

Our Community Notices

By Judy Barnes, Events Editor

Although we strive for accuracy in these listings, dates or times are often changed after publication. Please double-check the time and place of any event you wish to attend by calling the information number for that event.

Wednesday Senior Lunch at Big Red

Mar 9: Chili, Fritos and salad

Mar 16: BBQ pork sandwich, beans and coleslaw

Mar 23: Hawaiian chicken over rice with broccoli

Mar 30: Tuna on a croissant with avocado

Rolls and butter are served with each meal except sandwiches. Dessert is also provided.

Lunch is at 11:30 a.m. at 146 Jefferson St., Monument (the School District 38 Administration Building). \$3 voluntary donation. Entertainment follows lunch. For more information, call Judy, 487-9067. An activity of Tri-Lakes Health Advocacy Partnership. Meals are provided by Pinecrest Catering, Palmer Lake; Nikki McDonald, executive chef, 481-3307.

Volunteers needed for City/County Drainage Board, apply by March 18

The El Paso County Board of Commissioners is seeking community-minded citizen volunteers to serve on City/County Drainage Board. The Drainage Board is seeking two members, one citizen-at-large representative, and one developer representative. Applications are due by **March 18**. The volunteer application is located at www.elpasoco.com. Click on the "Volunteer Boards" link. For more information, call 520-6436 or visit www.elpasoco.com.

Pikes Peak SBDC seeks nominations of stellar small businesses, individuals

As part of Small Business Week 2016, the SBDC and BBB seek nominations in several categories to recognize accomplishments and efforts in the small-business community. There are five categories: Family-Owned Small Business of the Year, Veteran-Owned Small Business of the Year, Young Entrepreneur of the Year, Small Business Champion of the Year, and Small Business Person of the Year. Nominations close **April 1**. For more information on Small Business Week in the Pikes Peak Region awards and to make a nomination, visit www.pikespeaksbdc.org/events/week.

Monument's Citizens Police Academy

The Monument Police Department will host an eight-week Citizens Police Academy, beginning in April. There is no cost and it is open to all who live or work in the Tri-Lakes area and are at least 16 years old. Find out firsthand what law enforcement is all about and meet your local police officers. Learn about criminal law, patrol procedures, use of force, computer forensics, internal affairs, community policing, tactical considerations, and have the opportunity to shoot a variety of police weapons and much more. For more information and to apply for this program, call Andrea, 481-3253.

Free income tax help

Through its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, Pikes Peak United Way, in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), provides free income tax preparation assistance to individuals and families with a household income of \$52,000 a year or less. To find out if you qualify or to schedule an appointment, call 2-1-1 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; or visit www.ppunitedway.org/vitaetc.html.

The military also partners with the IRS to provide free tax assistance to military personnel and their families. The Armed Forces Tax Council (AFTC) consists of the tax program coordinators for the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. Volunteers are trained and equipped to address military specific tax issues, such as combat zone tax benefits and the effect of the EITC guidelines. For more information, visit www.irs.gov/Individuals/Military.

Taxpayers who prefer to file their own tax returns electronically have the option of using IRS Free File. IRS Free File offers brand-name tax software to taxpayers who earned \$62,000 or less in 2015 to file their returns for free. Taxpayers who earned more can use Free Fillable Forms, the electronic version of IRS paper forms. IRS Free File is only available through the IRS website by visiting IRS.gov/freefile.

Tri-Lakes Y youth spring soccer, register now

Indoor Soccer Clinic, ages 3-4 years-old, April 9-May 14; Indoor Soccer, ages 5-6 years-old, April 9-May 14; Outdoor Soccer, ages 1st-6th grade, March 28-May 14; Spring

Volleyball, ages 1st-8th grade, March 28-May 14; Flag Football, ages 1st-8th grade, March 28-May 14. Financial assistance is available. Register at www.pymca.org or at the Y, 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy., Monument.

Pikes Peak Soap Box Derby

This is the 13th consecutive year for the derby in the Springs. Fifty kids in their hand-built race cars will vie for the opportunity to represent Colorado Springs at the International Soap Box Derby held in Akron, Ohio, **July 15**, the greatest amateur racing event in the world. Three Tri-Lakes service organizations--Monument Hill Kiwanis, Gleneagle Sertoma, and Legacy Sertoma--contribute to the success of this annual event. The registration deadline is **May 1**. Practice day/inspection is **June 5**, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Race day is **June 12**, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., at the 400 block of East Costilla Street, between El Paso and Wahsatch. The public is welcome; there is no admission fee and food service will be available. For additional information, contact Duane Gritzmaker, 719-649-9220, duane_gritzmaker@earthlink.net.

County approves quit claim deed with the Town of Monument

County commissioners voted 4-0 to approve a quit claim deed with the Town of Monument at the Feb. 18 board meeting. In January 2014, El Paso County deeded to the Town of Monument approximately two acres of land between Second and Third Streets, adjacent to the New Santa Fe Regional Trail. The town plans to expand the trailhead parking area adjacent to Third Street to the south and is considering the addition of a "par course" along this section of the trail for use by hikers and joggers. The county will continue to own and maintain the New Santa Fe Regional Trail that traverses through the property. The town will only be allowed to use the property for park and municipal purposes. The deed contains a reverter clause that includes the property being returned to El Paso County if the town no longer elects to use the property for the stated purposes.

Enroll for preschool and kindergarten

Lewis-Palmer School District preschool and kindergarten registration for the 2016-17 school year has begun. Please contact your neighborhood school or the district registrar at 488-4700 for detailed information. Registration packets are available now at all preschools, elementary schools, and the Administration Building, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Registration packets are also available online at www.lewispalmer.org.

St. Peter Catholic School enrolling for preschool-eighth grade

The school offers full and half-day preschool, Core Knowledge Curriculum with small class sizes, Christ-centered education, athletics, and more. Call or visit: 124 First St., Monument; 481-1855; www.petertherock.org.

Trees for Conservation Program, order by April 4

The Trees for Conservation Program through the Colorado State Forest Service Woodland Park District sells seedlings for conservation plantings to landowners at production cost. Foresters are available to answer questions about tree planting. The program is designed to encourage landowners to plant effective wind barriers to protect buildings, cropland and feedlots, help prevent erosion, enhance wildlife habitat, promote reforestation, and assist with the development of Christmas tree plantations. For more information about the program and to order seedlings online, visit www.csfs.colostate.edu/districts/woodland-park-district. The order form is updated for species that have sold out. The deadline for orders is **April 4** and the pick-up point is in Woodland Park. For more information, call 719-687-2951.

County seeks citizen input on transportation

Residents throughout El Paso County are invited to participate in planning the county's future transportation system by getting involved in the Major Transportation Corridors Plan (MTCP) Update. The last MTCP Update, completed in 2011, led to significant road improvement projects and better maintenance. It established priorities for funding through the Pikes Peak Regional Transportation Authority and helped to preserve land for roads in anticipation of future development. This update will focus on connecting urban and rural areas of the county, planning for adequate funding to meet future needs, exploring options for accommodating non-motorized travel, and other issues established through community input. The

MTCP also identifies long-term right-of-way needs in each roadway corridor. Sign up for project updates and/or submit a comment or question through the Contact Form at <http://epcroadplan.com/contact-us/>. Take the online survey at <http://epcroadplan.com/how-to-participate/>. Attend a Highway Advisory Committee meeting, the third Wednesday each month at 9 a.m. at Pikes Peak Regional Building 2880 International Circle Hearing Room. For more information, contact Victoria Chavez, VictoriaChavez@elpasoco.com, 520-6884.

Property tax exemption for qualifying senior citizens and disabled veterans

El Paso County Assessor Steve Schleiker reminds residents that the Colorado Constitution establishes a property tax exemption for senior citizens and disabled veterans. For those who qualify, 50 percent of the first \$200,000 in actual value of the primary residence is exempted from property tax. The State of Colorado pays the property taxes on the exempted value. The application deadline for disabled vets is **July 1**, and for seniors is **July 15**. For an application or a brochure that explains the exemptions or for questions regarding the exemptions, please call the assessor's office at 520-6600, email ASRWEB@elpasoco.com, or visit www.elpasoco.com and click on "News Releases."

Postal Service asks for help with winter mailbox access

Help your mail carriers deliver the mail by clearing snow and ice from mailboxes and walkways. If you receive delivery of mail to a rural-type post mailbox, please clear around the box to allow your carrier to drive up to the box, deposit mail and drive away. If your mail is delivered at your residence or business, please keep the path to your mailbox or slot clear of snow and ice. Delivery personnel, meter readers, friends, and family will also benefit from a safe and convenient path to your door.

Sheriff's Office warns of phone scam

In this scam the suspects are claiming to be an employee of the Sheriff's Office. They give a "badge" number and threaten the individual they are speaking with if they don't follow directions to clear up a warrant, they will be arrested. In some of these cases, they use the name of an actual employee of the Sheriff's Office. They take time trying to coax individuals into going to a grocery store to obtain green dot cards to clear up a warrant. The Sheriff's Office reminds citizens that their office never calls to inform individuals they have an active warrant and never asks individuals to make payments to clear up a warrant. Also, they never call to ask for money for any reason. If you have information about, or have fallen victim to, this or any other scam, please contact 719-390-5555, and ask to have a deputy come out and take a report.

Carbon monoxide risk: make sure furnace vent pipes are clear of snow

Snow drifts can block side wall ventilation pipes critical for safe operations of modern gas appliances. Residents with modern high-efficiency furnaces in their homes and businesses should make sure the outside vent pipes for those appliances are not blocked by snow and ice. High-efficiency furnaces are not installed using the old style metal vent pipes that extend through the roof. Instead, they use shorter PVC pipes typically vented through a side wall near the ground. While these installations offer great efficiency, the side vent pipes can be covered by snow drifts or clogged by snow and ice, leaves, animal nests or other debris. Obstructed vent pipes can result in the furnace shutting itself down, or in the worst scenario, deadly carbon monoxide could be released into your home or business. Side wall vent kits that provide added protection against vent obstructions are readily available through local HVAC contractors and online suppliers. But even with a vent kit in place it's a good idea to check to make sure that snow has not drifted up against the outside wall where the vent pipes come out.

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