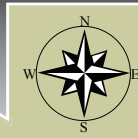


Our Community News

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



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Issue #258 — Volume 22 Number 8 — Saturday, August 6, 2022

Free

**OCN needs
your help!
See page 28**

Local Events

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

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

- **King's Deer Community Garage sale**, Fri.-Sun., Aug. 5-7. See ad on page 4.
- **Hummingbird Festival**, Fri.-Sat., Aug. 5-6, 10-3 pm
- **Return of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua**, Sat., Aug. 6, 1-4 pm
- **WMMI Western Saloon night fundraiser**, Sat., Aug. 6, 6 pm
- **Shear Kindness, hair cutting event**, Sun., Aug. 7, 10-2 pm. See ad on page 5.
- **Concerts in the Park**, Wed., Aug. 10, 6:30 pm. Wirewood Station.
- **Lang Pig Roast**, Fri., Aug. 12, 5:30-7:30 pm. See ad on page 11.
- **Elementary/Middle School Robotics Information Session**, Sat., Aug 13, 10-11:30am.
- **Concerts in the Park**, Wed., Aug. 17, 6:30 pm. Sandy Wells. See ad on page 14.
- **Monument Art Hop**, Thu., Aug. 18, 5-8 pm. See ad on page 2.
- **WMMI Summertime Family Days**, Sat., Aug. 20
- **Tri-Lakes Cruisers Annual Benefit Car Show**, Sun., Aug. 28
- **John Denver Tribute Concert**, Sun., Aug. 28, 6 pm. See ad on page 2.
- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., Sep. 1, approx. 9 am-2 pm. Information on page 28.
- **Ann Shimek ceramic art retrospective**, reception Fri., Sep 2, 5-8 pm; Exhibit open Sat., Sep. 3, 12-8 pm. See ad on page 14.

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Palmer Lake, July 3



Above: A double-crested cormorant and paddle boarders enjoyed a sunny July 3 at Palmer Lake. Photo by David Futey.

Monument Academy School Board, July 14, 22, and 25

Board votes to arm staff, implement dress policy gender rules

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held its regular meeting on July 14 and special meetings on July 22 and 25. The board discussed arming staff and teachers, modifying its dress policy, and the results of an eighth-grade survey. It also held executive sessions to discuss personnel matters related to Chief Operating Officer (COO) Merlin Holmes and details of security arrangements.

Board votes to arm staff

At the July 14 regular meeting, Ryan Graham, board president, noted that he had been able to bring in the organization Able Shepherd (AS) to meet with administration, teachers, and staff. The board voted unanimously to call a special meeting on July 25 to bring AS founder Jimmy Graham (no relation) to hold a Town Hall-style Q&A forum on safety and security.

At the special meeting on July 25, Jimmy Graham spoke about his background in the military, work as a trainer, and role as a father and husband. He talked about the AS training modules using the acronym DEFEND for Defense, Evacuate, Fortify, Emergency Medical Aid, Notify, and Dial 911.

Parents asked if the school had conducted a building vulnerability assessment. They expressed concerns about teachers' reactions under live fire, teachers leaving their rooms, the legal implications and consequences if a teacher were to kill another teacher or student, and how to alleviate kids' anxiety about concealed carry in the school. Other parents expressed support based on seeing security in a school Jimmy Graham had worked with and felt this was an important option for the school to have and applauded the work of AS saying some-

one needed to be the sheepdog and the school needed to do everything possible to ensure students are safe.

Ryan Graham said previous boards had done building assessments and identified vulnerabilities which he would not detail but said the board would address those issues. Brad Miller, MA's legal counsel, noted that the 2015 Claire Davis School Safety Act obligated schools to take reasonable care to protect students and said there is an established insurance protocol for schools that engage armed staff members. Ryan Graham also noted that students should not know who carries a concealed weapon. The financial reality, he said, is that the AS program is fiscally conservative and costs much less than hiring another school resource officer.

The board adjourned to executive

MA (Cont. on 2)

Donala Water and Sanitation District, July 21

Treatment plant partners notify district of their intent to bow out

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

At its July 21 meeting, the Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board discussed the implications of a letter it received from two neighboring districts that co-own the Upper Monument Creek Regional Waste Water Treatment Plant (UMCRWWTF) with DWSD notifying the district that they may discontinue use of the facility. Board President Ed Houle resigned from the board due to plans to move outside the district. The board heard updates on the status of three of its

wells.

The meeting ended with an executive session.

Forest Lakes and Triview may abandon treatment facility

On July 5, Ann Nichols, district manager of Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) and James McGrady, district manager of Triview Metropolitan District (TMD), sent the DWSD board a certified letter announcing they were considering participating in the North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) project and

discontinuing their use of the treatment plant they co-own with DWSD. The letter points out that DWSD "will have to assume all costs of operation, administration, maintenance, upgrade and replacement" for the plant—costs that are currently shared by the three districts. DWSD would also be solely responsible for funding any future expansions or compliance upgrades.

The letter also points out that, even

DONALA (Cont. on 6)