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Issue #259 — Volume 22 Number 10 — Saturday, October 1, 2022

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See page 28**

## Local Events

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.

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

- **Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day**, Sat., Oct. 1, 9 am
- **WMMI Miners' Pumpkin Patch**, every Saturdays starting Oct 1., 9 am - 4 pm
- **Heartsaver CPR/AED and First Aid Training**, Register before Oct. 5
- **Grow your business workshop**, Wed., Oct. 5, 8:30 am-3 pm.
- **Water Lantern Festival at Fox Run Park**, Sat., Oct. 8, 4:30-8:30pm
- **Crafts Plus Fair**, Sat., Oct.8, Peyton
- **Empty bowls dinner and silent auction**, Wed., Oct. 12, 5-7:30 pm
- **MVEA member appreciation days**, lunch and pie, Wed.-Thu., Oct 12-13
- **Masakazu Ito guitar concert**, Sat., Oct. 15, 6 pm
- **Tri-Lakes Monument radio Association introductory amateur ham radio license class**, Sat., Oct. 15 - 22
- **100+ Women Who Care**, Wed., Oct. 19, 5 pm
- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., Oct. 27, approx. 9 am-2 pm. Information on page 28.
- **YMCA 5K race: Creepy crawl 5K**, Sat., Oct. 29
- **MVEA High Schoolers Win a Summer Trip contest**. Deadline Nov. 10

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### Circulation

Print Run: 22,420  
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## Tim Watkins Memorial ride, Sept. 15



*Article and photos by Steve Pate*

On Sept. 15 five years ago, Tim Watkins rode his mountain bike into an area he loved near Mount Herman and Limbaugh Canyon. He did not return, and his family became worried. The following day, El Paso County Search and Rescue organized search teams and on Sept. 17 his remains were found partially buried off-trail. He had been shot.

Watkins is well-known to the Tri-Lakes mountain-biking community and his contribution to local trail building and maintenance was exceptional.

Last month, his family and friends gathered at the Tim Watkins Memorial site next to the Palmer Lake Library on Saturday, Sept. 17. Watkins's wife Ginger, his daughter Arielle, and his brother Da-

vid shared memories of their good times with Tim. After the gatherings in Palmer Lake, many biked south on the Santa Fe Trail, a few taking a side trip through the new Santa Fe Open Space, to the Trails End Taproom in Monument to continue sharing their feelings and memories of Watkins and to remember that no one has been held accountable for Watkins's death in the public eye.

The consensus among those attending the memorial is that someone must know what happened. The goal now is to hold an annual event on Sept. 17 to keep this unsolved crime in the public consciousness until someone comes forward with information that will lead to the person(s) who killed Tim.

For those who visit the Tim Watkins

Memorial in Palmer Lake (shown in the inset photo above), you'll notice a bike frame, a likeness of a red-tailed hawk, and other items. Jeff Tessier, who custom-built the bike Watkins rode on his last ride, contributed the scaled-down replica bike frame, and he and Rob Meeker and Meeker's son, Rob, created the hawk.

Family and friends hope that anyone who has information relevant to this tragic event will come forward and contact local law enforcement. The family also hopes that the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, with its considerable resources, will get involved.

*Steve Pate may be contacted at  
StevePate@OCN.me.*

*Monument Board of Trustees, Sept. 6 and 19*

## Developers clash with neighbors; trustees frustrated after planners quit

*By Chris Jeub*

The Monument Board of Trustees met Sept. 6 and 19. Police Chief Sean Hemingway swore in Police Officer Kristina DeRienzo, and trustees discussed a building moratorium. Many ordinances and resolutions were discussed and voted upon.

### Moratorium discussed

The idea of a development moratorium for the Town of Monument stirred discussion among the board members, the town manager and lawyer, and community members, but included a legal threat from Classic Homes, a major housing de-

veloper in the area.

Town Manager Mike Foreman shared the employment limitations resulting from two planners recently leaving—Planning Director Nina Ruiz and Planner Debbie Flynn. Ruiz left for other

**MONUMENT (Cont. on 2)**

*Monument Academy School Board, Sept. 1, 8, and 13*

## COO resigns; board fills vacancy and considers MLO

*By Jackie Burhans*

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held two special meetings and one regular meeting in September. On Sept. 1 the board held a forum for candidates to fill its vacant position. On Sept. 8 the board selected a candidate for the

vacancy, discussed the D38 mill levy override (MLO) issue, and heard reports. Finally, on Sept. 13 the board held a special meeting to go into executive session where they discussed the resignation of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) Merlin Holmes.

### COO Holmes resigns

The board called a special meeting on Sept. 13 at 9 a.m. to go into executive session "to discuss personnel matters with prior notice to [an] individual employee

**MA (Cont. on 5)**



MONUMENT (Cont. from 1)

employment, and Flynn moved to Florida, though Flynn has agreed to continue helping the Planning Department long-distance through a 1099 contractual agreement for a limited time. Foreman shared that summer projects are “start-

ing to slow down,” that he will serve as the interim planning director for the time being, and that he will not rush new developments until staff can be more prepared.

Trustee Jim Romonello noted that “we are fairly uncompetitive for plan-

ners.” Foreman expressed, “It is difficult to hire planning directors in every community in Colorado.” Foreman has hired Jacobs Engineering, a firm that Monument has worked with before, to help move along development projects. He also provided resumes to ensure the firm had no conflicts of interest for current projects. Applications are being taken for new planners.

Trustee Mitch LaKind said his suggestion that developers self-impose their own moratorium “lit up.” He claimed developers “lambasted me” and submitted projects anyway rather than refraining from “clogging the pipeline.” Foreman reminded the trustees that though the town is without a planner or director, they still have Planning Technician Theresa Rust on staff making sure current projects remain active.

Trustees Ron Stephens and Redmond Ramos asked Interim Town Attorney Joseph Rivera about the ramifications of putting developments on pause with a moratorium. Rivera advised the trustees to have a compelling reason for a moratorium and to set a specific timeline. He then suggested a study session to define these parameters, and Mayor Don Wilson suggested the trustees assemble in early October for the session. However, Foreman warned that assembling in early October would push up projects. “So, in an effort to pause, we would hurry things up,” Wilson said. The trustees then decided to keep the Oct. 7 canceled from the calendar and to do no workshop.

Several community members weighed in on the discussion. Steve King said the system is in “disarray” and that tonight was a perfect example of why we need a planning department. Ken Kimple claimed that “the developers aren’t going

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anywhere” and that the town should have a 90-day moratorium until “everything gets up to speed.” Brandy Turner shared that she was originally for a moratorium, but after hearing the discussion among the trustees was leaning against the idea. “My gut says [the moratorium] is just too much,” she said. Greg Coopman, a former trustee, warned of the appearance of impropriety in the meeting.

Nate Lenz, corporate counsel for Classic Homes, called the moratorium “completely inappropriate.” He explained that developers “contribute more than their fair share” and that the economic impact on developers would be significant. Lenz specifically called out King and claimed that he would love to sit down and talk about solutions

other than just “anti-growth.” Other projects are on the horizon that will be good for the town of Monument. He concluded if a moratorium “is hastily done, there will be a [legal] challenge [to the town].”

The trustees ended the meeting with requests for clarification and a message of rebuke. Trustee Darcy Shoening reflected disappointment in the Planning Department’s restriction of water use, asking why re-

strictions are imposed through Sept. 30 while approving more housing. Foreman, along with Trustee Stephens and Mayor Wilson, explained more of the process, that the restrictions were not a problem with the actual water in the ground but more of the infrastructure to get that water to residents. Trustee Ramos directed criticism toward Classic Homes. Ramos cited how Lenz’s comments attempted to invalidate concerns

from citizens. “The one person that spoke [tonight] that was rude and threatening was you, and that was wildly off-base. That is not acceptable here.” Ramos’ comments were met with

applause.  
**Ordinances**  
The board passed Ordinance No. 16-2022 repealing Ordinance No. 15-2022 by a vote of 7-0. The latter ordinance was in-



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tended to simplify processes but instead made planning more confusing. Foreman expressed that this ordinance was a mistake by the Planning Department and vowed to go back to the original ordinance and its intent. Public comment from several residents claimed the new ordinance was misleading and kept important documents from the board. Rivera compared the new ordinance to "pressing the undo button in a Microsoft Word document."

The board passed Ordinance No. 17-2022 approving the rezoning for a new business along Beacon Lite Road by a vote of 7-0, but only after discussing the disapproval from the town Planning Commission. The new business, Trailers Direct Express, would like to change from a PUD established from the previous owners (ABC Construction) to light-residential zoning. The new zoning is stricter than a PUD, but the new owners would like to develop it as such.

Public comments included several who were more concerned for the traffic problems on Beacon Lite Road than the applicant themselves. Terri Hayes, president and CEO of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, argued that Trailers Direct Express "crossed all their t's and dotted all their i's" and that the board should not deny the request. Referring to the town's comprehensive plan, she implored, "Trust your own plan and processes." Town Planning Commissioner Danny Ours called

in to express the intent of the Planning Commission: Keep from setting a precedent of rezoning properties in Monument. Community members seemed to agree but thought Trailers Direct Express wasn't the company to make the example. The applicant and the town staff emphasized that going back to the original zoning will help ensure the property is developed according to the town's comprehensive plan.

**Public hearings**

The board passed Resolution No. 68-2022 to approve a subdivision plat for Investing in Front Street by a vote of 7-0. The plot is at the corner of Second and Front Streets and consists of 15 lots covering 1.15 acres with a mixture of residential and commercial retail. It is currently zoned Downtown Business District (DB). Trustee Schoening asked the applicant to clarify the difference between attainable and affordable housing, and this plat was exclusively attainable with no subsidized housing offered. Maggie Williamson of Bella Art & Frame and Hayes spoke in favor of the project. Though some community members expressed concerns over parking, architect Brandon Papus explained that the development provided two parking spaces per unit, while the Planning Department required only 1.5. Wilson also observed that parking will come up later in the final plat anyway.

The board passed Resolution No. 69-2022 to approve the first amendment to the service plan for the Willow Springs Metropolitan District by a vote of 7-0. Willow Springs is located at the south side of town and consists of 120 acres of 399 homes and 100 acres of open space. The representative from Willow Springs explained the history of the development dating back to 2008 when it was first proposed by different owners. The purpose of the service plan is to increase the district's debt limit "to help facilitate the financing of the significant increase in the cost of public improvements." At the time in 2008, public infrastructure cost estimates were just shy of \$10 million, but today's estimates run over \$31 million.

The board passed Resolution No. 70-2022 to initiate annexation of Monument Ridge West and East by a vote of 7-0. The annexation is on both sides of the in-

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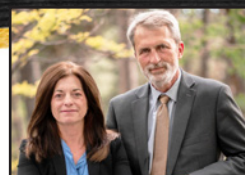


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terstate south of County Line Road. Rivera explained that preliminary findings found the annexation justified. Trustee LaKind asked if rezoning would be required, and Rivera explained that zoning would have to be assigned when annexing. Trustee Schoening asked if the board would be able to restrict multifamily housing from the rezoning, and Foreman said yes.

**Tabled discussions: signs, construction noise, schools**

In the Sept. 6 meeting, Trustee Schoening asked for clarification on what the sign placement rules were for the town. Rivera explained that a town may remove signs from public rights-of-way for aesthetic or traffic reasons but may not remove signs to regulate content. Schoening claimed that the current town code was unclear. Both Foreman and Hemingway agreed that enforcement does not have a clear directive to remove signs or not. After the sign ordinance was read aloud, Schoening suggested trustees strike the ordinance altogether, but Wilson instead asked the town manager to refrain from pulling any signs until later clarification of the ordinance. Review of the current sign code is set for discussion on Nov. 9.

During public comment, Ken Kemple complained that construction crews were making noise late into the evening in developments throughout Monument, a violation of code 8-20-050. He claimed to have emailed the town and even called the police, but no enforcement

mechanism seems to be in place to stop the noise. Ramos asked if there were fines for such disturbances, and Hemmingway said enforcement always seeks compliance first. Crews have consistently complied when challenged.

D38 Superintendent KC Somers asked the trustees to help make the upcoming mill levy override proposal a key discussion point in future meetings. Somers explained how Monument—despite its wealthy neighborhoods and excellent educational success—has not passed a levy since 1999. The last proposed levy which failed sought upgrades for all employees, but the upcoming ballot initiative is specifically for teachers. “Teachers have done the hero’s work,” Somers said. He compared the lack of teacher retention to the lack of police retention in the past, and D38 loses good teachers more than most districts in our region. Wilson asked Foreman to schedule a time for a lengthier discussion about Somers’s comments.

\*\*\*\*\*

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 Oct. 3 meeting has been canceled; the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, Oct. 17. Call 719-884-8014 or see [www.townofmonument.org](http://www.townofmonument.org) for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets or to

download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutesondemand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

Chris Jeub can be reached at [chrisjeub@ocn.me](mailto:chrisjeub@ocn.me).

**Editor’s Note**

On Sept. 26, OCN received a copy of a letter Classic Homes sent to the town clarifying Classic’s position. That letter is posted at [www.ocn.me/pdf/v22n10classicletter.pdf](http://www.ocn.me/pdf/v22n10classicletter.pdf).

**MA (Cont. from 1)**

on [a] specific personnel matter and to receive legal advice regarding [a] confidential HR matter.” After an hour and a half, the board reconvened and board member Danny O’Brien announced that the board had finished a challenging executive session, saying that on Sept. 9 it had received Holmes’ resignation letter. O’Brien said the board accepted that resignation and recognized Holmes’ efforts on behalf of MA. The board looks forward to partnering with administrative staff and teachers to ensure a successful school year, he noted. The board unanimously voted to accept Holmes’ resignation and declare a vacancy for the COO position effective immediately.

The board then unanimously voted to appoint a board subcommittee comprising Lindsay Clinton and Ryan Graham to develop a process for seeking a new COO, working with Chief Financial Officer Marc Brocklehurst and Chief People Officer Krista Pelley. The subcommittee was also authorized to make financial decisions related to interim roles and to approve a separation package for Holmes. The subcommittee will report to the board at the next regular meeting with a proposal for the COO search process.

Holmes was selected as COO on May 28, 2021, after the one-year seven-month tenure of Christianna Herrera, which in turn followed the ousting of former Executive Director Don Griffin in June 2019. Holmes answered questions about terminations from previous positions at a community meeting on May 17 ahead of his appointment. Holmes started as COO on July 1, 2021. See <https://www.ocn.me/v21n6.htm#ma> for more information.

In December 2021 (<https://www.ocn.me/v22n1.htm#ma>), the board held a six-hour executive session

and a well-attended regular board meeting discussing administrative leadership and organizational structure, noting the district had had three leaders over the last 2½ years. The board unanimously agreed at that time to hire an executive coach for Holmes and to perform a work

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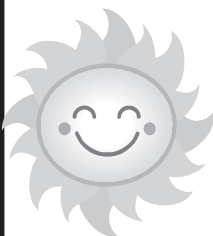


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climate survey. The board subsequently increased the coaching budget and held numerous executive sessions discussing COO performance. In its April 14, 2022 meeting, the board reviewed the survey results, expressed support of Holmes as COO, and renewed his contract (<https://www.ocn.me/v22n5.htm#ma>).

**Board selects candidate to fill vacancy**

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At a special board meeting on Sept. 1, six applicants for the open board position vacated by Misty McCuen attended to make statements and answer questions. Clinton noted that of the eight original candidates, six of them were present, with one of them coming in via Zoom. The candidates were Roxane Branch, Sarah Dorman (on Zoom), Alex Freed, Michael Geers, Karen Hoida, and Christopher McKinney. Each candidate made a two-minute opening statement, answered questions, and had one minute for a final statement.

Some candidates focused on their reasons for running, such as not wanting their child exposed to influences from the public school system, safety, accountability, increasing enrollment, and protecting parents' values. Others focused on their qualifications with backgrounds in the military, government service, law school, homeland security, and as a Christian conservative.

Candidates then answered questions from the board and audience about the strengths that qualify them to be on the board, their ability to judge character, time commitment, vision, threats, social emotional learning (SEL), the LGBTQ agenda, staff turnover, and their support for the board resolution against critical race theory and a proclamation against laws protecting gender identity and expression from discrimination, and decisions on arming staff. See [www.ocn.me/v22n3.htm#ma](http://www.ocn.me/v22n3.htm#ma).

All candidates expressed support for previous board proclamations, arming staff, and MA's vision, with one noting that he found MA when searching for a conservative Christian school and wanted them to keep doing what they were doing. Some candidates were against or skeptical of SEL, while others wanted to address it in the context of MA's mission. All candidates expressed the need to increase pay to address turnover as well as increase marketing and promote the desire to be part of MA's mission.

At the Sept. 8 meeting, after board approval of the voting process, the board selected Michael Geers to fill



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**Above:** At a special board meeting Sept. 1, candidates for Monument Academy's vacated board seat detailed their qualifications and answered questions. From left are Roxanne Branch, Alex Freed, Michael Geers, Karen Hoida, and Christopher McKinney, with Sarah Dorman attending via Zoom. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

the board vacancy until June 2023. Geers is an attorney in Colorado and Washington, D.C., who has a personal family law business in Monument. He has extensive experience on boards, served as a legislative analyst, and worked in both the Navy and Coast Guard. Geers will be sworn in at the October meeting after successfully completing a background check.

**Board considers mill levy override**

During the Sept. 8 public comments, Holly Rollins introduced herself as a former MA parent whose children attended from 2010 to 2012. She thanked the school for providing a stellar experience for her two children that promoted academic readiness and character development. She was on the MA board from 2011 to 2014, serving as president in 2014, and knows that it has limited resources to generate revenue for the school. The secret sauce is the teachers, she said, and they are grossly underpaid. The board doesn't have a lot of ways to address this, she not-

ed, but pointed out that MA is included in the D38 mill levy override (MLO) ballot initiative and urged the board to consider this option to address teacher compensation.

At that same meeting, the board went into executive session "to develop positions relative to negotiations concerning District and facilities development and ballot measures as it pertains to Monument Academy." The board returned after about two hours, and Graham reported that the board was cognizant that the district and community have an interest and hoped that the board would take action on the MLO. He said the board planned to meet with the district and reconsider the matter at the next board meeting. Board member Emily Belisle said the board wanted to have a comfortable level of detail and wanted to explore with the district how the money is to be shared with MA and do its due diligence to best serve MA's interest.

**Highlights**

Board meeting highlights include:

- The board spotlighted Kara Giroux, Tina McLellan, and Julie Ritschard, noting that they picked up registrar duties after MA had twice hired registrars, one of whom resigned after a few weeks and one who was not able to move to the community. Giroux, McLellan, and Ritschard were nominated by the executive staff for helping MA prepare for the school year, but they were unable to attend the board meeting due to their workload.
- Clinton asked Holmes about the status of the modulators that were approved in January to help with school overcrowding (<https://www.ocn.me/v22n2.htm#ma>). Holmes said he had one bid that was over \$100,000 and was trying to get additional bids but still expected the cost to be more than the original estimates. He conceded he could have done more over the summer and noted that MA had contracted for only four classrooms rather than



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- six due to lower enrollment.
- Holmes said the director of Academics was focused on the middle school math curriculum, the literary sequence, and the use of technology. Math curriculum is a focus due to low growth scores from

- NWEA (formerly the Northwest Evaluation Association), which came out over the summer.
- Holmes reported that the Finance Committee was working on two Phase 2 financing options depending on whether the MLO passes. He

noted that bond investors look at a school's debt-to-income ratio and the MLO, which would be used for teacher pay, would increase revenue providing incentives for investors to look positively at MA.

- Holmes said the unaudited numbers for MA showed a net income of \$600,000 last year compared to a \$300,000 loss the year before, which increased cash reserves to \$3.1 million and would also help with potential investors.
- The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) vulnerability assessment was completed. CDE walked inside and outside with an MA team and provided a full report including suggestions to improve safety and security.
- High School Principal David Kennington reported that a focus group had evaluated the status of classical education and MA has taken that input to bulk up the classical education that families want. He held an all-high-school assembly to discuss these concepts with students and referred them to the print of Raphael's The School of Athens fresco at the school's entrance.
- Board member Joe Buczkowski re-

ported for the Finance Committee that several heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units have to be repaired or replaced at the West Campus, costing \$8,500 each to repair or \$50,000 to replace. He recommended creating a building maintenance fund for these and other issues.

- In public comments for items not on the agenda, which took place after the executive session, Steve Waldmann spoke against the board's new dress code which he said violated the law, including the Crown Act which says it's illegal for schools to prohibit a student from wearing locs (aka dreadlocks). He also said requiring kids to wear clothing appropriate to the board's opinion of their gender is against laws protecting gender expression.

\*\*\*\*\*

The MA School Board meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. The next regular board meeting will be on Thursday, Oct. 13, at 6 p.m. on the East Campus. See more information at [see https://bit.ly/ma-boe](https://bit.ly/ma-boe).

Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).



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*Lewis-Palmer D38 DAAC, Sept. 13*

## Committee adds two subcommittees, discusses MLO and spring test results

*By Harriet Halbig*

The District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) discussed a possible name change, the addition of subcom-

mittees, and spring assessment results at its Sept. 13 meeting.

Assistant Superintendent Amber Whetstone gave a brief overview of DAAC's

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report to the Board of Education at its June meeting and said that one of DAAC's responsibilities is to offer feedback on the district's Unified Improvement Plan, which will be presented at the October meeting.

She said that two new committees are being formed in the district, the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) and the Wellness Committee. She requested that DAAC add these committees as subcommittees in addition to the present Special Education Advisory Committee and Gifted Education Leadership Team. Later in the meeting, the membership voted to accept this responsibility. The committee's bylaws will need to be altered to reflect this change.

Whetstine also requested that DAAC continue to link its activities to the district's strategic plan and that the committee consider a name change to increase public interest in attending meetings.

The committee heard proposed bylaw changes and suggested new names for the committee. A poll will be distributed to the members to vote on a new name. Some suggested names are Engage and Elevate, Educational Engagement Committee and D38 Engage and Elevate.

Board of Education liaison Tiffiney Upchurch reported that the board's current priority is staff compensation. The board voted in August to add a Mill Levy Override (MLO) to the November ballot. Current staff compensation is about 10% less than in surrounding districts.

Superintendent KC Somers shared a slide presentation regarding information on the MLO, highlighting statistics from neighboring districts and an annual turnover rate above 20%. The ballot resolution is specifically worded to provide funding only for non-administrative staff compensation.

Somers stressed that that School Finance Act, which funded a compensation increase last year, does not influence the district's status in comparison with neighboring districts. D38 does not meet some requirements for higher per pupil revenue, such as a high poverty rate, shrinking demographics, and a large population of English language learners.

The committee discussed ways to get information about the ballot issue out to the public. A kickoff event was scheduled for Monday, Sept. 19 at Limbach Park.

District again Accredited with Distinction

Assessment Coordinator Dr. Michael Brom presented assessment data from last spring. He said that district CMAS (Colorado Measurement of Academic Success) tests in math are significantly higher than the state average, but district participation is lower than state average. The district has once again been named Accredited with Distinction.

The district has a high rate of participation in PSAT and SAT tests, and scores are above the state average for college readiness. The district also shows special populations performing strongly.

\*\*\*\*\*

The District Accountability Advisory Committee generally meets from 6 to 8 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month. Locations vary. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, Oct. 11 at Lewis-Palmer Middle School, 1776 Woodmoor Drive in Monument. For further information, please contact [tmckee@lewis-palmer.org](mailto:tmckee@lewis-palmer.org) or 719-785-4243.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at [harriethalbig@ocn.me](mailto:harriethalbig@ocn.me).

Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education, Sept. 19

Board accredits schools, adopts character education programs, plans community engagement

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education discussed a number of aspects of the district's programs at its Sept. 19 meeting. Among these were programs involving character education at all levels, academic achievement as evidenced by last spring's assessments, and plans to increase community engagement in the coming year, especially until the Nov. 8 election.

Board President Chris Taylor was absent from the meeting. Vice President Theresa Phillips presided, with Director Matthew Clawson attending by phone.

Accreditation discussion

Assistant Superintendent Amber Whetstine presented information about results of various assessments last spring. This data included information about growth and academic achievement. Due to the pandemic, this data has not been available in detail since 2019. As a consequence, it was impossible to trace year-to-year growth based on comparative test scores.

D38 has been rated as accredited with distinction, among the top 6% of districts in the state. School districts are accredited by the state, and individual schools, including charter schools, are accredited by their district.

Whetstine explained that data in detail, referring to district and school performance frameworks. In these documents, data is described for each Colorado Measure of Academic Success (CMAS) test and subdivided by grade level and various other demographics including students with disabili-

ties, English language learners, and those qualifying for free/reduced lunch.

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Unlike most districts, the D38's scores improved over 2019, attributable to its efforts to continue a rigorous academic schedule through the pandemic. Whetstine especially praised the board for instituting new literacy curriculum.

The district also has a very positive graduation rate and high marks for readiness for post-secondary education and entry into the workplace. Efforts are now being made to include enlistment in the military as a subset of activities following graduation. Students who achieved certification in a trade while in high school will also be recognized.

The board voted to approve the accreditation of the schools.

To view detailed information, please go to [go.boarddocs.com/co/lewispalmer/board.nsg/vpublic](http://go.boarddocs.com/co/lewispalmer/board.nsg/vpublic). Choose the date of the meeting you wish to reference and select "view agenda." All supporting information can be viewed in detail.

**Board recognitions**

The board recognized Pastor Brian Petak of Ascent Church for support of suicide prevention by sponsoring the Run4Hope. The sixth run occurred the weekend before the meeting. The church has raised over \$140,000 in support of these programs, including funding of the Sources of Strength program at Lewis-Palmer and Palmer Ridge High Schools.

The board also recognized board Secretary Tiffiney Upchurch for receiving



**Above:** D38 board Vice President Theresa Phillips noted that Tiffiney Upchurch was awarded the 2022 McGuffey award by the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) for her committed and passionate service. Since 2017, Phillips said, Upchurch has brought unwavering passion, purpose, and persistence in championing the success of Every Student, Every Day and relentlessly advocating for strong public schools. Her service includes hundreds of volunteer hours and attending many school events. Phillips said Upchurch serves as board liaison to Monument Academy and to the District Advisory and Accountability Committee, the Special Education Advisory Committee, and the Preschool Advisory Committee. Upchurch is also a CASB delegate who leads by doing what is best for all kids, Phillips said. From left are board member Ron Schwarz, Upchurch, Superintendent KC Somers, and Phillips. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

the 2022 McGuffey award from the Colorado Association of School Boards. This award recognizes a member who brings committed and passionate service to their work. Phillips also recognized Upchurch for her active engagement with

the community and service as board liaison with Monument Academy, the District Accountability Advisory Committee, the Special Education Advisory Committee, and the Preschool Advisory Committee.

During his update, Superintendent KC Somers recognized journalism students at Palmer Ridge High School for the 2022 Epilogue Yearbook being named as an All Colorado Yearbook, and The Bear Truth newspaper receiving an Award of Merit. The Epilogue was also rated First Class by the National Scholastic Press Association.

Somers also recognized several National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists from the district. They are Tristan Clark, Elise Flinn, and Alex Weeks from Lewis-Palmer High School, and Lawson McVay, Nathanael Sapp, Laine Satterlee, Grace Weitzel, and Cole Wickert from Palmer Ridge.

The D38 Dispatch, an upcoming print newspaper, was introduced. The Long-Range Planning Committee will begin to meet later in the fall to discuss such issues as facilities condition, plans for Grace Best, and to update growth projections.

**New Human Resources director named**

Chief Business Officer Brett Ridgway introduced Misty Manchester as the district's new director of Human Resources and said she and the finance office will be working closely together.

**Character education resource accreditation**

Acknowledging that the district strives to provide a safe, healthy, and mentoring atmosphere for its students, three character-education programs have been in use for several years.

The Responsive Classroom program provides a framework for offering engaging academic activity with participatory lessons and a positive community sense of belonging and significance. All decisions are based on knowledge of a student's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

Capturing Kids' Hearts is used at the middle school level and continues the effort to offer support and encouragement with the goal of increased attendance and improved graduation rates.

Sources of Strength endeavors to spread hope and encourage emphasis on hope instead of trauma, training peer counselors to recognize when a student is struggling and help them find help.

Since the August board meeting, documents on these programs have been available for public comment before being approved. To view some of the public comments, see boarddocs.

Primary concerns are that using such programs could cut into academic time and that students and teachers are being encouraged to act as psychologists without parental involvement.

The board voted to approve the use of these programs in the schools.

**Community engagement plan**

Communications Director Mark Belcher reported that the Engage and Elevate public discussions held at various locations this year were very helpful in keeping the public informed and learning about their concerns and preferences.

Belcher proposed holding three Engage and Elevate meetings before the November election and one a month after, with a minimum of two board members at each.

**Public comments**

Two district parents spoke about the value of music education in our schools. They expressed a fear that difficulty in scheduling time for band education could threaten this resource, which brings such satisfaction and recognition to the district. It was suggested that in some cases music education could be offered as an extracurricular activity.

Lewis-Palmer Elementary School Principal Davonne Johnson commented on the value of social-emotional learning



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as a way to take care of the whole child. She said that Responsive Classroom offers a sense of belonging and family involvement.

Teacher Chris Thomas and community member Jackie Burhans both spoke of the value of teachers remaining in the district and building long-term relationships between students and teachers. Increasing compensation is one way to encourage teachers to remain.

One parent expressed dissatisfaction

with the new provider of after-school care for students, saying they do not cover school breaks. The Y has stepped in to fill the gap.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting is Oct. 17.

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

Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, Sept. 8 and 22  
**Fire Department receives grant**

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans  
The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees met twice in September. Two ordinances were passed that finalized the ballot language for the cannabis and mill levy override ballot questions. An interim fire chief was introduced, and the board declined participation in the recently passed Colorado Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) program. The board approved two special event requests. During public comments, the board heard concerns from a resident about the situation at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA). Finally, dates were set for a 2023 budget workshop, a public hearing on the budget, public forums on the Community Master Plan, and a candidate forum.

Both meetings ended with an executive session.

**Grant covers structure and wildland gear**

Town Administrator Dawn Collins told the board that the Palmer Lake Fire Department received personal protective equipment from the Colorado Division of Prevention & Control valued at \$173,936. The equipment includes gear for use in fighting structure fires and for fighting wildland fires.

**Ballot questions get minor edit**

Town Attorney Matt Krob told the board that the town's bond counsel had reviewed the language for the two ballot questions that the board had approved at its last meeting. The bond counsel requested that the mill levy override question refer to the cannabis question by its title rather than by its question number,

replacing "ballot question 1A" with "ballot question relating to operation of retail marijuana." Krob explained to the board that each ballot question would need to be passed as an emergency ordinance so that the amended language would take effect immediately.

Ordinances 13-2022 and 14-2022 passed, with Trustees Nicole Currier, Darin Dawson, Glant Havenar, Samantha Padgett, and Karen Stuth and Mayor Bill Bass voting in favor and Trustee Jessica Farr voting against.

**Interim fire chief comes on board**

Collins introduced John Vincent, the town's new interim fire chief. Collins told the board that Vincent had been the town's fire chief during the Black Forest Fire. She said Fire Chief Christopher McCarthy had resigned as of Sept. 1 and had accepted another position. The town had been in discussion with Vincent before McCarthy's resignation, she said.

**Board opts out of FAMLI**

Collins told the board that town staff had overwhelmingly decided against participating in the FAMLI program, which provides 12 weeks of paid job-protected leave when an employee experiences a qualifying family or medical event. She pointed out that individual employees can still opt into the program even if the town decides not to participate.

The board voted unanimously to

*PLBOT (cont. on 12)*

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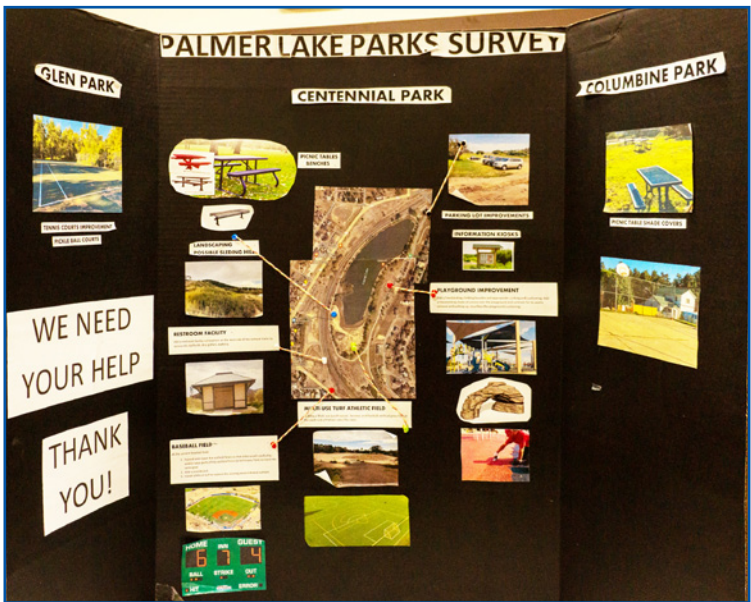
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Monument Mayor Don Wilson

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**Above:** Cindy Allen, on behalf of the Palmer Lakes Parks Commission, said it had been surveying the community on what they would like to see done in the parks. This information is being gathered for use in an upcoming GOCO grant the commission will submit. Allen displayed a presentation board with some of the items the committee is considering for each of the town parks. Ideas range from improvements to the tennis courts, new pickleball courts, improved parking, benches, a multi-purpose field, sledding hills, and new restrooms. The commission has received 200 responses so far. The survey is available at [www.bit.ly/pl-park-survey](http://www.bit.ly/pl-park-survey). Photo by Jackie Burhans.



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**PLBOT  
(Cont. from 11)**

approve Resolution 42-2022, which documents the town’s decision not to participate in the program.

**Special events approved**  
The town approved a special event permit for a Business Workshop hosted by the Palmer Lake Economic Development Group (PLEDG). The workshop will be held on Oct. 5 from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Town Hall and is open to all current Palmer Lake business owners and to anyone considering starting a business. Breakfast and lunch will be provided with the assistance of one of the town’s newest business, Sasquatch and Yeti Taqueria. Speakers will address a variety of topics.

A special event permit was also approved for the YMCA’s annual Creepy Crawly 5K Run, to be held at the Palmer Lake Recreation Area on Oct. 29 starting at 7 a.m. Costumes are encouraged.

**Use of TLCA as residence questioned**  
During the public comment portion of the Sept. 22 meeting, resident Roger Mosely voiced concerns about the fact that TLCA is being used as a residence in violation of the town’s codes. He said the issue had been going on for five months and he had communicated to the board and the town staff about the issue several times. He said he wanted to see the TLCA preserved as an art center for the town. Mosely said he did not care if the TLCA was used as a residence if changes to the building were properly permitted.

**Budget, master plan, candidate forum scheduled**  
Collins reminded the board that some scheduled 3% increases in the town’s water fees had not been made and that would impact the town’s budget. Havenar pointed out that without the increases the town would not be able to meet the balloon payment for the second water tank in 2024.



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The board scheduled a workshop on the 2023 budget on Thursday, Sept. 29 at 4 p.m. and a public hearing on the budget at a special meeting on Thursday, Nov.17. Both will be held at the Town Hall.

Community forums to discuss the Community Master Plan are scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 6 at 4 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 8 at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall.

A candidate forum is scheduled for

Saturday, Oct. 1 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Town Hall. The mayor's seat and three seats on the board will be decided on the Nov. 8 ballot. Questions for the candidates can be emailed to [info@palmerlake.org](mailto:info@palmerlake.org) with the subject CANDIDATE QUESTION.

**Executive sessions**

An executive session was convened on

Sept. 8 to discuss possible sale of personal property at Elephant Rock and a personnel matter.

An executive session was convened on Sept. 22 to consider possible sale of town property, personnel matters, and the evaluation of the town administrator.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next two board meetings are scheduled for Oct. 13 and 27. See the town's

website at [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com) to confirm times and dates of board meetings and workshops. Meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at the Town Hall. Information: 719-481-2953.

*James Howald can be reached at [jameshowald@ocn.me](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me).*

*Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).*

*Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Sept. 20*

# Mill levy adjustment recommended; board pushes ahead with merger

*By Natalie Barszcz*

At the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) meeting on Sept. 20, the board heard about a request to adjust the mill levy in response to a temporary drop in the Residential Assessment Rate (RAR) and discussed the timeline and actions for the next phase of the merger with Monument Fire District (MFD). The board also held an executive session to discuss the lease, transfer, or sale of the district's Sun Hills Station 6 (formerly DWFPD Station 3).

Treasurer Duane Garrett was excused. Director Charles Fleece joined via Zoom.

**Residential Assessment Rate adjustment**

District attorney Emily Powell of Ireland Stapleton Pryor Pascoe PC law firm said the district will have a temporary loss of revenue for the next three years from the passing of Senate Bill 22-238. The bill is an attempt to mitigate the tax burden impact on homeowners caused by the rapid rise in home values. However, the assessment rate reductions are not consistent, and varying adjustments are tweaked

for different types of properties such as single family, multi-family, lodging, agricultural, and renewable energy, coupled with different time periods for the implementation, adding complexity, said Powell. See [https://leg.colorado.gov/bill.SB22-238](https://leg.colorado.gov/bill/SB22-238) and SB22-293.

Powell also said:

- The governmental entities that rely on property tax revenue are going to lose out over the next three years with all the overlapping reductions.
- A lot of districts are scrambling with less revenue on the horizon to maintain the same service demands.
- DWFPD is one of a few unique districts that can maintain and stabilize revenues after the community passed the de-Gallagher ballot issue in November 2020.
- The board can float the mill levy without an election to recapture revenue over the next three years. See the BFFRPD article on page 16.

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs said the following:

- It is anticipated that DWFPD would lose about \$77,386 in 2023, and he

recommended the board approve an increase of 0.4 mills (for a total of 15.3 mills) for the sub-district and 0.17 mills (for a total of 7.17 mills) for the district.

- The same recommendation will be made to the MFD board to increase the mill levy by 0.5 mills to avoid losing about \$260,000 in revenue for the MFD 2023 budget.
- Initially it did not seem like a big deal with the combined district projected income of about \$16 million, but it is a couple of salaries for the new firefighters, or half an engine.
- The Residential Assessment Rate for single residences is set to return to 7.15 % in 2025, but a lot of advocacy groups are angling for permanent reductions.

A board decision will need to be made by the end of the year whether to increase the mill levy in time to inform the county assessor, said Kovacs.

**Merger progress**

Kovacs said that the district had been in "lock-step" with Powell and Dan Fallon of One Digital Insurance, Financial Services

and HR consulting advisory firm, Englewood, to complete the steps to transfer the DWFPD personnel to Monument Fire District on Aug. 28. Director of Administration Jennifer Martin, Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich, and the administration staff worked hard behind the scenes. It was labor intensive, but everything went smoothly due to the efforts of the office team. Everyone is paid, insured and happy, said Kovacs.

Powell thanked everyone for their patience with her, in particular the administrative staff and the board through the merger process, and said:

- The next step is to transfer the stations, apparatus, and equipment. The bills of sale for the apparatus and the equipment, as well as the quit claim deeds for the stations (except for the Sun Hills station), have been prepared, and those will be presented in October after the MFD legal counsel and board have signed the documents.
- Phase 1 of the merger is almost complete, and then the full-service intergovernmental agreement will

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- be in place.
- The next step will be to dissolve the legal boundaries so there will be only one fire district, and that will be a multi-phase process.
  - Phase 2 will be a multi-phase process requiring a carefully choreographed election in which the district will ask the residents living in the southern enclave for a substantial increase of about 14 mills.
  - The sub-district (Gleneagle) would

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- run an election at the same time, asking if the district's mill levy should be approved should the sub-district be dissolved. The district would start taxing at a higher rate and the sub-district could see a slight tax decrease.
  - The combined mill levy of the district is 21.9 mills. The board could decide to drop the mill levy to about 21.4 mills and the district would see a benefit.
  - The mill levy will be just higher than the MFD mill levy and then without an election, at the end of the process, the mill levy would drop for the former DWFPD residents to the same MFD's mill levy, currently set at 18.4 mills.
  - The intent is to have the ballot questions ready for the November 2023 election, and the stepped decreases in mill levy for the residents would begin in 2024. The whole process will take about two years.
- The DWFPD board will decide when the district begins implementing Phase 2, given the exhausting "heavy lift" the board and staff have experienced in 2022, said Powell.

President Mark Gunderman said he felt that the board should keep the momentum going and get the education campaign rolling out.

Secretary Larry Schwarz and Director Mike Forsythe concurred with moving ahead with Phase 2 without delay.

Powell said she had completed the exact same process for another district in May so she is familiar with the process and will prepare the paperwork for Phase 2.

**Public comment**

Gary Nelson, board president of the non-profit group Emergency Incident Support (EIS), asked Gunderman if the board would hold a discussion after the executive session regarding the price of Sun Hills Station 6.

Gunderman said the appraised value of the Sun Hills property would not be discussed during the regular meeting. The executive session will be a discussion with legal counsel to decide on the next steps for the board to take.

Nelson said that if the appraised value of Sun Hills Station 6 were known, prospective grant writing could begin. As the chief grant writer for the nonprofit all-volunteer group, he could work with

the board or potential buyers. The Sun Hills fire station is a great resource, and the group would like to continue using the station or begin searching for other options. The group provides a valuable resource to first responders, and EIS is interested in finding out more about the building, said Nelson.

**Executive session**

The board moved into an executive session at 4:05 p.m. pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute 24-6-402(4)(a): to discuss the lease, transfer, or sale of the district's Sun Hills fire station, including a discussion of an appraisal of value.

Fleece recused himself during the executive session.

When the board resumed the regular session at 4:30 p.m., no action was taken.

**2023 budget proposal/presentation**

Kovacs presented the budget and said:

- There will be very few expenses moving forward for the 2023 budget year. The district anticipates \$10,000 for the 2022 audit, \$16,900 in legal fees (subject to change), \$6,000 for property/liability insurance, \$450 for workers compensation for the board, \$7,932 in utility bills for the Sun Hills property, \$32,000 committed for election funds (includes the election of three board members in May 2023 and the election for ballot questions in November), and \$96,934 for the TABOR fund.
- The total anticipated revenue is about \$3.2 million (includes property taxes and specific ownership taxes).
- About \$224,184 will remain with the district for expenses.
- The remainder (about \$3 million plus any additional revenue generated throughout 2023) will be transferred to MFD for operating costs, facilities, and personnel.

MFD is committed to provide the services the community expects, said Kovacs.

**Financial review**

The board reviewed the August financial report during the meeting. Schwarz requested a break-down of the grant funding.

Popovich said the grant funding was made up of \$11,914 from the COVID-19 relief grant, \$4,950 from the Colorado Firefighter Heart & Circulatory Trust, and \$7,107 from a safety grant received from a former insurance group. The total grant funding received year to date is about \$23,971.

The board accepted the financial report as presented, 4-0.

The board approved the board meeting minutes from July and August, 4-0.

**Chief's report**

Kovacs brought the board's attention to the following:

- The Wescott members of the Gleneagle L5314 International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) are now members of Monument Local 4319 IAFF.
- Firefighter Golden Rains, currently assigned to the Colorado Springs Fire Academy (CSFD) as an instructor, is promoted to engineer and is scheduled to be recognized at the MFD board meeting.
- The entry-level firefighter recruitment process is now closed, and the candidates will take a written test. This year the district received only about half the applicants of previous years, so the odds are in favor of the recruit.
- The recruitment and retention problems are not unique to the district or the fire industry, it is a national problem. Attendees were talking about the "great resignation" at the Fire Chief's Conference in San Antonio, Texas. No one is entirely sure where everyone is going or how they are earning a living.

DWFPD (Cont. on 16)

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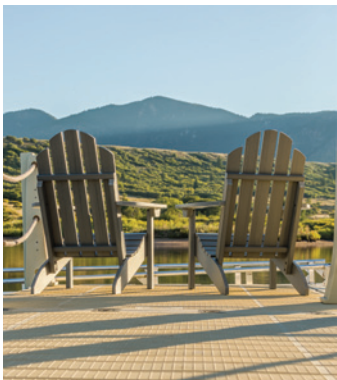


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- Piepenburg said the following:
- The district completed about 1,510 training hours, so 20.8% of the time staff are on shift they are training.
  - The district held Trench Awareness Training for the whole north group.
  - New Training Division Officer Capt. Jason Morrison and Fine completed Colorado Springs Fire Department Rescue School training.
  - Several practical tests were completed for Driver Operator Utility and Firefighter 2, allowing staff to get certified.
  - The district firefighters rescued a trapped dog from a 5-foot-deep culvert filled with dirt alongside Egerton Road.

Wildland operations and planning

Piepenburg said the Type 6 brush truck returned from Texas and the Type 3 wildland engine returned from California and has been made ready to deploy again. He described the different types of trucks used in wildland deployments: A Type 3 is similar to an everyday fire engine but can carry more water, with a 750-gallon tank, and is designed to be taken off-road and lay long hoses. A Type 3 is heavily requested in the West, especially in California. Other states such as Texas often request a Type 6 truck, a smaller water-carrying vehicle ideal for quick attacks and off-road.

Piepenburg also said one of the wildland technicians did not work out, but a new recruit took prior wildland classes to facilitate his hiring. He is “knocking it out of the park.”

Langmaid said the district envisions taking the wildland team model to help the department grow in experience and generate some revenue with deployments. The district needs to replace two brush trucks, and the design process has begun to build a wildland brush truck. Due to supply chain challenges, the ordering window will be limited to four days for Ford Super Duty Crew Cabs this year. The district will build the brush trucks and initial

approval of them will be requested later in the year. Dowden requested an update on the wildland pre-plans. Piepenburg said the developer of the plans, Dave Reid, has almost completed the north district wildland pre-plans and will then work on the south district plans to be completed by the end of the year. The cost is anticipated to be much less than originally projected, but Reid is a one-man show due to wildland deployments, said Piepenburg.

Board member comment

Behnken said about two weeks ago he had ridden around the district with Langmaid and heard about the challenges. The tour was cut short due to a vehicle collision into a home. Kudos to Langmaid and Piepenburg for their calm nature and level of professionalism. Behnken said he could not have been prouder of the district as a homeowner and board member. The executive staff and the team you have built around you completed the mission extremely well, said Behnken.

Kudos received

A thank you note was received from Riley stating appreciation for the gracious hospitality shown by Piepenburg, Trotter, Ore, and Patterson.

Donation received

Dowden said the district received a note of thanks and a donation of \$1,100 to be used at the discretion of BFFRPD, from Monica Davis of the Social Committee of the High Forest Ranch Homeowners Association (HOA).

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month at Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. Meetings are open to the public in person or via Zoom. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 12 at 7 p.m. For joining instructions, updates, agendas, and minutes, visit [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org) or contact the Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn at [admin@bffire.org](mailto:admin@bffire.org) or call 719-495-4300.

Monument Fire District, Sept. 28

Board meeting held after publication

By Natalie Barszcz

The Monument Fire District (MFD) board held its meeting on Sept. 28 after this issue of *Our Community News* had been printed. Coverage will be included in our Nov. 5 issue. For district information, see the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District article on page 13.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of

the month. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 26 at 6:30 p.m. at MFD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For Zoom meeting instructions, agendas, minutes, and updates, visit [www.tlmfire.org](http://www.tlmfire.org) or contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin at 719-484-9011.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).

Forest Lakes Metropolitan District & Pinon Pines Metropolitan Districts 1, 2 & 3, Sept. 12

Northern Monument Creek Interceptor design phase moves forward

By Natalie Barszcz

Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) and Pinon Pines Metropolitan Districts (PPMD) 1, 2, and 3, held a “special meeting” via teleconference on Sept. 12, to approve funding for the design phase for the proposed Northern Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) project.

Treasurer Douglas Stimple was excused.

District Manager Ann Nichols requested the board approve \$90,000 (to be included in the 2023 budget) to fund the design phase of the NMCI project and said the district had been working on the NMCI project for a couple of years with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU).

**Background:** The NMCI “pipeline” project was originally proposed as a regional wastewater project in an effort to comply with state and federal recommendations by consolidating regional wastewater treatment facilities. The wastewater from the various water districts in Northern El Paso County would be transferred via the NMCI pipeline for processing at the J. D. Phillips Water Resource Recovery Facility on Mark Dabling Boulevard, Colorado Springs. The CSU plant is already in compliance with some of the costly new regulatory state requirements for treating nutrients in wastewater. The plant has the capacity to handle the additional wastewater.

Nichols said the following:

- Originally the project included a cast of other interested water districts that use the Tri-Lakes Waste Water Treatment Facility (TWWTF) until the commitment deadline occurred in July.
- At that time the three districts that use TWWTF: Monument Sanitation District, Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, and Palmer Lake Sanitation District all bowed out of the NMCI project. See JUC article on page 18.
- The neighboring Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board has repeatedly indicated they want nothing to do with the project.
- Triview Metropolitan District (TMD) and FLMD

have decided to proceed with the design phase of the NMCI project due to the economics of keeping the Upper Monument Creek Regional Waste Water Treatment Facility (UMCWTF) in compliance with regulatory requirements. See TMD article on page 18.

- When the pipeline is completed, the district will use CSU to process wastewater and, hopefully, DWSD will eventually see the economic benefit of sending the wastewater downstream.
- TMD and FLMD are sharing the cost of the design phase for the northern entities.
- The total cost for the NMCI project is anticipated to be in the \$1.2 million range.

A letter of intent was sent to DWSD on July 5, informing the board of the decision to proceed with the NMCI project and bow out of operating the UMCWTF. DWSD would have to buy out FLMD and TMD, but a decision has yet to be made, said Nichols. See [www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#dwsd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#dwsd).

**Note:** The UMCWTF is jointly owned and operated by DWSD, TMD and FLMD. Each district has an equal share of board member votes.

Nichols said the UMCWTF license is due for renewal with the state this decade, and as indicated by Roger Sams, an engineer with GMS Inc. Consulting Engineers, the regulatory mandated nutrient treatment compliance may not be required until the early 2030s.

District counsel Russell W. Dykstra of Spencer Fane LLP asked Nichols if an agreement had been discussed with CSU for a reimbursement obligation for the expenditures undertaken should other districts join the NMCI project later in the project.

Nichols said:

- A reimbursement plan is not in the current agreement, but if participation increases, a discussion with CSU would happen.
- CSU would prefer to have the UMCWTF out of ser-

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).

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- vice, rather than just one remaining district operating the plant.
- The most prudent economical approach would be to close the UMCWTF and have CSU process the wastewater.
  - A smaller pipeline than originally proposed would come up to the plant from CSU and just take wastewater for TMD and FLMD. DWSD uses a different area of the UMCWTF plant to process wastewater.
  - An independent consultant will be selected to conduct a feasibility study that will clearly show that the NMCI pipeline is the most economical way to

- proceed.
- The final analysis between the two approaches will need to be made by an independent consulting firm. A consultant will be selected at the UMCWTF Joint Operation Meeting on Oct. 15.
  - The design of the pipeline is expected to be completed in late summer or early fall 2023, and then the district will know the final cost.
- The board approved the \$90,000 for the design, 3-0. Board President George Lenz thanked Nichols for keeping the process going.
- The board also approved 3-0, for the FLMD and

PPMD 2 and 3 minutes for the “special meetings” held on July 11 and 28.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meetings are usually held quarterly on the first Monday of the month at 4 p.m. Until further notice, meetings will be held via teleconference due to COVID-19 distancing protocols. Meeting notices are posted at <https://forest-lakesmetrodistrict.com>. For general questions, contact Ann Nichols at 719-327-5810, [anicholsduffy@aol.com](mailto:anicholsduffy@aol.com).

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, Sept. 12

## Long-range plan turns away from additional wells

By James Howald

The Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) board met on Sept. 12 to hear presentations from consultants who have been helping the district revise its long-range plan. It voted on a resolution setting fees for irregular or unique structures, and it heard operational reports.

**Wells to play lesser role in long-range plan**

Dan Niemela and Rachel Frei, both representing BBA Water Consultants Inc., and Richard Hood, project manager at JVA Consulting Engineers, reported to the board on their work to update the district’s long-range plan, which is updated every five years. Their presentations addressed ground and surface water, conservation, water storage, and the role additional wells will play as the WWSD service area builds out.

Niemela told the board that some previous projections of water resources were too optimistic. Aquifer tests done by the state found more impact from wells than expected. The district’s long-range plan done in 2006 predicted a need for many wells. In 2011, the district purchased the Woodmoor Ranch (previously known as the JV Ranch) and acquired the ranch’s surface water rights, which currently make up the bulk of the district’s renewable surface water resources. Niemela said surface water from the ranch is enough to meet the district’s demand.

Niemela said drilling new wells was becoming prohibitively expensive and riskier, and existing wells were beginning to fail. Ten of the district’s wells that draw on the Denver Aquifer are beyond their expected usable life, and the district has already used the best well sites. Arapahoe wells provide the most economical water. Peak demand during warmer months tends to drive well drilling, he said, adding that drilling a well that is only needed for a few high-demand days each year is not economical.

The Arapahoe Aquifer is declining by 16 feet a year, Niemela said.

Hood focused on the district’s customers and told the board for planning purposes JVA was using Single Family Equivalent (SFE) as a standard for planning. The district’s single-family, multi-family, commercial, and school customers would be translated into this standard. The district currently has 4,358 SFEs, he said. The district should expect quite a bit of growth, Niemela said. Future development of the Wissler Ranch should be included in plans for growth.

District Manager Jessie Shaffer said the district planned for two eventualities: build out within the current legal boundaries and build out if adjacent properties, such as Wissler Ranch, request inclusion in the district. Hood said complete buildout within current boundaries would be 6,481 SFEs and buildout if nearby properties are included could be as high as 7,815 SFEs.

Hood said average water use per SFE is declining due to conservation. In 2006, SFE usage was 314 gallons per day; in 2022 it has declined to 272 gallons per day. He credited efficient appliances, waterwise irrigation, consumer awareness and tiered rates that charge heavy consumers a premium for the greater usage.

Both Hood and Shaffer said peak demand days were driving infrastructure planning. The peak day demand factor has declined slightly since 1997, they said.

Hood said the district would need additional storage capacity. He recommended planning for an additional storage tank in the northern part of the district.

Rachel Frei gave details about the district’s current and proposed wells. Well 20 was very productive, she said. Well 21 was also good, but Well 22, the district’s newest well, is producing 40% less water than expected.

Frei said the wells in the southern part of the district are more productive than models predicted. She recom-

mended two locations in the south for new wells.

Frei said the district does an excellent job with data collection, which enables better planning and delivery.

Niemela said the district should be thinking about local re-use projects that would reduce water loss and pumping costs. Those projects could provide the equivalent of three to five Arapahoe Aquifer wells, he said, but would require additional treatment at the district’s two treatment plants.

**Fees for unique structures set**

The board unanimously passed a resolution setting fees for unique structures. This policy change resulted from a request from The Country Club at Woodmoor to connect two restrooms on their golf course to the district’s water and sewer service.

**Highlights of operational reports**

- Operations Superintendent Dan LaFontaine reported one service line break and three service failures during the previous month.
- Woodmoor Lake is expected to be completely filled by May 2024.
- Well 19 is expected to be back in service soon, and Well 22 should be in production by summer 2023 after the construction of a pipeline to connect it to the Central Water Treatment Plant.
- The Monument Junction and Cloverleaf developments are moving forward, and water and sewer infrastructure is being built.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next meeting is scheduled for Oct. 10 at 9 a.m. Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of each month at 1 p.m. at the district office at 1845 Woodmoor Drive; please see [www.woodmoorwater.com](http://www.woodmoorwater.com) or call 719-488-2525 to verify meeting times and locations.

James Howald can be reached at [jameshowald@ocn.me](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me).

Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility Joint Use Committee, Sept. 20

## 2023 budget planning begins; costs increasing

By Lisa Hatfield

The Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) Joint Use Committee (JUC) met on Sept. 20 to review the 2023 budget draft, monthly discharge monitoring report, and Northern Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) project.

TLWWTF is owned in equal one-third shares by Monument Sanitation District (MSD), Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD), and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD).

The three-member JUC acts as the board of the facility and consists of one director from each of the three owner districts’ boards: MSD board Treasurer Laura Kronick, JUC president; WWSD board Secretary William Clewe, JUC vice president; and PLSD board member Reid Wiecks, JUC secretary/treasurer.

**Budget draft presented**

Bill Burks presented his first draft of the 2023 budget to the JUC members. His comments included:

- Sludge removal cost per dry ton has increased noticeably, and population growth means greater volume of sludge to be removed each year from the activated sludge lagoons.
- TLWWTF needs to increase biosolids testing from one to four times a year.
- Chemical costs are increasing.
- It’s difficult to find inventory to replace district vehicles.
- Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) are approaching 8%.

The JUC made suggestions on several items to add to next month’s revised draft.

Manager reports

MSD Manager Mark Parker said line cleaning has started, and he’s doing emergency sewer line repairs on a clay tile pipe on Raspberry Lane. The new Willow Springs lift station is well underway and might start up by January.

Jeff Halbrook said PLSD is upgrading from 12-inch to 18-inch sewer line all the way from Palmer Lake to TLWWTF.

**Note:** Multiple segments of the PLSD sanitary sewer lines are over capacity and areas may be running as much as 94 percent full, prompting a system-wide engineering review and this upgrade. See [www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#plsd](http://www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#plsd).

WWSD Manager Jessie Shaffer said builders are installing water and sewer infrastructure along Cloverleaf Road and along Jackson Creek Parkway south of Highway 105.

Burks presented the monthly discharge monitoring report (DMR), and all sampling results were well within required Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) discharge permit limits for TLWWTF and other baseline sampling.

**NMCI and other considerations**

Burks’ additional comments included:

- It’s not clear which northern El Paso County sanitation districts plan to participate in NMCI. See [www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#tvmd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#tvmd) and [www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#flmd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#flmd).
- MSD, PLSD, and WWSD are not going to join NMCI but will stay with TLWWTF.
- Burks will write a letter to Donala Water and Sanitation District inviting it to use TLWWTF as a customer of MSD. Donala is co-owner of the Upper

Monument Creek Regional Waste Water Treatment Plant (UMCRWWTF). See [www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#dwsd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#dwsd).

- Changes to the Family and Medical Leave Act are complicated, and it’s hard to figure out how or whether special districts want to opt in or out.
- Five OCN representatives toured TLWWTF in September. He said they were impressed with how much is accomplished at the facility.
- JUC members should send him any updates to the master plan by the end of September.

MSD Environmental Compliance Coordinator Jim Kendrick summarized the deliberations and concerns of the September Colorado Water Quality Control Commission meeting.

Burks summarized items discussed at the Sept. 6 Arkansas Fountain Coalition for Urban River Evaluation (AFCURE) meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. Oct. 11 at the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility, 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of the month and are open to the public from all three owner-districts. For information on virtual meeting access, call Burks at 719-481-4053.

Lisa Hatfield can be reached at [lisahatfield@ocn.me](mailto:lisahatfield@ocn.me).

Triview Metropolitan District, Sept. 15

## Contract awarded; district receives funding

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Triview Metropolitan District (TMD) meeting on Sept. 15, the board held an executive session to discuss the main Construction General Manager Contractor (CMGC) award for the Northern Delivery System (NDS) pipeline project. The board also heard the district had received long-awaited funding for a water tank and that one small section of the NDS pipeline in the northern

portion of the district would be finished by late October.

**Executive session**

The board moved into an executive session at 7:17 p.m. subject to Colorado Revised Statutes 24-6-402(4)(a), (b), (e), to receive legal advice regarding acquisitions and negotiations, regarding the NDS CMGC Services, water litigation matters for 2022, and property transactions and instruction to negotiators.



Contract awarded

District Administrator Joyce Levad confirmed after the executive session when the regular meeting resumed that the board had unanimously approved Kiewit Infrastructure Co. as the CMGC for the NDS pipeline project. See NEPCO article on page 22.

Northern Delivery System pipeline installation

District Manager James McGrady said the district would begin installing part of the NDS pipeline for Segment C (northern portion of the NDS pipeline/district) beginning in late September and lasting six weeks, and said:

- The pipeline and equipment will be bored under the protected Preble’s meadow jumping mouse habitat and roads.
- K. R. Swerdfeger Construction and Flatirons Drilling Inc. will begin the project with a tap in Agate Creek Park.
- About 1,400 feet of 16-inch fusible PVC pipeline will extend north through Agate Creek Park, under Venison Creek Drive, through the walking trail that connects to Saber Creek Drive, and out to Homeplace Ranch.
- The pipeline will tie into the 16-inch and 12-inch pipeline that runs up the boundary between filing 5 and 6 in Home Place Ranch.
- That pipeline will tie into all the pipes in Jackson Creek filings 3-6 and enable the district to feed water through to the western side of the district.
- The park and walking path will be closed for the duration of the six-week project. For more information visit [www.triviewmetro.com](http://www.triviewmetro.com).

Funding finally received

McGrady thanked Mario DiPasquale of JDS-Hydro Consultants Inc. and said he had worked with DiPasquale to apply for funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to construct an additional water tank at the B plant, St. Lawrence Way, Promontory Pointe. The district finally received \$1 million from the ARPA funds on Aug. 24; the funding will provide 50% of the cost of a \$2 million storage tank. The tank will be used for water quality purposes, fire flow, and additional storage.

Director James Otis said the ARPA funding was implemented as far back as COVID-19 relief during the pandemic, and El Paso County is now distributing the funds.

Northern Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) update

McGrady said TMD and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) had both signed and delivered board approval for the design phase of the NMCI, and it is underway. He also said:

- Both districts believe it is extremely important to determine the cost of future operations for the Upper Monument Creek Waste Water Treatment Facility (UMCWTF) should the NMCI not occur.
- The districts need to know what the regulatory risk will be and if the districts can save money on the treatment of wastewater and avoid millions of dollars in plant expansions and rehabilitation.
- An evaluation of the UMCWTF could be joint-funded through the facilities budget, with TMD, FLMD, and Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) participation. If that does not occur, TMD and FLMD will fund the evaluation.
- The findings of the evaluation will determine the future cost of expansion of the treatment plant. See FLMD article on page 17.

**Note:** UMCWTF is co-owned and operated by all three districts.

Aquifer Storage and Recovery study

McGrady said the district received a \$200,000 Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) grant and the district had to come up with \$50,000 matching that was split between DWSD and FLMD (\$25,000 each) for a study to discover if Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) is possible. The study of the wells will take one to two years, and although the district is not planning to start ASR anytime soon, it will reveal what is possible.

Pueblo Reservoir 1041 permit approval

District water attorney Chris Cummins of Monson, Cummins, Shohet & Farr LLC said it is a requirement for the board resolution in Pueblo that the TMD board approve resolution 2022-10 concerning acknowledgement and acceptance of the terms and conditions requirements and entitlements under the 1041 permit approved by the Pueblo Board of County Commissioners for the use of Pueblo Reservoir and the north outlet works.

The board unanimously approved the resolution.

Restoration of wetlands

Cummins said the district had received a letter a couple of months ago concerning its long-term role in managing the wetlands within the district, and said:

- In 2001 TMD received a 404 permit for wetlands mitigation projects, with the obligation to restore the wetlands destroyed during development.
- A few years later, Jackson Creek Land Co., the primary developer at the time and therefore jointly responsible, was added to the permit and since

then has taken the lead in doing the legwork.

- Once the last couple of projects are completed, the permit will be closed out and a new revised permit to cover the projects will be needed in late 2022.
- The Army Corps of Engineers has requested that as the perpetual municipal district, the district commit to the long-term management of the wetlands.
- Jackson Creek Land Co. estimated about \$20,000 per year to maintain the wetlands but with the staffing expertise that TMD has, the work could be completed for less.
- A letter outlining the long-term projects and the handover will be sent to the Jackson Creek Land Co.

Cummins recommended McGrady commit to the management of the wetlands.

Otis said we know about the Preble’s meadow jumping mouse habitat, we have talked about it ad nauseum, but the board also has ideas for those wetlands, with the potential use of the addition of public walking trails while still preserving the habitat.

McGrady said all the capital work had been done, and the district needs to ensure the work continues.

The board unanimously approved the annual management of the wetlands.

Open records requests

District legal counsel George Rowley of White Bear Ankele Tanaka & Waldron Attorneys at Law, Centennial, said the statutory requirement under the Colorado Official Records Act allows the district to charge an hourly rate (currently set at \$33.58 per hour) for the district staff to retrieve large document requests. Rowley requested the board review and consider approval of Resolution 2022-11, amending and replacing the district’s prior records request policy that was approved on Aug. 14, 2012.

The board unanimously approved the new policy.

**Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI)**  
Rowley said the state-managed program called FAMLI was adopted after the Colorado voters approved Proposition 118 in November 2020, and said:

- The state-run paid FAMLI program provides up to 12 weeks paid leave, with both employers and employees contributing premiums to the program. See [www.famli.colorado.gov](http://www.famli.colorado.gov).
- Local government entities can opt out, but the district has three options: provide the program, or provide the option to employees on an individual basis, or completely opt out of the program.
- Direction from the board would be needed at the October meeting, and a final decision would be needed before the December board meeting.

McGrady said the district provides a comprehensive program paying short-term disability, long-term disability, a separate sick leave policy, and generous vacation time. FAMLI is designed to help small entities such as restaurants, not local government entities that already have a robust benefit program, said McGrady.

Otis recommended the district provide cost comparisons to employees and convey their input to the board before a decision is made.

President Mark Melville suggested some of the employees attend the next board meeting.

Directors attend conference

Director Marco Fiorito said that he and Otis had attended the Special Districts Association (SDA) annual conference in September, and discussions regarding state revolving funds and the Gallagher amendment were the main focus. The SDA is working with the state on a ballot initiative to prevent the state mandating any future mill levy tax decreases for local municipalities. The SDA is “hot and heavy” on it, said Fiorito.

Otis said that for example, any home worth \$28,000 or less will not be taxed, but a revenue problem would exist if any district consisted mainly of mobile homes. Many valuable connections were made at the conference, said Otis.

Public works, parks, and open spaces update

Superintendent Matt Rayno said the following:

- The district is in the middle of sidewalk concrete repairs. The root damage from large cottonwoods caused the shifting of the sidewalks in Jackson Creek neighborhoods.
- The district playgrounds are being assessed and quotes for “wants and needs” will be addressed with the contractor.
- Fall preparation for the winter months is underway with overseeding, fertilization and aeration. The trees will be injected with fertilizer after seeing a good response from the last application.
- The irrigation system is being prepped for winterization and will be shut down, drained and blown out by a technician by the end of September. If the district experiences a warm spell, even in the winter, the district can quickly turn on the system for a brief period, then shut it down promptly.

Otis said there had been a traffic light control issue at the Higby Road and Jackson Creek Parkway intersection.

Rayno said “dirty power” was running at outrageously high megahertz, causing the traffic lights to

change every five seconds at the Leather Chaps Parkway and Jackson Creek Parkway intersection, but technicians got them back into sequence.

The board’s directors thanked Rayno and his crew.

Resident communications

McGrady said residents would receive a “top notch” extensive newsletter with in-depth updates on all the district projects in their mailboxes by the end of September. **Note:** The district has only about one-third of the residents’ email addresses. Increasing that number would provide better communication. The district will never sell or share your email address, but when there is timely or urgent information to communicate, it would be useful. To subscribe, send an email to: [info@triviewmetro.com](mailto:info@triviewmetro.com).

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

Correction

In the September article, Marco Fiorito was referred to as vice president and Anthony Sexton was referred to as director. Levad confirmed upon request that Fiorito and Sexton swapped positions last month. Sexton is vice president and Fiorito a director. Levad confirmed before the meeting that the district website would reflect the position changes.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of every month at the district office located at 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Oct. 20 at 5:30 p.m. For meeting agendas, minutes, and updates, visit <https://triviewmetro.com>.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).

Bernard L. Minetti  
1931-2022



Commander Bernard L. Minetti USN, Ret., of Peachtree City, Georgia died September 10, 2022, in Sharpsburg, Georgia at the age of 91. He was born July 15, 1931, in Brooklyn,

New York to Bernard J. and Ettorina Minetti.

Bernard was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. He entered the Navy in 1951 and became a Commissioned Naval Officer in 1954. He was a Naval Aviator and retired as a Commander in 1977 after 25 years of service. As an ordained Deacon in the Catholic Church, he served God his entire life.

For over a decade before moving out of the area, Bernard was an avid OCN volunteer who contributed many articles and photos to the paper including coverage of the TLMFPD, Palmer Lake Historical Society, NEPCO, and VFW events. He was a steadfast volunteer at numerous OCN mailing days.

Bernard was a devoted husband, father, and Godfather. Though we know he is in the Hands of God, his absence on earth leaves a great sadness behind. He will be forever missed.

Commander Minetti is survived by his daughter, Bernadette Timm; son, Michael Minetti; sister, Marilyn Barletta; and brother, Richard Minetti. He was preceded in death by his wife of 63 years, Patrecia A. Minetti.

A visitation will be held from 6 pm to 9 pm Monday, October 3 at Thompson Funeral Chapel in Goodyear, Arizona. A Mass will be held at 10:30 am, Tuesday, October 4 at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Avondale, Arizona. Interment will take place at 12:30 pm, Friday, October 7 at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona in Phoenix, Arizona.



Monument Sanitation District, Sept. 21

## District receives \$684,000 American Recovery grant

*By Jackie Burhans and James Howald*

At its September meeting, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board heard from District Manager Mark Parker that the district received a grant from the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA). The board voted on the inclusion into its service area of a property on Front Street and opted out of Colorado’s recently passed Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program (FAMLI). The board also heard a report on a pipeline repair project from GMS Engineering LLC.

**ARPA grant funds sewer line repair**

Parker told the board that the district has been awarded an ARPA grant for \$684,025 to repair the wastewater collection line running between the Synthes Commercial area and the Willow Springs Ranch development. The line has high and low spots, known as heaves and bellies, that keep the line from

draining properly. The district will replace 1,300 feet of 8-inch pipe using the grant funds, and the rebuilt line will be enlarged to 10-inch pipe to handle increased flows from customers in Wagons West, Trails End, and others adjacent to Old Denver Highway.

Parker said ARPA grants are awarded only for “shovel ready” projects. The award is reimbursement-based and should be completed by 2023.

**Petition to include Front Street development approved**

The board held a public hearing on the inclusion of the property at 231 Front Street in the district’s service area. There were no public comments at the hearing, but Parker explained that developers planned to build a combination of commercial and residential units at the property. A portion of the property lies outside of MSD’s service area. The developer has petitioned for

that portion to be included in MSD’s service area.

After the hearing was closed, the board voted unanimously in favor of the petition for inclusion.

**Board says no to FAMLI**

Attorney Allison Ulmer, of Collins Cole Flynn Winn and Ulmer, the district’s legal advisors, told the board that the FAMLI act, passed in 2020, created a state-run family and medical leave program that provides up to 12 weeks of paid job-protected leave. The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment created a division to oversee the program. The program operates as an insurance program, with premiums that are equally divided between the employee and the employer. All private businesses must participate, Ulmer said, but governmental agencies, such as MSD, may opt out. If an agency opts out, employees may join the program on their own.

Ulmer emphasized that the details of the program are still in flux. If MSD opts out now, it can decide to join later. If MSD joins now, it must remain in the program for a minimum of three years, she said.

The consensus of the board was that opting out was the most flexible position the board could take, and it asked Ulmer to draft a resolution to that effect to be voted on at the October meeting.

**Raspberry Lane pipeline due for repair**

Dave Frisch, of GMS Engineering LLC, told the board that he recommended using Cured In Place Pipe (CIPP) lining technology to repair 525 feet of the clay sewer line on Raspberry Lane. The line has root intrusions and is beginning to collapse. CIPP uses a liner that is unrolled inside the existing pipe and then cured in place using steam. The liner lasts 40 to 50 years, he said, and is half the

cost of excavating and replacing the existing pipe.

Parker said the road had recently been repaved, and this method would not require that to be redone. The work is out to bid now, should be done by the end of the year and would be paid for using capital contingency funds already in the budget, he said.

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Monument Sanitation District meetings are normally held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month in the district conference room at 130 Second St., Monument. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Oct. 19. See <https://colorado.gov/msd>. For a district service map, see <https://colorado.gov/pacific/msd/district-map-0>. Information: 719-481-4886.

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

Donala Water and Sanitation District, Sept. 22

## Good news on the radium front

*By James Howald and Jackie Burhans*

At the September meeting of the Donala Water and Sanitation

District (DWSD), General Manager Jeff Hodge reported positive results on the district’s efforts to reduce the radium in water de-

livered to customers. The board discussed the district’s position on the recently passed Colorado Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program (FAMLI) and expanded the scope of the water tank maintenance project. In his Manager’s Report, Hodge provided operational details.

The regular meeting adjourned to an executive session to discuss the formation of a Loop Water Authority, the Upper Monument Water Reclamation Authority, and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regulations.

**Radium reduced at Holbein Treatment Plant**

Hodge told the board that DWSD would receive \$1.6 million in American Recovery Project Act (ARPA) funds to spend on its efforts to reduce radium.

Hodge said he had just received lab results that indicated the recently completed upgrades to the Holbein Treatment Plant, which included replacing the filter media, had reduced the radium level in its treated water to an “undetectable” level. State standards require water districts to notify their customers if treated water exceeds 5 picocuries per liter. The water treated at the Holbein plant is far beneath that level even if the sensitivity of the lab test has a standard deviation of 2 picocuries per liter, Hodge said.

FAMLI creates a state-run family and medical leave program that provides up to 12 weeks of paid, job-protected leave for employees who experience a qualifying event, with a contribution of 0.45% of the employee’s salary and a matching amount from the employer. Private sector businesses must participate, Glesne said, but governmental bodies like DWSD can opt out. If DWSD opts out, its employees can still join the program on their own, she said.

DWSD can opt into the program, Glesne said, in which case the district would have to remain in the program for three years. Or the district can opt out, in which case the district would need renew the option not to participate every eight years, and employees could submit their own paperwork to join the program and would be responsible for making their monthly contribution. Finally, Glesne said there was a “hybrid” option, where the district would opt out but would take on the administrative tasks on behalf of any employees who chose to opt in.

Hodge said COVID leave had been absorbed by the district, that after electricity employees are the district’s largest expense but that retaining employees was key. He estimated it would cost the district \$60,000 per year to join the program.

Glesne said she thought the program was aimed at employers who provided no benefits to their employees, which is not the case with DWSD.

Hodge told the board that the Loop water re-use project, in which DWSD is participating, has been awarded \$4 million in ARPA funds by El Paso County. He said Well 16A has been drilled, and tests have shown it will produce 500 gallons per minute if needed in an emergency. However, the pump and the variable-frequency drive for the well will take seven to eight months to arrive. He told the board that the staff was still considering whether to transition to the Tri-Lakes Waste Water Treatment Facility owned by Monument Sanitation District, Palmer Lake Sanitation District, and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District or to continue to use the treatment facility DWSD currently shares with Triview Metropolitan District and Forest Lake Metropolitan District. All options were open, he said.

**Executive session**

The regular meeting adjourned to an executive session to consider a contract to form a Loop Water Authority, the district’s contract with the Upper Monument Water Reclamation Facility, and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regulations.

Director Bill George pointed out that DWSD can’t officially communicate the improved results of the radium test until one more test shows improved results. Board President Wayne Vanderschuere agreed that a second test would be needed to verify the results, but that the results were “good news all around.”

**Board delays decision on FAMLI**

DWSD’s legal counsel, Linda Glesne, gave the board an overview of the FAMLI act, and laid out three strategies for the board to consider.

*Local author paints a picture of what wildfire will look like right here.*

Paperback, e-book, and audiobook available at [LisaHatfieldWriter.com](http://LisaHatfieldWriter.com).

Lisa will be signing books at the *Peyton Crafts Plus Fair* Oct. 8 (see ad below.)

# Crafts *Plus* Fair

9am - 4pm  
**Saturday**  
**OCT. 8th, 2022**

**FUN FOR EVERYONE!!**

**Peyton High School**  
**VENDORS WANTED**

**Contact:**  
**MARIA 719-216-3592**



\*\*\*\*\*  
The next meeting is scheduled for Oct. 20 at 1:30 p.m. Generally, board meetings are held the third Thursday of the

month at 1:30 p.m. and include online access; call (719) 488-3603 or access [www.donalawater.org](http://www.donalawater.org) to receive up-to-date meeting information. The district office is

located at 15850 Holbein Drive, Colorado Springs.  
*James Howald can be reached at [jameshowald@ocn.me](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me).*

*Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).*

*El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Sept. 6 and 13*

# Cooperation encouraged as Black Forest rezone approved despite neighbors’ objections

*By Helen Walklett*

During September, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved the rezoning of an almost 40-acre Black Forest property from RR-5 (residential rural) to RR-2.5 (residential rural). The commissioners also approved a minor subdivision request and a preliminary plan request for two Black Forest properties.

## Terra Ridge North rezone

At the Sept. 6 BOCC land use meeting, the commissioners voted unanimously to approve a request by owner and developer Philip Shay Miles to rezone his almost 40-acre property located south of the intersection of Black Forest Road and Hodgen Road from RR-5 to RR-2.5. The application came to the BOCC from the Aug. 18 El Paso County Planning Commission meeting in which commissioners voted 7-2 to recommend it for approval amid some concern about compatibility and access. *See [www.ocn.me/v22n9.htm?zoom\\_highlight=%22terra+ridge+north%22](http://www.ocn.me/v22n9.htm?zoom_highlight=%22terra+ridge+north%22).*

Miles told the BOCC that he plans to have 11 single-family lots on the rezoned property, with an average lot size of 3.4 acres and a gross density of 0.29 units per acre. Seven lots were planned under the RR-5 zoning.

During the public comment part of the hearing, five neighbors spoke in opposition, raising concerns about compat-

ibility with the surrounding area that is mostly zoned RR-5, access, and increased traffic. Access to the development will be via an extension northward of Fox Creek Lane, which currently ends in a cul-de-sac. Miles owns lots 5 and 6 at the head of the cul-de-sac and plans to construct a 60-foot right of way to county requirements through these. Neighbors questioned his ability to do this without obtaining the consent of the membership of the Terra Ridge Estates covenant-controlled community. Neighbor Jody Kaveney said, “He has drawn his 60-foot right-of-way access to Fox Creek Lane through lots 5 and 6. Mr. Miles does not have the consent of the membership of Terra Ridge Estates to do that.” One neighbor spoke in support.

Responding, Miles, himself a Terra Ridge Estates resident, said the matter of Homeowners Association (HOA) approval would be something that would be addressed at the final plat stage rather than the rezoning. Lori Seago, senior assistant county attorney, agreed, explaining that the county would evaluate the covenants on those two lots to determine whether dedicating right of way through them would violate them and thereby affect the legality of access. Miles also clarified that the two lots were not part of the rezoning area and would remain as 5-acre lots.

Making the motion to approve, Commissioner Holly Williams said, “I appreciate the fact he’s not going to straight

2.5-acre lots, that he’s dedicated 20% of the property to open space.” She added that knowing that the HOA rules would be addressed at the subdivision stage made her a little more comfortable in moving the request to approval.

Chair Stan VanderWerf encouraged the neighbors and the applicant to work together to try to come to something that is comfortable and appropriate for all parties concerned. He said, “It’s always just great when neighbors work together, and I would encourage both parties to reach out to each other and try to make sure that everything is addressed.”

The applicant’s intention is now to submit a subdivision application to replat the property into 11 single-family lots.

## McDermott minor subdivision

Also at the Sept. 6 BOCC land use meeting, the commissioners approved an application by Scott McDermott to create three single-family residential lots on an almost 30-acre property northwest of the intersection of Shoup and Herring Roads. The property, which is zoned RR-5, is owned by the applicant’s brother. The Planning Commission heard the application at its Aug. 18 meeting and voted unanimously to recommend it for approval. *See [www.ocn.me/v22n9.htm?zoom\\_highlight=mcdermott](http://www.ocn.me/v22n9.htm?zoom_highlight=mcdermott).*

McDermott’s intention is to move to the property to help care for his elderly

parents. The entire property was lost in the Black Forest Fire and work to remove the burned timber and replant trees is ongoing. Since the fire, a house and a separate accessory living quarters have been built, and these will remain on lot 1. The other two lots will each be 5 acres. McDermott intends to purchase lot 3 and build a home on it. At present there are no plans to build on lot 2. Any new structures would require site plan review and approval. Access to the two new lots will be via a new driveway off Herring Road.

## High View Estates preliminary plan

At the regular Sept. 13 BOCC meeting, the commissioners voted unanimously to approve the preliminary plan for High View Estates for five single-family residential lots on a 40-acre property zoned RR-5. It is a mile and a half southwest of the intersection of Black Forest Road and Walker Road, north of Hodgen Road.

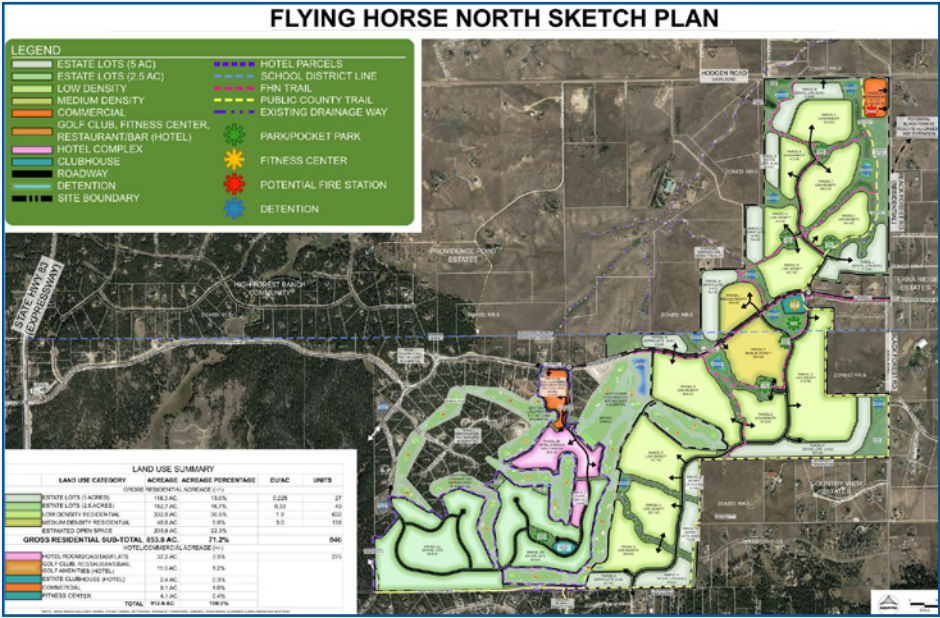
Three of the lots will be 6 acres, one 8 acres, and one 11 acres. The existing dwellings will remain on lot 1. A final plat for the development is being reviewed concurrently.

The application was heard at the Sept. 1 Planning Commission meeting and recommended for approval.

*Helen Walklett can be reached at [helenwalklett@ocn.me](mailto:helenwalklett@ocn.me).*

*Community Meeting, Sept. 8*

# Flying Horse North project update provided at meeting



**Above:** The Sketch Plan and other information on the proposed project can be found at [www.FlyingHorseNorthLiving.com](http://www.FlyingHorseNorthLiving.com) and the El Paso County Planning and Community Development website at <https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com>.

*By David Futey*

On Sept. 8, over 70 people attended a Sketch Plan update of the Flying Horse North development, which is located between Highway 83 and Black Forest Road. Held at Discovery Canyon Elementary School, the meeting was led by Phil Stuepfert, principal/senior project manager and lead planner at HR Green Inc., with input from Drew Balsick, president/project manager for Flying Horse Development LLC. This was the first public meeting since the four neighborhood meetings held in January.

El Paso County reviewed the plan and provided comment. There were 700 email notifications regarding the scheduling of this meeting sent to residents

and others potentially impacted by the project.

Stuepfert presented the revised Sketch Plan and provided an overview of the process to receive approval for the project. The present zoning allows for 283 single-family detached homes on 2.5-acre lots with Filing 1 accounting for 81 of those lots. The Sketch Plan is not intended to address rezoning. The Sketch Plan was originally submitted to the county in March and subsequently resubmitted on Aug. 5 and 18 to address the county’s comments. The next steps for the Sketch Plan include the El Paso County Planning Commission recommendation followed by a final hearing by the Board of County

# WHAT IS 4A?

District 38 is already **receiving \$1,000 more per student** than they did just two years ago. That increase enabled them to give staff **TWO (2) RAISES** last year.

Now about 4A: They are taking advantage of a recent temporary increase in staff turnover—one that also aligns with statewide and nationwide labor shortages—to trick voters into believing they need another \$5+ million per year from taxpayers, in perpetuity. As property values rise, this new tax will go higher and higher. Older, fixed income residents will be hit hard, but D38 wants you to ignore that.

They are asking for a **140% MLO TAX INCREASE** when inflation and recessionary pressures are squeezing everyone

D38 has **lost 400+ students** over the last few years but have chosen not to reduce costs like they should.

**TELL D38 TO LIVE WITHIN THEIR MEANS, LIKE THE REST OF US HAVE TO DO.**

Paid for by Monument Resident Scott Saunders

**TELL THEM NO ON 4A**



Commissioners.

If the project progresses, then a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Preliminary Plan submittal will be created by the developer and reviewed for conformance with the county's Land Development Code, followed by a public hearing, then a Final Plat submittal is reviewed for compliance with final construction drawings and administrative approval.

Stuepfert provided a summary of the Sketch Plan changes, which included a reduction in density from the pre-submittal. The project pre-submittal in November 2020 proposed the maximum number of units at 1,714. The final submittal revised the number to 1,121, with 846 residential and 275 associated with the proposed luxury resort hotel and related casitas and branded flats. This revised plan has: a luxury resort hotel, casitas, and branded flats; perimeter lots being changed to five acres; smaller lots in the central area of the site; lower-density housing adjacent to existing communities and homes; two commercial parcels; Holmes Road extended to Stagecoach Road through the development; and open spaces, parks, and trails. Stuepfert noted the county requirement for open space is 10% while the Sketch Plan allocates nearly 22% of 863 acres.

He then went into details of the project. The southwest area of the project will have 5-acre lots along the southeast perimeter, a new golf clubhouse, estate amenity club, 2.5-acre lots adjacent to Cathedral Pines, and a luxury resort hotel and casitas. The southeast area has 5-acre lots adjacent to most of the perimeter, a proposed minimum buffer of 370 feet between Black Forest Road and homes, a 30-foot landscape buffer along the south property line, a large park and potential fitness center, pocket parks, and connected trails. The northeast area has a proposed 9.1-acre commercial area at the intersection of Hodgen and Black Forest Roads to potentially include a fire station, a significant Black Forest Road buffer, 5-acre lots adjacent to Black Forest and Hodgen

Roads, and parks and trails connected to the regional trail system. At least 12 attendees commented on a variety of topics, with the majority raising concern about water availability, usage by the project, and the impact on present wells.

Several commenters raised concern about the availability of water from the Arapahoe and Dawson aquifers that the project might tap into, with one commenter stating the aquifers were last assessed 35 years ago. Stuepfert said the project has not determined a source but is looking into different water options supplied by municipal water systems. The project has a letter of intent from Cherokee Water District to provide water, but it is not binding at this time.

**Other concerns raised included:**

- The potential for a substantial traffic increase on Holmes Road with, as the commenter stated, no easements available for the project to widen it.
- “How does the plan benefit present Black Forest residents?”
- Concern about the precedent being made should the project proceed as stated in the Sketch Plan and not adhering to the original plan of 2.5-acre lots for all home sites.
- The impacts on the quality of life for Black Forest residents and wildlife migration.

At the conclusion of the public comments, Kevin Mastin, interim executive director of Planning & Community Development for El Paso County, spoke to lend clarity to the project process and citizen comments. He said the Sketch Plan is the developer's initial concept of the project and is first required to determine the general parameters of it. Mastin stated that the Sketch Plan does comply with the county's master plan at this point in the process.

Mastin explained that the Sketch Plan along with a water assessment (water rights and access to a municip

pal system) and other information gathered by the developer are packaged together and submitted to county planners for review. The water assessment report provided by the developer is then submitted to the Division of Water Resources (DWR) for review. If the DWR concurs or disagrees with the assessment, the DWR response is provided to the county attorney, county planners, and subsequently to the county Planning Commission and merged with other information along with a recommendation for the project. The Board of County Commissioners then votes on the project for it to proceed to the next stage, the Planned Unit Development (PUD) created by the developer. The PUD will contain detailed information, such as the water access, and the request for rezoning if needed. Rezoning would be required for this project.

Mastin emphasized that though the county receives numerous calls regarding water sufficiency relative to development projects, it has no authority to determine it for a project. Only the DWR determines whether there is sufficient water for a proposed project. He also said “county planners are the bane of developers” as they scrutinize every step of the project, including compliance with 4.2.6.D, 4.2.6.E and other Land Development Codes. Mastin said residents should contact their Planning Commission representative and can email [plnweb@elpasoco.com](mailto:plnweb@elpasoco.com) with their questions. This is a corrected email than what was stated at the meeting.

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Comments directed to the developer can be sent to [info@FlyingHorseNorthLiving.com](mailto:info@FlyingHorseNorthLiving.com). The Sketch Plan and other information on the proposed project can be found at [www.FlyingHorseNorthLiving.com](http://www.FlyingHorseNorthLiving.com) and the El Paso County Planning and Community Development website at <https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com>.

David Futey can be reached at [davidfutey@ocn.me](mailto:davidfutey@ocn.me).

## Community Meeting, Sept. 13

# Concerns raised about proposed Sunset Amphitheater



**Above:** Well-attended Sunset Amphitheater community meeting held Sept. 13. *Photos by Jackie Burhans.*

*By Jackie Burhans*

On Sept. 13, the developers of the proposed 8,000-seat Sunset Amphitheater held a community meeting at Boot



Barn Hall, a venue owned by developer and Notes Live Chairman JW Roth. Roth's representatives, city planners, and project consultants presented an updated plan to a nearly full house. The team addressed concerns over noise, safety, and parking.

An earlier plan had very little parking, instead it planned to use parking at Discovery Canyon Campus (DCC), The Classical Academy (TCA), Bass Pro, and Compassion International with shuttles bringing at-

tendees to and from the venue. Neighbors raised concerns about conflicts with school events, security, trash, and concert-goers parking and walking through residential neighborhoods. The updated plan eliminated parking at DCC and added a 500-car parking structure near the venue along with street parking and sidewalks on Spectrum Loop and two new potential lots by TCA. Owner development plan commitments include 70% of required parking (1,400 spaces) to be within a half-mile radius of the venue and said attendance would be limited if full capacity were not available.

The speakers noted that the development plan is still under review. Development documents can be seen at the Colorado Springs Land Development Review Search website at [https://web1.coloradosprings.gov/plan/ldrs\\_ext/rpt/index.htm](https://web1.coloradosprings.gov/plan/ldrs_ext/rpt/index.htm) by entering the Tax Schedule Number of 6207300001. Readers can view a video of the meeting, the presentation, and the FAQ document at <https://sunset.live/faqs-2/>.

Jackie Burhans can be contacted at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).

## Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations, Sept. 10

# NEPCO learns about local developments and D38

*By Marlene Brown*

The Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) held its general membership bimonthly meeting Sept. 10. President Mike Aspenson opened the meeting with a call for member Homeowner Associations (HOAs) to look for members who would like to be on the NEPCO board. NEPCO represents over 45 associations in Tri-Lakes and the Black Forest area and has been in existence for over 20 years. The board members continue to work with the El Paso County Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners, local planning commissions, and the towns of Monument and Palmer Lake.

There are open officer positions, and the annual board elections will be held at the November meeting. Nominations should be forwarded to Dave Betzler, Community Outreach Committee, at [info@nepco.org](mailto:info@nepco.org). HOAs are asked to share the NEPCO minutes with their members. The information at the meetings is for public concern regarding growth and expansion in the area.

**Treasurer's report**

Treasurer Jim Keefe reported that all the members had paid their dues except for three HOAs. Dues are about \$25 per lot and depend on how many homes are in the HOA.

**Wildfire insurance**

Wildfire Preparedness Committee Chair Beth Lonquist of Red Rock Ranch gave a presentation on wildfire insur-

ance that has become required after the Marshall Fire. Colorado recommends annual policy checkups to keep up with repair and replacement in the current market.

**Northern Delivery System update**

Warren Gerig of Eagle Village gave a report on the Northern Delivery System. James McGrady of the Triview Metropolitan District (TMD) said last month that everything is approved by Pueblo County and they were just waiting for the 1041 application process to be finalized. Construction is planned to begin in spring 2023, going north on Roller Coaster Road and then west on Baptist Road. TMD would have to pay \$630,000 in fees to the county, which would go into the county's general fund. TMD has agreed to pay the \$630,000 for road repairs to include road resurfacing and installation of fire hydrants every 1,000 feet. Road closures and the impact to residents should last about six weeks.

**Caliber at Woodmoor development**

Transportation and Land Use Committee Chair Bob Mooney presented charts regarding Caliber at Woodmoor, a multi-family rezone of 16 acres to include 20 homes next to the Palmer Ridge High School property line and a three-story clubhouse. The main concerns are overpopulation, close proximity to the school which could impede an evacuation, and more traffic on Monument Hill Road. For questions or comments on this project, contact Matthew Fitzsimmons, senior county planner at [matthewfitzsimmons@elpaso.com](mailto:matthewfitzsimmons@elpaso.com).

Some concerns about the project include that the developer has not bought the land yet. The county will need to rezone the area. A traffic impact study was done in summertime, but it needs to be done while school is in session.

**Monument Ridge East and West**

Monument Ridge East and West are east and west of I-25 at County Line Road. The Town of Monument is considering annexation.

Monument Ridge East would be about 70 acres southeast of I-25 and County Line Road, with patio homes, duplexes, and townhouses. The property will have to be rezoned to Planned Use Development (PUD) to allow for the density the traffic impact analysis has projected. Traffic impact projections won't be made public until the plat is submitted.

Monument Ridge West is 25 acres southwest of I-25 and County Line Road. It includes seven acres of a proposed commercial center serving the traveling public with goods and services, lodging, meeting facilities, and retail establishments. It also includes 18 acres of residential attached homes.

**Guest speaker—KC Somers, superintendent of District 38**

School District 38 Superintendent KC Somers said D38 covers 132 square miles, and the school board has five members. There were 6,700 students with 600 graduates in 2021-22. There are 765 employees with 330 support



employees such as bus drivers, lunch line, and janitorial. D38 has been listed in the top 6% of districts in the state. There are five elementary schools, one middle school, two high schools, one educational facility and one charter school (Monument Academy) with two buildings.

With 6,700 students and 2.5 students per home, that means there is a total of about 2,680 homes with children in the district. Most of the homeowners in the 15,000 homes in the district are retired and have not been voting for proposed mill levy overrides resulting in a property tax increase of \$258.89 per year. The MLO on the November ballot would result in a \$5.5 million increase in revenue that would be distributed in an 8%

increase in pay for the D-38 teachers and support staff. Administrators would not be included in the proposal. D38 has one of the lowest mill levies in the state, historically rated 11th among school districts in the county.

Somers said D38 has increased its law enforcement and armed security teams. They are working with the Monument and Palmer Lake Police Departments. They now have secured “single-point” entrances and controlled vestibules. They are scheduling monthly emergency drills to include lockdown and off-site evacuations. They are training the staff and students to actively be engaged in their own survival. They have improved threat assessment procedures to include law enforce-

ment and mental health experts. District Security works with the county Sheriff’s School Resource Officers (SROs) that are present in the schools. To contact board members as a group, email [schoolboard@lewispalmer.org](mailto:schoolboard@lewispalmer.org)

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The next NEPCO meeting is scheduled for Nov. 12 at 10 a.m. to noon at the Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. For more information regarding NEPCO, visit [www.nepco.org](http://www.nepco.org)

Marlene Brown can be reached at [marlenebrown@ocn.me](mailto:marlenebrown@ocn.me).

September Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

September can see big swings in weather as we transition from summer to fall. These can occur over just about any timeframe. Just two Septembers ago, we went from record highs in the upper 80s and low 90s to 3-5 inches of snow just a day later! Last year, September was relatively warm and wet. This year, we were again warmer than normal. but this year was drier than normal as well.

Another sign of the change of seasons usually occurs around the third week of September when we see our first mornings with temperatures dipping toward freezing. This year, the cool morning temperatures were a little delayed, with our first morning with temperatures in the 30s not occurring until Sept. 25.

As noted, temperatures were above normal this year and this was helped by a very warm start to the month. Highs reached the mid-80s to low 90s each afternoon from the 1st through the 8th. The only exception was the 3rd, when high temperatures only reached the upper 70s. The hot temperatures produced several daily record highs around the region, with many lower elevation locations reaching above 100 F.

This period of warmth was abruptly ended by a cold front that moved through during the morning of the 9th. Persistent upslope flows built behind the front and produced a thick layer of low clouds and fog. Much-needed rain fell from the afternoon on the 9th through the early morning of the 11th. The rainfall on the 10th was the most needed kind, falling as a steady light rain the entire day. The rain and upslope flow kept temperatures cold as well, with highs only reaching the mid-40s. This was quite a change after record warmth just a few days before.

Another quiet period took hold after this air mass cleared out. Highs were around normal from the 11th through the 17th, with 70s each afternoon and generally dry conditions only interrupted by a few sprinkles and rumbles of thunder on the 15th and 16th. Another quick

warmup returned over the last couple days of summer, with highs reaching the mid-80s on the 19th and 20th. Then, just like earlier in month, this warm weather was again interrupted by a cold front on the 21st and once again deep upslope conditions developed behind the front. Low clouds, fog, and drizzle again developed with visibilities almost down to zero at times later on the 21st and into the 22nd. Temperatures again were cool, with highs only reaching the mid-40s.

The last week of the month ended with generally quiet and mild conditions and lots of sunshine. Higher levels of moisture began to work back into the region over the last few days of the month, producing a few scattered showers. Highs over the last week of the month were generally in the upper 60s to low 70s, right about where they should be for the end of September.

Highest Temperature	<b>90° on the 6th</b>
Lowest Temperature	<b>37° on the 25th</b>
Season to Date Snow	<b>0.0”</b> (-0.4”, 100% below normal) (the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip.	<b>13.01”</b> (-6.85”, 35% below normal) (the precip season is from Jan 1 to Dec 31)
Heating Degree Days	<b>162</b> (-138)
Cooling Degree Days	<b>34</b> (+11)

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at [billkappel@ocn.me](mailto:billkappel@ocn.me).



**Above:** A rainy Wednesday and cold Thursday made for a foggy first day of fall Sept. 22. It rained much of the day on the 21st, and temperatures dipped into the 40s on the 22nd. Most people woke up to low visibility from the fog, making driving hazardous. It didn’t seem to bother this fisherman on Monument Lake, though. The fog finally cleared up in the late afternoon. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

**A look ahead**

October can be an active weather month for the region with our first snowy conditions often experienced. Most years, we seem to get a good snowfall around Halloween, and after a warm and dry September, we could use a wet and cold storm this year. Snow can be heavy at times during any part of October as when over 20 inches of snow fell from Oct. 9-10th in 2005, and 2006 saw over 24 inches of snowfall in less than 24 hours on Oct. 26th. Of course, the big storm some of us remember occurred during October 1997, when nearly 4 feet of snow and blizzard conditions shut everything down for several days. But we are just as likely to get mild and sunny conditions, so enjoy those sunny days when you can.

**September 2022 Weather Statistics**

Average High	<b>76.2°</b> (+5.3)
100-year return frequency value max	<b>77.5°</b> min <b>63.5°</b>
Average Low	<b>45.2°</b> (+4.0)
100-year return frequency value max	<b>46.7°</b> min <b>36.1°</b>
Monthly Precipitation	<b>1.02”</b> (-0.78”)
100-year return frequency value max	<b>4.34”</b> min <b>0.40”</b>
Monthly Snowfall	<b>0.0”</b> (-0.4”)

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.

**D38 has lost 400 students. Why do they need more money?**

With punishing inflation on the horizon, state tax increases coming, and market crashes looming, what does District 38 do? They put a mill levy override on the ballot. Because whatever pain our community is experiencing from exploding housing costs and grocery and gasoline prices is nothing compared to the agony of D38 employees and board members knowing that surrounding districts get more money from their local taxpayers than D38 gets from us!

Yes, like it or not, we are perpetually in a perverse high taxes contest. It’s sponsored by D38 officials, who regularly trot out the We Need to Stay Competitive card. We need to make sure D38 gets the most taxes in El Paso County—which they will be closer to if this MLO passes. Apparently, it isn’t good enough that the State of Colorado has ranked D38 one of the top five school districts out of 178 for the past 10 years. Now D38 wants to make us one of the top highest-taxed school districts as well. I assure you, this is a contest no one living in D38 wants to win!

What they won’t tell you is that they have lost over 400 students in the past few years. That’s an entire school’s worth of students. Instead of consolidating and reducing staffing levels, administrators are doubling down, insisting they need more money. To educate 400 fewer kids. Who does this?? Lifelong government employees, that’s who.

Colorado funds its schools on a per-pupil basis. That drop in students means D38’s funding has dropped by \$3.7 million, because, let’s face it, that’s how this is supposed to work. Let’s stay out of the high taxes contest.

Don’t feel guilty, just vote No.

**Derek Araje/#JustAskDerek**

**Support our D38 school board**

Thirty-five years ago, I moved to Monument because of the community, the school district’s high standards, the high caliber and commitment of teachers, and the students’ achievements. A community’s strength draws heavily from the quality and experiences of its schools. Because of that, my daughter and her peers thrived in this school system where residents supported elections to improve facilities and educational instruction.

This community has been fortunate in the past to have had such a dynamic, vibrant, high performing, and successful school district. Lewis-Palmer School District 38 is well known for its pursuit of excellence. Whether we have had children and grandchildren in our schools or have been residents with no student-age children, all have benefitted from such an outstanding school district. Home values have increased or remained high. Certainly, the quality of life is better because of strong schools and a robust community, and our past student success and achievement are unparalleled. We have been blessed with the high quality and longevity of our teachers and staff.

Now, as a community, it is time for us to step up and support our school board decisions that will benefit teachers and staff. Our support will stop the erosion of our best teachers and provide incentive to hire the very best teachers and staff to serve our children in the future. Not only that, whether we have children or grandchildren currently in the schools, it is critical for all voting residents to support District 38 for the benefits we have received over the years. As we have been blessed, it is time for us to bless our future. As we have received, let us now pay it forward and become a blessing for our teachers, staff, and children into the future.

**Ted Bauman**

**Is the D38 MLO a good deal for seniors?**

About one-third of D38 households have students in public schools. Of the remaining two-thirds, many are senior citizens whose children are out of school. (Full disclosure: I am in this category.)

These demographics always come into play when a mill levy override, which will increase property taxes, is being discussed. The benefit of increased funding for schools to parents with school-age children is clear. But it’s often taken for granted that seniors will pay additional taxes but not get any benefit. Is this really the case?

No.

Seniors are eligible for many benefits that are directly funded by the taxes of younger workers. If you get Social Security payments, those are paid for by younger workers. If you are on Medicare or Medicaid, your portion is augmented by younger workers. If you are a retired veteran, your retirement and your TriCare healthcare are funded in similar ways. If you’re 65 and you’ve lived in your house for 10 years, you qualify for the Senior Homestead Exemption Act, which exempts you from 50% of the property taxes that would otherwise be due on the first \$200,000 of the market value of your home. That’s paid for by younger workers as well.

So, when an MLO is proposed, seniors are not being asked to pay for something of no immediate benefit to them. They’re being asked to make a long-term investment in educating the ones who will in turn support their quality of life in their later years—an investment that will benefit those on both sides of the equation. Seniors are investing in doctors and nurses who will treat them.

With that in mind, seniors who take a long-term view will support D38’s proposed MLO.

**James W. Howald**

**Elephant Rock developer chosen**

The Sept. 3 edition of *Our Community News* reported that at the Aug. 25 meeting, Palmer Lake Trustees were “ready to have an agreement in principle” and “saw no



need for further discussion” before selecting The Carter Payne-Willans proposal for the development of the Elephant Rock property.

I don’t live in Palmer Lake, and have no relationship with any of the developers, but I have a calculator and made a few observations based on the reported description of the Carter Payne financials.

The selected proposal projected \$1.91 million “in sales tax for the town” over 10 years. This averages out \$191,000 per year, which would require generation of \$6.3 million in taxable revenue per year. That is double the sales generated by the average McDonald’s, one of the most efficient businesses on earth and targeted at the best traffic locations.

The selected proposal plans an investment which would generate “\$185,108 in property taxes” between 2023 and 2032. If invested immediately, at best this would generate nine years of property tax revenue between 2023 and 2032 or \$20,568 per year. That revenue would require a commercial market value of \$3.339 million within a year, for an assessed valuation of \$968,453 to generate \$20,568 in property tax revenue for the town.

The “proposed timeline” of phased investments for the project was estimated to be \$4.25 million, also double the initial investment for a McDonald’s franchise.

Based on these projections, this proposal is an incredible opportunity for the Town of Palmer Lake to attract this kind of investment for a collection of business activities capable of generating this amount of revenue. No need for further discussion.

Hal King

Does anyone realize how much more money D38 will get in this mill levy override?

They are asking for a 140% increase. Another \$5.6 million on top of the \$4 million extra we give them every year. Forever. District 38 has made it a point to say we pay a little less than other neighboring districts and that’s their reason for asking for more. It’s not that they actually need \$5 million to fill the positions they had trouble filling this year. It’s that something is wrong with the universe if others get more than they do.

Here’s the math: D20’s MLO currently gives them \$1,049 per pupil. Currently D38 gets \$620. If this MLO

passes, D38 will get about \$850 more per student. This will increase D38’s per pupil MLO funds to \$1,470.

It’s very interesting that this totals up to almost exactly the amount of money D38 lost when they lost over 400 students in recent years.

Why do we all of a sudden need to not only pay more taxes than D20 pays, but a whopping 45% more than they pay? Well, when you look closely and see that the amount D38 is asking for is simply to make up for the loss of enrollment, it starts to make lot of sense. Why cut any expenses when D38 can just harvest the funds from the taxpayer money tree? They have been trying this using different cover stories and lies for the past 15 years and this year is no different. There is no indication that fleecing taxpayers for more money would improve the quality of education here. When you are already No. 3 out of 178 in your state, more money is usually the last thing to make you any better.

Jeff Koehlinger

Lies, lies, lies

D38 is trying to pull the wool over on local taxpayers. It wasn’t long ago they asked for a massive tax increase to build a school that wasn’t needed. Now, D38 has over 400 less students over last four years and zero growth. In response, they should let some staff go and reduce expenses because they have almost a full elementary school less students. But D38 has chosen to waste taxpayer money and not reduce costs in response to hundreds less students and lower revenue.

Next, the D38 rate of teacher turnover is in line with many other districts in the state. In fact, districts with higher taxes and higher pay have similar rates of teacher turnover. Another lie and inconvenient truth they try to hide. Only a few years ago, D38 wasted \$1.5 million on plans for a school that can’t be built. In that lie, they tried to hide extra windfall revenue they would earn in a complicated “bond premium” scheme that they did not disclose. It is long overdue that D38 make cutting out waste and inefficiency a top priority. Next, D38 should provide real transparency and efficiency (and not a taxpayer-funded PR department that just spins the truth.)

Most families and retirees are struggling with record inflation, high prices and a recession that will reduce jobs. Asset prices are going down, which reduces wealth and financial capability. It is tone deaf for D38 to ask for

a big tax increase when homeowners are already reeling from higher property taxes due to inflation-induced rising home prices. Before coming to taxpayers for more money, D38 first needs to focus on cutting out waste and stop mismanaging our existing tax dollars. And stop lying to try to pass another unneeded tax increase, too.

Scott Saunders

Thank you D38 teachers, staff, and school board!

Thanks to our school board members for passing the resolution to allow teachers and other non-administrative staff compensation to go to the voters! D38 teachers and much of the support staff are the lowest paid of 10 surrounding districts. And this is in a state that is one of the lowest paying in the nation! Not only must we raise wages to stay competitive, but also our teachers have earned it with all they have sacrificed for our kids in the last couple of years. Great schools make our community stronger and help our home values, in addition to helping raise well-educated and competitive kids. Support D38 and vote yes!

Crystal Starkey

Thanks to Tri-Lakes Women’s Club for supporting youth baseball

On behalf of the Bears Baseball Club of Monument, I would like to thank the Tri-Lakes Women’s Club for playing an integral role in this year’s Palmer Ridge Youth Baseball Camp by donating T-shirts to the kids and coaches that participated in the four-day event. Thanks to their generosity, 87 campers from grades one through eight and 15 adult/youth coaches were provided a specially designed shirt that made them feel like valuable members of the same team and that will serve as a memento of their lessons learned at camp.

The baseball camp is held annually in June and is designed to get kids outside in the warm weather for an active and fun introduction to the game of baseball. All proceeds from the camp directly benefit the student athletes of Palmer Ridge’s baseball program by funding team supplies, safety equipment, and capital improvements.

Joe Ward

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Lose yourself in historical fiction

By the staff at Covered Treasures

“Once you’ve fallen in love with books, their presence can make you feel at home anywhere, even in places where you shouldn’t belong.”—

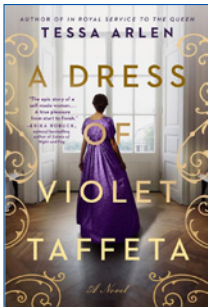
Kristin Harmel, *The Book of Lost Names*

Immerse yourself in well-researched historical fiction and lose yourself in a different time period. Authors frequently include notes to explain the true history that inspired them.

A Dress of Violet Taffeta

By Tessa Arlen (Berkley) \$17

Belle Époque icon Lucy, Lady Duff Gordon, was determined to shatter the boundaries of the fashion world. First Lucy is deserted by her wealthy husband, left with an aging mother and young daughter to support. Then Lucy survives the sinking of the Titanic. She could never have imagined the effects on her career, her second marriage, and her legacy. No matter what life throws at her, Lucy will live on as a trailblazing, fearless fashion icon, never letting go of what she worked so hard to earn.



code. Only Eva holds the answer. In 1942, forced to flee Paris and find refuge in a small mountain town, Eva forged identity documents for Jewish children. She came up with a way to preserve their real names. This is a testament to resilience of the human spirit and the power of bravery and love in the face of evil.

Woman of Light

By Kali Fajardo-Arstone (One Word) \$28

Listed as one of Oprah’s Best Historical Fiction 2022, this multigenerational novel is about survival, family secrets, and love. Luz “Little Light” Lopez is left to fend for herself in 1930s Denver after her brother is run out of town by a violent mob. She has visions that transport her to her Indigenous homeland in the nearby Lost Territory. In the end, it is up to Luz to save her family stories from disappearing into oblivion.

The Lost Girls of Willowbrook

By Ellen Marie Wiseman (Kensington Publishing) \$16.95

Bestselling author Ellen Marie Wiseman blends fact, fiction, and urban legend for a haunting story about a young woman mistakenly imprisoned at Willowbrook State School, the real-life institution later shuttered for abuses. Six years after her twin sister Rosemary’s supposed death, and the death of her mother, Sage discovers Rosemary didn’t die. She was committed to Willowbrook and went missing. Sage secretly sets out determined to

find Rosemary. What she learns will change her life in ways she never could have imagined.

Her Hidden Genius

By Marie Benedict (Sourcebooks) \$16.99

She changed the world with her discovery. Three men took the credit. When Rosalind is assigned to work on DNA, she believes she can unearth its secrets, and she does. But what unfolds next, she could never have predicted. Marie Benedict’s powerful novel brings to life Rosalind Franklin’s grit and spirit and shines a light on a woman who sacrificed her life to discover the nature of our DNA.

The Last Green Valley

By Mark Sullivan (Lake Union Publishing) \$15.95

In March 1944, as Stalin’s forces push into Ukraine, the Martels are one of many families of German heritage whose ancestors have farmed in Ukraine for more than a century. Caught between two warring forces, the Martels’ story is a brutal, complex, and ultimately triumphant tale that illuminates the power of love, faith, and one family’s incredible will to survive and see their dreams realized.

Until next month, happy reading.

The staff at Covered Treasures can be reached at books@ocn.me.

October Library Events

Authors to visit, Friends of the Library Week set

By Harriet Halbig

Two important events are coming up in October at the library. As the *All Pikes Peak Reads* program continues, two of the three featured authors will speak during the month.

On Saturday, Oct. 15, Susan Orlean, author of *The Library Book*, an adult selection, will appear in person at 4 p.m. in Library 21c, 1171 Chapel Hills Drive in Colorado Springs. Described as a love letter to the library, the book revolves around a mysterious major fire at the Los Angeles Public Library in 1986, which destroyed

more than 400,000 books and damaged 700,000 more. The cause was never discovered.

On Thursday, Oct. 20 at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., author Leslie Connor of *The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle*, this year’s children’s selection, will speak virtually. The book involves a child with learning disabilities who has difficulties being believed when he describes what he saw.

Oct. 10 through 17 is *National Friends of the Library Week*. The *Pikes Peak Friends of the Library* organization has over 1,000 members, with chapters at each branch. The *Friends* are dedicated to supporting and promoting

The Dictionary of Lost Words

By Pip Williams (Ballantine) \$17

A Reese’s Book Club Pick and bestseller, this captivating, thought-provoking book delves into the real women whose work on the Oxford English Dictionary went largely unheralded. Set during the height of the women’s suffrage movement and with the Great War looming, *The Dictionary of Lost Words* reveals a lost narrative, hidden between the lines of a history written by men. Inspired by actual events, author Pip Williams has delved into the archives to tell this highly original story that celebrates the power of language to shape the world.

The Book of Lost Names

By Kristin Harmel (Gallery Books), \$16.99

Eva, a librarian in Florida, discovers an article about a book she hasn’t seen in 65 years. The article discusses the Nazis looting of libraries and the search to reunite people with the texts taken from them. In one of the most fascinating cases, the book appears to contain



the library and its activities. Some of their activities are maintaining bookstores in each library, sponsoring a bi-annual book sale, supporting the *Mountain of Authors* event each spring, which brings a prominent author to speak and local authors together, literary awards, support of the *Regional History Symposium*, *All Pikes Peak*

*Reads*, children's summer reading, and professional development for Pikes Peak Library District staff. Members of the *Friends* will be at the library during the week to answer any questions. The exact date is to be determined. Please refer to the website, PPLD.ORG, look under

*About Us* and *Friends* for further information, or call 719-531-6333 extension 1461. Please join us! We hope to see you at the library during October! Refer to the website for news of seasonal programs and *Take and Make* projects. *Harriet Halbig* may be reached at *harriethalbig@ocn.me*.

Palmer Lake Historical Society, Sept. 15

# Capt. Jepp and the Little Black Book

By Natalie Barszcz

The Palmer Lake Historical Society met on Sept. 15 to hear a presentation from Flint Whitlock and Terry Barnhart on their co-authored biography titled *Capt. Jepp and the Little Black Book: How Barnstormer and Aviation Pioneer Elrey B. Jeppesen Made the Skies Safer for Everyone*. Elrey Jeppesen learned to fly during the “Golden Age” of aviation and took his first solo flight after 2.5 hours of instruction. In the 1920s and ‘30s, aviation was a hazardous business, especially for the pilots. Pilots were exposed to the elements and the cockpit was unheated. Planes were often unreliable and used primitive instrumentation, and navigational equipment was almost non-existent. Many early pilots lost their lives simply because they became lost or did not know the obstacles in their flight path. Jeppesen, the son of Danish immigrants, was determined to improve the situation, but not to make money, just to stay alive. During the process, his simple, hand-drawn aerial navigation charts grew from a small, part-time business into a multi-million-dollar international operation, with its world headquarters based in Englewood. Capt. Jepp, as he was known, led a remarkable life, with Orville Wright signing Jepp’s pilot’s license, misspelling his name and noting his birthdate incorrectly. Jepp was an early air-mail pilot, barnstormer, daredevil, wing walker, instructor, and aerial-photography pilot.

He also survived many crashes and became one of United Airlines’ first pilots, but most importantly he invented a system of aerial navigation that almost every pilot and airline company in the world uses today. Jepp was an innovative, successful businessman, winning over 20 national aviation honors, including induction into the U.S. Aviation Hall of Fame. So influential was Jepp to the field of aviation that the terminal at Denver International Airport is named in his honor. Jepp suffered from Parkinson’s disease and the effects were evident, as was his joy in life, when he told audiences, “As soon as I get over this Parkinson’s, I’m going to do some more wing walking.” For the first time, Jepp’s life has been captured in a book-length biography, co-authored by Whitlock and Barnhart. Whitlock is the author of 16 books, including three biographies and a novel. He is a WWII battlefield tour guide for the Smithsonian, National Geographic, and other organizations, and has appeared in numerous documentaries and lectures on Viking Sea Cruises. Barnhart is a licensed private pilot and is chairman emeritus of Barnhart Advertising and Public Relations in Denver, one of the most successful public relations firms for more than 35 years.

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The Palmer Lake Historical Society usually meets on the third Thursday of every month. The next event at Palmer Lake Town Hall is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 20. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for a presentation at 7 p.m. by

Steve Antonuccio on The History of the Alexander Film Company. For additional details, visit [www.palmerdividehistory.org](http://www.palmerdividehistory.org). Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).



**Above:** from left, Flint Whitlock and Terry Barnhart, display a copy of their co-authored biography *Capt. Jepp and the Little Black Book: How Barnstormer and Aviation Pioneer Elrey B. Jeppesen Made the Skies Safer for Everyone* at the Palmer Lake Historical Society presentation in the Palmer Lake Town Hall on Sept. 15. *Photo by Su Osgerby Ketchmark.*

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

# High altitude garden success in any season

By Janet Sellers

October brings us a wide range of gardening weather. We get warm days, cold days, rainy days, and even snow and ice! One way that we can protect our landscapes against this fluctuation is to use Mother Nature’s time-tested ways of mulching to protect our living soil with its many microbes and beneficial critters. We must protect these for any hope of garden success. Many people cover their roses, perennials, and garden beds prepped for spring with a thick layer of field straw or pine straw 3 to 4 inches deep or more. This is true of organic landscaping, but unnatural chemicals such as glyphosate kills weeds and actually undermines the plants and beneficial microorganisms our soil relies on. The EPA has also stated that many endangered plants may be at risk from glyphosate use in conservation areas. Glyphosate in soil takes 140 days to break down to half its toxicity and will continue to be taken up by plants from the soil for two years and longer. Most plants are endangered by glyphosate. It is made to destroy the growth process of plants. Our ecosystem is dependent on the interactivity of plants in the soil and soil with the plants, so while squirting this poison on plants has an immediate appearance of effect above ground, it has a long-term effect on our ecosystem. We are a part of this ecosystem.

Monument Community Garden (MCG) is organically grown, and we had a successful harvest even after two late spring snowfalls, which destroyed the March and May seed plantings and sprouts. Our MCG soil is natural and healthy, our microorganisms remained strong, and we planted a third time in June. With the high school helpers weeding each month, we had our seedlings thrive into abundant tasty crops. The garden’s circumference of marigolds did its job beautifully, safely keeping out insects, rabbits, mice, and deer. These varmints catch the scent of the plants and think the whole garden is just marigolds. Our lush strawberry starter plants gave us (and some pesky birds) sweet red berries. We look to have a full strawberry garden bed next year. We can bring our potted plants indoors for weather protection and they’ll bloom long into the season. I put my petunias and others in at night and out in the day for sun, and if it’s too cold, they go near my windows—all year we have plenty of good light for plants in sunny windows. In fact, my geraniums bloom year-round with trotting them indoors and outdoors. Janet Sellers is an avid lazy—aka nature-focused—gardener, using Mother Nature’s methods for the local “high desert forest” clime. Share your wisdom and local gardening tips to [JanetSellers@ocn.me](mailto:JanetSellers@ocn.me).



**Above:** On Sept. 17, students from the Palmer Ridge High School Key Club and Honor Society helped in the Monument Community Garden. From left are Aalia Renteria, Hanna Miller, Nate Sapp, and Todd Osborn. After pulling weeds and overgrown spearmint from the garden beds and turning the compost pile greens so that it would become soil in a few months, the students helped harvest the seed pods of various plants for next year. They sampled the garden’s fresh, sun-kissed ripe strawberries and the tasty seed pods of the radish plants and nasturtium flowers. Immature radish pods and nasturtium flowers both have a delicate, peppery flavor and add zest to salads, frittatas, and omelets. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

On the Trail (in memory of Tim Watkins)

# Ways to handle local wildlife encounters

By Steve Pate

On Aug. 31, Corey Adler, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) district wildlife manager for our area, explained how best to handle increasing encounters with local wildlife. He discussed how people should handle run-ins with a variety of critters, from a huge moose to the tiny Preble’s meadow jumping mouse. The presentation at Wesley Owens Coffee and Café in Monument drew about 30 people. Wildlife encounters on trails are our responsibility to prepare for and react properly. Most wildlife try to avoid human contact and will leave if given an opportunity. Exceptions may occur when bears, for example, are either startled or a sow bear has cubs nearby. In that case, try not to get between cubs and their momma and back away slowly—don’t turn your back on wildlife, try to make yourself appear bigger (raise your arms, etc.), and make some noise. Adler handed out “bear cans” with rocks inside for that purpose.

The same applies to mountain lions. Don’t turn your back or run. People are not in a mountain lion’s normal diet like deer and small animals. They usually want to get away from people, are nocturnal, and are seldom seen by humans. I know of local hikers, however, who have seen lion tracks following hikers. Moose are a different story. The moose population is increasing in our wildland interface areas around Palmer Lake, Mount Herman, the reservoirs, etc. If you come upon a moose, look for cover, a large tree or boulder you can put between you and the moose, especially if you notice its ears turning back as it gets ready to charge. Moose are not intimidated by much and have been known to charge, especially during rutting season. So, if all else fails, run. Adler also talked about bear encounters in our local neighborhoods. A CPW bumper sticker says, “Garbage Kills Bears.” That is because humans leave garbage where it is accessible to bears, bears learn where and when the



**Above:** On Aug. 31, Corey Adler, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) district wildlife manager for our area, explained how best to handle increasing encounters with local wildlife. *Photo by Steve Pate.* “food” is out, and the humans who left it out call CPW. The usual protocol is for CPW to sedate, tag, and chip the bear and release it once. If the same bear is caught again



(likely), it is killed. Please don't feed wildlife unintentionally by leaving trash and garbage where it's accessible, or by leaving bird feeders filled with birdseed when birds don't need supplemental food and when bears are not hibernating, late fall through early spring.

Feeding any wildlife is unlawful and just wrong. Deer get used to people and associate them with food when humans have provided it. Bird seed and corn are not good for deer—their digestive system is geared to handle grasses or tender pine branches. Adler told of a woman who

found a fawn, raised it thinking it was abandoned, and when it became a buck it gored a woman and seriously injured her. If you find young or injured wildlife, please leave them alone. If a deer, for example, is injured but can still move, it will probably survive; otherwise, call CPW.

Adler said coyotes may be seen anytime, day or night. Again, they normally want nothing to do with people but are a threat to small animals. Keep your dog on a leash when hiking and walking in your neighborhood. That may also help avoid rattlesnake bites while hiking in areas

where snakes hang out. And like other wild creatures, rattlers want to avoid humans (and dogs) but if threatened will strike if, for example, a dog pokes its nose at it.

Oh, and that Preble's meadow jumping mouse? It's an endangered species and has been spotted in its preferred riparian habitat, meadow grassland near a stream or other water, close to Bear Creek Elementary School.

Tips for "hazing" wild animals (non-lethal ways to persuade them to move away):

- Bear cans as mentioned above.
  - Make noise—convince them you're "top dog."
  - Paintball guns—nonlethal but they hurt.
  - CPW has used a shotgun loaded with rubber shot pellets—noisy and it hurts.
- Adler may be contacted at [corey.adler@state.co.us](mailto:corey.adler@state.co.us). If you have questions or concerns about wildlife in your area, you can call CPW dispatch at (719) 544-2424
- Steve Pate may be contacted at [stevepate@ocn.me](mailto:stevepate@ocn.me).

Art Matters

## Sunlight for mood, performance, and health



By Janet Sellers

Traditional art relies on light and dark, chiaroscuro, for visual understanding and enjoyment. Human history shows we lived and worked outdoors 10 hours a day, seven days a week, absorbing the light of the sky. It fills us with health and well-being. Our bodies and vision relate to natural light energy in powerful ways. We even feel this in looking at art that includes natural light.

Cloudy days outdoors are perfect for taking photos of art with no shadows and balanced light. Recently it was cloudy but raining and foggy—impossible conditions for photographing my works on paper outdoors. I tried indoor LED lighting, but the yellow cast of those bulbs made my drawings look dingy and unappealing. But why?

**Our biological need for light quality**

We can tell if the lighting is "off" in our photos and in art, and that affects our

enjoyment. But our needs go deeper than that. We innately desire lighting comfort when we look at things, especially art. Looking into it, I re-discovered the complexities of daylight vs. artificial lighting.

It turns out that the comfort and health provided by daylighting (even LED daylight bulbs help) aids us in regulating our circadian rhythms. Our body clock affects us powerfully. We know this from daylight saving time. Our body-mind health and productivity are strongly related to our exposure with lighting comfort.

**Sunlight—an overlooked wellness essential**

Being so used to artificial lighting, do we notice sunlight's full spectrum affecting our well-being? Photobiology is the science of how light affects living cells. Ken Cedar, of the *Science of Light* nonprofit, relates that children's scholastic performance is improved by applying scientific principles of light to enhance cognition, well-being, and self-regulation. In an

article for *Psychology Today*, he explains that sunlight is an overlooked wellness essential: "... Grasping this information is crucial to appreciating how our electronically saturated world makes us ill!"

**Natural dark and light help regulate the body**

Living in artificial light as we do, our bodies think we have no natural seasons. Many of our metabolic activities are affected by sunlight and darkness as well. Having enough darkness affects our sleep hormone, the antioxidant melatonin. Even candles or night lights reduce melatonin production to the degree that studies show increases in tumor growth in rats.

**We are like green plants**

Cedar relates in his studies that we are contemporary cave dwellers. Photobiologist Dr. John Ott indicated that we are suffering from mal-illumination, which he likened to malnutrition. I started reading his free e-book on the topic. With it,

he hopes to facilitate our improvement of health and well-being.

Our bodies need sunlight and its rhythms. It's how we're made. When we disregard this, our health and productivity suffer. Our screen-age life keeps us and our children indoors with fake lighting and screen addictions. (I'm not making this up; screen addiction is real, and it is harmful).

We have over 300 days a year of sunshine here in our Tri-Lakes area. Even so, daylight saving time will end soon, and we'll be changing our lives again. Let's take a tip from traditional art and artists in making the most of our natural daylight.

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Janet Sellers is an artist, writer, speaker, and educator. She exhibits her artworks in cities and museums in Colorado and around the world. She can be reached at [JanetSellers@ocn.me](mailto:JanetSellers@ocn.me).

## Snapshots of Our Community

### TL Cruisers Car Show, Aug. 28



**Above:** Nearly 200 antique cars filled downtown Monument on Aug. 28 at the Tri-Lakes Cruisers' 19th Annual Benefit Car Show. Spokesman Steve Gutman says it was "by far the largest crowd yet." The event supports Tri-Lakes Cares from driver registration fees. A check for the first \$1,000 was presented to Executive Director Haley Chapin. The money came from the estates of longtime Cruisers members Dick Cissell and Chuck Markl. *Photo by Steve Gutman.*

### Luau at JCSL, Sept. 9



**Above:** The public was invited to join senior residents on Sept. 9 for a luau and Islander tunes with dancing at Jackson Creek's Senior Living. The luau included food and festive ambience complete with a roasted pig and all the fixings. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

### Shimek Retrospective, Sept. 2



**Above:** From left, Anne Shimek Pottery Retrospective contributor Karen Larson, Palmer Lake Art Council (PLAC) President Jina Breneman, and PLAC board member Susan Kuehster pose behind a few of Shimek's pottery pieces that were on display during the PLAC-sponsored art event on Sept. 2. Shimek, who died in 2017, was an internationally renowned potter and longtime resident of Palmer Lake. She and her partner, Mary Little Deer Glenn, supported the community in a variety of ways, including the Empty Bowls event. More than 12 individuals including Larson lent over 50 pieces created by Shimek such as mugs, candle holders, goblets, plates, water pitchers and Native American-themed decorative pieces for the show. There were also 14 written remembrances of Anne and Mary on display for attendees to read while browsing the pieces. Held at Journey's End restaurant, the retrospective was the first popup art event by the PLAC. Breneman said "PLAC wants to highlight Palmer Lake and its local businesses like Journey's End through art events and other activities." Information on PLAC and its upcoming events is at <https://palmerlakecolorado.org/arts/fine-art/palmer-lake-arts-council/>. *Photo by David Futey.*



Monu-Palooza, Sept. 4



**Above:** On Sept. 4 during Labor Day weekend, Monu-Palooza, Monument's Hometown Music Festival, took over Limbach Park in downtown Monument. This sixth annual music event drew over 650 attendees throughout the day. Event organizer Charlie Searle said he started Monu-Palooza in 2017 because "Concerts in the Park ended in August, and I thought the town needed something to end the summer." He continued, "I wanted to keep it local with the bands, have an event that would re-invest in the community, and give the community something to enjoy close to home over Labor Day weekend." The music was provided by seven local bands accounting for over eight hours of music. The bands in order of performance were Hickabee, WireWood Station, Eighty3, Skin & Bones, Missy & The Dirty Secrets (pictured above), Searle's band the Ashtönz, and Mosquito Pass. *Photo by David Futey.*

Palmer Lake Wine Festival, Sept. 4



**Above:** About 1,200 people turned out on a cool, drizzly Saturday to participate in the third annual Palmer Lake Wine Festival (PLWF) on Sept. 10. Part of the proceeds from the event help fund Tri-Lakes Cares. Participants enjoyed music by the Monument Jazz Trio and Miguel Dakota in the gazebo just west of the lake and were able to sample a variety of local wines and buy from local food trucks and other vendors. Three wineries scheduled to participate were cut due to a 23-year-old state statute that prevents wineries, breweries, and distilleries from participating in more than nine festivals per year, and this resulted in long lines to sample wines. The PLWF committee said it will work to deal with this arbitrary statute, which was not enforced previously, before the next wine festival. *Photo by Steve Pate.*

Last 2022 ArtHop, Sept. 15



**Above:** The last Art Hop for 2022 on Sept. 15 was enjoyed by many in Monument. Artist and writer Janet Sellers was featured at Jefferson Studios, 215 Jefferson St., owned by Daryl Muncey. Sellers is pictured with her hummingbird art and poems that she is writing for a book. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*

Regional Sertoman of the Year



**Above:** Dr. Vicki Wynn has been named the 2022 Regional Sertoman of the Year. Wynn was among the nominees from the Mountain West Region's 30 Sertoma clubs who were considered for the honor. Earlier this year, Wynn was named Gleneagle's Sertoman of the Year. Wynn is the owner of Timberview Animal Hospital. She received the plaque from Regional Director Dave Oppenheim of Denver at the Sept. 7 meeting of the Gleneagle club. From left are Oppenheim, Steve Dawson, past regional director; Wynn; Gleneagle Sertoma Club President Larry Oliver; and 2021 Gleneagle Sertoman of the Year John Coyle. *Photo by Mary Obenauf.*

Bella Casa moves, Sept. 23



**Above:** After 19 years at 155 Second St. in Monument, Bella Casa Décor and Design moved to a new location a couple of doors away on Sept 9. The home décor and design store is now located at 125 Second St. Asked the reason for the move, owner Jenny Fields (in photo) said, "bigger place, cheaper rent." The new location is twice the size of the old one. The store replaces The Perfect Shade, formerly Shades of Amber, which closed on May 31. Bella Casa's previous location will be filled by the Fletcher Team and Associates, which owns the building. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

Radium reduction system



**Above:** Good news for Monument residents worried about radium in their water. A \$1.3 million expansion of the water treatment plant on 225 Beacon Lite Road that will reduce the radium found in Well 9 was dedicated on Sept. 14. Assistant Public Works Director Steve Sheffield says the new filters will remove "almost all" of the radium in the water. He says an expansion of the lab on site will also let staff conduct more extensive water quality tests. Town Manager Mike Foreman thanked the Board of Trustees for approving the \$20 million in bonds that helped pay for the project. Front row from left are Cheryl Morford, Trustees Jim Romanello and Darcy Schoening, Foreman, Sheffield, Trustee Mitch LaKind and Kerry Hilsabeck. *Photos by Michael Weinfeld.*



## Furay at TLCA, Sept. 17

**Right:** On Sept. 17, a sold-out audience at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) received a music history lesson as Richie Furay related his 60 years in the industry through songs and stories. With his daughter, vocalist Jesse Lynch, and Dan Skarsa on guitar and vocals, the trio opened with *Pickin' Up the Pieces*, a song from Furay's groundbreaking group *Poco*. Furay said, "We were just a bunch of kids getting together looking to cross country with rock and roll." The opening set included his 2015 song, *We Were the Dreamers*, highlighting the music pioneering done by *Poco*, and the devotional song *Wake Up My Soul*, as he was a pastor in Boulder for 35 years. Furay also provided the journey behind his friendship with Stephen Stills and the forming of *Buffalo Springfield*, complementing it with Stills' songs *On the Way Home* and *Sit Down, I Think I Love You*. *Photo by David Futey.*



## Shiloh Pines wildfire risk reduction



**Above:** What a great slash chipping day we had on Sept. 17! For 5 1/2 hours, 20 residents took turns bringing trees and branches to the chipping team from Monument Fire (the merger of Tri-Lakes Monument and Donald Wescott Fire Protection Districts). Residents thinned out densely packed stands of pines along the roadways so that the remaining trees will be healthier and there is less "ladder fuel" to feed a wildfire as well as making evacuation in the event of a wildfire safer. Shiloh Pines is west of Monument Lake. In the first year of the Shiloh Pines Firewise Committee, this is the fifth community fuels reduction event. Of 47 total lots, 28 actively support and/or are participating in wildfire mitigation. As vegetation grows, it's a constant effort to keep it maintained, whether people do the work or leave it to a wildland fire to clean things up. *Photo by Gayle Humm, Shiloh Pines Firewise Committee.*

## Ice Cave Creek forest restoration



**Above:** Along the Ice Cave Creek loop on Sept. 23, the aspens were beginning their annual color displays. A sign, "Logging Operations Ahead," was just a couple of switchbacks along the Ice Cave Creek Trail (ICCT). The "forest restoration project" work will continue through Oct. 7 west and north of Reservoir 2 and along Ice Cave Creek. The ICCT may be closed at times until Oct. 3 while operations are ongoing. *Photo by Steve Pate.*



## An important message for our readers OCN needs your help!

*Our Community News* is an all-volunteer organization. For the past 20 years, our volunteers have provided unbiased reporting on important local issues, including real estate development, fire departments, school districts, and water availability. We have provided a very favorable platform for advertising local businesses. We have published letters to the editor to allow you to express your opinions on events affecting the Tri-Lakes area.

Now we find that we have more tasks than we have volunteers. Some vital jobs where we could use your help:

- Reporters. Reporting on local meetings, what they talked about and what they decided.
- Mailing assistants. Counting and lifting tubs of papers to take the monthly mailing to the post offices and stacks of papers to local businesses, loading and unloading mailing tubs from a truck at two locations, preparing postoffice paperwork, tub labels, subscrip-

- tion labels, etc.
- Drivers. Driving a rental truck to various post offices once a month.
- Ad sales assistants. We need volunteers who love *OCN* to contact local businesses and encourage them to advertise in *OCN*.

The time and skills involved vary greatly from job to job. *OCN* will provide whatever equipment and training you need.

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 Publisher John Heiser at (719) 488-3455, or email [johnheiser@ocn.me](mailto:johnheiser@ocn.me) to see how you can contribute. Contact John today! He is waiting to hear from you. Together we can ensure that *OCN* continues to provide a vital service to our wonderful Tri-Lakes community.

## Our Community Notices

By Janet Sellers

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.

### D38 free and reduced price school meals policy

Applications for free and reduced price school meals, instructions and an information letter to households are available at each school or online at [www.lewis-palmer.org/nutritional](http://www.lewis-palmer.org/nutritional) services.

### Drop the Distracted Driving

Colorado has a law that bans texting while driving for drivers of all ages. CDOT found that most people have a "Do Not Disturb While Driving" feature on their phone in a recent survey, but many don't know how to use it. The unexpected can happen in an instant. Be proactive, learn how to enable this feature see [DropTheDistraction](http://DropTheDistraction) at [distracted.codot.gov](http://distracted.codot.gov).

### The safety stop is now state law

Bicyclists in Colorado now have safe and legal options for navigating through intersections after governor Jared Polis signed Colorado house bill 22-1028 into law on Wednesday, April 13, 2022. The new law, which allows bicyclists and users of low-speed conveyances to treat stop signs as yield signs and stop lights as stop signs when they already have the right of way, goes into effect immediately statewide. Info: [bikecoloradosprings.org](http://bikecoloradosprings.org).

### Neighborhood safety

What qualifies as suspicious activity? "If you see something, say something." It's vital to report to local law enforcement. Suspicious activity can refer to any incident, event, individual or activity that seems unusual or out of place. Some common examples of suspicious activities include: A stranger loitering in your neighborhood or a vehicle cruising the streets repeatedly. Someone peering into cars or windows. Here's what local authorities and Colorado Department of Public Safety says is needed information: Who did you see; what did you see; when did you see it; where did you see it; why it is suspicious. Call 911 or your local law enforcement agency.

### Rotary Club coming to Tri-Lakes

Rotary International has 1.4 million worldwide with clubs in every country on this planet. Rotary focuses on local and international communities on improving education, saving mothers and children, clean water, sanitation, growing local economies, and protecting the environment via its member business professionals, teachers, real estate persons, developers, medical doctors, nurses, housewives, and retired people serving to change lives locally and globally. Local info: Dr. Qureshi at 719 229 1648 or [kqureshico@yahoo.com](mailto:kqureshico@yahoo.com) and [www.Rotary.org](http://www.Rotary.org).

### Seniors Driver's License Electronic Renewal

With the implementation of the Driver's License Electronic Renewal By Seniors Act (HB21-1139), Colorado seniors now have the permanent ability to renew their driver license or identification card online, but there are new laws to understand. Information is online via [mycolorado.state.us](http://mycolorado.state.us). Some restrictions apply to drivers aged 21-80, and drivers over 80 need a special doctor's statement. Coloradans who are concerned about an elder family member's ability to drive should email [dor\\_mvhelpdesk@state.co.us](mailto:dor_mvhelpdesk@state.co.us).

### DMV online and kiosks

Clerk & Recorder's Office provides motor vehicle and driver's license services. 30+ services at [mydmv.colorado.gov](http://mydmv.colorado.gov). Renew registration online or at a kiosk. Make appointments. check in for appointments and wait where it's convenient for you. The DMV encourages Coloradans to skip the trip and use its online services whenever possible. So before your next trip to the DMV, remember to save time, go online. Visit [DMV.Colorado.gov/Save-time](http://DMV.Colorado.gov/Save-time) for more information. See [epcdrides.com](http://epcdrides.com).

### CO 21 (Powers Blvd.) &

### Research Pkwy. construction

Work will be completed in fall 2022 and will consist of replacing the current at-grade intersection with an innovative Diverging Diamond Interchange by constructing an overpass for Powers Boulevard/Colorado Highway 21 traffic to move continuously through the intersection over Research Parkway. For many more details and rendering of final configuration, including a video show-



ing new traffic flow, see <https://cccpi.net/cdot-powers-research.pdf>.

Beetle trunk drop off site

There is now a safe drop-off site for infested tree trunks at 6725 Foxtrot Ln. 80924, near Black Forest Rd. and Woodmen. Open 6 am to 7 pm daily. Closed July 1 -Sept. 30 (during flight season.) Mountain Pine Beetle infested trunk wood only, up to 20” size, small amounts of deadfall and standing dead trunk wood acceptable, no branches and/or debris of any type or size allowed. Thank you for assisting in all forest mitigation. Questions? Call or text Charles Newman 7 am -7 pm only, 719-352-6168

Emergency Financial First Aid Kit

If a disaster happened today, could you easily find your crucial household, financial, and medical documents to recover quickly? Use the checklists in the free Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK) to ensure nothing is missing. Get the EFFAK at: <https://go.usa.gov/xHC2m>.

MVEA offers rebates

For information on MVEA's energy efficiency rebates, visit [www.mvea.coop/save-energy-money/rebates/](http://www.mvea.coop/save-energy-money/rebates/), or call 800-388-9881. See ad on page 12.

The Sunflower is for people with non-visible disabilities



Watch for green and yellow sunflower lanyards, bracelets, and ribbons, discreet ways to make the invisible visible. Wearing the Sunflower discreetly indicates to people around the wearer including staff, colleagues and health professionals that they need additional support, help or a little more time. However big or small, your help moves us closer to a society where people recognize that an offer of help, understanding and kindness can make a huge difference to the daily experiences that a Sunflower wearer has.

Palmer Lake trailhead parking kiosk

For visitors wanting to park up close to the trailhead, patrons will be required to pay for that parking space. The kiosk was installed in February and staff is testing the hardware. Please note that the kiosk is for debit and credit payments only and the parking payment receipt needs to be displayed on the dash of your vehicle. Take care to confirm that the license plate number printed on the receipt matches your vehicle. The parking fee is \$5 plus processing fee and is subject to change for special events, holidays, etc., as determined by the Town Board.

Area code required for local calls

Colorado customers with numbers in the 719 and 970 area codes should dial 10-digits (area code + telephone number) for all local calls. They will still count as local calls. Check your safety and security alert devices to be sure they are programmed with 10-digit dialing. You can still dial just three digits to reach 711 (relay services) and 911 (emergency services) and other local three-digit

services including 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, 711 or 811 are currently available in your community, dial these codes with just three digits.

Openings on Monument boards

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

Openings on Palmer Lake boards

The Town of Palmer Lake continues to seek volunteer residents to serve on upcoming potential seats for the Planning Commission, the Parks Commission, and the Board of Adjustments. The Planning Commission meets once a month on the third Wednesday. The Parks Commission meets a minimum of once a month but also has opportunities to be involved in Work Groups for various Park areas. The Board of Adjustments meets up to once a month on the first Tuesday, as needed. To qualify, you must be a resident of the Town of Palmer Lake for a minimum of 12 consecutive months and be at least 18 years of age. See [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com).

Tri-Lakes Cares Needs Your Support

Tri-Lakes Cares is the only food pantry and human services organization located in and serving northern El Paso County through emergency relief and self-sufficiency 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 donate. Visit <https://tri-lakescares.org/donate> to find out how to donate money, medical items, personal supplies, or food. Please check the web for current needs in our food pantry at <https://tri-lakescares.org/donate/current-needs>. Donation drop-off hours are Monday thru Thursday, 10 am to 4 pm. For more information about Tri-Lakes Cares or how you can help, contact Nicole Pettigrew, director of Volunteers and Community Partnerships, at 719-481-4864 Ext. 111.

WMMI seeks volunteers

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](mailto:Volunteer@wmmi.org).

Free 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 Envida, 719-633-4677. If you need grab bars in the bathroom, a ramp to your door, or repair of stairs or railings, please call 719-488-0076, and leave a message or visit [www.coloradoseniorhelp.com](http://www.coloradoseniorhelp.com).

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](mailto:SeniorBeat@TriLakesSeniors.org). Senior Beat can also be viewed online at [www.TriLakesSeniors.org](http://www.TriLakesSeniors.org).

Can you volunteer today?

- OCN needs your help. See article on page 28.
- Links to local organizations with an immediate need for volunteers are listed on the county's web-site, [www.elpasocountyhealth.org/volunteering-and-donations](http://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).
- The Colorado State University Extension office in El Paso County has several opportunities for individuals interested in volunteering. <https://elpaso.extension.colostate.edu/volunteer-opportunities/>
- Committed to building healthy, caring communities, these El Paso County volunteer-based and nonprofit organizations rely on the hard work of individuals like you. Reach out today and find out how you can play a part by becoming a volunteer in El Paso County. Get involved in El Paso County volunteering non-profits and organizations! <https://www.americantowns.com/el-paso-county-co/volunteer-organizations/>.
- The El Paso County Sheriff's Office Volunteer Program is composed of a collective citizens group with a true and common desire to partner with the El Paso County Sheriff's Office by volunteering their services while learning more about the internal workings of the law enforcement community. <https://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com/volunteer-program-0>.
- The El Paso County Volunteer Program is a wonderful opportunity for citizens to learn about the various functions of county government as well as give back to the community. The County's numerous boards and commissions need your experience, talents and time. <https://bocc.elpasoco.com/volunteer>.
- The El Paso County Fair started as a potato festival in 1905 and has grown into so much more. We will be celebrating our 117th Fair, July 16th -23rd! <https://www.elpasocountyfair.com/p/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities>
- The Friends of El Paso County Nature Centers is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit whose mission is to support Bear Creek and Fountain Creek Nature Centers. The organization is comprised of an executive board of elected officers and a general membership governed by official Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation as a 501-c-3 nonprofit organization. <https://communityservices.elpasoco.com/nature-centers/nature-center-volunteers/>
- Children's Literacy Center provides free one-on-one literacy tutoring to Tri-Lakes children in grades 1-6 who are reading below grade level! Tutoring is at the Tri-Lakes Senior Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30-6:30 p.m., and our Summer Session will run through Aug. 14. For more information, to become a volunteer tutor or to enroll your child, visit [www.childrensliteracycenter.org](http://www.childrensliteracycenter.org) or email Christine Jeffson at [Christine@childrensliteracycenter.org](mailto:Christine@childrensliteracycenter.org). ■

Our Community Calendar

By Janet Sellers

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. Please contact [calendar@ocn.me](mailto:calendar@ocn.me) with changes and additions.

GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

- **Forest Lakes Metropolitan District, Pinon Pines Metropolitan District 1, 2 & 3 board meeting.** Typically meets quarterly on the first **Mon.** at 4 pm. Meetings are held via teleconference. For virtual joining instructions and updates see [www.forest-lakesmetrodistrict.com](http://www.forest-lakesmetrodistrict.com).
- **El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regular meeting,** every **Tue.,** 9 am.. View agendas and meetings at [www.agendasuite.org/iip/elpaso](http://www.agendasuite.org/iip/elpaso). BOCC land use meetings are being held every first and third Tuesday of the month as needed at 1 pm Centennial Hall, 200 S. Cascade Ave., Suite 150, Colo. Springs. Info: 719-520-6430.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission meeting,** **Thu., Oct. 6, 20,** 9 am, Regional Development Center, 2880 International Circle, Colo. Springs. Meetings are live-streamed on the El Paso County News & Information Channel at <https://www.elpasoco.com/news-information-channel>. Normally meets first & third Thu. (as required). Info: 719-520-6300, <https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com>.
- **Monument Board of Trustees meeting,** **Mon., Oct. 6, 20,** 6:30 pm, Town Hall Board Room, 645

- Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets first and third Mon. Info: 719-884-801, [www.townof-monument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees](http://www.townof-monument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees) for remote attendance links.
- **Palmer Lake Board of Adjustments,** **Tue., Oct. 4,** 5 pm, Palmer Lake Elementary School Library, 115 Upper Glenway, Palmer Lake. Normally meets first Tues.
- **Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting,** **Thu., Oct. 13,** 27, 5 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent, Usually meets second and fourth Thu. Info: 719-481-2953. [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com).
- **Monument Academy School Board meeting,** **Thu., Oct. 13,** 6 pm at the East Campus in the band room. 4303 Pinehurst Circle. Meets second Thu. Info: 719-481-1950, <https://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board/board-meeting-minutes/>.
- **Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) meeting,** **Sat., Nov. 15,** 10 am-12 pm., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Members of local HOAs welcome. Usually meets bi-monthly second Saturday of the month. [www.nepco.org](http://www.nepco.org).
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District board meeting,** **Mon., Oct. 10,** 1 pm, 1845 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Meets second Mon. Info: 719-488-2525, [www.woodmoorwater.com](http://www.woodmoorwater.com).
- **Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee meeting,** **Tue., Oct. 11,** 10 am 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets second Tue. Info: Bill Burks, 719-481-4053.

- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District board meeting,** **Wed., Oct. 12,** 9 am, call-in only: 650-479-3208, Access Code 76439078, 120 Middle Glenway. Meets second Wed. Info: 719-481-2732. [www.plsd.org](http://www.plsd.org).
- **Monument Planning Commission meeting,** **Wed., Oct. 12,** 6 pm Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets second Wed.

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- To see the options for remote public participation in each meeting, visit [www.townofmonument.org/263/Planning-Commission-Board-of-Adjustment](http://www.townofmonument.org/263/Planning-Commission-Board-of-Adjustment). Info: 719-884-8028. [www.townofmonument.org](http://www.townofmonument.org).
- **Donala Water & Sanitation District board meeting**, Thu., **Oct. 20**, 1:30 pm, 15850 Holbein Dr. Meets third Thu. Check the website for the access code for the electronic meeting Thu. Info: 719-488-3603, [www.donalawater.org](http://www.donalawater.org).
  - **Triview Metropolitan District board meeting**, Thu., **Oct. 20**, 5:30 pm, 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302, Monument. Normally meets third Thu. Info: 719-488-6868, [www.triviewmetro.com](http://www.triviewmetro.com).
  - **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 board meeting**, Mon., **Oct. 17**, 6-10 pm, Normally meets third Mon. This meeting of the Board of Education will be live-streamed on the district's YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCCommunity](http://www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCCommunity), agenda, supporting documents at <https://go.boarddocs.com/co/lewispalmer/Board.nsf/vpublic>. Info: 719-488-4700, [vwood@lewispalmer.org](mailto:vwood@lewispalmer.org), [www.lewispalmer.org](http://www.lewispalmer.org) district's YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCCommunity](http://www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCCommunity). Contact Vicki Wood. Phone: 719.481.9546 Email: [vwood@lewispalmer.org](mailto:vwood@lewispalmer.org) Website: <https://www.lewispalmer.org>
  - **D38 District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC)**, Tue., **Oct. 11**, 6-8 pm. Lewis Palmer Middle School, 1776 Woodmoor Dr. Info: [tmckee@lewispalmer.org](mailto:tmckee@lewispalmer.org) or 719-785-4243
  - **Monument Board of Trustees meeting**, Mon., **Oct. 3, 17**, 6:30 pm, Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets first and third Mon. Info: 719-884-801, [www.townofmonument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees](http://www.townofmonument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees) for remote attendance links.
  - **Donald Wescott Fire Protection District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Tue., **Oct. 18**, 4 pm, Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at [www.wescottfire.org](http://www.wescottfire.org) or contact Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich at 719-488-8680. Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday.
  - **Monument Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **Oct. 19**, 9 a.m., 130 Second St. Zoom meeting. Find joining instructions on the website. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-4886, [www.colorado.gov/msd](http://www.colorado.gov/msd).
  - **Palmer Lake Planning Commission**, Wed., **Oct. 19**, usually meets 3rd Wed., Town of Palmer Lake, 42 Valley Crescent
  - **Academy Water and Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **Oct. 19**, 6 pm. Usually meets third Wed. Public can join the Skype meeting: <https://join.skype.com/PACujKTn7Nrh>. Check the website for a link: <https://academywsd.colorado.gov/notices-and-alerts>. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-0711, <https://academywsd.colorado.gov>.
  - **Palmer Lake Town Planning Commission meeting**, Wed., **Oct. 19**, 6 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-2953, [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com).
  - **Woodmoor Improvement Association board meeting**, Wed., **Oct. 19**, 7 pm, Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets fourth Wed. Info: 719-488-2693, [www.woodmoor.org](http://www.woodmoor.org).
  - **Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Wed., **Oct. 12**, 7 pm, Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org) or contact Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn at 719-495-4300. Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday.
  - **Monument Fire District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Wed., **Oct. 26**, 6:30 pm., Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, Monument. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at [www.tlmlfire.org](http://www.tlmlfire.org) or contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin, at 719-484-0911. Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday.

WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS

- **The Centering Prayer Group at Black Forest Community Church**, first **Sat.**, 8:30-10 am 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.
- **Half Day Prayer Group at Benet Hill Monastery**, first **Sat.**, 9 am-12 pm. All vaccinated guests are welcome. Contact Sister Therese at (719) 355-1638 or (719) 355-1650 or [stherese@benethillmonastery.org](mailto:stherese@benethillmonastery.org). See ad on page 3.
- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Club meeting**, every **Sat.**, 8 am. [www.MHKiwanis.org](http://www.MHKiwanis.org), [MonumentHillKiwanis@gmail.com](mailto:MonumentHillKiwanis@gmail.com) for details, guests are welcome. service leadership clubs, Key clubs, Builders Club and K-kids at D38 schools. Empty bowls dinner and silent auction Oct. 12. Memberships open to

- the public. Info: RF Smith, 719-210-4987, [www.MHKiwanis.org](http://www.MHKiwanis.org). See ad on page 3.
- **Neighborhood Net Ham Radio**, every **Sat.**, 10 am Amateur ham radio operators practice for emergencies on weekly repeater nets so neighbors can help neighbors. Sign up at [www.mereowx.org/neighborhood-net](http://www.mereowx.org/neighborhood-net) or [contactus@mereowx.org](mailto:contactus@mereowx.org).
  - **The Wine Seller Free Wine Tastings**, every **Sat.**, 1-4 pm, 2805 Roberts Dr., Monument. Info: 719-488-3019, [www.thewineseller.net](http://www.thewineseller.net).
  - **Palmer Lake Art Group**, second **Sat.** A variety of art programs are offered after the social gathering and business meeting. Guests welcome. 300 Hwy 105, NE corner of I-25 and 105. 9:30 am. Info: 719-460-4179, [www.palmerlakeartgroup.com](http://www.palmerlakeartgroup.com).
  - **Lions Club Bingo**, every **Sat.** (except the first Sat.), 8:30 am-1 pm and first Mon., 5:30-10 pm Tri-Lakes Lions Club's portion of the proceeds benefit those in need in the Tri-Lakes community. Updated info and location: Jim Naylor, 719-481-8741 or [www.trilakeslionsclub.org](http://www.trilakeslionsclub.org).
  - **Tri-Lakes Parkinson's Disease Support Group**, third **Sat.**, 10 am-noon, Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St., Monument. Come for socializing, discussions on Parkinson's-related issues including available support, and occasional speakers. Info: Syble Krafft, 719-488-2669; Barry (group president), 719-351-9485. If you need any help, please call Syble or Barry.
  - **Faithful Friends discussion group**, on summer hiatus, usually third **Sat.**, 3-4:30 pm Wesley Owens Coffee. Info: Ellen, 303-526-5000 or Sandi, 719-237-3359. All ladies are welcome to our open discussion group.
  - **Benet Hill Monastery**, Let us pray with you, walk in the forest, come up and visit prayer sites, every **Sun.** worship is 10:15 a.m., 3190 Benet Lane, 80921. See ad on page 3.
  - **Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church**, every **Sun.**, 8 and 11 am traditional, 9:30 am contemporary. Both in-person (no registration necessary) and live stream at [www.tlumc.org/live](http://www.tlumc.org/live). Watch live or on replay: [www.facebook.com/tlumc](https://www.facebook.com/tlumc), [www.youtube.com/tlumc.org](http://www.youtube.com/tlumc.org). Info: 719-488-1365, [www.tlumc.org](http://www.tlumc.org). 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. See ad on page 2.
  - **Fuel Church** Sunday Service, every **Sun.** Service times, 11:00 am Live service streaming at [www.fuelchurch.org](http://www.fuelchurch.org) at 11:40 am on [www.fuelchurch.org](http://www.fuelchurch.org). Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Nursery and kids' service. Non-denominational, spirit-filled. Need prayer? Email us [info@fuel.org](mailto:info@fuel.org). See ad on page 9.
  - **Ridgeview Baptist Church**, every **Sun.**, 10:30 am, temporarily meeting at 9130 Explorer Dr., Colorado Springs, 80920. Info: 719-357-6515 or [www.ridgeviewcolorado.org](http://www.ridgeviewcolorado.org). See ad on page 6.
  - **Women's A.A. Step Study**, every **Mon.**, 6:30 pm, meeting remotely, check for details. Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 Baptist Rd. Park in west lot. Info: 866-641-9190. Al-Anon Zoom Meeting, Just for Today Online, every Mon., 9:00 - 10:00 am Zoom Meeting ID: 889 4142 7446, Password 349309
  - **Al-Anon Zoom Meeting, Just for Today Online**, every **Mon.**, 9-10 am Zoom Meeting ID: 889 4142 7446, Password 349309.
  - **Monument Life Recovery Group**, every **Mon.**, 6:30-7:30 pm, 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, [www.liferecoverygroups.com/meetings/life-recovery-group-3/](http://www.liferecoverygroups.com/meetings/life-recovery-group-3/).
  - **Amateur ham radio W0TLM** (Tri-Lakes Monument ham radio Association), third **Mon.** All amateur ham radio operators or those interested in becoming one are welcome. Info: [www.W0TLM.com](http://www.W0TLM.com).
  - **Centering Prayer Group at Benet Hill Monastery**, every **Tue.**, 10-11 am. All vaccinated guests are welcome. Contact Sister Therese at (719) 355-1638 or (719) 355-1650 or [stherese@benethillmonastery.org](mailto:stherese@benethillmonastery.org).
  - **Essentrics Fitness Program at Senior Center**, every **Tue.**, 9 am & **Thu.**, 10 am, Grace Best Education Center, 66 Jefferson St, Monument, CO 80132. Registration & info: Sue Walker, 719-330-0241, [www.trilakesseniors.org](http://www.trilakesseniors.org).
  - **GriefShare Support Group**, last **Tue.** of the month, 10:30 am-noon. • GriefShare Support Group, last **Tue.** of the month, 10:30 am-noon. NEW LOCATION: Tri-Lakes Senior Center, 66 Jefferson St. in the Grace Best Elementary School building. The Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance has partnered with Colorado Palliative and Hospice Care to host a 13-session grief support group in Monument. RSVP, info: Sue Walker, 719-330-0241.
  - **Children's Literacy Center**, every **Mon. & Wed.**, 5:30-6:30 pm. Provides free one-on-one literacy tutoring to Tri-Lakes children in grades 1-6 who are reading below grade level. Tutoring is at Grace Best

- Education Center, 66 Jefferson St. Monument. For more information, to become a volunteer tutor, or to enroll your child, visit [www.childrensliteracycenter.org](http://www.childrensliteracycenter.org) or contact Rachel Morin, Tri-Lakes Senior Center Coordinator, CLC 610-246-1047 (cell)
- **Tri-Lakes Women's Club Monthly meeting**, third **Wed.**, 11 am - 2 pm, Speaker: Susan Davies, Executive Director, Trails and Open Space Coalition. Program: Trail and Open Space Projects in the Tri-Lakes Region, Past & Future. Susan will share with us some of the recent achievements and the vision for the future for County Parks in El Paso County. Meetings are open to all members of Tri-Lakes Women's Club. To become a member, or learn about the club, visit our website at [www.tlwc.net](http://www.tlwc.net) or email [sleggie26@me.com](mailto:sleggie26@me.com).
  - **Senior Citizen Lunches**, Connections Café sites, every **Wed.** will have "grab and go" (prepared meals). 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. Food Pantry offers a "pick up only" model for clients. Mon.-Fri., noon-12:30 pm, Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy. 105, Palmer Lake. See the menu for the month in the Senior Beat newsletter. Stay for bingo the second Thu. Reservations are requested at 719-884 2300.
  - **Colorado Springs Philharmonic Guild Listening Club**, third **Wed.** Free virtual event. Maestro Wilson will conduct monthly hour-long programs. RSVP at [www.cspguild.org](http://www.cspguild.org).
  - **Gleneagle Sertoma**, first and third **Wed.**, 11:45 am to 1 pm at Beasts and Brews, 7 Spectrum Loop, Colorado Springs. The longest continuously serving civic service organization in northern El Paso County features a program speaker addressing local topics of interest. Duane Gritzmaker, [dwgritz@gmail.com](mailto:dwgritz@gmail.com) or 719-649-9220.
  - **Senior Social**, fourth **Wed.**, 12455 Black Forest Rd. Info: [www.aarpchapter1100blackforest.weekly.com](http://www.aarpchapter1100blackforest.weekly.com).
  - **Tri-Lakes Church of Christ** Wednesday night fellowship classes, every **Wed.**, 6-7:30 pm, 20450 Beacon Lite Road, Monument (corner of Beacon Lite & County Line Roads). Info: 719-488-9613, [greg-smith@trilakeschurch.org](mailto:greg-smith@trilakeschurch.org), [www.trilakeschurch.org](http://www.trilakeschurch.org).
  - **Tri-Lakes Cruisers**, first **Wed.**, 7 pm. A nonprofit car club. Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce community room, with numerous activities and events each month. Club membership applications are now being accepted and are available on the website: <https://tl-cruisers.weebly.com>.
  - **AARP Black Forest #1100**, second **Wed.**, noon. All ages welcome. In-person, Black Forest Lutheran Church, 12455 Black Forest Rd.
  - **Senior Bingo**, third **Wed.** Silver Alliance Senior Center, Space is limited to 16 participants. RSVP & info: Sue Walker, 719-464-6873, or email [sue@monumentalfitness.com](mailto:sue@monumentalfitness.com).
  - **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7829**, third **Wed.**, 7 pm, Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce community room, 166 2nd St., Monument. New members welcome. Info: Post Commander and POC Bruce Beyerly, [Bruce.Beyerly@gmail.com](mailto:Bruce.Beyerly@gmail.com).
  - **VFW Auxiliary to Post 7829**, third **Wed.**, 7 pm, The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. Guests are welcome to join; contact [carlsonmkc@aol.com](mailto:carlsonmkc@aol.com) for instructions on how to connect. If you are a relative of a veteran who served on foreign soil during war or other military action, you may be eligible. Info: Kathy Carlson, 719-488-1902, [carlsonmkc@aol.com](mailto:carlsonmkc@aol.com).
  - **Al-anon Meeting: Monument Serenity AFG**, every **Thu.**, 7-8 pm, Ascent Church (formerly the Tri-Lakes Chapel), 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. Info: [MonumentSerenity@gmail.com](mailto:MonumentSerenity@gmail.com).
  - **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers**, first **Thu.**, 6:30-8:30 pm at Monument Chamber of Commerce building, 166 2nd St, Monument, CO.
  - **Al-Anon meeting: Letting Go**, every **Thu.**, 9-10:15 am at Ascent Church, 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. For additional information go to [www.al-anon-co.org](http://www.al-anon-co.org).
  - **Networking breakfast**, first and third **Thu.**, Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce in person or via Zoom 166 2nd Street Monument 7:30-9 am free registration at [www.TriLakeschamber.com](http://www.TriLakeschamber.com).
  - **Fuel Church Griefshare**, every **Thu.**, 5:30-7:30 pm 643 State Highway 105, Palmer Lake. Email [info@fuel.org](mailto:info@fuel.org). 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake.
  - **A.A. Big Book Study**, every **Thu.**, 7 pm, Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 W. Baptist Rd. Call 425-436-6200, access code 575176#.
  - **Friends of Fox Run Park**, fourth **Thu.** Zoom meeting, 7 pm, email [friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com), they will email you the link the day of the meeting. Join the growing group to learn about volunteering and supporting the park for forest safety, trails, trees, education, more. Info: [friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com)



- park@gmail.com.
- **Monumental Impact Monthly Open House**, second **Fri.**, 5-6 pm, Grace Best East Rooms, 55 Adams St. Monumental Impact’s mission is to enable and support high school students in technology, engineering and entrepreneurship. Community members are welcome to connect with us, see our space and ask about programs. Info: [www.monumental-impact.org](http://www.monumental-impact.org)
  - **Gleneagle Women’s Club, membership luncheon**, third **Fri.**, Sept-June, various venues, 12 activity groups, i.e., hiking, bridge, etc. Guests welcome. For information contact Amy Miller (310) 941-1590.
  - **Senior Book Club**, second **Fri.**, 11 am-noon, Silver Alliance Senior Center, all are welcome. Coffee & snacks served. RSVP & info: Sue, 719-330-0241.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day Fox Run Regional Park**, Sat., **Oct. 1**, 9 am. Come to National Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day at Fox Run Regional Park. The event will include guided trail rides, trail etiquette handouts, riding clinics, giveaways and more. All ages are welcome: from tots on stride bikes to teens. Riders just need a working bike and helmet to participate. Register online at [www.ElPasoCountyNatureCenters.com](http://www.ElPasoCountyNatureCenters.com). For more information go to [www.communityservices.elpasoco.com/take-kid-mountain-biking/](http://www.communityservices.elpasoco.com/take-kid-mountain-biking/) or call 719-520-6977.
- **VOLUNTEER TODAY! Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., **Oct. 27**; approx. 9 am–2 pm. We are all volunteers at OCN and need YOUR help, even for an hour two, getting the papers ready to mail. Contact [AllenAlchian@ocn.me](mailto:AllenAlchian@ocn.me) to sign up and get the address and exact times.
- **Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts in Palmer Lake, oil painting class** for all levels of experience, **Thursdays**, (Reserve for Nov.), 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Instructor: Monument artist John DeFrancesco. Registration \$50 at: <https://trilakesarts.org/event/oil-painting-made-easy/>
- **Monument Hill Farmers Market**, every Sat., 8-2 pm, 66 Jefferson St., Downtown Monument. See ad on page 5.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, After Hours Networking Event**, Tue., **Oct. 11**, 5 pm–7:00 pm Free for chamber members, \$15 for non-members. Details: [www.trilakeschamber.com](http://www.trilakeschamber.com). 719-481-3282.
- **Pikes Peak Genealogical Society**, Wed., **Oct. 12**, 6:30pm Zoom hangout, 7 pm start; meets 2nd Wednesdays, guests welcome. Usually meets at The Venue, Library 21c 1175 Chapel Hills Drive Colorado Springs (currently only Zoom). Info: [ppgsPresident@ppgs.com](mailto:ppgsPresident@ppgs.com)
- **Tri-Lakes Monument radio Association offers introductory amateur ham radio license class**, Sat., **Oct. 15 - 22**. For people new to ham radio, no experience required, entry level FCC technician license. Details: [HTTP://wcr0t1m.com](http://HTTP://wcr0t1m.com) Contact Bob Witte 719-659-3727.
- **100+ Women Who Care**, Wed., **Oct.19**, 5 pm at Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. 100+ women contribute \$100 two times a year to local Tri-Lakes charities that positively impact our community. More info and how to join: [www.100womenwhocaretrilakes.com](http://www.100womenwhocaretrilakes.com)
- **Crafts Plus Fair**, Sat. **Oct.8**. Peyton High School. Contact Maria: 719-216-3582. See ad on page 20.
- **Western Museum of Mining and Industry, Miners’ Pumpkin Patch**, October **Saturdays**, 9 am – 4 pm,\$10 per person in advance, \$12 at the door. Locally sourced pumpkins, Games, Gold Panning and Historic Machine Demos, Pumpkin Catapult & Smashing, Farmers Market, more [www.MinersPumpkinPatch.com](http://www.MinersPumpkinPatch.com) 225 Northgate Blvd., [www.WMMI.org](http://www.WMMI.org). See ad on page 11.
- **Grow your business workshop**, Wed., **Oct. 5**, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Palmer Lake Economic Development Group partnering with El Paso County Small Business Development Center. Lunch provided. Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent, advanced reg.: [HTTP://tinyurl.com/PalmerLakebusiness](http://HTTP://tinyurl.com/PalmerLakebusiness).
- **Heartsaver CPR/AED andFirst Aid Training**. Tri Lakes United Methodist Church. Register before **Oct. 5**. \$30 includes corse, completion card, book. All ages, 8 hours. Info: <https://tlumc.org/events/event-registration/>
- **Water Lantern Festival Fox Run Regional Park**, Sat., **Oct. 8**, 4:30-8:30pm. Come out to enjoy the magical spectacle of the Water Lantern Festival at Fox Run Regional Park. Bring out your friends and family to decorate a water lantern and gather with your fellow community members for a wonderful evening of beautiful lights, food trucks, and special moments. Registration is required. For more information go to <https://communityservices.elpasoco.com/water-lantern-festival-2022/> or call 719-520-6977.
- **Tri Lakes Women’s Club monthly meeting**. Wed., **Oct. 12**, 11 am, Guest speaker: Betty Roush, Heal-

- ing Strong Colorado Springs Support Group. The Eisenhower Golf Club, USAFA, 3170 Golf Course Rd. Open to TLWC members. To join: [membership@tlwc.net](mailto:membership@tlwc.net)
- **Empty bowls dinner and silent auction**, Wed., **Oct. 12**, 5-7:30 pm. presented by Monument Hill Kiwanis Club, Kiwanis youth service leadership clubs, and Tri-Lakes cares. tickets available.
  - **Masakazu Ito guitar concert**, Palmer Lake Town Hall, Sat., **Oct. 15**, 6 pm.Tickets and info: [plartscouncil.org](http://plartscouncil.org).
  - **Front Range Makers Market**, Sat.-Sun., **Oct. 22**, 9-4 pm, Oct. 23, 10-3 pm, crafts, decor, yard art, more, \$5 at the door, Lewis Palmer High School, Higby at Jackson Creek Pkwy. See ad on page 3.
  - **MVEA member appreciation days**, celebrating over 80 years, lunch and pie, Wed.-Thu., **Oct 12-13**, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., free.
  - **MVEA High Schoolers Win a Summer Trip contest**. Deadline **Nov. 10**. Cash for college scholarships contact Erica Meyer, 719-494-2654. See ad on page 16.
  - **YMCA 5K race series** 3 base has one great cause. Creepy crawl 5K, Sat., **Oct. 29**; Turkey Trot Thu., **Nov. 24**, Jungle jog Sat., **Dec. 10**. Stroller and dog friendly. See ad on page 6.
  - **MVEA outdoor power equipment giveaway entry deadline**, Mon, **Oct. 31**. Details: [www.mvea.coop/greengiveaway](http://www.mvea.coop/greengiveaway).
  - **A Better Hearing Center**, free hearing screenings through **Nov. 30**, 574 W. Hwy 105. Monument. See ad on page 14.
  - **Cornerstone Cleaners**, special offers through **Oct. 31**. 1030 W. Baptist Road, near King Soopers. See ad on page 4.
  - **Eagle Wine & Spirits**, special offers through **Oct. 31**. Baptist Road next to King Soopers. See ad on page 3.
  - **Monument Cleaners**, special offers through **Oct. 31**. 15932 Jackson Creek Pkwy., in Monument Marketplace. See ad on page 5.
  - **Monumental Med Spa**, special offers through **Oct. 31**; at the loft, 4 Hwy. 105 Palmer Lake.. See ad on page 7.
  - **Noel Relief Centers**, new patient special. 950 Baptist Rd #130, Monument. See ad on page 8.
  - **Pure Romance** by Amy Yocum-Vos, special offers through **Oct. 31**. [www.pureromance.com/AmyYocum-vos](http://www.pureromance.com/AmyYocum-vos). See ad on page 4.
  - **St Mathhias Episcopal Church**, “Alpha” group conversations, Tuesdays starting **Oct. 11**, 7 pm. Rsvp [stmatthias@comcast.net](mailto:stmatthias@comcast.net) See ad on page 9.
  - **Trunk or Treat**, Fri. **Oct. 28**, 6-7 pm, St Peter Catholic School, 123 First St. Monument. See ad on page 2.
  - **The Living Room Plants**, special offers through **Oct. 31**. 12229 Voyager Pkwy, Suite 100. See ad on page 5.
  - **Tri Lakes Collision**, special offer through **Oct. 31**. See ad on page 5.
  - **YMCA fall sports** sign up now, [www.ppymca.org/sports](http://www.ppymca.org/sports). See ad on page 6.
  - **Tri-Lakes Women’s Club**, Joys of the Season holiday home tour Fri. and Sat. **Nov. 18 -19** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. five locations in North El Paso County. Info:

[www.joysoftheseasonht.org](http://www.joysoftheseasonht.org). See ad on page 2.

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 [calendar@ocn.me](mailto:calendar@ocn.me) or Our Community News, P.O. Box 1742, Monument, Colorado 80132.

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](mailto: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 John Heiser, Publisher, at (719) 488-3455 or [editor@ocn.me](mailto: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. The number of letters printed on a particular topic or in a particular issue may be limited. Letters containing personal attacks or endorsements for or complaints about individually-named commercial products or services will not be published.

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](mailto:johnheiser@ocn.me) or (719) 488-3455 with any questions.

Look for our next issue  
Saturday, Nov. 5

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

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



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## Support Our Community. Advertise in OCN!

Our Community News (OCN), with a **mailed** circulation of over **21,700**, 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 area 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.

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