

Our Community News

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



PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MONUMENT, CO
PERMIT NO. 32

ECRWSS
Postal
Customer

Issue #256 — Volume 22 Number 6 — Saturday, June 4, 2022

Free

**OCN needs
your help!
See page 27**

Local Events

Readers should assume that event information published in this issue is subject to change and information should be confirmed a day or two before the event by calling the information number or checking the organization's website.

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

- **Palmer 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
- **Western Museum of Mining and Industry, summertime family days**, Sat., June 11, July 9, Aug. 20
- **Monument Waterwise Garden opening celebration**, Wed., June 15, 5-6 pm
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, Thu., June 16, 7 p.m. *The Night of a Thousand Heroes*
- **Monument Art Hop**, Thu., June 16, 5-8 pm
- **Front Range Makers Market**, Sat., June 18, 9-4 pm
- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., June 30, approx. 9 am-2 pm. Information on page 17.
- **July 4th events** see Kiwanis ad on page 6.

In this issue

Palmer Lake News 1-4
School District 38 News 1, 5-9
Monument News 9-14
Fire District News 14-18
Water & San District News 18-20
County News 20
NEPCO and WIA News 20-21
Weather 21
Letter 22
Columns 22-24
Snapshots 24-27
Notices and Calendar 28-31
OCN Information 27, 28, 31-32

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

Circulation

Print Run: 22,420
Mail Delivery: 21,730
Stacks: 690

PRHS musical wins Bobby G award



Above: The Palmer Ridge High School production of *Once Upon a Mattress* has won the Bobby G Award for Outstanding Choreography. Georgia Lawrence, Riana McHugh, and Christy Inama accepted the award that's the Colorado High School equivalent of the Tonys. The award ceremony took place on May 26 at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. The musical was up for six awards in all, including Outstanding Overall Production. That's the most nominations the Bear Necessity Theatre Company has ever gotten. *Photo courtesy of Performing Arts Media Group.* **Right:** The cast hammed it up on the red carpet before entering the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. *Photo by Erika Belk.*



Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, May 12, 24, and 26

Financial challenges spotlighted

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

At three Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meetings in May, the spotlight was on the financial challenges faced by the town and proposals to increase revenue. At the May 12 regular board session, Trustee Karen Stuth gave the board an overview of the Palmer Lake Economic Development Group (PLEDG).

At a special meeting held May 24, Mayor Bill Bass presented a detailed analysis of the financial health of the town and its service departments and discussed a potential Mill Levy Override (MLO), merger with Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD), and/or the sale of recreational cannabis.

At the regular board meeting on May 26, Bass summed up the discussion of the special meeting. The board honored two volunteers, voted on the vacation of an undeveloped road, and

discussed requests from the railroad concerning erosion and the construction of an exclusionary fence to prevent people from crossing the railroad tracks at the lake.

PLEDG aims to improve town's financial health

Stuth told the board that PLEDG was a 501(c)(3) nonprofit formed by herself and others to address the town's shortfall in tax revenue, which she estimated at \$2 million. She said the mission of PLEDG was to establish a model of economic development that would strengthen the town while maintaining the special character of Palmer Lake and protecting its core assets of its people, its small-town lifestyle, and its natural resources.

Stuth said PLEDG has interviewed the town's residents, its past town leaders, and local business owners and has studied other towns with similar demo-

graphics. She was advised to keep the group non-governmental.

PLEDG has a board of 13 directors, Stuth said, and an ever-growing pool of volunteers. The PLEDG plan is organized around four pillars: Art, led by Jina Brennehan, Dining, led by April Fullman, History, led by Susan Kuehster and Outdoors, led by Ben Cunningham. The plan has four parts: attract complementary new businesses to Palmer Lake, communicate the Palmer Lake brand promise to attract visitors and residents, encourage residents to shop locally, and reach out to businesses by coordinating with business groups in the region.

Stuth mentioned a list of 2022 events in progress that includes Music at Chautauqua Days, the Taste of Palmer Lake, the Palmer Lake Wine Festival, a Masa Ito violin concert, and the 12 Days of Palmer

PLBOT (Cont. on 2)

Monument Academy School Board, May 12

Board considers organizational chart that restructures Exceptional Student Services

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held its regular board meeting on May 12 to discuss proposed organizational chart changes, including restructuring Exceptional Student Services (ESS). It also updated four board policies and discussed resuming live streaming and posting meeting recordings.

Board considers organizational chart and ESS structure

Board President Ryan Graham reminded the board members that they had seen a first look at an organizational chart for MA at the April meeting and tasked

Chief Operating Officer (COO) Merlin Holmes to get input from teachers and staff. Holmes said East Campus staff wanted separate principals for middle and high school and that, to save money, he suggested not replacing the director of facilities position. Holmes said the current payroll person was leaving at the end of the month. He was going to try out an outsourced payroll company to give MA the flexibility to take its time searching for a director of People Operations. Although some positions, such as athletic director, are under the high school section of the organization chart, they would also serve the middle school.

One question Holmes wanted to address was the change in MA's Exceptional Student Services (ESS) structure. He said the change came about after discussions with Rick Frampton, the Lewis-Palmer School District's executive director of Student Services. The change, Holmes said, would not affect the services that students receive. Holmes noted that MA's ESS team initially reported to the district and that Colorado law has not let charter schools have independence in special education (SPED). A few years back, Holmes said, MA hired an ESS director

MA (Cont. on 5)