

## John Howe bench dedicated



**Above:** On a sunny, peaceful day, the Town of Monument staff formally presented a white marble bench that was installed in the center of town to honor former trustee and indefatigable volunteer John Howe. Town Manager Chris Lowe served as master of ceremonies noting Howe's many hours spent for the Cemetery Committee while updating and correcting the records and locations of all those interred, briefing his progress to the Board of Trustees and Palmer Lake Historical Society, and helping organize memorable Memorial Day commemorative ceremonies that honor our veterans at this cemetery. Howe's service to our community since 2010 also ranges from reading poetry at a Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts Music-Poetry-Arts Café to serving dishes of ice cream at town ice cream socials, contributing to OCN, and serving on the Monument Sanitation District board. His ubiquitous partner in this work, Sharon Williams, also attended. Howe has also helped his Eagle Scout project partner Kent Matthews. Howe noted that the familiar Mark Twain misquote, "The report of my death is greatly exaggerated, meaning, as you can see, I am not beneath this bench." He thanked everyone who has helped him improve this "sacred place" where the first burial took place in 1860. "May this bench be a place for comfort and peace to those who come to Monument Cemetery," he said. "Thank you for this beautiful bench. It's gorgeous." Of course John made the cookies to save someone else from having to. *Photo by Jim Kendrick, retired colonel (USAF)*

## Films laud women's contributions



**Left:** The sisters of Benet Hill Monastery in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Women's Film Institute hosted *Shorts Night*, a showing of five short films that were guaranteed to make viewers "smile and be awe-inspired." Ranging between five and 30 minutes, the films varied dramatically from one another but maintained the theme of having a woman at the helm of the creation process. The audience chuckled throughout *Strudel Sisters: A Sweet*

*Treat for the Soul*, which portrays Hungarian sisters Ilona and Erzsébet who verbally joust with one another while masterfully creating their specialty confection. *Pickle*, a story about a couple who found it impossible to resist animal rescue opportunities, also produced laughter by depicting the couple's creative endeavors to provide comfort and care. The final film, *Mama Rwanda*, focused on the lives of women who refused to be defeated by post-genocide Rwanda's pain. Creative collaboration and determination bolstered their efforts to step beyond survival and into prosperity. Pictured above are (left to right) Yolanda Aragon, Isabel Aragon, and Emily Ulrich. Ulrich is a director of the Rocky Mountain Women's Film Institute board. *Caption and photo by Jennifer Kaylor.*

## Community engagement seminar



**Above:** On Saturday, Sept. 16, the Lewis-Palmer School District hosted a half-day seminar at Lewis-Palmer High School led by Martín Carcasson, director of the Center for Public Deliberation at Colorado State University. More than 40 people attended including district administrators and staff, parents, school board candidates, and representatives from the Town of Monument, the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Tri-Lakes Cares, and the city of Castle Rock. A similar session had been held the day before for the school district principals, administrators and school board members. The seminar, titled "Tackling Wicked Problems: Getting Beyond Partisan Politics," addressed three key questions: What is the nature of problems facing our communities? What communication and processes help us address those problems? How can we build community capacity to support those processes? Additional information can be found on YouTube under "Martín Carcasson" and on the Facebook page, "Wicked Problems Mindset." *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

## Tim Watkins remembered



**Above:** On Sept. 23, the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department led the mountain bike procession (inset above) to remember local cyclist Tim Watkins. More than 150 mountain bikers assembled at the parking area at the base of Raspberry Mountain and rode down through Red Rock Ranch to join those assembled at the Palmer Lake Town Hall, where over 300 people gathered for a memorial service (pictured above) held on the green. Many wore T-shirts with a picture of a mountain biker headed into the hills, with the admonishment, "Ride like Tim." Watkins was a longtime Palmer Lake resident and worked at several area bike shops, starting with Criterium in 1988. He cycled competitively on the road, track, and mountain bike. In 2000, he, Trina Lutwiniak, and Tom Loots opened Balanced Rock Bike and Ski on Beacon Lite Road in Monument. Over the years, he had enthused many new riders and helped them with their mechanical problems. He was very active in building and maintaining mountain bike trails, wrote several columns on riding local trails for *Our Community News*, and had been a major contributor to the Palmer Lake Yule Log celebration. The El Paso County Sheriff's Office is investigating Watkins death as a homicide. *Photos and information by Chris Pollard.*

## Monu-Palooza



**Above:** The Monu-Palooza event organized by Charlie Searle presented four bands: Skin and Bones, The Matt Bloom Band, The VooDoo Hawks, and (seen above) The AshtonZ. Concertgoers enjoyed the day at Limbach Park on Sept. 3. *Photo by John Howe.*

## Funds benefit suicide prevention

**Right:** Approximately \$20,000 in proceeds from the June 17 Color Run 5K fundraiser were distributed to four high schools for suicide prevention programs on Sept. 7 at the Ascent Church. Shown here are representatives from local churches and two school districts that got together to touch students' lives and find ways for all kids to have a voice.

Pastor Scott Campbell said teen suicide has become a defining cultural issue in northern El Paso County. Student Minister Taylor Shade told the administrators, "The best defense is a good offense." A long list of local churches and businesses helped sponsor the 5K, and Discovery Canyon, Lewis-Palmer, Palmer Ridge, and The Classical Academy high schools each received \$5,000. All four schools plan to use the funds for the Sources of Strength program, and the two District 38 high schools are also enlisting the help of the Value Up program. *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*

