

(-4.1", 20% below normal)
 Season to Date Snow **89.9"**
 (-29.3", 25% below normal)
(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
 Season to Date Precip. **18.39"**
 +0.95", 7% above normal) *(the precip season is from July 1 to*

June 30)
 Heating Degree Days **698**
 (+23)
 Cooling Degree Days **0**
Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me.



Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters to the editor are on page 31.

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

Wastewater facility manager lauds staff

In the early morning hours of Feb. 15, a windstorm rolled off of the Rampart Range and caused two separate power lines to touch, generating a power surge. This power surge entered the Upper Monument Creek Regional Waste Water Treatment Facility, overwhelming all the safety equipment that should have prevented any damage within this facility. The damage was substantial and resulted in a shutdown of the automated operations of the plant.

I am writing this letter, not to criticize, but to praise. The staff of the facility responded in a fashion that merits acknowledgement of their professionalism, as well as their experience and dedication. It is the result of that professionalism and experience that the facility was able to treat the wastewater that continued to enter the facility. I want to publically acknowledge those staff members of Donala who went more than the extra mile. With most of the automated systems damaged, the staff operated the facility manually, which required around-the-clock staffing until critical equipment was replaced and outside vendors were able to mobilize to the site. There were no discharges of untreated waste water into Monument Creek, and the effort leaving the facility was well within our permit limits.

Robert Hull, district superintendent; Terri Ladouceur, lead wastewater treatment operator; Thom Waite, wastewater treatment operator; Del Phipps, wastewater treatment operator; Aaron Tolman, wastewater treatment operator; and Troy Vialpando, maintenance operator, all came together and maintained the facility and managed this emergency in an outstanding fashion. I am honored to work with people of this quality. Everyone in the Donala Water and Sanitation District, as well as the Triview Metropolitan District, needs to be aware of the quality of employees who serve you every day.

Kip Petersen
 General manager
 Donala Water and Sanitation District

Parents key to education

Monument Academy is predicated on parental involvement. Daily, no fewer than 30 parents come to the school to volunteer, assist teachers, or observe their children. However, I, along with so many other MA parents, never heard of the new Common Core initiative until it was actually being implemented. Monument Academy's resolution to reject the standards helped bring it to light.

The lesson is there for all of us: Implementing such a massive change is a much easier task without parental awareness and debate. The Common Core initiative highlights how quickly and pervasively our children's education can change without our knowledge or input. And the implementers know it.

Even Dr. Sandra Stotsky and Dr. James Milgram, the content experts hired by Common Core, who later refused to validate the standards, highlight this in their 2013 paper Can This Country Survive Common Core's College Readiness Level?: "We hear no proponents or endorsers of Common Core's standards warning this country about the effects of the college-readiness level in Common Core's mathematics standards on postsecondary and post-baccalaureate academic and professional programs. At this time we can only conclude that a gigantic fraud has been perpetrated on this country, in particular on parents in this country, by those developing, promoting, or endorsing Common Core's standards."

There are other tangible benefits to parental involvement. A 2002 National Education Service study indicated that when parents are involved, students tend to achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or parents' educational level.

According to the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, when parents talk to their children about school, expect them to do well, help them plan for college, and make sure that out-of-school activities are constructive, their children do better in school.

Becoming a more aware, involved parent takes a concerted effort, but the benefits are worth it.

Jim Cunningham

Palmer Lake acquires Makower's Land

The article by OCN gave an accurate description of the meeting discussing my attempt to donate this land to the town in fall 2012. Basically, Town Clerk Berreth said that the land was unusable and unsellable and would be a continual drain on town finances despite the fact that she negotiated a reduction in back taxes and fees, so the Town Council voted to void the deed and refuse my donation. See the complete description at www.ocn.me/v13n4.htm#PLTC.

We have tried repeatedly to get a response from Palmer Lake officials as to why they did not void the deed but have not yet heard back. As of April 28, the town has still not voided the deed and therefore owns the land as public land.

According to Gina Trivelli, tax compliance administrator at the El Paso County Treasurer's Office, Berreth did not negotiate any tax liens and town attorney Larry Gaddis simply used State Statute C.R.S. 39-10-114 et seq. to accomplish the establishment of a "political subdivision." The town now has paid no taxes and is tax exempt forever. Berreth has deemed the parcel to be worthless; however, Trivelli again disagrees, saying it has a market value of \$28,300, with access from Verano by an alley which is also public land.

I deem this The Jaimie Willan Memorial Park and I have already spread the remains of Bree Makower who died on July 3, 2009. My original intent can be found at castlepinesnewspress.net/stories/Land-donated-to-Palmer-Lake-Former-resident-hoping-to-see-a-permanent-memorial-on-land,64570.

Since the Tribune has purged its files of me, for more information on my and Richard Willan's wishes for the property, please ask Tribune writer Lisa Collacott for her article by writing to lcollacott@ourcoloradonews.com or feel free to contact Willan at popswillan@msn.com. I am always happy to help at concept@att.net.

Kim Makower
 Consulting geologist

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Annual Meeting Roundup

You are invited to join your Cooperative at the
 MVEA 73rd Annual Meeting of Members

Thursday, June 5, 2014

Calhan High School
 800 Bulldog Drive, Calhan, CO 80808

5:30 p.m. Registration, Dinner and Entertainment
 7:00 p.m. Business Meeting, Election of Board of Directors and Door Prizes

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presents...
SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL AUTHORS

Thursday, May 15, 5:00 - 8:00 -- First Art Hop of the Season!
 Maureen Keilty, author of *Best Hikes with Kids in Colorado*, will be our featured author. Julie Raber will be showing her *Pocket Pals Trail Guides*, along with Susan Davies, Trails and Open Space Coalition Director and representatives of Rampart Range Wildlands -- a project of the Colorado Mountain Club.

Saturday, May 17, 1:00 - 3:00 -- Indies First Storytime Day
 Bring your children to hear favorite childhood books read by local authors. Donna Guthrie, Louise Zito, Allison Flannery and Kris Abel-Helwig will be our readers for this first annual nationwide event.

(719) 481-2665 (BOOK)
 Hours: Mon.-Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-4
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