

Expert provides update on local economy

By Candice Hitt

The Tri-Lakes Economic Development Corp. held an annual luncheon April 26 at the Inn at Palmer Divide to provide the most current information on the local economy in Tri-Lakes and El Paso County. Speaker Fred Crowley, Ph.D., senior instructor and economist at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, gave an overview of the local economy and how it has impacted businesses.

Crowley talked about some of the many factors to consider when looking at the overall economy:

- Global issues such as unrest in Arab nations, earthquakes, and the tsunami in Japan have caused a disruption in the supply chain.
- Twenty percent of U.S. exports go to Europe, however, the U.S. imports almost 30 percent of its products from other countries, causing job losses in the United States. Crowley said we need to stop imports and produce goods domestically to create jobs.
- Job growth has been slow, with a 55 percent loss of manufacturing jobs in El Paso County. This has had a large impact on the overall economic outlook.
- Military employment has been steady and is a good source of revenue for the local economy both in retail and housing.
- Real estate house listings are 20 percent lower than in 2011.

In summary, Crowley discussed ways the Tri-Lakes area could improve economic conditions for the future. Monument generates 2.5 times the retail sales as El Paso County per person, indicating people within about a 20- to 30-mile radius come to the Monument area to shop. Identifying which businesses to bring to the area will

contribute to positive growth.

Also, Crowley said the Tri-Lakes area needs to attract information, data processing, and technology manufacturers to boost the local economy and create jobs in those industries.

The luncheon was sponsored by local businesses such as BL Speer and Associates, Merrill Lynch, and First-Bank. The Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce helped to coordinate the event. For information: www.trilakesedc.com.

Candice Hitt can be reached at candicehitt@ocn.me



Above: Mike Law, president of the Tri-Lakes Economic Development Corp., introduced Fred Crowley. **Right:** Guest speaker Fred Crowley discussed the local economy at the Tri-Lakes Economic Development Corp. luncheon held April 26. Photos by Candice Hitt



Woodmoor Improvement Association Board of Directors, April 25

Chipping Day, cleanup event scheduled

By Harriet Halbig

Woodmoor Improvement Association Forestry Director Eric Gross announced April 25 that this year's Chipping Day and Firewise Event will be held on Saturday, May 19, from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the fire station on Woodmoor Drive.

Sponsored by Woodmoor's Forestry Volunteers and the Firewise Committee, this event helps to familiarize local citizens with fire mitigation practices and the association's membership services. The chipping service is available for a \$5 fee per load and is offered to encourage citizens to promptly remove slash and dead trees from their property.

Common Area Director W. Lee Murray reported that Great American Clean Up Day will be on May 12, followed by a free hot dog and hamburger lunch for all those who participate. The event will begin at 9 a.m. and end at noon.

The Common Area Committee also will conduct a pond study, stock ponds with fish, and seek bids for mowing services for the season. Repair work on The Barn continues, with repair of the floor in the meeting area underway and plans for replacement of blinds in the offices on the lower level. Some of the siding on the exterior of The Barn will also be replaced, as will the deck.

Association President Jim Hale appointed Vice President Kirstin Reimann and Secretary Jeff Gerhart to explore ways to use social media to keep members informed about the activities of the association.

Hale also said that he has been receiving emails about the Walters property, located at the south end of Woodmoor, near the high school and townhouses. At one time there was a suggestion to make the area into a wildlife refuge, but there were no written agreements. He asked Association Manager Matt Beseau to do some research into the history of the matter.

In his manager's report, Beseau said that 735 votes are still needed to finalize the approval of the governing documents for the association. After some discussion, the board approved the expenditure of \$1,200 to hire two individuals to visit those homeowners who have not yet approved the documents. It was felt that, after these visits, the few remaining members could be contacted by phone or email.

Beseau stressed that members who have already approved the documents will not be visited, nor will rental properties or those whose owners live outside the area.

Beseau and Hale attended a workshop sponsored by the Community Association Institute on the subject of aging communities. Since Woodmoor was first instituted in the 1960s, the demographics of the area have changed, and they said the workshop was useful for planning purposes.

Covenants Director Darren Rouse reported that slash was the most prominent complaint in the past month along with oversized signage.

Woodmoor Public Safety Chief Kevin Nielsen reported that the department had purchased a new Jeep that is now being customized for use.

Nielsen also said that there have been no reported bear sightings but that a mountain lion was recently seen in south Woodmoor. Additionally, there was a report of a home break-in at a vacant house whose owners were in the process of moving. He asked that association members notify Woodmoor Public Safety of vacant properties so that they may patrol them.

Architectural Control Director Anne Stevens-Gountanis reported that her committee approved the new Design Standards Manual the previous evening. Hale said that the board should schedule a special meeting to review the manual.

Stevens-Gountanis also reported that Monument Academy plans to plant pine and aspen trees on the north side of its property to screen it from Woodmoor.

Bill Clark, representing the Briarhaven Homes Association to the east of Woodmoor, requested that Woodmoor join his association in monitoring plans for the widening of Highway 105. He said that his association felt ill-informed about progress in the planning. He said that he plans to attend a meeting of NEPCO, the North El Paso County Coalition of Community Organizations, with the same message.

Hale said that he and other members from Woodmoor attended the recent open house at Monument Academy and suggested that the board poll members about their opinions.

The board of the Woodmoor Improvement Association meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the association's Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next meeting will be held on May 23.

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

HayCo L.L.C.

For All Your Livestock and Reclamation Needs!

Sm. Squares • Lg. Squares • Rounds
Alfalfa • Grass • Mixed • Straw

We have semi-loads available of premium quality alfalfa and mix in 3' x 3' x 8's!

We Deliver • 719-339-3525

www.hayco.us • Licensed & Bonded

Now accepting



FACINELLI MOTORS

\$3 OFF Oil Change

\$10 OFF \$100 Service

Good through 5/31/12

QUALITY AUTO REPAIR
SUBARU • HONDA • TOYOTA
and other ASIAN imports

Call today: 488-6729

707 County Line Rd., Palmer Lake

Mon-Fri. 7:30 - 5:30

