

# Our Community News

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



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Issue #265 — Volume 23 Number 4 — Saturday, April 1, 2023

**Free**

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your help!  
See page 29**

## 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 29-31 for event locations and other details of these and many other local events.**

- **EGGStravaganza**, Fox Run Regional Park, Fri., **Apr. 7**, 7:45-8:30 pm
- **Wildland fire information workshop**, **Apr. 8, 9-12**
- **Free home buying class**, Thu., **Apr. 13**, 5:30 p.m. -7:00 p.m. See ad on page 5.
- **Monument Fire District/Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Pancake Breakfast and Push-In Ceremony**, Sat., **Apr. 15**, 10 am.
- **100+ Women Who Care Bi-Annual Meeting**, Wed., **Apr. 19**, 5:00pm
- **Susan Helmich Fine Jewelry**. special event, Wed.-Thu, **Apr.19, 20**. See ad on page 13..
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, Thu., **Apr. 20**, 7:00 pm
- **Town of Monument Arbor day celebration**, Fri., **Apr. 28**
- **YMCA healthy kids day**, Sat., **Apr. 29**. See ad on page 6.
- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., **May 4**, approx. 9 am-2 pm. Information on page 29.
- **Peter Pan**, Sun., **May 7**. See ad on page 5.
- **Taste of Tri Lakes Cares**, Tue., **May 9**, 5:30 p.m. See ad on page 21.
- **YMCA summer day camp**, starts Tue., **May 30**
- **Front Range Maker's Market**, Sat., **June 17**, 8:30am-3pm. See ad on page 21.

## In this issue

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## Circulation

Print Run: 22,900  
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Stacks: 678

## D38 at the state capitol



**Above:** On March 1, a delegation of community members, parents, educators, board members, and the administrators from D38 took a trip to the state capitol to meet with state legislators and attend both House and Senate sessions. The trip was arranged by district lobbyist Amy Attwood and gave the district a chance to forge relationships and make the case for increased funding for K-12 education.

Attendees were able to meet with Rep. Don Wilson, D20 Monument; Sen. Mark Baisly, SD-4, Sen. Paul Lundeen, SD-9, and Sen. Janice Marchman, SD-15. All have Education Committee assignments. Wilson and Lundeen are local to the Tri-Lakes area and March-

man is a working teacher. The group also got to sit in on part of a House and Senate session and watch a debate on Senate amendments to HB23-1064 Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact designed to make it easier for teachers, especially active military members and eligible military spouses, from one member state to receive a teacher's license from another member state. The amendments were rejected, the bill was passed in the Senate, sent to the governor, and signed into law.

In the photo from right to left are Leah Braaten, elementary teacher; Alexandra Seabourn, reading interventionist; Amy Sienkowski, middle school assistant principal; Tiffney Upchurch,

board member; Cynthia Eversole, music teacher; Chris Thomas, kindergarten teacher, Brett Ridgway, chief business officer; Carolyn Bedingfield, grandmother; followed by several other attendees up through KC Somers, D38 superintendent. Not shown are: Char Armstrong, psychologist; Jackie Burhans, community member and parent alumni; Courtney Bushnell, business/marketing/computer science teacher; James Howald, community member and parent alumni; Stephanie Markle, social studies teacher; and Theresa Phillips, board vice president. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

*Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education, March 20*

## Proposed pay schedule introduced

*By Harriet Halbig*

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education received detailed information about a proposed pay schedule for the 2023-24 school year and discussed developments in the Portrait of a D38 Graduate and Portrait of a D38 Educator during its March 20 meeting.

### Pay schedule discussion

Chief Business Officer Brett Ridgway introduced a draft pay schedule for the upcoming school year.

Ridgway explained that the Parent and Community Advisory Commit-

tee and Staff Collaboration Committee contributed to the development of the schedule by offering suggestions on priorities as the schedule was developed.

The schedule was based on the assumption that the School Finance Act funding for the upcoming year will increase by 8% to \$9,800 per pupil. This would result in an increase of \$5.1 million to the district, of which \$1.5 million would go to Monument Academy and \$1 million would be set aside for capital maintenance and improvements.

By seeking efficiencies in spending and taking advantage of attrition among the staff, Ridgway was able to identify a potential additional \$1.1 million in savings which could be applied to compensation.

In response to input from the Staff Collaboration Committee (SCC), certain inclusions were added in creating the schedule. These included a program to provide bonuses for longevity, restoration of steps frozen during the pandemic, reduction in the number

*D38 (Cont. on 2)*

*El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Feb. 28 and March 21*

## Board hears calls to set aside Flying Horse North decision amid impropriety concerns

*By Helen Walklett*

At the Feb. 28 El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting, a citizen raised concerns of possible impropriety during the November 2022 BOCC hearing on the Flying Horse North (FHN) revised sketch plan.

### Citizen raises impropriety concerns relating to hearing

Philip Shecter, an FHN resident, raised concerns at the Feb. 28 meeting about possible impropriety during the November 2022 BOCC revised sketch plan hearing for the development. He

drew attention to campaign contributions received by Commissioners Cami Bremer, Carrie Geitner, and Holly Williams from the FHN developer and his affiliates.

*COUNTY (Cont. on 9)*



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## D38 (Cont. from 1)

of professional development days, and cutting costs.

The restoration of the frozen steps has already been achieved. The new schedule includes bonuses for longevity and the addition of health savings accounts to attract new hires. The health savings account would include a contribution from the district. The longevity bonuses would be presented at every five-year anniversary, with all individuals who have been with the district five years or more to receive the first bonus this year in the amount of \$250.

New hires will also be given credit for their previous experience at a higher rate than before.

In addition to using funds from attrition, Ridgway proposes to cut back

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**Above:** At the D38 school board meeting March 20, Executive Director of Student Services Rick Frampton and Tiffany Brown, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Coordinator recognized Maria Battaglia who serves as the Spanish Translator and Interpreter for the district as well as the Family Liaison. While Frampton spoke, Battaglia demonstrated by simultaneously translating what he said to Spanish. Battaglia does all the Spanish translation for the district making sure that everything is clear to the families. Parents also recognized Battaglia with hugs and flowers, noting her connection and commitment to D38 families and saying “Maria is a gift to the district and all that get an opportunity to work with her.” Finally all the parents and students in attendance gathered around Battaglia along with school board members, administrators and colleagues for a group photo. Battaglia is in the center in a long-sleeved green shirt. *Photo by Jackie Burhans*

on incentives for new hires in hard-to-fill positions.

Regarding hourly employees, Ridgway explained that the minimum wage increases each year. In an effort to anticipate this, he proposes that the D38 minimum wage be set at \$15.

Board Secretary Tiffney Upchurch expressed disappointment that some of the district’s employees would be compensated at such a low rate.

Ridgway explained that higher-paid staff would receive a lower percentage increase while lower paid staff would receive a higher percentage. He said that teachers would receive an average of 8.82%. While this would not quite reach parity with neighboring districts, it would be a significant improvement.

Upchurch asked whether this model is being used by other districts, and Ridgway said that it is. The board will need to vote to approve the schedule but cannot vote at this time as the level of funding from the state has not been confirmed and may not be available until May.

When asked whether the staff can provide input on the schedule, Ridgway responded that the SCC is the conduit for this feedback.

Superintendent KC Somers added that schools were sharing information from the SCC the day after its last meeting. He said an email would be sent to all staff soon and any responses would be shared with the SCC.

To view the presentation on this subject, go to lewis-palmer.org, board of educa-

tion, boarddocs and choose the date of the meeting.

Ridgway also discussed the district financial audit and



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**Palm Sunday, April 2, 10:15 am**

**Holy Thursday, April 6, 6:00 pm**

**Good Friday, April 7, 3:00 pm**

**Easter Vigil, April 8, 7:00 pm**

**Easter Sunday, April 9, 10:15 pm**



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other routine financial matters. He said February is the lowest ebb of revenue for the district, as income from taxes does not arrive until mid-March. He assured the board that in case of an emergency expense, funds would be available from sources other than the general fund.

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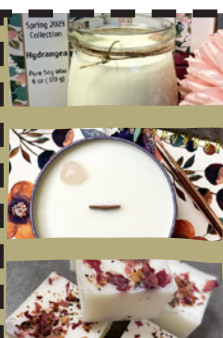
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### Portrait of a D38 graduate and D38 educator programs

Assistant Superintendent Amber Whetstine introduced Secondary Program Coordinator Jessica McAllister, who presented an update on development of the Portrait of a Graduate and Portrait of an Educator.

This initiative began in August 2021, overseen by two student interns who presided at meetings to seek input in desirable traits for graduates. In addition to speaking at District Accountability Advisory Committee meetings, they spoke with local organizations

such as Kiwanis, with alumni and building leaders who held listening sessions, Spanish-speaking families, and industry representatives.

Over 600 data points were collected and divided into themes. In January, data was coded to created prototypes.

Whetstine said the current stage is the final polishing of visualizations in anticipation of creating a new vision statement incorporating these skills into the curriculum.

Upchurch suggested including the various paths available toward graduation such as dual enrollment and internships.

Somers said the district needs to identify what makes us unique by demonstrating what it means to be part of a community.

The graduates were presented as falling into five categories of behavior. The Navigator is agile and confident, the Contributor is engaged and solution oriented, the Connector is empathetic and considerate, the Communicator is empowered, and the Problem-solver works well with others to arrive at solutions.



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The Portrait of an Educator is a more recent project, categorizing them as Connectors who develop relationships with students and colleagues, Differentiators who respect individuality and diversity, Professionals who collaborate with colleagues and demonstrate expertise, and Facilitators who listen deeply and foster curiosity and exploration.

For further information and to view the presentation on this subject, please see boarddocs.

#### Staff recognition

Executive Director of Student Services Rick Framp-ton and MTSS and Culturally and Linguistically Di-verse Coordinator Tiffany Brown introduced English Learner Program Translator/Interpreter and Family

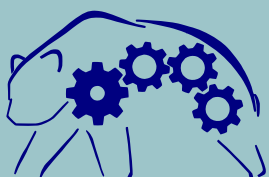


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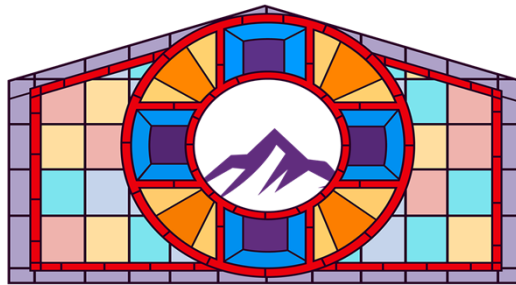
the National Association for Music Education.

The board passed a resolution acknowledging that music is an important part of a well-rounded education and that Monument demonstrates the importance of quality music education.

Bear Creek Elementary School band/music teacher Diane Jensen presented a trio of music students who provided a brief performance.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education meets at 6



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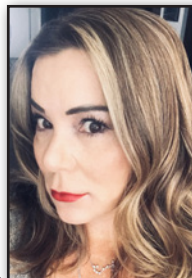
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p.m. on the third Monday of each month at its Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St. in Monument. The next meeting is April 17.

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



**Above:** On March 20, the D38 school board celebrated Music in Our Schools month with a performance by the Bear Creek Elementary School (BCES) brass trio: Hosanna Kirkbrode – Trumpet, Claire Lidington – Trumpet, and Isabella Thompson – Trombone. Photo by Jackie Burhans.

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Monument Academy School Board, March 9

MA building corporation executes construction documents; board extends interim COO contract

By Jackie Burhans

At its March 9 regular meeting, members of the Monument Academy Building Corp. (MABC), which owns Monument Academy's (MA) West Campus property, signed documents executing contracts for its recirculation construction. Also, the MA board extended the contract of its interim chief operating officer (COO).

Recirculation road contracts executed

President Ryan Graham noted that the project to build a recirculation road around MA's West Campus had been two years in the making. The road will go around the building and field on the West Campus and recirculate the traffic, so it comes in and goes out on Village Ridge Point instead of using Highway 105. He introduced Eric Norwood of Wilson & Co. as MA's owners' representative and construction manager along with David Kunstle of Sparks Wilson PC as MA's legal counsel who

helped to navigate many of the third-party approvals required.

Next, he introduced the MABC board, Chris Dole, Mark McWilliams, and Joe Buczkowski. Dole and McWilliams are former MA board members, and Buczkowski is on both the MA and the MABC boards as per board bylaws. MABC, Graham explained, owns the West Campus land and building.

Each board member had access to a binder containing the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with El Paso County to acquire a small portion of MA's West Campus land along with a non-exclusive permanent easement and two temporary easements for the county's Highway 105 Project A widening project. The agreed-upon just compensation for this agreement is around \$89,900, which is more than MA's own appraisal. The MA board unanimously consented for the MABC board to execute the MOA with the county.

The board also considered and

unanimously approved a Trade Contractor Agreement with Wildcat Construction. Graham noted that MA had

received two bids and that because the project is being funded by Pikes Peak Regional Transit Authority (PPRTA),



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they selected the lower bid. In concert with the county, MA's legal counsel and MA's owners' representative the board is advocating that this move forward. The MA board unanimously consented for the MABC board to execute this agreement.

The board also unanimously approved an indemnification agreement with Woodmoor Water and Sanitation (WWSD) to allow for the construction of a road over a conservation easement.

ment that WWSD controls on MA's land. WWSD had approved this agreement at its own board meeting. The MA board had also previously approved an owner-engineer agreement with Wilson & Co. and added a resolution for the Board of County Commissioners to authorize MABC to execute the agreements adopted by the MA board.

McWilliams then called to order the MABC board meeting to unanimously approve the MOA with the county for the acquisition of a right of way and easements, the trade contractor agreement, the WWSD indemnification agreement, and the owner-engineer agreement. Graham asked that the MABC resolution be added, which McWilliams agreed to do. MABC recessed its meeting to sign the documents and returned to adjourn its meeting, returning control to the MA board for its meeting to continue.

Graham said that now that the agreements were signed, if all goes well the hope is to start the project by mid-May and conclude in three to four months.

Interim COO contract extended

After a lengthy executive session to discuss details of security arrangements and for negotiations regarding the COO contract, the board resumed and board member Craig Carle moved to approve interim COO Kim McClelland's contract for the next fiscal school year, subject to contract negotiations. The board unanimously approved the motion.

Highlights

Board meeting highlights include:

- Board member Carle spotlighted teacher Debbie Kappel, who was

nominated by her peers for her excellent instruction in the classroom, contributions to the curriculum committee, and always being willing to help. Kappel was not present to receive her certificate.

- The board held a budget workshop on March 21 at the West Campus.
- Carle reported that the Lynx Fund was currently at \$75,000 of its \$500,000 goal with an additional \$23,000 if proceeds from the Gala are included. He said MA had started filming for a commercial to show the community where the fundraising is going.
- Financial consultant Glenn Gustafson reported that the FY21-22 financial audit from independent auditors CliftonLarsonAllen LLP was online and received a clean, unmodified opinion. The document includes a long-term view called the statement of net position as well as a short-term statement of activities. He noted recommendations on the segregation of duties and regular reconciliation of accounts between MA and D38.
- The board unanimously approved resolutions authorizing a change of authorized signers for Integrity Bank and First National Bank.
- Board member Emily Belisle reported that the School Accountability Advisory Committee (SAAC) East had seen an in-depth presentation on NWEA (formerly Northwest Evaluation Association) results for middle school math from Principal Collin Vinchattle, which resulted in a decision to stay the course with MA's math curriculum for the next



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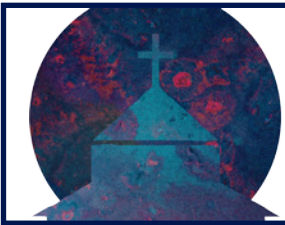
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school year. Moving forward, MA is looking at increasing testing for middle school core subjects at the beginning, middle, and end of the year so it

has data to make decisions.

- Vice President Lindsay Clinton noted that the board election applications were due March 31,

and there were two applicants at the meeting: Matt Ross and Ryan Graham.

\*\*\*\*\*

The MA School Board meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thurs-

day of each month. The next regular board meeting will be on Thursday, April 13, at 6 p.m. at the East Campus. See more information at see <https://bit.ly/ma-boe>.

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

COUNTY  
(Cont. from 1)

Shecter said, “Ms. Bremer, you and Ms. Geitner and Ms. Williams all received over 32% from that developer and his affiliates. El Paso County adopted the rules and procedures of the State of Colorado Independent Ethics Commission which defines, quote, ‘Appearance of impropriety means conduct perceived by a reasonable person to impair the ability to carry out official responsibilities with fairness, impartiality, objectivity, and integrity’ unquote.”

Shecter stated that he had requested the commissioners and county attorney place the issue on the agenda for a public hearing to create a process when an appearance of impropriety is evident and a quorum is not possible. He said the request had been refused and asked, “What are you afraid of?” He said that although campaign contributions are legal, when they come from a developer and his affiliates and are a substantial percentage of total contributions, such as 15% or greater in his opinion, and the developer then brings a matter for the commissioners’ consideration, that commissioner needs to be automatically recused to avoid an appearance of impropriety. He suggested a possible solution would be to maintain a list of commissioner volunteers to hear the matter for fairness to all parties in such circumstances.

Williams did recuse herself from the sketch plan hearing, stating she had had a conversation that gave her concerns about her ability to hear the matter fairly. Shecter said, “Given the appearance of impropriety of Mrs. Geitner and Bremer, you both should have recused yourselves from the Nov. 15th sketch plan hearing which would have prevented a quorum and required another process.”

He continued, “I’m asking you to set aside the approval decision of the sketch plan. I’m asking you to reset a hearing de novo after you create a process and procedure to follow when an appearance of impropriety occurs and a quorum of three commissioners is not possible.”

Shecter said that responses he had received from Williams and the county attorney made it appear as though it was unilaterally decided that these percentages of campaign contributions are not appearances of impropriety. He commented that this was not a decision for one or two people to make and called again for the matter to be addressed at a public hearing. He said he had also informed the

Contribution Analysis by Individual Commissioner

Source of Contributions*	Bremer	Geitner	Gonzalez	VanderWerf	Williams	Total
Flying Horse North (FHN)	\$48,400	\$13,000	\$4,200	\$13,870	\$48,400	\$127,870
Not affiliated with FHN	\$102,417	\$27,465	\$25,945	\$112,508	\$82,945	\$351,280
Total	\$150,817	\$40,465	\$30,145	\$126,378	\$131,345	\$479,150
FHN Percent of Total	32.09%	32.13%	13.93%	10.98%	36.85%	26.69%

\*Excludes Self Contributions

3/28/2023 Source of Data: TRACER - Home (colorado.gov) Data as of: December 2022

Above: Slide shown by Shecter at the Feb. 28 meeting. Shecter said it was prepared by others in the community who analyzed the public records and created the chart.

commissioners that they could request an advisory opinion from the Colorado Ethics Commission but that, at the time of speaking, no request had been made.

Responding to Shecter, Kenneth Hodges, county attorney, told him he had received his answer as far as the matter not being scheduled as an agenda item. Shecter said, “But the community wants this heard. What are you all afraid of?”

Three members of the public spoke in support of Shecter’s views and citizens stood up in the audience at his behest to show their support. Joe Hall, a county resident, said, “It screams at me, ‘What the heck is going on?’. How can you guys not be recusing yourself when you’re receiving campaign contributions in proportions that you’ve received from the developer.” He added, “I’ve been in the development business for 30 years. This is nuts!” Scott Riebel, a Black Forest resident, commented, “I can’t in my mind reconcile the fact that it can’t have some influence on how you’re making decisions with regards to some of these developments.”

Geitner said she was not sure how Shecter had got to the numbers displayed in the contribution analysis because corporations are not allowed to give contributions. She

commented, “There’s obviously some conglomeration or some assumption or connection that have been made so it would be difficult for me to accept this as accurate for that reason.” She continued, “I have a responsibility to decide if I can be impartial. That is what the choice becomes when we make a decision to recuse from a topic. Those are conversations that we have, and we do have an attorney we consult with. It’s not as if what seems to be being presented is that this is not a consideration or there’s some big coverup.”

She added that at a quasi-judicial hearing “not only do I have the responsibility to determine whether I can be impartial, but I am to be impartial and that means that I don’t just count the number of people in the audience who are for and against something and vote that way and that is because it’s done on the merits. It’s done based on criteria.”

Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez commented, “First Amendment. If developers want to donate money, the rules are the rules, but it does concern me. It does look like they are getting some outside influence in determining the outcomes of elections. That does not necessarily mean that is biasing elected personnel. But it does concern me, the amount of money that is influencing election out-

comes locally.”

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resort was approved by the commissioners 3-1 at their Nov. 15 meeting. Gonzalez voted no, stating he found the hotel to be inconsistent with the master plan, and Williams was recused. See [www.ocn.me/v22n12.htm#epbocc](http://www.ocn.me/v22n12.htm#epbocc).

Highway 105A project

At the March 21 meeting, the commissioners approved a special warranty deed, permanent easement, and temporary construction easements with Monument Academy Building Corp. at

a cost of \$89,900. The Highway 105A project will improve the highway to four lanes between I25 and Lake Woodmoor Drive.

Appointment to the Planning Commission

Also at the March 21 meeting, the com-

missioners approved the appointment of Kara Offner as a regular member of the Planning Commission. Her term runs until May 1, 2024.

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

El Paso County Planning Commission, March 2 and 16

Commissioners say 5-acre lots under attack, vote against rezone

By Helen Walklett

At the March 16 El Paso County Planning Commission meeting, the commissioners heard an application to rezone a 5-acre property in Outlook Estates to 2.5 acres. At the same meeting, the commissioners heard a variance of use for a second dwelling at an RR-2.5 (rural residential) property in Black Forest. Earlier in the month, they approved a minor subdivision request relating to the new Monument Academy site.

Overlook Estates rezone

The commissioners voted 7-2 to recommend for disapproval a request by Steven and Jennifer Liebowitz to rezone their property in Overlook Estates from RR-5 (rural residential) to RR-2.5. The rezone would have allowed the owners to apply for a minor plat to subdivide the existing lot into two 2.5-acre lots. The Summit Drive property is located to the north of Old North Gate Road and west of Silverton Road and is just north of the Flying Horse development and the Colorado Springs city limits.

Lekishia Bellamy, planner I, Planning and Community Development Department, told the commissioners that the application was moved from the consent calendar to a full hearing due to the level of opposition. She said concerns focused on it setting a precedent, increased density and traffic, compatibility with the surrounding area, and water availability.

David Gorman of M.V.E. Inc. and representing the owners, said that a 2.5-acre zoning would provide a transition from the higher density to the south and the 5-acre lots to the north. He said that the immediate neighbors had not objected. He commented, "We're of course much closer to some of the higher density development that already exists nearby. When you look at this, we see just an opportunity here and a reason to think that the corridor [just north of the city boundary] is a good place to use the existing infrastructure and to gain additional housing capacity, which is something that's needed." He noted that the property is separated from the areas to the north



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by a ridge and then a dip and added that the covenants of Overlook Estates allow for the replatting of lots.

At the time of the hearing, 55 letters of opposition had been received and one letter of support. Neighbor Greg Wolff, a realtor and the writer of the letter of support, spoke in favor of the application, describing Overlook Estates as a “perfect transition point.”

Fourteen people spoke in opposition, raising concerns that the rezone would set a precedent if approved, highlighting water availability issues, increased traffic, and incompatibility with the surrounding area. Jerry McLaughlin, a resident and president of the Sun Hills Homeowners' Association, said, “If they start dividing these 5-acre lots and it takes off like a bunch of rabbits in heat, we’re going to have a lot of change. You could effectively double the number of homes.”

Hans White, a resident to the north of the property, told the commissioners that Wolff, who spoke in favor, had twice failed in attempts to have his property rezoned. He said there was no difference in this application. He added that there was no need for a transition as that was all addressed in the Flying Horse rezoning.

Martha Wood, a 46-year resident, said the only benefit was to the individual [applicant]. “Colorado is enormous. There are lots of places people can build. They do not need to nibble into our community.”

In rebuttal, applicant Jennifer Liebowitz argued that a precedent had already been set in that a neighbor had an approved variance that allowed them to construct a second home on their lot which was being used by a family member. She said, “Although we can already exercise this right and do it that way, we are looking to increase our future property values by rezoning.” Steven Liebowitz stressed that Overlook Estates was a separate community from Sun Hills with separate covenants, which in their case allowed for subdividing to no less than 1-acre lots. He said they had also been through the lengthy process to obtain a water decree for a second well.

Senior assistant county attorney Lori Seago made the commissioners aware that covenants are private property restrictions and are neither enforced by nor binding upon the county. She further stated that water would be specifically reviewed at the final plat stage if the rezoning were approved.

Commissioner Becky Fuller said, “I view this as spot zoning. I think it has a huge potential to make a domino effect to really change this neighborhood and I don’t think that’s right.” She added, “I do not believe this is compatible to what is around it.” Commissioner Jay Carlson agreed with Fuller. “The RR-5 zone is under attack in my mind in the county and we can’t keep nibbling away,” he said. “It’s incumbent on us and this body to protect this type of neighborhood by not allowing this type of rezone.”

Commissioner Tom Bailey said he was struggling with the application because private property rights are important. He said, “If you want to do something on your land that is legal, you should be able to do that.”

Commissioner Christopher Whitney, who was not voting to ensure an odd number of votes, said, “I do think 5-acre zoning is under attack.”

The vote was 7-2 to recommend the application be denied, with Commissioners Sara Brittain Jack and Bryce Schuettepelz casting the no votes. Jack said, “The private property issue really resonates with me. I am offended when people say, well, he’s just doing

it to make money. I don’t know that in this country it’s illegal to make money.” Schuettepelz said, “I echo a little bit of what Mrs. Jack said as far as the private property owner rights to request to do this. I also look at this as the large lot rural residential is 5 acres and 2.5 acres and so, in that sense, it is compatible because it’s in the same property set as a rural large lot residential area, and so that’s why I voted no.”

The application is now due to be heard at the El Paso Board of County Commissioners’ (BOCC) April 18 land use meeting.

**Black Forest second dwelling variance approved**

Also at the March 16 meeting, the commissioners approved a variance of use to allow a second dwelling at a 2.89-acre property zoned RR 2.5 on the southwest corner of the intersection of Ford Drive and Milam Road in Black Forest.

The county approved a site plan for a new single-family dwelling in August 2022 and, at that time, the original 1960s dwelling was converted to an “accessory living quarters.” Such quarters can only be used for occasional temporary stays by family and friends.

Objections to the variance application were received from neighbors who

felt the approval would set a precedent and create water concerns.

The application was heard as a

consent item, but commissioners did have questions.

Commissioner Becky Fuller asked,

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given that the site plan approval was granted so recently, why the variance wasn't also requested at that time? Nina Ruiz of Vertex Consulting Services and representing the client, said the property owner was not aware it was an option at the time of the initial application. They had subsequently realized they needed a second home for their growing family and that the second home variance was an option.

Fuller commented, "It just feels a little sneaky to me." Ruiz replied, "I'm sure that's not the intent of the property owner to be sneaky."

The vote to recommend for approval was 8-1. Fuller was the no vote. She said she had voted that way because she wanted the BOCC to take a closer look at it and commented that she had some regrets in not having it pulled as a regular item.

The BOCC is due to hear the application at its April 18 land use meeting.

**Monument Academy minor subdivision**

At the March 2 meeting, the commissioners approved a request by Land Resource Associates for approval of a

minor subdivision to create one lot and four tracts on the almost 63-acre property site of the new Monument Academy. It is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Walker Road and Highway 83.

The 19.38-acre lot will contain the high school, recreational fields, and parking. Two of the tracts are set aside for future development, and two will be transferred to adjoining property owners as part of a property line survey adjustment.

The platting request follows the completion of a number of improve-

ments on which the site development plan was contingent. These included adding sidewalks, curbs, and gutters to Jane Lundeen Drive and Pinehurst Circle, constructing a roundabout at the intersection of Walker Road and Jane Lundeen Drive, improvements to the Highway 83 and Walker Road intersection, and the right-in-only intersection of Highway 83 and Pinehurst Circle.

The application is due to be heard at the BOCC land use meeting on April 4.

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

Monument Town Council, March 6 and 20

## New clerk, new police officers, and \$100,000 change order approved

*By Chris Jeub*

The Monument Town Council (MTC) met March 6 and 20. They welcomed a new town clerk, swore in three new police officers, voted to table an ordinance while passing another, approved a \$100,000 change order to complete construction on a water tank, and heard a presentation from Silver Key Senior Services.

**New clerk and police officers**

The MTC welcomed new Town Clerk Kyle Anderson, who joined the office on March 13. Anderson is a veteran of the U.S. Air Force and a graduate of Ohio State University and Capitol University Law School. He is a father of five.

During the same meeting, the council also witnessed the oath of office for three new police officers. Interim Chief Timothy Johnson presided

over the ceremony, where officers Kelly Goodwin, Joseph Markarian, and Dustin Williams took their oaths. Williams comes from Pope County, Iowa; Goodwin joins the Monument Police Department after serving with the Denver Police Department; and Markarian comes from the Pueblo Police Department.

**PPRBD building code**

A vote on Ordinance No. 05-2023: An Ordinance Adopting and Applying the Pikes Peak Regional Building Code, 2023 Edition, and Repealing the Previous Edition of Such Code was tabled till later.

The MTC convened to discuss the adoption and application of the 2023 edition of the Pikes Peak Regional Building Code. Roger Lovel, the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department

(PPRBD) representative, presented the history of the PPRBD, which was created in 1966 to serve a collection of building codes across the area. Lovel explained that the PPRBD issues permits, but land use and zoning is kept with local jurisdictions. The PPRBD adopts international building codes, and its regulations apply to building, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, energy conservation, conveyance, flood plain, and enumeration. The code also regulates contractor licensing and regulations. The PPRBD approved a new code, the 2023 edition, in December 2022. Lovel stated that the biggest change to the code was modifications to the energy conservation code and the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) code.

Councilmember Steve King expressed his concerns about the energy conservation code keeping houses so air tight that circulation is restricted. Lovel responded that they lost local control of the electrical code, and they are losing control of the energy conservation code. Another concern raised by King was whether multi-family units were required to adopt ADA compliance. Lovel explained that there is a state requirement for ADA compliance, and there are accessibility standards for apartments.

Town staff suggested tabling the discussion until April 17 to allow for a public hearing, explaining that there is no urgency to pass this ordinance immediately, and it would be better to have public input on this matter. Lovel assured the council that they need to hit the deadline of June 30 and he will be available for the public hearing. The council agreed to table the item by a vote of 7-0.

unanimously. This ordinance concerned the publication of ordinances in the Monument Municipal Code.

Director of Administration Laura Hogan presented, explaining that the vote would help speed up publication timelines for future developments. She elaborated that the proposed amendment would modify Section 2.04.030(G) of the Monument Municipal Code, which outlines the publication requirements for ordinances. The amendment would allow for the publication of ordinances in a more timely and efficient manner. Publication requirements have always been assumed to be in the newspaper (The Tribune), but staff would like to make the website the standard. She explained that this change would allow for more timely and efficient publication of ordinances.

Councilmember Marco Fiorito expressed his support for standardizing all publications on the website, which would help to streamline the process. Mayor Mitch LaKind asked about ADA compliance, to which Hogan responded that the amendment does have ADA compliance, but the council is working to ensure that all publications are fully accessible. King shared his thoughts on the importance of making information as efficient and accessible as possible, stating that as a former member of the Charter Commission, he believed this was a key consideration. Overall, the council members expressed their support for the proposed amendment, with some providing suggestions for further improvement. The council unanimously passed the ordinance with a 7-0 vote.

**Tank project**

Resolution No. 20-2023 was introduced and approved unanimously with a vote of 6-0 (Councilmember Jim Romanello was absent on March 20). This resolution pertains to the approval of Change Order No. 2 for the 2-million-gallon tank project with Preload Inc., a com-

**Publishing ordinances**

Ordinance No. 06-2023: An Ordinance Amending Section 2.04.030(G) of the Monument Municipal Code Regarding Publications of Ordinances passed



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pany contracted by the town to complete the construction of a water tank.

Director of Public Works Thomas Tharnish brought attention to a recent state inspection that deemed the tank insufficient and in need of immediate completion. As a result, the change order in question would amount to \$100,000. Town Manager Mike Foreman further explained that there were some delays in the project's deadlines, which were not the contractor's fault, and reminded the council that Preload's bid was \$700,000 less than the next contractor in line.

During the discussion,

Councilmembers Fiorito and Kenneth Kimple raised concerns about the board's responsibility, while Kimple asked how long the warranty on the project would last (answer: two years). The council ultimately approved the resolution, with King asking if the process could be expedited.

Silver Key Senior Services

Silver Key Senior Services President and CEO, Jason DeaBueno, presented to the council on the organization's efforts to support the senior population in the Tri-lakes area. With a focus on individuals over the age of 70, Silver

Key Senior Services aims to address the loneliness experienced by seniors who have recently moved to the area.

The organization's slogan, "Aging is... all of us!" reflects its belief in the value and worth of all seniors. To combat isolation, Silver Key Senior Services offers a companionship program that helps seniors connect with the community. Additionally, the Tri-lakes Senior Center serves as a bridge for seniors to connect with others. DeaBueno stressed the importance of combatting isolation, stating that it can be a decay for people. Silver Key Senior Services has been recognized

for its efforts, having been voted Best Workplaces two years in a row.

For those in need of assistance, Silver Key Senior Services provides the Silver Line at 719-884-2300 and infoilverkey.org. Its team will triage calls or emails to connect individuals with the resources they need. The organization also features a chat function on its website where visitors can interact with representatives. Overall, Silver Key Senior Services is dedicated to supporting the senior population in the community and addressing the challenges that come with aging.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Monument Council 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 two regular meetings are scheduled for Monday, April 3 and Monday, April 17. Call 719-884-8014 or see www.townofmonument.org for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see http://monumenttownco.minutesondemand.com and click on Town Council.

Chris Jeub can be reached at [chrisjeub@ocn.me](mailto:chrisjeub@ocn.me).

Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, March 9 and 23

Future of Elephant Rock property unclear

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

In March, the Palmer Lake Board of Trustees (PLBOT) continued to discuss the future of the Elephant Rock property without settling on any clear direction. The board debated snow removal policy and voted on an ordinance to regulate it. It continued to clarify its policy on short term rentals (STRs). A public hearing was held on rezoning lots in the Lakeview Heights neighborhood. The president of the D49 school board apologized to Mayor Glant Havenar for mistakenly identifying her as the person disrupting a school board meeting. The board voted to accept an offer to buy a small piece of property on Landsdown Street from the town.

Another public hearing was held on a request to amend the 2023 budget to properly account for the roll-over of funds for projects that were not started in 2022. The board adopted revised building codes and put in place new policies to review developers' requests and recover the costs of addressing them. The board authorized the mayor to pursue a grant from the state Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). It was announced that John Vincent, the acting fire chief, had accepted the position on a permanent basis.

The March 9 and 23 meetings both ended with executive sessions.

Many ideas for Elephant Rock

At the March 9 meeting, Richard and Lindsey Willans presented an updated version of their plan to use a portion of their property as a spa. They said they had abandoned their original vision of a village with a frontier theme, but they still wanted to use a swimming pool. They proposed the formation of a steering committee to plan the development of the spa. The Willanses said they have reduced the amount of land they need for the spa to 3.6 acres, and they would like to have a lease-to-own agree-

ment with the town for that land. They offered to board up the buildings. They also said they had been approached by a restaurant association in Colorado Springs.

Other residents made other suggestions for how to develop the property. Nikki McDonald suggested the existing buildings could be used as a wedding venue to generate revenue for the town. Gene Kalesti agreed with McDonald. Reid Wiecks wanted assurance the land would never be used for housing. Amanda Hinnen agreed with using the property to generate revenue and estimated rehabilitating the buildings would cost \$1.5 million. Samantha Deeder proposed using the property as an event center. Phyllis Head spoke in favor of leaving the natural beauty of the site unspoiled.

At the March 23 meeting, the discussion focused on planning and security. There was consensus among the board members that a plan was needed and that all stakeholders should have a voice but little agreement about whether the plan should cover the entire property or just portions that were the highest pri-



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ority for development.

Trustee Jessica Farr, the liaison with the Parks Commission, which has been an active participant in the Elephant Rock discussion, told the board that the commission suggested the buildings be used by the Palmer Lake Police and Fire Departments for training. She proposed marking the trails with flags as a next step, supported further discussions with the Willanses concerning a lease for the land needed for their spa, and argued for three acres of the property to be reserved for a public safety building. She said the Parks Commission was considering how to raise funds.

Wiecks argued a master plan covering all 28 acres would be difficult to complete. He suggested the Parks Commission develop its own plan for a trail, a soccer field, and a music amphitheater. A more focused plan could take advantage of the upcoming months when outside work can be done. Wiecks said the Parks Commission had sent the board a letter with suggestions, including how to address the problem of trail users feeding horses on an adjacent property. Mayor Glant Havenar asked Wiecks to clarify if the Parks Commission wanted to develop a plan for the perimeter of the property and leave the future of the buildings in the hands of the Board of Trustees. Wiecks agreed with Havenar's summary.

Roger Davis, the director and curator of the Luretia Vaile Museum, suggested the property be named Chautauqua Park to recognize the importance of Chautauqua to the history of the town.

Throughout the discussion, Town Administrator Dawn Collins pressed the board to provide clarity on schedules, the role of outside agencies, how to secure the existing buildings, and which buildings will stay and which buildings will go.

Palmer Lake Chief of Police Jason Vanderpool told the board that middle and high school students were entering the buildings through different paths, creating security issues. He told the board the property is patrolled, and when trespassers are caught they are issued a summons to appear in court. Minors are required to bring their parents, he said.

Additional details about the plans for the Elephant Rock property can be found on the town's website here: <https://www.townofpalmerlake.com/community/page/elephant-rock-property>.

**Snow removal ordinance amended**

At the March 9 meeting, Public Works Supervisor Jason Dosch outlined the difficulties his team faces keeping the roads clear of snow. Dosch said residents block roads and streets with snow from their properties, creating safety hazards. He asked that residents take responsibility for the snow on their properties. When his team is clearing snow from roads and streets, they don't stop to address issues with residents, Dosch said. Collins said the town does not have an ordinance addressing the issue. Farr and Havenar were concerned that the town would be overstepping its authority if an ordinance was too strict.

At the March 23 meeting, the board took up an ordinance to clarify the responsibilities of residents in regards to clearing their properties of snow. Collins presented Ordinance 8-2023, which regulates snow removal and makes residents responsible for clearing sidewalks without damaging them and prohibits residents from putting snow on sidewalks, streets, roads, or other's property without consent. The ordinance includes a fine not to exceed \$2,650, the maximum penalty set forth in Chapter 1.12 of the town's municipal code.

Collins said town staff is directed always to begin



**Above:** The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees poses for a group photo. Bottom, from left: Shana Ball, Samantha Padgett, Jessica Farr, and Glant Havenar (mayor). Top, from left: Nick Erhardt, Kevin Deher, and Dennis Stern. Photo by Jackie Burhans.

with education when there is a violation. Vanderpool said police officers always start with a warning and his officers were trained to talk to residents to encourage compliance.

The board passed ordinance 8-2023, with Trustees Shana Ball, Kevin Dreher, Nick Erhardt, Samantha Padgett, and Dennis Stern joining Havenar in voting yes. Farr voted no.

**STR license renewals and inspections discussed**

Havenar pointed out at the March 9 meeting that currently all STR licenses renew in May, creating a disincentive for operators to apply for licenses if they will need to renew in just a few months. Havenar suggested prorating licenses for the first year only and requiring renewal on the anniversary of the license.

Resident Roger Mosely raised the issues of STR safety inspections and parking requirements.

At the March 23 meeting, Collins presented an amended draft of the STR ordinance that changed the renewal date to the anniversary of the licensing date. An application for an STR license with the safety feature affidavit was included in the packet for the meetings. Collins said the direction from the board was not to implement regular safety inspections.

The amended ordinance specifies that if an accessory dwelling unit is used as an STR, the applicant must go through a conditional use acceptance process.

The board decided to have Collins bring back the ordinance in its final form at a future meeting.

**Lakeview Heights lots rezoned**

At the March 9 meeting, Collins presented the history of the rezoning proposal, explaining that rezoning the lots from R-3 (5,000-square-foot lots) to R-10,000 (10,000-square-foot lots) was discussed and approved in 1992 but an ordinance making the change was never passed.

Following a brief public hearing, the board voted unanimously to approve Ordinance 7-2023, which codifies the rezoning.

**School board president clears up mistaken identity**

John Graham, the president of the D49 School District Board of Education, apologized to Havenar for identifying her as the woman who disrupted a meeting of the D49 school board. His mistake resulted in a letter being sent to Havenar prohibiting her from entering any D49 buildings or attending any D49 meetings. Graham said he made the mistake even though he and Havenar had worked together in the past. He said Havenar was welcome in D49 in any capacity; Havenar accepted Graham's apology.

**Town property sold**

The board voted unanimously in favor of Ordinance 9-2023, which authorizes the mayor to complete the sale of a vacant 25,500-square-foot parcel of land adjacent to Landsdown Street to the Albright/Tedeschi party for \$104,400 plus closing fees.

**2023 budget amended**

At the March 23 meeting, Deputy Town Clerk Julia Stambaugh explained that some road and water projects had been funded in the 2022 budget, but those projects were not begun in 2022 due to supply chain and vendor delays. The funds for those projects need-

ed to be accounted for in the 2023 budget.

Havenar opened a public hearing on amending the 2023 budget. There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

Documents in the board packet for the meeting specified some unused funds were budgeted for repaving and drainage projects and others were budgeted for water line replacement projects.

Following the hearing, the board voted in favor of Resolution 25-2023, which amends the 2023 budget as presented. Ball, Dreher, Ehrhardt, Havenar and Stern voted yes; Farr and Padgett voted no.

**Board hears revised building codes**

Building official Roger Lovell presented the 2023 Pikes Peak Regional Building Department (PPRBD) building codes, starting with a brief history of the organization, which was founded in 1966 with an intergovernmental agreement between El Paso Board of County Commissioners and the City of Colorado Springs. An additional five jurisdictions later joined, including the Town of Palmer Lake. PPRBD's goal is the consistent enforcement of building codes throughout its region. The current Pikes Peak Regional Building Codes (PPRBC) in use are the 2017 codes which were adopted by Palmer Lake in June 2018. These codes apply only to construction and licensing and regulation of contractors. Each jurisdiction is responsible for its own land-use policies. Enforcement of these codes is paid for by the fees collected from developers, Lovell said.

PPRBD adopts new codes every six years, incorporating the latest model codes published by the International Code Council, which change every three years. The 2021 PPRBC adopts and amends the 2021 International Building, Residential, Energy Conservation, Existing Building Codes and, for the first time, the 2021 International Pool and Spa Codes. Newer codes, Lovell said, take advantage of new construction techniques and enhanced energy conservation and reduce ISO ratings and insurance premiums.

Electrical, plumbing, and conveyance codes are adopted by the state of Colorado every three years and must be adopted and enforced locally within 12 months. Local jurisdictions can amend but not weaken state codes; the 2023 PPRBC does not amend state codes which have not changed.

House Bill 22-1362, on reducing building greenhouse gas emissions, is the most significant of the model code changes, increasing the cost of initial construction while increasing energy efficiency and reducing operating costs. The 2023 PPRBC amends the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code by allowing additional options and serving as a stepping stone to full compliance. However, this must be adopted before July 1, 2023 by PPRBD and its members or the full unamended code will be required.

PPRBD began its 18-month review of the 2021 international codes in January 2021, followed by a public comment period after which changes were made to the PPRBC, followed by a second draft and comment period. The 2023 PPRBC was passed in December 2022 with public outreach including email, social media, presentations, press releases, media interviews, website alerts, networking events, and more.



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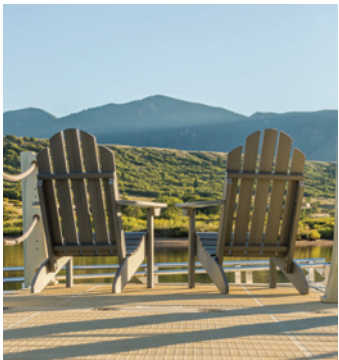
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PALMER LAKE (Cont. from 14)

Lovell fielded questions from the board confirming that PPRBC does not require electric vehicle plugs or solar readiness. Lovell noted that Palmer Lake Trustee Dennis Stern was the local representative to PPRBD and regularly attends its meetings. He also pointed out that there was a new PPRBD office on the north end that gives easier access to Palmer Lake residents.

Later in the meeting, the board held its first reading of Ordinance 10-2023 to consider the PPRBC. Stern said that PPRBD is doing a good thing to try to get this done before July 1 as he personally believes the new energy requirements are somewhat onerous and would spend a dollar to save a penny. Attorney Matt Krob explained that if an ordinance included a model code, it would have to be read and passed at the first meeting then read, passed, and adopted at the second meeting. The board voted unanimously to pass the ordinance on its first reading.

Development review service and reimbursement approved

At its March 23 meeting, the board unanimously passed two resolutions to authorize an interim development review agreement and to use a cost reim-

bursement agreement for collecting fees. Resolution 26-2023 allows the town to collect fees from applicants, Collins noted, to reimburse the cost for professional review of proposed development plans submitted to the town. The resolution included a draft cost reimbursement agreement for use with applicants. The board directed Collins to come back with a final version for its approval.

Resolution 27-2023 authorizes a professional service agreement with Community Matters Institute (CMI) for interim development review for the town. CMI was chosen because it knows Palmer Lake’s land use code and helped to rewrite the town’s master plan. The town has some development applications that require review right now and doesn’t have time to put out a request for proposals for a reviewer, so it would like to involve CMI on an interim basis. CMI’s rates are \$130 per hour for development review services, and Collins estimates the town would need 10-15 hours per month in the short term.

DOLA grant

Collins said she had been discussing a grant opportunity with DOLA that would provide matching grant funds to rewrite the town’s land use code. She asked the board to authorize the mayor to write a letter requesting the grant. The board voted unanimously to

authorize the mayor to sign the letter. **Vincent accepts fire chief position** Collins congratulated John Vincent, who accepted the role of Palmer Lake fire chief as of March 15. Vincent was serving as interim fire chief before accepting the role permanently.

Executive sessions

The March 9 meeting ended with an executive session to discuss the Elephant Rock property, to discuss the sale of town property, and to receive legal advice in regards to litigation or possible claims against the town.

The March 23 meeting ended with an executive session to hear legal advice about claims against the town and terms of a possible lease agreement for the Elephant Rock property.

The next board meetings are scheduled for April 13 and 27. See the town’s website at [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com) to confirm times and dates of board meetings and workshops. Meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at the Town Hall. Information: 719-481-2953.

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).

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, March 13

New technology for sewer maintenance

By James Howald

At its March meeting, the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) board approved a more efficient way to identify sewer lines in need of maintenance. The board awarded a contract for a sewer saddle replacement project and heard a request from a resident to buy land from the district. The board heard operational reports, and the meeting ended with an executive session.

Acoustic wave technology improves efficiency

Operations Superintendent Dan LaFontaine told the board about a new technology using acoustic waves that could reduce what the district spends on its “repair and replace” strategy for sewer lines. Currently, WWSD has divided its service area into five zones, and each year the lines in one zone are inspected by video camera and cleaned. It takes five years to inspect and clean all the lines in the service area, LaFontaine said.

LaFontaine explained a new method that uses devices that send and receive acoustic waves between manholes. The distortion in the acoustic waves is used to determine how clear or clogged a line is. LaFontaine said the Monument Sanitation District and the Palmer Lake Sanitation District have switched to this approach with good results.

LaFontaine said the technology would allow the district to inspect all five zones in one year instead of five years. Invasive tree roots are a costly problem, La-

Fontaine said, and a faster schedule would be more effective in dealing with them.

President Brian Bush recommended inspecting all lines annually. Director Barrie Town pointed out that using a schedule was not efficient because some lines were cleaned solely because they were on the schedule, not because they needed cleaning.

Director Town moved to add funds to the sewer line budget item, and the board voted unanimously in favor of his motion.

Contract awarded

District Engineer Ariel Hacker reviewed for the board the details of a contract to replace 30 service saddles (vertical connectors that join residential lines to mains), five gate valves, and three fire hydrants. The contract includes asphalt replacement, traffic control, and customer notification.

Hacker said Caraveo Construction Inc. had submitted the low bid for the job at \$187,711. She noted there were two other bids—one for \$295,000 and the other for \$480,000. The range of bids was very wide, she said, adding Caraveo Construction was already working on another job for the district.

The board voted unanimously to accept Caraveo Construction’s bid and authorize Bush to sign a contract.

Resident offers to purchase land

During the public comment portion of the meeting, resident Dave Easton told the board he was interested

in purchasing land adjacent to Monument Academy from WWSD. He said he had made a similar request several years ago.

District Manager Jessie Shaffer told Easton the district typically doesn’t sell land. Bush said he would be surprised if the current or a future board agreed to sell land belonging to the district.

Highlights of operational reports

- Construction of new well 19 is due to begin in April.
- The Chilcott Ditch is being cleaned in anticipation of beginning to deliver water to ditch customers later in the spring.
- Classic Homes is expected to have model homes in the Monument Junction East development built by June.

Executive session

The March meeting ended in an executive session to consider strategies relative to negotiations and receive legal advice concerning pending litigation.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 10 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.

James Howald can be reached at [jameshowald@ocn.me](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me).

Monument Sanitation District, March 15

Election canceled

District Manager Mark Parker told the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board at its March meeting that its upcoming election had been canceled because there are not more candidates than vacant board seats. He also updated the board on legislation that would govern how so-called “flushable” wipes would be labeled. Finally, the board heard operational reports.

Candidate withdraws

Parker told the board that Randy Estes had withdrawn his application to run for one of the three open seats on the board, reducing the number of candidates to three and eliminating the need for an election. Parker

said the election was expected to cost between \$5,000 and \$10,000 had it been needed. Estes is willing to serve by appointment if a seat opens unexpectedly, Parker said.

The legal report from designated election official Peggy Rupp included a cancellation of election report and declaration of candidates elected that names Anthony Archer, Daniel Hamilton, and Janet Ladowski as elected to four-year terms that will begin on May 17. Archer is currently serving on the board, having been appointed in February to fill the seat vacated by Laura Kronick’s resignation. Hamilton is currently serving as the board president.

Legislation aims to educate consumers

Parker updated the board on Senate Bill 23-150, which, if passed, will require the labels on wipes to warn consumers that the products are not truly “flushable” in that they do not dissolve once in the sewer system and increase maintenance costs by jamming the pumps in lift stations, clogging filters, and catching on tree roots, leading to repair costs that are shouldered by the ratepayers. Use of wipes increased following COVID. They can create dams that cause wastewater to back up into homes, Parker said. The bill will require informational labels instructing consumers to dispose of them without flushing them down the toilet.

- Highlights of operational reports**
- Parker noted that legal expenses were higher than typical in February due to work by the district’s law firm on the election and on rewriting the employee manual, which needs to be updated in light of Colorado’s Family and Medical Leave Insurance program, the Colorado Healthy Families and Workplaces Act, and the Department of Labor Family and Medical Leave Act. Job descriptions are also being updated, he said.
  - Double authentication, which requires signoff by two employees, has been put in place to improve the security of ACH transactions.
  - The district is scanning documents produced during its 65-year existence. The paper documents are being converted to Portable Document Format files that can be easily searched.

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 April 19. 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](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me). James Howald can be reached at [jameshowald@ocn.me](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me).

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Donala Water and Sanitation District, March 16.

Board seeks long-term contract with CSU

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans  
At its March meeting, the Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board met with representatives of Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) to discuss CSU's proposed long-term contract with DWSD. The board returned to the issue of the Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (UMCRWWTF), which it shares with Triview Metropolitan District (TMD) and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD). The board also heard operational reports.

**Board discusses long-term contract with CSU**  
DWSD, which has operated under a short-term contract that has had a series of extensions, is seeking to sign a long-term contract with CSU on the conveyance, treatment, and delivery of its renewable water through CSU's Southern Delivery System (SDS).

Jenny Bishop, project engineer for CSU, attended the DWSD meeting to discuss CSU's proposal, which is a short-term contract that can convert into a long-term contract. The reason for this approach is that CSU's contract for SDS has a clause that states that it cannot be used for regional entities that are not part of the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District (SECWCD) without either joining SECWCD or getting a written waiver from SECWCD and the Bureau of Reclamation (BR).

Bishop explained that both SECWCD and BR had separately indicated verbally that they were OK with the waiver, but that CSU had been unable to get them in the same room at the same time to sign a written document that CSU has drafted. The workaround is to sign a contract now that will serve as a short-term contract extendable for three years and convert it to a 25-year long-term contract once the waiver is signed. Twenty-five years, she noted, is the longest contract CSU can offer according to the city's charter.

The board went into an executive session to further discuss the CSU proposal and came out with edits to the proposed contract and directions to their lawyer to work with CSU's lawyer to pursue the waiver required for a long-term contract. General Manager Jeff Hodge will be available to attend any meetings that CSU might set up with SECWCD and BR to help finalize this waiver.

**Debate over UMCRRWWTF study continues**  
Hodge updated the board on recent developments in the sometimes-contentious discussion between DWSD, FLMD, and TMD over how to proceed with and who will pay for an engineering study of the UMCRRWWTF performed by Carollo Engineers Inc. (CEI). The study was commissioned by FLMD and TMD as part of their consideration of a proposal from CSU to take over the wastewater treatment currently done by

the UMCRRWWTF, which would make that facility unnecessary. FLMD and TMD viewed CSU's proposal to take over wastewater treatment positively, but DWSD decided against participating, arguing that the cost and benefit of the project were not clear.

DWSD argued that because the study was initiated without its input, it would not pay any share of its costs.

Hodge summarized a letter sent from DWSD to FLMD and TMD that stated:

- DWSD accepts FLMD and TMD's offer to pay for work done by CEI in 2022.
- DWSD will pay its share of CEI's charges for work done in 2023 if DWSD can assess and update the scope of work.
- DWSD sees the UMCRRWWTF as a valuable asset, wishes to continue to use it, values its potential to allow water re-use, and appreciates its contribution to local control.

The letter also requested that DWSD receive all data provided by CEI to FLMD and TMD, asked to have its preference for continued use of the facility reflected in the contract with CEI, and expressed its willingness to discuss how one partner might leave the Intergovernmental Agreement without shutting down the facility. DWSD believes shutting down the facility would not be in the best interests of its residents.

Board President Wayne Vanderschuere said he felt the data did not support CEI's overly negative assessment of the UMCRRWWTF and the study had not been peer reviewed. He added he had reached out to FLMD and TMD but had not received a response to date.

**Highlights of operational reports**  
In his manager's report, Hodge mentioned the following operational details:

- The upcoming election has been canceled since there are three candidates for the three open seats on the board.
- The construction of the raw water line for recently drilled Well 16A was scheduled to begin the week of March 13.
- Staff is working on a protocol to remove phosphorus from the UMCRRWWTF effluent that will result in credits that will delay the need for upgrades.
- DWSD has changed to a new lab for water quality testing due to concerns with the accuracy of results from the previous lab.

\*\*\*\*\*  
The next meeting is scheduled for April 20 at 1:30 p.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](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me). Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me)

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El Paso County Regional Loop Water Authority, March 16  
**Compliance with procurement policies approved**

By James Howald  
Compliance with county, state, and federal procurement policies imposed by receipt of American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds was the main topic at the El Paso County Loop Regional Water Authority (EPCRLWA) board meeting in March. EPCRLWA President Jessie Shaffer updated the board on the status of the project's water testing, and the board heard a brief financial report.

**ARPA funding brings compliance burden**  
Shaffer said the authority had not yet received its Public Deposit Protection Act identification number, which is required to account for the receipt and expenditure of certain public funds.

Russell Dykstra, EPCRLWA counsel, explained that ARPA and other grants require use of procurement policies that meet federal standards. He presented to the board a policy that met those standards as well as applicable Colorado state standards. As an example, Dykstra said there was a \$60,000 limit on funds for capital improvements. Dykstra mentioned some state requirements could change, and he would adjust the policy as needed to maintain compliance.

The board voted unanimously to approve the policy as presented.

Shaffer said he would ensure all requests for proposals, bids and job descriptions complied with state

and federal standards.

**Water quality testing underway**  
At its February meeting, EPCRLWA signed a contract with JVA Inc. to provide ongoing water quality testing that would be used to design the water treatment protocols needed to purify the water delivered to consumers.

Shaffer reported that the contract with JVA had been approved by legal counsel, and testing is underway.

**Financial report**  
Cathy Fromm of Fromm & Co LLC, the authority's accounting firm, told the board that a bank account was needed so that invoices could be paid. Four invoices totaling about \$14,000 have been received, she said, leaving the authority with about \$735,000 cash on hand.

\*\*\*\*\*  
The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 20 at 9 a.m. Regular meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of each month at 9 a.m. at the Monument Town Hall at 645 Beacon Lite Road. Workshop meetings are held every Thursday at 9 a.m. at rotating venues. Please see [loopwater.org](http://loopwater.org) or call 719-488-3603 to verify meeting times and locations.

James Howald can be reached at [jameshowald@ocn.me](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me).

  
  
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Triview Metropolitan District, March 23

# District will hold election; multiple contracts approved

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Triview Metropolitan District (TMD) meeting on March 23, the board heard about the 2023 Board of Directors' election for two board director seats and approved contracts with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU), Pueblo Water, and Kiewit Infrastructure. The board also held an executive session to approve authorization to seek eminent domain should it be required to complete the installation of the Northern Delivery System (NDS).

Treasurer/Secretary James Barnhart was excused.

### 2023 Board of Directors election

District Attorney George Rowley of the White Bear Ankele Tanaka & Waldron law firm recommended the four self-nominated candidates for two available board seats each submit statements of 400 words or less with a photograph. The mail-in-only election will be held on May 2, and a drop-off ballot box will be located in the foyer of the district office building at 16055 Old Forest Point, he said.

District Administrator Joyce Levad said any ballots dropped off at the TMD bill pay box located in the Baptist Road shopping center will not be counted. Information on the candidates and voting instructions can be found at [www.triviewmetro.com](http://www.triviewmetro.com).

**Note:** The designated election official is White Bear Ankele Tanaka & Waldron law firm.

### Board approves contract for water delivery

District Manager James McGrady said the convey, treat, and deliver contract had been presented at a Colorado Springs Utilities Board hearing on March 22, but even though the board members were supportive of the agreement, one member requested additional information, and the contract was removed from the consent agenda to allow presentation in a public forum. The contract will be considered again at the Colorado Springs City Council meeting on March 28, he said. See [www.ocn.me/v22n11.htm#tmd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n11.htm#tmd).

Water Attorney Chris Cummins of Monson Cummins & Shotet LLC said changes were made to the draft contract the board reviewed last month, and CSU agreed to the changes and addressed the district's concerns. Cummins requested the board approve the agreement between CSU and the district to convey, treat, and deliver regional water service via the NDS and said CSU recognizes the opportunity to utilize its underutilized water assets. The Colorado Springs Utilities Board meets between the Colorado Springs City Council meetings and are the same voting members, he said.

McGrady recommended the board approve the contract and said everything hinges on the agreement. The district purchased stranded assets, and the contract will allow the district-owned water to be delivered to its customers, he said.

The board approved the contract barring any major changes, 3-0.

President Mark Melville asked if the water delivered via the NDS would need additional treatment.

McGrady said the district may have to add a small amount of chlorine, but it will not need any further treatment when it is received via CSU. The water will

be treated and delivered via the pipeline in hours, he said.

### Executive session

The board moved into an executive session at 7:30 p.m., pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 24-6-402(4) (a), (b), (e), to discuss acquisitions and receive legal advice for negotiations associated with water delivery infrastructure, water, and property acquisitions.

When the board returned to the regular meeting, McGrady requested the board review and consider approval of Resolution 2023-02 authorizing the district manager to initiate eminent domain proceedings for the acquisition of easement and real property interests necessary for pipelines, utilities, and infrastructure associated with the NDS project, should good-faith negotiations fail.

The board approved the resolution, 3-0.

### Kiewit contract amendment

McGrady requested the board approve a third amendment to the NDS contract with Kiewit Infrastructure to guarantee the maximum price for the installation of a pipeline project, procure materials and equipment for the pump station, and establish a payment and construction schedule. He said the cost increases are mainly due to inflation and the addition of four high-pressure fire hydrants, but the project had found some savings from pipe material changes and by shortening a bore around Sanctuary Pointe. The total cost of the project will be about \$21.2 million, he said. See [www.ocn.me/v23n3.htm#tmd](http://www.ocn.me/v23n3.htm#tmd).

Kiewit Infrastructure project manager Max McLean said the contract pricing will be locked in and confirmed in April and there should not be much change.

McGrady confirmed the project remains on time and the pipeline construction is expected to commence on May 4. For details, visit [www.triviewmetro.com](http://www.triviewmetro.com).

The board approved the contract, 3-0.

### Pueblo water exchange agreement

McGrady requested the board approve an agreement between Pueblo, a municipal corporation, acting by and through the Board of Water Works of Pueblo, and the district. The 10-year agreement would make 20 acre-feet of water available for exchange with the district. The water to be exchanged to TMD would be released from Clear Creek, Turquoise, and Twin Lakes Reservoirs, or from direct-flow transmountain rights via the Arkansas River. In exchange, Pueblo will receive TMD water stored in Pueblo Reservoir. TMD will pay \$150 per acre-foot or about \$3,000 per annum, and a non-refundable fee of \$10,000.

The board approved the agreement, 3-0.

### Sand Creek Golf Course lease agreement

McGrady said the district owns 1,057 shares of stock in the Fountain Mutual Irrigation Co. and currently supplies 40 of those shares to Fontana Enterprises Inc. to irrigate the Sand Creek Golf Course. He requested the board approve a water lease agreement for \$6,199.60 for the first year, with a 4% annual increase. The agreement would be in place for water

years 2023 through 2029.

The board approved the water lease agreement, 3-0.

### Upper Monument Creek Regional Waste Water Treatment Facility

McGrady said the UMCRRWWTF study by Carollo Engineers Inc. is still in progress.

Melville asked if the UMCRRWWTF would require expansion at district build out.

McGrady said the increase in high-density apartments in the region will change the wastewater flows, and the study will also look at build-out density in Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District, along with all future regulatory requirements. The demand on the UMCRRWWTF will be slightly higher than current wastewater capacity, he said. See DWSD article on page 17.

### Public Works and Parks and Open Space update

Superintendent Matt Rayno reported the mild weather was helping crews get ahead on the spring projects, and he said:

- The Old Creek Park has received new playground equipment and an Americans with Disabilities Act ramp will be installed along with a 16-by-16-foot shade structure on an 18-by-18-foot concrete pad to house a picnic table.
- Crews conducted a thorough playground equipment audit and made repairs. A plastic slide repair at the Burke Hollow playground was made in-house. The playground is due to be replaced next year.
- Aeration began on March 23, but the ground was very dry and completion will be delayed until moisture is received.
- April turf fertilization and testing the irrigation main lines will begin on April 3, and that will allow aeration to continue.
- The irrigation is in place at Agate Creek Park, and the system will be charged in time for early spring seeding.
- Tree and shrub pruning and pre-emergent fertilization is almost complete.
- Street sweeping occurred on Lyons Tail Road and in Sanctuary Pointe.

Director James Otis said residents had complimented the holiday light display at the Baptist Road and Leather Chaps Drive intersection.

Rayno said the lights are the crown jewel of the district during the holiday season, and the east side of Leather Chaps Drive may receive some upgraded landscaping later in the season.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meetings are usually held on the third Thursday every month at the district office at 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for April 20 at 5:30 p.m. For meeting agendas, minutes, and updates, visit <https://triviewmetro.com>.

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

## Triview Board Candidate Statements

Two Triview Metropolitan District (TMD) Board of Directors positions are open for election on May 2. Ballots are mail-in-only to the district or they can be hand delivered to the drop-off box in the foyer of 16055 Old Forest Point. For further instructions, visit [www.triviewmetro.com](http://www.triviewmetro.com). If you are a TMD customer, you are eligible to vote.

Listed alphabetically are the four candidates for the two open positions:

- Amanda Carlton
- Barrett Edwards
- Jason Gross
- Ann-Marie Jojola

The statements below are the candidates' responses to two questions posed by *Our Community News*:

1. What in your background would help you in serving on the Triview Metropolitan District board.
2. What are the one or two biggest issues facing the district and what should be done about them?

### Amanda Carlton

Hello Monument! My name is Amanda Carlton and I

am a Colorado native who grew up in the area. After attending school, working in Melbourne, Fla., meeting my husband and having three children, I always dreamt of returning to my home state. I envisioned raising my babies in the most amazing community, and moved back in 2020. I love everything about Colorado—hiking, biking, nature's beauty, and our community. I am drawn to Monument for its quality lifestyle where families can raise children comfortably, infrastructure is well-maintained, and where people can be confident in well-managed growth. Monument is a very unique town with special people and I'm truly blessed to call it home.

I have a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering, a master's in Systems Engineering, and an MBA. I work in the defense industry and I strive to be successful in protecting our country through developing and expanding technology for our military and the nation's defense.

I would love to extend my passion for our community as a Triview Metropolitan District board director. As a project engineer, I believe I will well serve

the community's need for long-term planning, maintenance, and improvement. As a Monument resident, I'm appreciative of Triview's recent upgrade of surrounding playgrounds, landscape improvements, and efforts to reduce our dependency on non-renewable well water. As a board member, I will focus on our open spaces, parks, renewable water resources, and maximizing our tax dollars to the fullest extent. I look forward to working with members of our community and current directors of the board to continue to enrich and maximize our area's potential.

### Barrett Edwards

As of press time, OCN had not receive a response from Barrett Edwards.

### Jason Gross

Retired Lt. Col. Jason Gross has lived in Monument since 2016. His 24-year military career included leadership and management responsibilities for both projects and organizations. He currently works for Space Force's Space Systems Command integrating

TRIVIEW CANDIDATES (Cont. on 20)





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TRIVIEW CANDIDATES (Cont. from 18)

new satellite tracking capabilities into the U.S. Space Surveillance Network. Jason has a strong track record of successful teamwork to solve complex problems and looks forward to applying his experience to help Triview Metro District provide a sustainable, safe, and family-centered environment for our community.

Jason has been married to his wife Shannon for 23 years. Shannon is a teacher in the Lewis- Palmer School District. They have four children, two of whom graduated from Lewis-Palmer High School and two are currently attending.

As a Triview board member, his initial focus would be ensuring the corner of Jackson Creek and Higbee Road near Lewis-Palmer High School is updated to improve traffic flow. Currently, the intersection is dangerous and often congested. New development is increasing traffic in that area, and the many inexperienced drivers that go to and from the high school requires thoughtful design to help keep both pedestrians and other drivers safe.

Jason’s other priorities include ensuring Triview maintains focus on long-term sustainable water supplies, adequate street and open space maintenance, and ensuring taxes are kept as low as possible and be spent appropriately.

Ann-Marie Jojola

1. *What in your background would help you in serving on this board?* Through many of my current and past positions, from my 20-year career in the U.S. Air Force, working with law enforcement, finance, childcare or volunteering, integrity, professionalism, commitment, determination, a strong work ethic is among my strengths. My ability to work well with others, adapt to varying environments and problem solve while providing quality, timely responses have significantly contributed to my successful efforts in building strong, lasting relationships with internal and external offices and organizations. I believe my qualifications and experiences as well as having the desire to continue to make our community a better place for all who live and work here would make me a valued TMD board member.

2. *What are one or two of the biggest issues facing the district and what should be done about them?* TMD continues to lead the way to provide for our current water needs while also anticipating and planning for what will be needed upon full build out. I find it complicated yet fascinating. It is impressive to see the hard work that has been done to date by the board, who are members of our community. They ask the hard questions and tackle obstacles all with the community at the forefront of their minds. I want to contribute to this effort, first with seeing the NDS to completion, and then to continue the development of the renewable water system.

TMD makes the time to care for customers; they take pride in their work and maintain regular communication across our community. These traits appealed to me and being able to give back to my community on TMD’s Board of Directors would be another way to serve my community. Thank you for your time and your vote.

Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, March 15

Board of Directors election canceled

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD) meeting on March 15, the board heard the 2023 Board of Directors election had been canceled and that a new recruit had dropped out of firefighter training.

**Note:** The meeting was held in person in the boardroom at Station 1 due to the remodel of the community room.

Board of Directors election

Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn said the 2023 Board of Directors election had been canceled because there were only two candidates for two seats, saving the district \$18,000. The paperwork had been filed with the state. The two incumbent self-nominees Treasurer Jack Hinton and Vice Chairman James Abendschan will serve four-year terms, she said.

Board Secretary Donna Arkowski said the two board members will be sworn in at the May 17 meeting.

Financial report

Hinton said the district received about \$1.488 million in property taxes in March, and it is expected to receive about \$77,000 for wildland deployments. The district had a total of about \$3.475 million in total assets at the end of February. The largest expenditure was \$25,840 for structural Personal Protective Equipment.

The board unanimously accepted the financial report as presented.

2022 audit engagement letter

After the meeting, Dunn confirmed to OCN that earlier in March the district had engaged Schilling & Company Inc., Highlands Ranch, to conduct the 2022 audit. See [www.ocn.me/v23n3.htm#bffrpd](http://www.ocn.me/v23n3.htm#bffrpd).

Tender sale discussion

Fire Chief PJ Langmaid said the tender truck sale discussion, although posted on the agenda, was postponed until further information on the market for tender sales could be provided to the board.

**Note:** The district is expecting to receive a new tender later in the year.

Department report

Dunn said the district received about \$21,552 in ambulance revenue and there were no notable expenses for February. The remodel of the community room at Station 1 is still in progress, and the district is still

waiting for an inspection to install a gas meter in the barn at Station 1.

**Note:** The district is installing heating in the barn at Station 1 to create a workshop for the district mechanic.

Recruitment update

Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg said the district had two new recruits enrolled in the Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) Fire Academy. Langmaid said the district hired three new recruits, but one quit the academy quickly. The district is changing its hiring process to avoid a future recurrence of issues with high altitude adjustment. The district conducts a nationwide hiring process, and an offer of employment was made to the next candidate on the list, he said.

Piepenburg also said:

- The district assisted Falcon Fire Protection District with a barn fire.
- The district assisted CSFD with a 15-foot trench rescue after a worker had fallen into it.
- The on-duty crews received “Blue Card” command training to ensure the district is using the same language as neighboring departments.
- Several staff members received their Ice-Rescue Certification at Fountain Fire Protection District.
- The district completed a total of 1,452 hours of training in February.
- Wildland Deployment requests for assistance are expected in the coming months.
- The district’s Self Contained Breathing Apparatus Air-Pak units were flow tested.

El Paso County

Emergency Incident Support

El Paso County Emergency Incident Support (EPCEIS) President Gary Nelson announced the organization supported on average about one incident per week in 2022. EPCEIS also provides support during firefighter training and open houses. With 36 active members, the organization is available 24/7, 365 days a year, he said.

Chairman Nate Dowden thanked Nelson and his organization for the continued support.

Langmaid said the department had partnered with EPCEIS in the past and donated an ambulance to the organization in September 2020. EPCEIS vol-

unteers provide countywide food and shelter to first responders in all weather conditions, he said.

For more information on the 501c non-profit volunteer organization, visit <https://epceis.com>.

Public comment

Two residents of Arrowhead and Mountain View Drives voiced concern over first responder access, the planned paving of Howells Road, the anticipated increased traffic due to new developments, and the two neighboring District 20 schools that would further burden Old Ranch Road.

Langmaid said Howells Road had been annexed into the City of Colorado Springs, and the intent is to pave the road. He said he had received telephone calls on the subject recently and he advised the residents to reach out to the City Council members, the mayor, and the planners.

Dowden thanked the residents for voicing their concerns and said he wished the board could help, but the problems were out of the fire district’s and board’s responsibility.

One resident asked if placing a cistern on her property would be helpful.

Langmaid said water is always helpful to firefighters, and he directed the resident to research cistern recommendations at [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org).

Executive session

The board moved into an executive session at 7:31 p.m. pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes section 24-6-402(3.a.V.), for the purpose of discussing compensation matters that may be subject to negotiations with employees or employee organizations.

Dowden said before the executive session that no action would be taken.

The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

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Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month at Station 1, 11455 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. Meetings are open to the public in person or via Zoom. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 19 at 7 p.m. For joining instructions, updates, agendas, minutes, and reports, 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).

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, March 22

Local COVID emergency status ends; vehicle storage agreement approved

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) meeting on March 22, the board terminated the local COVID-19 disaster emergency declaration, approved a vehicle storage agreement for two nonprofit organizations, and recommended funding to memorialize a firefighter. The board also received multiple district updates and scheduled a special meeting in April to approve the sub-district dissolution process and amend the budget.

**Note:** The Board of Directors’ election was canceled

due to a lack of additional candidates.

Director Mike Forsythe was excused.

Local COVID disaster emergency terminated

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs said the district had been under a local disaster emergency since March 17, 2020 due to the SARS-COVID-19 virus, and he recommended the board approve Resolution 2023-02 ordering the termination of the declaration of the local disaster emergency. See [www.ocn.me/v20n4](http://www.ocn.me/v20n4).

[htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v20n4).

The board approved the resolution, 4-0.

Vehicle storage agreements

Michelle Ferguson of Ireland Stapleton Pryor Pascoe PC law firm requested the board approve the vehicle storage agreements for two nonprofit organizations: Emergency Incident Support and the American Red Cross. The organizations are using the Sun Hills property (formerly DWFPD Station 3) for vehicle storage and food and beverage preparation. See [www.ocn](http://www.ocn).





**Above:** The new Pierce Type 1 engine arrives in Monument on Feb. 13. The engine will receive equipment and be placed into service at Station 4 after a “push-in” ceremony in April. *Photo courtesy of MFD.*

[me/v22n10.htm#dwfpd](#) and [www.ocn.me/v22n11.htm#dwfpd](#).

President Mark Gunderman said the contracts had been changed from a minimum liability of \$5 million insurance coverage to \$1 million for both parties in accordance with the value of the property.

The board approved the rental agreements, 4-0. **Note:** Both organizations will use the Sun Hills property at no cost. The district paid about \$7,932 in utilities for the Sun Hills property last year.

**Request to memorialize firefighter**

Lt. Roger Lance requested funding up to \$1,500 for a memorialization plaque in honor of Firefighter/Paramedic Doug McIntyre. Lance said that McIntyre had served the Gleneagle community for 18 years and responded to over 10,000 calls during his career, saving countless lives. For many of the medics, he was their first partner and taught the difference between what was taught in EMT school and how it really works on the street. During his career, McIntyre was recognized by the Colorado State Assembly, by the U.S. Congress and was awarded the medal of valor, but most importantly he was a mentor, a brother, a friend, and an inspiration to the crews at Wescott. McIntyre took a medical retirement in 2017 and passed away unexpectedly in 2021, and the concern is that as time passes, his story will fade, Lance said.

Lt. Kurt Leonberger said that since McIntyre had built the roof on the gazebo at Station 4, the intent is to hold a small dedication service there and install a plaque in his honor.

Gunderman said the board is fully supportive of the project and that the decision ultimately falls to Kovacs.

Kovacs said the district is happy to honor the request, and the funding source will be identified. He requested Lance and Leonberger proceed with the project, and the district will find a day and time to celebrate the life of McIntyre.

**Subdistrict dissolution process update**

Ferguson requested the district hold a brief special meeting on April 24 at 4:30 p.m. to approve the letter that the district’s attorney, Emily Powell, was preparing for the sub-district dissolution. The letter allows the sub-district to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District dba Monument Fire District (MFD). Until the merger is completed, for legal purposes the district is still Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District and doing business as MFD. The vast majority of the DWFPD residents reside in the sub-district (northern portion of the district). After board approval, a court petition will be filed around May 1, she said. See [www.ocn.me/v23n2.htm#dwfpd](#).

*Monument Fire District, March 22*

**Four board directors elected; cell phone tower contract approved**

*By Natalie Barszcz*

At the Monument Fire District (MFD) meeting on March 22, the board elected four board directors and approved a cell tower contract and the first payment on the ladder truck. The board also approved snow removal equipment and heard about a change of plans for a training center and the plans for a station rebuild and three station remodels.

**Board of Directors election**

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs requested the board approve Resolution 2023-02 canceling the regular Board of Directors election for May 2 and declaring the following candidates elected for four-year terms: Jason

The board approved the special meeting, 4-0. **Board of Directors election canceled**  
Incumbent Director Charles Fleece, Treasurer Duane Garrett, and Secretary Larry Schwarz all submitted self-nomination forms and will begin four-year tenures in May 2023. There were no additional candidates, and all three directors will continue on the five-member board. The cancellation of the election was posted at [www.monumentfire.org](#) in early March. For more information, see [www.ocn.me/v23n2.htm#dwfpd](#).

**Financial reports**

Kovacs said that after the departure of Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich in late 2022, the district had decided to contract The Accounting Office Inc. to handle accounting. The change in accounting procedures would require the board to adopt an amended budget at the next board meeting. The district had received the bulk of property taxes in early March, and the first of the quarterly fund transfers of \$782,498 to MFD was scheduled to be made in March, he said. See [www.ocn.me/v23n2.htm#dwfpd](#).

Gunderman said the December financial report would be accepted after the budget amendment had been approved at the next meeting, and the cancellation of the election would provide \$32,000 in additional budgeted funds for the November election.

The board accepted the January and February financial reports as presented, 4-0.

**Chief’s report**

- Kovacs said the following:
- An update from district employee Firefighter/Paramedic Charles Ragland, the instructor representing the district at the Colorado Springs Fire Department’s Fire Academy, confirmed the seven district firefighter recruits are performing well.
  - The district completed 824 hours of training in February.
  - Emergency Medical Services responded to three out of four requests for service from American Medical Response. The number of requests remain steady compared to the first quarter of 2022.
  - Station 5 (Highway 83/Stage Coach Road) received back-lit red signage to match Stations 1 and 4.
  - Both water heaters were replaced at Station 5, and the rooftop HVAC unit at Station 4 was replaced. The units cost \$15,000 to \$20,000 each.

**Note:** Additional information can be found in the MFD article on page 21, and the monthly chief’s reports are available at [www.monumentfire.org](#).

Buckingham, Randall B. Estes, Roger K. Lance, and Thomas A. Tharnish. See [www.monumentfire.org](#). Note: Director Terri Hayes will serve the remaining two months of her six-year term. The new directors will begin their terms after the swearing in ceremony on May 24.

The board unanimously approved the resolution.

**Ladder truck payment approved**

Division Chief of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner said the district signed the papers and purchase documents for the ladder truck a year in advance to lock in the lower cost and payment plan after receiving board approval in January 2022. The

**NEPCO meeting**

Gunderman said he and Kovacs spoke at the Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) meeting on March 11. He talked to a group of about 20 representatives from various Monument and Gleneagle homeowners’ associations about the merger of the two districts, and Kovacs spoke to the group about wildland mitigation, he said. See the NEPCO article on page 22.

**Engine crew assist during water main break**

Fleece thanked Engineer Golden Rains and his crew for assisting during a water main break in his neighborhood in February. He said that it was lucky the crew had just wrapped up training when the water main break occurred. Academy Water and Sanitation District (AWSN) estimated about 2,200 gallons per minute were headed toward the barn on his property, and Rains and his crew helped for almost an hour until AWSN staff arrived, and he appreciated the Fire Department going above and beyond, he said.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

**Push-in ceremony**

After the meeting, Kovacs announced that Local 4319 will serve a pancake breakfast and hold a community “push-in” ceremony for the new engine 514 and the squad car on Sat., April 15, 10 am at Station 4. 15415 Gleneagle Drive, 80921. Please check the district website listed below for updates.

Meetings are usually held every other month on the fourth Wednesday at Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, 80132. The board will hold a special meeting on April 26 at 4:30 p.m., and the next regular board meeting is scheduled for May 24 at 4:30 p.m. Meeting attendance is open to the public in person or via Zoom. For joining instructions, agendas, minutes, and updates, visit [www.monumentfire.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).

FRONT RANGE  
**MAKER'S MARKET**  
**JUNE 17TH** 8:30AM TO 3:00PM  
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**Paul's Asphalt Service**  
*Top-quality asphalt paving and maintenance*  
**A+ rated by the BBB and great on-line reviews!**  
Hot mix asphalt paving • 5 types of asphalt sealcoating  
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**Paul Williams, Jr.**  
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Doors Open at 5:30 p.m.

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**Above:** Monument Fire District receives the Pierce F550 squad car. The multi-purpose vehicle is designed to carry advanced life support and firefighting equipment and will initially be placed into service at Station 5. *For more information, visit [www.ocn.me/v22n3.htm#tlmfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n3.htm#tlmfpd). Photo courtesy of MFD.*

first lease payment is now due to PNC bank, and he requested the board approve the first payment of \$152,009 for the ladder truck.

The board unanimously approved the payment plan.

The ladder truck was approved by the board for a total of \$1.575 million and is expected to be delivered in October, said Bumgarner. *See [www.ocn.me/v22n2.htm#mfd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n2.htm#mfd).*

**Station 5 cell phone tower**

Kovacs said the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District board had deferred a rental contract proposal with a cell phone company due to the merger workload, and he requested the board approve a letter of intent for a five-year lease agreement between the district and AT&T for a cell phone tower at Station 5 (Highway 83/Stage Coach Road). The rental of about 1,375 square feet would provide additional revenue for the district of about \$32,400 annually and bring fiber-optic capability to the station, he said. *See [www.ocn.me/v21n8.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v21n8.htm#dwfpd).*

The board unanimously approved the contract.

**Snow removal recommendation**

Kovacs said that after the February board meeting discussion about the expense of contract snow removal, the staff researched the cost of purchasing snow equipment and sent out a request for proposal for snow removal services.

Bumgarner said the following:

- The district had received three quotes and eight recommendations for snow plow equipment.
- The staff is considering fitting two or three vehicles in the fleet with plow equipment and possibly adding a sand/salt dispenser.
- The district has requested Greater Grounds not plow before 4 inches of snow lay on the ground.
- A request for proposals (RFPs) was sent out to 19 companies for snow removal services and the district had received two and is waiting for additional quotes. Information for the RFP can be found at [www.monumentfire.org](http://www.monumentfire.org).

Tharnish said it would be difficult to determine the snowfall amounts at each station due to the size of the district.

Treasurer Tom Kelly voiced concern that crews might not be available due to the typical high call out during snow events and advised an alternate plan.

Kovacs said a contingency plan would be needed. Typically, partner agencies request staff back on duty and pay time and a half for snow clearing, he said.

Buckingham suggested purchasing the equipment and maintaining a contract if district personnel are unavailable.

Kovacs said there was \$40,000 in the budget for a vehicle that was unavailable for purchase, and the funds could be allocated to snow removal equipment.

A board unanimously approved the purchase of

up to \$15,000 of snow removal equipment without a salt/sand dispenser.

**Station 1 Training Center update**

Division Chief of Operations Jonathan Bradley said the future of the district training center had circled back to the Station 1 property, and the staff will begin laying out the property for a center. The district is discussing shared training facilities with the Colorado Springs Fire Department and the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, with a goal to reduce costs by avoiding duplicated facilities with a multi-site plan, but plans remain conceptual. The district remains positive and will plan to develop the training site as a group and independently and costs are unknown, he said.

**Facilities update**

Bumgarner said the district is working with OZ Architects and reported:

- The architect made changes to the Station 2 remodel plan as requested by the board in February. The design now has brought the restroom out of the weight room and has an added sixth bedroom on the upper level, allowing for a six-person fire suppression crew and a two-person medic unit. A bid to replace the 20-year-old bay doors has been requested due to a bowed door and the smoked glass affecting visibility.
- The Station 3 contract for the 1.77 acres (north of the YMCA) has been reviewed by the district legal team, and changes were made. The district will bring on an owner representative to ensure a smooth process during contract negotiations.
- The new Station 3 design will be single story with administration offices and parking for staff and crews. Accommodations to the lot will be limited due to other buildings behind the station. The current Station 3 contract for sale is also in progress.

Kovacs said the design is not compromising anything with a 15,000-square-foot building and four or five additional offices planned for the future additional staff positions. The station will house a ladder truck, the squad vehicle, and the battalion chief vehicle, he said.

Bumgarner said:

- The Station 4 plan is close to being ready for bid. The architects are providing a plan for alternate bathroom facilities, and the remodel will include the kitchen and a private bedroom for the officer. The large bunk room will be enclosed to create four individual sleeping spaces. The station will have space to accommodate seven.
- Station 5 will also require enclosing the large bunkroom to create seven rooms, and the station will accommodate nine personnel with the existing rooms.
- The district is still in negotiations to purchase

land for a future Station 6 in the south of the district. *See [www.ocn.me/v23n3.htm#mfd](http://www.ocn.me/v23n3.htm#mfd).*

Kovacs said Bradley had visited each station to seek input before the facility upgrades commenced, and said the crews are happy with the plans.

**Palmer Lake contract update**

Kovacs said in January the district received a notice from the Town of Palmer Lake to terminate the contract to provide ambulance service. The town has since requested an extension to go beyond the 90-day termination notice to allow time to negotiate the terms for a new contract, he said. *See [www.ocn.me/v23n2.htm#mfd](http://www.ocn.me/v23n2.htm#mfd).*

**Fire technician position update**

Bumgarner said the first candidate did not accept the fire technician position but the second candidate did and will likely begin in late April.

**Fire Camp recruitment effort**

Kovacs said the district will host the first Monument Fire Camp for local high school students. The hope is to introduce and encourage students to consider fire and EMS service careers. The camp will run from June 3-5 and will hopefully continue as an annual program for high school students. The first camp was advertised at the local high schools and on the district website, with a limit of 12 students. The slots were filled within two days, and the district has a waiting list.

**Financial report**

The February financial report was unanimously accepted as presented.

**Note:** The financial report can be viewed at [www.monumentfire.org](http://www.monumentfire.org).

**Chief’s report**

Kovacs highlighted the following:

- Battalion Chief Mike Dooley announced his retirement from the fire service effective June 28.
- Battalion Chief Shannon Balvanz will fill the battalion chief of training position. The position is currently filled by Battalion Chief Kris Mola who will return to shift battalion chief this year.
- Battalion Chief Mike Keough retired from the fire service in January 2022, and recently completed an Air Force reserve commitment. A retirement ceremony is scheduled at Station 1 on Saturday, May 13 at 8 a.m.
- Several members of the executive staff attended the Center for Public Safety Excellence annual conference in Orlando, Fla., from Feb. 27 to March 4. Several software vendors were identified to assist the district’s pursuit in obtaining agency accreditation.
- A bystander was awarded the distinguished service award for going above and beyond to extinguish a fire at a home on Ranchero Drive, Monument. The resident wished to remain anonymous, and the district mailed the award.

**Note:** For additional information, see the DWFPD article on page 20.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

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**Push-in ceremony**

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Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for April 26 at 6:30 p.m. Meeting attendance is open to the public in person or via Zoom. For joining instructions, agendas, minutes, and updates, visit [www.monumentfire.org](http://www.monumentfire.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).*

**Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Organizations**

**NEPCO hears from fire officials**

*By Marlene Brown*

The Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Organizations (NEPCO) held its general membership bi-monthly meeting March 11 at the Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) Barn Community Center. Bob Swedenberg, vice president, introduced board and committee members.

Swedenberg also discussed County Ordinance No. 22-002 regarding parking on county roads in Homeowner Association (HOA) areas. Numerous HOAs

sent emails to the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) recommending that the exception for indefinite parking of specialized vehicles be rejected. The county ordinance was passed for the regulation of traffic by the BOCC, adopting the 2020 edition of the “model traffic code” repealing all ordinances in conflict as registered with the county clerk and recorder. For the full ordinance, go to <https://clerkandrecorder.elpasoco.com>.

Larry Oliver, director of Membership, stated

NEPCO has 47 members/homeowners associations representing over 10,000 homes and 20,000 registered voters within the NEPCO area.

Harold Larson, member-at-large, is now on the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) representing NEPCO and the Tri-Lakes area. The mission of PPACG, a voluntary organization of 16 counties and municipalities, is to provide a forum for local governments. *See [www.ppacg.org](http://www.ppacg.org).*

Beth Lonnquist of Red Rock Ranch spoke about





**Above:** At left, Jim Reid, regional director of the Pikes Peak Office of Emergency Management, announces his retirement. At right is Chief Kevin Nielsen of Woodmoor Public Safety. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*

taking expenses for fire mitigation off taxes owed on Line 65 on the 1040 tax form, regarding Colorado HB16-1052 Wildfire Mitigation Income Tax Credit. The bill changed the wildfire mitigation income tax credit. As stated on the Colorado Legislature website [www.leg.colorado.gov](http://www.leg.colorado.gov), an income tax deduction reduces a taxpayer's taxable income. A tax credit reduces a taxpayer's liability by taking a dollar-for-dollar reduction in what is owed by what the credit allows. It allows a

landowner a credit of 25% of the costs incurred in performing wildfire mitigation measures not to exceed \$2,500. Any amount more than the landowner's tax liability in the year the credit is first claimed may be carried forward to offset the landowner's tax liability for five years.

Lonnquist also reminded everyone that it is time to sign up for the Monument Fire for Chipping Day. HOAs can sign up for free and the Fire Department will send a chipper and two firefighters to help homeowners with tree and bush limbs.

Swedenberg introduced special guests Mark Gunderman, president, Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) Board of Directors, and Andy Kovacs, fire chief for the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD). Gunderman explained how they spent \$50,000 on an Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) Feasibility Study. The benefits of unifications are the realization of economies of scale between the two departments, better resources and coverage, and better pay for DWFPD personnel without raising taxes, Gunderman said.

Kovacs has been TLMFPD chief for two years and has 30 years in the fire service. His focus has been pre-fire planning; zone haven, an evacuation tool; free home inspections by firefighters; and 21 chipping events this year. Eventually, DWFPD will be dissolved and the mill levy will be reduced to match TLMFPD. The new district will be named Monument Fire District.

Bob Mooney, Transportation and Land Use Committee chair, reported that the Monument Planning Commission (MPC) will recommend reinstating Hay Creek subdivision. The plan proposes 213 acres in 20 parcels with a minimum parcel of 5.5 acres. Terra Ridge North proposes 11 2.5-acre lots. Lots will have individual wells and septic systems.

NEPCO is looking for help regarding the Land Use Committee. Contact Mooney at [bobmooney01@msn.com](mailto:bobmooney01@msn.com) or 719-930-9735.

Jim Reid, regional director for the Pikes Peak Office of Emergency Management (PPOEM), announced his retirement after 20 years of leadership service with El Paso County. He served as executive director of the Public Works Department and the county OEM director with a budget of over \$35 million, 170 employees, 2,100 miles of roadway, 22,000 acres of right-of-way and 273 bridges. Since Reid became director of PPOEM, it has concentrated on zone haven, evacuation exercises, and emergency response times.

For more information about PPOEM, go to <https://admin.elpasoso.com/pproem>.

NEPCO meetings are usually held on the second Saturday of every other month at the Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr., 10 a.m. to noon. Next meeting is May 13. All members of HOAs are welcome. For more information, see <http://nepco.org>.

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

Woodmoor Improvement Association, March 22

Board approves revisions to design manual

By Jackie Burhans

At its March meeting, the Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board approved revisions to its Project Design Standards Manual (PDSM), postponing its response to a resident's concern about a neighbor's shed. It also approved the acquisition of a hybrid Toyota RAV4 to replace an aging Jeep. Board members also provided reports.

**Revised PDSM applies to resident concern**  
Resident Jennifer Davis addressed the board to call attention to a covenant violation she had submitted on March 1 for which she had not gotten a confirmation or response. Her complaint pertained to a shed installed in South Woodmoor that has a gable roof while the home has a hip roof. The covenants for South Woodmoor require that other structures be in harmony with the external design of the primary dwelling, she noted. She also expressed concern that the roof pitch on the shed was in violation of the PDSM and that it was not installed on a concrete foundation.

President Brian Bush apologized that WIA's response was delayed and she had not yet received it. He noted that the PDSM was a living document and might not reflect the current guidance followed by WIA and the Architectural Control Committee (ACC). ACC administrator Bob Pearsall also noted that the complaint was received on the 1st and the next available ACC meeting was on the 14th, after which director of Architectural Control Ed Miller needed some time to fashion a response.

Bush noted that the ACC had adopted changes over time, some of which were just now being incorporated into the PDSM. He asked that Davis review the updated PDSM in light of her concerns and then come back to discuss it with board members or the

ACC administrator. He noted that she still had the ability to object to decisions made by the ACC or the board.

Later in the meeting, Miller moved to approve the PDSM as revised by the ACC. Bush noted that all board members had had an opportunity to review the changes. Pearsall characterized the changes as updating the PDSM to reflect current guidance and adding a section on subdividing lots that a resident had noted was missing. The board voted unanimously to approve the revised PDSM.

The PDSM, covenants, and other governing documents can be found on the WIA website at <https://woodmoor.org/governance/>.

Toyota hybrid to replace aging Jeep

Board member and director of Woodmoor Public Safety (WPS) Brad Gleason moved to approve an expenditure not to exceed \$38,000 to acquire a 2023 Toyota RAV4 Hybrid to replace one of the 2019 Jeep Cherokees.

Bush commended Gleason and Chief Kevin Nielsen for their extensive analysis and noted that the vehicle being replaced had over 100,000 miles and had issues with reliability. WIA hopes to save on fuel costs and will analyze this vehicle to inform future purchases. The board unanimously approved the request.

Board highlights

- Bush noted that he had met with El Paso County officials and learned that Highway 105 Project A, to widen the highway from the Kum & Go to Lake Woodmoor Drive, would start in June or July. Monument Academy will separately put in a loop this summer that goes around the back of its building and feeds to a roundabout on Knoll-

wood Drive at Village Ridge Point that the county will install as part of its project to improve traffic safety.

- Bush said the developer may start improving Jackson Creek Parkway (JCP) from the future Whataburger to Highway 105 this summer. The section of JCP to Higby is the responsibility of the Town of Monument.
- Project B on Highway 105 between Lake Woodmoor Drive (LWD) to Martingale Road, funded for 2024, will flatten hills and install extensive retaining walls with fences on top. Below LWD there will be a four-lane road, and above LWD there will be a three-lane road with a "T" intersection at Fairplay and Furrow Road. The "T" intersection will be a lane, concrete divider, left-turn lane, and another concrete divider.
- Bush met with the developer of North Bay and Waterside who said they will designate a piece of land behind The Barn as part of the homeowners association of Waterside and put in a deed restriction so that no one can build on it.
- Gleason reported that WPS has hired Darrin Abbink, a retired lieutenant from the Colorado Springs Police Department.

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 April 26.

The WIA calendar can be found 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).*

March Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

It was an interesting March around the region with colder than normal temperatures but very little snowfall. This combination is rare. Usually if March is cold it is also snowy, and if March is dry it is warm. But not this year. This is also a little disappointing, as it would have been nice to continue the trend of above-normal moisture we have seen in the last few months. The good news is that snow continued to pile up in the mountains with the exception of the Arkansas River basin. In fact, the San Juan Mountains of southwest Colorado have been setting records for seasonal snowfall. Just as important, if not more, most of the western U.S. has seen copious amounts of snowfall. Most amazing is the amounts of snowfall that have already occurred this year, with many locations already breaking their all-time seasonal accumulations.

All this moisture in the western U.S. is, of course,

very good news for helping alleviate some of the extreme drought conditions that have been occurring for the last several years. Now let's hope the snow melts out "gracefully" as we head into spring and summer. If not, we will be dealing with some major flood issues throughout the region, especially for areas west of the Continental Divide.

For us along the Palmer Divide, temperatures were below normal for the first week of the month, with highs in the 30s and 40s and a little light snowfall on the 1st and 3rd. Even cooler air moved in on the 7th with areas of low clouds and fog along with some freezing drizzle and flurries through the morning of the 9th. Highs were below freezing on the 7th and 8th as well.

Skies cleared on the 9th and the stronger March sunshine helped temperatures warm quickly, reaching the upper 50s by the 10th. After a brief cool down

on the 11th and 12th, the warmest temperatures of the month took hold on the 14th and 15th, topping out in the mid-60s and melting most of the remaining snowpack.

The most organized storm of the month then moved through in the next few days. This storm had all the signs of a spring system in the region, with mild air initially and areas of rain showers and ice pellets just after midnight on the 16th quickly turning to snow and blowing snow. Unsettled and cold conditions continued the next day with highs barely reaching the freezing mark.

Spring-like conditions settled in over the remainder of the month, with highs bouncing around from the mid- to upper 50s on the 21st and 22nd to just above the freezing mark on the 25th and 26th. Several of the days started off quiet with mostly clear skies giving way to convective snow showers by late morn-



ing and early afternoon. Unfortunately, no organized systems moved through, so snow showers were scattered and didn't produce any significant accumulations. Temperatures were below normal for most of the last two weeks of the month.

**A look ahead**

April is known for a wide range of weather conditions in the region and is on average our snowiest month of the year. We can see 70° temperatures one afternoon and blizzard conditions the next. Several recent years have seen over 50 inches of snow accumulate during the month. Of course, it also melts very quickly, often adding beneficial moisture to the soil and helping the vegetation, which is just getting started.

**March 2023 Weather Statistics**

Average High	43.8° (-8.4°)
100-year return frequency value max	57.9° min 38.0°
Average Low	18.3° (-3.3°)
100-year return frequency value max	27.0° min 12.0°

Highest Temperature	66° on the 15th
Lowest Temperature	5° on the 18th
Monthly Precipitation	0.33" (-1.26", 80% below normal)
100-year return frequency value max	4.29" min 0.22"
Monthly Snowfall	6.4" (-13.9", 70% below normal)
Season to Date Snow	69.5" (-21.4", 25% below normal) (the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip.	2.05" (-1.19", 35% below normal) (the precip season is from Oct 1 to Sept 30)
Heating Degree Days	1052 (+139)
Cooling Degree Days	0

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me.



**Above:** On March 20, the first day of spring, fast-moving clouds deliver short, light bursts of snow over Monument. Monument Rock is on the right a bit below the middle of the photo. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

## 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. The letters are in order by the author's last name.

### Necessary mitigation

If you were upset and thinking that the wildfire mitigation efforts underway at Monument Preserve are ugly, imagine the catastrophic conflagration that could occur if such mitigation wasn't done. Imagine the heartache if one of your beloved places was burned to a crisp, reduced to nothing but blackened stalks of trees and scorched earth. Trails would be closed because of the danger of dead trees falling on hikers and bikers. It may not be pretty right now, but if you've spent any time outdoors, you know that nature rejuvenates itself. The vegetation will come back and we'll have a healthier forest land. More important, we'll have a more defensible forest, if and when flames come licking for more.

Those of us who do not have a degree in forest management or may be unfamiliar with the term Wildland Urban Interface, would do well to trust the

professionals. By the way, take a look at your own property and see where mitigation might benefit your property and make you safer. There are knowledgeable people, particularly if you live in Woodmoor, who will come out and help you decide what you can do to achieve that. You'll find that you can perform mitigation and still have a very nice-looking property.

**Bill Beagle**

**D38 demographics changes are important**  
It is not about school district money, it is about having a plan for teachers and student population changes.

Our school district neighbors in Denver closed schools apparently because they did not see or plan for the growing student loss over the previous years. School districts and boards like D38 are expected to identify changing demographics and plan in advance, not spring school district decisions on the community without specific detailed plans.

D38 demographics have changed over the last three years, and it is important D38 strategic plans are updated not only on a scheduled basis, but when rapid changes occur over a short period of time to account for inflation, population shifts, staffing, and budget changes.

Our Denver neighbors are learning district plans should be dynamic and be quickly reviewed with the community as conditions change and certainly before school closure decisions are quickly made.

President Reagan is famous for saying "Trust but verify." Significant D38 demographic household changes, growth estimates, budget assumptions, curriculum evolution, and classroom teacher requirements are coming or already here. Community verification is difficult in an information-sparse environment.

D38 plans seem to be lagging in reflecting the new reality of rapid inflation, competitive staff recruiting, addressing deferred maintenance, and sadly a successful comprehensive vision for the future of our district.

A change in D38 is overdue and November elections are coming soon. Choose wisely and express your opinion just as the Town of Monument community governance decision and successful vote proved are essential for a better future.

**Gordon Reichal**

## Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

### The power of human connection

By the staff at Covered Treasures

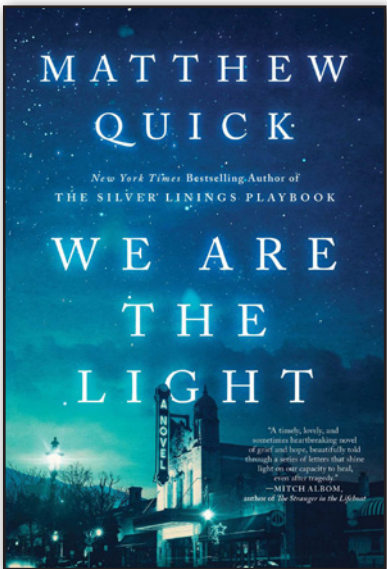
*"Social connection is such a basic feature of human experience that when we are deprived of it, we suffer."—Leonard Mlodinow*

If we have learned anything these last few years, it's the powerful need for human connection. These non-fiction and fiction books are noteworthy reads centering on this.

#### We Are the Light

By Matthew Quick (Avid Reader Press) \$27.99

A widower takes in a grieving teenager and inspires a magical revival in Majestic, Penn., a small, quaint town torn apart by tragedy. Everyone sees Lucas as a hero, except Lucas. Insisting that his deceased wife visits him as an angel, Lucas spends his time writing letters to his former therapist. Then Lucas and Eli form an unlikely alliance, embarking on a journey to heal their neighbors and themselves. This unforgettable, optimistic tale reminds us that life is full of guardian angels.



#### Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World

By Vivek H. Murthy, MD (Harper) \$29.99

Dr. Vivek Murthy's message is about the importance of human connection, the hidden impact of loneliness, and the social power of community. He makes a case that loneliness affects not only our health but also how our children experience school, how we perform in the workplace, and the sense of division and polarization in our society. At the center is our innate desire to connect. We are, simply, better together.

#### The Good Life: Lessons from the World's Longest Scientific Study of Happiness

By Robert Waldinger, MD and Marc Schultz, PhD (Simon & Schuster) \$28.99

What makes a life fulfilling and meaningful? The stronger our relationships in all their forms—friendships, romantic partnerships, families, coworkers, book club members, Bible study groups—the more likely we are to live happy, satisfying, and healthier lives. The Harvard Study of Adult Development reveals that the strength of our connections with others can predict the health of our bodies and brains as we go through life. It's never too late to strengthen current relationships and to build new ones.

#### B.F.F.: A Memoir of Friendship Lost and Found

By Christie Tate (Avid Reader Press) \$28

A heartwarming memoir about Christie Tate's lifelong struggle to sustain female friendship and the friend who helps her find the human connection she seeks. With Meredith, 20 years older, by her side, Christie embarks on a brutally honest exploration of her friendships past and present. B.F.F. explores what happens when we finally break the habits that impair our ability to connect with others, and the ways that one life can change another.

#### The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma

By Bessel Van Der Kolk, MD (Penguin) \$19

Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, one of the world's foremost experts on trauma, has spent over three decades working with survivors. He uses scientific advances to show how trauma literally reshapes both body and brain, compromising sufferers' capacities for pleasure, engagement, self-control, and trust. He explores innovative treatments, exposes the tremendous power of our relationships to hurt and to heal, and offers new hope for reclaiming lives.

#### The Half Known Life: In Search of Paradise

By Pico Iyer (Riverhead Books) \$26

Paradise: that elusive place where the anxieties, struggles, and burdens of life fall away. Pico Iyer brings together a lifetime of explorations to upend our ideas of utopia and how we might find peace amid difficulty and suffering. He brings together the outer world and the inner to offer us a surprising, original, often beautiful exploration of how we might come upon paradise amid our very real lives.

#### A Thread of Grace

By Mary Doria Russell (Ballantine) \$17

It is 1943, and 14-year-old Claudette Blum and her father are among thousands of Jewish refugees scrambling over the Alps toward Italy. The Blums discover that Italy is anything but peaceful, as it quickly becomes an open battleground for the Nazis, the Allies, Resistance fighters, Jews in hiding, and ordinary Italian civilians trying to survive. It tells the little-known story of the vast underground effort by Italian citizens who saved the lives of 43,000 Jews during the final phase of World War II. Profoundly moving, it engages the value and depths of human connection.

Until next month, happy reading.  
The staff at Covered Treasures can be reached at books@ocn.me.



April Library Events

# Quilt show continues

By Harriet Halbig

The quilts made by the Palmer Divide Quiltmakers will remain on display through April. Patrons can come and enjoy the variety of techniques and colors. There will be many programs at the library for all ages during April. Go to our website, [ppld.org](http://ppld.org), and look under classes by location. In some cases registration is required.

We hope to see you soon at the library.  
*Harriet Halbig may be reached at [harriethalbig@ocn.me](mailto:harriethalbig@ocn.me)*

**Right:** Palmer Divide Quiltmakers (PDQ) held its 21st annual quilt show at the Monument branch library in March. Members contribute to the community by providing pillows, turbans, and hats for adults and children undergoing cancer treatment in the Colorado Springs area. The club's Blanket Brigade members gather weekly to piece and tie quilts for local children in need of comfort. PDQ raises money at local craft sales to help bring quilters from around the world to speak at the meetings and conduct classes for members. PDQ welcomes new members and meets the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, 166 Second St., Monument. *Photos by Janet Sellers.*



Palmer Lake Historical Society, Feb. 16

# History of the KKK in Denver presented

By Marlene Brown

At the March 16 meeting of the Palmer Lake Historical Society (PLHS), special guest speaker Shaun Boyd, curator of History Colorado, presented a program on the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the greater Denver area in the 1920s. Even though it was a dark time in Colorado history, the Colorado History Society has procured archives of the KKK membership and be able record in history as far the activities of the KKK of the time.

In the early 1900s there were about 100,000 people living in the Denver area, with about one-third being members of the KKK. As many as 30,000 people would show up for an event. The events were political and condoned violence. In 1915, *The Birth of a Nation* was the first nationally released film. The film was controversial and has remained so ever since as "the most reprehensibly racist film in Hollywood history." The film has since been denounced for its racist depiction of African Americans, according to [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org).

Many of Denver's well-known residents, including Mayor Benjamin Franklin Stapleton who served five terms, 1923-31 and 1935-47, was a member of the

KKK. He also was the Democratic Colorado state auditor from 1933 to 1935.

Though the Klan came to Colorado in 1921, they were disbanded by 1929. The records and membership ledgers can be viewed at [historycolorado.org/kkkledgers](http://historycolorado.org/kkkledgers). There were no known members on the ledgers from the Tri-Lakes area.

\*\*\*\*\*

Next month's program is scheduled to be *Treasure Trove of Local History—Pikes Peak Library District Collections* by Brett Lobello, director of Regional History and Genealogy. Lobello will share information about researching through the library district's special collections stored in the Carnegie Building next to the Penrose Library in Colorado Springs. The public is welcome to learn how to research for special projects.

The next meeting is scheduled for 7 to 8:30 p.m. April 20 (doors open at 6:30) at the Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent St. For more information, see [palmerdividehistory.org](http://palmerdividehistory.org). The PLHS offered a special "thank you" to Sigi Walker for her longtime work and support to the group and her special talents for the

upkeep of the website and newsletter.  
*Marlene Brown can be reached by email at [malenebrown@ocn.me](mailto:malenebrown@ocn.me).*



**Above:** Shaun Boyd, curator of History Colorado, presents her program on the history of the KKK in Denver to the Palmer Lake Historical Society. March 16. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

# Plants can fill us with food and fill our electrical energy needs, too

By Janet Sellers

Garden friends, it's April and that means outdoors we'll have snow and sunshine and rain and every mix of weather here in our area of Colorado. That's not good news for outdoor planting unless you have a greenhouse to protect everything. But we can start tomatoes and other plants that take four to six months to grow.

We technically have a very short growing season, only 26 days. But we can start things indoors, get them going and then give them a protective covering for the month of June until they get going in the garden. We haven't had a lot of hail in our area lately, but a protective outdoor trick is to cover the garden bed with chicken wire. The hail bounces off the chicken wire and doesn't harm the plants.

Starting plants indoors from seeds is a good way to get things moving. Honestly, we shouldn't plant anything outdoors until Memorial Day. We have snow even in late May, and that can ruin a good start of outdoor seeds.

Successful gardeners in our area have told me they start these seeds in April: tomatoes and cucumbers, beans, herbs, and other plants that they want to give a head start for the season.

Another method that can be started in April for plants is to use the straw bale method. That requires three or four weeks of preparation by putting in very well composted soil between the flakes and watering between the flakes as well. This will start the special

composition for the straw to be ready for seeds. The straw not only provides a nice, inoculated substrate for the seeds but also insulates seeds from weather conditions while they are growing. I like straw bales because I don't have to bend down very far and it's basically an instant, inexpensive raised bed.

## Some curious plant facts

- *ScienceDaily.com* reports that, "by simply connecting a 'plug' to the plant stem, the electricity generated can be harvested and used to power electronic devices. IIT's researchers show that the voltage generated by a single leaf may reach

to more than 150 volts, enough to simultaneously power 100 LED light bulbs each time the leaf is touched."—Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia (IIT).

- Tomatoes ripen from the center out and the bottom up which means that you can harvest your tomatoes before they actually look ripe because of the way they ripen. You can put them on the window sill on the counter and they will continue to get redder but the flavor won't change.

*Janet Sellers is an avid organic "lazy" gardener. With minimal effort, she lets mother nature lead the way and take care of the growing. Send your garden tips to [JanetSellers@ocn.me](mailto:JanetSellers@ocn.me).*

On the Trail (in memory of Tim Watkins)

# Wildfire mitigation in Monument Preserve

By Steve Pate

Anyone who has hiked or biked in Monument Preserve, around the Rock, on either side of Mount Herman Road will be shocked to see the results of the United States Forest Service's (USFS) efforts to reduce the risk of wildfires in the preserve.

According to Friends of Monument Preserve (FOMP), "Most of you know that the USFS continues its three-year fire mitigation project in the 1,000 acres of open space surrounding the Monument Fire Center. According to the Fuels Management Office of the

Pikes Peak Ranger District, this area was designated as extremely high risk for high-intensity, potentially catastrophic wildfires. Thus, USFS concentrated its money and efforts here to protect the wildland-urban interface and surrounding communities."

To repair damage to trails in the preserve, FOMP will begin its regular trail work volunteer nights starting the second Tuesday in April through the second Tuesday in October. Additional workdays will be scheduled to repair significant damage caused by heavy equipment used to remove Gambel oak and



other fuel vegetation. Many trails have been damaged by the tires and tracks of this heavy machinery.

To participate in FOMP trail nights, you may simply show up or check the FOMP website, [fomp.org](http://fomp.org), for more details and schedules. These work nights will be from 5 to 7 p.m. in April through October and 6 to 8 p.m. May through September. Meet in the parking lot at the intersection of Mount Herman and

Nursery Roads, the Mount Herman trail trailhead.

While the original plan was to leave “islands” of ponderosa pines, small pines, and larger oaks, many areas have been razed while other areas are partially cleared or not touched at all. While this appears to be indiscriminate elimination of vegetation, it will eventually grow back. In the meantime, be cautious while hiking or biking in the



preserve and be alert for debris.  
*Steve Pate can be contacted at [stevepate@ocn.me](mailto:stevepate@ocn.me).*

**Above:** Wildfire mitigation area north of Mount Herman Road, March 6.  
*Photo by Steve Pate.*

Art Matters

Paper mache: a high art with a long history



*By Janet Sellers*

Paper and paper mache are materials that have found a high calling in fine art. In making art, an artist creates meaningful communication. Artists can use nearly any medium to create their art, and the value lies in the intention and imagination more than mere materials. Paper mache as artifacts will last hundreds of years if made well and kept properly. Treasured lacquerwares of Asia and Europe have kept their value in the art market, too.

The earliest paper mache has roots in the Far East and Middle East. At the time, it was a way to reuse a material that was rare, costly, and strong. Its

light weight gave advantages over other, heavier materials. The term “paper mache” (the English spelling) comes from the French for “chewed paper” as the rare and costly paper was mashed and recast into objets d’art and other artifacts.

Paper was invented in China in 105 A.D. and has both a humble and mighty reputation in the fine arts. There is a Chinese saying, “Life is as fragile as paper.” But in fine art and even warfare, paper is powerful. Wu dynasty impenetrable armor was made with paper mache.

The oldest preserved paper mache artifact is a falcon sarcophagus from

the Sassanid dynasty in Persia (224 A.D.), considered one of the best materials to use for coffins. Also used for pot lids, furniture, trays, bowls and even eyeglass cases, paper mache is a wildly popular creative medium for fine art, décor, and playthings.

Italian cartapesta was used in southern Italy instead of marble for life-size and larger-than-life religious statues and monuments since the 1700s. Italy Magazine reports that while cartapesta began in Lecce in the 17th century, it possibly had its origins in Naples with presepe (nativity) figures as well as the life-size models of saints made for Holy Week processions—

lighter to carry than wooden statues. Today, artists worldwide use paper and paper mache for their fine art works. It embodies aesthetic characteristics and techniques like no other material. Its light weight, workability, and durability maintain its unique position in the art world and for posterity.

*Janet Sellers is an artist, writer, and speaker. Her paintings, sculptures, and digital artworks are exhibited in the western U.S.A., and locally in Colorado. She can be contacted at [JanetSellers@ocn.me](mailto:JanetSellers@ocn.me).*

Snapshots of Our Community

Palmer Lake Broomball, Feb. 26



**Above** On Feb. 26, the Palmer Lake Parks Commission sponsored the Second Annual Palmer Lake Winterfest Broomball Tournament. Proceeds from the event will be applied toward park improvements in Palmer Lake. The tournament had three divisions: Adult, Family/Friends, and Youth, with 10 teams signed up. Each team consisted of six players including the goalie. Teams could also have substitutes. Players needed to bring their own brooms and the desire to have a fun day on the Palmer Lake ice. Players and spectators also enjoyed music, s’mores, drinks, and various treats throughout the afternoon. *Photo by David Futey.*

Team Rubicon wildfire mitigation



**Above:** On March 4 and 5, 40 volunteers of Team Rubicon conducted wildfire mitigation operations in the foothills west of Larkspur. Their efforts included Home Ignition Zone mitigation education and the reduction of potential wildfire fuel through tree thinning operations. This area has been designated as high risk for extreme wildfires. The team’s efforts are part of a county-wide collaborative effort to protect life, property, and critical infrastructure outlined in the Douglas County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Team Rubicon is a veteran-led volunteer disaster prevention and response group. This is the second of seven wildfire prevention efforts planned for this year in various Colorado communities. Caption by David LaRivee. *Photo by Sharon Williams.*

The Stickmen at the TLCA, Mar. 1



**Above:** The Stickmen brought their unique progressive rock style to the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) stage on March 1. The trio is composed of bassist Tony Levin, drummer Pat Mastelotto, and guitarist Markus Reuter. The band’s name is derived from the Chapman Stick played by Levin. The Chapman Stick is a 10- to 12-string instrument that offers the versatility of being used to play bass lines, melodies, and chords. Levin is considered one of the preeminent Chapman Stick players in the world. The Stick along with the U8 Touch guitar played by Reuter are both typically played by tapping and other techniques without the use of a guitar pick. The trio played selections from their 2022 EP titled *Tentacles* including *Ringtone*, *Danger in the Workplace*, and the title track *Tentacles*. Their set also included *Prog Noir*, *Crack in the Sky*, which is based on a Levin poem, and three King Crimson songs including *Red*. Levin and Mastelotto are longtime members of that band. Levin also has the distinction of having played on over 1,000 albums, being one of the most recorded bassists in music history. *Photo by David Futey.*

Drilling through the night



**Above:** Monument’s Well 13 near Santa Fe Trail and Fourth Street had a drilling rig operating 24 hours a day with a sound barrier wall and a well-lit tower and work space. The drilling took place over the last few weeks and is now completed, providing water for Monument’s residents. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*



# Stallsmith building dedication



**Above:** The Palmer Lake Sanitation District dedicated the district's building to Joseph Stallsmith on March 8. Forty-five years ago, Stallsmith created the Palmer Lake Sanitation District and selected the original board members. Mark Bruce, current board chairman, presented a plaque commemorating Stallsmith's contribution to the district and the Palmer Lake community. The plaque will be displayed at the entrance to the building. Stallsmith, 99, thanked the 25 people attending the ceremony and commented that he also helped set up the sanitation system at the U.S. Air Force Academy and used that experience to help in Palmer Lake and said "it was all downhill from here." (an old joke). Becky Orcutt, district manager, presented a cake with a decoration shaped like a sewer manhole cover and cupcakes. One of the participants joked, "Don't eat the brown ones." *Photo by Steve Pate.*

# Stars of Tomorrow Talent Show



**Above:** Raleigh Eversole, Wyatt Hyden, Erich Lambrech, and Rose Magdalene Helgoth, category winners. *Photo by Bob Harrigan.*

*By Steve Pate*  
Monument Hill Kiwanis, in conjunction with Lewis-Palmer School District 38, presented the first annual *Stars of Tomorrow* talent show March 19 at the Palmer Ridge High School auditorium. Emcees Anna Hacker, 10th-grader at Lewis-Palmer High School, and Dennis Beasley of Monument Hill Kiwanis, introduced the finalists in the competition to a crowd of about 350. Three categories of contestants competed for prizes. Rose Magdalene Helgoth, a fourth-grader at St. Peter Catholic School, won the elementary school category with a vocal performance of *Who Will Buy* from the musical *Oliver* and won the \$500 elementary category prize. The middle school winner, Eric Lambrech, in sixth grade at Lewis-Palmer Elementary School (competing in the middle school category), performed the *Piano Sonata #20, First Movement* by Ludwig von Beethoven and won \$750. The high

school category winner was a bassoon solo by Raleigh Eversole, accompanied by Rob Lambrech on piano. Eversole, a senior at Palmer Ridge High School, won a \$1,000 scholarship. The overall winner of the competition, all categories, was Wyatt Hyden, a junior at Palmer Ridge High School who won a \$2,000 scholarship. Hyden has performed for a sold-out crowd at Red Rocks Amphitheater. He arranged and performed a guitar solo medley of Van Halen, Chuck Berry, Metallica, and Ozzy Osborne. The talent show was professionally judged for the students of Lewis-Palmer School District 38, grades 1 through 12. As reported in *OCN* last month, 49 students tried out over three days of preliminary competition to narrow the field to the 20 performers who qualified for the final competition. *Steve Pate may be contacted at stevepate@ocn.me*

# TLWCC makes beds for needy kids



**Above:** Members of the Tri-Lakes Women's Club (TLWC) helped build beds for needy children on March 18. The 32 members, including Lori Forman, left, and Susan Congdon, right, picked up saws, drills, sanders, and hammers to build the beds for Sleep in Heavenly Peace, a volunteer group dedicated to building, assembling, and delivering high quality beds for hundreds of needy children in northern Colorado Springs, northern El Paso County, and eastern Teller County. TLWC members also donated cash and bedding sets to outfit the beds. In its 50 years, TLWC has donated over \$1 million to local police, school, and other nonprofit organizations in the Tri-Lakes community. *Photo by Pam Munson.*

# Moors and McCumber at TLCA



**Above:** On March 18, Kort McCumber, left, and James Moors played a post-St. Patrick's Day music celebration at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA). Moors and McCumber can both trace their family lineage to Ireland. That connection along with annual visits there provide the inspiration behind many of their lyrics and instrumental arrangements that weave Irish history and musical influence. Their set list included *John Devoy*, about an Irish Republican rebel; the non-instrumental *Marjorie* that highlights their lush vocal harmonies; *Leaving for Cobh*, about making the journey to the port of Cobh in Ireland to board a ship for the United States during the Potato Famine of 1840s; and the instrumental *Standing Stones*. They incorporated a variety of instruments throughout the evening including the Irish Bouzouki, fiddle, banjo, guitar, cello, and keyboard, which displayed the breadth of their musical talents. Information on the TLCA is at [trilakesarts.org](http://trilakesarts.org). *Photo by David Futey.*

# Deer enjoy felled pinon pines



**Above:** Mule deer dine on the many pinon pine tree mounds in the nursery off Sunburst Drive, Monument, in the late afternoon on March 20. The deer were unperturbed by the chainsaw operators working close by as the forest thinning continued. The large-scale tree felling is part of the second phase of forest mitigation in the area. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*



## Monument Rock gains visibility



**Above:** Forest thinning reveals a highly visible view of Monument Rock from Mount Herman Road on March 20. The area is hardly recognizable now that the scrub oak is cleared and many trees have been cut down. The fresh scent of pine permeates the air along the trails buried under bark debris left over from the fire mitigation project. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

## Odd place to water ski



**Above:** People gripe about dog (and horse) poop in the Monument Preserve and the debris left after the U.S. Forest Service wildfire mitigation, but a boat a mile in from Nursery Road? More trash to clean up. Actually, the hull appears intact, as does the trailer. But the interior (inset) is trashed and would need serious rework. And there's no motor. This photo was taken March 21. On March 25, Focus on the Forest—Tri-Lakes arranged for Milo Crawford at The Unstuckables to use his truck to tow the boat to be impounded in Woodland Park. *Photo by Steve Pate.*

## Eversole wins All-State honors



**Above:** Raleigh Eversole, who recently won the top prize in the High School category in the Monument Hill Kiwanis Stars of Tomorrow contest, has also achieved best All-State musician status in four categories—choir, jazz, orchestra, and band. Eversole is in 12th grade at Palmer Ridge High School and plans to attend college next year aiming for a career in music. He sings and plays bassoon and tenor saxophone. On March 22, Eversole led off the Honors Recital at Lewis-Palmer High School with a solo bassoon performance of *Elegy for Innocence*, accompanied by Rob Lambrech on piano. *Photo by Bob Harrigan. Caption by Steve Pate.*

## Why advertise in OCN?

- OCN is mailed FREE to every resident and business in the Tri-Lakes area. We mail more than 22,000 copies every month and put another 600 copies in stacks throughout the area. OCN has the largest mailed circulation and the third-largest circulation among local newspapers in El Paso County after The Gazette and The Colorado Springs Independent. We put copies of OCN into the hands of those people most likely to buy your products or services: local residents and businesses.
- OCN is a primary source for Tri-Lakes area news. Since its founding in 2001, OCN has been presenting unbiased, detailed coverage of Tri-Lakes area governmental entities and their deliberations and actions. Credibility is key. Advertising in a credible medium typically rubs off on the advertisers in that media.
- OCN gives preference to Tri-Lakes area businesses. As part of OCN's long-standing commitment to encouraging the economic health of the Tri-Lakes area, we offer a significantly discounted ad rate to Tri-Lakes area businesses as a way to help local businesses like yours succeed.
- OCN's low ad rates and monthly publication schedule help stretch your ad budget. OCN has one of the lowest ad costs per printed copy of any local publication. Since OCN is a monthly publication, your ad is out there for a month—more than four times longer than other local papers. Many of our advertisers tell us they're still getting calls in the third and fourth week of the month.
- OCN doesn't use contracts. You aren't tied down. Adjust your advertising month-to-month to meet your changing needs. Our advertisers run ads in OCN because they see benefit in it, not because they're bound by a contract they signed months before. To reward frequent advertisers, OCN has a Frequent Advertiser Bonus (FAB) rewards program. You earn up to 10% of your ad cost as a reward you can use to reduce the cost of future OCN advertising. The more you advertise with OCN, the more you save. Thanks to our FAB rewards program, OCN advertisers have saved more than \$105,000!
- You are supporting a good thing. Your advertising dollars support a unique all-volunteer, Tri-Lakes-focused effort to present factual, comprehensive news to all Tri-Lakes area residents and businesses.

### And the best reason of all: It works!

**Crystal Wright, Crystal's In-Home Training** - "I have had the best success with advertising in the Our Community News for my business. 95% of my new clients are coming from this local paper, and I couldn't be more pleased. If you are thinking of advertising in the Monument area, I recommend you advertise with this paper."

**Mike Smith, Woodsmith Custom Creations** - "OCN is the only paper that works for me. I've tried other newspapers, one that comes out daily and another that comes out weekly. Compared to the results I get from advertising in the OCN the other papers are flops. I get a fairly priced ad in my targeted area with calls referencing my ad every month. It can't be beat!"

**Randi and Dale Sehestedt, Woodmoor Handyman and Snow Plowing** - "OCN is the only paper we advertise in and it consistently brings us plenty of good local customers. Great paper and great people to work with."

**Mary Sue Hafey, Fringe Benefits Custom Interiors** - "Since I starting advertising with OCN years ago, it has helped brand my company while consistently increasing my exposure and sales!"

**Elba D'Asaro, Spa Medica** - "OCN ads work!"

**Mike Reaster, Guitar Lessons** - "Ads in OCN work great for me. I tried other local papers and got no response. Thanks to my ads in OCN, I can work from home and make a decent living. All my work comes from my ads in OCN."

**For more information on advertising, go to [www.ocn.me/advertise.htm](http://www.ocn.me/advertise.htm) or contact John Heiser at (719) 488-3455 or [ads@ocn.me](mailto:ads@ocn.me).**



An important message for our readers

# OCN needs your help!

Our Community News is an all-volunteer organization. For the past 20 years, our volunteers have provided unbiased reporting on important local issues, including real estate development, fire departments, school districts, and water availability. We have provided a very favorable platform for advertising local businesses. We have published letters to the editor to allow you to express your opinions on events affecting the Tri-Lakes area.

Now we find that we have more tasks than we have volunteers. Some vital jobs where we could use your help:

- Reporters. Reporting on local meetings, what

- they talked about and what they decided.
  - Mailing assistants. Counting and lifting tubs of papers to take the monthly mailing to the post offices and stacks of papers to local businesses, loading and unloading mailing tubs from a truck at two locations, preparing postoffice paperwork, tub labels, subscription labels, etc.
  - Drivers. Driving a rental truck to various post offices once a month.
  - Ad sales assistants. We need volunteers who love OCN to contact local businesses and encourage them to advertise in OCN.
- The time and skills involved vary greatly from job to

job. OCN will provide whatever equipment and training you need.

Please join us today! Meet a group of interesting and committed people. Learn new skills—use your enthusiasm and creativity to benefit our community and celebrate unfiltered information.

Please call Publisher John Heiser at (719) 488-3455, or email [johnheiser@ocn.me](mailto:johnheiser@ocn.me) to see how you can contribute. Contact John today! He is waiting to hear from you. Together we can ensure that OCN continues to provide a vital service to our wonderful Tri-Lakes community.

## 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.

### Student video contest

The Colorado Department of Transportation is launching a statewide video contest for high school students to create a public service announcement on distracted driving. Students are invited to create their own anti-distracted driving video for the chance to win money and be featured in CDOT's awareness campaign. \$5,000 prize pool awarded to the top entries. Submissions will be accepted through April 10, through CDOT's Distracted Driving website, [www.codot.gov/safety/distracteddriving](http://www.codot.gov/safety/distracteddriving).

### Student community garden volunteers

Monument Community Garden will have some openings for student gardening volunteers starting in April. Tasks include preparing garden beds, weeding, sowing seeds and developing the compost sector. Bring gardening gloves, some tools will be provided at the work days by other volunteers. Besides tasks, there will be a short information and skills demonstration each 2-3 hour session. Contact Janet Sellers at [JanetSellers@ocn.me](mailto:JanetSellers@ocn.me) for more information.

### MVEA outage notifications

Please add your phone number to your MVEA account to streamline outage reporting and restoration notifications. To report an outage please call or text "OUT" to (800) 388-9881. Visit MVEA's Outage Center before the storm. There is information about preparing for outages, electrical safety, outage reporting, a link to the outage map, and more.

### Trail Repair Volunteers Needed

Friends of Monument Preserve (FOMP) needs volunteers to help repair the trails in the National Forest Open Space surrounding the Monument Fire Center. The Forest Service recently completed the second phase of Fire Mitigation work and many of the social trails have been damaged. The Forest Service relies on FOMP to maintain these trails. Trail Repair work days are scheduled on the second Tuesday of the month from April-October. Next meeting: Tuesday, April 11 at 5:00 pm. Meet at the Mt. Herman trailhead off Mt. Herman Rd and Nursery Rd and bring gloves. Tools will be provided.

### 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).

### Neighborhood safety

What qualifies as suspicious activity? "If you see something, say something." It's vital to report to local law enforcement. Suspicious activity can refer to any incident, event, individual or activity that seems unusual or out of place. Some common examples of suspicious activities include: A stranger loitering in your neighborhood or a vehicle cruising the streets repeatedly. Someone peering into cars or windows. Here's what local authorities and Colorado De-

partment of Public Safety says is needed information: Who did you see; what did you see; when did you see it; where did you see it; why it is suspicious. Call 911 or your local law enforcement agency.

### Free search for Unclaimed Property

Unclaimed property is tangible or intangible property that has had no activity for a specific period of time. Once the property is in the custody of the state of Colorado, the State will maintain custody of the property in perpetuity until the rightful owner or heirs come forward to claim. The State Treasurer's Office provides this service free of charge. Colorado: Great Colorado Payback - Colorado.gov (findyourunclaimedproperty.com) SAME AS: <https://colorado.findyourunclaimedproperty.com/app/what-is-ucp>

### 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.

### County Trailability Program

A new program uses mobility vehicles to allow more people access to nature in ways previously inaccessible to them. Trail routes for each county nature center include the volunteers and staff, trained to accompany participants. Vehicle registrations open April 1 and can be made at the Nature Center May1-Oct. 31. Contact El Paso County Regional Parks programs: Mary J Lewis at Bear Creek, or Jessica Miller at Fountain Creek, <https://communityservices.elpasoco.com/trailability/>.

### 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 Client Programs, at 719-481-4864 Ext. 111.

**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?

- OCN needs your help. See article above.
- 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>.
- 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).

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## 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., 4 pm Meetings are held via teleconference. For virtual joining instructions and updates see [www.forestlakesmetro-district.com](http://www.forestlakesmetro-district.com).

- **El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regular meeting,** usually every Tue., 9 am. BOCC land use meetings are being held every first and third Tuesday of the month as needed at 1 pm. View agendas and meetings at [www.agendasuite.org/iip/elpaso](http://www.agendasuite.org/iip/elpaso). Meetings are held at Centennial Hall, 200 S. Cascade Ave., Suite 150, Colo. Springs. Info: 719-520-6430.
- **Monument Town Council meeting,** Mon., Apr. 3 & 17, 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.

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- **Palmer Lake Board of Adjustments**, Tue., **Apr. 4**, 5 pm, 28 Valley Crescent St., Palmer Lake. Normally meets first Tues., as needed.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission meeting**, Thu., **Apr. 6 & 20**, 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., **Apr. 10**, 1 pm, 1845 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Normally meets second Mon. Info: 719-488-2525, [www.woodmoorwater.com](http://www.woodmoorwater.com).
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Parent and Community Advisory Committee (formerly DAAC)**, Tue., **Apr. 11**, 6-8 pm, Bear Creek Elementary School, 1330 Creekside Dr, Monument. , Monument. Contact for information is [tmckee@lewispalmer.org](mailto:tmckee@lewispalmer.org).
- **Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee meeting**, Tue., **Apr. 11**, 10 am 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets second Tue. Info: See <https://tlwastewater.com/index.html> Bill Burks, 719-481-4053.
- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **Apr. 12**, 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., **Apr. 12**, 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).
- **Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting**, Thu., **Apr. 13 & 27**, 5 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent, Usually meets second and fourth Thu. Info: 719-481-2953. [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com).
- **Monument Academy School Board meeting**, Thu., **Apr. 13**, 6 pm at the East Campus. 4303 Pinehurst Circle. Meets second Thu. Info 719-481-1950, <https://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board/board-meeting-minutes/>.
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 board meeting**, Mon., **Apr. 17**, 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/LPSDCommunity](http://www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCommunity), agenda, supporting documents at <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>.
- **Monument Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **Apr. 19**, 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).
- **Palmer Lake Town Planning Commission meeting**, Wed., **Apr. 19**, 6 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-2953, [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com).
- **Academy Water and Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **Apr. 19**, 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>. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-0711, <https://academywsd.colorado.gov>.
- **Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Wed., **Apr. 19**, 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 Regional Loop Water Authority meeting**, Thu., **Apr. 20**, 9 am Monument Town Hall Boardroom, 645 Beacon Lite Rd. Meets third Thu. Info: 719-488-3603. [www.loopwater.org](http://www.loopwater.org).
- **Donala Water & Sanitation District board meeting**, Thu., **Apr. 20**, 1:30 pm, 15850 Holbein Dr. In 2023, meets fourth Wed., Check the website for the access code for the electronic meeting. Info: 719-488-3603, [www.donalawater.org](http://www.donalawater.org).
- **Triview Metropolitan District board meeting**, Thu., **Apr. 20**, 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).
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., **Apr. 26**, 7 pm, Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. The WIA Board normally meets fourth Wed. Info: 719-488-2693, [www.woodmoor.org](http://www.woodmoor.org).
- **Donald Wescott fire protection district special meeting**, Wed., **Apr. 26**, 4:30 p.m., Station 1, 18650 Highway 105 Monument. Find updates and zoom meeting joining instructions at <http://www.monumentfire.org> or contact director of administration Jennifer Martin, at 719-484-0911. Meetings are usually held every other month on the 4th Wednesday.
- **Monument Fire District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Wed., **Apr. 26**, 6:30 pm., Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, Monument. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at <http://www.monumentfire.org>, or contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin, at 719-484-0911. Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday.

WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS

- **Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) meeting**, Sat., **May 13**, 10 am–12 pm., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Members of local HOAs welcome. Usually meets bi-monthly second Sat. of the month. [www.nepco.org](http://www.nepco.org).
- **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**, 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). See ad on page 3.
- **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. Service leadership clubs, Key clubs, Builders Club and K-kids at D38 schools. Memberships open to the public. Info: RF Smith, 719-210-4987, [www.MHKiwanis.org](http://www.MHKiwanis.org). See ad on page 3.
- **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).
- **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**, third **Sat.**, 10 am-noon, Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St., Monument. Info: Syble Krafft, 719-488-2669; Barry (group president), 719-351-9485. If you need any help, please call Syble or Barry.
- **Benet Hill Monastery**, Let us pray with you, walk in the forest, come up and visit prayer sites, every **Sun.** worship is 10:15 a.m., 3190 Benet Lane, 80921. See ad on page 3.
- **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 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 7.
- **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.
- **German Conversation Group**, every **Mon.**, 1:30 pm, Monument Library, 1706 Woodmoor Drive. Public welcome with Intermediate to Advanced German speaking skills.
- **The Forest Chorus**, first and third **Mon.**, 7-8:30 p.m., at the Black Forest Community Center. most months. The group supports community events, leading sing-along audience participation, and occasionally perform a wide variety of music for fun. For more information please email: [blackforestnews@earthlink.net](mailto:blackforestnews@earthlink.net). Previous choir or barbershop experience is preferred.
- **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: [www.W0TLM.com](http://www.W0TLM.com)
- **La Leche League** breastfeeding support group, second **Mon.**, 7 pm, . Partners and helpers welcome (and babies and kids, too) so we can meet our breastfeeding goals together. Black Forest Community Center 12530 Black Forest Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80908. For more information, contact RachelKLangley@gmail.com.

gmail.com.

- **Children's Literacy Center**, every **Mon. & Wed.**, 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 Grace Best Education Center, 66 Jefferson St. Monument. For more information, to become a volunteer tutor, or to enroll your child, visit [www.childrensliteracycenter.org](http://www.childrensliteracycenter.org) or contact Rachel Morin, Tri-Lakes Senior Center Coordinator, CLC 610-246-1047 (cell).
- **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, Grace Best Education Center, 66 Jefferson St, Monument, CO 80132. Registration & info: Sue Walker, 719-330-0241, [www.trilakes-seniors.org](http://www.trilakes-seniors.org).
- **Friends of Monument Preserve (FOMP) Trail Repair monthly Work Days**, 2nd **Tue.** Apr.-Oct. October, Work Days 5:00 - 7:00 pm. May-Sept. Work Days 6-8:00 pm. Meet at Mt Herman Rd and Nursery Rd, bring gloves. FOMP needs volunteers to help repair the trails in the National Forest Open Space surrounding the Monument Fire Center. The Forest Service recently completed the second phase of Fire Mitigation work and many of the social trails have been damaged. The Forest Service relies on FOMP to maintain these trails. Next meeting: Tues., **Apr. 11**, 5:00 pm. Tools will be provided.
- **GriefShare Support Group**, last **Tue.** of the month, 10:30 am-noon. NEW LOCATION: Tri-Lakes Senior Center, 66 Jefferson St. in the Grace Best Elementary School building. 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.
- **Senior Citizen Lunches**, Connections Café sites, every **Wed.** will have “grab and go” (prepared meals). A \$2.25 donation is requested. 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” Mon.-Fri., noon-12:30 pm, Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy. 105, Palmer Lake. Reservations requested: 719-884 2300. Check the Silver Key @ Tri-Lakes website for events and schedules, <https://www.silverkey.org/tri-lakes-events/>.
- **Colorado Springs Philharmonic Guild Listening Club**, third **Wed.** 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 at Beasts and Brews, 7 Spectrum Loop, 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).
- **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, 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).
- **Pikes Peak Genealogical Society**, Wed., **Apr.12**, 6:30pm hangout begins. & pm meeting begins. Program:Researching European Records Without a Passport, by Carol Darrow. Currently only zoom. Info: [PPGSPresident@PPGS.com](mailto:PPGSPresident@PPGS.com)
- **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).
- **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#.
  - **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, **Thu.**, **Apr. 20**, meeting, 7:00 pm, doors open at 6:30 pm. Usually meets third **Thu.** Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent St. <https://palmerdividehistory.org>
  - **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 forest safety, trails, trees, education, more. Info: [friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com).
  - **Tri-Lakes Women's Club** (TLWC) monthly meeting, third **Fri.**, **Apr. 21**, 11:30 am, fun garden-style party, and a style show featuring Chico's clothing collections. Location: Falcon Club, USAFA. Meetings are open to all members of Tri-Lakes Women's Club. To become a member, or learn about the club, visit our website at [www.tlwc.net](http://www.tlwc.net) Contact Info: Tri-Lakes Women's Club membership@tlwc.net
  - **Senior Book Club**, second **Fri.**, 11 am-noon, Silver Alliance Senior Center, all are welcome. Coffee & snacks served. RSVP & info: Sue, 719-330-0241.
  - **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 Amy Miller, (310) 941-1590.
  - **Monument Dementia Caregiver Support Group**, second **Sat.**, 9:45-11:15 am. Meets in Person, First National Bank Monument ( 581 Highway 105, Monument, CO 80132). Meets monthly, 2nd **Sat.** Contact: Registration is required, call 800-272-3900 or email [khare@alz.org](mailto:khare@alz.org) to register.
  - **Tri-Lakes Monument radio Association**, Details: Contact Bob Witte, 719-659-3727.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **VOLUNTEER TODAY! Our Community News mailing day**, **Thu.**, **May 4**, approx. 9 am-2 pm. We are all volunteers at OCN and 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.
- **Pikes Peak Brewing Company**, pop up Smokehouse **Fridays and Saturdays** until it's gone. See ad on page 11.
- **Special Hazardous Waste** event for hard to recycle items, **Fri.**, **Apr. 7**, El Paso County Household Hazardous Waste Facility 3255 Akers Drive Colorado Springs, CO 80922
- **EGGStravaganza**, Fox Run Regional Park, **Fri.**, **Apr. 7**, 7:45pm; 8:00-8:15pm; 8:30 pm start times. Glow in the dark egg hunt at Fox Run Regional Park. 2-6 person teams to find eggs with answers, win a prize! Ages 8+. Prepaid timed registration required, \$5 per person/ \$4 per member. [www.elpasocountynaturecenters.com](http://www.elpasocountynaturecenters.com).
- **Benet Hill Monastery Holy Week Services**: Good Friday **April 7**, 3:00 p.m. Easter Vigil, **April 8**, 7:00 p.m. Easter Sunday **April 9**, 10:15 a.m. See ad on page 3.
- **Tri Lakes United Methodist Church**, Good Friday Service, **Apr. 7**, 6:30 p.m. Easter Sunday, **Apr. 9**, 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m. See ad on page 8.
- **Wildland fire information workshop**, **Apr. 8**, **9-12**. Palmer Ridge High School Auditorium, 19255 Monument Hill Road. Covering personal preparedness, all about evacuation, home hardening and risk assessment, local wildfire concerns. For more info, videos, etc., <https://admin.ElPasoco.com/pproem/fire-mitigation/>
- **St Mathias Episcopal Church Easter Service**, **Sun.**, **Apr. 9**, 10:00 a.m., egg hunt to follow service. All are welcome. See ad on page 6.
- **Fuel church Easter**, **Sun.**, **Apr. 9**, 11:00 a.m. Easter scavenger hunt follows service (for ages 1-11 years). See ad on page 7.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce**, Networking, **Tue.**, **Apr. 11**, 5 pm-7:00 pm, members free, \$15 for non-members. Details: [www.trilakeschamber.com](http://www.trilakeschamber.com). 719-481-3282.
- **Free home buying class**, **Thu.**, **Apr. 13**, 5:30 p.m. -7:00 p.m. with Rebecca Seedorf, Realtor. See ad on page 5.
- **Monument Fire District/Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Pancake Breakfast and Push-In Ceremony**, **Sat.**, **Apr. 15**, 10 am, Station 4, 15415 Gleneagle Drive. [www.monumentfire.org](http://www.monumentfire.org).
- **100+ Women Who Care Bi-Annual Meeting**, **Wed.**, **Apr. 19**, 5:00pm, Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Drive. We are 100+ Women committed to contributing \$100 two times a year to local Tri-Lakes charities, which will positively impact our communities by allowing us to give up to \$20,000 annually. Together we can make a difference that we can see! Big impact, without a big commitment. For more information on how to join us visit: <http://www.100womenwhocaretrilakes.com/>

- **Susan Helmich Fine Jewelry**. special event, **Wed.-Thu.**, **Apr.19, 20** only. See ad on page 13.
- **Monumental Med Spa**, special botox offer **Thu.**, **Apr. 20**. See ad on page 7.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, **Thu.**, **Apr. 20**, meeting, 7:00 pm, doors open at 6:30 pm. KKK in Denver in the 1920s. Usually meets third **Thu.** Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent St. <https://palmerdividehistory.org>
- **Jackson Creek Senior Living** will host a 12-week GriefShare support group for anyone grieving the death of a family member or friend. Meets weekly Tuesdays, **Feb. 7 - Apr. 25**, 6-8 p.m., Falcon's Nest (3rd Floor), located at 16601 Jackson Creek Parkway. Open enrollment, but registration is required. to register, visit <https://www.griefshare.org/groups/162569>. Please wait until you receive confirmation before joining the group.
- **Arbor day celebration**, **Fri.**, **Apr. 28**, 10am. Town of Monument will be celebrating Arbor Day at Monument Lake. There will be a tree planting demonstration and staff available to answer questions from the public about trees. Attendees will get to take home a free plant. <https://townofmonument.org>.
- **YMCA healthy kids day**, **Sat.**, **Apr. 29**, Learn about summer activities at the Y for school age kids. YMCA of the Pikes Peak region. See ad on page 6.
- **A Better Hearing Center**, special offers through **Apr. 30**, 574 East Highway 105 Monument. Affordable Flooring Connection, special offers through **Apr. 30**. see ad on page 13.
- **Cornerstone Cleaners**, special offers through **Apr. 30**. 1030 W. Baptist Road, near King Soopers. See ad on page 4.
- **Eagle Wine & Spirits**, special offers through **Apr. 30**. Baptist Road next to King Soopers. See ad on page 3.
- **Gleneagle Candle Co.**, special offers through **Apr. 30**. See ad on page 4.
- **Monument Cleaners**, special offers through **Apr. 30**, 15932 Jackson Creek Pkwy., in Monument Marketplace. See ad on page 5.
- **Noel Relief Centers**, new patient special. 950 Baptist Rd #130, Monument. See ad on page 7.
- **The Living Room Plants**, special offers through **Apr. 30**. 12229 Voyager Pkwy, Suite 100. See ad on page 5.
- **The Vanity Box**, Special offers. See ad on page 3.
- **Tri Lakes Collision and Auto Service Center**, special offers through **Apr. 30.**, 2101 Wolf Court, Monument. [www.trilakescollision.com](http://www.trilakescollision.com). See ad on page 5.
- **Covered Treasures Bookstore**, **Sat.**, **May 6**. 11 am-1 pm., author Sandra Dallas will sign her book *Where Coyotes Howl*. 105 Second Street, Monument.
- **GameCon XVI GameCon**, **Sat. May 6**, 8 am-5pm, Cost: \$15. A tabletop gaming convention for students in grades 6 - 12 in the Pikes Peak region. Janitell Junior High School, 7635 Fountain Mesa Rd. Fountain CO 80817 . D20 GameCon is a non-profit teachers organization, info: <https://www.gamecon.info>
- **Peter Pan**, Ent Center for the Arts, **Sun.**, **May 7**. See ad on page 4.
- **Taste of Tri Lakes Cares**, tickets for an evening of food and fun **Tues.**, **May 9**, 5:30 p.m. See ad on page 21.
- **YMCA summer day camp**, starts **Tue.**, **May 30**, Info: [www.ppymca.org/daycamp](http://www.ppymca.org/daycamp). See ad on page 6.
- **Jackson Creek Community garage sale**, **June 16, 17**, Contact Frances, 719-200-7387.
- **Front Range Maker's Market**, free, 90+ Artisan Makers, Boutiques & Food Trucks. **Sat.**, **June 17**, 8:30am-

- 3pm. Lewis-Palmer High School. Outdoors. Info: [Fr-makersmarket.com](http://Fr-makersmarket.com). See ad on page 21.
- **Tri Lakes Church of Christ, Vacation Bible School**, **June 26-29**.
  - **Western Museum of Mining and Industry, summer family days: June 19-23 and July 17-21.** [www.wmmi.org](http://www.wmmi.org).

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 John Heiser, Publisher, 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.

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.

The content of ads, inserts, and letters to the editor in OCN is solely the responsibility of the advertisers and authors who place those ads, inserts, and letters. The appearance of an ad, insert, or letter in OCN does not imply endorsement of the ad, insert, or letter’s content or purpose. While OCN does not knowingly run false ads, inserts, or letters, we do not research the accuracy of that content. Readers are encouraged to do their own research prior to committing to use the products or services offered or accept the conclusions of letters to the editor. Readers with concerns about the content of an ad, insert, or letter should take up those concerns with the advertiser or author.

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

Look for our next issue  
Saturday, May 6

Ad space reservations due: **Fri., April 14**  
Finished ad artwork due: **Fri., April 21**  
Letters to the editor due: **Fri., April 21**  
Calendar items due: **Fri., April 28**

Visit our website to read, download, and search all the back issues at **WWW.OCN.ME**



Our Community News

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

OCN is published on the first Saturday of each month by Colorado Cooperative Association

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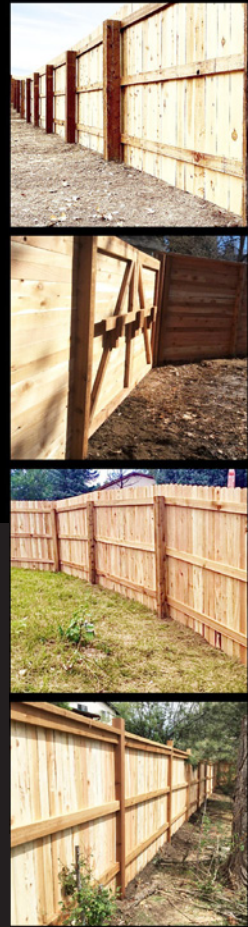
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