

would appropriate a community tax refund from the 2013 TABOR surplus for park improvements around El Paso County. The refund of about \$8 per household would instead go to Black Forest Regional Park improvement, including trails, tree, and weed maintenance. The tax refund would also be used to improve The Pineries and to create a trail around Monument Lake to Elephant Rock.

Voting "no" on 1A would put \$8.41 back in citizens' pockets, minus the administration costs and mailing fees.

Kevin Walker introduced ballot issue 1B concerning potential stormwater fees based on a \$7.70 monthly fee for an average household. This fee would remain consistent for 20 years and improve the safety of future drinking water supply sources for El Paso County by funding stormwater infrastructure improvement projects to protect downstream watersheds from erosion and sedimentation. Monument and Palmer Lake have already decided against participating in the stormwater issue, but residents of northern El Paso County will vote on this issue in November. For more information, go to pikespeakstormwater.org.

Commissioner Glenn's Town Hall on animal protection is tentatively scheduled for 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, October 11, at the Kit Carson Riding Club in Black Forest.

He also discussed his creation of a new task force in the county voicing El Paso County's appreciation for its military members. In a future visit to Washington, D.C., Glenn plans to promote El Paso County's valuable role in

supporting our nation's defense, expressing our interest in a continued role in advocating for our nation's defense.

Glenn encouraged citizens to be active participants in local legislation concerning future investments in the community, future companies seeking location opportunities, and future effects of current legislation.

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Commissioner Darryl Glenn can be reached at darrylglenn@elpasoco.com. The El Paso County Public Services Department can be reached at (719) 520-6420 The Development Services Department can at (719) 520-6300.

Michael Justice can be reached at Michael.Justice@ocn.me.

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**Donald Wescott**  
 Fire Protection District, Sept. 16

# Community invited to open house Oct. 4

By Nancy Wilkins

At the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Sept. 16 Board of Directors meeting, Fire Chief Vinny Burns announced the community is invited to attend an open house, firefighters collected thousands of dollars for Muscular Dystrophy Association, the board reviewed the draft budget for 2015, and Dino Ross was hired as legal counsel.

**Open house at 2 stations**

In connection with Fire Prevention Week, Burns invited the community to attend Wescott's open house Oct. 4, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at fire Stations 1 and 2. Firefighters will be there to answer questions and encourage everyone to tour the facilities, examine equipment, and inspect fire engines. The address for Station 1 is 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Station 2 is located at 15505 Highway 83.

**District raises nearly \$5,000 for MDA**

Over Labor Day weekend, firefighters participated in "Fill the Boot" for Muscular Dystrophy Association. Burns reported the community raised about \$5,000 to help find a cure.

**August run report**

Assistant Fire Chief Scott Ridings reported 173 calls for August 2014 compared to 183 calls in August 2013. A small grass fire was extinguished without major property damage. The majority of calls were for rescue and emergency medical services.

**First glance at 2015 budget**

Board members Greg Gent, Joyce Hartung, Bo McAllister, and John Fredell made a "first pass" at next year's budget. The board, Burns, and Ridings looked at major expense items, expected revenue, and discussed ways to save the district money as it plans for next year. Because the 2015 budget is still under review, no votes or motions were made at this time.

**Switching healthcare plans could save thousands**

According to Burns and Ridings, staying with the district's existing healthcare plan under the Affordable Health Care Act will increase costs by about 30 percent. Choosing a "silver plan" instead of a "gold plan" for health insurance could save the district about \$20,000. Although moving to the silver plan would increase the expected out-of-pocket costs, based on healthcare needs of the majority of the firefighters, Ridings and Burns recommended the district choose the silver plan.

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