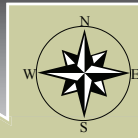


Our Community News

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



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Issue #255 — Volume 22 Number 5 — Saturday, May 7, 2022

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.

- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., **May 5**, approx. 9 am-2 pm.
- **Grand re-opening for Palmer Lake Town Hall, Library, Museum**, Sat., **May 7**, 10 am
- **NEPCO membership meeting**, Sat., **May 14**, 10 am - 12 pm. HOA legislation.
- **Kiwanis Monument Hill Club**, grant application deadline, Sat., **May 15**
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, After Hours Networking Event**, Tue., **May 17**
- **Monument Art Hop**, Thu., **May 19**, 5-8 pm
- **Monument's Memorial Day Ceremony**, Mon., **May 30**, 10 am
- **MVEA 81st Annual Meeting**, Thu., **June 2**
- **Palmer Lake Kids Fishing Derby**, Sat., **June 4**, 8 am-11:30 am
- **Cherry Creek Crossing community garage sale**, Sat., **June 4**, 8-4 pm
- **Concerts in the Park, Limbach Park**, every **Wed.**, 7 pm, starting June 8.
- **Palmer Lake Art Group Color Splash art show**, **June 7-24**, reception Fri., **June 10**, 6-8 pm
- **St. Peter Pie and Ice Cream Social**, Sat., **June 11**, 6-8 pm
- **Front Range Makers Market**, Sat., **June 18**, 9-4 pm
- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., **June 2**, approx. 9 am-2 pm.

Santa Fe Open Space Grand Opening, Apr. 7



Above: From left are Fred McGuire, Dr. Catherine McGuire, Kane Cotton, Wiley Cotton and Brittany Cotton holding their children, and Dr. Tom and Linda Close. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

By Janet Sellers

On April 7, the Close/Maguire family and dignitaries of El Paso County including county commissioners and regional parks personnel cut the ribbon to open the trails for the new Santa Fe Open Space (SFOS).

After about 10 years of negotiations, the Close/Maguire family made it possible for the area to become an El Paso County open space for future generations. The families had grown up, played on, and enjoyed the land for generations, nearly a century of stewardship, as their grandfather had bought the land in the early 1900s.

The Master Plan information states that 10 years before the county purchased the property now known as SFOS, the Close/McGuire family placed

a conservation easement over the property to preserve certain natural, scenic, open space, aesthetic, ecological, recreational, historic, and environmental values, collectively known as Conservation Values. The conservation easement, administered by the Palmer Land Conservancy, requires the protection of the Conservation Values for perpetuity, no matter who owned the property, thus preserving the Values for generations to come. As such, recreational opportunities within the open space are limited to passive activities, such as hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding.

Myriad facets of nature, interest, and history abound at the 60-acre site, maintaining a south-facing backcountry feel with nearly 2 miles of circuit trail through ponderosa pine, scrub oak, and flowered

meadows, a year-round availability for recreation. Dr. Catherine McGuire spoke about her family's strong desire to keep the area as it has always been. A research paper that Dr. Tom Close had written in his college days indicates the rock formations in the area contain Eocene epoch turtle fossils. The Eocene epoch is part of the Tertiary Period in the Cenozoic Era lasting from about 54.8 to 33.7 million years ago.

The space is reached only by hiking into it from the Santa Fe Trail, either going south from the Palmer Lake end of the regional trail or north from the same trail in the Monument area along Highway 105.

Janet Sellers can be contacted at janetsellers@ocn.me.

El Paso Board of County Commissioners, March 29, April 5 and 19

Highway 105 Improvement Project moves closer to construction phase

By Helen Walklett

During April, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved agreements involving Monument Academy that bring Phase A of the Highway 105 Improvement Project closer to construction.

Highway 105 Improvement Project

At the April 5 BOCC meeting, the commissioners voted unanimously to approve two agreements involving Monument Academy which will help to move the Highway 105 Improvement Project closer to construction.

The three-phase project will provide improvements along the section of Highway 105 owned and maintained by the county, which stretches from Jackson Creek Parkway, near the east ramps of

the I-25 to the junction with Highway 83. Funding of \$19.5 million is coming from the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) with federal funds contributing \$5.12 million to the first phase.

The first part of the project will see work carried out between the I-25 east ramps and Lake Woodmoor Drive with the highway improved to a four-lane county standard throughout this section. Jennifer Irvine, county engineer, said that currently the final design for the section is 95% complete with six remaining property acquisitions and the environmental assessment still to be completed. The latter includes a Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat assessment, a biological assessment, and a mitigation plan.

To address highway safety issues associated with traffic at Monument Acad-

emy, the county has designed an onsite circulation plan intended to add more onsite capacity for vehicles queuing during student pick up and drop off. A right of way will also be conveyed to the county to enable it to widen the roadway.

The first agreement approved is a reimbursement agreement that allows for the transfer of the use of PPRTA and federal funds to the county. PPRTA, via the county, will reimburse the school for the construction and construction management costs of the onsite improvements. The second agreement sets out the working relationship between the county and the school and plans for completing the onsite improvements. It also conveys the right of way.

BOCC (Cont. on 2)

Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education, April 18

Palmer Ridge geothermal project advances, baseball field draws complaints

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education devoted much time to matters involving Palmer Ridge High School at its April 18 meeting.

During public comments, nine individuals spoke on behalf of the high school's baseball team. These included

parents, student athletes, and staff. All spoke of the disadvantage of having a field which is often muddy or overly dry, robbing the team of having practice on site and home games during the season. Athletes need to drive a half hour to an indoor practice facility, often missing the last period of school in the process.

Athletes stressed the importance of playing on a home field in terms of morale.

The proposed solution is the purchase of an artificial turf field which could be used all year and potentially rented to others. Team supporters have

D38 BOE (Cont. on 5)

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Deer Creek Road Closure

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

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