

Our Community News

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



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Free

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.

- **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers Annual Library Quilt Show, Feb. 28-Apr. 2.**
- **TLWC Grants Program grant applications**, available through **Mar. 15.**
- **D38 strategic plan community feedback events:** Tue., **Mar. 8**, 6 p.m. PLES; Wed., **Mar. 30**, 4:30 p.m., Kilmer Elementary School;
- **Chamber of Commerce After Hours Networking Event**, Tue., **Mar. 15**, 5 p.m.-7 p.m.
- **100+ Women Who Care - Membership Social**, Wed., **Mar. 16**, 5 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, Thu., **Mar. 17**, 7 p.m. *Pueblo Flood*
- **Chamber of Commerce Education Series**, Tue., **Mar., 22**, *Data Driven Decisions*
- **Wildfire neighborhood ambassadors free classes**, Tuesdays through May 3
- **WMMI Spring Break STEAM camp**, **Mar. 21-25**, grades 3-5.
- **Heart saver CPR first aid AED class**, Sat., **Apr. 9**, 8.m. - 4 p.m.

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OCN needs your help!
See page 28.

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

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Fire district ice rescue training



Above: From left, Lt. Steve Buckner, Lt. Jon Bodinsky, and firefighter Golden Rains complete their annual ice-rescue refresher training at Bristlecone Lake on Jan. 24. Crews from the combined districts of Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District and Donald Wescott Fire Protection District took part in annual ice-rescue refresher training under a "bluebird sky" on one of the many frozen lakes within the district. *Photo courtesy of Andy Kovacs.*

Monument Academy School Board, Feb. 10

Board approves proclamation against gender identity discrimination protection

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held its regular meeting on Feb. 10, unanimously passing a proclamation against gender identity protection laws, and a resolution against critical race theory (CRT). It also spotlighted a teacher, updated its graduation requirements, and modified its snow policy.

Board rejects gender identity protection laws

MA's Feb. 10 board meeting was attended by over 80 parents, teachers, and staff as well as Rep. Tim Geitner of House District 20 and local developer Matt Dunston who helped MA acquire the land for its high school and whose metro district provides services to MA. Attendees and board members spoke out or read statements against Colorado bills from

2008 and 2021 that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

One bill, SB08-200, expands prohibitions against discrimination to include a person's orientation toward heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or transgender status and was codified in the Colorado Revised Statutes starting in CRS-24-34-01. The bill added the protection to 23 areas including housing, employment, education, public accommodations, and healthcare. See the bill at <https://bit.ly/sb08-2008>. House Bill HB21-1108, Gender Identity Anti-Discrimination, clarifies the individuals included in a protected class (<https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb21-1108>) by adding the terms "gender expression" and "gender identity" to the statutes.

MA (Cont. on 2)



Above: Monument Academy held its regular meeting on Feb. 10 in its East Campus gym with more than 80 attending. Parents took turns speaking out against critical race theory (CRT) and gender identity protections. Toward the end of the meeting, the board unanimously passed a resolution opposing the use of CRT and other race-based training and curricula and a proclamation against bills that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Feb. 23

AMR requests remain high; squad vehicle approved

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) meeting on Feb. 23, the board discussed the exponential increase of requests made by American Medical Response (AMR) in 2022, received an update on the unification process with Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD), approved a new squad vehicle and a lease purchase agreement for the approved tower truck, and received multiple updates on other district matters.

American Medical Response

Secretary Mike Smaldino asked if there had ever been a time when the district had dispatched an ambulance into the City of Colorado Springs to assist AMR and the remaining ambulance was dispatched on a district call leaving the district without an ambulance.

Division Chief of Operations Jonathan Bradley said that it had occurred.

Smaldino responded:

- I have a huge issue with that, and it is a disservice to the district residents.
- AMR is an outside commercial agency with a poor business model, and it is not doing its job.

TLMFPD (Cont. on 8)