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

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## 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.

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## Deer Creek Road Closure

See WWSD article page 17

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

## Circulation

Print Run: 22,370  
Mail Delivery: 21,664  
Stacks: 706

## 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](mailto: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)**



BOCC (Cont. from 1)

Commissioner Holly Williams thanked staff for their years of work on the project to date and said, “I think it will be a lot safer for the students who

attend here [Monument Academy]. The day they get out of school hopefully we will have shovels in the ground so the day they come back to school, they will not be lining up in the middle of the street anymore and just many of the safety issues

that the students and parents have faced will be completed and cleared up.”

A member of the public asked how much of the project’s budget was going toward the mitigation plan for the Preble’s mouse. Irvine replied that the environmental assessment was not complete but that generally the environmental costs were 5% to 10% of total construction costs. She added that environmental

costs were not just concerned with the mouse but also matters such as storm-water, noise, etc., where the county must comply with federal, state, and local requirements. Commenting in general on the environmental assessment process and the length of time it takes, Chair Stan Vanderwerf said, “It was previously a massively bureaucratic process and under the previous presidential administration that was substantively streamlined and under the current administration it was returned back to the very bureaucratic process.” He added, “Elections have consequences.”

Construction on the first part of the project is expected to start later this year and be completed in 2024. The second phase of the project is in the final design segment with construction expected to begin in summer 2023 and take two years. It will include the widening of the road from Lake Woodmoor Drive to Martingale Drive to three lanes, and the addition of shoulders and additional turn lanes. Preliminary design for the remainder of the highway is underway.

County Planning Commission reappointments

At its April 19 meeting, the BOCC approved the reappointment of Commissioners Thomas Bailey and Becky Fuller as regular members of the Planning Commission. Their terms will run until

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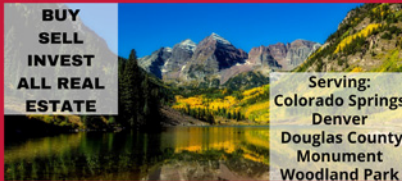
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April 19, 2025. Regular members may only serve two consecutive terms on the nine-member commission.

Other decisions

- March 29—the commissioners approved two am-

balance permits for the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District. The one-year permits run until April 30, 2023.

- March 29—approved a memorandum of agree-

ment, special warranty deed, and easements for the Beacon Lite Road and County Line Road Improvements Project concerning property owned by Jennifer and Andre Ulferts

- for \$25,000.
- April 5—approved an ambulance service license for the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District. The one-year permit runs until April 30, 2023.

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

Black Forest Slash/Mulch site kick-off, Apr. 16

By Lisa Hatfield  
“Clean up the mess.” A forest property can become vulnerable to wildfire and flying embers as natural debris accumulates. Dead branches and needles fall, and trees become overcrowded through new growth. It’s in your best interest to clean it up to keep the forest healthy. Thanks to some hearty volunteers again this year, all residents of El Paso County can bring branches less than 8

inches in diameter and less than 6 feet in length to be chipped up at Black Forest Slash/Mulch site at the intersection of Shoup Road and Herring Road, Colorado Springs. Please visit <https://bfslash.org/> before you come to the site for detailed information and a form to fill out for first drop-off of the year. The website has facts on wildfire risk reduction, noxious weeds, and more. For a recording to answer questions,

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The Slash/Mulch Committee (SAMCOM) held its kickoff meeting April 16 at the Black Forest Community Center. Those providing briefings included the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District, Colorado State

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Forest Service Forester David Poletti, El Paso County noxious weeds expert Tina Travis, Judy von Ahlefeldt on the mastication at the Pineries County Park, and an emergency preparedness and evacuation briefing from Pikes Peak Regional Office of Emergency Management. Look online for the "Pikes Peak Regional Emergency Preparedness and Safety Guide."

SAMCOM is run entirely by volunteers who do it for the Forest. The slash site needs volunteers to sign up for four-hour shifts to man the entry gate, monitor the unloading and watch for unacceptable material, and man the exit gate to collect the loader fees.

Lisa Hatfield can be contacted at [lisahatfield@ocn.me](mailto:lisahatfield@ocn.me)**Monument Dance Classes** Ages 3 & up

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**Above:** The Black Forest Slash/Mulch Committee (SAMCOM) held its kickoff meeting April 16 at the Black Forest Community Center. Residents of El Paso County can bring branches and pine needles to the site now. *Photo by Ralph Brands*

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**D38 BOE (Cont. from 1)**

managed to raise \$31,000. Athletes and parents asked for the district's help, also stating that tickets to games and concessions could supply revenue, and savings on water use would be considerable.

**Geothermal system progress**

Later in the meeting, Executive Director of Operations and Development Chris Coulter reported on progress in completing the geothermal system at Palmer Ridge. The original installation failed, resulting in a lawsuit by the district against the provider of the system. PVC pipes in the system had corroded at the joints and leaked, making the system untenable, according to the district.

Work so far has included revising the bore field for the system. Several of the original bores could not be found. The bore field is now complete.

Phase two involves replacing the 6-inch PVC pipes with 6-inch steel pipes which would be less susceptible to damage by the water/glycol mixture which will pass through them. In addition, replacement of a 100 horsepower pump with several smaller ones will make the system more efficient.

The estimated cost of the second phase and the bore field will be \$2.55 million. Coulter estimated that the savings in maintenance and utilities would repay the district's investment over about nine years, and the system should be viable for much longer.

Board President Chris Taylor complimented Coulter on his work, pointing out that a year ago the estimated cost of the work was \$4.55 million. Between the revenue from the lawsuit and previously committed funds, about \$1.6 million has already been committed in this year's budget.

Later in the meeting, following an analysis of the district's budget, it was determined that the district

could afford to pay for phase two out of the general fund.

Board Director Matthew Clawson and board Secretary Tiffney Upchurch said they would prefer to put the question before the public in advance of a vote. Taylor pointed out that the project has been discussed in public meetings over the past several months.

Taylor proposed a motion to complete the geothermal project with up to \$1 million from the general fund. The motion passed with Clawson and Upchurch voting nay.

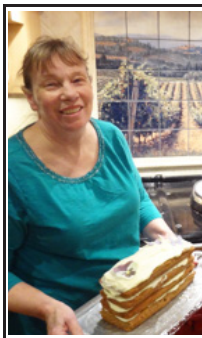
Taylor then told Coulter to proceed with the project with the intent to complete it by August.

**Budget update**

Chief Financial Officer Kitte Overton presented a summary of the proposed 2022-23 budget. The budget must be finalized by the end of June.

Overton estimated that if there are 6,414 full-time equivalent students in 2022-23 (including Monument Academy), the district may expect to receive \$9,043 per pupil operating revenue (PPOR) in 2022-23, or \$583 more per pupil than this year. This will result in around \$3 million more than received this year.

The expenditures for this school year have been less

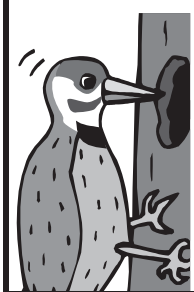
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than anticipated, leaving a considerable amount available going into 2022-23. (In response to this finding, the board later voted to devote up to \$1 million to complete

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Open Mic/Jam Night/Saturday, May 21  
All Those Who Wander/Friday, May 27  
Open Mic/Jam Night/Saturday, May 28

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tion of the Palmer Ridge geothermal project, see above.)

In response to a question from board Treasurer Ron Schwarz, Overton said that the district has \$15 million in cash savings. Setting aside \$8 million in case of an emergency, this leaves \$7 million for the district's use without withdrawing from reserves.

### Benefits plan overview

Director of Human Resources Kristen Steuber explained the district's benefits plan for 2022-23.

At present, 437 individuals participate in health insurance coverage from Kaiser and United Healthcare. This includes family coverage. Premiums are expected to increase by 7.5% in the upcoming year.

The district is part of the Colorado Employers Benefits Trust, an organization which coordinates coverage for several districts and handles COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act) coverage for those who wish to continue health coverage after leaving the district's employment, and claims.

In answer to a question from Schwarz, Steuber said that the district's benefits are up to par with adjacent districts.

Steuber also said that there will be a request for proposals in January of next year to compare health plan alternatives.

## Robert Joseph Rissacher

**1925-2022**



Robert Joseph Rissacher passed away peacefully at his home on April 23, 2022 at the age of 96. He was surrounded by family and friends who prayed the rosary with him.

Bob was born to the late Joseph and Jeanne Rissacher on June 28, 1925, in Long Island, New York. As a young man

Bob began a lifetime of dedication to community by serving in the military and training as a bombardier, during WWII.

In 1948, he married his wife of 56 years, the late Mary Rose Rissacher. Bob and Mary honeymooned in Colorado and decided to make a home there. Bob attended the University of Denver while working for George Berbert and Sons. He later went on to own Denver Surgical Supply Company.

Bob was very involved with his daughters in the Lakewood Westernaires, traveling to horse shows throughout the United States and Canada. He was a mentor, not only for his daughters, but for many young people who were experiencing difficulties in their lives.

He was a long time member of the Woodmoor Country Club, an avid golfer, playing many years in the Woodchoppers member guest tournament, even scoring a hole in one! He introduced the wonderful game of golf to generations of family and friends.

Bob was a devout Catholic. He belonged to the Knights of Columbus, sang in both the St Bernadette's choir (Lakewood) and the St Peter's choir (Monument). After the passing of his wife Mary, he became a Stephen's minister. He fulfilled a lifetime dream by traveling with the Order of Malta to Lourdes in 2017.

Bob had a true sense of joy and a genuine love of people. He never missed an opportunity to say "what can I do for you" or to tell someone "I'm so proud of you".

Bob is survived by his three loving daughters and their spouses; Mary Jo and Bill Cameron, Kathy and Ron Royce, Jean and John Wheaton, and by his grandchildren; Hayden Kirby, Memory Stein, Will Cameron, David Cameron, Cameron Pappas, Collin Royce, Jeff Royce, Steven Royce, Sarah Wheaton and Jenna Wheaton. He had the good fortune of having 16 great grandchildren. As a loving and joyful husband, father, and grandfather, Bob will be deeply missed.

In his last years, Bob was blessed by a truly compassionate team of caregivers and hospice providers known as Team Bob.

Services will be held May 13 at Saint Peter's Catholic Church in Monument. The Rosary will be said at 9:30 am followed by the Funeral Mass at 10 am. All are welcome. A celebration of his life following the services will be held at his home in Woodmoor. In lieu of flowers, please send memorial donations to St Peter's Catholic Church or to Pikes Peak Hospice.



**Above:** At the D38 board meeting April 18, Coaches Dave Jones and Sheila Ferguson presented the Monument Warriors, a group of athletes affiliated with the Special Olympics, devoted to offering athletic opportunities for adults and youths with disabilities. This team has competed in bowling and baseball and will soon participate in track and field. Photo by Jackie Burhans.

### Policy discussion

The board voted to approve four policies regarding non-discrimination and sexual harassment. These policies refer to students and personnel and include reporting processes.

### Recognitions

Early in the meeting, Superintendent KC Somers congratulated a number of individuals and groups for their achievements:

- Coaches Dave Jones and Sheila Ferguson presented the Monument Warriors, a group of athletes affiliated with the Special Olympics, devoted to offering athletic opportunities for adults and youths with disabilities. This team has competed in bowling and baseball and will soon participate in track and field.

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Christina Cotton



- Coach Bill Benton and members of the Lewis-Palmer High School 4A champion basketball team were congratulated for their fifth title.
- Career/Technical Education coordinator Jess McAllister spoke of a program at Lewis-Palmer Middle School which is connected with the high school Gateway to Technology program. The middle school has founded an organization called Skills USA. Also introduced were middle school Assistant Principal

Amy Sienkoski and Skills USA instructors Ken Motta and Paul Lewis. A few students displayed their projects.

During his superintendent update, Somers also mentioned the following:

- Makenna Flores and Amber Wright of Palmer Ridge High School and Gavin Flores-Caballero of Lewis-Palmer High School were congratulated for winning Best and Brightest scholarships from the Colorado

- Springs Gazette.
- Palmer Ridge's Bearbotics robotics team was awarded the Gracious Professionalism Award at the regional competition. They missed making the world competition by one point.
  - The Homeschool Enrichment Academy's Destination Imagination entry passed through regional competition, was fifth in the state, and has

been invited to attend the global finals.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the district Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be on May 16.

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

Lewis-Palmer D38 DAAC, April 12

# Community engagement and Title programs

By Harriet Halbig

In keeping with this year's theme, the D38 District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) devoted emphasis to a part of the district's Strategic Plan in April. The month's theme was developing community relationships through communication.

The district has sponsored a series of five public "Engage and Elevate with D38" events held at various schools throughout the district. This was the fourth meeting, with the fifth to be held at Bear Creek Elementary School on May 4.

Superintendent KC Somers, three members of the Board of Education, and several members of the administration were present to listen to citizen comments and answer questions at the April 12 meeting. Somers said that there was an average of 30 citizens present at earlier meetings.

Members of the administration briefly explained the five steps of the strategic plan dealing with safe and healthy schools, world-class education, valuing employees, fiscal stewardship and transparency, and relationships and communication.

Board Secretary Tiffiney Upchurch said that all actions taken by the board are now viewed within the framework of the Strategic Plan. The board especially stresses step three, seeking ways to improve compensation for staff in the face of increasing turnover in the district.

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Director of Communications Mark Belcher reported that the district website now includes a news feature and storytelling. Printed mailers are in the planning stage. He encouraged all to explore what is available.

The group was divided into several sections to discuss what the district is now doing and what could be added to increase appreciation of the value of the district and its employees.

- Some opinions included:
- Our people should be our priority. The district needs to explain the Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR) to the public so they understand that collecting more taxes due to increased property values does not mean more money for education. Under TABOR any tax increases must be voter-approved.
- In addition to the Portrait of a Dis-



**Above:** Superintendent KC Somers, three members of the Board of Education, and several members of the administration were present to listen to citizen comments and answer questions at the April 12 “Engage and Elevate with D38 meeting.” *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

trict 38 Graduate, perhaps develop a Portrait of a District 38 Teacher to display their experience and expertise and how much they are valued and care for their students. Amber Wright, a senior at Palmer Ridge High School, commented on how teachers take a personal interest in the well-being and progress of students and don’t just stand in class and give lectures. This portrait could aid in recruitment and retention.

- The public needs to understand that a mill levy override does not solve all problems. The budget stabilization factor, which reflects funding which was not made available over the past several years due to state budget shortages, must also be addressed.
- The district should include an investigation of benefits in addition to salary.
- If a mill levy override is on the November ballot, make clear to the public how the funds will be used. People are often unwilling to devote their taxes to schools if they are not

certain of the use of the funds.

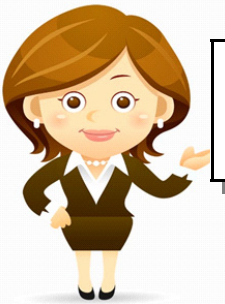
- Stress the various pathways to graduation offered by the district.
- There is a need to decide how to reach each citizen. We have the data to prove the district’s worth and need to clearly acknowledge that taxes are a major source of revenue. The district needs to stress that real estate value is tied to school performance.

Somers thanked all individuals for their passion and time.

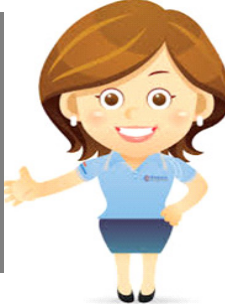
**Title programs**

Title programs are federally funded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Applications are submitted to the Colorado Department of Education for approval. Assistant Superintendent Amber Whetstone explained these programs.

Title I involves improving academic achievement of the disadvantaged. In D38, Palmer Lake Elementary and Bear Creek Elementary receive funds to supplement state and local money to promote family engagement and fund tutoring and additional assessments to track progress. This program includes address-



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ing barriers for the homeless in the community by coordinating with health and social services agencies.

Title II involves high-quality educators and leaders by providing training for teachers in responsive classroom training to foster connections and respect among students and teachers, to increase the number of highly qualified teachers, and to fund such positions as Learning Coach and stipends for teacher leaders. Funding is also provided to substitutes for

teachers attending trainings.

Title III provides funding to improve the education of English learners to meet state achievement standards. Funding supports family, school, and community partnerships, purchase of supplemental materials, tutoring for students, and a professional library for culturally and linguistically diverse instruction.

Title IV supports student academic enrichment by providing a well-rounded education to all, improving the use of

technology to support academic achievement and digital literacy, providing financial assistance for accelerated exam fees such as Advanced Placement, and supporting the salary of a coordinator of Learning Services to oversee continuing education for teachers.

An additional focus of the district is on family, school, and community relationships. These are supported through the use of Family Nights funded by Title I, an international dinner held annually to support connection

between cultures, homework clubs at Palmer Lake and Bear Creek Elementaries, a family liaison/interpreter/translator, and the availability of the Mango Language program for adults provided by the Pikes Peak Library District.

Palmer Ridge High School Principal Adam Frank led a tour of the school before the meeting and said this year's theme is Excellence with Equity. He introduced four students who said what made them value being a student at Palmer Ridge. These

aspects included membership in the Building Advisory Committee, valuing the choir program, being made to feel welcome, and the excellence of the school library.

\*\*\*\*\*

The District 38 District Accountability Advisory Committee meets five times a year, usually on the second Tuesday of the month from 7 to 8:30. Locations vary. This was the final meeting of the 2021-22 school year.

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

Monument Academy School Board, April 14

Board backs COO despite reviews, welcomes board candidates

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held a regular board meeting on April 14 to review campus climate and administration performance surveys, renew administrator contracts, and introduce board candidates. It also had a special board meeting on April 6 solely to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters relating to the surveys evaluating the chief operating officer (COO) and to receive legal advice related to personnel matters.

Board reviews survey results and renews COO contract

In the Human Resources Committee report, board representative Joe Buczkowski said the board had tasked itself with doing an employee-wide climate survey of all faculty and staff and a 360-degree assessment of both the COO and chief financial officer (CFO). The committee contracted with the Employers' Council with a budget of \$15,000 for an annual membership, a review of grievance policies, an ethics hotline, surveys, and executive coaching for the COO. The results for all surveys are available on MA's website at <https://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board/board-surveys/>.

Board President Ryan Graham then read a prepared statement recapping some of the challenges MA has faced over the years and its efforts to course-correct in the recent past. The board felt it needed to repair and rebuild and, as part of that, decided to hire Merlin Holmes as MA's COO. After doing its due diligence and reviewing Holmes' history, the board

felt he was the right person for the job. MA continued to endure challenges, including the sudden resignation of its high school principal, the impact of the Highway 105 project on its West Campus, disciplinary problems, and culture wars, Graham summarized.

After reviewing the survey results, Graham said, some might ask why he stands as a voice of support for Holmes. He noted that Holmes had done exactly what he was asked to do, was task-oriented, was good at recruiting, and was a visionary and fiscal conservative. Holmes must continue developing his communication style, but Graham said he was willing to invest in him. Graham recommended MA renew Holmes' contract for one year, implement executive coaching, and continue to perform skip-level assessments with his reports.

Buczkowski agreed, saying Holmes has great charter school

experience, respects the board, and respects the parents' role in school choice. Buczkowski said Holmes has been instrumental in procuring phase two funding,

and he wasn't sure it could happen without him. Board member Lindsay Clinton said that Holmes is willing to be coached and listen to constructive criticism.

Other board members also made statements of support, and the board voted unanimously to renew Holmes' con-

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tract for one year.

**Board candidates introduced**  
Graham noted that two board members, Chris Dole and Megghan St. Aubyn, were leaving as their terms are expiring soon and that the board voted earlier to expand to seven members. St. Aubyn said that since there were three open positions and three candidates, there was no need for an election, but the board wanted to let the candidates introduce themselves and set up a parent Q&A meeting.

The three candidates spoke briefly about their backgrounds and reason for running for the MA school board. Emily Belisle, a parent of three kids, has moved around a lot as a military family and wanted to bring her experience to MA and represent regular moms and dads. Craig Carly has a kindergartner daughter at MA and doesn't want to change a lot but wants to protect the incredible foundation. Danny O'Brien has one student at MA currently, with two more in the next couple of years. He intends to build on a foundation that is strong and keep MA steered in the right direction and moored to the foundations that have led to success.

The board unanimously voted to hold a special meeting on April 21 at the West Campus for parents to meet and question the board candidates.

**Highlights**  
Board meeting highlights include:

- The board unanimously voted to renew the contract of its CFO, Marc Brocklehurst, for one year.
- Holmes presented a draft of a first-ever organizational chart for MA that included the newly hired, part-time Director of Academics Tina Leone and a new director of People Operations position. The chart also reflects the presence of the Monument Academy Building Corp. and the Monument Academy Foundation, organizations that hold the lease agreements for the West and East campuses, respectively. The organizational chart will be available for staff to digest, and the board will vote on it in its next meeting.
- MA spotlighted parents Josh and Wendy Brethauer, who are active volunteers and have spearheaded fundraising efforts.
- Holmes introduced Secondary High School Principal Dave Kennington and the middle school Principal Collin Vinchattle, who attended an event to meet staff and parents.
- The board brainstormed questions for its upcoming community survey regarding the FASTER armed staff program.
- The board unanimously agreed to change the date of its spring retreat to Wednesday, June 1, at the East Campus.

\*\*\*\*\*



**Above:** Parents Wendy and Josh Brethauer were recognized by Monument Academy for their extensive volunteer work. The Brethauers have two daughters who attend MA. They founded the MA Security Solutions Committee in 2019 to raise money to hire MA's first school resource officer. Most recently they organized MA's first annual fundraiser event and raised \$156,000 to provide teacher bonuses and benefit safety programs. Marc Brocklehurst, chief financial officer, looks on as board member Misty McCuen, center, presents a certificate of appreciation at MA's April 14 regular board meeting. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

The MA School Board usually meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. The next regular board meeting

will be on Thursday, May 12, at 6 p.m. on the East campus. See more information at <https://bit.ly/ma-boe>.  
*Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).*

**Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, April 19**

**Third ambulance in service; wildland fire mitigation efforts ramp up**

*By Natalie Barszcz*  
At the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) meeting on April 19, the board received updates on the new district ambulance and the ongoing district wildland mitigation efforts. It held an executive session to discuss the unification process and to consider other matters regarding the draft intergovernmental agreement (IGA) for the Provision of Emergency Services with Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD). A pension board meeting was held after the regular meeting.

**Agenda amendment**  
Chairman Mark Gunderman made a motion to remove the second executive session discussion regarding the future of Station 3 (now Station 6, located at 15000 Sun Hills Drive), due to a lack of information.

The board unanimously approved the agenda with the amendment.

**Third ambulance in service**  
Fire Chief Andy Kovacs said the combined district had received about 1,100 calls since Jan. 1 and continues to be busier with calls for Emergency Medical Services and Advanced Life Support compared with the same time last year, but the district now has a third ambulance that operates out of Station 4 (formerly DWFPD Station 1). Ambulance units are still requested to assist in Colorado Springs, with about 54 requests in March, but the combined district responded to only about 26 requests, and the district will not be left without service, said Kovacs. See [www.ocn.me/v22n4.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n4.htm#dwfpd).

**Mitigation efforts ramping up**  
Kovacs said Director of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner had over a dozen chipping events scheduled for the year, and the district's goal is to get communities involved with some "sweat equity" and help mitigate a wildland fire. Secretary Larry Schwarz asked how chipping events are staffed, and if a fire break conversation had occurred in light of the Marshall Fire in Boulder County. See [www.ocn.me/v22n2.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n2.htm#dwfpd).

Kovacs responded with the following:

- Firefighters are paid time and a half to assist with the chipper, and homeowners are responsible for bringing yard debris to the roadside. HOA volunteer groups assist with bringing the debris to the chipper.
- The mitigation of the long grass surrounding the former golf course needs to occur several times a year.
- Through a state grant, the Town of Monument (TOM) is developing a Wildland Fire plan that will include DWFPD.
- Politicians at the state level are concerned about fire danger and grant money will be available for the combined fire district.
- The district is excited to partner with the TOM and get the document rolled out.
- A stakeholder meeting is planned for June, which will include the Monument Police Department, util-



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ity departments, Pikes Peak Office of Emergency Management, El Paso County Sheriff's Office dispatch office, and the U.S. Forest Service.

- The results of the meeting will be presented to the board in late summer.

**Emergency Incident Support**  
Emergency Incident Support (EIS) board President Gary Nelson thanked the board for supporting the group over the years and for housing four vehicles at Station 3 (now Station 6) for a reasonable rate. EIS is a nonprofit volunteer group based in northern El Paso County that has achieved huge accomplishments, and that is due in part to the use of Station 3, said Nelson. See EIS photo on page 13.

Gunderman thanked Nelson and the EIS volunteers for their service to first responders throughout the region and the neighboring counties.

**Staff appreciation**  
Kovacs recognized the following personnel:

- Lt. Justin Chavez and his team for the amazing job they did during a recent homeschool tour.
- Firefighter/Paramedics Eliza Norman and Nate Boyce for obtaining an Emergency Services Academy grant for \$4,500 to purchase three pediatric restraint devices for each ambulance. The devices were researched and recommended by Norman and Boyce.
- Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich for securing a Safety grant for \$7,107 to help offset the cost of the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus purchase.

**Chief's report**  
Kovacs said the following in the chief's report:

- The combined district personnel had received their individual permanent station assignments in

March, and both organizations are now fully integrated at the operational level.

- A survey had been conducted both internally and externally for the renaming of the organization. Almost 200 members of the community participated, and 81 responses were received from the district employees. See [www.ocn.me/n22v4.htm#dwfpgd](http://www.ocn.me/n22v4.htm#dwfpgd).

htm#dwfpgd.

- A new firefighter had received a conditional offer of employment with the district, and he will be the first district firefighter to attend the Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) fire academy in June. The district will continue to send firefighters to help with instruction at the CSFD fire academy.

- The acceptance to the CSFD fire academy reflects the outstanding relationship that the district shares with CSFD that had not existed in years past.
- The district will continue to send new firefighters to West Metro Fire Academy when space is available and also use the CSFD fire academy.
- Accreditation manager Battalion

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Chief Scott Ridings is using First Watch software to show average response times, reveal the busiest station, etc., and he is also using the Geographic Information System (ESRI Software) to collect information about local demographics to complete the community risk assessment. The project will be completed in 2022 and become part of the 2022-26 Strategic Plan.

- The district is beginning the process of updating the specifications of the fire engines in anticipation of future engine purchases. The district will need two engines and realistically a third, but even if the decision were to be made and the board approved the purchases, it would be at least 24 months before delivery.
- It has been helpful for TLMFPD personnel to train with the water tenders over the past four months.

Treasurer Duane Garrett asked how fuel economy was being addressed.

Kovacs said that the board will be presented with data and the trends next month. The district is taking fewer trips to the grocery store and remaining mindful that an engine gets about 3-4 miles per gallon.

**Note:** Although both district boards continue to meet separately, they are presented with the same chief's report every month. For additional information regarding the combined district, see the TLMFPD article on page 16.

**Station re-numbering**

Kovacs said that Division Chief of Operations Jonathan Bradley and Ridings are working diligently with the Pikes Peak Fire Chief's Council on re-numbering the fire stations and apparatus throughout northern El Paso County. The pilot re-numbering will take place over the next several months, and hopefully it will ease the existing confusion of who is responding via the Computer Aided Dispatch system. The re-numbering will

**Above:** Tri-Lakes Monument/Donald Wescott Fire Protection District personnel “push-in” the combined district's third ambulance at Station 4 (formerly Station 1) on Gleneagle Drive, Colorado Springs, during the 8 a.m. shift change on April 2. The ceremony of “pushing-in” apparatus harkens back to the 1800s, when fire departments used horse-drawn steamer engines to put out fires. After fighting the fire, the crew would wash and ready the horses and the apparatus in preparation for the next fire call, and because horses will not walk backward when they are under a load, the crew would push the apparatus back into the narrow station bay. Many fire departments nationwide carry on this generational time-honored tradition when a new engine is placed into service. Board Chairman Mark Gunderman was in attendance to witness the curious event. *Photo by Andy Kovacs.*

begin with the Air Force Academy Fire & Emergency Services (10th Civil Engineer Squadron) and include the Palmer Lake Fire Department and Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District. Re-numbering hopefully will become the model for the rest of the county to adopt, said Kovacs.

**Executive session**

The board moved into executive session at 4:41 p.m. to receive advice from DWFPD legal counsel Emily Powell of Ireland Stapleton Pryor Pascoe PC law firm to consider matters subject to negotiation and instruct negotiators regarding the draft IGA for the Provision of Emergency Services with TLMFPD.

The board did not approve or make any decisions when it returned to the regular meeting at 5:04 p.m.

The regular meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

**Volunteer pension board**

Gunderman called the volunteer pension board to order at 5:08 p.m., with Trustees Lt. Tim Hampton and Michael Badger attending via telephone/Zoom technology.

Gunderman administered the oath of office to Badger, and then Hampton promptly announced his resignation as a trustee effective April 19. Hampton said his resignation was due to his ineligibility to continue as a board member, since DWFPD no longer had serving volunteer firefighters, and eligibility is only available to active retiree firefighters and volunteer firefighters who are receiving funds from the volunteer pension fund. See [www.ocn.me/v22n4.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n4.htm#dwfpd).

Gunderman thanked Hampton for devoting a lot of work to the volunteer pension board over the past several years.





**Above:** Emergency Incident Support (EIS) provides hot food, beverages, and a rest area for about 120 firefighters during the Silver Charm fire (behind The Great Wolf Lodge) that burned 17 acres and caused the evacuation of 500 homes on April 22. EIS is a unique organization that provides critical support to first responders in Colorado. They are primarily focused on the Front Range, in El Paso and Douglas counties. EIS recently achieved several major milestones and accomplishments by providing support for 60 Pueblo County firefighters along the Arkansas River while simultaneously providing multiple meals to several agencies and the firefighters that were fighting a structure fire near Curtis and Patton Roads in El Paso County. In April, the group traveled as far as Beulah and Custer County to support 60 wildland firefighters from multiple agencies responding to a brush fire, and the group added support to feed 60 Teller County wildland firefighters near Mills Ranch Road. EIS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit group, established in May 2019 and based in northern El Paso County. For more information, visit [www.epceis.com](http://www.epceis.com). *Photo by Gary Nelson.*

Schwarz thanked former DWFPD volunteer firefighters Hampton and Lt. Brian Ackerman for their years of service to the community and the hard work, professionalism, and the dedication to the volunteer training program.

Badger nominated active retiree William Lowes as Hampton's replacement.

Gunderman administered the oath of office to Lowes as the newly appointed pension board trustee.

Popovich requested the removal of two agenda items: the review of the allocation report and pension status report due to the reports not being ready.

The board approved the agenda with the revisions, 4-0.

Popovich presented the actuarial update to the board and said:

- The Firefighters Police Pension and Association sent a letter to the district in November stating that the district volunteer pension fund was

underfunded by \$14,723.

- If the district had kept all the volunteers from day 1 (which is not the case), and everyone qualified to receive a pension, the district would have owed \$3,200 after the actuarial study was completed in 2021.
- As of Nov. 1, 2021, every member who was fully vested in the volunteer pension fund is receiving the approved \$450 plan increase and, depending on how many years served, everyone received variable increases up to the approved amount. See [www.ocn.me/v21n10.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v21n10.htm#dwfpd) and [www.ocn.me/v21n11.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v21n11.htm#dwfpd).
- The district closed the pension fund and no longer has any active volunteer firefighters, therefore no changes will be made until September 2022, and the fund will not be underfunded.

Resident Hampton said the district can request an actuarial study annually and pay for it every other year from the pension fund for about \$3,500. The minimum state-mandated requirement is every other year.


Gunderman requested Powell confirm the cost of a 2022 actuarial study and where the funding would come from.

Badger said he would confer with Hampton and Ackerman to have the records brought up to date.

The pension board meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.


Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of every month at the TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, at 4 p.m. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for May 17 at 4 p.m. The meetings are open to the public both in person and via Zoom. For joining instructions, agendas, minutes, and updates, visit [www.wescottfire.org](http://www.wescottfire.org) or contact Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich at 719-488-8680.

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



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Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, April 20

# Station alerting approved; strategic planning defined

By Natalie Barszcz  
At the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD) meeting on April 20, the board approved funding for the unbudgeted, long-awaited Fire Station Alerting System and heard about the strategic plan for the district. The two outgoing board directors administered the oath of office during a swearing in ceremony for two probationary personnel.  
**Station alerting approved**  
Deputy Chief James Rebitski said the district had received the final quote for the installation of the Station Alerting system.

Fire Chief PJ Langmaid said the long-awaited El Paso County Fire Station Alerting System project had taken seven years to complete, and it was a huge credit to Fire Chief Steve Conner of the Cimarron Hills Fire Department to have figured out how to get around the friction points within the county, and he added:

- The cost of about \$92,000 to install the Fire Station Alerting System in both stations came as a shock to the department.
- The system is not fully budgeted, although \$75,000 was set aside in the Capital Improvement Fund for communications, and the district saved money by cancelling the election, received a grant, and the payment for the Type 3 fire engine is now deferred until the 2023 budget.
- The board will need to provide direction on which pot of money should be used.

Treasurer Jack Hinton said any line item can be moved around within the budget legally just as long as the district does not go over budget by more than 10 percent, and doing so would

mean a revised budget submitted to the state. Hinton recommended using the Capital Improvement Fund and leaving the budget alone.

Vice Chairman Nate Dowden made a motion to reallocate \$43,000 (the first payment on the engine) to the acquisition of the Fire Station Alerting System, and the remaining funds be taken out of the Capital Improvement Fund, with the total expenditure not to exceed \$100,000.

The board unanimously approved the purchase and the reallocation of funds.

## Strategic planning

Langmaid said he expects the firefighters and officers to think strategically all of the time, one to five years ahead, and the command staff to think grand strategically, five, 10, and 20 years ahead. The region needs to be thinking regionally, but the district is challenged obtaining information from El Paso County for the preparation of the pre-plan maps for wildland fires. There is a friction point, and communication issues continue with the county. The district is building a stronger relationship with the City of Colorado Springs because it is getting things done, enabling the district to work on evacuation planning. He also said:

- The district needs to prepare for wildland fires through training, prevention with mitigation, planning, and that includes the pre-plans already in development, and the addition of evacuation maps using Zonehaven software (an evacuation management and community support tool).
- No agency in the entire country is an island, and the Fire Department of

New York City needed help on 9/11. So if people have their ego in the way, the citizens end up suffering.

- The district is trying to build coalitions, and the executive staff will know what the community will look like in four years. Regionally, the district needs to look from a grand strategic perspective for those years, and to not plan for that is a dereliction of duty.
- The performance piece falls to the line staff, and they will crush everything. The new training officer will need the same aggressive mentality as the rest of the department, and care will be taken filling the training chief position—there are “big boots” to fill.
- The district will be thinking ahead due to the supply chain issues, knowing that apparatus will likely not be delivered until 2024-25.
- A regional renumbering of fire houses throughout the county has begun, and a decision will be needed on how many fire stations the district needs in the future.
- The district ideally needs 80 percent line staff and 20 percent executive staff to function efficiently, and an increase in the executive branch will be pursued in 2023.

## Probationary staff sworn in

Langmaid announced that Lt. Chad Herdt and firefighter Dustin Courter had completed their one-year probationary period with BFFRPD, and it was time for them to take the oath of office to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the State of Colorado, and to carry out their firefighter duties in accordance with their loyalty to the mission to protect lives and property.

Director Deborah Hoffpauir administered the oath of office to Courter, and Chairman

Richard Nearhoof administered the oath of office to Herdt. Family members of both personnel pinned on the badges during the ceremony.

Nearhoof congratulated both firefighters on becoming permanent members of the staff.

## Finance and administrative report

Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn said the district received the following notable revenue:

- Ambulance revenue of \$7,976.
- Total tax revenue of \$255,134 (includes specific ownership tax).
- Wildland revenue of \$6,948 was received for deployment to the Caldor Fire in California.
- The district received chainsaws, rescue and wildland equipment totaling \$4,026.

Dunn also noted the following:

- The district held the Second Annual Awards Banquet in March where the Firefighter of the Year was awarded to Acting Lt. Erik Beckstrom, and the annual Emergency Medical Services provider of the year was awarded to volunteer Emergency Medical Technician Madison North.
- Capt. Chris Piepenburg was promoted to deputy chief of Operations during the awards banquet. See [www.ocn.me/v22n4.htm#bffrpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n4.htm#bffrpd).
- The district website and platforms have been reviewed to provide the public with easier access to information and updates.
- Supply chain issues continue, but the district is maintaining sufficient station and medical supplies.

## Logistics/planning

Rebitski said the following:

- The Mobile Data Collection/Global Positioning System location issues are being resolved, and new double antennas will be

installed on all vehicles.

- Two district employees are registered to attend a CSFD fire investigation class.
- The Pierce Engine is late and expected to be delivered in June.
- Due to the national supply chain shortage, everything the district attempts to order is delayed by six weeks and up to 12 months. The district is searching for new vendors and ordering a little extra to maintain supplies.
- New concepts are being explored to bolster the district’s fuel supply on site if a shortage occurs.
- The Flying Horse North development submitted sketch plans in March, and the Sterling Ranch development continues to grow, with new emergency access approved for Phase 9.
- Multiple minor subdivisions have submitted plans to subdivide acreage to 2.5 acres.

## Community risk—mitigation

Rebitski also said:

- The district continues to work on the Community Risk Assessment to develop the Community Risk Reduction Plan.
- He and Piepenburg attended the spring Pikes Peak Regional Office of Emergency Management wildland mitigation meeting to discuss regional mitigation projects.
- Two of the four temporary seasonal wildland technicians started the season and were immediately deployed to a wildland fire but returned to the district mid-April.
- Several quotes had been requested for a heavy-duty chipper, but none is available to purchase for at least 12 months.

## Red flag warning days

Rebitski said the “red flag warning” days had remained fairly constant due to multiple wildland fires throughout the region and the prolonged dry conditions, and the district had moved to Stage 2 fire restrictions. Information on fire restrictions and updates can be found at [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org).

Langmaid said the decision to move to Stage 2 fire restrictions was not due to the deployment of crews to assist with wildland firefighting. The district is not compromised in any way, and staffing levels are being maintained per shift, as normal.

## Operations update for March

Piepenburg said he will continue to oversee the Training Division until the district finds a suitable replacement, and said the following:

- About 1,429 training hours (including after-dark training) had been completed, exceeding the National Fire Protection Association required monthly minimum of 720 hours by about 708 hours.

BFFRPD (Cont. on 16)

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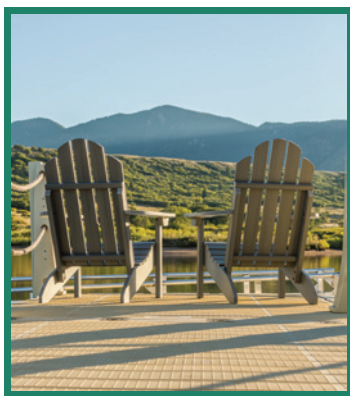


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BFFRPD (Cont. from 14)

- A crew deployed to southeastern Colorado to the Cimarron and Comanche Grasslands with a Type 6 “brush” truck for about 3 weeks, and as soon as other areas in the Southern and Western states have wildland fires, the crew will deploy again with a truck or Type 3 engine.
- The district receives wild-

land deployment reimbursements for deployed apparatus, at \$96-\$110 per hour, depending on the type of apparatus.

Wildland pre-plan program update

Piepenburg presented the board with a sample of the wildland pre-plans and said the tactical maps will cover 93 areas within the district. They are available to download and use, but not all of

the information is available yet. Retired firefighter/paramedic Dave Reid, a former employee of South Metro Fire Rescue, Denver, is developing the maps for less than \$30,000 and they are expected to be completed by the end of the year, said Piepenburg. See [www.ocn.me/v22n4.htm#bffrpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n4.htm#bffrpd).

**Note:** A Black Forest resident invited county commissioner candidate Lindsay Moore to the board meeting to hear the dis-

trict’s concerns. Moore pledged to support the district if elected and rebuked the current commissioners, the county coroner, the Flying Horse North development, urban sprawl, and the Democratic Party. Board meeting minutes can be viewed at [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org).

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday of every 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 May 18 at 7 p.m. For joining instructions, updates, agendas, and minutes, visit [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org) or contact Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn at [admin@bffire.org](mailto:admin@bffire.org) or call 719-495-4300. *Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).*

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, March 30 and April 27

# Election canceled; district will rebrand

By Natalie Barszcz  
At the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) meeting on March 30, the board discussed rebranding the district and the revised employee handbook, canceled the May board director election, and held an executive session to discuss the intergovernmental agreement

(IGA) for a full contract for services between the district and Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD). At the April 27 meeting, the board discussed employee leave agreements and amendments to the employee handbook and received an update on the unification process. Multiple employees at both

meetings were recognized for “performing above and beyond” the call of duty.

On March 30, President John Hildebrandt acknowledged the firefighters in Ukraine and said, “It is commendable to see that they are just doing their jobs, amidst the fighting.”

Treasurer Jason Buckingham was excused on March 30. Secretary Michael Smaldino was excused on April 27.

Election canceled

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs said the district had not received any self-nominations other than from the incumbent candidates, and he declared the following incumbent board members elected for three more years: President John Hildebrandt, Director Tom Kelly, and Secretary Mike Smaldino.

The board approved the cancellation of the election, 6-0.

Rebranding

Kovacs said staff members had received their permanent station assignments in mid-March and the two organizations had come together seamlessly, but although the district does not want to change the department name legally until the merger is complete, the combined district staff is hoping to achieve a rebranding before the completion of the IGA—full-contract for services. See [www.ocn.me/n22v4.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/n22v4.htm#dwfpd). The combined district employees submitted about 30 potential names, and about 184 community members completed an electronic survey to narrow down the new district title. The results will be revealed to the board directors in late April, said Kovacs.

Vice President Roger Lance said the rebranding is the last piece toward unity.

Wescott unification—full-service contract

Kovacs said that progress is being made on the IGA for a full contract for services between TLMFPD and DWFPD, and said:

- Multiple issues, to include health benefits and compensation, are being discussed for inclusion in the IGA. The discussions have caused the contract to be delayed until July 1.
- The district would rather bring the Wescott employees on in July and not continue to lease them for \$1 until Jan. 1, 2023. See [www.ocn.me/v22n1.htm#tlmfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n1.htm#tlmfpd).
- Paramedic Charles Ragland, the DWFPD Local 4319 union board president, conducted a survey, and the DWFPD personnel agreed to the option of car-

rying over 72 hours of leave per year, or a cash-out of the remaining leave days.

- Revenue from DWFPD will be used for any employee requesting a cash-out through the end of 2022.
- The employee handbook has good controls to ensure sick time is not abused, and staff members are backfilled with time-and-a-half pay.
- He is comfortable with both options and the flexibility, and by 2023, all employees in the combined district will receive 96 hours of sick time (four shifts for the entire year), allowing employees the ability to take time off without being financially impacted.

The board agreed to maintain the status quo.

Kovacs said he would share the board’s sentiments with legal counsel.

Employee handbook revised

At the March meeting, Kovacs said the employee handbook had been reviewed by the board over the past couple of months and about 20 pages had been removed.

Hildebrandt said there were a lot of redundancies in the old handbook, and it is now more streamlined.

Smaldino recommended that an annual form be signed to make the executive staff aware of the personnel that are engaged in employment elsewhere.

The board approved the revised employee handbook with recommendations, 6-0.

At the April meeting, Kovacs said an internal executive staff discussion regarding the TLMFPD “use it or lose it” vacation policy had occurred, and the decision to allow each employee to cash-out or roll over any remaining leave at the end of the year was possible. The expense is under-budgeted by about \$50,000, and it would need to be budgeted. The carry-over of 72 hours of leave per year was not available to TLMFPD employees in the previous handbook, but it was up to a year in the past. The amendment would be in place for the next calendar year, said Kovacs.

Hildebrandt said the district is financially in a good spot to allow it to happen.

Kovacs said that any future changes will be modified by the district attorney and presented to the board for approval annually.

The board approved the changes to the employee handbook, 6-0.

Chiefs’ coin presentation

Kovacs said multiple staff members had been recognized for “going above and beyond the call of duty” and certificates and the chiefs’ coin would be awarded to the following: Lieutenants Franz Hankins, Michael Smith, Justin Chavez, and Tony Tafoya, Engineer Mike Rauenzahn, EMS Coordinator Paramedic Stephanie Soll, Firefighter/Paramedics Jay Bruchis, Derek Thorne, and Firefighter Hunter Ortuno. Firefighter William Vogl was recognized at both meetings for two separate responses.

Future staffing needs


Kovacs said that a conditional offer of employment has been extended to a firefighter, and that candidate will attend the Colorado Springs Fire Department’s (CSFD) firefighter academy in June, and he added:

- The flexibility of having two firefighter academy options in the future will serve the district well. The West Metro Rescue District, Denver, firefighter academy currently has no available placements due to resignations, retirements, and growth along the Front Range.
- The direct benefits of attending the CSFD firefighter academy are that district personnel will be taught in exactly the same way, and the district is now running more calls with the CSFD due to a shared border. Regardless of patch or agency, the closest district should respond.
- No other district in El Paso County is currently utilizing the CSFD firefighter academy.

Division Chief of Operations Jonathan Bradley said every department needs recruits, and the firefighter academies are currently running 32-36 recruits per course, and he said:


- The firefighter academies the district uses run longer with more in depth, detailed courses than other academies, and the district has found that transformative.
- The combined district has four staff members, close to graduating the West Metro Rescue District fire academy.
- In addition, two TLMFPD paramedic students will return to the district in June and will operate as paramedics in October
- The district has staff shortages, and finding paramedics is like “digging up a nugget of gold” these days.
- The Wescott staff addition

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has the district operating with 19 staff members per shift, the minimum would be 14 per shift, but it is not enough. The district is looking at staffing needs for the next three to five years and will be looking at a more robust model.

- Facilities will need to be upgraded over time, but additional staff will be the greater cost.
- The pressure on staffing is an immediate and a long-term problem, and it may be that staff members seek openings closer to home to avoid long commutes.

Kovacs said as part of the strategic plan, the district facilities and the long-term personnel needs will be discussed with the board over the next two months. The district will receive more revenue in the future due to all the construction, said Kovacs.

Financial report

Buckingham presented the March financials and said the overall revenue received year to date was about \$5 million, representing approximately 39.3% of the projected 2022 budget that is set at \$12.96 million. The overall expenses year to date are about \$2.273 million, which is about 22.4% of the projected 2022 total expense budget, set at \$10.164 million.

Hildebrandt asked how the budget will be reported when the full-service contract is approved after July 1 and said he assumes both districts' budgets would be parallel to each other.

- Kovacs said the following:
- The district will essentially keep the lights on with DWFPD, and it will have a skeleton budget to pay for insurance for the board members, the audit, legal fees, and the TABOR reserves.
  - The remaining revenue from DWFPD will be blended into the TLMFPD revenue profit and loss statements.
  - Both districts will still allocate the budgeted funds as earmarked for certain expenses this year, even though TLMFPD will receive the additional revenue, and the district will ensure items are funded from the respective budgets.
  - Each district will require amendments to their respective budgets this year.
  - Property tax revenue, Specific Ownership Tax, ambulance fees, and wages and benefits will be reflected in the financial reports separately for the first year.
  - DWFPD does not collect impact fees.

Hildebrandt and Director Terri Hayes agreed that keeping the financial statements separate for the first year will allow the district to compare revenue and expenses and keep the financial tracking easier for Buckingham.

The board accepted the financial reports as presented at both meetings, 6-0.

Impact fees

Hayes asked if any further development regarding impact fees had occurred.

Kovacs said that no further conversations had occurred with the district, and he was not aware of any other

fire department engaging in a conversation regarding impact fees. It has been a backburner issue over the past few months for the district.

Hayes said everything is building so fast that by the time an agreement is reached, it will be too late.

Kovacs said the district will re-engage in the conversation regarding impact fees.

**Note:** The district does not receive impact fees for new construction in the unincorporated areas of the district. Lance said the growth will increase the district's responsibility significantly.

Division Chief of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner said that 18 construction projects are currently in various phases of development within the district, and the accreditation process Battalion Chief Scott Ridings is working on will help indicate the future needs of the district. The district will have "a big life hazard increase" with the addition of about 900 multi-family residences, but fire hydrants will be included where the district has growth, with no want for water pressure. It will remain that way in the Town of Monument and the Triview Metropolitan District areas, said Bumgarner. Smaldino stated that Bumgarner did an "excellent job" representing the district and giving the best wildland fire presentation of the day at an event they both attended in Colorado Springs.

Chief's report for March

Kovacs said the following:

- Firefighter/paramedic Nate Boyce secured a grant for \$16,000 from the Colorado Division of Fire and Control for 11 respirators that will provide protection for staff members from COVID-19 and other airborne viruses.
- EMS calls in March were down from the beginning of the year, but calls are trending as expected at 700 calls year to date, up 23% from the same time in 2021, and ambulance revenue is up 19%.
- "Hats off" to the firefighters for completing 1,022 training hours, double the required amount.
- The Wildland Type 3 engine will not be delivered until summer 2023 due to a supply chain delay in the fabrication of the chassis.
- The district had an informal meet and greet with a Denver-based architectural firm to discuss a site plan for the Station 1 Training Center.
- The district is planning a "ribbon cutting" ceremony in May on the completion of the re-model at Station 1. For details, visit [www.tlmfire.org](http://www.tlmfire.org).

**Note:** The combined district boards continue to meet separately, however the boards receive the same chief's report with some additional updates. See the DWFPD article on page 10.

Executive session

At 7:31 p.m., the board moved into executive session with district attorney Maureen Juran of Widner Juran LLP, pursuant to CRS §24-6-402(4)(e) to determine positions related to matters that may be subject to negotiations, to develop strategy for negotiations, and instruct negotiators regarding a draft IGA with DWFPD. After the

meeting, Kovacs confirmed that no decisions were made or approved when the board returned to the regular session at 8:14 p.m.

The March 30 meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

The April 27 meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of the month. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 25 at 6:30 p.m. at TLMFPD 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).

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Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, April 21

# Board approves supplemental water; Deer Creek Road to be closed

By James Howald

The Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) considered a supplemental water agreement for Monument Junction at its April 21 meeting. It heard an update on the upcoming board election. Finally, the board heard operational reports.

Deer Creek Road between Woodmoor Drive and Monument Hill Road will be closed for a week starting May 9 to allow for the installation of a pipeline to the Central Water Treatment Plant (CWTP).

Monument Junction buys supplemental water

District Manager Jessie Shaffer reminded the board that it had agreed to provide supplemental water for both Monument Junction developments in October 2021. Elite Properties, the developer, is now offering to purchase supplemental water for the residences to be built to the east of Jackson Creek Parkway (JCP). Shaffer said when supplemental water is requested, the developer typically starts by paying for an option to purchase the water later, but Elite Properties was offering to complete the transaction immediately. Shaffer asked the board to authorize him to sign the agreement with Elite Properties.

District Engineer Ariel Hacker explained that the residential development to the east of JCP would have three phases: first, the construction of 17 acres of single-family residences, then multi-family residences in a "foursquare" configuration, and finally a mix of both types.

Board President Brian Bush noted that the price the

district charges for supplemental water had not been raised for some time, and asked Shaffer if it was priced correctly. Shaffer said he assessed WWSD's price annually and it was comparable to but a bit lower than similar districts.

Bush said Elite Properties would pay \$1.6 million per year for the supplemental water requested and about \$6 million in one-time tap fees for the residences east of JCP.

The board voted unanimously to allow Shaffer to sign the agreement.

Board election canceled; Town to replace Wyss

WWSD attorney Erin Smith told the board that last month there had been four candidates for three available seats on the board. Barrie Town, one of the candidates, withdrew his name, eliminating the need for an election. She congratulated Daniel Beley, William Clewe, and Tom Roddam for being elected by acclamation. Beley, Clewe and Roddam, all incumbents, will serve three-year terms, Smith said.

Bush said Jim Wyss, also an incumbent, had submitted his resignation, and at the May 9 meeting the board would appoint Town to serve in Wyss's place. Bush thanked Wyss for his service to the district and for saving the district's customers the \$25,000 that holding an election would have cost.

Highlights of operational reports

- Operations Manager Dan LaFontaine told the board that a water main had burst while being



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tested, leading to a 500,00-gallon loss. Discovery of an irrigation meter that had not been read in a year and a half led to the district billing for 467,000 gallons of water that had not been paid for.

- LaFontaine reported that the CWTP is fully operational.
- The refilling of Woodmoor Lake is a little behind schedule.
- The Lake Pump Station is on schedule to be complete by June 1.

\*\*\*\*\*  
The next meeting is scheduled for May 9 at 1 p.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)

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 Facility Joint Use Committee, April 12

Sludge lagoon flips

*By Lisa Hatfield*  
The Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) Joint Use Committee (JUC) met on April 12 to review the monthly discharge monitoring report and facility operations. Facility Manager Bill Burks described an emergency he and his team had been dealing with for the last few days in the sludge lagoon.  
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: PLSD board member Reid Wiecks, JUC president; MSD board Treasurer John Howe, JUC vice president; and WWSD board Secretary/Treasurer William Clewe, JUC secretary/treasurer.  
**Sludge lagoon is upside down**  
Burks said, "Last week was kind of chaotic. I didn't know how all this was going to play out." Because of seasonal temperature changes, the sludge lagoon developed thermal stratification. This happens every year, but this time was particularly bad. The layers flipped, resulting in a floating biosolid mat, intense odors, and inefficient lagoon treatment.  
He and his staff have been using a diesel pump to maintain operations in a jerry-rigged way until the heavy sludge can be removed from the pond. He has asked Denali Water Solutions to move TLWWTF to the top of its priority list for sludge removal, which was already scheduled for later this year, pending test results on radium, metals, and fecal coliforms.  
The JUC consensus was "Good job, Bill!"  
**Stakeholders concerned about lack of due process**  
Burks and MSD Environmental Compliance Coordinator Jim Kendrick summarized the deliberations and concerns of the April 5 Arkansas Fountain Coalition for Urban River Evaluation (AFCURE) meeting. AFCURE has significant concerns about the draft Policy 20-1: Policy for Interpreting the Narrative Water Quality Standards for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). Burks said unelected appointees are listening to conservation groups and environmental justice groups to determine how state money will be spent, bypassing the Legislature and stakeholder work group process.  
"It's idiotic," summarized Kendrick and Burks. Stakeholders are afraid the new policy will be turned into a state law imposed on Colorado without review at the technical/scientific level as required by state statutes and the federal Water Quality Control Act.  
Burks also presented the Discharge Monitoring Report for February. All sampling results were well within required Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) discharge permit limits for TLWWTF and other baseline sampling.  
WWSD Manager Jessie Shaffer asked for an update on the preliminary results of TLWWTF engineering consultant firm Tetra Tech's financial analysis of the new facility master plan and potential impact on the three member districts. Eventually, all three districts will need to decide whether to participate in the North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) wastewater project or continue operations at TLWWTF.  
The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
The next meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. May 10 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 Bill Burks at 719-481-4053.  
*Lisa Hatfield can be reached at [lisahatfield@ocn.me](mailto:lisahatfield@ocn.me).*

Monument Sanitation District, April 20

District opts out of NMCI project

*By Jackie Burhans and James Howald*  
At its April 20 meeting, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board decided, after months of deliberation, not to participate in the Northern Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) project. District Manager Mark Parker gave details about a grant from the Colorado Special Districts Property and Liability Pool (CSDPLP). Parker told the board about a problem recently discovered with the sewer line for Willow Springs and about a delivery of documents from a law firm that used to represent MSD. Allison Ulmer, an attorney with the district's newly appointed law firm of Collins Cockrel & Cole P.C., and Peggy Rupp, a paralegal, also attended the meeting.

lied that Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD), Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) and Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD) had all decided not to participate in NMCI. Forest Lakes Metropolitan District and Triview Metropolitan District were considering participation, according to Parker. Parker recommended that MSD not participate in NMCI.  
The consensus of the board, and of Jim Kendrick, Regulatory Compliance, was that NMCI did not provide enough benefit to MSD to justify the responsibilities of participation.  
**Grant awarded**  
Parker told the board MSD had received a safety grant of \$835 from CSDPLP, bringing the district's total budget for safety and ergonomic items to \$3,502. Parker

**NMCI deemed not cost effective**  
Parker told the board he had received a Design Services Cost Contribution Agreement for the NMCI project from Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU), and he thought the intent of the document was to require potential participants to decide whether they would participate in the project. The NMCI is one of several efforts to build infrastructure to enable water to be reused. If built, the NMCI project would convey untreated wastewater from participating sanitation districts south to the JD Phillips Water Recovery facility in Colorado Springs, where it would be treated before being returned to the districts for re-use.  
Parker said how the treated water would be returned to the districts was not clearly defined by CSU, and he believed that Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD), Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) and Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD) had all decided not to participate in NMCI. Forest Lakes Metropolitan District and Triview Metropolitan District were considering participation, according to Parker. Parker recommended that MSD not participate in NMCI.  
The consensus of the board, and of Jim Kendrick, Regulatory Compliance, was that NMCI did not provide enough benefit to MSD to justify the responsibilities of participation.  
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The next meeting is scheduled for May 9 at 1 p.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.  
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said he planned to use \$208 for COVID-related items and \$2,807 for miscellaneous safety and office equipment.

**Willow Springs pipeline needs repair**  
In his Manager's Report, Parker told the board that a wastewater line serving Willow Springs Ranch, Wagons West Townhomes, and Trails End had been inspected and problems had been found. Internal video of the line was examined by GMS Engineering and the line was found to have low spots, or bellies, that would need to be repaired by MSD. The line would also serve 100 new res-

idences planned by Aspen Homes just north of Willow Springs, Parker said. He said he would apply to El Paso County for funds from the American Recovery Program Act to fund the repairs.

Parker said representatives from Willow Springs Ranch had told him they planned to have all 452 houses in the development built and sold by the end of 2022.

**Old legal documents to be scanned**  
Parker mentioned that a legal firm that had represented the district in the past had delivered boxes of old records to the district's office. Documents that needed to be kept

in perpetuity would be scanned, he said.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
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 May 18 at 9 a.m. 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, April 21*  
**Board brainstorms strategies**

*By James Howald and Jackie Burhans*  
At its April 21 meeting, the Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board heard operational updates from District Manager Jeff Hodge in its regular session, then reconvened in a workshop session to discuss issues such as Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) and the district's long-term contract to purchase water from Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU), among other subjects.

**Finances and projects on track**  
In his manager's report, Hodge told the board the district's finances "are right where they should be." The improvements to the Holbein treatment plant are going well and should be complete by June. Hodge said the filter media in the R. Hull treatment plant would need replacement and that he expected replacing the filter media in both plants would help to reduce radium levels in the district's water. Another state-mandated letter addressing radium would be sent to customers soon, Hodge said.  
Regarding wells, Hodge said Well 3D is now in production and pumping 120 gallons per minute reliably. Well 8A has been cleaned and is expected to be in production this month. Well 12A is being cleaned. Work on

the district's new well, Well 16A, is proceeding and the district is working with residents near the well site on mitigating the noise of drilling.  
**Workshop debates ASR, relationship with CSU**  
In the workshop, Hodge told the board that DWSD was working with Triview Metro District to assess the feasibility of ASR, an approach to ground water management that involves pumping water back into aquifers for storage to avoid loss to evaporation and later pumping the water for consumption. Brett Gracely, a water resource manager with Leonard Rice Engineering Inc., told the board that better-producing wells are the best candidates for use with ASR. Pipe routes and the accounting model used with ASR will be the biggest challenges, he predicted. Developing the technology along with Triview adds complexity to the effort, he said. Board President Ed Hodge said he saw great potential in ASR.  
The board also discussed the pros and cons of continuing to purchase water from CSU. Hodge expressed concern that CSU had not provided the district with a draft of a contract detailing the rates DWSD could expect for the long term. Rogers Sams, an engineer with GMS

Inc. Consulting Engineers, said CSU wanted to use the same contract for all districts that purchase water from it. "Everybody gets the same deal," Sams said.  
Director Wayne Vanderschuere suggested pursuing a one-year extension of the current contract with CSU, rather than seeking a 25-year agreement. Hodge said DWSD would continue to get 1.2 million gallons of water a year from CSU, but a larger amount would trigger the need for infrastructure improvements, including increasing pipeline capacity. He said CSU viewed DWSD as an "outside customer," and its own customers were the priority for service.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
The next meeting is scheduled for May 19 at 9 a.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. Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me*

*Triview Metropolitan District, April 21*  
**More details revealed about regional water delivery system**

*By Jennifer Kaylor*  
At the April 21 Triview Metropolitan District Board of Directors meeting, District Manager Jim McGrady presented a prototype of the final Northern Delivery System (NDS)—a regional water delivery system—demonstration that will likely be provided to the public in mid- to late June. The information was compiled in collaboration with JDS-Hydro Consultants Inc., which has been acquired by South Dakota-based company RESPEC.  
Triview staff, all board directors, and legal representatives attended the meeting either online or in person.  
**Note:** The April 21 agenda and packet may be accessed via <https://triviewmetro.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Triview-Board-Packet-for-4.21.2022-Website-Reporter.pdf>. McGrady's PowerPoint board presentation may be accessed via <https://triviewmetro.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Triview-Board-Meeting-draft-04-21-22-jcm.pdf>.  
Triview is a Title 32 special district in Monument that provides road, park, and open space maintenance, as well as water, stormwater, and wastewater services, to Jackson Creek, Promontory Pointe, Sanctuary Pointe, and several commercial areas.

**Water pipeline plan unfolds**  
McGrady's slide presentation about the NDS included the project's planning history, pipeline alignment and pipe sizes, major infrastructure, and estimated construction costs as well as a project timeline.  
In response to public input from meetings and other channels, the originally proposed pipeline route initiated at a planned pump station site near Highway 83, directed northwest through the Sun Hills Community and Fox Run Park then west along Baptist Road toward either of the district's B or C water treatment plants. The newly proposed route again originates at the pump station site, follows Old Northgate Road then heads directly north on Roller Coaster Road until it intersects with Baptist Road/Hodgen Road. This section, one of two, is segment A. The second section, segment B, turns west from the intersection and either follows along Sanctuary Pointe's northern border or travels through a private parcel to eventually connect with either of Triview's C-plant or B-plant water treatment facilities, respectively. Each of the potential end points of the route would likely require a water storage tank for fire storage and blending purposes; however, the Sanctuary Pointe location currently has a water tank with the necessary water storage capacity. The B-plant location would eventually require construction of a new water tank, most likely in the parking lot (the north option) or immediately east of the plant (the east option). McGrady confirmed that the district applied for a portion of El Paso County's American Rescue Plan Act funds—\$20 million of which have been

earmarked for water projects—to finance the NDS's water storage needs.  
McGrady characterized the new route as easier and quicker to build since the district could hire multiple pipe contractors, but the new route would also involve closure of Roller Coaster Road. In response to resident Barrett Edwards' questions about road closure time and related communications, McGrady estimated a three- to four-month period for when Roller Coaster Road would be closed to through-traffic but not local residents. Acknowledging the critical nature of traffic management and communications, he discussed a project website, message boards, and impromptu newsletters as foundational communication efforts and assured Edwards that no resident would have to park down the street and walk home.  
Currently, Triview and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) have committed to participating in the project. McGrady stated that Donala Water and Sanitation (DWSD) and the Town of Monument continued to consider their options, but Woodmoor Water and Sanitation planned to participate in another water delivery system called the "Loop Group," see <https://ocn.me/v22n4.htm#wwsd>. The project's water main—a 16-inch pipe size—is estimated to support the hydraulic needs of 4 million gallons per day (MGD) which is calculated to support Triview, FLMD, DWSD, and the Town of Monument if, ultimately, all four districts participate. An estimated 32,300 linear feet (about six miles) of pipeline and the Highway 83 pump station—also with a hydraulic capacity of four MGD—completed the bulk of infrastructure needs.  
The proposed plan included establishing a construction manager/general contractor (CMGC), or manager-at-risk, contract which provides a guaranteed maximum price. Although water delivery negotiations were ongoing with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU), the cost estimation incorporated a \$9 million CSU tap fee and water rate of \$7.39/1,000 gallons. McGrady acknowledged that the water rate was higher than Triview's current tier one rate and would likely induce a district rate increase eventually. CSU proffered a 25-year, 3.45% interest financing option for the tap fee, McGrady said. Additional ongoing costs would be determined by the meter size each district required. Triview's meter requirement was estimated to be 6 inches and FLMD's, 2 inches. If DWSD or Town of Monument were to participate in the project, each of their meter sizes were estimated at 3 inches.  
Total project costs varied due to the two water treatment plant options, B-plant and C-plant, as well as the B-plant storage tank options, the north and east tank locations. All of the different options were contained within the NDS's segment B. Segment A costs remained stat-

ic at \$3 million for the pump station and \$8.87 million for pipeline installation plus asphalt repair and overlay of Roller Coaster Road. In segment B, estimates for connecting to the Sanctuary Pointe C-plant option added a potential \$3.9 million, which included about \$650,000 in onsite district improvements. The B-plant option would require an estimated \$4.72 million plus \$2.7 million to situate a storage tank at the east location or the same \$4.72 million plus \$1.9 million to place a storage tank north of the treatment plant. Ultimately, the highest cost figures incorporated the CSU tap fee, the pump station, pipeline segment A, and segment B's B-plant option with the east storage tank and reached an estimated \$31.5 million. The lowest cost option calculated at \$24.8 million and included the CSU tap fee, the pump station, pipeline segment A, and segment B's C-plant option in Sanctuary Pointe, which required onsite district improvements and not a new water storage tank.  
McGrady delineated quarterly goals for establishing permits, easements, and funding activities; acquiring materials; awarding the CMGC and other contracts; and finalizing participation agreements with other partners. Start-to-finish, the NDS was projected take a year to complete and construction on segments A and B would likely begin the second quarter of 2023. McGrady anticipated conducting a final public meeting in mid- to late June. A possible second meeting may be scheduled for Sanctuary Pointe residents.  
**Votes propel NDS, Conexus, and Home Place Ranch forward**  
The district manager and legal counsel provided insight into two resolutions, a consent agreement, and a letter of support. The first resolution, 2022-02, provided the means for the board to confirm the NDS route as presented and maintain the right to find an alternative if costs become excessive.  
The second resolution and an accompanying agreement pertained to the Conexus development within Triview's boundaries on the west side of I-25. Conexus

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amended its original service plan and subsequent financing mechanism of subdistricts. Resolution 2022-03 is a resolution consenting to the organization of the Conexus Metropolitan District Numbers 1 and 2, whose boundaries and services will overlap with the boundaries and services of the Triview Metropolitan District. If approved by Triview, Conexus cannot build, own, or maintain any facilities that conflict with Triview and must meet Triview’s compliance parameters. The accompanying consent agreement allows Conexus to build the necessary infrastructure for its residents and to finance the construction through the two metropolitan districts. Director James Otis emphasized that approval of the overlap simply conveyed that Conexus met all legal requirements and fiduciary responsibilities and Triv-

iew residents are not at financial risk. The final action requested authorization for President Mark Melville to sign a letter of support for Home Place Ranch, also known as Triview Metropolitan District No. 3, to restructure its service plan and increase its total debt to finance expanded public improvements which include construction of a recreation center in District No. 3. The directors unanimously approved the two resolutions and consent agreement and authorized Melville to sign the support letter. At about 7:55 p.m., the directors moved into executive session §24-6-402(4)(a), (b), (e), Acquisitions, Legal Advice, and Negotiations regarding the following general topics, if needed: negotiation regarding the Northern

Delivery System and the design contract for the North Monument Creek Interceptor pipeline.  
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Triview board meetings are generally held on the third Thursday of the month. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Thursday, May 19. The district office is located at 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302. Because a public presentation is expected to be scheduled for mid- to late June, check the district’s website, <https://triviewmetro.com> for meeting updates. See also “Triview Metropolitan District” on Facebook or Twitter. [com/@TriviewMetro](https://twitter.com/TriviewMetro).  
*Jennifer Kaylor can be contacted at [jenniferkaylor@ocn.me](mailto:jenniferkaylor@ocn.me).*

Monument Board of Trustees, April 4

Board member resigns; Independence Day festivities approved

By Allison Robenstein

At its April 4 meeting, the Monument Board of Trustees decided to begin the appointment process to select a new member after Trustee Laurie Clark resigned. **Resolution declaring a vacancy on the board** Clark resigned her position effective April 3, and a resolution declaring the vacancy will allow the board to appoint a replacement. The position will remain in office only until the next regular election in November. Clark was elected in April 2018. During her tenure, she missed 23 meetings, more than any other sitting trustee. **Special event permit approved for Independence Day parade and street fair** Portia Hermann, communication, and event specialist for the town, said the Kiwanis Club has applied to hold the annual parade on Monday, July 4. A permit for the associated street fair, hosted by the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, was also requested. These were both unanimously approved by the board.

**Monument fee schedule addition resolution** Town Planning Director Meggan Herington said the new fee schedule resolution sets a procedure, to be completed during the pre-application meeting, between a property owner or residential building developer and town staff, for the school district to select land dedication or to receive fees in lieu of land. The local homebuilders association suggested the fee schedule be incremental since it is a significant increase in cost and none had anticipated it. The fees are paid at the time a building permit is requested, then deposited into the school fees fund. Fees have not been updated at least since 2011, Herington told the board. The suggested incremental increase was to begin July 1, 2022. For example, fees for a single-family detached home are currently \$1,350 but, according to the graduated fee schedule increase, this would be updated to \$1,784. Then, on July 1, 2024, the same fees would increase again to \$2,218. Trustee Mitch LaKind questioned the staggered fee schedule.

Trustee Darcy Schoening asked why the fees differ so much between the variety of house styles, saying the people in apartments aren’t using the home any less than those who live the single-family homes. “It seems discriminatory to me,” she commented. Herington said the fee schedule isn’t equal because the basis for determination is based on student yield—more school-age children are expected in single-family homes than in apartment complexes based on statistical analysis. Schoening said the town needs fewer starter homes and fewer apartments. Fees are paid by the developer when they request a building permit. Trustee Jim Romanello argued this will cause rent to increase because the little guy pays the fees but noted the idea of incremental fee increases make sense to him. The resolution was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.  
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*Allison Robenstein can be contacted at [allisonrobenstein@ocn.me](mailto:allisonrobenstein@ocn.me).*

Monument Planning Commission, April 13

Monument to welcome new planning director; three proposals recommended for approval

By Kate Pangelinan

Three public hearing items were approved for recommendation to the Board of Trustees (BOT) at the April 13 Monument Planning Commission (MPC) meeting: Conexus Phase 1 Preliminary PUD Plan Major Amendment No. 2, the Native Sun Construction Preliminary/Final PUD Plan and Final Plat, and Willow Springs Ranch Filing No. 2 F. All proposals were approved unanimously, 6-0. Those voting were Vice Chairman Martin Trujillo and Commissioners Ray Egley, Eric Light, Cathy Green, Daniel Ours, and Sean Zernickow. Other notable matters included: 

- It was announced that Nina Ruiz is expected to become Monument’s planning director on June 1. Meggan Herington will fill in until then. She is still working on Monument’s new industrial design standards.
- Commissioner Steve King was sworn in to serve on the Board of Adjustments.

**Conexus Phase 1 Preliminary PUD Plan Major Amendment No. 2** Some facts about this proposal, as detailed in the meeting packet available online, presented by Planner II Debbie Flynn during the meeting and supplemented with an additional presentation by Andrea Barlow of NES Inc. and Mike DeGrant of Schuck Communities: 

- This amendment concerns a 23.3-acre property between Highway I-25 and Old Denver Road. Previously, in 2018, an amendment was passed allowing for “Religious Facilities and Institutions” to be built on this land. As stated in the meeting packet, “The construction of a church on Lot 1 has been approved and is nearing completion, which leaves 8.4 acres for future development.”
- Also as stated in the meeting packet, this amendment “includes additional specific industrial standards that are consistent with the recently approved industrial standards for Conexus Phases 2 and 3 Preliminary PUD Plan. These standards will replace the limited light industrial and manufacturing standards.” The packet includes a more thorough list of what exactly these industrial design standards entail. Regardless, this amendment will keep these Conexus Phase 1 projects in line with plans for Phase 2 and Phase 3.

Two public comments expressed support for this proj-

ect, and the PC asked questions touching on such topics as parking, signage, traffic, and definition clarification. In the end, the proposed amendment was unanimously approved for recommendation to the BOT. **Native Sun Construction Filing No. 1 and Native Sun Construction Preliminary/Final PUD Plan and Final Plat** Some facts about this proposal, as detailed in the meeting packet available online, presented by Flynn during the meeting and supplemented with an additional presentation by Earnest Jessop with Native Sun and Peter Patton with Patton and Associates, a land planning firm: 

- This project is located at 16050 Old Denver Road in Monument, south of Baptist Road. The whole site is 10.66 acres, which this final plat is intended to divide into two light industrial lots of 7.36 acres and 3.3 acres. The Preliminary/Final PUD Plan being considered is concerned with Phase 1, handling the 7.36-acre lot.
- According to the PUD Plan and the meeting packet, Phase 1 is intended to feature “a 7,000-square foot office building, a 6,120-square foot shop, and construction yard.” Phase 2 is on the horizon, although it’s unknown when plans will solidify. Its 3.33-acre lot is expected to feature “an approximately 10,000-12,000-square foot office building.” All buildings/work areas are for the Native Sun company.
- The office building built during Phase 1 of this project is expected to be two stories with a parking area. Further information is available in the meeting packet online.

Two public comments were made for this proposal as well, one asking questions and another expressing support. Commissioners’ questions included subjects such road maintenance, the offices that will be built here, the size of Native Sun’s fleet (one semi-truck at the moment, as well as some construction equipment), and water use. A motion to approve the proposals for recommendation to the BOT passed unanimously. **Willow Springs Ranch Filing No. 2 F** Some facts about this proposal, as detailed in the meeting packet available online, presented by Flynn, with Tim McConnell of Drexel, Barrell & Co. representing the applicant:

- Willow Springs Ranch Filing No. 2 is 6.158 acres, west of Willow Springs Ranch Filing No. 1. According to the meeting packet, Filing No. 2 will include “Cattail Drive and Short Prairie Court, 27 single-family lots, and two tracts.” The tracts will be used for such things as “public utilities, landscaping, open space, trails, and drainage,” again quoting the packet, and the lots will “range in size from 5,465 square feet to 11,488 square feet.” The property can be reached from Forest Lakes Drive.

Two citizens spoke during the public comment portion of the hearing, mentioning concerns. After some discussion, this proposal was approved for recommendation unanimously, with the following condition: “Cattail Drive access will need to be converted to a right-in/right-out when and if a new roadway adjacent to Willow Springs Ranch Filing No. 2 is constructed for the Lewis-Palmer School District 38’s future school site or the potential development of properties to the north.” **Information and relevant links**

- This article was written referring to a draft of the meeting’s minutes submitted by Theresa Rust, currently available online at [monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com](https://monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com).
- These minutes will later be considered for approval by the PC, and—once any potential amendments are made and a vote passed—no longer designated a “draft.”
- This site—[monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com](https://monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com)—is also a good place to find explanatory packets and agendas for both PC and BOT meetings.
- Many PC meetings are available to watch in their entirety on the town’s YouTube page, at [youtube.com/channel/UCdFLo8UcqZfFdkio5jT6GDA](https://youtube.com/channel/UCdFLo8UcqZfFdkio5jT6GDA). Citizens may find it easier to search for “Town of Monument” or “Monument Planning Commission” in YouTube’s search bar.
- According to the town’s website, planning staff can be contacted by calling 719-481-2954 or sending an email to [planning@tomgov.org](mailto:planning@tomgov.org).

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The next PC meeting is expected to be held on May 11 at 6 p.m. in Monument Town Hall.  
*Kate Pangelinan can be reached at [katepangelinan@ocn.me](mailto:katepangelinan@ocn.me).*



Monument Board of Trustees, April 18

Proposed town charter to be on November ballot

By Allison Robenstein

During the April 18 meeting, the Monument Board of Trustees approved placement of the new town charter on the November ballot for a vote. They also approved a new liquor license for the Secret Window.

**Home Rule Commission completes charter**  
Katherine Sellers, counsel to Home Rule Charter Commission, and Steve King, commission chairman and member of the Board of Adjustments, presented the newly written charter to the board. It will be referred to the voters during the November election. To read the full charter, see <https://tinyurl.com/5ercdx9a>.

- Of the charter contents, King told the board:
- Monument would be divided into two districts that mostly follow the east and west sides of the town.
  - Trustees would become council members serving up to two consecutive four-year terms.
  - After each election cycle, council members will review and revise a required code of conduct.
  - Council members must attend meetings and a limit to meetings missed will be put into effect, however, virtual and in-person meetings are one and the same.
  - Monument would maintain its town status, indicative of our small-town community.
  - The town manager must live within the town boundaries and would be given six months to move there.
  - Town employees may not strike or require collective bargaining agreements.

One concern was the change of status for the clerk and treasurer positions. Currently, they are appointed for each election cycle, but this would change in the charter. Instead, they would become town employees. Trustee Ron Stephens said he was concerned the autonomy of the positions would be removed should they work for the town manager. King said it was discussed, but in the

end the commission thought higher-quality applicants would apply for a job that is guaranteed rather than one in which their position could be eliminated with a 4-3 vote.

Trustee Darcy Schoening spoke against the portion of the charter identifying the council members' qualifications. Currently, town residents at least 18 years old and with one year of residency may become trustees. The charter requires candidates to be 22 years old and be a resident for 24 months. "Why do you think you know better than the voters, overstepping the boundaries of the commission?" she asked.

King said numerous precedents require such an age in consideration of higher levels of education, responsibility, and maturity, but Schoening pushed back. She asked why someone who could purchase liquor or join the military couldn't be part of community government. She said this is "highly inappropriate and highly disenfranchising."

Sellers put an end to the back and forth by clarifying the voters and not anyone on the board will decide whether the components of the charter are worthwhile. "You don't have that discretion," she said firmly, confirming the board may not weigh in on the merits of the charter. Town Attorney Joseph Rivera said the board's job is not to approve or disapprove of the charter, nor does it have any opportunity to change the content, because it is up to the voters to do so.

In the end, the board approved the resolution referring the charter to the voters in a 5-1 vote with Schoening voting against.

**New liquor license for Secret Window**  
Deputy Town Clerk Tina Erickson said Anthony and Rhoda Archuletta, owners of Secret Window at 47 Third St., applied for a new liquor license. Mayor Don Wilson said this isn't a new license. The proprietors already serve beer and liquor, said Erickson. Anthony Archuletta

said the location has been in business for 14 years. There were no public comments, and the license was approved unanimously.

Public comments

During public comments, Christine Malmborg, owner of Dragonfly Paddle Yoga, asked the board to thoughtfully consider not shutting down her business. Malmborg said her annual permit to teach classes on Monument Lake was denied. Numerous residents and people who took her class at the lake in previous years asked the town to reconsider.

She noted Dragonfly Paddle Yoga is the "only business to provide this health-minded business in the area." Her supporters noted the small presence at the lake and the fact that it is a local, woman-owned business that empowers students to learn a new skill, as well as providing an economic benefit to the community.

Mayor Don Wilson asked Town Manager Mike Foreman if the permitting policy had changed, and Foreman replied that there are more businesses who wish to be permitted than the lake can handle. He said Malmborg is not a vendor of choice for the town, although she has become a steward of the lake for years.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

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The Monument Board of Trustees usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 16. Call 719-884-8014 or see [www.townofmonument.org](http://www.townofmonument.org) for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for BOT or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutemand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

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Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, March 31, April 14 and 28

Town Hall reopens, drainage study presented

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

The second Palmer Lake Board of Trustees (PLBOT) meeting for March was postponed until after the April edition of Our Community News went to press and so is covered in this article, along with the two meetings held in April.

The March 31 meeting was the first to be held in the refurbished historic Town Hall. At that meeting, the board considered two subdivision requests for properties on French's Hill, an ordinance to set the fine for parking in no-parking zones, a request to authorize staff to select an appraiser, and a request to alter the access point for the Pine Crest Youth subdivision. The board also approved a special event permit for a 24-hour endurance race. The meeting went into executive session to discuss a request for temporary use of town property and a possible annexation.

At the April 14 workshop and meeting, the board heard a presentation on the drainage issues on High Street. Appointments to the ad-hoc Grants Committee were made and a vote was taken to approve the appraiser chosen by staff to assess two town properties. Town Administrator Dawn Collins discussed erosion at the pedestrian bridge and the fencing required by BNSF adjacent to the railroad tracks. The board also approved a special event permit for Palmer Lake Wine Festival. Finally at this meeting, Jeff Zearfoss used the time reserved for public comments to talk about his ideas for developing the Elephant Rock property.

The April 28 meeting began with the board acting in its capacity as local licensing authority to consider a liquor license request from Sasquatch and Yeti Taqueria LLC. The board heard a presentation from CORE Electrical Cooperative and held two public hearings: the first to consider a conditional use permit for the Diacut property on Highway 105 and the second to consider vacating a right of way on Loveland Slope. Three special event permits came before the board, as well as a suggested amendment to the town's regulations for short-term rentals.

**Board meetings reconvene in Town Hall**  
The restoration of the Town Hall building is virtually complete, allowing board meetings to return to their usual location. The structural repairs are finished, and the interior remodeling preserves the historical look of the building while improving the lighting, the audio system, and the restroom facilities, one of which is now Americans with Disabilities Act compliant. Cameras were installed during the interior work, improving the live streaming of board meetings by enabling two points



Above: The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting March 31 was the first to be held in the refurbished historic Town Hall. Photo by Jackie Burhans.

of view: one on the board and the other on the microphone used for public comments. A grand re-opening event for the Town Hall, the library, and the museum will be held on Saturday, May 7 at 10 a.m.

**French's Hill subdivisions approved**  
At its March 31 meeting, the board held two public hearings and voted on two resolutions regarding requests to subdivide. Richard and Lindsay Willan asked to subdivide French's Hill parcels 6, 7 and 8 into five lots, three for single-family homes and two for low-profile, two-story buildings to be used as a health and nature retreat. Shana Ball asked to subdivide French's Hill parcel 10 into three lots, to be used for one single-family home and for a residential assisted living business.

There were no questions from the public at either hearing.

The board voted unanimously to approve resolutions granting both requests.

**No parking zone fine set**  
The board voted in favor of Ordinance 6-2022, which amends the town's master fee schedule to raise the fine for parking in a no-parking zone from \$15 to \$50.

**Staff authorized to choose appraiser**  
Deputy Town Clerk Julia Stambaugh asked the board for authorization to negotiate contracts with appraisers to evaluate the Elephant Rock property the town had recently acquired and the town property just south of County Line Road that is currently used as a motocross track. Stambaugh said three proposals to do the appraisals had been submitted.

Mayor Bill Bass, Trustee Nicole Currier, Trustee Da-

rin Dawson, and Trustee Karen Stuth voted to authorize staff to negotiate with appraisers. Trustee Jessica Farr voted no. Trustees Glant Havenar and Samantha Padgett were absent from the board meeting.

Access to Pine Crest Youth subdivision amended

John Cressman asked for a minor replat of his property on Greeley Boulevard to reposition the driveway to make it less steep.

The board voted unanimously in favor of Resolution 22-2022, which makes the requested changes to the plat.

**Permit for endurance race approved**  
Jen Brown and Lance Pearce asked the board to grant a special event permit for the 24 Hours of Palmer Lake Endurance Run. The race will be held on Oct. 8 and 9 and will take place around the lake. They said 100 to 200 runners were expected for the eighth running of the race. Brown and Pearce said \$5 of every registration fee would be donated to the Palmer Lakes Park Commission.

The board voted unanimously to approve the permit.

**Temporary use of town property denied**  
The March 31 board meeting ended with an executive session to consider approving a temporary use of town property. After the executive session, the board reconvened to open session and voted to disallow the temporary use of town property. The board did not provide details about the request.

**High Street drainage study**  
At the April 14 workshop, Mark Morton and Erica Countryman, both of GMS Inc. Consulting Engineers (GMS), reviewed their study of drainage problems on High Street. High Street was chosen as the first location for study as it has seen the most frequent and severe flooding in the town.

Morton and Countryman said they had considered High Street drainage issues from the perspectives of 10-year, 50-year, and 100-year storms. They explained that a 100-year storm had a 1% chance of occurring in any year, a 50-year storm had a 5% chance of occurring, and a 10-year storm had a 10% chance.

Countryman discussed the basins that drain to High Street, identifying a 72.5-acre basin west of Highland Road as the greatest source of runoff. She explained the study assessed several factors, including the ability of the soils in the drainage basins to absorb water, to calculate each basin's rate of drainage and peak runoff. The study also analyzed the capacity of the town's existing drainage paths to convey runoff, thereby identifying infrastructure that is undersized and more likely to flood.



She said the town’s existing infrastructure overall could handle a five-year storm, but the study identified a poorly built culvert that could only handle a two-year event.

Morton and Countryman presented two alternatives to improve the drainage on High Street: an above-ground design that would enlarge existing culverts to eliminate drainage bottlenecks at a cost of \$400,000, and an underground design that would install a mix of 30- and 36-inch pipes at a cost of \$4 million. Which design to choose would be up to the board, they said. They also mentioned the possibility of a hybrid design that would combine above- and below-ground elements at a mid-range cost.

Morton discussed funding options. He doubted the town would qualify for grants, which are only available to disadvantaged communities, because of the median income and average home value in Palmer Lake. The town could try for funds from the American Recovery Plan Act, he said. The town could borrow money, Morton said, adding that would require financial stability and a clearly defined revenue stream such as property taxes or a water department usage fee. He recommended the town set up a water enterprise fund to facilitate borrowing money.

Morton and Countryman presented the study at a workshop meeting, and the board took no votes based on their presentation.

Appointments made to  
ad hoc Grants Committee

The board voted unanimously in favor of Resolution 23-2022, which appoints Nicole Currier and Cindy Powell to the town’s Grants Committee. The committee researches, writes, and administers grant fund applications, and advises town staff as needed.

Appraiser chosen

The board voted in favor of Resolution 24-2022, which authorizes Bass to sign an agreement with Opteon USA to appraise the Elephant Rock property as well as the property currently used as a motocross track. The resolution specifies Opteon USA will receive \$9,500 to appraise the two properties and must complete its work in 45 days.

Erosion and fencing demand attention

Collins told the board that GMS was working on a plan to address erosion at the pedestrian bridge abutment adjacent to the lake and asked the board to authorize her to pay GMS \$9,500 for its work and to put the work out for bids. Collins said the erosion was considered urgent by the railroad, and, if not quickly addressed, the railroad might shut down the bridge.

The board voted unanimously to authorize Collins to move forward with the project.

Collins also spoke to another requirement of the railroad: the need to upgrade the fencing that runs parallel to the railroad tracks by the end of April. The railroad requires the fencing be 8 feet high. She said if the town does not complete the project, the railroad will do the work and send the bill to the town.

The board voted unanimously to authorize Collins to put together a bid and proceed with the project.

Palmer Lake Wine Festival scheduled

Havenar asked the board to approve a special event permit for the third Palmer Lake Wine Festival to be held on Sept. 10 at the north end of the Palmer Lake Recreational

Area west of the lake adjacent to Highway 105. Havenar said she is now a co-owner of the event along with Matthew Hexter and Paul Murphy. The festival has commitments from 18 wineries currently and has room for seven more, according to Havenar. Wineries interested in participating should contact Havenar.

The application for the event says 1,500 attendees are expected. The festival area will be fenced in accordance with state law and will include musical performances. Parking will be on the west side of the recreational area and in private parking lots. Security will be handled by a third-party contractor.

The board voted to approve the permit with Havenar abstaining.

Developer brings vision for  
Elephant Rock Property

Jeff Zearfoss used the public comment portion of the April 14 meeting to introduce himself to the community and present his vision for possible uses of the Elephant Rock Property.

Zearfoss told the board he owned the Carter Payne building in Colorado Springs, which was originally built as the city’s first Black church in 1897 and is now used as a community space housing a brewery, taproom, and co-op restaurant.

Zearfoss said he envisioned the Elephant Rock property as the home of a brewery, restaurants, a community garden, art studios and galleries, hiking trails, and bike shops. He said he looked forward to continuing the discussion with the town about partnering to develop the Elephant Rock property.

Taqueria requests liquor license

At the April 28 meeting, Norma Sandoval, co-owner of Sasquatch and Yeti Taqueria at 292 Highway 105, requested a liquor license for her business. She said the restaurant serves tacos, burritos, and tortas based on her family’s traditional recipes and would like customers to be able to order a beer or a margarita to drink along with their food on the patio. Stambaugh said staff saw no issues with the request.

The board voted unanimously to approve the request and forward it on to the state for final approval.

CORE project underway

Rob Osborne addressed the board on behalf of CORE Electrical Cooperative. He described the three-phase project which will rebuild nine miles of lines in the town, bringing them up to the latest standards. Phase 1 is complete, with phase 2 ready for construction in June; construction on phase 3 will start in 2023. Osborne said residents will see temporary use of double poles during construction, which are necessary to minimize power outages. Work will be done Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Residents will be notified of scheduled outages and any time contractors need access to rights of way on residents’ properties.

Conditional use permit granted

The board held a public hearing at the April 28 meeting regarding Diacut owner Bruno Ferrer’s request for a conditional use permit to allow his property at 773 Highway 105 to be used as a temporary storage location for storage of hay. The property was previously occupied by Elites Cranes. Ferrer said the hay would be stored for a year until the owner builds a barn to store it at another location. A chain-link fence with a screen would sur-

round the hay, Ferrer said, adding that the bales would be covered by tarps.

Bass said he was concerned with the appearance of the property and pointed out that a lot of effort had gone into removing Elite Cranes’ inoperative equipment from the site. Stuth also expressed skepticism that Ferrer would abide by the schedule he had proposed. Ferrer said his request had been approved by the Planning Commission.

There were no other comments at the public hearing.

Later in the meeting, the board voted to approve the conditional permit on a six-to-one vote, with Stuth voting against.

Vacation of right of way considered

The board held a second public hearing on a request from Gene and Maria Kalesti to vacate a platted but undeveloped town right of way on Loveland Slope between 171 and 179 Shady Lane. Gene Kalesti said the town’s right of way encroached on his property due to inaccurate surveying done when the town was originally laid out in 1889. If the right of way is vacated, he intends to landscape it to prevent erosion and potential flooding, Kalesti said. He added that the Planning Commission had approved his request.

Several neighbors and other residents spoke at the hearing, some in favor of and some opposed to the request. The board also received several letters on both sides of the request.

Due to the many technical details involved in the request, the board tabled the request until its May 12 meeting to give board members time to visit the site. Town Attorney Matt Krob advised the board members to visit the site together but to avoid conversations at the site and to hold all discussion at a public meeting.

Special event permits granted

The board granted three special event permits: for the Elephant Rock Bike Tour, scheduled for June 5; for the Tri-Lakes Lions Club Fishing Derby, also to be held on June 5; and for the town’s annual Fourth of July event, the Festival on the Fourth.

The board voted unanimously to grant all three permits.

Short-term rental regulation amended

Collins proposed some clarifying language be added to the recently passed ordinance governing short-term rentals. The amended language specifies two things: first, an owner-occupied property (one parcel) with more than one rental requires a conditional use permit, and second, a non-owner occupied property (one parcel) with more than two rental units requires a conditional use permit.

The board asked Collins to continue to refine the language in the ordinance and bring an updated version back to a future board meeting.

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The next two board meetings are scheduled for May 12 and 26. See the town’s website at [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com) to confirm times, dates and locations of board meetings and workshops. Meeting times may change. Meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 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).*

NEPCO announces special speakers for May 14 meeting

By Marlene Brown

The Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) will hear more about three bills concerning Home Owners Associations (HOAs) in the Colorado State Legislature this year from state District 20 Rep. Terri Carver, who represents communities in northern El Paso County including the Air Force Academy and Palmer Lake.

The bills are:

- HB22-1137 HOA Board Accountability and Trans-

parency—relating to the conduct of HOAs collecting unpaid assessments, fees, and fines.

- HB22-1139 HOA Cannot Regulate Use of Public Rights-of-Way—relating to prohibiting HOAs from requiring that public rights-of-way be used in a certain manner.
- HB22-1239 Regulate Community Association Managers by the Division of Real Estate.

Joining Carver will be HOA attorney Lenard Rieth to further explain how the bills would impact local and re-

gional HOAs. Dave Betzler, NEPCO’s Outreach chair, explained that NEPCO is actively engaged with county and municipal planners and keeps its members informed about local development activities. HOA members and the public are urged to attend the May 14 meeting from 10 a.m. to noon at the Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. [www.nepco.org](http://www.nepco.org).

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

Woodmoor Improvement Association, April 27

Board discusses subdivision, fire insurance, short-term rentals

By Jackie Burhans

The Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board met on April 27 to hear from residents on subdivision, fire insurance, and short-term rental (STR) concerns. Treasurer Connie Brown was absent.

Owner comments on  
subdividing and fire insurance

Resident Joann Schmitz returned to follow up on her previous concerns about the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) application process. Schmitz noted that she had received a copy of the application but that identifying information was redacted. She determined that the applicant was a corporation and suggested that

corporations do not have privacy rights. She wants to talk to the developers when they resubmit their application to the ACC as they had not reached out to nearby homeowners as promised. Schmitz offered to work with the ACC to develop guidelines for property subdivision requests.

Bush indicated the property was previously subdivided into four separate parcels, but the owner had vacated the internal lot lines. While WIA can provide input when the developer goes before the El Paso County Planning Commission, he said the county could override any such input, providing examples of the county doing so in the past. Bush also noted that very few properties left in Woodmoor could be subdivided but welcomed any in-

put from Schmitz on proposed guidance.

Schmitz also brought to the board’s attention a bipartisan bill passed by the state Legislature: HB22-1111 Insurance Coverage for Loss Declared Fire Disaster. The bill still needs to be signed, but its purpose is to ensure insurance companies pay promptly, increase the upfront payment from 30% to 65% of the total property value, and extend the time to rebuild from 12 months to 36 months with two six-month extensions available.

The bill, she said, also codifies the option to rebuild or buy somewhere else without penalty. She noted that the East Troublesome and Marshall fires revealed that many homeowners were grossly underinsured. Schmitz also suggested additional tips to add to the WIA website.



Bush replied that WIA would want to provide residents with more information when the bill is finally signed. He said he had concerns about the impact on insurance rates.

Short-term rental concerns

Bush reported that the board had received two letters about short-term rentals (STRs) in Woodmoor. In one case, an owner advertised their STR as being available for events. WIA contacted the owner, who agreed it was a mistake and changed the ad.

The second letter asked how WIA regulates and controls STRs. Bush replied that the board’s counsel said it cannot prevent STRs but can regulate them. He said that WIA currently has over two dozen STRs and has had a generally satisfactory experience. WIA requires that owners apply for permission, provide a point of contact, and advise renters of WIA rules and covenants. Any violations perpetrated by renters would belong to the property owner.

A resident inquired if WIA was checking to see if the owner’s license or registration was current and how it handled outdoor smoking by guests. The board said it has no authority over short-term rental licensing, registration, or taxation.

Vice President Peter Bille noted that WIA could fine STR owners for covenant violations. Bush said that WIA could retract its approval to operate a home business if problems continued and nuisances were reported.

As for outdoor smoking, board member Brad Gleason said the Sheriff’s Office sets the rules and that the current level is a Stage 1 fire ban declared on April 10. Stage 1 fire restrictions include restrictions on outdoor smoking except within an enclosed vehicle or building,

a developed recreation site, or while in an area at least 3 feet in diameter with no flammable materials. Bush said the board has the authority to act depending on the facts. Residents can call Woodmoor Public Safety (WPS) or the Sheriff’s Office if they see a dangerous situation.

Find more information on fire status and restrictions at <https://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com/services/ready-set-go>.

Board highlights

- Bille noted that WIA is having issues with its email system and encouraged residents to check their spam folders for missing emails from the association.
- On behalf of Brown, Bush reported that expenses are down due to two staff vacancies and noted that WIA is experiencing hiring challenges like other businesses. He said WIA is replacing one Woodmoor Public Safety officer and its Covenants and Forestry administrator.
- Denise Cagliari, homeowners association (HOA) administrator, noted that WIA would partner with the county Elections Department to use the Barn as a polling place for the general election. There will be no Barn rentals between Oct. 31 and Nov. 8.
- Cagliari reported that May 6 is the deadline for dues payment before WIA imposes a lien and fees on owners with outstanding bills.
- Board member and Covenants Director Cindy Thrush reported that March saw nine violation notices and 13 unfounded complaints. Fourteen HOA checks resulted in four violations that were remediated before closing.
- Gleason noted that the warmer weather means

more kids will be playing outside, and he urged residents to be careful, watch their speeds, and be attentive while driving through Woodmoor.

- Board member Ed Miller reported that the Fire-wise grant is going well and should open up to more residents in June or July. Chipping days are scheduled for June 25 and 26 and for July 30 and 31 at Lewis-Palmer High School. Residents will unload slash from their own vehicles to reduce waiting times. The slash will be fed into the chipper by event volunteers.
- Bush indicated that the board had signed the agreement with WOSC LLC to accept the donation of 65 acres of open space in South Woodmoor. He said the anticipated transfer date is sometime in June, earlier than initially anticipated, as it no longer depends on the county approval of a replatting filing.
- Bush noted that Deer Creek Road would be closed for two weeks starting May 9 between Woodmoor Drive and Monument Hill Road while Woodmoor Water and Sanitation installs pipes to its Central Water Treatment Plant.

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The WIA Board of Directors usually meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Barn at 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next meeting will be on May 25.

See the WIA calendar at [www.woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/](http://www.woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/). WIA board meeting minutes can be found at [www.woodmoor.org/meeting-minutes/](http://www.woodmoor.org/meeting-minutes/) once approved and posted.

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

April Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Just when we thought we were getting back to normal and making up for the moisture deficit that ended fall and started winter, the weather pattern took a serious turn for the worse. Last month ended up being the driest April on record around most of the Front Range and eastern plains of Colorado. This includes the Palmer Divide, where we only had one day of accumulating snow and two days of measurable precipitation for the month. This would be very dry any month of the year, but is even more alarming given that April is normally one of our wettest and snowiest months of the year. To make matters worse, April is a critical month for us as the moisture we normally receive during that time is very beneficial as we start the growing season.

Not surprisingly, temperatures were warmer than normal for the month, but not by much. This was because the generally dry weather meant afternoon highs were warmer than normal as the energy from the sun was able to heat up the atmosphere (versus melting snow) more efficiently. But conversely, overnight lows were cooler than normal as the generally dry air allowed temperatures to cool more rapidly.

This pattern isn’t too unusual for the spring when a La Niña pattern is in place over the Pacific Ocean. However, the persistence and strength of the pattern was definitely unusual. Making things even worse was the fact that several strong storm systems moved through the region. However, each of these storms managed to move just to our north. These systems hammered areas in Wyoming, Montana, and the Dakotas with wind, snow,

and rain and did bring beneficial snow to our mountains mainly north of I-70 but only produced winds and dry weather for us.

Clear skies started the month with highs in the 50s and 60s on the 1st and 2nd before a quick shot of moisture moved in on the 3rd. This produced flurries and rain and snow showers that morning through afternoon. Unfortunately, it produced less than a one-tenth of an inch of precipitation and only a trace of snowfall.

No precipitation fell from the 4th through the 11th, with mainly clear skies and windy conditions most days. The combination of dry conditions and gusty winds also meant extreme wildfire conditions and several fires did pop up in the region.

A cold front moved through on the morning of the 12th, but the wind direction with this front was from the west. This meant the atmosphere was dry as the cold air moved in. Therefore, we only got gusty winds and cold temperatures. A few flurries and snow showers did manage to survive the trip over the Rockies but only amounted to a trace on the 12th and 13th.

Dry conditions along with gusty winds again took hold from the 14th through the 23rd. Fire weather conditions were again extreme through the period as well with temperatures fluctuating slightly above and below average through the period. High temperatures swung between the low 50s to record highs in the upper 70s on the 19th and 22nd.

A more organized storm system moved through on the 24th with areas of snow showers occurring off and on from late morning through early evening. This sys-

tem managed to bring our only accumulating snowfall of the month, with around an inch for most of us. Dry weather then returned for the remainder of the month with temperatures generally above normal as we headed into May.

A look ahead

May often experiences a wide variety of weather conditions in the region, from warm, sunny days to severe thunderstorms and hail, and even some snowfall. We can see very wet weather, sometimes heavy snow and other times our first 90-degree temperatures of the year. So be prepared for just about anything.

April 2022 Weather Statistics

Average High	59.6° (+3.1°)
Average Low	26.5° (-1.1°)
Highest Temperature	79° on the 22nd
Lowest Temperature	13° on the 13th
Monthly Precipitation	0.15" (-2.81", 95% below normal)
Monthly Snowfall	1.1" (-25.3", 96% below normal)
Season to Date Snow	71.1" (-46.5", 40% below normal)
(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)	
Season to Date Precip.	4.98" (-1.36", 21% below normal)
(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)	
Heating Degree Days	658 (-31)
Cooling Degree Days	0
Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at <a href="mailto:billkappel@ocn.me">billkappel@ocn.me</a> .	

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.

Thanks for LPHS After Prom event

Thanks to our great community of parents, LP staff, and students, After Prom 2022 was a huge success! We had approximately 350 students attend the event.

Many school districts do not offer an After Prom, as the planning and coordination involved take a substantial amount of time and money. Both District 38 high schools have such a dedicated group of staff, parents, and community patrons that we have been able to make After Prom a yearly tradition which we were pleased to bring back in 2022.

Much of the financial support comes from local businesses and families’ personal donations. We would like to recognize the following: Tri-Lakes Printing, Something New Boutique, Arlene’s Beans, Ramen Chops, Back East Bar and Grill, Chick-fil-A, Dion’s Piz-za, Horseshoe Donuts, Top Golf, The Summit, Target, Scheels, Sam’s Club, Overdrive Raceway, Glow Golf, Parry’s Pizza, Mod Pizza, City Rock, Lolly’s, Freedom Car Wash, Black Forest Deli, Josh n’ John’s, Legends

Mini Golf & Batting, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Noodles & Company, Pies & Grinders, In-N-Out, Del Taco, Gourmet Gift Baskets, Bad Daddy’s Burgers, Texas Roadhouse, Raising Cane’s, Rock House, Olive Garden, Costa Vida, Burger King, Buffalo Wild Wings, Chili’s, Chipotle, Clean Juice, Walmart, Costco, King Sooper’s, Safeway, and Jimmy Johns.

We had over 100 volunteers who helped with everything from purchasing prizes, mailing invitations,

organizing/transporting/providing food, selling tickets, decorating, working on the night of the event, cleaning up the day after, and so much more.

A very special thank you goes to the After Prom committee of Lisa Blinn, Otilia Duling, Dori Sutton, Bill Cade, Laurie Devine, Julie Hart, Nicole Pritchard, Liz Meggett, Coach Tupper, Officer Chad, Bridget O’Connor, and many more.

Michelle Oliger, After Prom Chair

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Young-adult and middle-grade summer reads

By the staff at Covered Treasures

“There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate’s loot on Treasure Island.”—Walt Disney

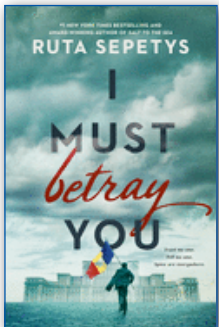
Connect with five-star books on your summer reading adventure:

I Must Betray You

By Ruta Sepetys (Philomel Books) \$18.99

Master storyteller Ruta Sepetys is back with an historical thriller about 1989 communist Romania and the citi-

zen spy network that devastated a nation. In a tyrannical country governed by isolation and fear, 17-year-old Cristian is blackmailed. He risks everything to unmask the truth behind the regime, give voice to fellow Romanians, and expose to the world what is happening in his country.





**You Have a Match**

By Emma Lord (Wednesday Books) \$10.99

This hilarious, heartfelt novel of romance, sisterhood, and friendship is a Reese Book Club winner. Through a DNA service, Abby discovers she has an older sister, and then tries to figure out why her parents gave Savvy up for adoption. There are complications, but part of life is showing up, leaning in, and learning to fit all your awkward pieces together, because sometimes the hardest things can also be the best ones.

**All My Rage**

By Sabaa Tahir (Razorbill) \$19.99

From one of today’s bestselling young adult authors comes a novel of young love, old regrets, family, forgiveness, immigration, and the American Dream. Heart-breaking and hopeful, this story about three main characters is told in two timelines, current day in California and past flashbacks to Pakistan.

**The Line Tender**

By Kate Allen (Puffin Books) \$8.99

Wherever the sharks led, Lucy’s marine-biologist mother was sure to follow. She was collecting shark data when she died suddenly. Five years later, there is another tragedy. To survive the fresh wave of grief, Lucy must grab the line that connects her depressed father, a stubborn fisherman, and a curious widower to her mother’s unfinished research. It’s a story of loss, grief, and the kindness of friends and community.

**Wink**

By Rob Harell (Puffin Books) \$8.99

Ross just wants to be a normal seventh-grader. He doesn’t want to lose his hair, wear a weird hat, or deal with the disappearing friends who don’t know what to say to the cancer kid. Based on Rob Harrell’s real-life experience, and packed with comic panels and spot art, this personal novel is an unforgettable, heartbreaking, hilarious, and uplifting story of survival and finding the music, magic, and laughter in life’s weirdness.

**The Bridge Home**

By Padma Venkatraman (Puffin Books) \$8.99

Four determined homeless children make a life for themselves in Padma Venkatraman’s stirring middle-grade debut. Runaway sisters Viji and Rukku find shelter and friendship on an abandoned bridge. With two homeless boys, the group forms a family of sorts. When illness strikes, Viji must decide whether to risk seeking help from strangers or to keep holding on to their fragile, hard-fought freedom.

**The Ogress and the Orphans**

By Kelly Barnhill (Algonquin Young Readers) \$19.95

This instant-classic fantasy centers on the power of generosity and love, and how a community suffers when they disappear. Stone-in-the-Glen has fallen on hard times. When a child goes missing, the mayor points to Ogress. The orphans know this can’t be. But how can the orphans relate Ogress’s goodness to people who refuse

to listen, and how can they make their deluded neighbors see the real villain in their midst?

**Northwind**

By Gary Paulsen (Farrar Straus Giroux) \$17.99

Set along a rugged coastline centuries ago, this bestseller tells the story of a young boy’s battle to survive against the odds. Amid a deadly plague, Leif is forced to take to the water and flee northward, navigating from one danger to the next, unsure of his destination. With hints of Nordic mythology and an irresistible narrative pull, this is Gary Paulsen at his captivating, adventuresome best.

**Words on Fire**

By Jennifer A. Nielson (Scholastic) \$8.99

Bestselling author Jennifer A. Nielsen transports readers to a corner of history in 1893 with this inspiring story. In Lithuania the occupying Russian Cossack soldiers have banned Lithuanian books, religion, culture, and language. Audra’s parents insist that she flee, taking with her an important package and instructions for where to deliver it. Can joining the underground network of book smugglers give Audra a chance to rescue her parents?

Until next month, happy reading.

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

April Library Events

Story Time and Toddler Time continue

By Harriet Halbig

Regularly occurring programs at the Monument library are *Story Time* on Tuesdays from 10:30 to 11:30 and *Toddler Time* at 9:30 and 10 on Wednesdays, May 11 and 25. There is also a *Story Time* offered at Reynolds House on the grounds of the Western Museum of Mining and Industry on Mondays from 9:30 to 10:45. Also, the district’s Bookmobile will visit the site.

Free math tutoring continues to be available each Monday from 3:30 to 6:30.

Please note, however, that the library will be closed on Monday, May 23 for staff training and Monday, May 30 for Memorial Day. Math tutoring and the *Story Time* at Reynolds House will be unavailable on those two days.

The library’s summer reading program, *Summer Adventure*, will kick off on June 1. Teen volunteers are needed to help with registration, programs, and various other library duties. To register as a volunteer, please go to the library website, ppld.org. Select services, ppld teens, volunteer, and fill out the application online. Thanks in ad-

vance for your interest!

The official ribbon cutting for the reopening of the Palmer Lake Library and Lucretia Vail Museum was held on **May 7**. The Palmer Lake Library is open Wednesday through Friday from 10 to 6. *Family Story Time* for ages 3 and up is on Fridays at 10:30.

We look forward to seeing you at the library and hope you will plan to join us for Summer Adventure. Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Native plants make beautiful landscapes while protecting our ecosystem

By Janet Sellers

Not all plants are native these days and not all non-native plants are invasive species, yet many plants we can buy at a big box store or consider for our landscaping are actually invasive. “Invasive plant species are non-native to particular ecosystems, and the introduction of them is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health,” according to the National Invasive Species Information Center.

In the National Audubon Society’s Plants for Birds program, native is “any plant that was here before European colonization,” says Partnerships Manager for Plants for Birds, Marlene Pantin. “And then, of course, native plants are those that are adaptable to the climate and the soil conditions in that area.”

Even native plants brought into our area from the coasts or other ecosystems can have a devastating effect on our birds, wildlife, and high forest clime. People buy plants they think look pretty, but their roots and seeds can aggressively travel and create problems far and wide, shading out and robbing living space for native plants and pollinators, too.

We have excellent resources via our Colorado Native Plant Society, with a free online brochure here: https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/native/FrontRange.pdf. Native plants offer beautiful colors and textures for our gardens that are perfectly designed for where we live. We can plan our landscaping for berms, low areas, inclines, and water features. Instead of water-guzzling turf, we can plant grasses and groundcovers, and support our pollinators and favorite critters like butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds.

Is it still safe to feed hummingbirds?

People have been asking about the avian flu and if there is a danger to hummingbirds and having a hummingbird feeder up. Audubon says that hummingbird feeders are at minimal risk simply because there are fewer numbers of these birds at the feeders; hummingbirds rely on nature and flowers. The issue is with a larger community of birds and feeders with a wide variety of birds using them; greater numbers and varieties of visiting birds may shed the virus and infect others.

Dangers are mainly red dye in the syrup and not cleaning the feeders promptly/daily from contaminants, and being careful and clean is key. Where hummingbird feeders are an issue in our area is with regard to bears and other wildlife getting attracted to the feeders, and it

is recommended to offer water (flowing water attracts hummers) instead and for sure to take down feeders every evening.

Janet Sellers is an ethnoecology researcher, writer, speaker, and chronicler of life and landscapes and lives in Woodmoor, Colo. Contact her with your success tips for local nature and garden ideas at JanetSellers@ocn.me.



**Left:** Non-native and aggressive plants choke out native plants. Try to use the blue columbine (*Aquilegia caerulea*) shown here, native bee balm (*Monarda fistulosa menthaefolia*), or woodland phlox (*Phlox divaricata Chattahoochee*). Other good choices include native harebells (*Campanula rotundifolia*) and showy locoweed (*Oxytropis lambertii*). Planting alternatives to oxeye daisies would be native daisies (*Erigeron spp*), shasta daisy, black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), blanket flower (*Gaillardia aristata*), and native yarrow (*Achillea lanulosa*). Columbine photo by Janet Sellers.

On the Trail (in memory of Tim Watkins)

Cleanup is more than a twice-a-year event

By Steve Pate

For those of us who enjoy getting out in the woods in our local mountains, finding trash littered along trails is more than annoying. For local hikers and mountain bikers, trailside trash is a growing problem. April 29 marked one of several “annual cleanup days” in our area. While these group efforts are usually focused on roadside cleanup or possibly vacant lots, on Monday, April 18, Randy Phillips and several local folks who love hiking our local mountains pitched in and cleaned up trash on “Flow Dog,” a hiking trail that traverses the east flank of Mount Herman.

Tim Watkins, who started this column 15 years ago, was a strong advocate and personally worked to establish and maintain trails here. He had a reputation for helping mountain bikers and others along trails and for challenging them to not abuse the trails. Responsibility is ours to accept. Why not take along a bag and take out more than you bring into the woods?

Phillips and Wendy Patterson, Julie Shimon, Matt Hornung, and Cougar and Ellie Patterson, did more than their share by picking up cans, bottles, and broken glass and hauling them out for proper disposal. Each of us could help even if not on that scale and by encouraging others to do the same.

If you’ve read this far, I suspect you respect our forests and trails, so please encourage your friends and ac-

quaintances to do the same.

Notes

- We’ve been touting the Santa Fe Open Space for nearly a year, and now it’s open. Please see the photo of the grand opening ceremony on page 1.
- We’ve had the driest April on record. Please be alert for smoke or fire and call 911 with the location immediately.

Steve Pate can be contacted at stevepate@ocn.me.



**Above:** The Flow Dog cleanup crew are, from left, Matt Hornung, Cougar Patterson, Julie Shimon, Randy Phillips, and Wendy Patterson. Ellie Patterson is not in the photo. Photo by Randy Phillips.



Art Matters

Local-to-global art ecosystems in our own backyards



*By Janet Sellers*  
All ages can join the fun in historic downtown Monument at the year's first Art Hop on May 19, from 5 to 8 p.m. It's a way to meet and greet the artists and visit art places in town. Our art venues include our public art park, the Santa Fe Trail art walk, galleries, and the ever-increasing fun of pop-up art fairs.  
Besides our tradition of physical art to have and to hold, a new dimension of art to collect is settling in from hype to standard practice, and the ripple effect is extraordinary news for artists, galleries, collectors, and the multi-billion-dollar secondary art market sales. This development will protect the art ecosystem at each step in the process of creativity and imagination for artists all the way to future acquisitions of the art. Heretofore, an artist, gallery, or collector didn't see realized profit after a sale.  
I was recently on a roundtable discussion with Christina Steinbrecher-Pfandt, one of the authors of the recent <https://www.blockchain.art/> white paper on the blockchain.art site. The white paper explains, "The art world is a global ecosystem of networked actors—artists,

galleries, collectors, auction houses, museum professionals, etc.—and an international marketplace that achieved \$67.4 billion in revenue in 2018. Art is marketed through multichannel efforts that include traditional exhibitions, pop-up art fairs, auctions, both in-person and online sales, and strategic partnerships. However, since the COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020, the art world's priorities have shifted dramatically. Now, everything is online—an industry-wide digitization is underway and moving fast."  
Businesses worldwide are embracing this technology for many safety and lucrative reasons. To clarify, NFT (Non-Fungible Token) art is essentially a blockchain for art, and blockchain is defined, for example, by IBM as "a shared, immutable ledger that facilitates the process of recording transactions and tracking assets in a business network. An asset can be tangible (a house, car, cash, land) or intangible (intellectual property, patents, copyrights, branding)."  
The NFT million-dollar explosion we've had of late (see my column from May 2021) is settling down now, and one of the optimal outcomes looks to be the

ability to have a certificate of authenticity type of blockchain certificate that will allow artists to create a certificate and have the artwork authenticated as a physical artwork using crypto technology. The blockchain can help differentiate the artwork from forgery and verify the ownership of an artwork. The benefits for artists, collectors, and galleries can be enormous, ongoing, and lucrative.  
*Janet Sellers is an artist, writer, speaker, and educator. She exhibits her artworks in cities and museums in Colorado and other places around the world. She can be reached at [JanetSellers@ocn.me](mailto:JanetSellers@ocn.me).*  
**Right:** A whimsical sculpture that appears abstract from many angles and spells out "ART" when you look at it just right from Second Street in Monument, at the Bella Art and Frame shop. Our seasonal art activities launch soon at our May 19 Art Hop, as well as a number of other arts events and public art calls for artists. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*



Snapshots of Our Community

Looking south from Higby Road



**Above:** March 31. This is a water line being laid under what will become a section of Harness Road, in Jackson Creek North Filing Nos. 3-6, between Higby Road and Leather Chaps Drive. The final plat for JCN was approved unanimously by the Monument Board of Trustees on June 7, 2021. The 165 acres will include 378 single-family detached lots that range in size from 7,150 square feet to 29,215 square feet. A 10.2-acre park and 34 acres of open space will be included. Zoning changed from Regency Park Residential District—Estate, which allowed two dwelling units per acre, to Planned Residential Development District—Single Family, allowing four dwelling units per acre. See [www.ocn.me/v21n7.htm#mbot0607](https://www.ocn.me/v21n7.htm#mbot0607). *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*

Wildfire Preparedness Day, Apr. 2



**Above:** The Palmer Ridge Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Club and event speakers pose in front of the bear statue at the end of the Wildfire Preparedness Day on April 2. The day's events, held at Palmer Ridge High School, featured informational booths and speakers including: personal preparedness—Pikes Peak Regional Emergency Management; know about evacuation—El Paso County Sheriff's Office; home and property risks—Colorado State Forest Service; local wildfire concerns—Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District. *Photo by Charles Gregory. Caption by Megan King.*

Spring seed giveaway, Apr. 2



**Above:** Representatives of the Tri-Lakes Lions Club and Tri-Lakes Cares were at the Community Garden at Lavelett Park the morning of April 2, giving away seeds to plant for spring blooms. With temperatures in the 20s and 30s, everyone there was ready for warmer weather. The local Lions Club, which focuses on community and service, has been serving northern El Paso County communities including Monument and Palmer Lake. For more information regarding the Tri-Lakes Lions Club and other community projects and events, go to <https://trilakeslionsclub.org>. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*

Three become Eagle Scouts, Apr. 9



**Above:** Three young men became Eagle Scouts last month. From left are Alec Falk, Blake Marchetti, and Andrew Bonneau, who received their awards at a special Court of Honor ceremony on April 9. They're members of Boy Scouts of America Troop 6 of Monument. *Photo by Karl Falk.*



## DCC presents Spamalot, Apr. 6-9



**Above:** From April 6-9, Discovery Canyon Campus (DCC) High School Theatre presented *Spamalot*, a musical comedy based on the movie *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. In presenting the play, theater teacher and play director Amy Keating said due to the pandemic, “It has been 2-1/2 years since our last performance, something fun for the students in the cast, creating the props and doing the production was needed.” The play highlights the “immensely talented students and many seniors involved in a mixed-gender ensemble. The (seven) leads are switched, two performances are male leads and two female.” Respectively, King Arthur was performed by Ethan Homich and Zoe Collins. In performing Arthur, Homich said, “You have this great leader plopped into an insane world, which he finds difficult in belonging.” Collins added that Arthur has “so many nuances in this play, sometimes he does not know how to count, then can somehow persevere through the chaos.” *Photo by David Futey.*

## DCC HS band at festival, Apr. 19



**Above:** On April 19, the Discovery Canyon Campus (DCC) High School Symphonic Band was one of 36 Colorado high school bands to qualify and perform at the Colorado Bandmasters Association (CBA) 2022 State Concert Band Festival. The selected bands performed at Colorado State University’s (CSU) Griffin Concert Hall and were critiqued by a panel of collegiate music educators. Under the direction of DCC Band Director Justin Carpenter, the band performed *Elements*, a “petite symphony” by Brian Balmages and Liberty Bell, composed by John Philip Sousa. The band received a “Superior” rating for its performance, a first in school history. Following its performance, the band attended a clinic by one of the judges, receiving direct feedback on its performance and instruction on refining its technique. *Photo by David Futey.*

## 100+ Women Who Care, Apr. 20



**Above:** Members of 100+ Women Who Care contribute \$100 twice a year to local Tri-Lakes nonprofits. The group meets for an hour and a half, hears a three-minute presentation from each nominee, and votes. The total annual giving of \$20,000 makes a significant impact without a large time commitment. On April 20, the group met at the Woodmoor Barn to hear presentations and decide which nominated non-profit would receive all the donations from that meeting. Tri-Lakes Cares, Monument Warriors special olympics team, and the Ryan Pappas Foundation were the nominees. In a close vote, the Ryan Pappas Foundation was the selected winner. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, Oct.19. See [www.100womenwhocaretrilakes.com](http://www.100womenwhocaretrilakes.com) for information about the group. Board member Cathy Wilcox is pictured leading the meeting. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

## Easter Egg Hunt

**Right:** About 50 children in the Lake of the Rockies community in Monument took part in an Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday. Community residents donated more than 1,300 eggs for the hunt. Some of the eggs were filled with candy and toys. Others contained money up to \$20. The kids were split into three age groups: ages 1-4, 5-7, and 8 and up. Oaklee Thies, who’s almost 2, found 15 eggs filled with candy. *Photo by Carly Thies.*



## TLWC grant in action, Apr. 18



**Above:** Members of the Tri-Lakes Women’s Club (TLWC) got to see Bear Creek Elementary School students graduate the Adaptive Physical Education (APE) Community Recreation Program that’s funded by a TLWC grant. The program is offered for elementary and middle school students with special needs in the Lewis Palmer School District. Amanda Huckstep, Physical Therapist and APE/Community Recreation Consultant for District 38, says aquatic therapy helps those with special needs by decreasing “muscle tightness and mental stress” and promoting “body awareness and self-confidence.” TLWC members saw the students get their certificates of completion on the final day of the program at Safe Splash Swim School on April 18. **Pictured:** TLWC members on bench, from left are co-president Cindy Beley, Granting Chairperson Shelley Pruitt, and co-president Billie Healy. In pool from left are Cruz Vigil, John Morse, Lindsey Horne, Aubree Thomas, Safe Splash instructor Donovan Clark, Safe Splash instructor Jessica Ralls holding Zach Fisher and Caleb Schleeper. *Photo by Sue Leggerio.*

## Pasque flowers in bloom, Apr. 19



**Above:** Pasque flowers, also known as Easter flowers, are harbingers of the Spring wildflower season. This photo was taken April 19 near a trail in the Mount Herman/Raspberry Mountain area. *Photo and caption by Randy Phillips.*



Benet Hill makes commitment



**Above:** Benet Hill Monastery Prioress Sister MT Summers and Monastic Council members have signed a public statement committing the monastery community to the Church's Laudato Si' Action Platform. Joining with others around the globe, the monastery will work with the Action Platform over the next seven years for education, engagement, and implementation opportunities to better care for the Earth. As part of the platform, the sisters say they value and are committed to environmental sustainability and ecologically wise and practical use of alternative energy sources. They say they recognize the interconnectedness of climate change and the cry of the poor and commit to integral ecology to the extent possible. Holding the Earth flag that hangs outside the Monastery dining room, from left are Sister Margaret Meaney, Sister Therese O'Grady, Sister MT Summers, Sister Mary Colleen Schwarz, Sister Deb Kuhl, Sister Mary Glenn, Sister Ana Cloughly, and Sister Clare Carr. *Photo courtesy of Benet Hill Monastery.*

Monument Lake restocked, Apr. 21



**Above:** One fish, two fish, many, many more fish are in Monument Lake. Colorado Parks and Wildlife Department (CPW) stocked the lake with rainbow trout twice last month. A truck backed into the lake, opened a chute, and deposited 2,400 fish into the water on April 4 and another 2,600 on April 21. The department plans to stock the lake with other varieties of fish a couple more times this season. The CPW says it raises more than 100 million fish each year to stock Colorado waters. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

Funds raised for Ukraine, Apr. 21

**Right:** On April 21, the annual No Boys Allowed Tour was held by merchants in downtown Monument. More than 250 women toured the shops, enjoying a night out. Proceeds from ticket sales amounted to \$500 and was donated to assist the war efforts in Ukraine. Kathi Schuler, left, owner of the Love Shop, gave the check to Jodi Bliss, owner of Bliss Studio, who forwarded the money via PayPal to "brave blacksmiths and metal fabricators in Ukraine" who are making "hedgehog anti-tank units, periscopes, knives, de-mining crampons" as well as "water tankers for hauling water to the front lines and body armor for bullet-proof vests." *Photo by Susan M.*



"Beatles" Reunion at TLCA, Apr. 22



**Above:** On April 22, the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) audience got an answer to "What if the Beatles had reunited in Palmer Lake?" Drew Harrison (John Lennon), Adam Joel (Paul McCartney), Jimmy Pou (George Harrison), Terry Carlton (Ringo Starr) and Tommy Cosentino (the fifth Beatle) provided an answer with The Beatles Reunion: Get Back tour through songs from the Beatles and their solo efforts. Carlton said had circumstances allowed, "We believe they (the Beatles) would have eventually settled their differences and rejoined for the love of their music and each other." The tribute began with the Beatles Get Back followed by Lennon's Starting Over, McCartney's Jet, Harrison's Set on You then Starr's It Don't Come Easy. The audience sang along, danced, and gave standing ovations throughout the evening as they were continually delighted with the music and imagery. The Beatles song I Feel Fine summed up the evening for all. *Photo by David Futey.*

FoFRP celebrate Earth Day, Apr. 22



**Above:** Earth Day 2022 was celebrated by the Friends of Fox Run Park by working for the day in Fox Run Regional Park. The crew collected trash around the edge and in the park. This year's theme of Earth Day was "Invest in our planet" and the crew invested its time and efforts to improve the park and Earth. Globally over 1 billion people in 193 countries help by working in volunteer crews. For more information, go to [www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org). For info on future volunteer projects in Fox Run Regional Park, email [friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com). *Photo by Julie Haverluk.*

Fundraiser for teacher

**Right:** Lewis-Palmer Middle School physical education teacher Katelynn Gillen is asking for financial help to pay for her medical treatments. Gillen has Epstein-Barr virus (EPV) and John Cunningham virus. As a result, she has brain lesions and is in extreme pain. Gillen needs chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant. She'll be treated at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. She and her family will have to stay in Rochester for up to six weeks while Gillen is hospitalized. A GoFundMe has been set up to help pay her medical and travel costs. Donations can be made at <https://gf.me/v/cjcfy/medical-cost-for-coach-gillen>. *Photo courtesy of GoFundMe.*



Fundraiser for Wounded Heros



**Above:** As a fundraiser for Wounded Heroes USA, two local bands—ASHTōNZ, led by Charlie Searle, and Mosquito Pass, led by Tim Steinwinder, played a benefit concert in the barn at the Western Museum of Mining and Industry on April 23. American Legion Post 9-11 Tri-Lakes also helped. Wounded Heroes USA is a local not-for-profit organized by Bill Miller. Proceeds from this event will support Gold Star Families at Fort Carson. *Photo by Marissa Searle.*



## Fox family, Apr. 20



**Above:** We've seen all kinds of wildlife from our deck in Monument. Raccoons, deer, bats. On April 20, a new family moved in. A family of foxes appeared from a den on the berm south of Monument Lake. A mother, father, and six kits. The kits have provided twice daily entertainment. Each morning and late afternoon the kits crawl out of their den to play and roll around. Now that they've gotten older, the father has taken them into the woods, perhaps to teach them how to hunt. *Caption by Michael Weinfeld. Photo by James Smith.*

## Great American Clean-up, Apr. 30



The Great American Cleanup is the nation's largest community improvement program, which takes place annually during spring in over 15,000 communities nationwide. *Keep America Beautiful* is celebrating its 24th year of volunteers donating time and effort to bring communities together by helping each other. Crews working in the Monument area, including Boy Scouts and Friends of Fox Run Park, were able to help the Town of Monument collect over 75 bags of trash in a little over two hours April 30. **Above left:** Monument residents took part in the national Great American Cleanup on April 30. Tia M. Mayer, John Howe, and Michael Weinfeld (not shown) collected garbage in the vicinity of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce's Community Meeting House and Ms. T's Garden on Highway 105. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.* **Above right:** Other cleanup sites designated by the town were Monument Lake, Baptist Road Trailhead (shown), Third Street Trailhead and Highway 105 bridge, and the Monument YMCA. For more information, see <http://www.kab.org> or <https://www.townofmonument.org>. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*

## Claude Bourbon at TLCA, Apr. 30



**Left:** On April 30, the third time was far more than the charm as internationally renowned guitar virtuoso Claude Bourbon captivated and enthralled the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) audience. After having two TLCA appearances canceled due to the COVID pandemic, Bourbon weaved his renaissance classical training with Spanish, blues, folk, Middle

Eastern and other genres into an unequaled style that, coupled with earthy gruff vocals, gathered the audience for an eclectic musical journey. Bourbon started playing guitar at 15 years old, switching to electric guitar in his early 20s while performing in a band. Bourbon said he eventually "realized I could be my own band playing bass and lead" on an acoustic guitar. That began a 30-year solo career that has achieved nearly unparalleled recognition throughout Europe and America. *Photo by David Futey.*

## Black Forest Arts & Crafts, May 1



**Above and left:**The 58th Annual Spring Show by the Black Forest Arts & Crafts Guild was held May 1 at the Black Forest Community Center. The five-day event showcased local artisans in a variety of media including beadwork, doll clothing, paintings, woodworking, and pastries and jellies. The Guild raises money for its Scholarship Fund and awards a local graduating senior each year. For more information on scholarships or to become a member, visit [www.BFACG.org](http://www.BFACG.org). *Photos by Marlene Brown.*

## 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.

**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 at [distraction.codot.gov](http://distraction.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).

**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](http://www).

[Rotary.org](http://Rotary.org). See ad on page 4.

**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://Colorado.gov/Save-time) for more information. See [epcdrives.com](http://epcdrives.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 showing new traffic flow, see <https://cccpi.net/cdot-powers-research.pdf>.

**Slash/mulch program**

Location: Southeast corner of Shoup and



Herring Roads, drop-off open Apr. 30-Sept. 11, Sat., 7 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sun. noon-4 p.m., and Tue., Thu. evenings 5-7:30 p.m. \$2 drop-off fee for slash, loyalty card offers a discount. Free mulch, self-loading from May 14 through Sept. 17. Info: visit [www.bfslash.org](http://www.bfslash.org).

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 plans broadband service

Mountain View Electric Association is planning to provide reliable, affordable, high-speed fiber broadband service to all its 51,000 members in the next six years. MVEA and Conexon Connect teams are now designing and mapping the network. For more information about MVEA and Conexon Connect's fiber-to-the-home project, visit [www.mvea.coop/broadband](http://www.mvea.coop/broadband).

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.

MVEA's bill paying options

MVEA offers credits for using making auto-pay and on-line payments.

MVEA Equipment Giveaway

Picture yourself as the winner of an Electric Mower+Trimmer Package or an Electric Power-Washer. Entry deadline **May 26**, Enter on-line at [www.mveacoop/greengiveaway](http://www.mveacoop/greengiveaway). Winners will be announced at the 81st Annual Meeting June 2 at Limon Public Schools. See ad on page 18.

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 Vaile Museum to reopen

Plans to reopen soon with several new exhibits upon completion of the improved handicap accessible ramp. We are in great need of volunteers to carry on the work of the society. Visit [www.PalmerDivideHistory.org](http://www.PalmerDivideHistory.org) or call 719-559-

0837.

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?

- Links to local organizations with an immediate need for volunteers are listed on the county's website, [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.epc-sheriffsoffice.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/getinvolved/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.forestlakesmetro-district.com](http://www.forestlakesmetro-district.com).
- **Monument Board of Trustees meeting,** Mon., **May 2**, 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.
- **El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regular meeting,** every **Tue.**, May 3, 10, etc., 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.
- **Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting,** Thu., **May 12**, 5 pm Palmer Lake Elementary School Library, 115 Upper Glenway. Usually meets second and fourth Thu. Info: 719-481-2953, all for current meeting location. [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com).
- **Palmer Lake Board of Adjustments,** Tue., **May 3**, 5

- pm, Palmer Lake Elementary School Library, 115 Upper Glenway, Palmer Lake. Normally meets first Tues.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission meeting,** Thu., **May 5**, 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>.
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District board meeting,** Mon., **May 9**, 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., **May 10**, 10 am 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets second Tue. Info: Bill Burks, 719-481-4053.
- **D38 District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) meeting,** second Tue., (no mtg May-Aug), 7-8:30 pm. Palmer Ridge High School, 19255 Monument Hill Rd., Monument. Usually meets five times per school year on the second Tuesday of the month, Check District 38 calendar (Oct., Nov., Jan., Mar., Apr.) <https://www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCommunity>. Info: [t.mckee@lewispalmer.org](mailto:t.mckee@lewispalmer.org) or 719.785-4143. [www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCommunity](http://www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCommunity). Info: 719.481.9546, [vwood@lewispalmer.org](mailto:vwood@lewispalmer.org).
- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District board meeting,** Wed., **May 11**, 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.,

**May 11**, 6 pm Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets second Wed. 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).


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- **Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting**, Thu., **May 12**, 5 pm Palmer Lake Elementary School Library, 115 Upper Glenway. Usually meets second and fourth Thu. Info: 719-481-2953, all for current meeting location. [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com).
- **Monument Academy School Board meeting**, Thu., **May 12**, 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) membership meeting**, Sat., **May 14**, 10 am - 12 pm., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Update on HOA legislation. Members of local HOAs welcome. Usually meets bi-monthly second Saturday of the month. [www.nepco.org](http://www.nepco.org). See article on page 22.
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 board meeting**, Mon., **May 16** , 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). The agenda and supporting documents, where applicable, can be found here: <https://go.boarddocs.com/co/lewispalmer/Board.nsf/vpublic> Contact Vicki Wood. Phone: 719.481.9546 Email: [vwood@lewispalmer.org](mailto:vwood@lewispalmer.org) Website: <https://www.lewispalmer.org>
- **Donald Wescott Fire Protection District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Tue., **May 17**, 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., **May 18**, 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).
- **Academy Water and Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **May 18**, 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>, Wescott Fire Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-0711, <https://academywsd.colorado.gov>.
- **Palmer Lake Town Planning Commission meeting**, Wed., **May 18**, 6 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-2953, [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com).
- **Monument Board of Trustees meeting**, Mon., **May 18**, 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.
- **Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Wed., **May 18**, 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.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission meeting**, Thu., **May 19**, 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>.
- **Donala Water & Sanitation District board meeting**, Thu., **May 19**, 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., **May 19**, 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).
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, Thu., **May 19**, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent St., Palmer Lake, CO 80133, *Helen (Hunt) Jackson: The Colorado Years*, presenter Doris McCraw, historian specializing in Colorado and Women's History. Meets third Thu. Info: 719-550-0837, [www.palmerdividehistory.org](http://www.palmerdividehistory.org).
- **Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Wed., **May 25**, 6:30 pm., Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, Monument. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at [www.tlmfire.org](http://www.tlmfire.org) or contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin, at 719-484-0911. Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association board meeting**, Wed., **May 25**, 7 pm, Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Meets fourth Wed. Info: 719-488-2693, [www.woodmoor.org](http://www.woodmoor.org).
- **Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting**, Thu., **May 26**, 5 pm, Palmer Lake Elementary School Library, 115 Upper Glenway. Usually meets second and fourth Thu. Info: 719-481-2953, all for current meeting loca-

tion. [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com).

**WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS**

- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., **May 5, June 2**, approx. 9 am-2 pm. We 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.
- **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**, the 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).
- **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 at weekly meetings featuring speakers on a variety of topics and a free continental breakfast at normal meetings. Memberships open to the public. Join the 150+ men and women of the Tri-Lakes area who work together to make a difference for youth and our community. Info: RF Smith, 719-210-4987, [www.MHKiwanis.org](http://www.MHKiwanis.org).
- **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, SUSPENDED**, third Sat.; if you need any help, please call Syble or Barry. 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.
- **Faithful Friends discussion group**, 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.
- **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](http://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 3.
- **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: Joyce Witte, 719-661-9824, [Joyce-witte@gmail.com](mailto:Joyce-witte@gmail.com); [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, Lewis-Palmer High School modular building across from the YMCA, on Jackson Creek Pkwy. Registration & info: Sue Walker, 719-330-0241, [www.trilakeseniors.org](http://www.trilakeseniors.org).
- **GriefShare Support Group**, last **Tue.**, 10:30 am-noon.

Tri-Lakes Senior Center, across the street from the YMCA. 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.

- **Bingo by the American Legion**, every **Tue**. Game sales start at 5 pm, games start at 6 pm, the Depot Restaurant, Palmer Lake. Proceeds go to scholarships and other community support activities. Info: 719-488-8659, <http://legionpost9-11.org>.
- **Tri-Lakes YMCA Senior Coffee, SUSPENDED**, every Tue., 9:30-11:30 am, 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy., Monument. Members and non-members are welcome. Socialize, have coffee and snacks in the front lobby. Free. Info: 719-630-2604, <https://ppymca.org/locations/north/tri-lakes/tri-lakes/holly-brando>
- **Children's Literacy Center**, every **Tue. & Thu.**, 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 the Tri-Lakes Senior Center. 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).
- **D-38 HomeSchool Enrichment Academy**, every **Tue. or Thu**. 2021-22 school year, for K-8 grade, home-schooled students to cultivate a love of learning through explorations in art, music, PE, science, and more. [www.lewispalmer.org/hsea](http://www.lewispalmer.org/hsea).
- **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).
- **Tri-Lakes Women's Club Monthly meeting**, Wed., **May 18**, 11 am - 2 pm, Wedgewood Black Forest, 12375 Black Forest Rd. Program: Melissa Bagnall, the Pres., Silver Alliance, updates on the Senior Center events. and new local musician, Jonathan Lowry musical concert, various instruments. Meetings are open to all members of Tri-Lakes Women's Club. Meets third Wed. 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). Please Note: the annual craft fair is canceled this year.
- **Senior Citizen Luncheons**, 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**. each month, 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 El Padrino, 13425 Voyager Pkwy., 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, [gregsmith@trilakeschurch.org](mailto:gregsmith@trilakeschurch.org), [www.trilakeschurch.org](http://www.trilakeschurch.org).
- **Kehilat, Zoom Bible Study**, every **Wed.**, 6:15 pm Bring your hungry and tired so they can be filled and more blessed. Ms. Williams, 719-453-6279.
- **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, Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Masks required. 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).
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, third **Thu.**, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Info: 719-550-0837, [www.palmerdividehistory.org](http://www.palmerdividehistory.org).
- **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 safety, trails, trees, education, more. Info: [friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com).
  - **Bridge, SUSPENDED**, second Thu. Silver Alliance Senior Center, 1300 Higby Rd., Monument, Sept.-June Info: [www.blgc.org.html](http://www.blgc.org.html).
  - **Ben Lomond Gun Club, SUSPENDED**, second Thu., Tri-Lakes Chapter. Info: <https://blgc.org>.
  - **MITEE Open Builds (Monumental Impact for Technology, Engineering, and Entrepreneurship)**, every **Fri.**, 4-6 pm All those involved in technology and engineering and those tinkering on projects. All high school students and adults are welcome. Info: Jeanette Breton, 719-387-7414, [jeanette@monumental-impact.org](mailto:jeanette@monumental-impact.org); [www.monumentalimpact.org](http://www.monumentalimpact.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 Sarah George, 719-487-2985.
  - **Silver Center Book Club**, second **Fri.**, 11 am-noon, Senior Center across the street from Tri-Lakes YMCA, on Lewis-Palmer High School campus. All are welcome. Coffee & snacks served. RSVP & info: Sue, 719-330-0241.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Grand re-opening for Palmer Lake Town Hall, Library, Museum**, Sat., **May 7**, 10 am Village Green, 28 Valley Crescent, Palmer Lake.
- **Covered Treasures Bookstore May events:** celebrating Children's Book Week with two weekends of children's author signings. On Sat., **May 7**, 1-3 pm, meet Katie McQuaid book signing, *Everybody Loves Grace* and Lindy and Tom Schneider will sign their titles, *College Secrets of Highly Successful People* and picture book *Starfish on the Beach*. Sat., **May 14**, 2-4 pm to meet Whitney Anderson book signing includes **Twig, The Cloud, and Dino** and the **Brave Little Boy**. Covered Treasures Bookstore, 105 Second Street, Monument, 719-481-2665.
- **Services for Robert Joseph Rissacher**, Fri., **May 13**, Rosary 9:30 am, Mass 10 am, St. Peter's Catholic Church, 55 Jefferson St., Monument. See obituary on page 6.
- **Kiwanis Monument Hill Club**, grant application deadline, Sat., **May 15**, [www.monumenthillfoundation.org](http://www.monumenthillfoundation.org). Check [www.MHKiwanis.org](http://www.MHKiwanis.org). See ad on page 18.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, After Hours Networking Event**, Tue., May 17, 5 pm-7:00 pm Free for chamber members, \$15 for non-members. Details: [www.trilakeschamber.com](http://www.trilakeschamber.com). 719-481-3282.
- **Monument Art Hop**, Thu., **May 19**, 5-8 pm, in Historic Downtown Monument, live music, local artists, outdoor activities, food trucks, more! Info: [downtown-monument.org](http://downtown-monument.org). See ad on page 7.
- **Monument Hill Farmers Market**, starts Sat., **May 21** and every Sat, thereafter, 8-2 pm, 66 Jefferson St., Downtown Monument. See ad on page 5.
- **MVEA outdoor power equipment giveaway entry deadline**, Thu., **May 26**, Info: [www.mvea.coop/greengiveaway](http://www.mvea.coop/greengiveaway).
- **Monument's Memorial Day Ceremony**, Mon., **May 30**, 10 am, Monument Cemetery 800 Eighth Street, Monument, CO 80132. This event is free and open to the public. Please join us to honor our military veterans.
- **Western Museum of Mining and Industry, summer-time appreciation days**, month of May, 225 Northgate Blvd., WMMI.org. See ad on page 2.
- **YMCA Summer day camp**, weekly starting Tue., **May 31**, ages 5-12, [ppymca.org/daycamp](http://ppymca.org/daycamp). See ad on page 6.
- **Speed Trap Bistro**, Live Music, 84 Hwy. 105. Open 7 days for breakfast, lunch, weekends til 11pm. See ad on page 5.
- **Monumental Med Spa**, specials through **May 31**, at the loft, 4 Hwy 105 Palmer Lake.. See ad on page 7.
- **A Better Hearing Center**, special offers, through **May 31**. 574 Hwy. 105, Monument. See ad on page 12.
- **Cornerstone Cleaners**, special offers through **May 31**. 1030 W. Baptist Road, near King Soopers. See ad on page 4.
- **Eagle Wine & Spirits**, special offers through **May 31**. Baptist Road next to King Soopers. See ad on page 3.
- **Monument Cleaners**, special offers through **May 31**. 15932 Jackson Creek Pkwy., in Monument Marketplace. See ad on page 5.
- **Noel Relief Centers**, special offers through **May 31**. 1840 Woodmoor Drive, Suite 109, Monument. See ad

- on page 8.
- **Facinelli Motors**, special offers through **May 31**, 706 Westward Ln, Monument. See ad on page 17.
  - **Pure Romance by Amy Yocum-Vos**, special offers through **May 31**. [www.pureromance.com/AmyYocum-vos](http://www.pureromance.com/AmyYocum-vos). See ad on page 4.
  - **The Living Room Plants**, special offers through **May 31**, 12229 Voyager Pkwy, Suite 100. See ad on page 5.
  - **McCords Garden Center**, special offers through **May 31**. 2720 McShane Dr. (corner Hwy 105). See ad on page 5.
  - **Make It Work: 3D Printers, June 1-3**, 4 pm-6 pm: Bring in your broken 3D printer and we'll see if we can help you get it working again. Offered at 55 Adams Street. Hosted by Monumental Impact to raise funds for programs. Donations appreciated. Contact [enable@monumentalimpact.org](mailto:enable@monumentalimpact.org) for more information.
  - **MVEA 81st Annual Meeting**, Thu., **June 2**, Limon Public Schools, 912 Badger Way, Limon, Colorado 80828. Info: <https://www.mvea.coop/community/community-events/annual-meeting/>. See ad on page 18.
  - **Palmer Lake Kids Fishing Derby**, Sat., **June 4**, 8 am-11:30 am. Entrance Fee - Donation of non-perishable food items for Tri-Lakes Cares. Kids must be accompanied by an adult. Please bring your own fishing gear and bait. Salmon eggs and worms are recommended. Staff will measure fish throughout.
  - **Cherry Creek Crossing community garage sale**, Sat., **June 4**, 8-4 pm, NW corner of Hwy 83 and Hodgen Rd., See ad on page 6.
  - **Concerts in the Park**, Limbach Park, every **Wed.** at 7 pm, June 8-Aug. 17, See ad on page 14.
  - **Palmer Lake Art Group Color Splash art show, June 7-24**, reception Fri., **June 10**, 6-8 pm, featuring scholarship awards to high school students. Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 304 Hwy. 105, Palmer Lake. See ad on page 14.
  - **St. Peter Pie and Ice Cream Social**, Sat., **June 11**, 6-8 pm, donations benefit Mater Filius, all welcome, St. Peter Catholic Church, 55 Jefferson St., Monument. Intended to raise awareness and funds for Mater Filius (Mother and Child) the new maternity home to open in 2023 for vulnerable pregnant women in the Pikes Peak Area. No admission fee. All are welcome! For more information or to make a donation go to: [www.petertherock.org](http://www.petertherock.org).
  - **Front Range Makers Market**, Sat., **June 18**, 9-4 pm. Lewis Palmer High School outdoors in north parking lot. See ad on page 32.
  - **June/July 2022 WIA Chipping Days, June 25-26 and July 30-31**, south parking lot of Lewis-Palmer High school. NOTE: shifting to a resident slash drop - much like the Black Forest Slash Pile. Residents queue up in their vehicle and are released progressively to self-drop slash in a central location. WIA and its contractors will no longer unload your vehicle for you. This change will allow up to 5 vehicles to unload at once rather than the 2-3 vehicles being unloaded as in previous years. The same type of materials will be accepted. Slash/logs up to 8 inches in diameter, pine needles, etc. As in previous years: NO construction materials, rock/rubble, stumps, or garbage will be accepted. Only clean slash/logs will be accepted. Please contact the WIA Office with questions at 719-488-2693 x 4.
  - **Festival on the Fourth at Palmer Lake**. Mon., **July 4**,

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.

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

- 2-10 p.m. West Side of the railroad tracks on the west side of Palmer Lake. Vendors, Volunteers & Sponsors needed. Contact [ctgraff75@gmail.com](mailto:ctgraff75@gmail.com).
- **Party for the Parks**, fundraising for the Town of Monument Park System, Sat., **July 16**, starts at 1 pm, 17630 Jackson Creek Pkwy, lot north of YMCA. See ad on page 16.
- 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 Jennifer Kaylor, Managing Editor, 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.

Look for our next issue  
Saturday, June 4

Ad space reservations due: **Fri., May 13**  
Finished ad artwork due: **Fri., May 20**  
Letters to the editor due: **Fri., May 20**  
Calendar items due: **Fri., May 27**

Visit our website to read, download, and search all the back issues at  
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Volunteers reporting on community issues in Monument, Palmer Lake, and the surrounding Tri-Lakes area

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