

80s and low 90s from the 12th through the 22nd.

We got a couple quick shots of rain over the region with afternoon and evening thunderstorms on the 16th, 17th, and 18th. But this was barely enough to wet the ground for most of us. Instead, the region continued to dry out and heat up.

Higher levels of moisture began to affect the region during the last week of July, bringing much needed moisture for most of us. The week of July 23 started off warm and dry however, continuing the trend that had been prevalent for most of the middle of the month. Temperatures reached into the upper 80s and low 90s on the 23rd and 24th. These were about 10° warmer than normal. But this week of July is on average our warmest week of the year. The Southwest monsoon moisture plume began to shift slightly to the east over the next few days, allowing for frequent afternoon and evening thunderstorms to develop across the region. With the more extensive cloud cover, temperatures also cooled back to normal and slightly below normal levels, with 80s common from the 25th through the end of the month. The heaviest rain oc-

curred from the afternoon of the 30th through the early hours of the 31st. Several areas received over an inch of rain with this round of storms, with reports of hail up to quarter size.

Although this rain is very welcome in the Tri-Lakes region, the same can't be said over the Waldo Canyon Fire burn scar. The recent fire there has led to extremely high runoff and frequent debris flows and flash flooding. This, of course, has caused problems along the U.S. Highway 24 corridor and the base of the mountains in the areas. It will continue to be a problem in the region for the next few years until the vegetation is able to grow back and stabilize the soil.

#### A look ahead

August is the last true "summer" month for the region. We are often greeted with sunny, pleasant mornings that turn into afternoon and early evening thunderstorms. Highs during the month range from the mid-80s at the beginning of the month to mid-70s at the end. Temperatures at night get more comfortable as well, often dipping into the 40s, making for better sleeping weather.

#### July 2012 Weather Statistics

Average High	86.5° (+3.6°)
100-year return frequency value max	87.6° min 75.3°
Average Low	51.7° (+1.0°)
100-year return frequency value max	56.2° min 46.9°
Highest Temperature	93° on the 2nd
Lowest Temperature	47° on the 13th
Monthly Precipitation	3.44"
	(+0.34" 10% above normal)
100-year return frequency value max	6.03" min 0.98"
Monthly Snowfall	0.0"
Season to Date Snow	0.0"
	(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip	3.44"
	(+0.34" 10% above normal)
	(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)
Heating Degree Days	1 (-28)
Cooling Degree Days	129 (+38)

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at [billkappel@ocn.me](mailto:billkappel@ocn.me).

## Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters to the editor are on page 43.

**Disclaimer:** The opinions expressed in Letters to Our Community should not be interpreted as the view of OCN even when the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.

### The kindness of strangers

To the Tri-Lakes community: I wish to express my utmost gratitude and appreciation to you for the support you gave to the fire evacuees and the American Red Cross during the Waldo Canyon Fire. As the manager of the Red Cross Emergency Shelter at Lewis-Palmer High School, I witnessed firsthand this amazing support.

At 7:20 p.m. on Tuesday, June 26, as the fire raged through the Colorado Springs community, I received a call to open the shelter site at LPHS. As part of the Red Cross proactive planning, the site had already gone through the approval process, and the staff of School District 38 and the area Red Cross volunteers were waiting for my call. I arrived at LPHS within 10 minutes and was greeted by many members of the community ready to help. These volunteers, the D-38 staff, and trained Red Cross volunteers sprang into action and had the shelter ready to receive clients by 8 p.m. The first evacuees arrived at 8:10 p.m. A total of 81 clients were served over the life of the shelter.

A steady stream of these spontaneous volunteers flowed through the shelter all night and for the next five days, offering their time, talents, and treasure to support the evacuees. They worked hand-in-hand with the Red Cross volunteers maintaining the shelter, manning the kennels, answering phones, or sorting the multitude of donations that other citizens brought to the shelter. Not only did many individuals support this relief effort, but many restaurants, businesses, and local churches (too many to list here) stepped forward to serve.

It is indeed through "the kindness of strangers" that we all serve our fellow man. Thank you, Tri-Lakes. I am proud to call you my home.

**Jeanie Ahrens**

Tri-Lakes Shelter coordinator

Pikes Peak Chapter American Red Cross

### Criticism and praise for D-38 board

Many who attended the regular June meeting of the Lewis-Palmer District 38 school board were disturbed to hear Board of Education Vice President Mark Pfoff scold the audience, telling them that it is inappropriate for a citizen to ask questions about the school district budget.

Of all the money collected by the state of Colorado in revenues, 43 percent is spent by local school boards on pre-K-12 education. When did Americans lose the right to publicly and respectfully question elected officials about documents they use to make multimillion-dollar decisions? The questions from the citizen concerned where the money is being spent and asked for clarification about potential discrepancies.

On a much more positive note, I would like to commend the board members in their appointment of John Magerko to the board. Magerko has the reputation as someone who listens to all points of view in seeking the best solutions. Hopefully incidents like the one described above will not be repeated and will now be a thing of the past.

**Stephen Boyd**

### Incorrect comment about water use led group to pull garden proposal

Palmer Lake Community Garden (PLCG) presented a proposal to the Palmer Lake Town Council at the council meetings on June 7 and 14. PLCG's proposal came from an interest in reaching out to Palmer Lake citizens by offering to design, plant, fund, and maintain a beautiful, water-wise, and edible garden in a portion of the existing flowerbed in front of Town Hall.

Our idea, inspired by Denver Botanic Gardens, was to improve this highly visible area by planting a combination of flowering, edible, perennial, and annual plants using water requirements similar to what is currently in place. The proposal included using the 20-plus PLCG local gardening enthusiasts to provide the ongoing maintenance of the flowerbed.

During PLCG's presentation to Town Council, Jeff Clibon incorrectly interjected that the garden would require more than 120 gallons of water per week, as was reported in the July 7 issue of Our Community News ("Police officers converted to individual contract status; fireworks canceled; water crisis developing"). Unfortunately, the Town Council and Clibon misunderstood the proposal as growing a vegetable garden like one might plant on a farm or in one's back yard. PLCG withdrew its proposal at the conclusion of its presentation due to the adverse reception by Town Council.

PLCG continues to grow food, share knowledge about sustainable gardening practices, and build community in the four established community beds located at the end of the parking lot in front of the fire station.

**PamCooley**

**Rebecca Angelo-Duke**

**Donna Wood**

Palmer Lake Community Garden

**Editor's note:** In the July article reference above, OCN incorrectly identified Pam Cooley as the director of the Palmer Lake Community Group. She was one of three members making the presentation at the July meeting about designing, funding, planting, and maintaining an edible garden. In addition, their proposal is not related to the already existing four blue planters at the end of the parking lot, which were incorrectly identified in the article as the topic of discussion.

### Witness to accident sought

Were you the person who saw my car get rear-ended at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 26? I was heading west on Highway 105, coming up to the light at the Highway 105 and I-25 South intersection. My white Subaru Outback with "A Tranquil Mind Hypnotherapist" decal on the back window was rear-ended.

I believe you have shoulder to mid-length blond hair, are in around your 40s with a young, possibly teenage daughter. About an hour later, you approached me in the Vitamin Cottage to ask if I was okay. I indicated that I was not, and you discussed the speed the driver was going. You indicated that that car was driving fast and did not attempt to stop.

The car that hit me was a dark Lexus ES300 driven by a young man who had a young male passenger.

I am injured and wish to speak with you, as you were a witness to this accident. Please call me at (719) 321-9600. Thank you.

**Roberta Brunner**

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### Between The Covers at the Covered Treasures Bookstore

## Colorado's great outdoors

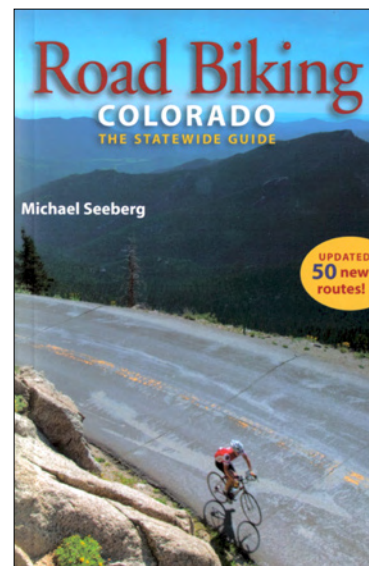
By the staff at Covered Treasures

Late summer and early fall are among the best times to get outdoors and enjoy our beautiful state. Whether you prefer hiking, bicycling, walking, or driving, there are books to guide you to well-known sites and to hidden, out-of-the-way places.

#### Touring Colorado Hot Springs, 2nd Edition

Contributors: Carl Wambach & Susan Joy Paul (FalconGuide) \$16.95

Touring Colorado Hot Springs provides detailed descriptions, easy-to-read maps, and firsthand information for 32 of the best hot springs in the state. Descriptions are spiced with historical information and hot springs trivia that give insight into the area's past. This entertaining and informative new edition will lead you to world-class family resorts and lesser-known hidden springs in Colorado. It includes fully updated and revised text, new photos, and GPS coordinates of all the hot springs.



#### Road Biking Colorado: The Statewide Guide

By Michael Seeberg (Westcliffe Publishers) \$24.95

Whether you're a seasoned cyclist looking for new challenges, or a visitor in quest of the highest and most scenic paved roads in the U.S., this guidebook covers nearly every stretch of pavement recommended for road biking in Colorado, as well as its famous mountain biking trails. For each of the 208 routes, you will find: route directions; elevation profiles; route difficulty rankings; services, terrain, and mileage information.