

proved annual liquor license renewals for:

- Jackson Creek Chinese Restaurant, 1054 W. Baptist Road
- Texas Roadhouse, 16916 Jackson Creek Parkway

Town manager’s report

Green noted that the *Today in America* cable TV show had notified the staff that it was interested in “highlighting Monument in one of their programs” at a town cost of \$20,000. Tooley asked Green to find out if the town would own the rights to the video segment for future public relations use in town commercials. Green said the town may explore the possibility of splitting the cost of this segment with the Monument Economic Development Corp. or the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Com-

merce. Green noted that she would attend the Sand Creek Summit meeting on Aug. 21 for all of El Paso County to discuss solutions to county stormwater issues.

The board went into executive session at 8:04 p.m. to discuss potential litigation with Town Attorney Gary Shupp. No actions were taken after coming out of executive session. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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The next meeting will be held at 6:30 on Tuesday, Sept. 4, due to the Labor Day holiday, in Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. Meetings are normally held on the first and third Monday of the month. Information: 884-8017.

Jim Kendrick can be reached at [jimkendrick@ocn.me](mailto:jimkendrick@ocn.me).

Monument Board of Trustees, Aug. 20

# Mitigation stressed after Waldo Canyon Fire

By Jim Kendrick

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Fire Marshal John Vincent gave a presentation on the Waldo Canyon Fire and fire mitigation at the Aug. 20 meeting of the Monument Board of Trustees.

The Ice Cream Social scheduled before the regular board meeting was shifted from Limbach Park to the foyer of Town Hall due to cool temperatures and the threat of a thunderstorm. The sun came out briefly after everyone in attendance got a cup of ice cream from Trustee John Howe. Folks stepped out front to enjoy the ideal temperature..

Trustees Stan Gingrich and Rick Squires were absent from the meeting.

Vincent said his presentation had been given to homeowners associations (HOAs) throughout the Tri-Lakes district.

The Waldo Canyon Fire was first detected about noon on Saturday, June 23. Because Vincent lives on the west side of Colorado Springs, he said he was deployed by 12:45 p.m. to the Waldo parking lot, then redeployed to Green Mountain Falls five minutes later to set up a command post and put the incident action plan together for the county. He stayed on duty in Cascade Sunday through Monday night.

After a night’s sleep at home, he went to Cascade on Tuesday morning, where he had spent some of his high school years. He then spent Wednesday on a fire engine at the Air Force Academy through 11 p.m. He returned to his regular 9-to-5 shift on Aug. 2.

The cost statistics he cited for the Waldo Canyon Fire were:

- Two dead
- \$16.7 million for fire suppression
- 346 homes lost
- 32,000 forced evacuations
- \$353 million in claims
- 4,300 damage claims
- A continuing cost of \$25,000 per day—the fire is still not completely out

Some of the other points he made during his 40-minute presentation were:

- The Waldo fire was 15 miles south of the Tri-Lakes district in El Paso County.
- Local people are still saying it can’t happen here.
- The Waldo fire moved downhill from the top of the ridge to the Flying W Ranch in only four minutes with previously inconceivable swiftness due to 65 mph fire-induced winds.
- Fire is a naturally occurring element on the border of the prairie that should be occurring every year.
- Since 1907 the Forest Service has

suppressed fires, leading to epidemic pine bark beetle infestations.

- They were called the Rocky Mountains for a reason.
- They are not rocky right now because of unhealthy forests.
- Rules are put in place by firefighters to determine what can be saved and what can’t.
- The mitigation of evacuated properties performed by firefighters is “not pretty.”
- Only fires less than four feet high can be fought directly without special equipment.
- Fires from four feet to eight feet high can only be fought with equipment and water.
- If fires are over eight feet high, human contact is prohibited and firefighters must abandon the scene.
- In the Tri-Lakes area there is typically plenty of space between houses, but trees are planted to fill the spaces between houses and both are flammable.
- If the fire gets airborne, firefighters can’t stop it—closely spaced trees will burn a house down, even one with asphalt shingles, by dropping burning embers on it.
- If the fire stays on the ground, it can be fought by firefighters if there has already been mitigation.
- There are 12 firefighters on duty at Tri-Lakes.
- Groups of three are assigned to a truck to protect 20 to 40 homes in a wildfire situation.
- There are 2,600 homes just in Woodmoor.
- HOAs need to get all neighbors to work together on mitigation in each subdivision, following the way the Forest Service looks at fire containment.
- A plot of all fires over the last 100 years shows that fire will be back again and again.
- Firefighters will not sweep piles of pine needles from your cedar shake roof.
- Prepping your house with fire retardant gel two to three hours before the fire arrives, when the firefighters are leaving the area, will not matter if your or your neighbor’s house has wooden shakes.
- If you can’t see your house from the street or cul-de-sac, you have too many trees.
- Tree crowns should have at least 10 feet of separation to mitigate crown-to-crown ignition
- Plan for evacuation early, packing

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