

Our Community News

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



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Issue #141 — Volume 12 Number 11 — Saturday, November 3, 2012

Free

Local Events

See pages 30-35 for details of these and many other local events.

48th Annual Black Forest Arts & Crafts Guild Fall Show & Sale, Thu.-Sun., Nov. 1-4, Thu.-Sat., 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

WMMI Heritage Lecture: Historic Cold War Uranium Production and its Health Effects on Workers, Thu., Nov. 8, 6:30-8 p.m.

Palmer Ridge High School Musical "Annie," Thu.-Sat., Nov. 8-10.

TLCA) Member Artist Exhibition Opening Reception, Fri., Nov. 9, 5-8 p.m.

NEPCO Meeting: County Commissioner's Overview, Sat., Nov. 10, 10 a.m.-noon.

Dream Masterz Theatrical Illusions with Joe Givan and Carol Massie, Sat., Nov. 10, 7 p.m.

Monument Academy Veterans' Day Assembly: "Honoring the Honorable," Mon., Nov. 12, 10 a.m.

Palmer Lake Historical Society: "Early Weapons In The Colorado Territory," Thu., Nov. 15, 7 p.m.

Lewis-Palmer High School Musical "Legally Blonde," Thu., Nov. 15-Sat., Nov. 17.

Tin Roof Productions presents "Sense & Sensibility: A Musical," Sat., Nov. 17 and Sun., Nov. 18.

Gleneagle Women's Club Luncheon & Art and Crafts Show, Fri., Nov. 16.

AARP Mature Safe Driving Program, Sat., Nov. 17, 1-5 p.m.

Tri-Lakes Community Blood Drive, Tue., Nov. 20, 3-7 p.m.

Palmer Lake's Chili Supper and First Annual Star Fest, Sat., Nov. 24, 5-8:30 p.m.

Holiday Boutique and Bazaar, Sat., Dec. 1, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Monument Small Town Christmas, Sat., Dec. 1, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Kiwanis' 7th Annual North Pole at Tri-Lakes Arts and Crafts Fair, Sat., Dec. 1 and Sun., Dec. 2.

Palmer Lake Yule Log Pot Luck Dinner, Tue., Dec. 4, 6 p.m.

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Above: First place winner in the Donala Water and Sanitation District's xeriscape contest. The unusual front yard landscape at 440 Avocet Loop consists of a gravel berm bisected by a dry stream bed, ornamented with xeric plantings. A low privacy fence and a shade structure along with flowers and trees enhance the side/back yards, creating a virtual outdoor room for the family to enjoy. The landscape is irrigated by a drip system. The conversion from traditional landscape to xeriscape saved 73 percent of the water previously used to irrigate the grounds. This address was awarded free water for October, November, and December. *Photo provided by the Donala district.* See page 14 for additional news of the Donala district and page 29 for photos of the other winning designs.

Monument Sanitation District, Oct. 18

Fee increase options discussed

By Jim Kendrick

On Oct. 18, the Monument Sanitation District board discussed options on fee increases to ensure that it has enough revenue to cover increased costs for treatment of total phosphorus demanded by the EPA and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. District Manager Mike Wicklund said a basic fee increase of \$5 per month—to \$30—is required to prevent district reserves from dropping any lower and to pay the district's share of the 2013 budget for the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility budget of \$945,000, up from \$632,000 in 2011 and \$796,000 in 2012.

Wicklund noted that \$30 per month is still not enough to meet long-term requirements of regulation 31.17 that will necessitate a monthly fee of at least \$35 per month, nor would it significantly help meet long-term capital costs of \$1 million or more in the next decade.

Wicklund noted that the final 2013 draft budget for the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility had been approved for a public hearing on Nov. 13. See the Oct. 9 JUC article on page 8 for other details regarding the Tri-Lakes Facility's Joint Use Committee meeting.

All members of the board and staff were present for the meeting.

2013 budget discussion

Wicklund offered three options for general board review and discussion for 2013 regarding an increase of the current basic fee of \$25 per month and \$4.50 per each 1,000 gallons over 5,000 gallons for commercial/industrial customers:

- \$27 basic fee and \$4.75 per 1,000 gallons over 5,000
- \$28 basic fee and \$4.80 per 1,000 gallons over 5,000
- \$30 basic fee and \$4.85 per 1,000 gal-

lons over 5,000

There was a lengthy discussion of all the new future operational and capital expenses that are being driven by the state Water Quality Control Commission and Division as well as far more restrictive and expensive requirements being demanded by the EPA. Some of the items noted by Wicklund and some board members were:

- Some of the changes from the draft Wicklund proposed in September were suggested by district CPA Ray Russell.
- None of the increases in the proposed budget is the result of Monument board or staff initiatives.
- The fees charged by Monument are still the lowest in the region and haven't been increased in three years despite the large increase in the operating cost of the Tri-Lakes facility.
- Unlike other districts in this region, Monument has no debt and no property tax.
- The district's ending balance for 2013 for the \$30 option is about \$225,000 below the minimum emergency amount required of \$300,000 and the capital reserve of \$1 million needed by 2022 to pay for new requirements being imposed for just nutrients by Regulation 31.17.
- The board will need to propose annual fee raises for every year from 2017 to 2022 to achieve the \$1 million capital requirement for 2022.

Lift station pump update

Wicklund updated the board on the recent pump lifespan problems with the positive displacement pumps in the Wakonda Hills lift stations. He explained that the district's engineering consultant, GMS Inc.,

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Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District special meeting, Oct. 8

Tax measure left off county election sheet

By Bernard L. Minetti

On Oct. 8, Battalion Chief Bryan Jack, election officer for ballot issue 5C, told the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District board that the notice for the district's tax increase proposal had been omitted from the county election information sheet. He said county officials stated that it was a vendor problem and that the vendor would have to correct it.

"Statutorily, I don't know where that's going to fall, or what the secretary of state is going to do about it, if he gets involved, or where it will end up," Jack said.

Director John Hildebrandt said, "Since this is a TABOR issue, there are specific criteria we're supposed to meet ... we've met 'em ... but the county, which is our surrogate to the voters, did not meet it if we have a deadline that we are supposed to meet. I wonder what that deadline's going to be."

Jack said the deadline to mail ballot issue notices to residents outside of the county was Oct. 6. "I don't know if that's the same statutory deadline for residents in the county."

Hildebrandt said he would hate to have the issue pass and then be challenged on a technicality. Jack said the county sent

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Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Oct 24

New shift schedule proposed

By Bernard L. Minetti

At the Oct. 24 meeting of the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District board, Battalion Chief Bryan Jack proposed modifying the district's use of the Kelly Shift Schedule, an operating guide used by fire departments and emergency services agencies.

Essentially, the Kelly schedule uses three teams, or platoons, and three shifts to provide 24/7 coverage. It consists of a nine-day cycle where each team works one 24-hour shift, followed by 24 hours off duty, then works another 24-hour shift, followed by 24 hours off duty, and then works a final 24-hour shift, followed by four consecutive days off duty.

Personnel work an average of 56 hours per week, or 112 hours per two-week pay period, and work the same day of the week

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