

Our Community News

Volunteers reporting on community issues in Monument, Palmer Lake, and the surrounding Tri-Lakes area



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Issue #182— Volume 16 Number 4 — Saturday, April 2, 2016

Free

Breaking News! Monument Mayor Resigns see page 14

Local Events

See pages 23-27 for details of these and many other local events.

- Pat McGee Concert at TLCA, Sat., Apr. 2, 6 p.m.
- Southern Colorado Regional Rubik's Cube Tournament, Tue., Apr. 5, 5-8 p.m.
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan Meeting, Tue., Apr. 5, 7-9 p.m.
- Palmer Ridge High School Spring Play: *Play On*, Thu.-Sat., Apr. 7-9, 7 p.m.
- Jeffrey Broussard & Creole Cowboys Concert at TLCA, Fri., Apr. 8, 7 p.m.
- HAP Thrift Store Storage and Store Moving Sale, Sat.-Sun., Apr. 9-10, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Tri-Lakes Land Use Committee Meeting, Mon., Apr. 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Foot Care Clinic, Wed., Apr. 13
- Active Shooter Class presented by Monument Police Chief Jacob Shirk, Wed., Apr. 13, 10-11 a.m.
- Bethany Yarrow & Rufus Cappadocia Concert at TLCA, Fri., Apr. 15, 6 p.m.
- Monument Library: AARP Smart Driver Course, Sat., Apr. 16, 12:45-5 p.m.
- Palmer Lake Historical Society: Spinning in the Western Region, Thu., Apr. 21, 7 p.m.
- Monument Library: Internet Safety for Seniors, Fri., Apr. 22, 1-3:15 p.m.
- Great American Cleanup, Sat., Apr. 23, 9 a.m.-noon
- Pine Forest Show: Antiques, Home Décor, and Garden Sale, Sat.-Sun., Apr. 23-24,
- Black Forest Arts & Crafts Guild 52nd Annual Spring Show & Sale, Thu.-Sun., Apr. 28-May 1
- Palmer Ridge High School Play, *Almost, Maine*, Thu.-Sat., Apr. 28-30, 7-9 p.m.
- Foot Care Clinic, Fri., Apr. 30
- Palmer Lake Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, Sat., May 7
- Community FireWise Event, Sat., May 7, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. ■

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Above: Regina Helgoth was one of thirteen children, age 5 to 15, who presented compositions from classical composers such as Bach, Handel, and Pachelbel March 4 at the Tri-Lakes Senior Center. Little Hearts, Big Music is a small group of young musicians who play once a month, without any compensation, at nursing homes and local assisted living facilities. See page 26 for a group photo and more information. *Photo courtesy of the Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance.*

Monument Board of Trustees, March 11

Methadone clinic battle ends

By Lisa Hatfield

After a special meeting on March 11, the Town of Monument announced that it had settled all claims concerning its lawsuit with Colonial Management Group (CMG). The press release from Town Manager Chris Lowe said the town contributed a significant financial amount to aid in the settlement of the lawsuit and that the town and its insurer (CIRSA) were the only parties involved in this agreement with Colonial Management. (On March 23, Lowe told OCN that the town paid \$350,000, but the CIRSA amount was still not specified since there was no signed settlement agreement yet.)

Mayor Rafael Dominguez said, "The significant financial contribution by the town was justified because the board felt it was important for all residents of the town that not only should the claims be settled, but also under the condition that CMG not be allowed to ever locate in the Town of Monument."

Since September 2014, CMG had been trying to open a methadone clinic at 192 Front St., across the street from Limbach Park. At that time, it was granted administrative approval by town staff, since

the treatment center had sought its land use and building permit approvals as a "clinic," which was not clearly defined by town ordinances. After the public found out about the application in spring 2015, the administrative decision was appealed by Jamie Fenley, a Monument resident who vehemently opposed having a methadone clinic located there, and the No Methadone in Monument nonprofit group was formed to allow other concerned citizens to support that appeal.

By granting Fenley's appeal on Aug. 10, the Monument Board of Adjustment reversed the decision of the town's staff and prevented CMG from proceeding with its original plan. CMG then filed a lawsuit in El Paso County District Court naming the Town of Monument and all the members of the Monument Board of Trustees and Monument Board of Adjustment both as individuals and as official members of those boards.

See related March 7 Board of Trustees article on page 10.

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Additional Monument articles start on page 10.

Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education, March 15

New administrators named; Monument Academy requests funds from 1999 MLO

By James Howald

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education covered a wide range of topics in its meeting on March 15. Highlights of the meeting included approval of two new

administrators, discussion of the funding aspects of the charter contract negotiation with Monument Academy, a discussion of board policies, and comments from the public.

(Continued on page 2)

Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority, March 18

Revenue bond recall and sales tax termination approved

By Jim Kendrick

At the March 18 Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority (BRRTA) regular board meeting, BRRTA's District Manager Elaine Johnsen, who is the funding optimization manager for El Paso County Budget Administration, presented a resolution for extraordinary mandatory redemption all of BRRTA's remaining outstanding 2007 privately-held revenue bonds, which was unanimously approved. The next interest date that these bonds can be recalled is June 1, 2016. Johnsen said the estimated total cost of early redemption is \$14.831 million for principal, interest, and trustee fees, while BRRTA's current total bond resources are \$14.916 million as of Feb. 29, for an excess of \$85,594. She added that BRRTA had also collected \$146,000 in sales and use taxes to date in 2016.

The BRRTA board also unanimously approved a resolution to terminate BRRTA's temporary 20-year one-cent sales and use tax by June 30, 2016, which solely finances the BRRTA bond payments, and to terminate as soon as possible all agreements with other entities regarding collection and distribution of these bond-related revenues. The county staff members supporting BRRTA as an additional duty were directed to work with the bond trustee and take all steps necessary to issue the call for redemption and pay off the bonds in full as of June 1. The BRRTA president and vice president were authorized to execute any and all documents necessary to carry out these matters.

BRRTA will have no source of sales or use tax income as of June 1 and will rely on its remaining total balance of about \$400,000 for operations until the board votes to dissolve the authority. All planned BRRTA-supported improvement projects for Baptist Road are expected to be completed by the end of 2016. Future Baptist Road improvements will be financed by El Paso County.

Note: The BRRTA board consists of two Town of Monument elected officials and three elected El Paso County officials. The current members are Monument Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Kaiser (chair), Monument Mayor Rafael Dominguez, County Commissioner Darryl Glenn, County Commissioner Dennis Hisey, and County Assessor Steve Schleiker. The absences of Glenn and Kaiser were unanimously excused.

BRRTA voters approved a \$21.5 million sales tax revenue bond issue financed by a temporary 20-year one-cent sales tax within the BRRTA service area in the Nov. 6, 2006 election. The privately

(Continued on page 2)