

OCN needs your help! See page 28.

Local Events

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

See pages 29-31 for event locations and other details of these and many other local events.

- OCN mailing day, Thu., July 29 & Aug. 1, approx. 9 am–2 pm.
- Monument Hill Kiwanis 4th of July parade, See list of events on page 9.
- **Concerts in the park**, every Wed., through **Aug. 9**, 6:30 to 8:30 pm. See ad on page 14.
- NEPCO Meeting, Sat., July 8, 10 am-noon. HOA legal topics.
- Palmer Lake Historical Society, Sat., July 9 & 15, members walking tours.
- Freedom car wash coupon fundraiser, ends Mon., July 10 . See ad on page 4
- Kids's Painting Class, Mon., July 10, 2-4 pm.
- Free Home Buyers Workshop, Sat., July 15, 10 am - noon. See ad on page 5.
- **Art Hop**, Thu., **July 20**, 5-8 pm. See ad on page 2.
- WMMI, Family Days, Sat., July 15 & Aug. 12, www.wmmi.org. See ad on page 11
- Time to dance, free event, Fri., July 21, 6-7 pm
- Kiwanis Peach Order deadline, Mon., July 31. See ad on page 8.
- Hummingbird Festival, Fri.-Sat., Aug. 4-5, 10 am-3:00 pm. See ad on page 9

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Above: As the American flag was raised by Colorado Springs firefighters over the Black Forest Community Center on June 10, the 10-year anniversary of the Black Forest Fire, residents and victims of the fire gathered in the rain to pray and hear stories of the day the fire started, the loss of their homes, and the healing process. Many have rebuilt after nearly 500 homes were lost in the 10-day fire. Some moved on, but many have worked to clean up their properties and replant trees and build new homes. The work is still going on 10 years later. For information about fire mitigation and the slash/mulch program or to make donations to help with the cleanup process, go <http://bflash.org>. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*

Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, June 21

Evacuation routes raise concern among residents

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD) meeting on June 21, the board heard concerns over crowded evacuation routes fueled by increased development, discussed the lack of wildland deployments reducing anticipated revenue, and received a donation to equip the recently purchased 2005 Pierce tower ladder truck.

Director Chad Behnken was excused.

Evacuation routes raise concern

Resident David Haney of Arrowhead Drive said the planned development Kettle Creek North behind Pine Creek High School and west of Howells Road would bring a total of about 900 homes to that area. The residents living in his neighborhood are concerned about safety should evacuation be necessary in the event of a wildland fire, citing the increased traffic concerns and limited access roads that would hamper evacuation. When he contacted Fire Chief P J Langmaid three months ago, Haney learned the district had not been consulted by the Colorado Springs Fire Department during the process, but it is a fire issue and he had hoped the fire district had more clout when it comes to exits and evacuations. The residents are asking for help from the district, he said.

BFFRPD (Cont. on 4)

El Paso Board of County Commissioners, June 6 and 20

Townhome development off Woodmoor Dr. withdrawn from agenda

By Helen Walklett

A 52 single-family townhome development off Woodmoor Drive was withdrawn from the El Paso Board of County Commissioners’ (BOCC) June 20 land use agenda. The BOCC did approve a rezone application and a minor subdivision application for Black Forest properties during June.

Woodmoor Dr. townhome development withdrawn from agenda

A combined rezone and preliminary plan application by Lake Woodmoor Holdings LLC proposing 52 single-family townhomes on a 7.53-acre property on the east side of Woodmoor Drive, which was due to be heard at the June 20 BOCC land use meeting, was withdrawn by the applicant. No future date was set for it to be heard.

BOCC (Cont. on 2)

Triview Metropolitan District, June 22

NDS pipeline project progressing

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Triview Metropolitan District (TMD) meeting on June 22, the board received an update on the progress of the Northern Delivery System (NDS) pipeline project, approved a water rights lease agreement, and held an executive session to discuss acquisitions, negotiations, and receive legal advice for water, and property, and the draft aquifer storage and recovery report.

Vice Chairman Anthony Sexton was excused.

NDS update

District Manager James McGrady said the NDS pipeline project had reached Roller Coaster Road, and Kiewit Infrastructure is installing about 300 feet of pipeline per day, (the original bid had predicted 200 feet per day). The pipeline project has reached the trail head entrance to Fox Run Regional Park, and everything is going extremely well, he said. The pipeline is expected

TRIVIEW (Cont. on 8)

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BOCC (Cont. from 1)

The application was heard at the May 18 El Paso County Planning Commission meeting where the vote to recommend for approval was 6-1. Commissioner Eric Moraes was the nay vote. Neighbors raised concerns at that meeting about water availability and traffic, particularly in relation to the nearby schools and pedestrian safety. See <https://www.ocn.me/v23n6.htm#epcpc>.

Vessey Road rezone to RR-2.5
 Also at the June 20 BOCC land use meeting, the commissioners heard a request to rezone a 14-acre Black Forest property from RR-5 (rural residential) to RR-2.5 (rural residential). It is located west of the

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intersection of Vessey Road and Black Forest Road and south of the intersection of Vessey Road and Pine Castle Drive.

The applicant has also submitted a minor subdivision application and wishes to divide the property into a three-lot subdivision with each lot being four acres or greater. This application is currently under review.

The request was unanimously approved as a consent item, meaning there was no discussion. It came to the BOCC from the May 18 Planning Commission meeting with a recommendation for approval. At that meeting the item was pulled from the consent calendar and elevated to a

full hearing after concerns were raised that the rezone would allow the applicant or a subsequent owner to ask for five lots in the future. This concern was alleviated by adding a condition that the applicant abide by the 4-acre lot sizes set out in the subdivision application. The applicant agreed to this.

Kinch minor subdivision
At the June 6 BOCC land use meeting, the commissioners heard a request by Paul and Amy Kinch to subdivide their 29.12-acre property on Milam Road

into three 5-acre lots and one 14-acre lot. The subdivision does not require a rezone as the land is already zoned RR-5.

The applicants plan to build a new home on the larger lot and sell the other three. They state in their letter of intent that the subdivision will allow them to better maximize the use of their land.

The application was heard as a consent item, meaning there was no further discussion. It came to the BOCC with a recommendation for approval fol-

lowing the May 4 Planning Commission hearing.

Appointments to the Planning Commission
At their June 6 meeting, the commissioners approved four appointments to the

Planning Commission. Commissioner Jay Carlson was reappointed for a second term as a regular member with a term running until June 1, 2026. He is the commission's vice chair.



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Commissioner Christopher Witney, who has been an associate member, was appointed as a regular member with a term running until June 6, 2026. New to the commission, Jeff Markewich and Wayne Smith were appointed as associate members for a one-year term running until June

6, 2024. Regular members may serve two three-year terms. Associate members are appointed for one year and may serve two consecutive terms. Mem-

bers can apply to serve more than two terms. Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.me.

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BFFRPD (Cont. from 1)

Langmaid said he advised Haney in March to approach the elected officials and leaders of the City of Colorado Springs. As fire chief, he has no legal standing or authority in that area of the city. See www.ocn.me/v23n4.htm#bffrpd.

Chairman Nate Dowden said he was 100 percent empathetic toward the position of the residents, but the district has zero standing with the Colorado Springs Planning Commission during the decision-making process.

Treasurer Jack Hinton said the Fire Department is limited in the decision-making process.

Langmaid said the district maintains a good relationship with Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD), and recently spent 90 minutes discussing operational capabilities, working collectively to bring resources together if another large fire occurs, he said.

Haney said that in the wake of the 10-year anniversary of the Black Forest Fire, he is shocked that the department had not been taken into consideration, especially when many residents would need to depart quickly with animal trailers and motor homes. The traffic study was conducted when the senior high school students

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were not in class, he said.

Langmaid said typically no one is racing to get out of Arrowhead Drive and Howells Road during school entry and exit times.

Dowden said the wildland urban interface is a big issue with the district.

Zonehaven alerting

Langmaid said the district is working diligently with CSFD and Monument Fire District to address evacuation plans. Decisions are made quickly during a wildland fire evacuation, and this spring the El Paso County Sheriff's Office (EPCSO) purchased and adopted the Zonehaven software alerting system app for every agency within the county. The app allows information and evacuation instructions to reach residents quickly and accurately, and he highly recommended signing up for notifications.

Note: Residents need to sign up individually at www.bffire.org for Peak Alerts to receive emergency notifications. See www.ocn.me/v23n5.htm#mfd.

Wildland deployments lacking

Langmaid said he had received a request from California for wildland support and it was immediately rescinded, but the district is on the cusp

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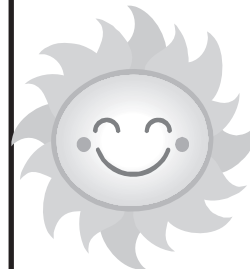
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of sending crews on wildland deployments. The district had hoped to purchase two new brush trucks with the net profits from deployment revenue, but district mechanic Gavin Smith conducted an extensive internet search and found three used brush trucks that were about \$200,000

each, one had higher mileage than the district-owned brush truck. Wildland deployments have been few so far this year. The net profit from wildland deployments in 2022 was about \$270,000; it will likely be less this year, he said.

Note: After the meeting, the district deployed four

members of the Wildland Deployment Team for a two-week assignment, patrolling and assisting with a wildland fire in California.

Wildfire mitigation

Langmaid said the wildland crew recently had chance to chip up some neighborhood brush

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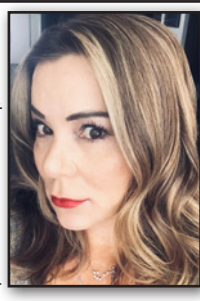
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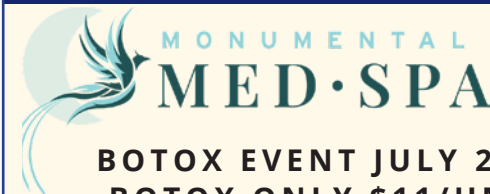
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with a chipper borrowed from EPC-SO, but that prompted Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg to request speeding up the program to purchase a district chipper. The district wildfire risk assessment includes mapping the whole district and working with property owners that have higher volumes of brush that could impact properties that are mitigated in the community. The decision on purchasing additional apparatus will be discussed after wildland deployment revenue for 2023 has been realized, he said. Note: The El Paso County Slash and Mulch facility is located at 12375 Herring Road, Black Forest. For hours of operation, location, and information, visit www.bfslash.org.

Plan reviews prove time-consuming

Langmaid said the county has an expectation that he is trying to navigate regarding unfunded mandates on the fire district. Most of the day he had been reviewing contractor and developer project plans. The county agreed the district could charge a fee to review plans, but he is unsure if the developer will pay the fee or if the county is prepared to pay for the manpower or use a costly third party. The county is aware of the burden on the fire districts but is also concerned about conflicts of interest. There is more to unpack and unravel, he said.

Financial report

Hinton said that as of May 31, the district had about \$2.2 million in the bank (with about \$1.4 million for general operations, \$567,908 in combined emergency and capital improvement reserves, and \$137,400 in the TABOR reserve fund). The district received about \$441,718 in county taxes. It had about \$3.6 million in total assets (includes \$631,554 for the 2022 Pierce Enforcer 4395 engine). The district was at about 37% of the budget year to date at the end of May.

The board accepted the financial report as presented, 4-0.

Operations update

Piepenburg said the district responded to a significant structure fire with Falcon Fire Protection District in May.

Training update

Piepenburg said the following:

- The weather had put a slight damper on training recently, but staff are still training outside despite the storms. The district completed 1,588 training hours in May, about 20% of their time on shift.

- Live fire training took place with CSFD and Monument Fire District at the district training center.
- Firefighter 2 and driver operator pumper practical tests were completed.
- Orientation training has begun on the tower ladder truck.
- The district hired Michael Torres as the new training captain to replace Jason Morrison. Torres arrives with 16 years' fire service experience with the City of Chicago Fire Department and smaller suburban departments.
- He and Lieutenant Chad Herdt attended Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) training in Lakewood. The hope is to include more staff members in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) USAR training in the future. Nationwide, about 28 teams make up the task forces that deploy to natural and man-made disasters.

Langmaid said besides CSFD and Fort Carson, the district is the only agency in the county that participates in FEMA USAR operations. Teams also deploy internationally to assist in disasters such as the recent earthquake in Turkey. Herdt and Piepenburg are a credit to the district, he said.

Note: Herdt and Piepenburg are members of CO-TF1 Lakewood, Colo., West Metro Fire Rescue FEMA USAR taskforce.

Facilities update

Dowden requested an update on the condition of Station 1 after the prolonged spring rains, in comparison to the leakage issues of previous years.

Langmaid said the repairs to the mezzanine appear to have been successful, and the rain had not affected Station 1. Unfortunately, the concrete and run-off repairs at Station 2 had not worked out as anticipated, and water is traveling down the walls and entering through cracks in the concrete. Staff are pushing water away from walls, and after an inspection that afternoon, he noted water entering the bay at Station 2, he said.

Donation received

Father Brad Noonan of Our Lady of the Pines Catholic Church, Black Forest, presented Dowden with a \$7,000 check on behalf of his parish. Noonan thanked the Board of Directors and the district for their support throughout the years,

complimenting the board for its foresight in purchasing the ladder truck. It is a beautiful gift to the community, said Noonan.

Dowden thanked Noonan and the congregation for the generous donation. The district will use the funds to purchase equipment for the 2005 Pierce Tower Ladder truck.

In remembrance

Noonan asked those present to re-

member Benjamin "Ben" Weylin Montoya who passed away from COVID-19 pneumonia on Jan. 16, 2021. Montoya was an emergency medical technician with the department in the 1990s before moving to Kansas in 1998.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the



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third Wednesday of the month at Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. Meetings are open to the public in person or via Zoom. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 19 at 7 p.m. For joining instructions, updates, agendas, minutes, and reports, visit www.bffire.org or contact Director of Public Relations

Brooke Reid at admin@bffire.org or call 719-495-4300.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.me.

TRIVIEW (Cont. from 1)

to reach Highway 83 by September, and he thanked Kiewit Infrastructure for working with landowners along the pipeline to negotiate storage of materials along the route. The district plans to complete the overlay of asphalt along the pipeline route in early fall, he said.

For NDS pipeline project updates, answers to questions and concerns, and to sign-up for email notifications, visit www.triviewnds.com. The link can also be found at www.triviewmetro.com.

Note: TMD is expecting to receive district-owned renewable surface water via the pipeline after the pump house is built next to the Colorado Springs Utilities water storage tank east of Highway 83 and Old Northgate Road. The pump house is scheduled for completion in October 2024.

Water rights lease agreement

McGrady requested the board review and consider an amendment to the district water rights lease agreement between James Treat of 7021 County Road 104, Salida and TMD. The district owns all of Bale Ditch 1, that diverts water into the Arkansas River, and owns half of Bale Ditch 2. The Treat family owns and uses the second half of Bale 2 to irrigate a hay crop. The agreement allows the district to have a standing lease to begin using the second half of the Bale Ditch water whenever Treat decides to stop using the water. The district will pay Treat for the use of the water. In addition to an existing water right, the agreement will justify and include the Treat water right, and whenever he decides to sell in the future, the district would likely be the buyer of the

other half of Bale 2. The district has undertaken the engineering portion to divert the water from Bale 2 back to the Arkansas River, he said.

Water Attorney Chris Cummins of Monson Cummins & Shotet LLC said the lease agreement is favorable for owner Treat because it will avoid his duplication of the engineering costs to divert his share of water back into the Arkansas River.

Director Jason Gross said the agreement constitutes astute planning.

The board approved the water rights lease agreement between the district and Treat and authorized the district manager to sign with only non-substantive changes to the approved agreement, 4-0.

Operations report

McGrady said the following:

- The Pueblo 1041 permit was scheduled for review and consideration by the Pueblo County Commissioners on June 27. The permit is critical for the district to operate all its water assets and exchanges between it and Pueblo.
- The pump station at the Stonewall Springs Reservoir, Pueblo County, was commissioned on June 26, and the district has begun storing water in the reservoir.
- The Upper Monument Creek Waste Water Regional Treatment Facility’s 86-page report is being reviewed by the district. The report will be discussed in the July executive session. See www.ocn.me/v23n4.htm#tmd.

Higby Road redesign

McGrady said the Higby Road redesign was undecided due to the multiple staff turnovers at the Town of Monument (TOM). A meeting is scheduled with the TOM to work through some of the technicalities of the design. The district has a comprehensive functional design that meets everyone’s needs including the school district’s, he said. The TOM Planning Department now have new staff with different ideas on the width of the road. The district is managing the project and engaged two traffic engineers, one with over 25 years of experience from Colorado Springs, and a design engineer. A Kiewit engineer also provided a cost estimate for the project. The district did collect money from developers to pay for the Higby Road project, he said.

Gross requested a confirmation briefing to ensure the design considers teen driver safety. See www.ocn.me/v23n2.htm#tmd.

Unexplained water loss cause discovered

Superintendent Shawn Sexton said after re-calculating the water usage versus water sold the district discovered a water loss of a little over 7% compared to previous months that indicated as much as a 15%-22% water loss. Water loss is at a normal acceptable level, but zero would be best.

McGrady said the unexplained



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water loss discussion in May was due to the district reading the meters on the 28th of each month, but the real reading is on the last day of the month. In winter, the extra days are added to the next month, but a hot day after the 28th in spring and summer would show higher usage. In the future, the district will compare apples to apples to ensure accurate water loss levels. The calculations were just a measurement issue, thrown off by high usage days, he said. See www.ocn.me/v23n6.htm#tmd.

Financial update
President Mark Melville requested the board review and approve the checks over \$5,000 and said that all expenses were budgeted line items and part of the overall 2023 budget.

The board approved the checks over \$5,000 as presented, 4-0.

Treasurer/Secretary James Barnhart noted that vehicle expenses were at \$660,000—1100% over the budgeted \$20,000 for 2023 in the financial report.

McGrady said the staff would need to investigate what appears to be a possible line-item discrepancy. The district conducts all vehicle oil changes in house, but expenses have been high for tires and fuel. Having an in-house mechanic has saved money for the district, and until the district purchased a \$500 blade sharpener, the district had a weekly expense for the sharpening of blades. The cost of sub-contracting jobs is high and the district endeavors to keep most jobs in house, he said.

The board accepted the financial report as presented, 4-0.

Public Works and Parks and Open Space update
Superintendent Matt Rayno said the following:

- The spring weather pattern has been a huge challenge for the staff to keep the district in viable shape. The district has seen excessive

plant growth due to the rainfall, and additional weed control and early pruning is needed. A typical spring is not usually as wet, and herbicide control has been diluted by the water.

Mowing is needed every five days, and the staff are working hard to catch up.

- The paving is now complete at the new state-of-the-art facility at A Yard (located adjacent

to the power station east of Jackson Creek Parkway). The new facility will house the

900-ECO 12-yard truck-mounted combination sewer cleaner, on order since August 2022. See



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Pancake Breakfast - Tickets at the Door
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Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce
Street Fair - 2nd Street and Washington Street
- 9:45 am

Monument Hill Kiwanis Children’s Parade
Downtown Monument
- 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Monument Hill Kiwanis 4th of July Parade
Downtown Monument
- 10am

Air Force Flyby
- 10:30 AM

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Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce
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- www.ocn.me/v22n9.htm#tmd.
- The Agate Creek Park enhancement project is nearing completion, with two staff dedicated to working on the park. Staff planted about 500 shrubs alongside the trails and anticipate a July 4 completion date. Foot traffic will not be permitted until after the surface is stabilized and the first mow is completed.
 - The Remington Hills overlay project was placed on hold due to erosion from the new development and the weather, but the district is hoping to begin the overlay July 9, after patching and re-stabilizing the road. This reporter mentioned the wet trail behind Split Creek Drive at the intersection below the reten-

tion pond behind Transcontinental Drive in Promontory Pointe. Although a drain exists in the low point of the trail intersection, and drain improvements had been made in the past, the area more often remains wet throughout the year, causing the majority of trail users to cut another trail close to a property line. The pet station receptacle placed just west of the soggy area is often difficult to access from the trail that runs from the northern utility tract, south to Lyons Tail Road. Although the region has experienced an unusually wet spring, the problem has existed since the beginning of the development, hence the well-worn trail that veers from the designated trail, she said.

Melville suggested some additional buildup in the area might al-

leviate the problem.

Gross asked if a wet spot on the trail system behind Oxbow Drive could be fixed. He said a neighbor's sump pump drains onto the trail, and he suggested the district install drainage in that area.

Rayno said that another resident on Lacuna Drive has a sump pump dumping out, and that the district needs to create culverts to help drain water in these spots, but many trails need work, especially after the prolonged heavy spring rain storms.

Executive session

The board moved into an executive session at 7:21 p.m. pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 24-6-402(4) (a), (b), and (e), to discuss acquisitions, negotiations, and receive legal advice for water and

property, and the draft aquifer storage and recovery report. See www.ocn.me/v23n6.htm#dwsd.

After the meeting, Assistant District Manager Steve Sheffield confirmed that no decisions were made when the board returned to the regular meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 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 meeting is scheduled for July 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.

Monument Fire District, June 28

Board meeting held after publication

By Natalie Barszcz

The Monument Fire District (MFD) board scheduled its meeting for June 28 which was after this issue of Our Community News had gone to

press. Coverage of that meeting will be included in our Aug. 5 issue.

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 26 at 6:30 p.m. at Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For Zoom meeting 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.

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, June 12

Audit shows good financial health, Lori Akers retires



Above: Retiring Billing Manager Lori Akers was feted by Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) board members, staff, and friends from Woodmoor Improvement Association and the community. Akers worked at WWSD for 38 years in a variety of positions, including meter reading, reporting and repairing, main break repairs, landscaping, front office, and billing. She started in 1985 as a part-time employee when the district had 817 customers and most of the roads were yet to be paved. She became a full-time employee in 1987,

doing customer service and using two-way radios to communicate with other employees. She initially did billing by hand, sending out bills on 3-by-5 cards, then helped implement computer-based billing and oversaw three software conversions. During her tenure, WWSD grew to over 4,000 customers. Akers said, "I don't cry, but I have a lump in my throat," and she planned to enjoy her retirement touring on her motorcycle. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

By James Howald

At its June meeting, the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) board heard an audit report on its 2022 finances. The district's lawyer announced some changes to her legal firm. The district's engineer updated the board on changes to the Highway 105 expansion plans and other projects. The impact of recent rainy weather was discussed. The board celebrated the service of longtime employee Lori Akers. The July board meeting was rescheduled, and the meeting

ended with an executive session.

"Smooth audit"

Uli Keeley, of Prospective Business Solutions LLC, presented the results of the audit of the district's finances for 2022. Keeley said this was her first audit for the district, but she was familiar with its finances. The board selected her as its auditor in December 2022. Keeley had worked for the district's previous auditor John Cutler and Associates on WWSD issues before she started her own company.

Keeley's report issued the district an unmodified opinion, an indication that the audit did not uncover concerning issues.

She pointed out a new line item in the net position portion of the report called "land lease receivables." Governmental Accounting Standard Board regulations have changed how leases are reported on balance sheets. WWSD leases a portion of the Woodmoor Ranch property, triggering this new reporting requirement.

Keeley said the district's net

position, which represents the district's equity in its infrastructure, had increased by \$4 million since 2021.

Keeley said since this was her first audit of district finances, she was required to do extra work to confirm all beginning balances. She found the previous auditor had deferred the reporting of some revenues that she thought should not be deferred, and she had corrected that.

The board voted unanimously to approve the audit report and

authorize Keeley to file it with the state.

District lawyer moves to new firm

Erin Smith, WWSD’s lawyer, announced that her partner of 25 years was retiring, and she planned to merge her practice with Maynes, Bradford, Shipp & Sheftel LLP, a firm in Durango that has a 75-year history with water law. Her rules of conduct require her to notify the board, she said, and ask for a motion to allow the president to sign a memo authorizing this change and permitting her to move her files to the new firm.

The board voted unanimously to authorize President Barrie Town to sign the required memo.

Highway 105 expansion delayed

District Engineer Ariel Hacker told the board that Phase A of El Paso County’s plans to expand Highway 105 between Jackson Creek Parkway and Lake Woodmoor Drive were being rebid. She said the county expected to award the new contract by the end of June and begin construction in August. Because of this delay, Hacker recommended that WWSD rebid the work required by the county’s project because WWSD received only one bid, which was much higher than expected. Because of the county’s expansion plans, WWSD needs to move water and sewer service lines that are in county rights of way adjacent to the highway.

Hacker mentioned two other WWSD projects she intended to rebid. The largest of these is the installation of additional equipment to manage water pressure in Zone Five, the southernmost portion of the WWSD service area. She said she was also considering whether to rebid construction needed to connect Well 19 to the WWSD infrastructure as a separate project or

add it to the Zone Five project.

Spring rains mean free water, headaches

Operations Superintendent Dan LaFontaine told the board that WWSD is currently supplying only groundwater to customers. He added that the rainy weather meant free water for the district, since there are no energy costs to acquire the resulting surface water as there are with ground water. WWSD has not needed to divert water from Monument Creek due to the precipitation, he said. The water level in the Augusta Pit is high, and that additional water has been conveyed to Woodmoor Lake by gravity.

The downside to the rain, LaFontaine explained, is that once the ground is saturated, the rain often infiltrates the sewer lines through leaky manhole covers and stresses the water treatment plant.

Lori Akers to retire

The board celebrated Lori Akers, who served WWSD in many roles for 38 years. .

July board meeting rescheduled

The board delayed its July board meeting by one week until July 17 to allow additional time to prepare WWSD’s midyear budget update.

Executive session

The board meeting ended with an executive session to discuss pending litigation.

Correction

In last month’s article, board member Roy Martinez was incorrectly identified as Tom Martinez. Our Community News regrets the error.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 17 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 or call 719-488-2525 to verify

meeting times and locations.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.



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Monument Sanitation District, June 21

Board hears audit report

By Jackie Burhans and James Howald
At its June meeting, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board heard an audit report of the district's 2022 budget. General Manager Mark Parker discussed the need to repair a sewer line running under Highway 105. The meeting ended with an executive session.

District finances in good shape
Derek Watada, an auditor from Olson, Reyes & Sauerwein LLC, told the board that as part of his audit process he worked with district staff to understand financial processes and tested them. He said the district's books are clean, requiring only a few minor adjustments. The district's financial statements are materially accurate, he said.

Watada said the district's assets increased by \$1.7 million over 2021. Tap fees generated \$1.9 million in cash flow in 2022, an indicator of Monument's rapid growth. He mentioned \$200,000 in receivables, most of which is uncollected user fees, \$60,000 of which are delinquent. A single commercial account owes \$55,000 of the delinquent fees, he said.

Watada pointed out a new line item in the audit report: net pension assets. He explained this line resulted from the fact that Colo-

rado Public Employees' Retirement Association, which had been underwater, is now in a position where future payouts are less than its balance. Previously, MSD's audits had shown a pension liability, but with PERA's return to financial health the current report shows an asset instead. MSD's previous audit showed total liabilities of \$400,000; that total is now \$275,000, Watada said, primarily due to the new pension asset.

Watada said MSD's net position, which represents equity in the district's infrastructure, had increased by \$1.9 million in the last year.

He ended his presentation by commenting that the tap fees from over 200 new accounts were the primary driver of the year's financial performance.

The board voted unanimously to approve the audit report and to file it with the state.

In his discussion of the financial reports for May, Parker pointed out that an increase in gas prices had raised the amount spent on utilities. Director William Morgan pointed out that interest income for the district had increased due to the higher interest rates.

The month's financial reports

were approved unanimously.

Sewer line needs attention
Parker said a sewer line that serves the Conoco gas station, the McDonald's restaurant, and Jarrito Loco has been discovered to have portions that have sunk and are causing problems. The line runs under Highway 105 and is next to Taco Bell's drive-through on the west side of the highway. Parker said he thought the problems resulted from poor installation. The line is installed 14 feet deep, making the repair more difficult, Parker said. In the short term the line can be cleaned, but repairing it properly could result in interruptions to business, he said.

Executive session
The meeting ended with an executive session to discuss the general manager's performance review.

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 July 19, 2023. See <https://colorado.gov/msd>. For a district service map, see <https://colorado.gov/pacific/msd/district-map-0>. Information: 719-481-4886.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

Donala Water and Sanitation District, June 15

Contractor selection process defined

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans
At its June meeting, the Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) debated a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) document that will be used to select engineers and other contractors. Updates of the district's personnel policies and operating regulations were discussed. Board President Wayne Vanderschuere discussed what he learned about energy costs at a recent Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA) meeting. The board heard details of financial and operational reports.

The meeting ended with an executive session to receive legal advice on DWSD's Upper Monument Creek Regional Waste Water Treatment Facility (UMCRWWTF) Inter-governmental Agreement.

RFQ document approved; contractors pre-qualified
At the May board meeting, General Manager Jeff Hodge told the board that the district is receiving federal funds via the American Recovery Plan Act, and those funds bring with them a requirement to implement a standard process to evaluate contractors that aligns with federal regulations. He presented a draft of an RFQ form to be used when evaluating contractors. The board voted to refine the form and make a final decision at its next meeting.

Following discussion at the June meeting, the board committed to use the RFQ form as presented.

Hodge said four contracting companies had been evaluated using the new process. He presented the evaluations of Merrick & Co., Kimley-Horn, Meyer & Sams Inc. and LRE Water. All four companies scored between 95 and 100 points using the new evaluation process.

Hodge explained these companies were now pre-qualified to be awarded contracts up to \$60,000 without further evaluation. Each company had its own areas of expertise, he said.

The board voted unanimously to approve the RFQ document and to add the four companies to the district's list of pre-qualified contractors.

Personnel policies updated
Madison Phillips, a lawyer with Cockrel Ela Glesne Greher and Ruhland, the law firm representing the district, presented the results of her review of the district's personnel policy document. Phillips said she had made all the substantive changes requested by the board. She mentioned that the updated policies now used the Consumer Price Index in Denver only as a data point, allowing the use of other information to determine salaries. She also said the policy for time off now specifies Paid Time Off will be used first and when that is exhausted Short Term Disability leave will be used. When that ends, the employee will transition to Long Term Disability.

The board voted unanimously to approve the updated policies.

Operating rules and regulations reviewed
The board considered a new version of its rules and regulations, which govern all aspects of the district's operations, including how to apply for service, how service will be measured, fees, penalties and charges, control of prohibited waste, and enforcement.

Phillips said some changes had been made to align the rules with changes to the Clean Water Act.

The board voted unanimously to approve the updated rules and regulations.

Energy costs to rise
During the directors' comments portion of the agenda, Vanderschuere told the board that he attended the MVEA annual meeting, and that he had learned that Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association Inc., MVEA's supplier of electrical power, will increase the wholesale price of electricity by 8% in 2023. Wholesale power costs



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are 66% of MVEA's costs, since MVEA does not produce power itself. MVEA has not increased prices for residential customers in six years, he said, and it will try to cover the increased cost, but it will be difficult for them to do so.

Time of day billing, which charges MVEA's commercial customers, including DWSD, higher rates at peak usage hours, will be a bigger factor, he said, adding that DWSD should concentrate on timing work to align with the lower-cost time periods. Vander-

schuere said the price during peak hours was 24 cents per kilowatt hour and the price was 10 cents per kilowatt hour during the less expensive hours of the day.

Hodge pointed out that increasing energy costs are one of the reasons DWSD is adding variable flow devices (VFDs) to its wells. They reduce energy costs, he explained.

Vanderschuere said energy cost increase will be a factor in DWSD's future budgets, and he thought the district should plan for the worst.

- Highlights of financial and operational reports**
- Hodge said revenues for water sales were low—25% of what was expected midway through the year—due to the rainy weather. That will change during the summer months.
 - Hodge said moving to Piper Sandler Investment Bank saved DWSD \$150,000.
 - Water Operator Ronny Wright said wells 1A and 8A have had VFDs installed. Well 14A was due to have a VFD in-

stalled on June 26. Well 16A, which is under construction, will also have a VFD installed. Energy suppliers are offering rebates up to \$20,000 when VFDs are installed, and VFDs can be remotely managed by software to further reduce energy costs.

Executive session

The meeting ended with an executive session to receive legal advice concerning negotiations regarding the UMCRRWTF Intergovernmental Agreement.

The next meeting is sched-

uled for July 20 at 9:30 p.m. so that a tour of UMCRRWTF can be held. 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 to receive up-to-date meeting information. The district office is located at 15850 Holbein Drive, Colorado Springs.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

El Paso County Regional Loop Water Authority, June 15

Board awards contract for project manager

By James Howald

At its June meeting, the El Paso County Regional Loop Water Authority (EPCRLWA) board chose a company to provide project management services. The board also heard the results of the last round of water quality testing.

The EPCRLWA was formed in November 2022 by an Intergovernmental Agreement between Cherokee Metropolitan District (CMD), Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD), the Town of Monument (TOM), and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) to build infrastructure that would allow water, including treated effluent, that is flowing south in Monument and Fountain Creeks to be stored at Calhan Reservoir at Woodmoor Ranch and then pumped back north to be used by customers of the participating districts.

Merrick & Co. selected for project management services

staff. Initially, the project manager will work on an as-needed basis. The project manager will not oversee construction.

Water quality testing continues

Josh McGibbon and Peter Hassinger, of JVA Consulting Engineers, the company EPCRLWA has hired to provide ongoing water quality testing, gave the board a summary of the testing done on May 26 at the headgate of the Chilcott Ditch. The ditch, which diverts water from Fountain Creek and conveys it to the Calhan reservoir, was not running when the testing was done because the reservoir was full due to recent rain, McGibbon said.

Hassinger said the results were mostly in line with previous testing:

- pH and hardness measurements were close to previous results.

- Nitrate was between 4.5 to 4.9 in previous testing and was 3.6 in the latest tests.
 - There was a small rise in iron and manganese levels.
 - Turbidity increased from 17 to 216.
 - Organic carbon levels remain low.
- *****
- The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 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 or call 719-488-3603 to verify meeting times and locations.
- James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

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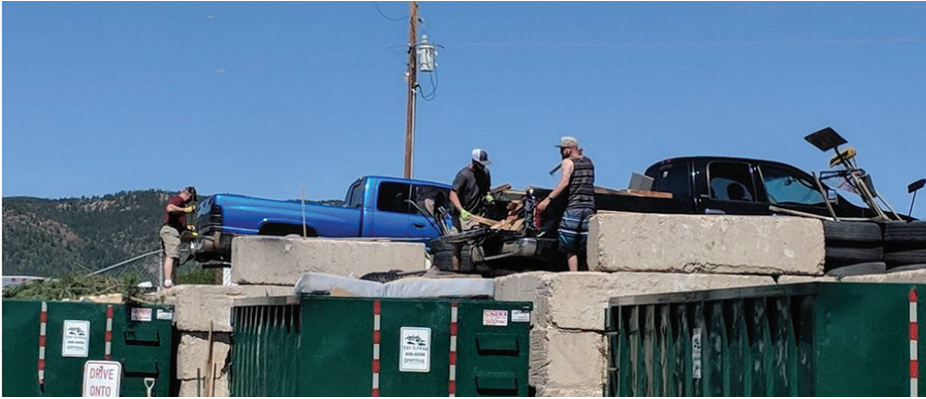
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Monument Town Council, June 5 and 19

Town Code amendments approved on narrow vote; Wilson sheds light on state bills

By Chris Jeub
During two meetings held in June, the Monument Town Council tackled code amendments, resolutions, and an ordinance. The discussions surrounding the Town Code amendments were lengthy, resulting in a split vote among council members. In addition to these local matters, former Mayor Don Wilson, now

serving as the representative for District 20, presented insights on state-level House and Senate bills and their implications for Monument.
Town Code amended on split vote
Ordinance No. 12-2023, which amends four sections of the Town Municipal Code, passed narrowly with a 4-3 vote. Director of Plan-

ning Shelia Booth presented the ordinance, highlighting the need for modifications due to window wells being built without easements, in violation of the code. Town staff conducted inquiries with various entities and recommended updating sections related to setbacks and easements as the most effective solution.

However, council members expressed differing opinions on the proposed changes. Mayor Mitch LaKind voiced concerns about imposing mandatory window well covers on homeowners, and Councilmember Marco Fiorito agreed, feeling uncomfortable with the requirement. Councilmember Steve King expressed safety concerns, particularly regarding the reduced clearance between window wells and fences. On the other hand, Councilmember Sana Abbott believed developers should be responsible for installing window well covers due to their cost, while Councilmember Ken Kimple opposed requiring homeowners to do so.

Public comments were divided, with a representative from Challenger Homes supporting the proposed changes, emphasizing the importance of continuing construction based on existing designs. The discussion also touched on other issues, including updating the definition of “Family Child Care” to comply with state law and revising the

definition of “Lot Coverage” to address concerns related to smaller parcels.

Ultimately, the ordinance passed with a narrow 4-3 vote, but the handling of the ordinance by town staff was lightly admonished. LaKind stated that combining multiple issues in one ordinance without separation should not happen again. Town Manager Mike Foreman acknowledged the concern and assured the council that their feedback had been heard.

Resolutions passed
Resolution No. 41-2023, a resolution approving a final plat for Home Place Ranch Filing No. 3, passed unanimously. Town Planner Jeff Liljegren presented the project, which is located along Gleneagle Drive between Higby and Baptist Roads. Town staff supported the applicant’s rationale, and a traffic study indicated that the development would include 299 homes and one amenity center with 38 parking spots. Kimple raised concerns about the need for a new traffic study and the noise impact of a pickleball court. Mayor LaKind suggested Kimple bring up a pickleball noise ordinance rather than denying the resolution. Ultimately, the resolution passed with a 7-0 vote.

The second resolution, No. 42-2023, focused on adopting the Town of Monument’s 2023 Three-Mile Plan. Town Planner Shelia Booth explained that

the plan places limitations on municipal annexations, restricting the extension of municipal boundaries to no more than three miles in any direction from the existing boundary within a single year. The resolution was previously approved unanimously by the Planning Commission. King sought clarification on whether property not included in the plan could still be annexed, and Booth confirmed that it was possible. The resolution passed with a unanimous 7-0 vote.

Retail paint store approved
Ordinance No. 11-2023, which approves the final planned unit development for the 705 W. Baptist Road Final PUD Plan on 0.73 acre, passed unanimously. Liljegren presented the details on behalf of the applicant. The project aims to establish a 4,500-square-foot retail paint store, a use permitted in the Planned Commercial Development zone. Situated adjacent to AutoZone and Family of Christ Lutheran Church, the project received a favorable recommendation for approval from the staff. Notably, no letters of opposition or agreement were received regarding the project. The Planning Commission expressed unanimous support, granting approval with a 7-0 vote, which subsequently resulted in the successful passage of the ordinance.

Rep. Don Wilson presentation
During his presentation to the Monument Town Council, former Mayor Don Wilson, now the representative for Colorado District 20, provided an overview of several state bills and their potential implications:

- SB 23-166: This bill, despite Wilson’s opposition, was signed into law by Gov. Jared Polis. It created another state board, despite the presence of similar resources.
- First Right of Refusal: Wilson highlighted the concern surrounding this proposal, which would have required ranchers to sell houses to municipalities first, including RVs on their driveways. “Fortunately, the governor vetoed this bill,” Wilson said.



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MONUMENT (Cont. from 14)

- HB 1120: Wilson expressed displeasure with this bill, which mandates landlords to collaborate with tenants receiving government assistance before evicting them.
- HB 1255: This bill allows municipalities to disclose reasons for halting growth without completely prohibiting it.
- SB 23-303: Wilson addressed this bill, introduced by the governor, which aims to

- impact TABOR refunds. However, due to its complexity, it has led to uncertainty and legal challenges.
- SB 23-213. Though this controversial land use bill failed to reach the governor’s desk, Wilson predicted it would return in a different form in the future.

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 first meeting in July is cancelled to observe the Fourth of July holiday. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 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.

Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, June 8 and 22

Board repeals water emergency ordinance

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans
The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees (PLBOT) held two regular board meetings in June, each preceded by an executive session. On June 8, the board repealed an ordinance declaring a water emergency and considered the creation of an enterprise fund related to water. It heard an update from Town Administrator Dawn Collins. It voted on two resolutions and considered participating in a block grant program and an advisory board. The board debated how to zone healing centers where patients can be treated with psilocibin mushrooms. A special event permit was approved. The June 8 meeting was opened with Palmer Lake Elementary School student Kaston Flake leading the pledge of allegiance.

At its June 22 meeting, the board heard a staff update from Assistant Town Clerk Julia Stambaugh. The board held public hearings followed by votes on two land use projects: the first a conditional use permit and the second involving requests to vacate rights of way and replat four lots into one. It heard a presentation on a grant for six pickleball courts planned for the west side of Palmer Lake just north of the pedestrian bridge. Finally, it granted a special event permit.

Water emergency repealed; enterprise fund considered

The board considered Ordinance 14-2023, which amends the municipal code to repeal a declaration of emergency regarding the water supply. Mayor Glant Havenar explained the change to the municipal code was necessary so that the board can proceed with its work on projects needed to maintain the water system which impact water rates. Town Attorney Matthew Krob said the town’s water infrastructure needs work and the emergency status would prevent lenders from funding needed improvements.

Resident Roger Moseley opposed the repeal, arguing that the town had not met the requirements to end the emergency such as acquiring new water sources. Moseley expressed concern that repealing the emergency would lead to more development subsidized by residents.

The board voted unanimously to approve the ordinance.

Trustees Samantha Padgett and Shana Ball said they were ready to move forward with the creation of an enterprise fund needed to finance the stormwater drainage project the board is considering. Collins provided a memo to the board with information regarding enterprise funds.

No motion was proposed, but the board agreed to move forward with the establishment of an enterprise fund.

Staff update, June 8

At the June 8 meeting, Collins updated the board on the status of the trail being designed on the Elephant Rock Property and on two recent resignations. She said a property owner next door to the Elephant Rock property had agreed to move an existing fence and the trail would be repositioned. She announced Deputy Town Clerk Julia Stambaugh had resigned her position to take a job in the private sector. Stambaugh was scheduled to stay through the end of June, Collins said. Collins also said Samantha Deeder had resigned from the Parks Commission.

The condition of Highway 105 south of Spring Street has been reported to the Colorado Department of Transportation, Collins said, and it has committed to patching the highway and improving the drainage.

Two resolutions passed

Police Chief Jason Vanderpool asked the board to approve Resolution 43-2023, which authorizes the renewal of a memo of understanding with all El Paso County agencies that those agencies will assist the Palmer Lake Police department in any case where a Palmer Lake officer is involved in a shooting. All officer-involved shootings must be investigated by an outside agency, he said. The memo, which covers a four-year period, has already been approved three times.

The board voted unanimously to approve the resolution.

Fire Chief John Vincent told the board that the LaFrance fire truck, built in 2001, one of two trucks owned by the department, had recently failed a pump test and was to be repaired. He said the truck needed too many repairs to remain in service and asked the board to approve Resolution 44-2023, which authorizes him to list the engine for sale. He said the funds from the sale would go to capital improvements or back into the budget.

The board voted unanimously in favor of listing the engine for sale.

Board agrees to join block grant program

Havenar asked the board to consider joining the El Paso County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which aims to address urgent needs, mitigate blight conditions, and benefit low- to moderate-income families using funds provided by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. It costs the town nothing to join, she said, and membership would help with grants and funding. Building these relationships ensures the town’s voice is heard.

The board voted to participate in the program and Trustee Ball volunteered to manage the town’s participation.

For many of the same reasons, the board decided to participate in the Community Development Advisory Board as well, which makes recommendations to the El Paso Board of County Commissioners concerning the use of CDBG funds. Ball volunteered to represent the town on the advisory board.

Healing centers zoned M1

The board debated Ordinance 15-2023, which adds healing centers where patients can receive treatment with psilocybin mushrooms to the list of conditional uses in areas zoned M1 general industrial. Havenar said no applications for healing centers had been received by the town to date, but she wanted to be prepared. Attorney Krob explained that if towns fail to establish zoning for the centers, then they can be anywhere in the town. Towns can’t refuse applications to create healing centers, he said.

The board voted to approve the ordinance, with Trustees Ball, Kevin Dreher, Nick Ehrhardt, Padgett, Dennis Stern and Mayor Havenar voting in favor. Trustee Jessica Farr voted no.

Special event permits granted

The board heard a request for a special event permit for The Springs 50 Trail Walk, which was held

on June 9. Stambaugh, speaking on behalf of the applicant, told the board the event consisted of a group of 50 veterans walking from Palmer Lake to Fort Carson. The walk will provide a time for them to bond, Stambaugh said. The board voted unanimously to grant the permit and waive the event fee. The board also approved a permit for the Pikes Peak Library District to hold three concerts in the Village Green on Aug. 11, 18, and 25.

June 8 executive session

The board meeting was preceded by an executive session to receive legal advice regarding lease agreements at the Elephant Rock property, a possible annexation, and an Intergovernmental Agreement involving the Palmer Lake Fire Department, a complaint against the Palmer Lake Police Department and a personnel matter.

June 22 staff update

At its June 22 meeting, Stambaugh told the board that the audit of the town’s 2022 finances would be complete by July. She said the audit process was smoother this year because of recent changes to the accounting codes. Stambaugh said she expected the town’s insurance premiums to be lower due to improved training and compliance with CIRSA requirements. She mentioned tax revenues from the sale of adult use cannabis were beginning to come in and looked promising. She said the town was seeking an interim accounting service to help with bookkeeping and that Water Operator Steve Orcutt had provided feedback to GMS Engineering Inc. on their preliminary engineering report on stormwater drainage.

Conditional use permit granted

At its June 22 meeting, the board held a public hearing on an application by Curtis Claar for a conditional use permit in a Community Commercial (CC) zone. The permit would allow Claar to build a mixed-use commercial and residential building, with an electrical vehicle charging station in the parking lot, on a small triangular lot at the intersection of Primrose Street and Columbine Road. Claar’s application states the commercial portion of the building will house the office for his vehicle charging business and he will use the residential portion as his home. Claar said the Planning Commission had agreed to the concept. Ball said Claar’s proposal conforms with the town’s master plan.

There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

The board voted unanimously to approve Resolution 45-2023, which allows Claar to move forward with his plan.

Rights of way vacated; replat approved

The board held two public hearings on applications from Cindy Powell and Duran Walton Ventures LLC to vacate rights of way on El Moro Avenue and on Bijou Avenue. A third hearing was held on a related application from Duran Walton Ventures LLC to replat 15 lots into five on which residences will be built. Havenar disclosed that she had been involved as a realtor in the sale of the lots a year previously.

During the first hearing, Krob pointed out that if the right of way for El Moro were granted, the town would still retain a right of way to build a trail on the property in question. The first hearing was closed quickly with no questions from the public.

During the second hearing, there were no questions about the vacation, but Drew Walton of Duran Walter Ventures LLC was asked about his plan to build on the replated lots. He said he intended to build small houses on the four lots, one for himself and his wife, and others for family members. The hearing was closed after that question.

There were no questions from the public on the third hearing.

Following the public hearings, the board voted unanimously in favor of Ordinance 16-2023, which vacates El Moro Avenue, Ordinance 17-2023, which vacates Bijou Avenue and Resolution 46-2023, which approves the requested replat.

Grant for pickleball courts

Tim Cares and Mike Pietsch told the board they had been offered a \$250,000 grant to build six pickleball courts and a bathroom on the west side of Palmer Lake just north of the pedestrian bridge. The design they submitted, however, locates the courts over a water line, a pipeline that carries water. Acceptance of the grant would require the water line to be moved. They asked for the board's thoughts on whether the grant should be accepted.

Havenar said she met with Cares, Pietsch, Orcutt, and Reid Wiecks of the Parks Commission. Other locations for the courts were discussed and rejected. Orcutt expressed concerns about the cost of moving the water line. She added that Awake the Lake (ATL) had committed some

funds to the project. Ball argued for accepting the grant even at the price of moving the water line. Pietsch explained the courts would be for day use only, with no additional lighting. The courts would be open to the community at no cost but would also generate revenue by charging leagues and tournaments. In response to a concern from Trustee Kevin Dreher about possible cost overruns, Pietsch said ATL had pledged \$100,000 over the amount of the grant. Pietsch said the next step, if the town approved, would be to work on a more formal design for the entire project. Krob advised the board to see more details before authorizing Cares and Pietsch to accept the grant.

June 22 executive session

The June 22 board meeting was preceded by an executive session to receive legal advice on a complaint involving the Palmer Lake Police Department, on a grant, and on a lease.

The next board meetings are scheduled for July 13 and 27. See the town's website at 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. Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

Monument Academy School Board, June 8

Board reorganizes, hears legislative update



Above: At the June 8 meeting of the Monument Academy (MA) school board, state Rep. Don Wilson (left) provided an update on relevant bills from the 2023 legislative session. Photo by Jackie Burhans.

By Jackie Burhans

At its June 8 regular meeting, the Monument Academy board spotlighted a departing board member and filled a vacancy with a former board candidate. The board also heard a legislative update from House Rep. Don Wilson, HD-20. Finally, the board heard about an upcoming meeting on Navigating Gender Issues as well as updates on the East Campus modulars and the West Campus Highway 105 recirculation project.

Board member changes

Board President Ryan Graham started the meeting by spotlighting board member Michael Geers, whose term would end on June 30. Geers had been appointed to fill the vacancy created when former board member Misty McCuen resigned in August 2022. Graham said boards remain strong and productive based on the people who serve and thanked Geers for his service.

With the May 25 resignation of board member Danny O'Brien, the MA board moved to fill this new vacancy. At McCuen's resignation in August, the board held a community-wide search which resulted in the appointment of Geers. In that closed-ballot vote, candidate Karen Hoida was the runner-up.

Graham moved that the board appoint Hoida to fill the new vacancy, given that it occurred in the same fiscal year as their previous search.



Above: Monument Academy (MA) board President Ryan Graham, left, presents a certificate of appreciation to Michael Geers, who was appointed to the board last August to fill a vacancy. Graham noted that a board's effectiveness depends on the people who serve, thanking Geers for his service. Photo by Jackie Burhans.

Hoida, a Leadership Program of the Rockies graduate, has lived in the area for 30 years, is a lawyer who specializes in litigation and real property, and supports the mission and vision of Monument Academy, which supports her

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Above: At the June 8 meeting, board President Ryan Graham reported that construction was underway at the Monument Academy (MA) West Campus on the new recirculation road that goes around the school building to divert traffic from Highway 105. Recent rains have slowed the work due to oversaturated soil. Graham asked that MA parents use caution when driving around the school due to the construction traffic. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

values, she said. The board unanimously approved her appointment.

Hoida was sworn in and took her seat alongside other board members. All current board members, along with newly elected board member Matt Ross, will take their oaths of office in July. The board voted for its officers, retaining Graham as board president, Lindsay Clinton as vice president, Emily Belisle as secretary, and Joe Buczkowski as treasurer. Board committee assignments will be decided in July.

Legislative updates

Rep. Don Wilson HD-20, the former mayor of Monument, briefed the board on relevant bills from the 2023 legislative session. Wilson serves on the Education Committee in the state Legislature.

The bills he thought would be of interest to the MA board included:

- HB-1009 Secondary School Student Substance Use. This puts the Colorado Depart-

ment of Education (CDE) in charge of how drug use is handled in districts and schools. This bill has been signed into law.

- HB-1291 Procedures for Expulsion Hearing Officers. The state feels there should be uniform guidelines and a set way of handling expulsions. This bill has been signed into law.
- HB-1003 School Mental Health Assessment. This lets the CDE conduct mental health assessments on students in sixth through 12th grade and provide mental health advice. The bill, which exempts home school enrichment students or those who only participate in extracurricular activities, has been signed into law.
- HB-1176 PERA Defined Contribution Plan School Personnel. Wilson was a sponsor of this failed bill which would have allowed

teachers to choose a 401K style defined contribution plan in lieu of the standard defined benefit plan.

- HB-1025 Charter School Application Timelines. Although this doesn't impact MA, it gives new charter schools more time to complete applications. It has been signed into law.
- SB-087 Teacher degree apprenticeship program. Wilson was a sponsor on this bill, which was signed into law, that allows an alternative route to teacher licensure.
- SB-065 Career Development Success Program. This bill, sponsored by Wilson and state Sen. Paul Lundeen SD-9 and signed into law, expands and continues access to trade schools by increasing funding. The bill removes the requirement for the successful completion of apprenticeships and adds the board of cooperative educational services (BOCES) to the program.
- SB-205 Universal High School Scholarship Program. Wilson and Lundeen were sponsors for this bill, which was signed into law, that makes scholar-



Above and right: On June 8, the Monument Academy (MA) school board unanimously appointed Karen Hoida to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Danny O'Brien. Hoida, who is a lawyer, will serve the remainder of his term. *Photos by Jackie Burhans.*



ships available to high school students who go into trades rather than a traditional four-year college.

Wilson said he looked forward to the next legislative session, where he would be watchful for bills impacting charter schools, including waivers for requirements for highly qualified teachers.

Highlights

Board meeting highlights include:

- Clinton reminded the attendees of the upcoming June 27 meeting on Navigating Gender Issues. It will be held at 6 p.m. on the East Campus and will include board members as well as MA's lawyer Brad Miller. Topics will include Colorado state

laws and the board's proclamation against discrimination protection for LGBTQ students. There will be a question-and-answer session.

- Graham reported that construction is underway on the recirculation road at MA's West Campus that was required due to the Highway 105 widening. Overly saturated soil due to recent rains has slowed the project somewhat. He encouraged parents to be careful due to construction traffic.
- Graham reported that modular construction on the East Campus would be completed in July before the school session begins in August.

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



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Lewis-Palmer Board of Education, June 26

Board approves budgets for district and Monument Academy

By Harriet Halbig

The June 26 meeting of the Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education was held after the deadline for articles for this issue, but a brief description of the meeting follows. Please see the August 5 issue of OCN for additional coverage of what transpired at this meeting June 26.

The board approved the budgets for the 2023-24 school year for District 38 and for Monument Academy. Both budgets may be found in

boarddocs on the district website, lewispalmer.org, under Board of Education.

Regarding a restructuring of bus routes discussed at the May 22 board meeting (See <https://www.ocn.me/v23n6.htm#d38>), one bus stop has been added east of Highway 83 to decrease the distance travelled by students. See the revised map on boarddocs.

The board voted to notify the county of its intent to participate in the November election and

voted to call for nominations for directors. Four board seats are involved in the election.

The Board of Education does not meet in July. The date for the August regular meeting has yet to be determined.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

June Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

June was the second month in a row of well-below normal temperatures and well-above normal rainfall. This was especially the record cold and wet period that was most active during the first three weeks of the month and included several days of severe weather. For the month, temperatures averaged about 4 degrees below normal and precipitation was more than three times the normal amount.

Numerous records were set as well along the Front Range and eastern plains. This included the second wettest period from May 1 through June 17 at the official Denver observational site where records extend back to 1872 and the coldest June 1-17 at that same site since 1872. Daily record rainfall occurred on several days during the month.

All this moisture and daily cloudiness kept temperatures very cool, with our first 80-degree temperatures not occurring until June 18. The last time we hit the 80s in the region was way back on the last day of summer, Sept. 20, 2022. The end of June also marks the end of the snow season. After a slow start we managed to make up a lot of ground from December through April and ended the season quickly with just a small amount of snow recorded in May and none in June.

Overall, we were slightly below normal for the season, just barely breaking above the 100-inch mark. Of course, the abundant moisture in May and June means we are far above normal for the seasonal precipitation having almost reached our yearly total in the first six months.

The first week of the month was wet and cool, with 1-2 inches of rain accumulating. The heaviest rainfall during the period was on the 3rd, when we had cloudy and cold conditions all day. High temperatures only managed to reach the low 50s that afternoon, making our weather feel more like Seattle in the winter than Colorado in the summer.

After a couple days of relatively dry but cool conditions, another week of wet weather moved in. This period included daily thunderstorm activity, with a few days producing hail and flash flooding. The heaviest rain fell on the 7th and the 11th through the 12th. Runoff was exacerbated by the saturated soils as the ground has had no time to dry out.

The 14th saw a brief respite from the rainfall, but we were greeted by hazy skies this day as smoke from Canadian wildfires moved into the region. This smoke was quickly cleared out, however, with another round of heavy rainfall and areas of hail on the 15th and 16th.

Our first truly summer-like weather finally arrived on the 18th, with sunny skies and temperatures touching 80 degrees. The next afternoon was even warmer, hitting 84 degrees and not a cloud in the sky. After another mild and mostly sunny day on the 21st, more moisture moved back in. This time there was a high amount of instability to combine with the very moist air mass. This combination results in strong to severe thunderstorms on the 22nd and 23rd. Sev-



Above: A cumulonimbus cloud looms large over Black Forest, reflecting the sun as it begins to set in the west at around 8 p.m. on June 21. The Gleneagle community is pictured below the cloud that occurred between two heavy rain storms with large damaging hail on the summer solstice. By 8:30 p.m., the cloud had been replaced with gray skies and electrical activity as the second storm moved in. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

eral tornadoes were reported in the region, with the strongest, an EF3 occurring south of Grenada and another near Highlands Ranch. Hail, sometimes large enough to cause damage, occurred both days. On the 22nd the most dramatic aspect was the hail that injured several spectators at Red Rocks Amphitheater. On the 23rd, parts of the Palmer Divide were hit with hail up to 2 inches in diameter, enough to cause dents in cars and damage to roofs.

Finally, a long stretch of relatively dry and quiet weather moved in to end the month. Mainly dry conditions, with sunny skies were the rule from the 24th through the 30th. This allowed the region to begin to dry out a little, just in time for the start of the North American Monsoon season. One benefit of all the moisture is all the plants are happy and everything is green. Now let's hope our two wettest months of the year (July and August) are well-behaved.

A look ahead

July can be an active weather month around the region, as the Southwest Monsoon season gets going. Afternoon and evening thunderstorms are a common occurrence, and when they tap into higher levels of moisture, flash flooding can result. Hot, stagnant weather can also take hold for a few days at time, with highs hitting the 90s on the warmest days.

June 2023 Weather Statistics

Average High	70.6° (-6.8°)
	100-year return frequency value
	max 82.5° min 66.3°
Average Low	44.7° (+0.4°)
	100-year return frequency value
	max 50.7° min 40.2°



Above Extreme shifts in weather are something Coloradans are used to, but the weather changes from June 15 to 16 were even more wild. Early evening on June 15, a double rainbow appeared over the Lake of the Rockies community after a warm shower. The next day, seconds after a severe thunderstorm warning was issued by the National Weather Service in Pueblo, the skies opened up and dumped 2 inches of pea-size hail on the ground, knocking leaves off trees and damaging plants. In one Monument yard, a downspout shaped like a dragon looked like it was vomiting hail. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

Highest Temperature	84°F on the 19th	Monthly Snowfall	0.0"	(+5.94" 45% above normal)
Lowest Temperature	37°F on the 2nd		(-0.1" 100% below normal)	(the precip season is from Jan 1 to Dec 31)
Monthly Precipitation	6.58"	Season to Date Snow	105.4"	Heating Degree Days 230 (+135)
	(+4.63" 330% above normal)		(-17.1" 14% below normal)	Cooling Degree Days 9 (-19)
100-year return frequency value		(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30))		Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me.
max 6.94" min 0.15"		Season to Date Precip	16.96"	

Letters to Our Community

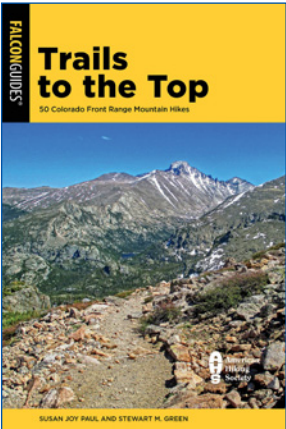
Guidelines for letters are on page 31.
Disclaimer:Theinformationandopinionexpressed in Letters to Our Community are the responsibility of the letter writers and should not be interpreted as the views of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.
Another hidden cost of excessive development
To make way for development natural land is

stripped of its topsoil, then paved over with parking lots, roads, and driveways. This makes the ground impervious to surface water which normally makes its way through layers of earth, sand, and gravel where it is naturally filtered and naturally makes its way to be stored in natural aquifers. This surface water is commonly known to be non-potable, highly contaminated with various pollutants, both organic and inorganic.

The Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) solution mentioned in OCN June 3, 2023, page 18 proposes to collect this excess surface water (i.e., runoff created by excessive development) and inject it directly into the heretofore pristine aquifer through an existing well(s).
I ask you: What could possibly go wrong? (My apologies for the excessive use of the words natural and naturally.)
Brian Clifford

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore
Adventure awaits

By the staff at Covered Treasures
"Adventure awaits. Grab your hiking boots and get ready for new adventures."—Unknown
It's hiking season! These are expert guidebooks to help you plan your adventures.
Trails to the Top: 50 Colorado Front Range Mountain Hikes
By Susan Joy Paul and Stewart M. Green (Falcon Press) \$24.95
While Colorado's 14ers and 13ers are well known, this new guide from local outdoor adventurers and authors Susan Joy Paul and Stewart M. Green takes readers off the beaten path—to the top of some of Colorado's lesser-known, yet no less impressive mountains between 9,000 and 12,000 feet. The 50 unique routes covered feature amazing views with accessible trailheads for hikers of all skill levels, all located within a couple hours' drive of Denver, Fort Collins, and Colorado Springs. You'll find hikes suited to every ability, color photos, GPS coordinates, directions to the trailhead, and mile-by-mile directional cues.
Trail Tips: Providing Inspiration for Your Journeys on the Trail, Personal, and Work Life
By Al Andersen (Al Andersen) \$25
Everyone is on a journey in their hiking, personal, and work lives. The quality of our success often depends on the support and inspiration we get along the way. Trail Tips will get you thinking and inspire you on your adventures in life. Local



author Al Andersen started out writing about his hikes and life. Many found them inspirational, and he has compiled them into this book.
100 Trails, 5,000 Ideas: Where to Go, When to Go, What to See, What to Do
By Joe Yogerst (National Geographic Society) \$29.99
This travel guide takes you on a series of epic hiking and walking adventures on 100 trails around all 50 states and Canada, including the best scenic overlooks, camping sites, and off-trail activities. With each itinerary you'll find practical planning advice for when to go and what to expect. This book offers something for everyone, from beginners looking for an easy day hike to advanced trekkers seeking multi-week excursions.
Best Summit Hikes in Colorado: 55 Classic Routes and 100+ Summits (Revised)
By James Dziezynski (Wilderness Press) \$24.95
Mountaineer and explorer James Dziezynski presents 55 of Colorado's best summit hikes. Now in color, this guide covers all of Colorado's major ranges, including the Front Range, Sangre de Cristo, Sawatch, San Juan, and Mosquito and Ten Mile ranges. Each hike profile includes a topographic map with GPS waypoint and elevation profile, difficulty and class ratings tailored to Colorado's unique terrain, optional routes for further exploration, and fascinating trivia and history.
Adventure Ready: A Hiker's Guide to Planning, Training & Resiliency
By Katie Gerber and Heather Anderson (Mountaineers Books) \$24.95
In this comprehensive guide, renowned hikers Katie "Salty" Gerber and Heather "Anish" Anderson help prepare long-distance hikers for all the challenges—physical, mental, emotional—they may encounter while on the trail for weeks or

months. Backpackers will find detailed information about everything from gear selection, navigation, safety, and trip planning to nutritional and physical preparation and body resiliency to how to readjust after returning home. Worksheets and checklists make for easy planning.
The Essential Guide to Hiking with Dogs: Trail-Tested Tips and Expert Advice for Canine Adventures
By Jen Sotolongo (Falcon Press) \$24.95
As a dog owner, hiking with your canine companion is one of the most rewarding experiences. With this guide, you and your four-legged friend can be ready for anything the wilderness might throw at you. Set yourselves and others up for the very best hiking experience. Need-to-know topics are covered, from trail etiquette to leave no trace ethics, important gear and packing guides to essential commands you should train for the trail. Featuring beautiful photography, this guide will inform and inspire any adventure dog and their parents.
Uphill Both Ways: Hiking Toward Happiness on the Colorado Trail
By Andrea Lani (Bison Books), \$21.95
One grouchy husband, three reluctant kids, a 489-mile trek from Denver to Durango, and one woman, determined to reset her life and confront the history of environmental damage. Lani's family traveled through stunning scenery and encountered wildflowers, wildlife, and too many other hikers. They ate cold oatmeal in a chilly, wet tent and experienced scorching heat, torrential thunderstorms, and the first trip of winter. Her kids grew in unimaginable ways, and Lani began to uncover the secret to happiness.
Until next month, happy reading.
The staff at Covered Treasures can be reached at books@ocn.me.

July Library Events
Summer reading, special programs to enjoy

By Harriet Halbig
The Summer Adventure reading and activity program continues until July 31 at the Monument Library.
Nine hundred fifty-four patrons up to age 18 have registered to participate to date. It isn't too late to join and win prizes! Upon registration, children receive a free book. For each day when 30 minutes or more are spent reading, imagining, or engaging in physical activity, mark off a section on your game card (available online or at the library). After 30 days, those up to four years

old receive a free colorful bath toy. Those ages 5 to 11 receive a reading medal, and those 12 to 18 receive a free book or journal of your choice.
Special programs in July include Rhythm Fun for Everyone at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, July 18. Play drums (provided), sing, and move to the rhythm that you create.
On Tuesday, July 25 at 7 p.m., enjoy a Life-Size Game Night: Intergenerational Edition. Family members of all ages are invited to play life-size games of Candy Land, Battleship, and Clue from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

On Friday, Aug. 4 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. there will be a family concert featuring Steve Weeks

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in Limbach Park, 151 Front St. in Monument. Come prepared to sing and dance to the music and don't forget to bring a lawn chair or blanket. Please note that all Pikes Peak Library facili-

ties will be closed on July 4 in observance of Independence Day. Monument Library staff will participate in the parade and street fair in Monument. Stop by to say hello!

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me

Palmer Lake Historical Society, June 18

Father's Day Ice Cream Social

By Marlene Brown

June's monthly meeting of the Palmer Lake Historical Society (PLHS) was moved to Father's Day. The PLHS held its traditional Father's Day Ice Cream Social on June 18 at the Palmer Lake Town Hall in the Village Green. The weather was warm, and the rain took a break during the afternoon. New fathers and old fathers came with their families to enjoy the sunshine and listen to the guitar music of Craig Walter.

Free cream and pie were served from inside the Town Hall by members of the PLHS. Pie fillings included apple, cherry, and rhubarb. Rhubarb was a favorite of the pioneers, and the plant was grown in many yards of the settlers. The event was sponsored by John Spidell of The Spidell Foundation of Monument.

The Lucretia Vaile Museum was open for viewing of historical collections of the area. Volunteer members of the PLHS offered special tours in the afternoon. The museum is operated by the museum director, staff, and docents, all who are volunteers. It is open Wednesdays 1 to 4 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The mission of the museum is to house photos, articles, and artifacts of the historical Palmer Lake, Monument, and Palmer Divide areas. It is located at 66 Lower Glenway Street (below the Palmer Lake Library). For more information, see palmerdividehistory.org/about-the-museum.

Next month will be the members-only Walking



Above: Young and old enjoy ice cream and pie on the Village Green at the Palmer Lake Town Hall on June 18 for the Palmer Lake Historical Society's Father's Day Ice Cream Social. *Photo by Esther Martinez.*

Tours with past President and award-winning director Jim Sawatzki, who has produced many historical videos of the area. It will be held at 10 a.m. July 9 at Historic "Old Ranch Town" of Monument and is an easy one-mile walk. Learn about Monument's history, including train station and hotels. On July 15, there will be a 2.5-mile walk through Greenland Open Space to visit the Historic Old Cemetery of Palmer Lake. For more information, see palmerdividehistory.org/local-history-on-tour-led-by-jim-sawatzki/.

The PLHS normally meets (open to the pub-



Above: Music was provided at the Palmer Lake Historical Society ice cream social by Craig Walter of the Craig Walter Band. Walter is a local singer and songwriter and has performed over much of the United States.

lic) on the third Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent St. For information about becoming a member of the PLHS and other events provided by the PLHS, go to palmerdividehistory.org.

Marlene Brown can be contacted at marlenebrown@ocn.me.

On the Trail (in memory of Tim Watkins)

Mount Herman Road closure update



Above: Rockslide on Mount Herman Road 2¼ miles from gate. *Photo by Steve Pate.*

By Steve Pate

We mentioned in the June issue of OCN that Mount Herman Road (MHR) had been closed by the U.S. Forest Service. Someone opened the gate and drove up toward the FS 716 trailhead and into a washed-out section of the road. The car has been removed and the Forest Service was

scheduled to begin repairing the road June 21.

During a walk up MHR toward FS 716 on June 20, I was able to talk to the superintendent of the wildfire mitigation crew just starting work to reduce the fire risk on the west and north side of MHR. They will be reducing the fuel load by taking out Gambel oak and other "ladder" veg-



Above: A masticator begins wildfire mitigation off Mount Herman Road, June 20. *Photo by Steve Pate.*

etation.

I had heard that a rockslide closed the road and came upon it about 2¼ miles up MHR from the closed gate. The storm-caused washout is about 2¾ miles from the gate, just below FS 716 trailhead.

A natural gas line was also damaged during recent storms, and I talked with a gas company employee en route to work on repairs. The crew was unable to access the damaged lines due to the rockslide, which occurred in mid-June.

Several mountain bikers and hikers were using MHR on June 20. Sections of MHR may close temporarily while wildfire mitigation is underway and when road repairs begin.

StevePatemaybecontactedatstevepate@ocn.me.



Above: Washout on Mount Herman Road 2¾ miles from gate, just below FS 716 trailhead. *Photo by Steve Pate.*

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Pretty, edible plants that deter mosquitoes and deer

By Janet Sellers

With so much rain in June, we likely will have more mosquitoes than usual. Several plants grow well in our area that help make outdoors fun again. Pots of these aromatic herbs around where you'll be outdoors will also repel garden pests.

Basil is great for cooking. Its eugenol oil compounds confuse and irritate mosquitoes—they'll leave for another food source. Gently touch the leaves to release the scent.

Catnip, a great pollinator plant, contains nepetalactone, a compound that is up to 10 times better than DEET at repelling mosquitoes, according to the National Library of Medicine. Traditional medicine says to vigorously rub the leaves between your hands and apply them to the skin to last at least 30 minutes. It's safe around cats and dogs.

Lemon balm, aka bee balm, is a plant in the mint family that deters pests. Made into a hot or cold tea, people use it for its calming effects and other conditions.

The flowers and leaves of marigolds deter bugs. It contains pyrethrum, a natural insecticide. Plant them near doors, windows, and seating areas.

Mint—its menthol keeps pests away. Grows just about anywhere, even in partial shade.

Flower teepees

We're going to try flower teepee towers this summer. Made with poles (aspen shoots or bamboo, etc.), it can be a teepee big enough for kids to sit in, or just for climbing plants. I'm going to make them for zesty salad nasturtiums (annuals) and climbing roses (perennials). Both are pretty and deer resistant. The deer leave my nasturtiums and a friend's prickly climber roses alone. Nas-



Above: Student volunteers work on the Monument Community Garden. For many years we've used pine straw at various local community and home gardens (yes, a safe 2-inch depth) to mulch over food crops after seeding to keep out weeds and lock in the moisture. Pine needles are renewable, knit themselves together, stay put after rain or snow even on slopes, and break down more slowly than other organic mulches. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

turtiums may drop their seeds for next year, the roses will need annual pruning to keep them in check and in shape.

Pine needle myth

A common myth is that pine needles make the soil acidic. They do not. For proof, just test your soil. Weeds and plants don't grow in pine needle mulched areas because the weed seeds don't get into the soil to germinate. Plants and seeds unnatural to the forest clime landscape that don't grow well may need soil amendments because Mother Nature optimizes forest soil for forest life. That keeps the natural pine forests safe from weeds and helps nurture the pine forest microbiome.

Annual Colorado Hummingbird Festival

The Annual Colorado Hummingbird Festival will be on Aug. 4-5 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., a celebration of our four Colorado hummingbirds just before the fall migration. Everybody can enjoy hummingbird talks and stories with hummingbird garden-themed arts and crafts, baby alpacas, giant bubbles, a farmer's market, and more. It is held at the historic Happy Landings Ranch, 17435 Rollercoaster Road at Hodgen Road.

Janet Sellers is an avid "lazy gardener" letting Mother Nature lead the way for simple yet successful gardening. Please send garden tips to:

JanetSellers@ocn.me.

Art Matters

Art Hop: an indoor-outdoor art fair with booths



By Janet Sellers

The unique aspect of our local Art Hop as an art fair is the chance to meet and interact with the artists themselves. Artists attend the events with their work to meet and interact with people and share their work. A personal connection adds a special dimension to the artwork and creates a memorable experience.

We have an engaging, festive atmosphere at the Art Hop in Monument. The air is filled with energy, creativity, and a sense of celebration. We can enjoy browsing through art displays, listening to live music, trying cuisine at food trucks, and engaging in conversation with fellow enthusiasts. It's an immersive experience that can be both entertaining and inspiring. And the best part is you get to take

the art and the memories of the day home with you.

At Bella Art and Frame, I took some photos of some of the artists and talked to them about their work:

Lynn Roth was on hand to share his art images of colorful scenes in Cuba and the stories that go with them. Roth is a founding mentor for the new Palmer Lake Arts Council and has been active in the Tri-Lakes local arts scene with the Palmer Lake Art Group and many arts and civic events. He exhibits his art widely in Colorado and the West.

Steve Weed, the featured Bella Art and Frame exhibitor for June, talked to visitors about his portrait paintings. Weed's exhibit had many paintings of characters of the West. He is the creator and instigator of the "Ashes to Art" project.

He says the project was "created to ultimately show gratitude and help my neighborhood in Colorado Springs. The artwork incorporated charcoal and ash found in our yard and neighborhood, initially for my own emotional therapy. Then, they became a way that I could use my skills to thank the firefighters and police officers and also to help my neighbors who lost everything."

John McClusky shared his natural landscape and night skies fine art photography at his booth. Ranging from the night skies of the West to bucolic and forest landscapes, his artwork shows nature's beauty in the sky, land, and waterscapes. His photos are readily available locally, and as a lifelong science educator and college provost, he enjoys sharing his knowledge of nature and photography with others in

pictures and in the field.

Tom Ulmer showed his nature photography at his booth. He named his photo studio Rock 36 Photography. An Air Force Academy graduate with a career in the Air Force, he said he fell in love with the Alaskan wilds while developing his photography avocation. His work is viewed locally and in Broomfield. He has many photos of his favorite natural places and the animals that live there.

Janet Sellers is an artist, writer, and lecturer. Contact her at janetsellers@ocn.me.

Pictured below (clockwise from the upper left): Lynn Roth, Steve Weed, John McClusky, and Tom Ulmer. *Photos by Janet Sellers.*



Snapshots of Our Community

Thunderbirds rehearsed May 31 for the USAFA Graduation



Above: The Thunderbirds rehearsed their airshow on May 31, a day before performing at the Air Force Academy's graduation ceremony in Colorado Springs. A crowd watched the rehearsal from the parking lot at Bass Pro Shop in Northgate. The rehearsal was in two parts. In the morning, four planes conducted a survey flight. Then, in the afternoon, six planes practiced the airshow they would perform at the graduation. President Joe Biden spoke at the ceremony. He thanked the graduates for choosing "service over self." *Photos by Michael Weinfeld.*

Fire district youth camp, June 1



Above: Students engage in fire rescue drills at Station 1, Monument Fire District, during the first annual Youth Camp on June 1. Thirteen high school students attended the three-day camp on June 1-3 to discover more about the type of work firefighters and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) workers carry out. Students were taught about the history of the fire service, personnel protective equipment, hose and ladders, forcible entry, vehicle extrication, a host of EMS topics, and how to compete for a firefighter career position successfully. The camp is expected to expand next year to accommodate more students and continue annually for high school students with an interest in fire and EMS careers. *Photo courtesy of Monument Fire District.*

PLAG honors Maddox, June 2



Above: Palmer Lake Art Group (PLAG) member John DeFrancesco, left, and PLAG President Vicki Mynhier, right, present Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) Executive Director Michael Maddox with a portrait of Maddox painted by DeFrancesco. The presentation took place at PLAG's opening reception for its 2023 Color Splash Art Show at the TLCA on June 2. DeFrancesco said it was in recognition of Maddox's "many years of supporting PLAG, the arts, and keeping the arts meaningful in the Tri-Lakes community." DeFrancesco said he got the concept for the portrait composition from a photograph of Maddox on the TLCA stage as the lighting illuminated Maddox's face. *Photo by David Futey.*

Hazel Miller at TLCA, June 3



Left: On June 3, Colorado Music Hall of Fame 2023 inductee Hazel Miller, with Coco Brown and backup band *The Collective*, performed a Tribute to Aretha Franklin along with covers of other artists for a sold out and raucous Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) audience. Miller, Brown, and Collective guitarist

Cody Carbone shared lead vocals and provided complementary background vocals throughout the evening while backed by exceptional Collective musicians Rich Lamb (bass), Dana Marsh (keyboards), and Brian Mikulich (drums). The Franklin songs performed included *Baby, I Love You, Chain of Fools, Dr. Feelgood, Freeway of Love, and Respect*. Interspersed among the Franklin songs, the group performed other covers including Stevie Wonder's *Superstition*, Carlos Santana's *Smooth* and culminated the evening with a tribute to Tina Turner with *Proud Mary*. Information on upcoming TLCA events is at www.trilakesarts.org. *Photo by David Futey.*

Cotton wins art scholarship, June 2



Above: Lewis-Palmer District-38 High School art student Isabelle Cotton received the 2023 Palmer Lake Art Group (PLAG) Scholarship during PLAG's opening reception at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts on June 2. Cotton also had several of her works on display for the month-long PLAG gallery show. For 60 years, PLAG has offered the scholarship to a graduating D38 student who will be continuing their art education, awarding over \$86,000 to date. Cotton said it is "an honor to receive the scholarship and have my artwork featured in this show." Cotton will continue her artistic pursuits at Temple University in Japan. *Photo by David Futey.*

Zettler's woodcarving wins 1st place

Right: The Palmer Lake Art Group (PLAG) held its opening reception on June 2 for its 2023 Color Splash Art Show in the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) main gallery. The show was scheduled from June 1-28 and dedicated to the memory of longtime PLAG member Claudette Bedingfield. A total of 42 PLAG members had their works displayed at the show. Two paintings that were jointly painted by a variety of PLAG members, were auctioned off with proceeds going toward the PLAG scholarship fund. The show was judged by Tim Deibler, who selected Bob Zettler's woodcarving (shown above) titled *The Rock House* for first place. An interesting display was 18 cloud and sky paintings by PLAG painters. The adjacent gallery contained Inside- and Outside- the Lines by Sandy Goddard (paintings) and John Goddard (photography). This show goes through July 25. Information about PLAG is at www.palmerlakeartgroup.com. *Photo by David Futey.*



Shiloh Pines chipping day, June 3

Right: The residents of Shiloh Pines Homeowners Association west of Monument Lake worked through the rain on June 3, with the help of the Monument Fire District chipper and two firefighters, to reduce the load of "ladder fuels" in their neighborhood. By removing flammable material close to homes, it's less likely the home will ignite during a wild-fire. And by thinning pines growing too close together to thrive and reducing the amount of Gambel oak, when a ground fire comes through, there's less of a chance it will become a crown fire. See <https://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/>. *Photo courtesy of Shiloh Pines HOA.*



Tri-Lakes Lions hold annual Palmer Lake Fishing Derby, June 3



Above: The Tri-Lakes Lions Club held its annual Fishing Derby for kids at Palmer Lake on a cold, rainy June 3. About 160 young people ages 4 to 14 competed for prizes for the biggest fish. Colorado Parks and Wildlife provided fishing rods for those who did not bring their own, and bait was also provided. According to Jim Hazuka, co-chair of the derby, Bass Pro Shop provided prizes including tackle boxes and fishing rods. Other sponsors included Farmers Insurance, Rosie's Diner, and Colorado Friends and Family Fishing. Parents or other adults helped the young people rig their fishing gear and cast if needed.



Palmer Lake's water level had been too low to accommodate the derby until recent torrential rains replenished the Palmer Lake reservoirs and the lake. Parks and Wildlife again stocked the lake with rainbow trout before the derby.

Pictured at right: Kaison (center) with a friend, and his dad Landon Blatter, caught an 11¾-inch trout.

Photos by Steve Pate.

PLAC offers summer art classes



Above: Camilla Borroel and Hunter Aho enjoy the first summer art class inaugurated by the Palmer Lake Arts Council (PLAC), which will offer children's art experiences throughout the summer. These classes are sponsored by PLAC and Facinelli Motors. So far, classes were held at The Shop in Palmer Lake. *Photo courtesy of Palmer Lake Arts Council.*

Church buries time capsule



Above: The Church at Woodmoor is celebrating its 50th anniversary. In honor of the occasion, a time capsule was buried in front of the church on June 11. It contains a cross used by Pastor Bob Browning in Vietnam during battlefield communion, a replica of the three crosses in front of the church, a church directory, a book of photos, a copy of The Messenger, a church bulletin, a history of the church, and photos of the church grounds. Next to the spot where the time capsule was buried, a commemorative sculpture of the church's logo was installed. *Left photo by Robyn Martinez. Right photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

Volunteer gardeners honored



Above: Tia M. Mayer and John Howe were honored by the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce on June 7 for their work in reviving the garden next to the Chamber's meeting house on Highway 105. The garden is called Ms. T's after Mayer, who's in charge of buying and installing new plants. Mayer says she's always wanted a public garden to take care of and it's an "incredible honor" to have the freedom to plant what she wants. Chamber President and CEO Terri Hayes (right) says the garden used to be in "horrendous" shape before Mayer and Howe took over. Mayer and Howe received a certificate of appreciation, a gift card, and a note that says, "The entire community benefits from your efforts." The building was originally a schoolhouse in the 19th century settlement of Gwillimville before moving to Monument Presbyterian Church, where it was used as a Sunday school. It was then donated to the Chamber and moved to its current site about 20 years ago. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

Free shredding in Black Forest



Left: For the first time since 2019 when CO-VID-19 shut down everything, Chapter 1100 of AARP in conjunction with AARP ElderWatch Colorado held a free shredding

event in Black Forest on June 10. People from 21 areas of central Colorado dropped off their personal documents for shredding, yielding about 7,000 pounds of paper, which will be recycled. They also donated 370 pounds of non-perishable food and \$255 to the Black Forest Care and Share Food Bank. Shredding unneeded personal documents is recommended to make sure no one can find personal information in trash bins or storage areas. In the photo, volunteers unload personal documents to waiting trucks for on-site professional shredding. *Photo by Stan Beckner.*

Awake the Lake holds "fun"-raiser



Above: On Saturday, June 10, the “fun-raiser” sub-committee of Awake Palmer Lake held a Red Wine & Blue BBQ, a fundraising event at Palmer Lake Town Hall. The sold-out event raised money for the fireworks display at the upcoming Festival on the Fourth in Palmer Lake on July 4. Attendees enjoyed a barbecue dinner, lawn games, music, and line-dancing lessons. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Mass casualty drill, June 14



Above: First responders and volunteer casualties participate in an area-wide mass casualty incident drill at Lewis-Palmer High School on June 14. Monument Fire District, in partnership with Monument Police Department, hosted the drill on June 12, 14, and 16. The purpose of the drill was to allow local first responders to practice their roles in a mass casualty event, should one occur in the area. The following organizations also participated in the drills: District 38 Security, Palmer Lake Police and Fire Department, Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, Colorado Springs Fire Department, Falcon Fire Protection District, Security Fire Department, American Medical Response, and Asteri Ambulance. About 35 volunteers from Emergency Incident Support provided food and refreshments, and they were actors during the drill. *Photo courtesy of Monument Fire District.*

New pier on Monument Lake



Above: There's a new pier at Monument Lake. It took eight days to build the 370-foot structure on the northeast corner of the lake. The project was completed on June 14. Anglers and pedestrians will now be able to cross the lake and get to a part of the shoreline that had been inaccessible. The pier was constructed in sections with members of the Public Works Department maneuvering each section through the water with long poles. The sections are weighed down with 55-gallon drums filled with concrete each weighing 1,000 pounds. The project cost about \$224,000. About three-quarters of the cost was picked up by a \$171,000 Fishing is Fun Grant from the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

BOCC hearing on redistricting



Above: On Monday, June 12, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) held a public meeting of the redistricting committee at Lewis-Palmer High School, greeted by demonstrators. The BOCC, which is required to re-draw the county commissioner districts at least once in the second odd year after the decennial census, appointed itself to the redistricting committee at its April 18 meeting and must hold public meetings in each commissioner district and complete the process by Sept. 30. After opening remarks, a presentation on possible maps based on previous commission direction, and a demonstration of the geographical information tool they used and that the public could use to propose its own maps, the board heard public comments from local district residents, residents outside the local district, and residents from outside the county. Comments included concerns about the previous redistricting splitting the town of Monument into two separate districts and dividing the southeastern quarter of the county into three districts. These actions were described as diluting the votes of Manitou Springs after a close election and splitting the vote of the primarily Black and Latino community in southeastern Colorado Springs. Information about the redistricting process, including videos of past meetings and the schedule for upcoming meetings, can be found at <https://www.elpasoco.com/redistricting/>. The next redistricting meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 6 in Commission District 4 at Mesa Ridge High School. From left are the clerk to the board, Commissioners Holly Williams D-1, Cami Bremer, D-5, Carrie Geitner D-2, Stan VanderWerf D-3, and County Attorney Kenneth Hodges. Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez Jr. D-4 attended by phone. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Avian hangout, June 13



Above: Who says only birds of a feather flock together? The morning of June 13, I spotted a heron, a mother goose and her two goslings and seven cormorants hanging out together by the dam at Monument Lake. Once they dispersed, the heron flew to the new pier and landed on the railing where it stayed until workers arrived to complete construction of the pier. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

Support Our Community.
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Did you know that our advertisers are the reason Our Community News is mailed FREE to the entire Tri-Lakes community? Our mailed circulation each month exceeds 22,000. We also place another 600 papers each month in stacks at local businesses. Our advertisers' willingness to advertise in OCN makes free distribution of this newspaper possible. Please let them know you saw their ad in OCN when patronizing their business!

Thank you for your support!
Please shop Tri-Lakes and
Black Forest businesses!

Monument water tank update



Above: Erection of scaffolding on June 23 is keeping construction on schedule for the 2-million-gallon Town of Monument concrete water storage tank in residential Forest View Estates IV (FVE IV). The erected scaffolding will support on-site, pre-poured concrete wall panels which were scheduled to be set during the week of June 26 through first part of July. These panels will be placed by a 500-ton crane with a longest boom reach of 156 feet with lift and carry of 28,000 pounds. Once the wall panels are placed, formation rebar and reinforcement preparation will be done for pouring of the concrete dome later in July. Residential property in FVE IV is restricted by recorded covenants limited for residential use. The Town of Monument purchased the property from a private citizen, declared eminent domain over the property, then eliminated the restrictive covenant. The expansive water tank project will provide for Monument water needs with pipeline access currently being laid through adjacent residential areas of Forest View Estates, Red Rock Ranch, Highway 105, and downtown Monument. *Photo by Sharon Williams.*

PLAC hosts Shakespere in the Park



Above and below: On June 24, the Palmer Lake Arts Council (PLAC) hosted the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs TheatreWorks troupe. They entertained a happy crowd at the Palmer Lake Village Green with their lively, innovative version of Shakespeare's *Pericles*, a romantic play of adventure and intrigue, including pirates, heroes, royalty, and villains. TheaterWorks offers free theater events to many local communities and will perform *The Taming of the Shrew* at Ent Center for the Arts in July. The PLAC will offer other various events over the summer. In October, PLAC will offer a play about Palmer Lake, written by a local playwright. *Photos by Janet Sellers.*



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 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 community volunteers

Many students need volunteer hours for scouting, civics classes, or other clubs volunteering hours. Monument Community Garden as well as

Friends of Fox Run Park will have some openings for student volunteers (and grownups, too) for the summer. Gardening tasks include preparing garden beds, weeding, sowing seeds, and developing the compost. Bring gardening gloves, some tools will be provided on the work days by other volunteers. Volunteers are needed weekly, in harvest time, twice a week. Friends of Fox Run Park also has openings for volunteers for various tasks. Besides tasks, there will be a short information and skills demonstration for each 2-3 hour session. Contact Janet Sellers at [\[ers@ocn.me\]\(mailto:ers@ocn.me\) for more information.](mailto:janetsell-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

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.

Slash/mulch program

Because of an unprecedented amount of slash and mulch from recent tree

die-off, mulch needs to be picked up and used in the community. The rain has kept people from being able to pick it up but it needs to be picked up as soon as possible. Slash drop off through Sep. 10 (\$2/load). Free mulch pick up through Sep. 16. Hours: Tue. & Thu. 5-7:30 pm, Sat. 7 am-4 pm, Sun noon-4 pm. Mulch loader Sat. (\$5/2 cubic yards). Located in Black Forest, Herring and Shoup roads. Volunteers needed for shifts. Info: www.bflash.org.

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: Tue., July 11, 5 pm. Meet at the Mt. Herman trailhead off Mt. Herman Rd and Nursery Rd and bring gloves. Tools will be provided.

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 Department 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 can be made at the Nature Center May 1-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. Senior Beat can also be viewed online at www.TriLakesSeniors.org.

Can you volunteer today?

- OCN needs your help. See article on page 28.

- **Links to local organizations** with an immediate need for volunteers are listed on the county’s website, 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/>
- **El Paso County volunteer-based and nonprofit organizations** are committed to building healthy, caring communities and 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.american towns.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.epcsheriffsoffice.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 pm, 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 or email Christine Jeffson at Christine@childrensliteracycenter.org.

Our Community Calendar

By Janet Sellers

Although we strive for accuracy in these listings, dates or times are often changed after publication. Please double-check the time and place of any event you wish to attend by calling the info number for that event. Please contact calendar@ocn.me 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.forestlakesmetrodistrict.com.
- El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regular meeting, usually every Tue., am. Please note there is no meeting on July 4th. The BOCC land use meeting in July is being held on July 18th at 1 pm. View agendas and meetings at 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., July 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.townof-monument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees for remote attendance links.
- Palmer Lake Board of Adjustments, Tue., July 11, 5 pm, 28 Valley Crescent St., Palmer Lake. Normally meets first Tues., as needed.
- El Paso County Planning Commission meeting, Thu., July 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 and third

- Thu.(as required). Info: 719-520-6300, <https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com>.
- Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District board meeting, Mon., July 10, 1 pm, 1845 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Normally meets second Mon. Info: 719-488-2525, www.woodmoorwater.com.
- Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Parent and Community Advisory Committee (formerly DAAC), On summer hiatus until October. Usually meets monthly on second Tue., 6-8 pm, Monument. For details, on the meeting site, see <https://www.lewispalmer.org/Page/2#calendar>. Contact info: tmckee@lewispalmer.org.
- Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee meeting, Tue., July 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., July 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.
- Monument Planning Commission meeting, Wed., July 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.townof-monument.org/263/Planning-Commission-Board-of-Adjustment. Info: 719-884-8028. www.townofmonument.org.
- Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting, Thu., July 13 & 27, 5 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent, Usually meets second and fourth Thu. Info: 719-481-2953. www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- Lewis-Palmer School District 38 board meeting, No meeting in July. Normally meets third Mon., 6-10 pm. This meeting of the Board of

- Education will be live-streamed on the district’s YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCommunity, agenda, and supporting documents at <https://go.boarddocs.com/co/lewis-palmer/Board.nsf/vpublic>. Contact Vicki Wood. Phone: 719.481.9546 Email: vwood@lewispalmer.org Website: <https://www.lewispalmer.org>.
- Monument Sanitation District board meeting, Wed., July 19, 9 am, 130 Second St. Zoom meeting. Find joining instructions on the website. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-4886, www.colorado.gov/msd.
- Palmer Lake Town Planning Commission meeting, Wed., July 19, 6 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets third Wed. Info:

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- 719-481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- Academy Water and Sanitation District board meeting, Wed., July 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., July 19, 7 pm, Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at 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., July 20, 9 am Monument Town Hall Boardroom, 645 Beacon Lite Rd. Meets third Thu. Info: 719-488-3603. www.loopwater.org.
 - Triview Metropolitan District board meeting, Thu., July 20, 5:30 pm, 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302, Monument. Normally meets third Thu. Info: 719-488-6868, www.triviewmetro.com.
 - Donala Water & Sanitation District board meeting, Thu., July 26, 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.
 - Monument Academy School Board meeting, Meets in the school year, second Thu. Info 719-481-1950, <https://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board/board-meeting-minutes/>.
 - Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting, Wed., July 26, 7 pm, Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. The WIA Board usually meets fourth Wed. Info: 719-488-2693, www.woodmoor.org.
 - Monument Fire District board meeting, in person or via Zoom, Wed., July 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.
 - Donald Wescott fire protection district meeting, Meets every other month on the fourth Wed. The next meeting is July 26, 4:30 pm, at Station 1, 18650 Highway 105 Monument. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at <http://www.monumenfire.org> or contact Jennifer Martin, at 719-484-0911.

WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS

- Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) meeting, Sat., July 8, 10 am-12 pm., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. HOA legal topics. Members of local HOAs are welcome. Usually meets bi-monthly (Jan., Mar., May, July, Sep., Nov.) on the second Sat. of the month. 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, at 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. See ad on page 3.
- Monument Hill Kiwanis Club meeting, every Sat., 8 am. www.MHKiwanis.org, Monument-HillKiwanis@gmail.com for details, guests are welcome. Service leadership clubs, Key clubs, Builders Club, and K-kids at D38 schools. Memberships are open to the public. Info: RF Smith, 719-210-4987, www.MHKiwanis.org.
- Neighborhood Net Ham Radio, every Sat., 10 am Amateur ham radio operators practice for emergencies on weekly repeater nets so neighbors can help neighbors. Sign up at www.mereowx.org/neighborhood-net or contactus@mereowx.org.
- Palmer Lake Art Group, second Sat. A variety of art programs are offered after the social gathering and business meetings. Guests welcome. 300 Hwy 105, NE corner of I-25 and 105. 9:30 am. Info: 719-460-4179, 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.
- 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 am, 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. Watch live or replay: www.facebook.com/tlumc, www.youtube.com/tlumc.org. Info: 719-488-1365, www.tlumc.org. 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. See ad on page 7.
 - Fellowship of Christ Church, every Sun. 9 am. 4303 Pinehurst Circle. See ad on page 6.
 - Fuel Church Sunday Service, every Sun. Service times, 11:00 am Live service streaming at www.fuelchurch.org at 11:40 am on 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. See ad on page 5.
 - 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. 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.
 - 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 the 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 for children under age 11. Info: 303-946-2659, www.liferecoverygroups.com/meetings/life-recovery-group-3/.
 - Old Fashioned Community Sing-along. First and third Mon. 5:30 to 6:30 pm Black Forest Community Church 6845 Shoup Rd. Come share the joy of singing old, familiar, catchy tunes just for fun. For details: kay@stricklan.net.
 - Amateur ham radio WØTLM (Tri-Lakes Monument ham radio Association), third Mon. All amateur ham radio operators or those interested in becoming one are welcome. Info: www.WØTLM.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.
 - 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 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.
 - 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.trilakesseniors.org.
 - Friends of Monument Preserve (FOMP) Trail

- Repair monthly Work Days, second Tue. Apr.-Oct. October, Work Days 5-7 pm. Now through Sept. Work Days 6-8 pm. Meet at Mt Herman Trailhead at the corner of 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., June 13, 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.
 - Colorado Springs Philharmonic Guild Listening Club, third Wed. Free virtual event. Maestro Wilson will conduct monthly hour-long programs. RSVP at 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 or 719-649-9220.
 - Senior Social, fourth Wed., 12455 Black Forest Rd. Info: 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, 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.
 - 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.
 - 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 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.
 - Pikes Peak Genealogical Society, Wed., Aug. 16, 6:30 pm, hangout begins, 7 pm meeting begins. Guests are welcome to attend the meeting via Zoom, contact the PPGS President@PPGS.org.
 - Al-anon Meeting: Monument, every Thu., 7-8 pm, Ascent Church (formerly the Tri-Lakes Chapel), 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. Info: 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.
 - 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.
 - Fuel Church Griefshare, every Thu., 5:30-7:30 pm 643 State Highway 105, Palmer Lake. Email 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., June 15, meeting, 7 pm, doors open at 6:30 pm. Usually meets third Thu. Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28

- Valley Crescent St., 7contact: Kokesdm@yahoo.com <https://palmerdividehistory.org>
- Friends of Fox Run Park, fourth Thu. Zoom meeting, 7 pm, email 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, special events, more. Info: friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com.
 - Tri-Lakes Women's Club (TLWC) monthly meeting, now on summer break, usually the third Fri. To become a member, or learn about the club, visit our website at 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. 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 to register.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- VOLUNTEER TODAY! Our Community News mailing day, Thu., Aug. 3, approx. 9 am-2 pm. We are all volunteers at OCN and need YOUR help, even for an hour or two, getting the papers ready to mail. Contact AllenAlchian@ocn.me.
- 4th of July Festivities, Monument Hill Kiwanis, Agenda See ad on page 9.
- Western Museum of Mining and Industry, Farm stand every Mon. & Wed. 9-6; Lecture: Alexander Film Company of Colorado Springs, Tue., Aug. 8, 4-5 pm; Family Day: Sat. Aug. 12, 10-3 pm. See ad on page 11.
- Make It Work Clinic for PCs, FREE. Donations appreciated. We are gauging interest in helping community members with their PCs, please email us if interested. enable@monumentalimpact.org. 55 Adams St in Downtown Monument.
- Monumental Impact, Kid's Robotics, tech, drone Summer Workshops, and Camps. More info/ register: <https://monumentalimpact.org/workshops/>.
- Monument Hill Farmers Market, every Sat., 8 am to 2 pm. 66 Jefferson Street Monument. See ad on page 5.
- YMCA summer day camp, through Aug 4, Info: www.ppyymca.org/daycamp. See ad on page 6.
- Concerts in the Park, every Wed., through Aug. 9, 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Limbach Park. See ad on page 6.
- Covered Treasures Bookstore booksignings, Sat., July 8, 1-3, A.J. Forge signs his book The Buslife Kitchen; Sat. July 15, 10-3, the store's 30th-anniversary party; Art Hop July 20, 5-8 pm Al Anderson signs Rail Tips; Stewart Green & Susan Joy Paul sign Trails to the Top. 105 Second Street, Monument.
- Palmer Lake Historical Society, Sat., July 9 & 15, members walking tours led by Jim Sawatski, 10:00 to 1:00. Meet at Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent, Palmer Lake.
- Kids's Painting Class sponsored by Palmer Lake Arts Council and Facinelli Motors, Mon., July 10, 2-4 pm at The Shop, 735 Hillview Rd, Palmer Lake. Info/register: 719-460-4179.

Our Community News is a member of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce. Visit the chamber at www.trilakeschamber.com



Support Our Community. Volunteer with OCN!

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 John Heiser, Publisher, at (719) 488-3455, or email johnheiser@ocn.me to see how you can contribute. Contact us today!

- Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Networking, Tue., July 11, 5 pm-7:00 pm, members free, \$15 for non-members. Details: www.trilakeschamber.com. 719-481-3282.
- Freedom car wash fundraiser special coupons (ends Mon., July 10) . See ad on page 4.
- 2023 Home Buyers Workshop, free community class, Sat., July 15, 10 am - noon. Rebecca Seedorf, see ad on page 5
- Art Hop, Thu., July 20, 5-8 pm., Downtown Monument. Every third Thu. through Sep. Free. See ad on page 2.
- A Better Hearing Center, special offers through Jul 31. 574 East Highway 105 Monument. See ad on page 8.
- Affordable Flooring Connection, summer specials. see ad on page 3.
- Alpine Essentials Rec MJ dispensary, Special offer through July 3. See ad on page 13.
- Cornerstone Cleaners, special offers through Jul 31. 1030 W. Baptist Road, near King Soopers. See ad on page 4.
- Eagle Wine & Spirits, special offers through Jul 31. Baptist Road next to King Soopers. See ad on page 3.
- Gleneagle Candle Co., special offers through Jul 31. 13796 Gleneagle Drive 80921. See ad on page 4.
- Monument Cleaners, special offers through Jul 31, 15932 Jackson Creek Pkwy., in Monument Marketplace. See ad on page 5.
- Monumental Med Spa, special offers for July. See ad on page 6.
- Noel Relief Centers, new patient specials. 950 Baptist Rd #130, Monument. See ad on page 7.
- The Living Room Plants, special offers through July 31, 12229 Voyager Pkwy, Suite 100. See ad on page 5.
- Palmer Lake Wellness, mention the ad for special offer, see ad on page 12.
- The Vanity Box, special offers, facial revivals, and more. See ad on page 3.
- Tri-Lakes Collision and Auto Service Center, special offers through Jul 31. 2101 Wolf Court, Monument. www.trilakescollision.com. See ad on page 5.
- St Peter Catholic Schools: Now enrolling, see add on page 2.
- Time to dance, free event, Fri., July 21, 6-7 pm. See ad on page 5.
- YMCA Fall youth sports registration open; see ad on page 6.
- 2023 Hummingbird Festival, Fri.-Sat., Aug. 4-5, 10 am-3:00 pm. Learn about hummingbirds and nature, art, alpacas, gifts and farmers market, 17435 Rollercoaster Rd. For vendor space 719-492-0355. See ad on page 9.
- Kiwanis peaches orders by July 31, pick up Aug. 12; see ad on page 8.
- Never Dead Riders motorcycle group Poker Run, Sat., Sep. 23. Non-profit to raise funds to help people with a family member with cancer.

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 or (719) 488-3455 with any questions.

Info: neverdeadriders.net

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 send the information to 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 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. At OCN’s sole discretion, we may ask you for clarification of your statements. Include references, such as website links, in your letter for any facts and figures you cite. OCN does not guarantee every letter will appear in print or on-line and does not guarantee a publication date. The number of letters printed on a particular topic or in a particular issue may be limited. Letters containing personal attacks or endorsements for or complaints about individually-named commercial products or services will not be published.

Look for our next issue Saturday, Aug. 5

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

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



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