on May 28 at UC Health stadium, at 9 a.m. for Palmer Ridge High School and 1 p.m. for Lewis-Palmer High School.

Somers also announced the retirement of Chief Academic Officer Lori Benton. He expressed appreciation for her years of service to the district.

Legislative update

Board of Education Liaison Tiffiney Upchurch reported on a number of legislative bills under consideration. These include bills that would prevent misuse of the Safe2Tell system, a suicide prevention act which has been signed, a school finance bill to be voted on May 26, and restoration of some per pupil funding. An increase in funding for special education would be supported with funding from marijuana sales.

Gifted Education Leadership Team

Benton presented her annual report on the activities of the Gifted Education Leadership Team, which meets monthly. Its duties include identification of students who would benefit from services and tracking of their progress. Each student is provided with an individual learning

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At the end of May, after 23 years in Monument, Expectations Salon, Spa & Boutique is closing its doors. I am very thankful for the loyal patronage and friendship of my many customers. If you have an unexpired gift certificate, please redeem it before the end of May.

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Maria, contact her at
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plan that is monitored by staff and parents.

The activities of the team are evaluated by the state every four years. The last assessment, in 2019, received a perfect score for the district.

Benton pointed out that when viewing the percentage of students under a gifted/talented program, the elementary grades are underrepresented because the initial identification of students is made in third grade.

Benton reported that gifted education is underfunded by the state and the district makes a significant investment from local funds for this purpose.

Universal Improvement Plan update

Assessment Coordinator Michael Brom reported on the district's Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) and those of the individual schools.

In past years, the committee considered each plan at length during its meetings. Beginning last year, plans were assigned to individual members for discussion. Brom reported a notable decline in achievement in math because of the school closure due to COVID-19. He said that assessments were performed in the fall and will be given again in May to measure improvement.

The PSAT and SAT tests will be given in mid-April with results available in June.

Three subgroups targeted for improvement are:

- Students with disabilities in math and reading.
- Middle school students in reading.
- K-3 students with significant reading deficiencies; 70% are reading up to grade level.

The committee voted to approve the UIPs for submission to the state Department of Education.

Kelly Bane was elected as the new co-chair of the committee, with Christy Milks continuing for another year.

The Lewis-Palmer D38 District Accountability Advisory Committee meets six times per year. This was the final meeting of this school year.

*Harriet Halbig can be reached at
harriethalbig@ocn.me.*

BFFRPD (Cont. from 1)

member team), presented the board with an apparatus proposal and said the following:

- The goal was to build an engine that would work for the community and that requires a 1,500-gallon-per-minute pump with a 750-gallon tank water capacity.
- The request for proposals the district received in late 2020 were so far above the mark in cost that the committee decided to jump on a proposal that had been dropped by another district for significantly less cost.
- A two-wheel-drive Pierce Enforcer Pumper will provide a lower engine height and avoid further back and knee injuries to the crews.
- Front Range Fire Apparatus of Frederick, Colo., proposed the apparatus could be built

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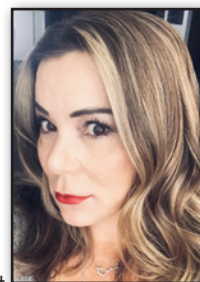
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within about 12-15 months for a total cost of \$631,554.

Rebitski said the team volunteered to research the apparatus, and he was not part of the committee. Jones and the team worked long hours to figure out the specifications and find the right engine—this rig will last a long time—and they have done a tremendous job, said Rebitski.

Treasurer Jack Hinton said 1st National Bank has offered a 10-year fixed rate loan at 3.5%. See www.ocn.me/v21n4.htm#bfffprpd.

The board unanimously approved the production and purchase of the new apparatus.

Vehicle update

Rebitski said the following:

- The custom designed 2019 Spartan engine was driven to SVI Trucks, Fort Collins, for a two-day inspection to find a resolution to the pump engagement issue.
- SVI stated that the engagement issue is quite normal for four-wheel-drive vehicles due to the mechanisms being operated through the transfer case.
- After a conference call with the Darley engineers while the Spartan was on the lift at SVI, it was determined that the pump engagement issue was a result of the gears not blending and

moving too slowly.

- The engineers at Darley in the past have had the exact opposite problem and are interested in observing the engagement issue in person.
- Chief of Operations Capt. William Kraus also visited SVI when the inspection was complete and is now aware of the fix. Kraus has instructed the drivers to increase the revolutions per minute from 800 to 850 rpm and by tapping on the gas to get to 850 rpm, the gears slip right in and the engagement issue is resolved.

Rebitski said that at a cost to the district, SVI confirmed during the visit that the four-wheel-drive chassis could be replaced with a two-wheel-drive chassis to lower the Spartan engine by 8.5 inches, allowing easier access to the hose bed. The process is estimated to take about four to six weeks, and SVI is confident the four-wheel-drive chassis would eventually be purchased by another department and BFFRPD could recoup some of the cost. See www.ocn.me/v21n4.htm#bfffprpd.

Hinton said that before the board can approve the chassis replacement on the Spartan, the board would need to know the total cost. He recommended using

funds from the Capital Improvement Fund to pay for the chassis replacement.

Rebitski said he would request “hard numbers” from the SVI president for the two-wheel-drive chassis conversion on the Spartan and get the ball rolling.

Training update

Rebitski said the recently hired staff will begin an aggressive hard-and-heavy three-week mini training academy on April 26 to understand the workings of BFFRPD, to include physical training, fire-fighting skills and daily testing.

He also said:

- Axis Business Technologies has installed a Samsung Interactive Display digital canvas with an audio sound bar and surround speakers in the training room. The screen replaces the old pull-down screen and white board.
- The streamlined learning system can pair computers, laptops, and smartphones and

will provide greater access to digital study resources and meet the demands of modern education.

- The district is excited to incorporate this state-of-the-art technology into the BFFRPD training programs.
- As the district continues to grow and hire personnel, the

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goal is to eventually hold a sixteen-week fire academy at BFFRPD.

- Manitou Springs Fire Department used the BFFRPD training facility for a successful firefighter academy in April.

Chief's report

Rebitski said the following:

- An under-sink plumbing failure caused a major water leak at Station 2 during an evening in April around 8 p.m. Operations were not affected and Servpro assisted with the clean-up within 40 minutes to mitigate the problem. Dry-wall repairs will be made by Servpro, and the plumbing issue was corrected the next morning. Insurance is covering the cost.
- He is working with the Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) to develop new plans for commercial construction to find water solutions for fire code compliance. The district hopes to present the solutions to the board in May, and then the requirements will be posted on the district website.
- Flying Horse North is now able to provide a fire hydrant off its 8-inch main at Allen Ranch Road. The Pikes Peak Regional Building Department is aware that the hydrant has yet to be tested and approved by BFFRPD.
- The district is holding strong to a commitment to maintaining a high level of water in new construction areas, and developers are now approaching the district with their water plans.
- BFFRPD provides free fire mitigation inspections for existing homeowners and new construction. Insurance companies are starting to ask for inspections and proof of 30 feet of defensible space around properties.

Exclusion process

Rebitski said Langmaid and the BFFRPD legal counsel had met with new Fire Chief Randy Royal of CSFD and the City of Colorado Springs legal counsel to discuss the next phase of exclusions. The next phase plans to exclude the remaining municipal parcels west of Black Forest Road but not the ones that are unincorporated and solely receiving services from BFFRPD. The joint plan and resolution for board approval is expected at the May regular board meeting, said Rebitski. See www.ocn.me/v20n8.htm#bffrpd and www.ocn.me/v21n2.htm#bffrpd.

Annexation looming

Rebitski said El Paso County and the City of Colorado Springs expect vast amounts of the BFFRPD current service area to be annexed to Colorado Springs as part of its master plan in the coming decades.

Financial update

Treasurer Jack Hinton said the following:

- The district has \$2.083 million in the bank.

- \$235,000 in the Emergency Reserve Fund.
- \$249,000 in the Capital Reserve Fund.
- \$94,000 in the TABOR account, retaining 3% of the budget as required by law.
- Liability and workers compensation was the biggest expense in March.
- Overtime remains high and will adjust in time as the new hires come on board.
- Fuel costs have skyrocketed, and the power loss during the blizzard incurred an extra fuel cost to run the generator.
- The district is currently operating without an accountant.

Hinton confirmed during public comments that the administrative assistant position was upgraded to administrative officer with a realignment of duties to absorb three separate positions. The administrative officer position now incorporates the accounting position and has a higher pay scale, but the elimination of three other positions resulted in a cost savings, said Hinton. The new administrative officer is undergoing training now and will start full-time in June.

The board unanimously accepted the financial re-

port as presented.

Note: Copies of the monthly financial reports have not been made available to OCN in 2021.

Praise for former board member

Black Forest resident Linda Smith requested the board minutes recognize the achievement of the former BFFRPD board Treasurer Jayme McConnellogue on her recent promotion to deputy fire chief of the CSFD. Smith said McConnellogue spoke out and insisted on financial transparency for the district after the 2013 Black Forest Fire before becoming board treasurer. McConnellogue now holds the highest office ever held by a female within CSFD.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Meetings are usually held at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at BFFRPD Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for May 19 at 7 p.m. For Zoom meeting joining instructions, updates and minutes, visit www.bffire.org.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.me.

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, March 29 and April 20

Interim fire chief sworn in; FLSA dispute continues

By Allison Robenstein

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District met March 29 for a special meeting to extend an offer to Warren Jones, Ph.D. for the interim fire chief position. During the April 20 regular monthly meeting,

Jones was sworn in along with two new paramedics.

Swearing in ceremony

Paramedics George Gaugesen and Cory Trottier were sworn in just before Jones took the oath of office. He will replace Vinny Burns, who retired after 40 years of

fire service.

Jones began his career as a firefighter for the Poudre Fire Authority in Fort Collins in 1977. He served in a variety of positions, ultimately becoming battalion chief. He served as fire chief for the Evans Fire Protection District in Evans, Colo., for eight years. Jones holds three degrees, all from Colorado State University: a bachelor of arts degree in Education, a master of arts in Political Science, and a doctorate in Education and Human Resources.

Burns thanked the community for its support through the years. The district was formally started in 1981 after Donald Wescott, a Colorado Springs firefighter, was killed in the line of duty. "We've come a long way baby," said Burns, noting how proud he has been to serve with his staff and volunteers. Burns said he is planning to travel and see family.

Secretary Larry Schwarz said to Burns, "I've known you for 27 years and fought



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fires alongside of you. Thank you from all of El Paso County.”

2020 audit

At the April 20 meeting, Tom Mistare from Hoelt-ing and Co. presented the 2020 audit to the board, saying it presented fairly. Though Mistare said the pandemic caused his team to work re-motely, he gave an unmodified, clean opinion of the district’s financials.

As with his review last year, he suggested a segregation of duties as part of a more robust in-ternal control.

FLSA audit almost complete

District counsel Michelle Ferguson said the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) audit was almost complete in March, but then the board considered including wildland fire reimburse-ments. After an FLSA audit for past payroll, the district realized there were pay-

ment discrepancies. Ferguson said that without including the reimbursements, employees were owed \$12,000 in total. If reimbursements are added in, the employees are owed a total closer to \$27,000.

Chairman Mark Gunderman confirmed the board’s philosophy doesn’t change regarding paying for unpaid payroll. He confirmed that al-though payroll had been processed in March, no payments had gone to employees. See www.ocn.me/v21n4.htm#dwfpd.

Schwarz asked if employees will be notified of the extra pay so they can be pre-pared for the associated taxes. Since

Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich is sending letters to all those who should expect reimbursements, the board directed her to tell staff how to change their tax status and the time frame for completing the change.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

If the meeting is held in person, it will be at Sta-tion 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. For a virtual meet-ing, the phone number is 669-900-9128, and the meeting code is 980 378 2073. Meetings are usually on the third Tuesday of each month at 7

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www.townofmonument.org/478/Land-Development-Code-Project

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PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE:

MAY 11, 2021
Public Open House @ Monument Town Hall 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

MAY 12, 2021
Monument Planning Commission Public Hearing @ Monument Town Hall 6:00 p.m.

JUNE 7, 2021
Monument Board of Trustees Public Hearing @ Monument Town Hall 6:30 p.m.

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Please Contact:
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Town of Monument Planning Department
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Lewis-Palmer School District 38’s team of dedicated professionals make a difference every day for our students, families, and community. The team members listed below are retiring from public education this year. Please join us in recognizing the significant contributions each one of them has made in improving our students’ futures.

- Lori Benton, D38 Chief Academic Officer

Lashelle Brown, Health Clerk, PRHS

Kim Cona, Second Grade Teacher, PWES

Mike Diamond, Business Teacher, LPHS

Teri Diamond, Resource Teacher, LPMS

Kathryn Holley, Foreign Language Teacher, LPHS

Laura Johnson, D38 Occupational Therapist

Stephanie Johnson, Language, Culture, Equity Coordinator

Monica Kaler, Fourth Grade Teacher, LPES

Teale Kocher, D38 Personnel Manager

Jill Matheson, Resource Teacher, LPMS

Dewayne Mayo, Technology Teacher, LPMS

- Maggie Mechtly, GT Facilitator, RKES

Anastasia Melzer, GT Facilitator, PWES

Sue Normile, Resource Teacher, LPMS

Terri Owens, Resource Teacher, LPMS

Peggy Pitt, D38 Accounting Technician

Phyllis Robinette, Second Grade Teacher, PLES

Roy Saye, Media Productions, PRHS

Dena Sikole, D38 Adapted P.E.

Jenafer Snyder, Intervention, RKES

Mark Swanson, Social Studies Teacher, LPHS

Kathy Thirkell, Math Teacher, LPHS

Susan Voyzey, Language Arts Teacher, LPMS

p.m. The next Donald Wescott Fire District Popovich at 719-488-8680 or see www.wescottfire.org.

Correction

In our March 2021 issue, OCN reported that only one candidate had been interviewed for the interim

fire chief position. In fact, two candidates were interviewed. After the initial round of interviews, one candidate withdrew his name from consideration. OCN regrets the er-

ror.

Allison Robenstein
can be contacted at
allisonrobenstein@ocn.me

Monument Board of Trustees, April 5

Home rule a possibility for Monument; land uses pass

By Allison Robenstein

During the April 5 Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting, the board heard a presentation from Town Attorney Andrew Richie on home rule. Three police officers were sworn in and ordinances were hit and miss in terms of approval. The board received an I-25 Gap Project update, too.

Home rule process

Richie explained to the board that Monument is currently a statutory town regarding local government methods. In Colorado, municipalities default to statutory rule, which limits powers to only those granted by state statutes. Home rule allows towns to create legislation for local concerns.

Richie said the process toward

home rule is calendar driven and relies heavily on residents' support. Voters would have to elect a charter commission made of nine to 21 residents who would write a new town charter. This would supersede any non-regulated concerns, but state laws will always weigh heavier than the charter. The charter may not supersede state laws.

Once elected, the charter commission has 180 days to submit a charter. The BOT would then publish it and give notice of an election. Some examples of the flexibility allowed within the charter include:

- Identifying the form of government and clarification of powers for the mayor, board members, and town manager.

- Categorizing procedures for elections and setting election dates.
- Modifying or eliminating term limits for mayor and the board.
- Creating additional taxes including entertainment, tourism, or lodging taxes.
- Revising budget procedures.

Richie cautioned that restrictive or poorly written charters can be difficult to live with and even more difficult to change, because they require a vote of the residents. Richie said home rule may give the town more governmental powers than some residents think is necessary.

Richie said most towns that choose this form of government see the biggest areas of change in finan-

cial wellbeing and community development. It also allows for more flexibility in land use and zoning.

Resident Nancy Swearingin said, "I'm ambivalent either way," regarding the possible change. She suggested government entities that have become home rule towns present the benefits of changing their governmental system brought to their communities.

The costs for adopting home rule can be prohibitive. Town Manager Mike Foreman said elections can cost upwards of \$15,000 annually.

Most of the trustees were interested in moving forward with the year-long process. It will be discussed further during a June BOT retreat.

Town Clerk Laura Hogan suggested those interested in learning more can sign up for the town's monthly newsletter at townofmonument.org.

Richie suggested residents look at the Colorado Municipal League website, www.cml.org, for more information on home rule in general.

Police promotions

Chase Dukes, Paul Nyman, and Samuel Yanez were sworn in as the newest officers in the Police Department. Chief Sean Hemingway introduced the new officers. Dukes is a Palmer Ridge High School graduate and a native of the area. Nyman worked for 21 years in health-care and was "inspired to change careers to serve this community in a different way," said Hemingway. Yanez served in the military for 25 years and is a certified handgun instructor.

Staff to review revenue excesses and fees

Two ordinances that were requested for approval were sent back to the staff. The first was a request to put an issue onto the November election ballot asking voters to permanently approve the town retaining all revenues including excess.

The Colorado Taxpayers Bill of Rights, or TABOR, limits the amount of excess revenue a municipality may keep and requires it to give excess back to the taxpayers unless the voters allow the town to keep the extra money. Local voters may retain control over revenue by voting against the "statutory formula for calculating permissible revenue."

In the past, Monument voters have allowed the town to keep whatever excess revenues it might receive with elections happening every four years. This ordinance is different because it would allow the excess to be kept permanently.

Several trustees were concerned, saying this request is different from those in the past by including the line, "For the year 2021



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Trustee Ron Stephens said the fundamental concept behind TABOR is that excess revenues belong to the people, not government. “It should be returned to the people without this vote,” he said, noting other similar ballot requests have “gone down in flames,” especially if the ballot language is too vague.

Trustee Laurie Clark said she had polled her constituents, noting, “89% have said they don’t want this passed,” and would prefer to receive the money back they paid in taxes.

Swearengin suggested the request needed more discussion and an education campaign for residents so they understand the consequences.

Trustee Mitch LaKind said the verbiage allowing the town to keep excess revenues in perpetuity “shudders me.” He asked why the language had been changed, suggesting the town staff “decided to go against the known formula that works, to take advantage of the citizens’ good nature.” Foreman quickly stepped in, saying that wasn’t the point and instead staff was worried about the excessive election costs. “Staff doesn’t have a position on this,” he said.

Mayor Don Wilson appeared upset that the board packet didn’t include a listing of the years when there had been excess revenues. Foreman said since the budget had been “de-Bruced,” it was impossible to know. Named after TABOR’s author Douglas Bruce, de-Brucing is the elimination of the revenue cap.

The board voted unanimously to postpone the motion for 30 days.

The other ordinance request to be sent back was a request by Planner Debbie Flynn proposing a permitting fee schedule change. The board members seemed genuinely confused about the changes after being told the new schedule didn’t include any fee increases and was intended to provide better customer service by consolidating fees.

For example, final site inspection fees have been broken down as follows:

- \$75 for less than one acre.
- \$125 for one to five acres.
- \$250 for five to 10 acres.
- \$350 for 10 to 50 acres.
- \$600 for anything over 50 acres.

The new, proposed schedule is broken into only two categories: \$350 for zero to 25 acres and \$750 for anything over 25 acres. Flynn said the Housing and Building Association of Colorado Springs approved the fee suggestions. Wilson confirmed with Flynn that the smaller developers would then be subsidizing the larger ones with this fee suggestion. “Correct,” she said.

LaKind said, “That’s a massive increase.” There were no comparisons to other similarly sized municipalities, so a motion to send the resolution back to staff was unanimously approved.

I-25 South Gap update

Larry Quirk, project engineer for the South Gap project, said the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) project is moving along well. The full project should be complete by November 2022.

The County Line Road Bridge between El Paso and Douglas counties will be expanded this year to accommodate one through lane and one turn lane in each direction. The bridge will be rebuilt in phases: outside lanes will be built, then the existing bridge circa 1964 will be demolished and rebuilt. There will be a six-week closure of the northbound on and off ramps at the County Line Road exit, but Quirk didn’t specify dates.

For more information, go to I-25 South Gap: Monument to Castle Rock — Colorado Department of Transportation (codot.gov) or text I25Gap to 21000.

Elite Cranes rezone approved

Flynn presented the rezone and preliminary/final planned development site plan for Elite Cranes. The two-acre property located at 940 Synthes Ave. had previously been zoned Planned Industrial. A 5,000-square-foot shop and an outdoor storage yard will be built if approved. The crane rental business owned by Sam and Stacie Lowry was unanimously approved.

Monument Industrial Park development moving forward

The final plat for the Monument Industrial Park was approved. The development will be located just north of Valero at 1310 W. Baptist Road along I-25. Trustee Jim Romanello was in the meeting remotely and his vote could not be heard, so Wilson took that as an abstention. The final vote was 6-0-1.

Village at Jackson Creek comes back to the board

The Preliminary Planned Development Site Plan and rezone for the Village at Jackson Creek was unanimously approved. Foreman spoke briefly, telling the board he addressed the Planning Commission board members to apologize for inappropriate language that had been used in a rebuttal of their remarks regarding this development. He also noted Larry Manning is no longer employed as the planning

director. Foreman said Richie and he would attend planning meetings until a new director is hired.

The board had heard this request before but sent it back to the Planning Commission for further review. Brett Behnke of Creekside Developers is requesting the rezone for a “live/work/play” development to include commercial and residential land uses. Behnke said after meeting with the Planning Commission that he has made the following changes according to their requests:

- Revised the proposal to include 20 residential units per acre, down from the previous 32 housing units/acre.
- The maximum building height for buildings within 600 feet of I-25 will be 75 feet, down from 90 feet. Buildings farther than 600 feet from the highway will have a maximum height of 50 feet. The town’s comprehensive plan allows for taller building heights, prompting LaKind to say he has an issue with conditions being set that violate existing regulations.

The request was approved unani-

mously.

New water tank will sit on new land

The board approved the purchase of one-half acre of land to build a secondary water tank. It sits adjacent to land where the town’s existing tank is located. Richie said the land will cost the town \$70,000. Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott said this purchase makes sense because there will be no interruption of water services and low-cost land. It was approved 6-1 with Clark voting against and giving no reason for doing so.

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 pm.

Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

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Monument Planning Commission, April 14

Three projects recommended for approval

By Kate Pangelinan

Monument Planning Commission (PC) Vice Chairman Sean White led the April 14 meeting, making this his first time doing so. Commissioners Bill Lewis, Martin Trujillo, Danny Ours, and Eric Light were also in attendance, along with town staff, including Town Manager Mike Foreman. Foreman will be coming to PC meetings until a new planning director is chosen to fill Larry Manning's role. This is expected to happen sometime in the next three months.

After the PC considered this month's three public hearings and recommendations items, Foreman addressed the commissioners directly, expressing gratitude for what the PC does for their community. He stated that Monument town staff is here to serve the commissioners.

Also, Trujillo volunteered to serve as the PC's new representative on the Board of Adjustments.

The three public hearings and recommendations items for April were: a couple amendments for Sanctuary Pointe Phase 1, the Wolf Business Park Lot 2 Filing No. 2 Final PD Site Plan, and the Monument Dental Clinic Final PD Site

Plan. Motions to approve these proposals for recommendation passed, meaning that each item will now go on to the Board of Trustees (BOT) with the PC's blessing. A summary of discussion points mentioned during the meeting will also be sent to the BOT for its consideration.

Further information about all projects discussed by the PC can be found in the meeting packets located at monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com. This site is also a good resource for accessing approved meeting minutes, as well as the agendas for upcoming meetings. This latest PC meeting, along with many older ones, can be found recorded on the Town of Monument's YouTube channel at youtube.com/channel/UCdFLo8Uc-qZfFdkio5jT6GDA. Citizens may find it easier to search for "Town of Monument" or "Monument Planning Commission" in YouTube's search bar.

According to the town's website, Planning staff can be contacted by calling 719-481-2954 or sending an email to planning@tomgov.org.

Sanctuary Pointe Phase 1 Final PD Site plan and Sketch Plan
 Some facts about the Sanctuary



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Grand Reopening!

Pointe project, according to presentations from Planner Debbie Flynn and Andrea Barlow of NES Inc., along with the meeting packet and discussions during the meeting:

- The area involved is 5.11 acres, within Phase 1 of the Sanctuary Pointe development.
- Originally, a church was expected to be built on this property. Now, though, the diocese no longer intends to build this church. Since there won't be one large building there anymore, the developers want to increase the property's density capacity from 600 units to 612 units, allowing for 12 more houses. These 12 houses would be built in a cul-de-sac off of Sanctuary Rim Drive.
- This proposal has been presented to the public multiple times, first in January 2021 when 15 houses were being suggested by the developers, and then in February 2021. The project has been tweaked somewhat to address citizens' concerns. Full details can be found online, but some examples include adding a trail between Lot 8 and Lot 9 and adjusting lot size to better match the surrounding area.
- Barlow listed previously established citizen concerns about this proposal, including loss of trees, increased traffic, and the possibility that houses will be too dense in the area, and explained why the applicant disagrees with these assessments.
- The applicant is listed as "NES Inc." in the packet, and the property owner is listed as "Elite Properties of America Inc."

There were multiple speakers during the designated Public Comment period. Citizens came representing their neighborhood, each intending to speak on a different subject. Some of their listed points included concerns about the trees, housing density, and possible accidents around the property entrance, as well as expressions of love for their community. It was suggested that seven or eight homes in this area might be considered "reasonable." The PC was encouraged not to recommend this project for approval as it currently stands. It was also noted that Classic Homes wouldn't give a

price for buying the property, but that a nearby neighborhood may be interested in purchasing it.

Following discussion, the PC approved the project for recommendation to the BOT 4-1, with Trujillo voting against.

**Wolf Business Park, Lot 2
Filing No. 2 – Final PD
Site Plan**

Some facts about this project, according to Flynn's presentation, the meeting packet, and discussions during the meeting:

- This is a 1.39-acre property located at 2168 Wolf Court.
- The goal is to build a 12,500-square-foot building meant for office/warehouse use, plus a "fenced outdoor storage yard, required parking, lighting and landscaping."
- The same fencing used

for the Tri-Lakes Collision development is expected to be used here.

- The space isn't being constructed with any particular business in mind; the thought is that if the facilities are built, someone will come for them.
- Lisa Peters and Robert Green were present to answer questions about this development.
- The applicant is listed as "Hammers Construction" in the packet, and the property owner is listed as "David Wolf."

No citizens spoke during the Public Comment period. The project was approved for recommendation unanimously, 5-0.

**Monument Dental Clinic
Final PD Site Plan**

Some facts about this project, according to Flynn's

presentation, the meeting packet, and discussions during the meeting:

- This development is expected to feature a 3,290-square-foot dental clinic, renderings of which can be found online, along with "required parking, lighting, and landscaping."
- The site size is 0.78 acres located at 745 W. Baptist Road, on Lot 3 of Monument Ridge.
- Darendia Marvin attended the meeting to answer any questions.
- This is a new dental care facility, not a relocation of an existing practice.
- The applicant is listed as "WMG Development" in the packet, and the property owner is listed as "WMG Development LLC."

This project was approved for recommendation to the

BOT unanimously, 5-0, following another uneventful Public Comment session.

For the time being, the public will be able to attend PC meetings through Webex software. Citizens are also afforded the option of calling in to listen to meetings, and if alternate accommodations are needed, the town website states, "Individuals without the ability to participate by phone or computer may contact Drew Anderson at danderson@tomgov.org or 719-396-0842." Further information: <http://www.townofmonument.org/meetings/>. The next PC meeting is expected to be held on May 12.

Kate Pangelinan can be reached at katepangelinan@ocn.me.



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Monument Board of Trustees, April 19

Board repeals emergency pandemic declaration

By Allison Robenstein

On April 19, the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) voted to repeal the emergency pandemic declaration it had approved in March 2020. A water-related contract was approved, and two special workshops were set for May 3 and 17.

Trustee Jim Romanello was noted absent.

COVID-19 pandemic resolution repealed

In March 2020, just as the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning, the BOT declared a local disaster for the town. This allowed for the recovery of any financial aid and assistance and provided the town manager with special authorities, including the ability to “appropriate and expend funds, execute contracts, authorize acquisition of goods and services without the strict compliance with the town’s procurement regulations.”

The board discussed repealing this resolution during its March 15 meeting. Town Attorney Andrew Richey said the review demonstrated the town has used relatively few of the powers entrusted within the resolution. See Vol. 21 No. 4 - April 3, 2021 (ocn.me).

The repeal does not dissuade local businesses from taking pan-

demetic precautions as they see fit. The possibility of trustees attending meetings remotely may still be an option if the board passes the necessary resolutions. Trustee Ron Stephens asked about grant availability should the repeal be approved. Town Manager Mike Foreman said grants are not affected by this change.

With few questions from the board members, the request passed 6-0.

Water treatment plant 3/9 to get addition

Public Works Director Tom Tharnish asked the board to approve a contract with Lefever Building Systems to supply construction materials for a pre-engineered metal building addition to the 3/9 water treatment plant. This portion of the building will be used as a laboratory.

This project is part of the \$22 million bond. The intent is to allow the contractor to procure the materials. Five companies were interested during the request for proposal process, three considered bidding, but only Lefever ended up bidding on the project.

Mayor Don Wilson asked if this building expansion would encompass office space too, but Tharnish

said offices will now be in the Code One building at 259 Beacon Lite Road purchased in February. See Vol. 21 No. 3 - March 6, 2021 (ocn.me).

The request was approved unanimously.

Public comments

A resident suggested to the board that Monument become a sanctuary city from more government overreach. Although he didn’t specify from what the town should seek refuge status, he listed the Second Amendment, mask mandates, and the Equality Act.

Other important notes

There will be two public workshops held in May. On May 3, the board and the Planning Commission will hold a joint workshop at 5:30 p.m. before the regular BOT meeting. On May 17, the BOT will discuss fee schedule revisions, TABOR issues, and home rule initiation. That meeting is also scheduled for 5:30 p.m. before the regular board meeting.

Foreman said the town will have several surveys available in the next few months, including one for police funding and another regarding home rule. Look for those on the town’s website, <http://www.townofmonument.org>.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

The Monument Board of Trustees usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 3. Call 719-884-8014 or see www.townofmonument.org for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for BOT or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutesondemand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

Allison Robenstein

can be reached at

allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, April 8 and 22

Board continues to seek fair plan for street parking

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees (PLBOT) met three times in April. On April 8, the first of two regular meetings was held. On April 22, the board held both a workshop meeting and the second regular meeting.

In April, the board returned to its efforts to design a comprehensive and fair policy governing parking on town streets, this time

taking into consideration the feedback from residents in response to the plan presented by town staff at its meeting in March. Water issues were also on the agenda, with the board hearing a report on the status of the town’s residential wells and debating how to address the low water level in Palmer Lake. The board debated updating the town’s noise

PLBOT (Cont. on 16)

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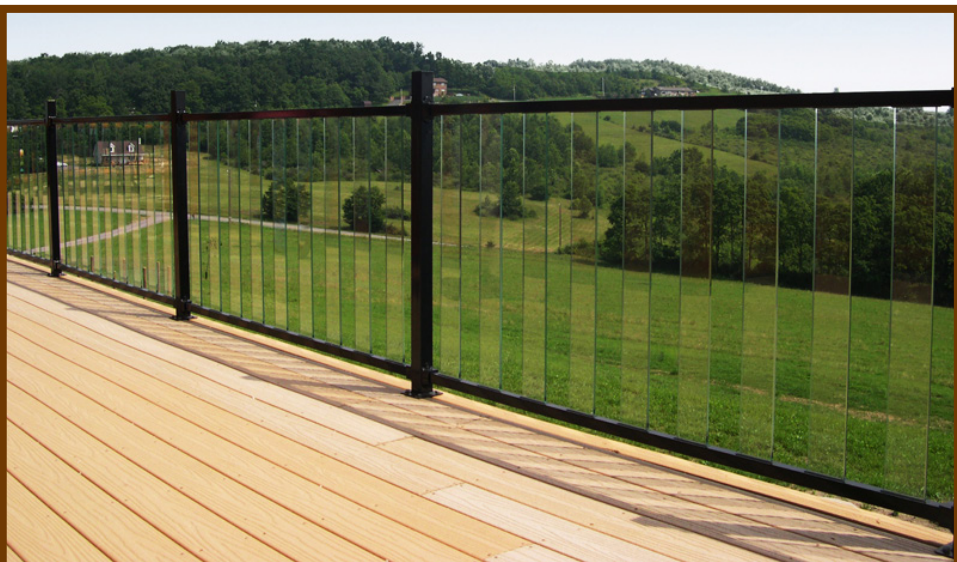


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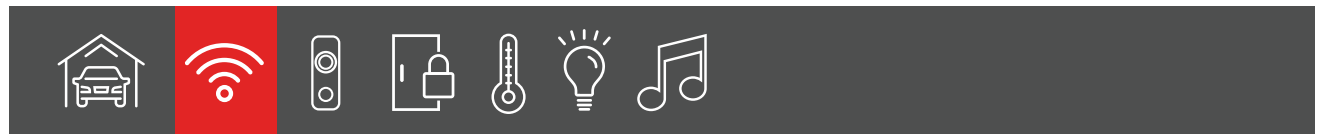
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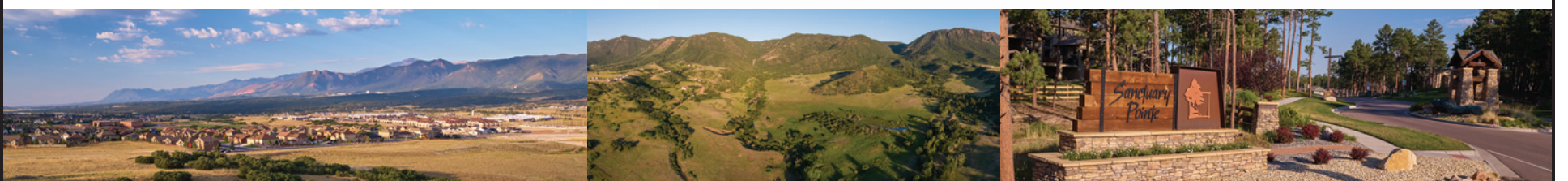
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PLBOT (Cont. from 14)

ordinance and heard a presentation about planning for fireworks on the Fourth of July. The board updated the town's road standards and its fire, plumbing and electrical codes.

Two motions on street parking approved

At its last meeting in March, the board heard a presentation from town staff proposing 16 streets where parking would be allowed. Mayor Bill Bass said he supported staff's suggestions but directed them to develop a map documenting where proposed parking was allowed, and to publish that map on the town's website. He also asked for feedback from the community.

In April, the board reviewed feedback from

residents in its workshop meeting and then voted to approve two motions concerning parking in its regular meeting.

At the workshop meeting, Bass began the discussion by saying the street parking policy changes were "across the board" and applied to residents and non-residents. He said street parking had been challenging for the last year, especially when it came to the issue of how residents' guests could park legally.

In response to Bass's remarks, a town resident said he objected to visitors' disregard for speed limits, crosswalks, and no parking signs, and said he had observed them racing to find scarce parking.

Trustee Karen Stuth said she felt the staff's deci-

sions about where to allow parking said "some neighborhoods are not as important as others."

Town Administrator Dawn Collins reviewed the previous discussions on the topic, reminding the board that the staff was not attempting to punish some and privilege others, but the staff's decisions were made entirely on the design of each street. Collins said the staff had reviewed residents' feedback and was open to further discussion. She suggested allowing street parking near businesses but not on residential streets but added often there was no buffer area between commercial and residential areas.

Resident Nikki McDonald, who previously served as the town's mayor, said

she hoped last year was unusually challenging due to a high number of visitors. She suggested posting no parking signs only where parking was obviously a problem and seeing if there is still a problem in future.

A resident who said she was new to Palmer Lake said she did not want to see residential streets opened to visitor parking due to safety concerns. Another resident asked the board "not to screw it up anymore," adding that he blamed "vocal people coming in to turn this into the big city they moved away from."

At the regular meeting on April 22, Trustee Darin Dawson opened the discussion by requesting clearer signs indicating where the town did want visitors to park. Collins pointed out

that some of those signs were already in place and the many no parking signs were in response to an emergency. Bass agreed the town should clearly mark areas where parking was allowed.

Stuth said she believed COVID-19 restrictions were being removed and recommended waiting to see what effect that would have on street parking.

Collins asked the board for direction on whether to remove or retain signs specifying no parking for non-residents.

Jeff Hulsmann, owner of O'Malley's Steak Pub, said "Take the damn signs down please."

After the discussion, Stuth moved to direct the town staff and Town Attorney Matthew Krob to draft a resolution removing all signs specifying no parking except for residents. The board voted unanimously in favor of the motion. Krob said the motion returned the town "to square one" regarding parking. Collins asked how the board wanted to handle areas where parking caused problems.

Stuth made a second motion to let the town staff make decisions on parking, and the board voted unanimously in favor of the resolution.

Consultant reports on residential wells

At the April 8 regular meeting, Dave Frisch of GMS Inc. gave the board the results of his study of residential wells within the town limits.

Frisch said he identified 151 residential wells, pumping from a total of four aquifers underneath the town.

Trustee Glant Havenar said she estimated 69 of the residential wells require metering and asked Frisch to provide details about metering of residential wells. Frisch answered that metering may be required by the state or by the town, and reporting will vary with some reporting to the state and some to the town. Some of the town's wells were drilled before metering and reporting were required. Frisch recommended that the town require all residential wells to be metered and to report to the town in the future. Bass asked if metering and reporting were currently in the town code and Collins said no.

Bass pointed out that well metering is a common practice and that the town code specified that homeowners with residential wells receive an allocation of water based on their lot size at no charge but should

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be charged for any use beyond their allocation. Frisch said the town was not currently charging for use over allocation, but that the board should enforce that in some way when a mechanism to do so could be designed.

Frisch said that better management of residential wells could allow the town to make up to 1,145 water taps available since the current upper limit on water taps was calculated using only surface water rights.

Resident Matt Stephen asked Frisch to speak to the issue of water table depletion. Frisch said the Denver aquifer was dropping about 16 feet a year in the Palmer Lake area. In other areas the Denver aquifer was dropping 20 feet a year, Frisch said. As the number of wells increases, the likelihood that aquifers will be depleted also increases, Frisch said.

Frisch told the board that there were three possible responses to the depletion of aquifers: not to allow any new residential or commercial development, develop other water resources, which would also require increased costs for infrastructure, or move to a regionalized water distribution system if one is built in the future. All three options would be costly, he said.

Low water level in lake prompts action

At a previous board meeting in March, Collins told the board that the Parks Commission suggested cancelling activities at the lake due to its low water level.

At the April 8 meeting, Frisch said water had been added to the lake from the town's reservoirs two times in the last two months. Frisch said the lake covered about 10 acres, that the maximum the town could add to the lake was 8.4 acre-feet per month, and at that rate he calculated the maximum the town could raise the water level in the lake in a year was 6.7 feet.

Hulsmann commented from a business standpoint that cancelling activities at the lake would be catastrophic since the trails and the lake are "huge draws."

At the April 22 workshop, Bass commented on the higher water level in the lake.

Parks Commission Chair Reid Wiecks told the board that in response to the higher water level, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) had reversed its decision not to stock the lake with fish. Wiecks went on to suggest that, rather than closing the lake, different parts of the lake be dedicated to different activities, for example designating one area for wading and another for fishing. Buoy lines would be used to mark boundaries between areas, he said. The south end of the lake could be used to create a wildlife area and for launching boats, kayaks, and paddle boards.

Wiecks also mentioned that people who park to the west of the lake and cross the railroad tracks to reach the lake are violating the town's agreement with the railroad, and steps will need to be taken to steer them to the bridge. He suggested repairing the existing fence and adding barbed wire.

The board voted unanimously to authorize the Parks Commission to proceed with Wiecks's suggestion, except for adding barbed wire to the fence.



Above: Eagle Scout candidate Jacob Unwin of Boy Scout Troop 9 is recognized with a certificate of appreciation for his work on a wildlife conservation area on the west side of Palmer Lake. From left are Bill Bass, Palmer Lake mayor; Unwin; and Mike Pietsch, Palmer Lakes Parks Commission member. Photo by Jackie Burhans

Noise ordinance reconsidered

At the April 22 workshop, Bass opened discussion of the town's noise ordinance by pointing out that it was difficult to enforce.

Two residents said the ordinance represented the response of the community to a business that hired bands that were too loud and played objectionable music two years ago. Both liked the provision of the ordinance that specified quiet time on weekends.

At the April 22 regular meeting, Police Chief Jason Vanderpool told the board the current ordinance was hard to enforce because the specified decibel level was too low. He suggested raising the maximum decibel level allowed. He said it was easy to enforce the ordinance's quiet time provisions.

Stuth moved to table further discussion of the ordinance until May. The motion was unanimously approved.

Fourth of July fireworks on track to return

Cindy Kuchinsky, director of the Palmer Lake Fireworks Committee, told the board about plans for a "Festival on the Fourth" that would include a fireworks display and asked the board to approve a special event application.

Because there is always some uncertainty about whether fire conditions will allow for fireworks, Kuchinsky said the committee envisioned a festival possibly ending with fireworks.

The committee is seeking sponsors for the event, Kuchinsky said, adding the town web page would have a link enabling donations from residents.

Kuchinsky said safety and security are primary considerations, and the committee has met with Police Chief Vanderpool and Fire Chief McCarthy. AMR will provide two ambulances and two EMTs, and there will be two buses on opposite ends of the lake, she said. Between 50 and 60 security staff are in the plan, as are a beer garden and a concession stand at either end of the lake.

The board voted unanimously to approve the special events permits and to waive the permit

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Standards and codes updated

- The board voted unanimously to update the town’s road standards as required by the town’s storm water ordinance and to align those standards with El Paso County’s standards.
- Ordinance 5-2021 amending the electrical and plumbing codes was approved.

- With McCarthy’s support, the board voted unanimously to approve Ordinance 6-2021 to adopt the 2015 international fire code.

Eagle Scout candidate Jacob Unwin honored

Bass presented Eagle Scout candidate Jacob Unwin of Boy Scout Troop 9 with a certificate of appre-

ciation from the town for the work Unwin did to create a wildlife conservation area on the west side of the lake. Unwin undertook the project to earn his Eagle Scout rank.

The Board of Trustees is scheduled to hold three meetings in May, a regular meeting on May 13 and a workshop and regular meeting on May 27. The workshop will be held

at 5 p.m. and the regular meetings at 6 p.m. All meetings will be at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me. Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, April 12

Cost of water re-use study increases

By James Howald

On April 12, Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) District Manager Jessie Shaffer told the board about increasing costs for the water re-use study in which WWSD is a participant. The board also changed its stance concerning the enforcement of utility easements on the lots bordering on the newly created South Woodmoor Preserve. Finally, the board heard operational reports.

Cost of water re-use study increases

At its Feb. 8 and March 8 meetings, the board discussed joining other water districts in the Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority (PPRWA) and Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) to study the feasibility of receiving return flows of water from Fountain Creek and delivering that

water to WWSD customers.

At the district’s April 12 meeting, Shaffer told the board that the original cost estimate for the water re-use study was low. But the cost estimates received from consultants required for the study were higher than expected, he said, and only eight of the member water districts have decided to participate in the study. Shaffer said the original cost estimate of \$100,000 for the study has been revised upward to about \$130,000.

Shaffer said the study would have two phases. The first phase would identify several sites as potential storage sites, analyze their feasibility, and then identify the top three choices. The second phase would do geotechnical work on the best three sites and refine the cost estimates for those sites. Shaffer

said the expected cost for phase one was \$100,000, and the expected cost for phase two was \$32,000.

The consultant’s costs would be capped at \$80,000, Shaffer said, adding that the participating districts would petition the Arkansas Basin Roundtable and the South Platte Basin Roundtable for funds to complete the study. Shaffer said each of the eight participating water districts was asked to provide \$10,000 to begin the study.

The consensus of the board was to move forward with the study.

District re-evaluates easement policy

At its March 8 meeting, the board considered requesting El Paso County to refuse building permits to residents seeking to build accessory structures over existing utility easements. This was considered because of concerns that residents adjacent to the South Woodmoor Reserve (previously a portion of the Walters family property) who are expanding their lots may encroach on easements.

At its April 12 meeting, the board changed its stance on this issue to a position of neutrality. The district will not make any requests of the county and will rely on existing county policies to ensure there is no infringement on easements, Shaffer said. Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) covenants, to which all residents are subject, will provide a second check, according to Shaffer.

WWSD board President Brian Bush, who is also the president of

the WIA, said he expected covenant enforcement to be taken up at the next WIA meeting.

Highlights of operational reports
Reports from district staff contained the following highlights:

- Upgrades at the South Water Treatment Plant (SWTP) are substantially complete.
- Installation of equipment that saves processing costs by more precise real-time monitoring of phosphorus is nearly complete at the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF).
- El Paso County is replacing a bridge adjacent to the TLW-WTF and is requesting an easement from WWSD to complete the project. The county will hire an appraiser who will decide the value of the easement.
- WWSD has entered into an agreement with JUWI Solar Inc. to allow that company to install a second solar array at Woodmoor Ranch.
- The Chilcott Ditch has opened for the year as of the first week in April.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 10 at 1 p.m. Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of each month at 1 p.m. Meetings are currently held at the Woodmoor Barn Community Center rather than the district office; please see www.woodmoorwater.com or call 488-2525 to verify meeting times and locations.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

*El Paso Board of County Commissioners,
March 30, April 6, 13, and 20*

Cloverleaf development rezoning approval a “win-win”

By Helen Walklett

At its April 13 meeting, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved the rezoning application for the proposed Cloverleaf development northeast of the Higby Road and Jackson Creek Parkway intersection. During April, the commissioners also made decisions relating to the Winsome and Forest Lakes developments.

Cloverleaf rezoning

At its April 13 meeting, the BOCC heard a request by ProTerra Properties LLC to rezone its 37.22-acre Cloverleaf property from RS 20000 (residential suburban) to RS 5000

(residential suburban). The property is the redevelopment part of the sale of the “Walters Open Space” land.

The application was heard by the El Paso County Planning Commission at its March 18 meeting, where the commissioners voted 9-1 to recommend it for approval. The nay vote was in connection to concerns with compatibility with the surrounding area. Several members of the public spoke both for and against the application at the meeting. See <https://www.ocn.me/v21n4.htm#epcpc>.

BOCC (Cont. on 20)

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BOCC (Cont. from 18)

The land proposed for the rezoning is an undeveloped parcel from the Woodmoor Place subdivision, platted in 1972, that was intended to be a golf course but was never developed. The property has been used by residents as open space but has always been privately owned. ProTerra's involvement has directly facilitated a group of neighbors, who formed Woodmoor Open Space Coalition (WOSC), to purchase the rest of the property as permanent public open space.

Andrea Barlow of NES Inc., on behalf of the applicant, said the rezone to RS 5000 would provide a transition from the lower density half-acre residential lots to the west and north and the higher density townhome development to the south and east. She told the commissioners that the developer had made changes to the project following concerns raised at a neighborhood-wide meeting and at a further meeting held with the residents of Leggins Way who are most impacted by the plans.

Tish Norman, director of WOSC, spoke in support of the application, thanking ProTerra for its support and the way in which it had worked with WOSC to get the best possible outcome. She said, "We just see this as a model for all communities to follow because nobody wants homes in their backyard but, when they can negotiate it, it's a win-win for everyone." No one spoke in opposition.

Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez Jr. said, "I greatly appreciate the work that the homeowners and the developer have done on this. That is a great example of how to get things done and do it in a way that benefits everybody because it's always difficult to find a win-win situation." He raised one long-term concern about the water supply but noted that this would be a matter for consideration at the preliminary plan stage.

Commissioner Cami Bremer said, "I am very grateful for developers that are invested in the greater good of the community." Commissioner Carrie Geitner called the partnership "refreshing."

BOCC chair, Commissioner Stan VanderWerf, said, "I think it's really outstanding when

we have a community and the developer working together and ironing out the differences before they come to us. Frankly, it makes our job a whole lot easier and many of you may be aware that not all development applications work out that way."

The commissioners voted 4-0 to approve the rezoning. Commissioner Holly Williams was absent. Bremer said that Williams "deeply regrets not being able to be here today but has no concerns for this which is squarely in her district."

A preliminary plan request for the creation of the 144 single-family residential lot Cloverleaf development is scheduled to be heard by the Planning Commission on May 6. Lots 1-141 would be built on the rezoned land; lots 142, 143, and 144 would be built on two parcels that are separate from the rezoned land under their existing RS 20000 zoning.

Final chance to comment on the draft Master Plan

Citizens have two more opportunities to comment on the county's draft Master Plan at special Planning Commission hearings on May 5 and 26. The intent is that the commission will be in a position to adopt the Master Plan at the end of the second hearing.

The 9 a.m. hearings will be held at Centennial Hall, 200 S. Cascade Ave, Suite 150. In-person attendance is permitted but is highly discouraged. To avoid overcrowding of the hearing room and violation of COVID restrictions, the public is encouraged to participate remotely/online.

To participate remotely, members of the public should email Tracey Garcia at TraceyGarcia@elpasoco.com or contact her at (719) 520-7952 with their name and phone number and also provide any documents they wish to submit.

The hearing can be watched live at <https://www.elpasoco.com/news-information-channel>. Staff will also be monitoring the county's Facebook live feed for questions and comments.

Winsome predevelopment site grading

At their April 13 meeting, the commissioners approved a request by Winsome LLC authorizing pre-development site grading for the 340-acre proposed Winsome Filing No. 2 final plat in advance of that plat's approval. The property

is located at the northwest corner of the Hodgen Road and Meridian Road intersection. The BOCC approved the Winsome preliminary plan in July 2019. Normally pre-development site grading is approved at the same time, but no grading request was included at that time, hence this separate application.

License agreement with Forest Lakes

At the April 20 BOCC meeting, the commissioners approved a license agreement with Forest Lakes LLC to allow it to construct a crossing on county property across the New Santa Fe Regional Trail. The crossing will provide access from Woodcarver Road to the neighboring Falcon Commerce Center.

Forest Lakes intends to convey the ongoing maintenance of the crossing to the Town of Monument at a future date, and the town has indicated a willingness to accept these responsibilities. When this happens, the county would grant the town a permanent easement to enable it to carry out maintenance.

Transfer of developers' fees to school districts

At its March 30 meeting, the BOCC voted unanimously to approve the transfer of subdivision plan and plat fees to the appropriate county school districts. Lewis-Palmer School District 38 got \$10,448 that will be put toward completing HVAC improvement projects. Academy School District 20 received \$36,720, which will go toward the cost of accommodating enrollment trends and facility needs.

Other decisions

- March 30-the commissioners approved the issuance of two ambulance permits to the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District. The one-year permits run until April 30, 2022.
- April 6-approved the issuance of an ambulance service license to the Black Forest Fire and Rescue Protection District. The one-year license runs until April 30, 2022.
- April 13-approved the reappointment of Joan Lucia-Treese to the Planning Commission. Her term will run until May 1, 2024.

Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.me.

El Paso County moves to fewer COVID-19 restrictions

By Lisa Hatfield
(Condensed from the April 15 press release from El Paso County Public Health Information Joint Information Center. For complete text, see <https://www.elpasocountyhealth.org/news/news-release/2021/el-paso-county-moves-to-less-covid-19-restrictions-for-events-and-businesses>)

El Paso County is moving to fewer COVID-19 restrictions for events and businesses. The state COVID-19 dial framework ended April 15. The statewide mask order remained in place. City and county officials will not implement a local dial or any additional restrictions beyond what the state has implemented. Gov. Jared Polis has continued the order on social distancing and masks but has eased restrictions on most indoor businesses' capacities.

The following statewide restrictions took ef-

fect Friday, April 16 as part of a new public health order:

Outdoor events

- Unseated outdoor events have no restrictions.
- Seated outdoor events have certain restrictions.
- 5-Star certified businesses and prior approved variances remain in effect.

Indoor events

- Indoor events fewer than 100 people have no restrictions other than the state mask order requirements.
- Indoor events from 100 to 500 people must maintain 6-foot distancing between non-vaccinated people and unknown vaccinated people, and comply with the state mask order.
- Indoor events over 500 people must obtain a variance from El Paso County Public Health and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment before (CDPHE) the event and comply with the state mask order.

- 5-Star certified businesses and prior approved variances remain in effect.

These restrictions do not apply to the following sectors:

- Places of worship and associated ceremonies.
- Retail services.
- Restaurants that have sit-down dining and do not have unseated areas where 100 or more people could gather (such as dance floors or common gathering areas).
- School proms and graduations that wish to exceed these thresholds shall be subject to review and approval by local public health agencies in accordance with CDPHE prom and graduation guidance.

For businesses or entities that have questions concerning the 5-Star Program, variance requests to exceed 500 people, and outdoor event consultation can be directed to: COVIDBusinessRecovery@elpasoco.com

Throughout the pandemic, the public has been encouraged to make informed decisions about engaging in activities based on their personal level of risk and to exercise public health precautions accordingly. Although more than 210,000 people in El Paso County have been fully vaccinated, COVID-19 cases and positivity rates have seen a modest increase. City, county, and public health officials encourage people to remain vigilant as they begin to return to more normal activities. Residents should continue to take the appropriate public health precautions to include mask wearing, social distancing, stay-



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ing home when sick, washing hands, and getting tested for COVID-19 if they display symptoms or have been exposed to COVID-19.

“For the health, safety, and vibrancy of our community, we strongly urge everyone to continue to take the disease seriously and make the best personal decisions regarding the vaccine as we reopen,” said El Paso Board of County Commissioners Chair Stan VanderWerf.

“The best and quickest way to recover from this pandemic and return to our ‘normal’ lives is for as many people as possible to get vaccinated,” said Colorado Springs Mayor John Suthers. “We have the supplies and we have the medical professionals at the ready to administer vaccines to all residents 16 and older. It is incumbent upon individuals and businesses to operate and behave at a level that is appropriate for their level

of personal risk. We urge vigilance as we relax restrictions, knowing that if hospitalizations or deaths increase, we may have to re-implement these restrictions, which would hurt both our culture and our economy.”

Lisa Hatfield can be contacted at lisahatfield@ocn.me

April Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Typical weather patterns affected the region during April, with one day feeling like winter and the next more like summer. April is usually one of our snowiest months of the season, with beneficial moisture accumulating as we start the growing season. Unfortunately, this month received below-normal precipitation, which doesn’t help the ongoing drought conditions in the region. Fortunately, temperatures were below normal for the month and this helped to slow the melt of the snow we did get and lowered evaporation overall.

After a very snowy March, April started off dry and mild. Temperatures reached into the 60s and low 70s during the first week of the month, with no precipitation from the 1st through the afternoon of the 6th. The warmest days occurred from the 3rd to the 5th, when several daily record highs were set around the region.

This warm spell was interrupted briefly by a quick-moving cold front during the mid-afternoon hours of the 6th. Clouds increased that afternoon, with a few sprinkles developing that quickly turned into snow, heavy at times, that afternoon. This produced a couple inches of accumulation, with light snow continuing off and on through the evening.

Quiet conditions returned over the next few days, with seasonable cool temperatures on the 7th, then above-normal temperatures on the 8th. Cooler air moved in on the 9th, with areas of low clouds that morning holding high temperatures in the mid-40s. This back and forth

between cool, upslope conditions and highs in the 40s and mild westerly breezes with highs in the upper 50s to low 60s continued over the next several days.

This was occurring as the overall weather pattern was changing in the western United States. During the middle of the month, an area of unsettled weather was dropping into the Inter-mountain West region to our west and setting the stage for several rounds of moisture and cooler temperatures to affect the region from the 13th through the 23rd. Unfortunately, this pattern was a little unorganized with no well-developed areas of low pressure drawing in cold air and moisture in a good combination that would result in heavy snow for us. Instead, we had rounds of snow showers, fog, and low clouds each day.

The most organized portion of the overall unsettled pattern came through during the afternoon and evening of the 15th, when areas of heavy snow and blowing snow caused travel problems in the region. Most areas along and west of the Palmer Divide picked up 4-8 inches of much needed snow. Overall, during this unsettled period, most areas received around 10 inches of snow and around an inch of moisture.

As this system departed the region, high pressure built in from the west and brought with it dry and mild conditions. Highs jumped into the 60s on the 24th, then well into the 70s on the 25th and 26th, along with gusty winds and high fire danger. The final storm of the month moved into the region on the 27th, bringing some much-needed snow to the mountains and a mix of rain

and snow for use through the 28th. Temperatures were below normal during that time as well, before quiet and seasonal conditions returned over the last two days of the month.

A look ahead

May often means a wide variety of weather conditions in the region, from warm, sunny days to severe thunderstorms and hail, and even some snowfall. Just last year we had a major snowstorm toward the end of the month, with nearly 2 feet of snow accumulating. But other times very little snow falls during the month and temperatures can reach well into the 80s.

April 2021 Weather Statistics

Average High	54.2° (-2.3°)
Average Low	26.3° (-1.3°)
Highest Temperature	74° on the 25th
Lowest Temperature	10° on the 20th
Monthly Precipitation	1.45" (-1.51", 50% below normal)
Monthly Snowfall	14.2" (-12.5", 47% below normal)
Season to Date Snow	123.9" (+6.3", 5% above normal)
<i>(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)</i>	
Season to Date Precip.	9.90" (+0.60", 6% above normal)
<i>(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)</i>	
Heating Degree Days	742 (+53)
Cooling Degree Days	0

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me.

Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters are on page 31.

Disclaimer: The information and opinions expressed in Letters to Our Community are the responsibility of the letter writers and should not be interpreted as the views of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer. The letters this month are arranged in alphabetical order based on the letter-writer’s last name.

Keep wearing your mask

In our state, the COVID-19 disease is nowhere close to having ended.

Here is an April 20, 2021 quote from The Denver Post: “Colorado’s ‘fourth wave’ of COVID-19 isn’t among the absolute worst spikes in the country, but it’s difficult to tell where it might go in the second half of April. Hospitalizations in Colorado from confirmed or suspected COVID-19 increased 33% from March 18 through Sunday, which was the 14th-highest rate of increase in the country.”

Denver’s Westword website says, “Colorado is now in its fourth day since COVID-19 restrictions were relaxed. And once again, the state metrics tracked by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment have gotten worse by almost every major measure.” (COVID-19 Colorado Data Worsens April 2021 Update | Westword)

Yes, the Colorado COVID-19 dial framework has ended, and Colorado Springs and El Paso County leaders have said they will not implement a local dial or any additional restrictions beyond what the state has implemented. Nonetheless, Gov. Polis has continued the order on social distancing and masks but has eased restric-

tions on most indoor business capacities.

National health experts, the ones who know what they’re talking about, continue to urge us to continue wearing masks while in public settings. (See www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html). I agree, masks are a nuisance and uncomfortable, but they work. For those who don’t want to cover their mouths and noses, please consider the rest of us.

Ross Meyer

Liberate the face

It is time to liberate the face, especially in our schools. Our children, as well as our society, need to end this unscientific ritual, which creates anxiety, stress, and fear. Overwhelming scientific research shows that masking is ineffective in decreasing viral infections. The COVID-19 virus is 1,000 times smaller than the tiniest mask thread. Viruses flow through the masks like water through a sieve.

Facial masks are like clouds blocking out the sun and create a gloomy atmosphere. Masks deprive us of essential facial communication. We no longer see individual faces. We are denied smiles, grimaces, and frowns. Isn’t a smiling child one of the great joys in life?

Do you really want your children to live in fear of their neighbors? Masking reinforces the idea that our neighbors are infectious. Our legal system is founded on the principle of innocent until proven guilty. But with COVID, we are told to assume that everyone is infectious, even if you have been vaccinated or recovered from the disease. Schools require students, who are the least

susceptible to the virus, to mask up all day inside and outside. Such protocols are irrational as well as harmful.

Are we following the science or the edicts of egotistical politicians? Science tells us that taking Vitamin D and zinc are much more effective than masking. But the politicians never mention anything about supplements, diet, and exercise.

Will Gov. Polis lift the mask mandate? Why aren’t we free to choose? If you feel better and safer wearing a mask, then please wear one. That is your right. For the rest of us who do not want to wear masks, that should be our choice. Please respect us and give us back our smiles.

Michael O’Hare

Masks are ineffective and harmful: Free the face

With COVID-19 deaths declining significantly, vaccines readily available, successful therapeutics and the pandemic over, the vast majority in Monument is not at risk and should stop wearing ineffective masks. Simply put, a mask is a tax on breathing. Just as excessive taxes hurt families and seniors financially, the “mask breathing tax” is more harmful. How did “two weeks to flatten

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the curve” turn into over one year of a nefarious agenda and government oppression? Masks are a fraud as demonstrated below.

Ineffective: Masks are harmful to students. Research has shown cloth masks are ineffective in preventing the spread of COVID-19. A cloth mask is too porous to contain the virus transmission. Even a superior N95 mask, which filters to 0.3 microns, does not block COVID-19, which is .06 to .14 microns in size.

Harmful: Masks inhibit air flow and are dangerous to those with asthma, COPD, chronic lung diseases and students involved in sports. Moreover, masks lower oxygen in the blood while simultaneously raising harmful carbon dioxide levels and increasing respiratory rates. Masks trap exhaled pathogens and collect bacteria, mold, and viruses. Masks also increase the risk of infection.

Toxic: Masks are toxic, and many contain carcinogens including fire retardant, lead, formaldehyde, and other chemicals.

Psychological harm: Masks create a sense of isolation and subjugation, damaging the mental and emotional health of students. Development

is dependent on social interaction and facial expression. Masks and isolation have led to a surge in teen depression. D38 should protect our students, not harm them.

Monument has tremendous natural beauty and fresh air. The time has come to choose self-respect and commonsense and free ourselves and our children from this abuse.

Scott Saunders

Real danger is dense, urban developments
As chairman of the Black Forest Land Use Committee, I take exception to Tom Cronin and Bob Loevy (April 4 Gazette) regarding the new El Paso County master plan. They claim that a major cause of concern in unincorporated El Paso County is the 5-acre “ranchettes” that have large lawns and consume huge amounts of non-renewable Denver Basin water. The reality is that the ranchettes spread out the development and preserve the water (as well as the trees and wildlife.)

I live on one of those ranchettes and we do not water any lawn nor do most of our neighbors. It simply takes too much water and we are

very water conscious. The newer developments may have a small patch of lawn but are not “surrounded by big lawns” as Tom and Bob claim.

The real danger is in the dense, urban developments like Sterling Ranch and The Ranch where almost all have lawns. These dense developments are always approved by our county commissioners in zoning that is supposed to be 5-acre lots. At present, Sterling Ranch (5,225 homes) and The Ranch (2,200 homes) will all use non-renewable water, and they outnumber all of the current homes in Black Forest.

The bottom line is that dense, urban development outside the city limits should not be allowed unless they can connect to city water. Tom and Bob also say it is a “challenge” for county residents to have to drive into the city for groceries, gas and movies. We love living outside the city, away from the congestion and noise, and don’t mind a drive to get things. Furthermore, most of us work in the city and can get those things when we are in town.

Terry Stokka

▪

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Cookbooks for health and bringing people together

By the staff at Covered Treasures
“Food brings people together on many different levels. It’s nourishment of the soul and body; it’s truly love.”—Giada De Laurentiis

The last year has taught us the value of health, home-cooked meals, and being with family and friends. To help you, here are some inspiring cookbook choices.

Eat Better, Feel Better: My Recipes for Wellness and Healing, Inside and Out
By Giada De Laurentiis (Rodale Books) \$32.50
In Giada’s most personal book yet, she gives you an inside look at her path to wellness, the culmination of a 10-year journey. She shows you her own process of reconfiguring her diet to control inflammation as well as wellness tactics like intermittent fasting, meditation, and other self-care routines to optimize one’s well-being. More than a cookbook, Giada offers 100 new recipes to boost gut health and immunity and nourish your mind, body, and spirit.



Milk Street: Cookish: Throw It Together
By Christopher Kimball (Voracious) \$35
The James Beard Award-winning team at Milk Street has harnessed the most powerful cooking principles from around the world to create 200 of the simplest, delicious recipes so you can throw together fast, flavorful meals in no time. These recipes, most with six or fewer ingredients, make it easy to be a great cook.

The Mountain Baker: 100 High-Altitude Recipes for Every Occasion
By Mimi Council and Kimmy Fasani (Countryman Press) \$28
Living in Colorado, we all know the struggle with baking at higher than 5,000 feet. Longtime mountain dwellers Mimi Council and Kimmy Fasani share their recipes for successful cakes, cookies, muffins, breads, and beyond. These recipes include conversions for sea-level kitchens, so home bakers can enjoy these treats wherever they cook.

Half-Baked Harvest Super Simple
By Tieghan Gerard (Clarkson Potter) \$29.99
Colorado blogger Tieghan is beloved for her freshly sourced, comfort-food-forward recipes. In this new book, she takes what fans loved most and distills it into quicker, more manageable dishes, including options for one-pot meals, night-before meal prep, and even some slow cooker recipes. Especially for home cooks who are pressed for time or just starting out, this is a go-to resource for hassle-free meals that never sacrifice taste.

5 Ingredient Semi-Homemade Meals
By Bobby and Dessi Parrish (Mango) \$29.95
Bobby and Dessi Parrish share the ins and outs of their five-ingredient meals and assure us that their quick and easy recipes are doable for anyone. But it doesn’t stop there; they know that a key aspect of these simple healthy recipes is the prep work, so they provide hacks for smarter and easier grocery shopping, including how to pick the “best in class” products.

High Altitude Baking (Second Edition)
Edited by Patricia Kendall (Bower House) \$17
With over 200 recipes and proven tips developed by the high-altitude baking experts at Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, this

book is a must for cooks living between 3,500 and 10,000 feet. The book includes mile high cakes, cake recipe adjustment guide, quick mixes for cookies, cakes, quick breads, coffee cakes, muffins, scones, cornbreads, biscuits, pancakes, and more. It also includes tips for high altitude canning, jelly-making, and freezing.

Pie in the Sky: Successful Baking at High Altitudes
By Susan Purdy (William Morrow) \$32.50
This is the classic guide to high-altitude baking. Purdy leaves behind old conversion tables, disproves many oft-repeated calculations and adjustments, and presents reliable recipes in their entirety for each altitude. She explains the hows and whys, gives tips and hints for problems specific to every altitude, and generally demystifies the subject of atmospheric obstacles that cause favorite recipes to flop. Every recipe was tested at sea level, 3,000 feet, 5,000 feet, 7,000 feet, and 10,000 feet, and can be used at these elevations or points in between.

The New Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone
By Deborah Madison (Ten Speed Press) \$40
Originally published in 1997, Madison’s award-winning book was both ahead of its time and an instant classic. This revised and expanded edition has more than 1,600 recipes for home cooks, with more than 200 new recipes, and comprehensive, updated information on vegetarian and vegan ingredients. This treasure is not just for vegetarians and vegans; it’s for everyone interested in learning how to cook vegetables creatively, healthfully, and passionately.

Until next month, happy reading.
The staff at the Covered Treasures can be contacted at books@ocn.me.

May Library Events

Changes in services, programming for May

By Harriet Halbig
Patrons continue to be welcomed into the Monument Library to browse the collection and stay a brief time to read newspapers, visit, and charge devices. The capacity limit has been raised from 20 to 40 patrons at a time. Masks continue to be required for those 5 years and older.

The library district is planning its Summer Adventure reading program for children up to

age 18. While there will be no indoor programs, the library has arranged with the Town of Monument to use Limbach Park for outdoor programs. Please watch for further announcements. Summer Adventure will begin June 1.

Due to recent research indicating that the coronavirus is not transmitted by surface contact, the library will no longer clean computers and other library equipment between patron vis-

its. For those who wish to do so, a supply of Lysol wipes is available near the patron computers for your use.

Additional furniture is being reintroduced in the main area of the library. It has been reupholstered with vinyl for ease of cleaning.

The meeting rooms remain unavailable, but efforts are being made to reopen them. An announcement will be made on the website, ppld.

org, when it is possible to place reservations for their use. Social distancing will still be required.

Curbside services for retrieval of hold items and wireless printing

will continue. Hours of service will be 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 10 a.m. through 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. The library is closed on Sunday.

We look forward to greeting you at the library.

Please note at all Pikes Peak Library District facilities will be closed on May 31 in observance of

Memorial Day.

Harriet Halbig can be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

On the Trail (in memory of Tim Watkins)

County Search and Rescue



Above: Keith Lonnquist, county Search and Rescue team volunteer, with his certified search dog Baily. Photo by Steve Pate.

By Steve Pate

With the stresses we’ve all faced during the last year, many of us have sought relief through outdoor experiences. Unfortunately for those who relish getting away from crowds, taking a hike or mountain bike on our local trails has not provided much solitude. Thousands more people than usual out hiking or riding have resulted in overflowing trailhead parking lots, and social distancing is not easy on a single-track.

Another side effect of many more inexperienced hikers testing their knowledge and skill on unfamiliar trails is that some find themselves over-extended and lost or injured. Our all-volunteer El Paso County Search and Rescue team (EPCSAR) has been called upon more often than normal to find and help people who have become lost or hurt using our local trail systems. Some use hiking apps such as AllTrails to find a trailhead and go in unprepared for the challenges of specific areas.

I talked with Keith Lonnquist, of the local EPCSAR team, to get an idea of how the team operates during an emergency. Here is his description of how the SAR team is set up and responds to some typical situations that have occurred near the Tri-Lakes area. Keith is also a certified K9 search dog handler. We’ll meet Bailey, his Labrador search dog, later.

Most of our (SAR team) calls originate directly via the 9-1-1 system. County Dispatch includes our team when a call 1) is in the county and 2) appears to require our expertise (searches, injuries in backcountry, etc.) Out-of-county requests originate from the CSAR (Colorado Search and Rescue Association). That organization coordinates all

multi-county requests for SAR assistance throughout the state. We also occasionally assist CSPD (the Colorado Springs Police Department) for searches (usually with K9s) in Colorado Springs.

We get a lot of missions in our county’s most popular hiking/biking areas, such as Barr Trail, the Manitou Incline, and North Cheyenne Canyon. As trails have gotten busier near Colorado Springs and more information has become available about our Monument/Palmer Lake area (e.g., AllTrails) in the past couple years, our local area is now busier than ever, hence more SAR calls.

A typical 9-1-1 call was received on April 2. County Dispatch received a call from a lost hiker somewhere above the Palmer Lake Reservoirs. The Palmer Lake Fire Department (PLFD) responded first and began its search. EPCSAR was then requested to assist. Our On Duty Coordinator (ODC) spoke with Dispatch and confirmed the situation and our need. With that, our ODC sent a page out to all 70 members of the team. Those that can respond, do. Often our ODC can speak directly with the reporting party, confirming the status of the subject (injuries, hypothermia), name, clothing, and location information. Dispatch is usually able to acquire the phone’s GPS location coordinates (latitude and longitude) data. These data can be within feet of the subject’s actual location or sometimes miles away.

Over a dozen EPCSAR members arrived at the planned “staging” location (we parked at the water plant at the end of Glen Street). We towed our off-road vehicle (ORV) with tracks (snow travel) to staging. After a review of maps and trails, three team members (one an EMT) continued in the ORV to the first reservoir and then north, parallel to Ice Cave Creek. When no longer able to drive on the trail, the team went on foot and met the PLFD team, which had located the hiker. The exhausted, rattled, but uninjured hiker was walked down to the ORV and transported back to staging and to the AMR ambulance for a checkout. She refused the ambulance ride and was taken to her vehicle, parked in town. This was an easy search.

Typically, it takes one to 1½ hours to get the first SAR team into the field, with more members streaming into the staging area. In this case, being relatively confident of the subject’s general location meant that we could send just the tracked ORV and

we did not have to deploy the dozen other SAR team members on a foot search in the deep snow. It was also

fortunate that the subject was located just before dusk—all too often the lost hiker does not realize they

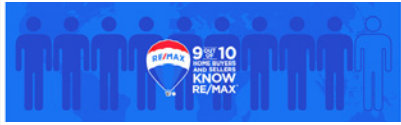
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need help until near dark. In those cases, EPCSAR will be out looking at night with cooling temperatures and a higher risk of injury to all involved.

We have had two very similar missions in about the same location. Last spring, we again had a good latitude/longitude location, hiked up the icy Ice Cave Creek Trail, located the lost hiker, gave them traction devices (Microspikes), and were able to walk her back down to the reservoir road

and drive her back to her vehicle in the daylight. The previous year, a hiker called 9-1-1 at dusk. We found her at 10 p.m. and walked her down and out of the same area.

In all three of these searches, the subjects were less than 100 yards from the trail, but with the realization they were lost, wisely made the 9-1-1 call and stayed put, making it possible for us to locate them quickly. In each of these cases, the hikers had cell phone coverage and Dispatch was able to provide a close

enough location to start our searches. Even with this valuable location information, it is still typically two hours before a SAR member can hope to contact the lost person. The 9-1-1 paging process, driving to the staging area, getting enough people for a team, making a search plan, coordinating radio channels, determining resources needed, hiking in—they all take time. We always search in a minimum of pairs, because there are too many risks in the woods to be out alone day or

night.

Thanks to Lonnquist and the other SAR team members who provide a wonderful service to our hiking/biking community. As mentioned earlier, Keith is also a certified K9 search dog handler. Search dogs can take the effort to a level humans can't achieve—searching for scent. I hope to include more of Keith's expertise in this area in future "On the Trail" columns.

Steve Pate can be contacted at stevepate@ocn.me

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Early birds for gardens and mucho mulch



Above and right: May is a good time in our area to enjoy bulbs and seeds such as the columbine planted the previous autumn, yet seeds can be planted for successful wildflowers, garden flowers, and other seedlings that will thrive later in June, July, and even August. *Photos by Janet Sellers.*

By Janet Sellers

Our hummingbirds arrived recently. I saw one flying over my garden mid-April, but they have had to hide during our cold spells. Hummingbirds go into a state of deep sleep called torpor, sort of like a hibernation, to survive cold, and they also go into torpor when they sleep at night. Their metabolism will lower to 1/15th of normal, and body tem-



perature drops to a point of nearly hypothermic.

We can help our delicate birds with a supply of clean, fresh water. Many people have heated water bowls to accommodate the late freezing temperatures we often get in May. While it's great fun to supply hummingbird sugar nectar feeders, water is easier, cleaner, and much more needed in our area. Many more kinds of birds will come to water sources than are attracted

to the various feeders offered, so water is a good bird magnet. Water can be placed in dishes placed to hang like bird feeders, in shallow dishes or small water features. Placing rocks for the songbirds to perch on and take a sip will bring the most success, as most songbirds cannot lean out or stand in water over a half inch or so.

In the garden for May, we have a local saying that we put in seeds or can buy plants around Mother's Day, but don't put them in the ground until Memorial Day. Our weather varies so greatly in May, my best advice is to put thick mulch over the garden areas. I use pine needle straw over my seedlings and plants because it stays put even with windy, rainy, or snowy weather, and I use it for my garden paths as well. The pine straw is free to rake up or get from neighbors who raked them up, and I put them 4 to 6 inches deep for early plant protection.

The seedlings can grow up through them, and they gradually turn into rich soil over the course of the growing season. Myth has it that pine needles are acidic, but that's just not so. When planting seedlings using good, amended soil

with the pine needle straw cover, the composition of the pine needles do not affect what is growing in the garden from underneath. In the forest, seeds cannot get down through the pine needles to the soil in order to get started, and that is why we don't have lots of weeds around pine forests.

In May, we can plant seeds for our greens out in the garden, and many other plants, if mulched well, will begin to grow but wait for the warmth to take root and thrive, likely in June. I've successfully planted most of the community garden in greens and started snow peas and beans, even squashes and pumpkins by May, but they have needed 6 inches of mulch for protection.

Flowers from last year will begin popping up, both annuals from seed and perennials, and we can safely plant flower seeds if mulched well, or birds will consider them a grab and go feeding.

Janet Sellers is an avid lazy gardening ethnobotanist looking to enjoy gardening while respecting our native forest health and microclimates. She can be reached at janetsellers@ocn.me.

Art Matters

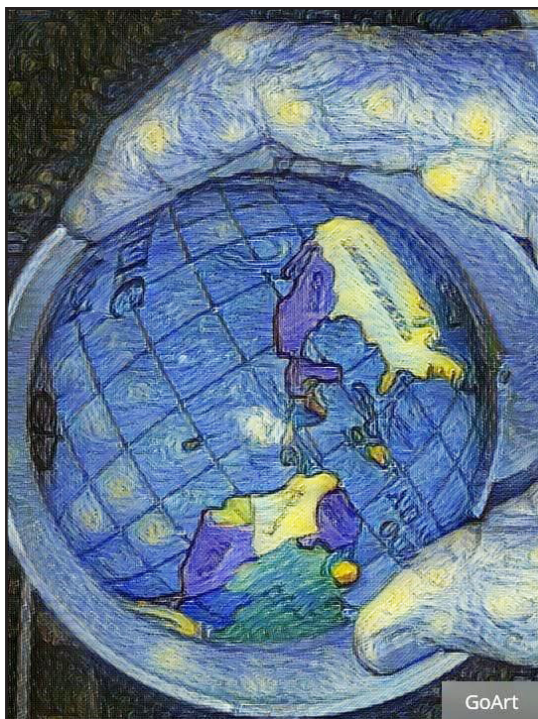
Crypto art, an online-only prize

By Janet Sellers

"...You can think of SuperRare like Instagram meets Christie's. A new way to interact with art, culture, and collecting on the internet!"—SuperRare website.

Many artists and galleries have had to open online venues due to the pandemic limiting social gatherings. On my art radar of late is the world of collectables, including the spectacular niche genre of digital collectibles. Besides being a new cultural activity, it's gaining tremendous interest as a social activity, albeit online at "galleries" such as SuperRare, which explains, "SuperRare is a marketplace to collect and trade unique, single-edition digital artworks. Each artwork is authentically created by an artist in the network and tokenized as a crypto-collectible digital item that you can own and trade."

When I stumbled upon this new-to-me genre (it's been going since 2013 or 2014), I thought back



to the 1960s and poster and album art and how its ephemera became collectors' items, but crypto art is owned only by its URL, not even an in-hand item. Non-Fungible Tokens (NFT) electronically pro-

Left: These kinds of images, if only available online, could be considered crypto art, which are only electronically generated, electronically transacted, electronically owned, and based on blockchain technology. A blockchain collects information together in groups, also known as blocks, that hold sets of information. Blockchain is used in ever-growing industrial applications and is now a vital element in the protection of digital artworks. *Imagery courtesy of Janet Sellers.*

tected artwork is bought and sold among collectors amid the (to many of us) confounding systems recorded in the blockchain ecosystem.

These reminded me of sports trading cards or Pokémon trading cards but in an online ecosystem. Yet, it's not just for playtime anymore. On March 11, 2021, Beeple, (real name Mike Winkelmann) auctioned a piece of crypto art at Christie's, *Everydays: The First*

5000 Days, that sold for \$69.3 million (with fees), making it the third-highest price paid at auction for a work by a living artist.

One of the factors of the system is that artists sell their work for a specific NFT price but they also have rights to receive royalties from the primary as well as secondary art market sales, something that has been denied many artists of all levels in brick-and-mortar galleries and global platform markets.

Why do people buy works of art? Physical or not, art collecting relates to the primal desire of connectivity. At its very core, it's still an asset-based support of the arts and artists. Collectors will collect, whether it's art, model trains, baseball cards, or whatever it is they're on the hunt for, and in this case, the crypto art in its own ecosystem is the ultimate prize.

Janet Sellers is an artist, writer, and lecturer locally and globally, in person and online. JanetSellers@OCN.Me.



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.

Allison Robenstein can be contacted at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me

A Fowl Day, Apr. 21



Above: April 21 was a bitterly cold and windy day in the Tri-Lakes area. At Palmer Lake, only a few ducks could be seen at the lake braving the weather at mid-day. Temperatures were expected to rise into the 70s by the next weekend. *Photo by David Futey.*

Operation Gratitude, Apr. 23



Above: Since 2003, Operation Gratitude's mission has been to forge strong bonds between Americans and their military and first responder heroes through volunteer service projects, acts of gratitude, and meaningful engagements in communities nationwide. In April, first responders from Palmer Lake police and fire were given care packages and letters from Operation Gratitude to thank the men and women who diligently and respectfully serve the residents of Palmer Lake. Thank you, Operation Gratitude, for your acknowledgement of our esteemed first responders. From left are Officer D, Officer Emily, and Chief Jason Vanderpool of the Palmer Lake Police Department. *Photo courtesy of Samantha Holmes.*

Fox Farm History, Apr. 24



Above: On April 24, Southwinds Fine Art hosted Friends of Fox Run Park for a presentation about the history of fox farms of the 1930s and '40s of northern El Paso County. Historian and teacher Julie Haverluk shared a collection of fox furs and fashion of days gone by with a talk about several farms from Palmer Lake to Rampart Range Road. There was at one time a fox farm in Fox Run Regional Park and several others within minutes of the Tri-Lakes area. A booming business for the farmers only lasted during the first half of the century and gave way to more modern thinking regarding the fur business. *Photo by Zoe O'Donnell.*

Earth Day at Fox Run Park, Apr. 22



Above: Members of Friends of Fox Run Park celebrated Earth Day 2021 by transplanting trees from patches of ponderosa pine seedlings on the floor of the forest, known as dog hair in forestry terms, to bare spots on the Roller Coaster Trailhead. County park employees provided the tools and approved the moving of the trees. For more information on volunteer projects, including trail building and preservation coming soon in the park, please contact friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*

TLC Boot Barn Fundraiser, Apr. 23



Above: Over \$5,000 was raised for Tri-Lakes Cares April 23 at the Boot Barn Concert Hall where Ashtonz and WireWood Station performed. The crowd was happy and the music was resounding. Everyone was ready for a party when the bands hit the stage. Both bands have made the list of "Best of Colorado Springs." Pictured are supporters who helped underwrite the concert. For more information, see tri-lakescares.org. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*

Reynolds Ranch House, Apr. 24

Right: On April 24, the Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI) opened the renovated Reynolds Ranch House to museum members. Pictured (L to R) are Museum Curator Richard Sauers, former WMMI employee Casey Pearce, and WMMI volunteer Betty Chastain. They are in the newly renovated living room of the museum's Reynolds Ranch House. The Queen Anne-style house was built in the 1890s by Joseph and Sarah Reynolds near what was the town of Husted. Sauers provided visitors with information about the house, the four-year renovation process, and plans that include furnishing the house and erecting a gazebo. Eric Swanson of Wells & West General Contractors was the project manager for the renovation's three phases: the basement and foundation, exterior, and interior. Swanson said it was "fabulous to be a part of the renovation process. The museum's persistence in keeping public interest and fundraising were the difficult parts of the project." The renovation, which cost over \$500,000, was funded by the State Historical Fund, grants and donations by museum members, Questers, and capital campaigns. *Photo by David Futey.*



Great American Clean Up, Apr. 24



Above: Employees from Starbucks spent their Saturday morning April 24 cleaning up the Santa Fe Trail, starting at the Baptist Road Trailhead. Jennifer Cummings, supervisor and environmental specialist for El Paso County, was there to hand out trash bags and help the volunteers. Coffee was handed out, and the volunteers were ready to go. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*



Above: A group of 35 to 40 volunteers organized by Lea Grady met in the parking lot near Staples on Saturday, April 24 to take part in a cleanup along Jackson Creek Parkway (JCP). At 9 a.m., small groups attacked the trash from the meeting point north to Highway 105. The Monument Police Department set up warning signs to alert drivers traveling along JCP. Trash bags and other supplies were provided by Home Depot, which also disposed of the trash free of charge. The group of volunteers was not part of the larger cleanup effort in the area, just local residents who care about the appearance of our neighborhood. Grady said a total of 64 trash bags were filled. *Photo by Steve Pate.*



Right: The Oliverius and Gordy families took part in the Great American Cleanup on April 24. They worked at Monument Cemetery along with a dozen other people. Other crews worked at the parks, the Santa Fe Trail, and various areas in town, picking up numerous bags of trash. *Photo by Theresa Rust.*

OCN photo contest winner



Above: Spotted in the pond near the Monument Library, an American white pelican. Quite the sight on Earth Day. The knob on his beak indicates that he's a breeding-age male. *Photo by Suzanne Schwartz.*

Keep them coming! Send your best "Life in Tri-Lakes" photo to editor@ocn.me no later than **May 21**. Please don't send more than two photos. Include names of any people in the photo, date taken, a description of the activity or location, and the name of the photographer. Call Lisa at 719-339-7831 with questions.

Our Community Notices

By the OCN calendar team
We miss Judy Barnes' expert work on the calendar and notices.
If you are interested in helping OCN compile the monthly calendar and notices, please write to calendar@ocn.me. We would love to have your help!

Although we strive for accuracy in these listings, dates or times are often changed after publication. Please double-check the time and place of any event you wish to attend by calling the information number for that event. Please notify us if your event listing needs to be updated.

Red Flag Warning

A Red Flag Warning means warm temperatures, very low humidity, and stronger winds are expected to combine to produce an increased risk of fire danger. Extinguish all outdoor fires properly. Drown fires with plenty of water and stir to make sure everything is cold to the touch. Do not throw live charcoal on the ground and leave it. Never leave a fire unattended. Sparks or embers can blow into leaves or grass, ignite a fire, and quickly spread. See www.elpasoco.com/fireworks-burn-ban-information/.

Feeling hopeless, anxious, or depressed? Free help is a phone call away

Everybody needs a little help sometimes. Pikes Peak Suicide Prevention Connection has a support group for young people, Teen Talk Group, that meets **Sundays** at 6 p.m. The Adult Peers Support Group meets **Mondays**, 7-8 p.m. The Colorado Crisis Services Line is available 24/7. Call 1-844-493-TALK (8255). For more information visit pikespeaksuicideprevention.org, or call 719-573-7447, or text 719-232-4875, or email info@pikespeaksuicideprevention.org. If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, please

call 911.
Jewish Family Service offers virtual counseling for all

Jewish Family Service (JFS) of Colorado's virtual counseling services are available to anyone throughout the state who is feeling overwhelmed or in crisis at this time. JFS supports everyone, not just those of the Jewish faith. JFS accepts private insurance, self-pay, Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and offers a sliding-fee schedule for those with limited financial resources and will not turn away anyone in crisis. To find out more about virtual counseling and the various services JHS offers, phone 303-597-5000 or visit the website, www.jewishfamilyservice.org.

High School Senior Scholarship Applications Due May 7

The Black Forest Arts and Craft Guild will be awarding at least one scholarship of \$1,000 to a high school senior. See www.bfacg.org for application and submission information. Please note that you must reside within our boundaries listed in the instructions. Due **May 7**.

Don't Wait! Vaccinate!

El Paso County is vaccinating people age 16 and older against the COVID-19 virus. If you have non-urgent questions about COVID-19, please call the El Paso County Public Health call center at 719-575-8888. Hours are Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. See www.elpasocountyhealth.org

CDC's new mask guidelines for vaccinated people

The CDC released new mask guidelines on Tue., April 27, stating those who are fully vaccinated are no longer required to wear masks in public. New data found by the CDC says that more than half of the united states population is vaccinated.

The data also confirms that more than a third of the American people are fully vaccinated. Even if fully vaccinated, the CDC still requires masks indoors; however, CDC Director Rochelle Walensky reassured people that interaction is safer now. She said, "We know that masked, fully vaccinated people can safely attend worship services inside, go to an indoor restaurant or bar, and even participate in an indoor exercise class."

Are you experiencing hardship due to COVID-19?

Connect with Tri-Lakes Cares for assistance with groceries, rent or mortgage, utilities, car repair, and medical assistance at www.tri-lakescares.org/coronavirus. For more information, call 719-481-4864.

Volunteer for Tri-Lakes Cares

There are many areas within Tri-Lakes Cares that you can help serve. Volunteers interact with clients, stock the food pantry, distribute grocery orders, process donations, pack Snack Packs for local youths, and contribute in many other ways to the success of Tri-Lakes Cares. Becoming a volunteer is easy and fun. For details, contact Volunteer Coordinator Nichole Pettigrew, 719-481-4864 x113, VolunteerCoordinator@Tri-LakesCares.org; or visit <https://tri-lakescares.org/volunteer/>.

Tri-Lakes Cares youth internship opportunities

Do you know a youth who wants to improve their technical skills and contribute to our local community in a meaningful way? If so, we want to connect with them! Systems Development Internship & Website Development Internship. See <https://tri-lakescares.org/about-tlc/employment/>.

Tri-Lakes Cares needs us now more than ever

Tri-Lakes Cares is the only food pantry and human services organization located in and serving northern El Paso County through emergency, self-sufficiency, and relief programs. The community-based, volunteer-supported center is a critical resource for our neighbors in need. The best way to help support Tri-Lakes Cares is to make a financial donation. For more information about Tri-Lakes Cares or how you can help, contact Nicole Pettigrew, director of Volunteers and Community Partnership, at 719-481-4864 Ext. 111; communityengagementmanager@tri-lakescares.org; or visit www.tri-lakescares.org.

2021 Black Forest Slash-Mulch Schedule May 1-Sept. 12

Black Forest Slash-Mulch Program is a Wildfire Mitigation and Recycling Program. It accepts slash (trees, limbs, and brush debris only, max. length 6 feet, max. diameter 8 inches) (no stumps, roots, weeds, grass, lumber, or trash). Cost to drop off slash is \$2 per load. Mulch loader fee \$5 per bucket, about 2 cubic yards. Co-sponsored by the El Paso County Environmental Division, Colorado Forestry Association and the Black Forest Fire Department, in cooperation with the Colorado State Forest Service and the State Board of Land Commissioners. Hours: **Saturdays**, 7 a.m.-4 p.m.; **Sundays**, noon-4 p.m.; and **Tuesday and Thursday evenings**, 5-7:30 p.m. The mulch loader schedule is **Saturdays** only, 7 a.m.-4 p.m. on specified days. See www.bfslash.org for form to bring with you, or phone the county Environmental Division, 520-7878. Southeast corner of Shoup and Herring Roads in Black Forest.

Donate live trees for Black Forest burn scar recovery

Black Forest Together needs your help! BFT is hoping to launch the fourth year of our Trees 4 Tomorrow program, which has transplanted just under 4,000 trees into the burn scar. We need new tree donor sites in order to launch the program. As always, all tree donations are tax-deductible. Donating your trees is a great way to help mitigate your property and help your burn-victim neighbors restore theirs. To help keep overhead and costs down: site must be 25 acres or larger, have easy access for a truck and trailer, have at least 100 trees to donate. Trees need to be 3 to 8 feet tall, with a trunk diameter of 2½ to 4 inches. Doghair (thickets of seedlings) will not be removed. If you are interested in donating to our program or know someone who is, please contact us at Resourcecenter@blackforesttogether.org or call 719-368-0500.

Mail theft prevention tactics

Residents are reporting they are finding mail, both open and unopened, strewn around the ground. Both community and individual mailboxes have been tampered with.

- Do not leave mail sitting in your mailbox overnight. Mail your outgoing mail at a postal annex. We understand this can be an inconvenience, but criminals are stealing whatever mail they can get their hands on.
- If you see suspicious vehicles driving around slowly and checking mailboxes, please get a description of the vehicle and possibly a license plate number. Do not approach the vehicle as that can become very dangerous, but a cellphone picture is priceless to us when it comes to establishing potential suspect/s or vehicles.
- If you believe you were a victim of mail theft, please contact the El Paso County Sheriff's Office at 719-390-5555 and the postal inspector at 877-876-2455.

El Paso County Road Safety Plan

Tell us your thoughts on road safety issues in El Paso County, and where you have experienced safety concerns. The county Road Safety Plan Project Team will incorporate this feedback into the plan including, but not limited to, identifying emphasis areas, selecting proven countermeasures, and in developing an implementation list. See website to enter comments on the interactive map. epcsaferroads.com/leave-comments.

El Paso County Safe Streets Alliance

El Paso is one of the most rapidly growing of Colorado counties. With this growth comes increasing traffic volume and the potential for commuters to use our neighborhood streets to bypass congestion. El Paso County does not currently benefit from a program to use speed tables, chicanes, roundabouts and other calming measures to slow traffic speed and volume on neighborhood streets. There's an El Paso County proposal to extend Furrow Road South to Higby Road. Once this connection is made, the current traffic volume is forecasted to significantly increase. Three HOAs that border Furrow have formed the initial group to deal with the issues of this extension with the county. The group has created a working document and an El Paso Safe Streets Alliance petition at <https://ceds.org/epssa/>. The petition urges the county commissioners to expand traffic calming measures county-wide.

CDOT: stories of distracted driving victims

Distracted Driving continues to be a dangerous issue on Colorado roads. An average of 42 crashes a day involve a distracted driver, and the consequences can be truly life-changing. Please rethink your distracted driving behaviors and consider the reactions of those around you. "Every time I see a distracted driver, my first thought is to get as far away from them as possible," said Susan Dane, founder of Coloradans Organized for Responsible Driving (CORD). "My second thought is to ask: is it worth it? I lost two friends to a distracted driver, there's no reason for more lives to be lost due to distracted driving." Hear from the victims themselves at <https://www.codot.gov/safety/distracteddriving/victims>.

YMCA Outdoor Season Pool Pass

Monument Valley Pool, Prospect Lake Beach & Wilson Ranch Pool. Daily, monthly and season passes available. Find out more at ppymca.org/poolpass. See ad on page 6.

Monument Hill Foundation grants, apply by May 31

The Monument Hill Foundation, the charitable arm of the Monument Hill Kiwanis Club, has an annual granting program. Grants are awarded for projects that best advance the foundation mission of supporting youth and community in Tri-Lakes and northern El Paso County. Applications will be accepted from April 15 through **May 31**. The grant application is available at monumenthill-foundation.org (select "Apply for a Grant") See ad on page 3.

Sign up for Town of Monument notifications

The Notify Me feature on the town's website allows you to subscribe for topics such as emergency alerts, road

closures, weather, etc. Visit Notify Me on the website, www.townofmonument.org/list.aspx, and sign up for the topics that interest you.

Volunteer for Monumental Impact

Monumental Impact is a nonprofit in the Tri-Lakes area focused on enabling and supporting high school students in technology, engineering, and entrepreneurship with experiences and community. Monumental Impact provides opportunities for students to explore these careers and supports Bearbotics in its current competitive build season. The group is looking for volunteers to serve on the board of directors and/or to serve as mentors in our community. To find out more, call 719-387-7414, email volunteer@monumentalimpact.org, or visit <https://monumentalimpact.org/community/>.

WMMI seeks volunteers

Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI) has positions for docents/tour guides, front desk, landscaping, and building and maintenance. For more details, contact Loretta, 719-488-0880, or email Volunteer@wmmi.org.

Mining Heritage of Colorado Springs

WMMI is celebrating the 150th anniversary of Colorado Springs with "The Mining Heritage of Colorado Springs," through August. The exhibit will highlight the operations of the coal industry, the gold ore processing mills that stood west of the city, the railroads that serviced the coal and mining industries, Winfield Scott Stratton and his legacy, the El Pomar story, Cripple Creek railroad millionaires and their Colorado Springs mansions. 225 North Gate Blvd., Colorado Springs 80921, 719-488-0880. For additional information, <https://wmmi.org/>.

Sisters' Thrift & Boutique is open

The Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery have a shop full of gently used treasures, including clothing and accessories, household items, and small furniture at 8674 N. Union Blvd., Colorado Springs. Store hours are Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 719-282-0316. The shop welcomes donations and volunteers. For more information about Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery, visit www.benethillmonastery.org. See ad on page 11

Openings for Monument's Planning Commission and Board of Adjustments

The Town of Monument has openings on its Planning Commission and Board of Adjustments. For more information, visit <http://townofmonument.org/261/Available-Board-Openings>.

MVEA Energy Star appliance and light bulb rebates

Mountain View Electric offers rebates to encourage energy efficiency. Save on your monthly electric bill by replacing incandescent and halogen light bulbs and old appliances with Energy Star certified equipment. Find more information and a Rebate Product Guide at www.mvea.coop/rebates.

MVEA tree-trimming services

Tree trimming helps prevent storm-related power outages. For more information, call 800-388-9881 or 719-495-2283, or visit www.mvea.coop/tree-trimming.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) free virtual support groups

NAMI's Connection Support Group provides weekly peer support for anyone with a mental health diagnosis. It is facilitated by people managing their own mental illnesses and structured to meet the diverse needs of those with depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and more. Connections meets Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m. You can fill out a new participant form at www.namicoloradosprings.org/connection-support-group.html. The weekly Family Support Group provides peer support for family members as their loved ones encounter the ups and downs that come with living with mental illness and working toward recovery. This group meets Thursdays, 7-8:30 p.m. For links to the above information and other groups, visit www.namicoloradosprings.org. Info: 719-473-8477, email info@namicos.org, or visit www.namicoloradosprings.org.

Silver Key senior citizen services

Connection Cafe's "Grab and Go" meal clients will receive three frozen meals for the week; meals must be requested in advance for the following week. A \$2.25 donation is requested. Please call 719-884-2300 to reserve your meal. Meals on Wheels and Home Delivered Meals will deliver frozen meals for the week to Monument on Wednesdays. If you qualify but are not yet enrolled for meals, phone 719-884-2300 or visit www.silverkey.org. The Food Pantry is implementing a "pick up only" model for clients. Mon.-Fri., noon-12:30 p.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy. 105, Palmer Lake. Reserve & Ride is temporarily limited to essential transportation needs only: strictly medical and food-related trips. Reservations are requested, phone 719-884-2300. For more information about senior services including Calls of Reassurance, visit www.silverkey.org.

Small-business grants available

The Energize Colorado Gap Fund will provide more than \$25 million in small-business loans and grants to boost

small businesses impacted by COVID-19. Sole proprietors, businesses, and nonprofits with fewer than 25 full-time employees can apply for up to a \$15,000 grant and a \$20,000 loan for a possible combined total of \$35,000 in financial assistance. For more information and to purchase PPE, visit <https://energizecolorado.com>.

Free transportation and handyman services for seniors

Mountain Community Senior Services offers free transportation and handyman services to Tri-Lakes seniors. Private transportation to medical appointments or a grocery store is now provided by Enviva, 719-633-4677. If you need grab bars in the bathroom, a ramp to your door, or repair of stairs or railings, please call Cindy Rush, 488-0076, and leave a message or visit www.coloradoseniorhelp.com.

Can you volunteer today?

Links to local organizations with an immediate need for volunteers are listed on the county's website, www.elpasocountyhealth.org/volunteering-and-donations, for groups like Care and Share, Crossfire Ministries, blood donations, Early Connections (volunteer from home opportunity), foster an animal, Medical Reserve Corps of El Paso County, Salvation Army, Silver Key, and United Way (ongoing opportunities).

I-25 MyWay commuting options website

In another effort to improve traveler and worker safety along the 18-mile-long construction zone of Interstate 25 between Monument and Castle Rock, rush-hour travelers now can help maximize their commute time by taking advantage of I-25 MyWay, a new partnership between the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Denver Regional Council of Governments. I-25 MyWay is offering transit, vanpool and carpool incentives to commuters willing to try a new mode of transportation between Colorado Springs and Denver. By taking more single-occupant vehicles off the road, it helps reduce congestion and enhances the environment. Commuters can learn more about eligibility and types of incentives at i25MyWay.org. The site will run through the end of construction in 2022.

Sign up for "Reverse 9-1-1" emergency notifications to your cell phones

The Emergency Notification System (powered by Everbridge), commonly referred to as Reverse 9-1-1, is a tool that can make rapid notifications to specific geographic areas to alert you to emergency situations including manmade disasters, evacuations, hazardous materials incidents, missing persons, and more. Reverse 9-1-1 is not the same as Amber Alerts, which are generated by a different system. You must register to receive emergency notifications on any phone other than your landline. You can list up to five locations and up to eight points of contact. Sign up at www.elpasoteller911.org.

Senior Beat newsletter—subscribe for free

Each monthly *Senior Beat* newsletter is full of information for local seniors, including the daily menu of the senior lunches offered Monday through Friday at the Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Highway 105, Palmer Lake. It also contains the schedule of the classes and events for the month at the Senior Citizens Center and senior-friendly library programs. To subscribe, send an email with your name and mailing address to SeniorBeat@TriLakesSeniors.org. *Senior Beat* can also be viewed online at www.TriLakesSeniors.org.

Solar Power co-op forming

Solar United Neighbors is a nonprofit 501C3 forming a group in the area. It will help residents and businesses learn about solar energy. The co-op is free to join; for more information see www.solarunitedneighbors.org/ColoradoSprings.

Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, a voluntary organization of 16 counties and municipalities, offers several programs that may be of interest to our readers. One example: PPLD Partnership Medicare Series. Info: www.ppacg.org, (719) 471-7080.

Driver and vehicle services

Most driver and vehicle services can be completed online at mydmv.colorado.gov. Residents can renew their motor vehicle registration online at mydmv.colorado.gov, by phone at 520-6240, by mail, or by self-service kiosks at King Soopers (1070 W. Baptist Rd., Monument) or at the North Motor Vehicle Office at 8830 N. Union Blvd. (24/7 kiosk). For more information, phone 520-6200 or visit epcdrives.com. See ad on page 2.

EPC Community Engage, "What Can Code Enforcement Do for You?"

Want to learn more about what El Paso County's Code Enforcement can do for you, what constitutes a violation, and how to submit a complaint? See <https://planning-development.elpasoco.com/epccommunityengage/>.

May is Better Hearing & Speech Month

Be more aware of your hearing health. Visit A Better Hearing Center, 574 Hwy. 105 in May for a complimentary consultation and live-listening demonstration. www.abetterhearingcenter.com. See ad on page 7.

Attention Tri-Lakes residents
with medical conditions

If you have a medical condition or a physical disability, please contact Jennifer at Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, 484-0911, to register for emergency assistance if evacuation is

required.

Save your sewer system!

Grease from cooking, gravy, cooking oil, and sauces may look harmless as a liquid, but when it cools it gets thick and sticky. That means if you pour grease down your drain, it sticks to pipes

and eventually can cause clogs and messy overflows. Prevent backups in your home by pouring all grease from bacon, fried chicken, and other cooking grease into a can, putting in the freezer, then tossing it in the trash.

Our Community Calendar

By the OCN calendar team
We miss Judy Barnes' expert work on the calendar and notices.

If you are interested in helping OCN compile the monthly calendar and notices, please write to calendar@ocn.me.

Although we strive for accuracy in these listings, dates or times are often changed after publication. Please double-check the time and place of any event you wish to attend by calling the info number for that event.

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

Many entries show dates 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.

Please contact calendar@ocn.me with changes and additions.

GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

- **Monument Board of Trustees Workshop**, Mon., **May 3**, 5:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Info: 719-884-8017.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., **May 3**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 719-884-8017, www.townofmonument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees for remote attendance links.
- **El Paso Board of County Commissioners meeting, view agendas and meetings at www.agendasuite.org/iip/elpaso** Tue., **May 4**, 9 a.m. Centennial Hall, 200 S. Cascade Ave., Suite 150, Colo. Springs. Meets every Tue. Info: 719-520-6430, www.agendasuite.org/iip/elpaso.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission special meeting**, Wed., **May 5** and **May 26**. Adoption of Your El Paso Master Plan as the Master Plan for El Paso County, replacing previously adopted county Master Plan elements. Special hearings begin at 9 a.m. 719-520-6300. See www.elpasoco.com, Departments, Planning and Community Development, Planning Commission, 2021 meetings.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission meeting, live-streamed at elpasoco.com/public-meetings/**, Thu., **May 6 & 20**, 1 p.m., Centennial Hall, 200 S. Cascade Ave., Suite 150, Colo. Springs. Meets 1st & 3rd Thur. (if required) each month. Info: 719-520-6300, https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com/.
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Mon., **May 10**, 1 p.m., 1845 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Meets 2nd Mon. each month. Info: 719-488-2525, www.woodmoorwater.com.
- **Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee Meeting**, Tue., **May 11**, 10 a.m., 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Bill Burks, 719-481-4053.
- **Monument Land Development Code and Zoning Map Update Public Open House**, Tue., **May 11**, 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monument Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Info: Debbie Flynn, Planner II, Town of Monument Planning Department, 719-488-1604.
- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District Board meeting, call in only: 650-479-3208, Access Code 76439078**, Wed., **May 12**, 9 a.m., 120 Middle Glenway. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 719-481-2732. www.plsd.org.
- **Monument Planning Commission meeting**, Wed., **May 12**, 6 p.m. Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Topics are expected to include the Land Development Code and Zoning Map Update. To see the options for remote public participation in each meeting, visit www.townofmonument.org/263/Planning-Commission-Board-of-Adjustment. Info: 719-884-8028. www.townofmonument.org.
- **Monument Academy School Board meeting**, Thu., **May 13**, 6 p.m., see website for YouTube meeting link. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 719-481-1950, www.monumentacademy.net/school-board/

- board-meeting-minutes/.
- **Palmer Lake Town Council meeting**, Thu., **May 13**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 719-481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **D38 District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC)**, (skip May) Wed., 7 p.m., Usually meets five times per school year on the second Tuesday of the month (Sept., Oct., Nov., Jan., Feb., Apr.). https://www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCommunity. Info: 719.481.9546, vwood@lewispalmer.org.
- **Monument Academy School Board meeting**, Thu., **May 13**, 6:00 p.m., Board meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 719-481-1950, www.monumentacademy.net/school-board/board-meeting-minutes/.
- **Palmer Lake Town Board of Trustees meeting**, Thu., **May 13**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 719-481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board meeting**, Mon., **May 17**, 6-10 p.m., Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Meets 3rd Mon. each month. Livestream on the district's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCommunity, Agenda and supporting documents at https://go.boarddocs.com/co/lewispalmer/Board.nsf/vpublic. Info: (719) 488-4700, vwood@lewispalmer.org, www.lewispalmer.org.
- **Monument Board of Trustees workshop**, Mon., **May 17**, 5:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Discuss schedule revisions, TABOR, and home rule initiation. Info: 719-884-8017
- **Monument Board of Trustees meeting**, Mon., **May 17**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 719-884-8017, www.townofmonument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees for remote attendance links.
- **Wescott Fire Protection District Board meeting**, Tue., **May 18**, 4 p.m. Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. For a virtual meeting, the phone number is 669-900-9128, and the meeting code is 980 378 2073. Meetings are usually on the third Tuesday of each month. For information, call Executive Administrator Stacey Popovich at 719-488-8680 or see www.wescott-fire.org.
- **Monument Sanitation District Board meeting**, Wed, **May 19**, 9 a.m., 130 2nd St. Zoom meeting. Find joining instructions on the website. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 719-481-4886, www.colorado.gov/msd.
- **Academy Water and Sanitation District Board meeting, the public can join the Skype meeting: https://join.skype.com/PAcujKTh7Nrh. Check the website for a link: https://academywsd.colorado.gov/notices-and-alerts**, Wed., **May 19**, 6 p.m. Wescott Fire Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 719-481-0711, https://academywsd.colorado.gov.
- **Palmer Lake Town Planning Commission meeting**, Wed., **May 19**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 719-481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District Board meeting**, Wed, **May 19**, 7 p.m., Station 1, 11445 Teachout Rd. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 719-495-4300, www.bffire.org.
- **Donala Water & Sanitation District Board meeting, Check the website for the access code for the electronic meeting**, Thu., **May 20**, 9 a.m., 15850 Holbein Dr. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 719-488-3603, www.donalawater.org.
- **Triview Metropolitan District Board meeting**, Thu., **May 20**, 5:30 p.m., 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302, Monument. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 719-488-6868, www.triviewmetro.com.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission special meeting**, Wed., **May 26**, Action for the Master Plan adoption. 2021 special hearings begin at 9 a.m. Contact Planning and Community Development Department at 719-520-6300. Full staff reports for each item can also be found at www.elpasoco.com, Departments, Planning and Community Development, Planning Commission, 2021 Meetings.
- **Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Board meeting. Zoom meeting. Find joining in-**

- structions at www.tlmfire.org or contact Jennifer Martin, 719-484-0911**, Wed., **May 26**, 6:30 p.m. . Location change: From May-October 2021 the meetings will be held at the Chamber of Commerce, 166 Second St. downtown Monument. Meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: www.tlmfire.org.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board meeting**, Wed., **May 26**, 7 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: 719-488-2693, www.woodmoor.org.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., **June 7**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Topics are expected to include a public hearing on the Land Development Code and Zoning Map Update. Public hearing on Normally meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 719-884-8017, www.townofmonument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees for remote attendance links.

- WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS**
- **Monument Hill Farmer's Market**, every **Sat.** starting **May 15**. 8 a.m.-2 p.m. 66 Jefferson St. Many new vendors plus all your old favorites. 592-9420. See ad on page 5.
- **Group of Artists (GOA) meetings at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA), SUSPENDED**, 10 a.m.-noon, 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Lively discussions about art topics, general studies on creativity. Meets 1st Sat. each month. Info: 481-0475, info@trilakesarts.org
- **The Centering Prayer Group at Black Forest Community Church**. First **Sat.** of every month from 8:30-10 a.m. at the old log church. Centering prayer opens and closes the meetings with discussion and fellowship in between; open to all. Contact Rev. Roger Butts, 719-433-3135 for information.
- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Club Meeting, Zoom meeting, MHKiwanis.org, MonumentHillKiwanis@gmail.com for details; every Sat., 9 a.m.**, Guests are welcome at weekly meetings featuring speakers on a variety of topics and a free continental breakfast at normal meetings. Memberships open to the public. Join the 150+ men & women of the Tri-Lakes area who work together to make a difference for youth and our community. Info: RF Smith, 719-210-4987, www.MHKiwanis.org. See ad on page 3.
- **Neighborhood Net**, every **Sat.**, 10 a.m. Amateur radio operators practice for emergencies on weekly repeater nets so neighbors can help neighbors. Sign up at www.mereowx.org/neighborhood-net or contactus@mereowx.org.
- **The Wine Seller Free Wine Tastings, SUSPENDED**, every **Sat.**, 1-4 p.m., 2805 Roberts Dr., Monument. Info: 719-488-3019, www.thewineseller.net.
- **Bingo by the American Legion, SUSPENDED**, every **Sat.**, game sales start at 6 p.m., games start at 7 p.m., the Depot Restaurant, in Palmer Lake. Proceeds go to scholarships and other community support activities. Info: 719-481-8668, http://legionpost9-11.org/.
- **Lions Clubs Bingo, SUSPENDED**, every **Sat.**, 10


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- a.m., and Wed., 7 p.m.; Carefree Bingo, 3440 N. Carefree Circle, Colo. Springs. Tri-Lakes Lions Club's portion of the proceeds benefit those in need in the Tri-Lakes Community. Info: Jim Naylor, 719-481-8741 or www.trilakeslionsclub.org
- **Lucretia Vaile Museum, *closed for now***, 66 Lower Glenway St., Palmer Lake. Free. The museum houses items of local historical significance. Special displays rotate every 4-6 months. Info: 719-559-0837, <https://palmerdividehistory.org/>.
 - **Artful Outdoors**, every **Sat.-Sun.**, 1-3 p.m. and by appointment. Join Janet Sellers for weekly art and nature talks and DIY art techniques at local nature and art spots. All ages, good social distancing, masks required, all outdoors for now. Limited to 5 at a time for now. Info: janetsellers@ocn.me, www.StartMyArt.com.
 - **Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church**, both in-person and livestream at tlumc.org/live every **Sun.**, 8 & 11 a.m. traditional, 9:30 a.m. contemporary. Watch live or on replay: facebook.com/tlumc, youtube.com/tlumc. Registration required for in-person worship tlumc.org/registration. Info: 719-488-1365, tlumc.org. See ad on page 3.
 - **Fuel Church** Sunday Service, every **Sun.**, Connection 9:30-10 a.m. New service times, 10:45 a.m. Live service streaming at fuelchurch.org at 11:25 a.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Nursery & kids service. Non-denominational, spirit-filled. Need prayer? Email us info@fuel.org. See ad on page 8.
 - **Women's A.A. Step Study, *meeting remotely, call for details***, every **Mon.**, 6:30 p.m., Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 Baptist Rd. Park in west lot. Info: 866-641-9190.
 - **Monument Life Recovery Group, *Check the website***, every **Mon.**, 6:30-7:30 p.m., The Ascent Church, 1750 Deer Creek Rd. This faith-based support group is for those seeking freedom from all hurts, habits, and hang-ups. Daycare provided for children under age 11. Info: 303-946-2659, liferecoverygroups.com/meetings/life-recovery-group-3/.
 - **Monument Hill Kiwanis Bingo, *SUSPENDED***, every **Mon.**, 7:30 p.m., Carefree Bingo, 3440 N. Carefree Circle, Colo. Springs. All proceeds benefit those in need in the Tri-Lakes Community. Info: bingo@mhkiwanis.org.
 - **Senior Citizen Luncheons, Connections Café sites will have "grab and go" (prepared meals)**. every **Mon.-Fri.**, 12-12:30 p.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. A \$2.25 donation is requested. Please call 719-884-2300 to reserve your meal. See the menu for the month in the *Senior Beat* newsletter. Meals on Wheels and Home Delivered Meals will deliver frozen meals for the week to Monument on Wednesdays. Food Pantry offers a "pick up only" model for clients.
 - **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI)**, every **Mon., Wed., Fri.**, Sat., 9 a.m.-4 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). Group tours are suspended temporarily. Masks required. Cost: \$11 adults, \$10 military/AAA, \$9 seniors & students, \$6 children 3-12, free to children under 3 & museum members. Info: 719-488-0880, info@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.
 - **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI), Lecture Series, *check the website***, Tue., 7-8 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). RSVP & Info: 488-0880, RSVP@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.
 - **Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Thrift Store**, now open **Mon.-Sat.**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 755 Hwy 105, Suite N, in the West End Center. All proceeds support Tri-Lakes Senior Programs. Volunteers needed, phone 716-464-6873. To donate furniture, call 719-488-3495 for a pickup. Info: www.TriLakesSeniors.org.
 - **Tri-Lakes YMCA Senior Coffee, *SUSPENDED***, every **Tue.**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy, Monument. Members and non-members are welcome. Socialize, have coffee and snacks in the front lobby. Free. Info: 719-630-2604, <https://ppymca.org/locations/north/tri-lakes/tri-lakes/holly-brandon>.
 - **Adult Children of Alcoholics/Dysfunctional Families meeting: ACA Promises**, every **Tue.**, 6:30-7:30 p.m. As a child, did you develop a false self in order to survive? See quiz at <https://adultchildren.org/newcomer/am-i-an-adult-child/>. The solution is learning to re-parent ourselves with gentleness, humor, love, and respect. Meeting via Zoom. Call/text Stacey 206-384-8285 or see www.adultchildren.org (click on Newcomer), information@acawso.com
 - **Al-anon Meeting: Monument Serenity, *visit www.al-anon-co.org to find online and phone meetings*** every **Tue.**, 7:30-8:30 p.m., Ascent Church (formerly the Tri-Lakes Chapel), 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. Info: Kay, 719-481-9258, www.al-anon-co.org.
 - **Essentrics Fitness Program at Senior Center**, every **Tue.**, 9 a.m. & **Thu.**, 10 a.m., Lewis-Palmer High School modular building across from the YMCA, on Jackson Creek Pkwy. Registration & info: Sue Walker, 719-330-0241, trilakesseniors.org
 - **Peak Reader Children's Literacy Program, *SUSPENDED***, every **Tue. & Thu.**, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Free one-to-one tutoring for children reading below grade level. To enroll your child or volunteer as a tutor, visit www.childrensliteracycenter.org or call 719-471-8672.
 - **Tri-Lakes Cruisers, a nonprofit car club**. Wed., May 5, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce community room. Meets the first Wed. of every month. The club is preparing for its annual car show scheduled for the last Sunday in August (Aug. 29, 2021) with 20 trophies to be awarded. Club membership applications are now being accepted and are available on the website: tl-cruisers.weebly.com on the "ABOUT" page.
 - **Tri-Lakes Church of Christ** Wednesday Night Fellowship Meal (Free) & Classes, ***SUSPENDED***, every **Wed.**, 6-7:30 p.m., 20450 Beacon Lite Road, Monument (corner of Beacon Lite & County Line Roads). Info: 488-9613, gregsmith@trilakeschurch.org, www.trilakeschurch.org.
 - **Zoom Bible Study, Kehilat**, every **Wed.**, 6:15 p.m. Bring your hungry and tired so they can be filled and more blessed. Ms. Williams, 719-453-6279.
 - **Al-anon Meeting: Letting Go, *visit www.al-anon-co.org to find online and phone meetings*** every **Thu.**, 9-10:10 a.m., Ascent Church, 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. Info: www.al-anon.co.org.
 - **Monumental Impact's Community of Support**, **Thu., May 20** and **Thu., June 10**, 5 p.m. 55 Adams St. (virtual link can be emailed), Connect with businesses and individuals involved in technology, engineering and entrepreneurship that are interested in being the Community of Support to high school students in these career pathways. May and June students will have an opportunity to pitch their product and project ideas. Info: 719-387-7414, enable@monumentalimpact.org. Register: monumentalimpact.org/community/.
 - **A.A. Big Book Study, *Call 425-436-6200, access code 575176#*** every **Thu.**, 7 p.m., Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 W. Baptist Rd.
 - **The Speedtrap, Music on the Patio**. every **week-end in May**. 84 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Open 8-2 every day, later on weekends. Info: 719-488-2007, www.speedtrapbistro.com. See ad on page 5.
 - **Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS), *check website***, every **Fri.**, 8 a.m., Monument Chamber of Commerce, 166 2nd St., Monument. Info: Terry, 719-684-4912, or visit www.TOPS.org.
 - **Chess Nuts**, every **Mon.**, 5-9 p.m., Silver Alliance Senior Center, across the street from the YMCA. Any age, any skill. Learners welcome. Drop in and leave when you want. Bring your own board and pieces if you have them. Meets every Monday, 1 p.m. Info: www.TriLakesSeniors.org/chess.
 - **Black Forest AARP Potluck Lunch & Meeting, *all in-person AARP activities are canceled through the first quarter of 2021***, 12455 Black Forest Rd. All ages welcome. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. RSVP & info: Stan, 596-6787, www.aarpchapter-1100blackforest.weebly.com.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Silver Alliance Senior Center across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on the Lewis-Palmer High School campus. A registered nurse examines your feet and provides foot care advice, toenail trimming. **By appointment only**. Info: Nurse Association, 719-577-4448.
 - **Bridge, *SUSPENDED***, Silver Alliance Senior Center, 1300 Higby Rd., Monument. Formerly met 2nd Thu. each month, Sept.-June. Info: www.trilakes-seniors.org/programs/events.html.
 - **Senior Bingo, *SUSPENDED***, Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake, after the senior lunch. Come for lunch at noon, then stay and play. Free! Prizes! Formerly met 2nd Thu. each month. Info: Maggie Nealon, 719-488-3037.
 - **Ben Lomond Gun Club, *SUSPENDED***, Tri-Lakes Chapter Formerly met 2nd Thu. each month. Info: <https://blgc.org/>.
 - **Silver Center Book Club**, **Fri., May 14**, 11 a.m.-noon, Senior Center across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on Lewis-Palmer High School campus. All are welcome. Coffee & snacks served. Meets 2nd Fri. each month. RSVP & Info: Sue, 719-330-0241.
 - **El Paso County Hazardous Materials & Recycling Collection Facility. *https://communityservices.elpasoco.com/environmental-division/ Appointments required***. 719-520-7878.
 - **Palmer Lake Art Group. *Check the website***. Formerly met 2nd Sat. each month, , Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer

Lake. A variety of art programs is offered after the social gathering and business meeting. Guests welcome. Info: 719-460-4179, www.palmerlakeart-group.com.

- **Amateur Radio W0TLM (Tri-Lakes Monument Radio Association), *check the website***, Mon., May 17. All amateur radio operators or those interested in becoming one are welcome. Meets 3rd Mon. Info: Joyce Witte, 719-661-9824, Joycewitte@gmail.com; www.W0TLM.com.
- **Gleneagle Sertoma luncheon meeting, *SUSPENDED***, Liberty Heights, 12105 Ambassador Dr., Colo. Springs. Interesting speakers and programs; all are welcome. Formerly met 1st & 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Garrett Barton, 719-433-5396; Duane Gritzmaker, 719-481-2424; www.gleneaglesertoma.org.
- **Senior Bingo, Silver Alliance Senior Center**, Wed., May 19. Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Masks required. Space is limited to 16 participants; RSVP required. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. RSVP & Info: Sue Walker, 719-464-6873, or email sue@monumentalfitness.
- **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7829, *via Zoom.com; POC Delbert Zehrung, 559-362-3223***. Wed., **May 19**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. New members welcome. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Post Commander Joe Carlson, 405-326-2588, jcarlson@vfw7829.org, www.vfw7829.org.
- **VFW Auxilliary to Post 7829, *meeting by videoconference***, Wed., **May 19**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. Guests are welcome to join; contact carlsonmkc@aol.com for instructions on how to connect. If you are a male or female relative of a veteran who served on foreign soil during war or other military action, you may be eligible. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Kathy Carlson, 719-488-1902, carlsonmkc@aol.com.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society meeting, *SUSPENDED***, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. All are welcome. Formerly met 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 719-559-0837, www.palmerdivide-history.org.
- **Gleneagle Women's Club, *SUSPENDED***, Come for lunch, book discussions, bridge, and more. Location for lunch varies. Formerly met the third Fri. each month, Sept.-June. Info: Syble Krafft, 719-488-2669.
- **Tri-Lakes Parkinson's Disease Support Group, *SUSPENDED; if you need any help, please call Syble or Barry***. Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St., Monument. Come for socializing, discussions on Parkinson's-related issues including available support, and occasional speakers. Formerly met the 3rd Sat. each month. Info: Syble Krafft, 719-488-2669; Barry (group president), 719-351-9485.
- **Faithful Friends discussion group**, 3254 Forest Lakes Dr., Monument. Info: Ellen, 303-526-5000.
- **Grief Share Support Group**, Tue., **May 15**, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Tri-Lakes Senior Center, across the street from the YMCA. The Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance has partnered with Colorado Palliative & Hospice Care to host a 13-session grief support group in Monument. Meets last Tue. each month. RSVP & Info: Sue Walker, 719-330-0241.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber Monthly Education Series**. 166 Second St., Monument. Free event for members and non-members. Please register for virtual attendance information: www.trilakeschamber.com. Info: 481-3282.
- **Senior Social, *all in-person AARP activities are canceled through the first quarter of 2021***, 12455 Black Forest Rd. Formerly met the 4th Wed. each month except Nov. & Dec. Info: aarpchapter-1100blackforest.weebly.com.
- **Friends of Fox Run Park, *Zoom meeting***, **Thu., May 27**, 6-7 p.m., email friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com and they will email you the link the day of the meeting. Join the growing group to learn about volunteering and supporting the park for safety, trails, trees, education, more. Meets 4th Thu. each month. Info: marlenebrown@ocn.me.
- **Myasthenia Gravis Association** of Colorado Support Group. Location varies. Info: Carolyn, 488-3620, www.4-mga.org, 303-360-7080, 4mga@4-mga.org.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Black Forest Arts & Craft Guild sale**. **Thu.-Sat., Apr. 29-May 1**, 9 a.m.-8 p.m., **Sun. May 2**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Thousands of handmade craft items, baked goods, etc. Near The Corner of Black Forest & Shoup Roads, Black Forest Community Center, 12530 Black Forest Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80908. Info: www.bfacg.org.
- **Ready Set Go! - Wildland Fire Prevention/Mitigation Day**, **Sat. May 15**, 8 a.m.-noon, on grounds

- of Lewis-Palmer Elementary School, 1315 Lake Woodmoor Dr, Monument. See before & after demonstrations of wildfire vegetation risk reduction. Dave Root Colorado State Forester, Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control, the El Paso County Sheriff's Office Wildland Crew, emergency evacuation planning. See www.tlmfire.org or jbumgarner@tlmfire.org for details.
- **Friends of Fox Run Park HollyDay**, Sat., **May 15**, 11-1 p.m. Holly Williams, county commissioner District 1, will be at Fox Run Regional Park. Bring your lunch and walk and talk with Holly. Bring your concerns about the future of the park, traffic, and any other questions you might have for our commissioner for Northern El Paso County. For more information, contact marlene.brown@ocn.me
 - **Monumental Med-Spa Grand Reopening**, Sun. **May 16**, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Food, live music, prizes. The Loft, 4 Hwy. 105, Palmer Lake. See ad on page 12.
 - **Shred Event**, Mon.-Fri., **May 17-21**, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sat., **May 22**, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.. Sensitive Household Documents - up to 50 pounds for secure shredding. Pound for pound, Schur Success Group recommends a pound of food for a pound of shred or \$1 per pound, all benefitting Tri-Lakes Cares. 366 Second St., Suite B, Monument.
 - **Colorado Springs Philharmonic Guild Listening Club, free virtual event**, Tue., **May 18**, 2 p.m. Maestro Wilson will conduct monthly, one-hour programs. RVSP at www.cspguild.org/listening-club.html
 - **Art Hop**, Thu., **May 20**, 5-8 p.m. Art Hop is the third Thu. May-Sep. Info: 719-481-2665.
 - **Art Hop at Covered Treasures Bookstore**, Thu., **May 20**, 5-8 p.m. Covered Treasures Bookstore, 105 Second St., Monument. Susan Joy Paul (*Woman in the Wild: The Everywoman's Guide to Hiking, Camping, and Backcountry Travel*) and Chris Meehan (*Best Outdoor Adventures Colorado Front Range: A Guide to the Region's Greatest Hiking, Climbing, Cycling, and Paddling*). Art Hop is the third Thu May-Sep Info: 719-481-2665.
 - **Cherry Creek Crossing Multi-Family Garage Sales**, Sat. **May 22**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. NW corner Hodgen Rd. & Hwy. 83. See ad on page 6.
 - **Service in the Parks Day at Palmer Lake**, Sat., **May 22**, 9 a.m.-noon. All volunteers must sign the Waiver Agreement to participate. [Townofpalmerlake.com/Forms & Applications](http://Townofpalmerlake.com/Forms%20&%20Applications). Send form to lindseyleiker@gmail.com to sign up & email your Waiver Agreement.
 - **Memorial Day Ceremony**, Mon., **May 31**, 10 a.m., Monument Cemetery, 800 Eighth St., Monument. Honoring all military veterans. Free and open to the public; bring chairs. Carpool to save parking. Contact our events coordinator 719-481-2954 if you would like to participate at this event Townof-Monument.org/331/Memorial-Day-Ceremony. See ad on page 8.
 - **Our Community News mailing days**, Wed.-Fri., **June 2-4**. We need your help for an hour or two. Email editor@ocn.me for slots available to help count and prepare 21,500 newspapers for U.S. Postal Service mailing. Box truck driver needed too.
 - **Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA)**

Our Community News is a member of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce. Visit the chamber at www.trilakeschamber.com



Support Our Community Advertise in OCN!

Our Community News (OCN), with a circulation of over 21,600, is a unique all-volunteer monthly newspaper mailed FREE to every resident and business in the Tri-Lakes area. OCN is a primary source for Tri-Lakes area news that gives advertising preference to Tri-Lakes and Black Forest businesses. OCN's contract-free low ad rates and monthly publication schedule help stretch your ad budget while supporting an important Tri-Lakes-focused effort to present factual, comprehensive news to all Tri-Lakes area residents and business owners.

For advertising information, contact John Heiser, (719) 488-3455, ads@ocn.me, or visit www.ocn.me.

- Telephone Town Hall Annual Cooperative Meeting**, Thu., **June 3**, 6 p.m. in the comfort of your home. Register at www.mvea.coop/annual-meeting. Win bill credits and prizes. See ad on page 12.
- **Woodmoor Neighborhood Garage Sale**, Fri.-Sat., **June 25-26**, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Register as a seller by **June 18** at woodmoorgaragesale.com. Claire Garlick (719) 332-8360.
 - **Purely Ponds Parade of Ponds and Waterfalls**, Sat.-Sun **June 26-27**, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Self-guided charity pond and waterfall tour will be held from on 2021. Visit water feature exhibits throughout Colorado Springs, Monument, and the surrounding area. Purely Ponds Fine Landscapes will match and donate proceeds from ticket sales to The Boys & Girls Club of the Pikes Peak Region. Ticket books, complete with tour map, addresses, driving directions, and descriptions are just \$5 per ticket. Tickets will be available by **June 1** online at www.purelyponds.com/parade-of-ponds. Tour attendees are responsible for their own transportation and expected to follow current COVID-19 guidelines. For more information, please visit us online at purelyponds.com/parade-of-ponds or call 719-896-0038. The Boys & Girls Club greatly appreciate your generosity. Thank you so much for your support and help to publicize this charity event. Purely Ponds Fine Landscapes. 719-896-0038
 - **Independence Day Celebration**, Sun., **July 4**. (Approval for the 2021 parade is expected in early May.) Meanwhile, to view the "Monument Hill Kiwanis 2020 VIRTUAL Parade, Celebrating Our First Responders, Health Care Professionals, and Critical Support Workers," visit monumenthillkiwanis.org/mhk/index.php/parade-showcase.
 - **Community CPR Class Fundraiser to benefit Tri-Lakes Cares**, Tue., **July 6**, 5 p.m. Limbach Park. You will learn adult, child, and infant CPR in an hour. \$10 minimum donation is required. RSVP monumentcommtraining@gmail.com.
 - **Tri-Lakes Cruisers Annual Car Show**, Sun., **Aug. 29**. Twenty trophies to be awarded. Club membership applications are now being accepted and are available on the website: tl-cruisers.weebly.com on the "ABOUT" page.
 - **Palmer Lake Wine Festival**, Sat., **Sep. 11**, 1-5 p.m. VIP noon. Palmer Lake Recreation Area. A portion of proceeds to benefit Tri-Lakes Cares. Buy tickets at PLWF2021.com.

Content

Articles in Our Community News focus on the deliberations of Tri-Lakes area governmental bodies such as the Monument Board of Trustees, Palmer Lake Town Council, and many of the local water, sanitation, fire, and school district boards.

Unlike papers that try to figure out what the "story" is and then get quotes on each side to presumably lead the reader to conclude what the "truth" is, OCN's role is to report in detail on public meetings of local governmental entities. We report what was talked about and what was decided. By reading OCN, you can find out what you might have learned if you had attended those public meetings. In this context, "truth" is that the articles accurately represent what transpired at the meetings.

The content of ads, inserts, and letters to the editor in OCN is solely the responsibility of the advertisers and authors who place those ads, inserts, and letters. The appearance of an ad, insert, or letter in OCN does not imply endorsement of the ad, insert, or letter's content or purpose. While OCN does not knowingly run false ads, inserts, or letters, we do not research the accuracy of that content. Readers are encouraged to do their own research prior to committing to use the products or services offered or accept the conclusions of letters to the editor. Readers with concerns about the content of an ad, insert, or letter should take up those concerns with the advertiser or author.

Contact John Heiser, Publisher, at johnheiser@ocn.me or (719) 488-3455 with any questions.

Support Our Community. Volunteer with OCN!

Please join us today! Meet a group of interesting and committed people. Learn new skills—use your enthusiasm and creativity to benefit our community and celebrate unfiltered information. Please call John Heiser, Publisher, at (719) 488-3455, or email johnheiser@ocn.me to see how you can contribute. Contact us today!

Our community calendar carries listings on a space-available basis for Tri-Lakes events that are sponsored by local governmental entities and not-for-profit organizations. We include events that are open to the general public and are not religious or self-promotional in nature. If space is available, complimentary calendar listings are included, when requested, for events advertised in the current issue. To have your event listed at no charge in Our Community Calendar, please call (719) 339-7831 or send the information to cal-

Letters to Our Community

Our Community News welcomes letters to the editor on topics of general interest to readers in the Tri-Lakes area. We do not knowingly print letters that are substantially the same as letters that have been submitted to other publications. To ensure that OCN contains a variety of viewpoints, each letter writer is limited to a maximum of one (1) letter per issue and six (6) letters within a twelve (12) month period. To submit a letter, please:

- Email your letter, preferably as an attached Microsoft Word document, to editor@ocn.me or mail a copy to **Our Community News, P.O. Box 1742, Monument, CO 80132-1742.**
- Identify your submission as a letter to the editor and confirm that it has not been submitted to any other publication.
- Include a suggested headline or title that summarizes the topic you are addressing.
- Limit your letter to no more than 300 words including your suggested headline and closing.
- Include your full name, home address, phone numbers, and email address, if you have one. Only your name will be published.
- Submit your letter so we receive it no later than midnight, Friday, two weeks prior to the publication date.

If you have not received an acknowledgement two days after your email submission or one week after you mailed your letter, please contact Jennifer Kaylor, Managing Editor, at (719) 488-3455 or editor@ocn.me. At OCN's sole discretion, we may ask you for clarification of your statements. Include references, such as website links, in your letter for any facts and figures you cite. OCN does not guarantee every letter will appear in print or on-line and does not guarantee a publication date. Depending on the space available, the number of letters printed in an issue may be limited to the first 12 received. Letters containing personal attacks or endorsements for or complaints about individually-named commercial products or services will not be published.

Look for our next issue Saturday, June 5

Ad space reservations due: Fri., May 14
Finished ad artwork due: Fri., May 21
Letters to the editor due: Fri., May 21
Calendar items due: Fri., May 28

Visit our website to read, download, and search all the back issues at **WWW.OCN.ME**



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Event information: calendar@ocn.me

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Every month more than 21,000 copies of OCN are delivered **by mail** to businesses and residents throughout the Tri-Lakes area. Another 700 copies are placed in stacks in local shops and offices.

For information on OCN advertising, contact John Heiser at (719) 488-3455 or ads@ocn.me or visit www.ocn.me/advertise.htm.

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Did you know that our advertisers are the reason *Our Community News* is mailed FREE to the entire Tri-Lakes community?

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