

OCN needs your help!
See page 28

Local Events

Readers should assume that event information published in this issue is subject to change and information should be confirmed a day or two before the event by calling the information number or checking the organization's website.

See pages 28-31 for event locations and other details of these and many other local events.

- **July 4th events** see Kiwanis ad on page 16.
- **NEPCO meeting**, Sat., **July 9**, 10 am – 12 pm.
- **“Crepes and Cruisers”** at JCSL, Sat., **July 9**, 10 am-noon
- **Ashes to Beauty**, Waldo Canyon fire recovery, Sat.-Sun., **July 9-10**, 9-5 pm
- **WMMI, Summertime Family Days**, Sat., **July 9, Aug. 20**
- **Chamber After Hours Networking Event**, Tue., **July 12**, 5 pm–7 pm
- **Concerts in the Park**, Wed., **July 13, 20, 27, Aug. 3, 10, 17**. See ad on page 14.
- **Party for the Parks**, Sat., **July 16**, 2-9 pm . See ad on page 14.
- **Pikes Peak Brewing, Hops and Hot Rods**, Sun., **July 17**. See ad on page 13.
- **PLHS Guided Walking Tour of Palmer Lake**, Thu., **July 21**, 1-4 pm
- **Monument Art Hop**, Thu., **July 21**, 5-8 pm. See ad on page 2.
- **TLMFPD Station 1 Grand Reopening**, Sat., **July 30**, 11 am-1 pm. .
- **WIA Chipping Days**, Sat.-Sun., **July 30-31**
- **Return of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua**, Sat., **Aug. 6**, 1–4 pm
- **Technology & Engineering Camps**, **Aug 1-12**, 9 am-3 pm
- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., **Aug. 4**, approx. 9 am–2 pm. Information on page 28.
- **Hummingbird Festival**, Fri.-Sat., **Aug. 5-6**, 10-3 pm
- **WMMI Western Saloon night fundraiser**, Sat., **Aug. 6**, 6 pm. See ad on page 20.
- **Elementary/Middle School Robotics Information Session**, Sat., **Aug 13**, 10-11:30am.

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Sunrise over Palmer Lake, June 24



Above: At a sunrise attempt at fishing Palmer Lake on June 24, the fish outwitted the human. Steve Galchutt had many strikes but all misses except one that hung on till he almost got it to shore, then let go. *Photo by Steve Galchutt.*

Monument Academy School Board, June 9

Phase 2 funding, Highway 105 construction hit roadblocks; arming staff decision postponed

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held its regular meeting on June 9 to discuss Phase 2 funding, the Highway 105 project, and arming staff. The board also updated four policies and agreed to resume recording, posting, and live streaming its meetings.

MA held a six-hour board retreat on May 31 with current and incoming board members, school administration, and legal counsel. They discussed pressing issues at both campuses, legal training of new board members, a SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat) analysis, and more. The board shared some results in the June 9 meeting and planned to discuss the SWOT analysis in the July meeting.

Phase 2 funding

Chief Operating Officer (COO) Merlin Holmes reported that funding for the Phase 2 construction to build out MA's secondary school had gone full circle and hit some roadblocks. He said he would meet with bond counsel the following Monday to discuss how to move forward. Outgoing board member Chris Dole noted that funding had hit a brick wall due to the state of the economy. He said MA's current bondholder for its two existing bonds has no appetite for further financing until things calm down. Dole initially hoped to break ground for a new athletic field last April and see groundbreaking for Phase 2 in August. He said he was not optimistic.

MA (Cont. on 2)

Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education, June 20

Board passes 2022-23 budget, learns of recent legislation, discusses potential annexation

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education passed the proposed 2022-23 budget, learned the potential impact of recent legislation, and discussed other matters at its June 20 meeting, the last of this school year.

To view the budget, please go the district website, lewispalmer.org. The resolution was divided into sections to

approve the borrowing of funds during the summer to pay commitments until tax revenue is received in October, to carry over funds for ongoing capital projects, and to advance funds to the nutritional services fund.

Legislative update

District Superintendent KC Somers and

D38 BOE (Cont. on 6)

Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, June 9 and 23

Renewable water might be available

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

On June 23, the Palmer Lake Board of Trustees heard a presentation on a water reuse project that could increase the town's supply of renewable surface water. A public hearing was held and a resolution considered on a conditional use permit for a property just north of the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. Two other public hearings were held in June: the first for a conditional use permit for a short-term rental and the second for a final reading of the Model Traffic Code. The board voted following these hearings.

The board also voted on a resolution concerning the county's opioid settlement agreement and on a resolution authorizing Miller Timber to provide fire mitigation. The board heard operational reports and ended its June 23 meeting with a brief executive session.

The board held two workshop meetings in June, both on ideas to improve the town's finances. Those workshops are covered in a separate article in this edition of OCN.

The Loop Project promises renewable water supply

Jessie Shaffer, district manager of the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, Amy Lathen, general manager of the Cherokee Metropolitan District, and Tom Tharnish, director of Public Works for the Town of Monument, gave the board an overview of the Loop Project, a large infrastructure project, still in the planning phase, whose goal is to increase

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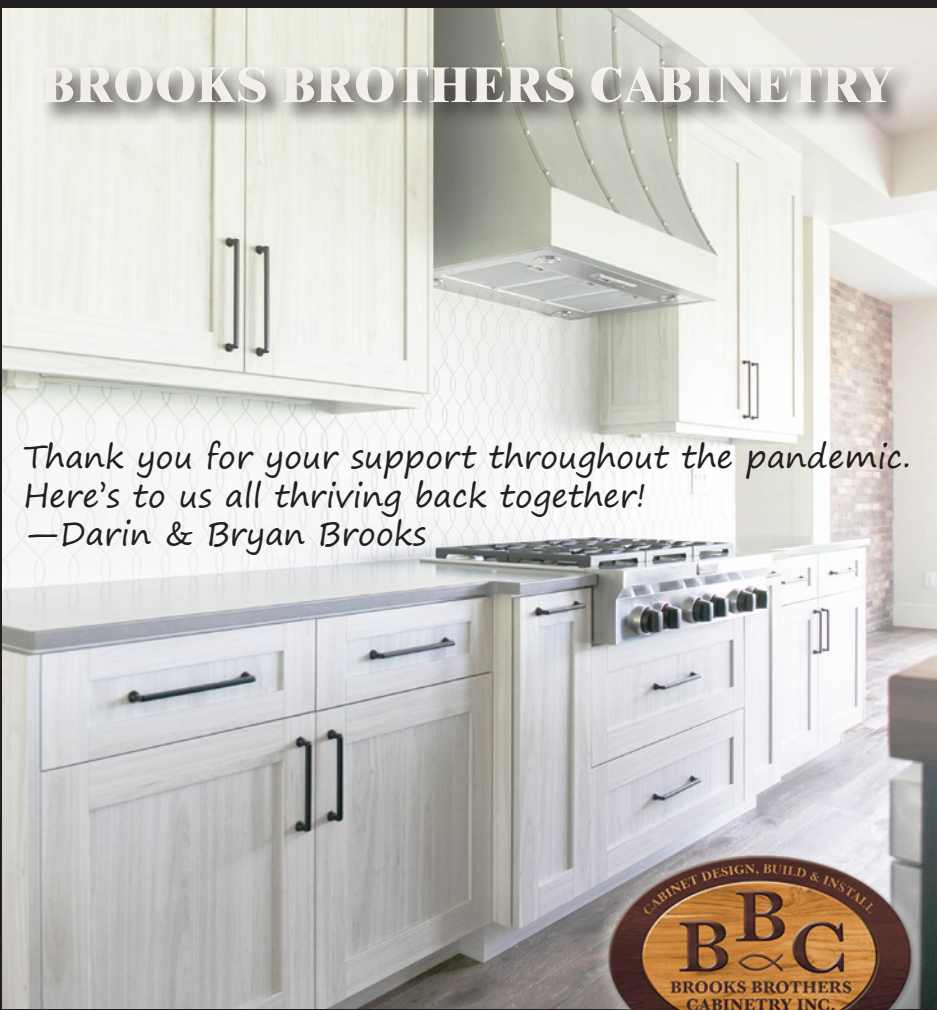
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MA (Cont. from 1)

Armed staff discussion tabled

Board President Ryan Graham reviewed the timeline saying MA had started talking about arming staff via the FASTER training program in February, then held a special meeting in March on the program, then sent a survey to parents and staff. See more information at <https://www.ocn.me/v22n4.htm#ma>.

Graham said he felt a decision was needed quickly. He noted that some parents said they would pull their kids if MA implemented the program, and he thought it right to give them that option over the summer. He also said MA had heard from some staff members that they would leave.



Graham reported the survey results of 450 parent respondents showing support for arming staff at 67% yes, 15% no, and the rest needing more information. Staff support was at 47% yes, 30% no, and the rest needed more information.

Board member Joe Buczkowski asked about the program's cost, which Graham replied was \$1,000 per person. Graham noted that under Colorado's statutes, individuals who graduate from

the program would be contracted in addition to their current position as armed security guards. Holmes said MA should pay a stipend to participants. Buczkowski said the school's insurance premium would increase, though he did not know the exact amount. Buczkowski understood wanting to make a decision quickly but said it was hard without complete information on the budget impact. He also said it would be nice to bring in a consultant to look at the vulnerabilities of the two campuses and address prevention efforts first, then look at the FASTER program.

Board Secretary Lindsay Clinton said she felt this program was one tool in a comprehensive toolbox that included active shooter, triage, and mental health training. She strongly felt this is a tool MA should have. Board member Misty McCuen wanted to hear from staff and didn't want to live in fear or be naïve. She said she, too, was supportive of this effort and noted it did not replace the school resource officer (SRO) program.

Holmes said he was generally supportive of the program but would take direction from the board, noting that other safety procedures are available as well. Dole said he supported arming teachers



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and raising money for SROs but talking about timing was premature. He said MA does need this tool but also needs to assess vulnerability. Finally, board Vice President Megghan St. Aubyn noted that the board's role was to set policy, and it should write a draft of one to allow this or any other program.

Principals at the East Campus were also supportive, with David Kennington saying his experience at a former school changed how he felt about armed security. Angela Duca agreed with others and said she understood and trusted the program. Elementary principals said their team was not as supportive of the program, with Laura Barrette noting that elementary staff are nurturers. She raised concerns about how teachers would manage their class if they were called to an emergency and said she preferred armed police with years of training. She added it had been years since MA assessed

the West Campus, and arming staff is going to extremes.

During the public comments portion of the meeting, a new parent said he had come to the school to ask about security protocols. Although the board typically does not respond to public comments, Graham said MA had a crisis team and offered to speak with him offline.

Christin Patterson, strings teacher at MA, said the staff results contradict the parental feedback on the survey. She felt both campuses were safe with existing measures and did not believe MA was a soft target. Patterson felt MA would be better off spending its money assessing vulnerabilities. She expressed skepticism about background checks and red flag laws, saying someone could pass one day and break down the next. She felt bringing in guns would bring more chances that someone could be hurt.

Patterson also read a statement from another teacher

who said the FASTER program is highly reactive and does not solve the problem. They urged the board to seek proactive options, saying it should address resources for mental health, bullying, stress, and resisting social pressures. They expressed concern that people holding

weapons would focus on that rather than fully paying attention to students and said students would find out who was carrying. Patterson relayed another statement from a teacher who said they taught students

using scientific reasoning and supporting evidence, and there was no evidence FASTER would improve outcomes. They said asking teachers to carry firearms is contrary to developing lifelong relationships and places



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them in a state of mind that is not conducive to teaching. They urged the board not to implement FASTER at this time.

Graham read aloud a draft resolution saying, in part, that the board had a duty to provide a safe environment, wished to provide rigorous training, and resolved to work over 12 months to develop school safety programs to prepare for an active shooter event. Dole suggested removing the training date and specific training provider. St. Aubyn suggested removing the reference to

the Uvalde shooting, which seemed reactive. Buczkowski reiterated his interest in getting a consultant to look at existing security protocols and help MA prioritize its efforts.

Graham tabled the discussion until a special meeting in July, saying he would address the requested changes.

Highway 105 Project

The Highway 105 Committee reported receiving no bids for the construction project to rework the MA's West Campus traffic flow. They did receive a bid for an owner's representative to manage the construction project. The request for proposals has been re-issued, and the county has modified some of the project specifications, which may help attract smaller construction companies.



Above: At the June 9 meeting, Monument Academy (MA) board member Misty McCuen presented school spotlight certificates to outgoing board members Megghan St. Aubyn and Chris Dole. Both are leaving the board after serving for three years. Board members expressed gratitude for all the ways St. Aubyn and Dole have contributed to the MA board and the school. The MA board is, from left, Ryan Graham, Lindsay Clinton, Chris Dole, Megghan St. Aubyn, Joe Buczkowski, and Misty McCuen. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Graham noted the lack of responses means construction will not finish by the start of the school year, shifting the timeline to sometime in the fall. He said he was discussing with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) next door extending MA's agreement to use the LDS driveway for right-in, right-out access only. Graham is speaking with church leadership and the church's legal counsel and is optimistic they understand the need to extend the agreement. He expects to send out more communication sometime in July.

Policies reviewed

Buczkowski highlighted the policies the governance committee reviewed:

- 1525 State Assessments Refusal—remove a reference to the repealed Colorado Revised Statute (CRS) 22-7-409 and strike section 6, which had obsolete forms.
- 1526 State Assessments Administrative Policy—

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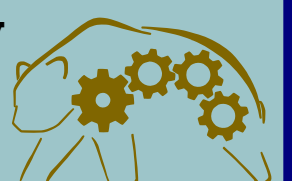


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add that the procedure shall specify the timing for distribution of the assessment calendar and require it to be distributed to parents and posted online.

- 1527 Student Retention Policy—no policy changes except for updating the review date.
- 1528 Homebound Instruction Policy—no policy changes except for updating the review date

The board unanimously voted to accept the changes as proposed. The revised policies can be found, along with existing policies, at <https://bit.ly/ma-bd-policies>.

Highlights

Board meeting highlights include:

- MA spotlighted outgoing board members St. Aubyn and Dole.
- The board unanimously approved a motion to resume recording and posting its regular meetings and live streaming, if possible, starting with its August meeting.
- The board approved its 2022-23 organization with Graham as president, Clinton as vice president, Buczkowski as treasurer, and incoming board member Emily Belisle as secretary.
- Buczkowski will also fill the role of board member

representative to Monument Academy Building Corp. (MABC) and Monument Academy Foundation (MAF) now that Dole is moving off the board. MABC and MAF are the organizations that hold the bond debt and lease agreements for the West and East campus buildings, respectively. Dole will remain on the MABC and MAF boards as a parent representative.

- The School Accountability and Advisory Committee (SAAC) for MA's East Campus, as reported by McCuen, provided a letter to the board indicating the end-of-year survey, with a 30% response rate, had a downward trending response. Concerns included a decline in perceived excellence, teacher turnover, use of long-term substitute teachers, staff teaching outside their expertise, and the use of iPads in the classroom. There was also a down-

ward trend in character leadership and electives. After tabling it last month, the board voted unanimously to add the position of development officer reporting to Chief Financial Officer Marc Brocklehurst.

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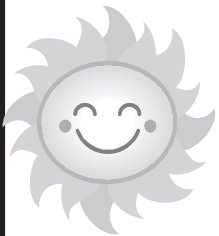
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D38 will participate prominently in the July 4 festivities sponsored by Monument Hill Kiwanis, with teachers serving as grand marshals and a family-oriented event at Big Red after the parade.

District staff is developing wording for a brochure in support of a potential ballot issue this November.

Somers congratulated Alec Falk of Palmer Ridge High School as state champion in discus. The Palmer Ridge men's track team placed 11th and the women's team placed 17th in the state.

The board recognized Christy Milks for her service as co-chair of the District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC).

DAAC update

Milks reported on the activities of DAAC over the past year.

The committee is mandated by the state. Activities include review and input on district budget matters, the teacher evaluation process, school assessments, and reports from two subcommittees, the Special Education Advisory Committee and the Gifted Education Leadership Team.

Milks said that she thinks DAAC is a very productive committee as it consists of parents, teachers and administrators from each school. There is also a board liaison, Tiffiney Upchurch, and an administration liaison, Michael Brom. She said that participating has taught her a great deal about the workings of the district.

Milks wishes there were a way to increase community involvement in the committee and suggested that a name change and advertising of the meetings could help. A suggested name would be Elevate and Engage. At present, Harriet Halbig is the community participant, covering the committee's activities for Our Community News.

Plans are in place for an additional subcommittee, potentially to include the Financial Advisory Committee and a Wellness Committee.

Annexation discussion

There was a brief discussion about the potential for annexation of the schools into the Town of Monument.

Originally part of the consent agenda, the board discussed the ramifications of this action. Currently only one of the schools, Bear Creek Elementary, is in the Town of Monument. In the wake of a

recent tax increase to benefit the Monument Police Department, it was thought that annexing Palmer Ridge High School and Lewis-Palmer High School into the town could improve response time in the case of an emergency.

Chief of Safety and Security Dennis Coates commented that the current school resource officers from the Sheriff's Office provide sufficient safety at this time and therefore a decision can be

postponed.
The board voted to table the motion for now.

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of each month, except July, in the district's learning center, 146 Jefferson St. Monument.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.



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PALMER LAKE (Cont. from 1)

the availability of renewable surface water to consumers in the northern part of El Paso County.

Shaffer said the Denver Basin aquifers, which supply most of the groundwater used by residents of El Paso County, are depleting. The cost of pumping water from them is increasing, and it will eventually become cost-prohibitive to use groundwater from aquifers.

Shaffer explained that the Loop Project would address these issues by diverting water from Fountain Creek at the Chilcott Ditch, near the town of Fountain, treating that water and then conveying it to customers in the northern part of the county through pipelines, some of which exist and some of which will need to be built. The water diverted is the treated output from wastewater plants in the northern part of the county. He described the Loop Project as a "treatment and transfer" effort.

Shaffer said the Loop Project took a regionalized approach to water and would allow participating water districts to work together in new ways. He discussed the possibility of regionalized well management, an approach that would let districts temporarily take wells out of production to allow the aquifer to recharge.

Shaffer told the board the original cost estimate for the project was \$134 million, but after a detailed engineering study by Forsgren Associates Inc., the current estimate was \$192 million.

Tharnish discussed how Palmer Lake might connect to the Loop Project infrastructure. He explained that Monument, which plans to participate in the project, is planning to build a \$2 million storage tank in the Red Rocks Ranch neighborhood. This would provide a connection point for Palmer Lake, should the town decide to participate.

Conditional use granted for mixed-use workshop

At the June 23 meeting, a public hearing was held to debate granting a conditional use permit to Kurt Ehrhardt, the owner of a property just north of the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. Ehrhardt said the proposed project would include a metal and wood crafting shop and mixed residential and commercial uses elsewhere on the property. Town Administrator Dawn Collins said a conditional use permit was required due to the mixed uses Ehrhardt was proposing.

The designer of the crafting shop, who identified himself only as Josh, said the shop would fabricate one-of-a-kind wood and steel components for the interiors of homes and offices. He said he expected the construction of the shop to take two or three years and said he would not move forward with the project if the conditional use permit was not granted.

A resident who lives near the property asked why the permit was requested before the design for the shop was complete. He asked the board to collect more information before granting the permit.

Resident Jacob Benton asked if the conditional use permit would remain with the property if the workshop project was not completed, and Collins answered that it would.

After the public hearing ended, the board voted on Resolution 37-2022, which grants the conditional use permit. The resolution passed, with Mayor Bill Bush and Trustees Darin Dawson, Jessica Farr, Samantha Padgett, and Karen Stuth voting yes. Trustees Nicole Currier and Glant Havenar voted no.

Conditional use granted for short-term rental

A public hearing was held at the June 9 meeting to consider a request from Emi-

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lie Harker for a conditional use permit for her short-term rental (STR) property at 703 Platt Lane. Collins explained that the town’s recently adopted ordinance for STRs requires a conditional use permit for dwellings with multiple living areas in an area zoned for single-family residences, such as Harker’s.

Havenar asked if the parking at the STR was adequate, and resident Lindsay Aho, representing Harker, said yes.

The hearing was closed, and the board voted unanimously in favor of Resolution 34-2022, which grants the permit.

2020 Model Traffic Code adopted

After a hearing on the Model Traffic Code at the June 9 meeting, during which Town Attorney Matthew Krob explained that the town was currently using the 2010 Model Traffic Code and the 2020 update

addressed issues like phone use by drivers under 18 and texting while driving, the board voted in favor of Ordinance 10-2022, which adopts the 2020 version as the town’s standard.

Board signs on to opioid settlement

Collins told the board that the El Paso Board of County Commissioners had proposed that Commissioner Stan VanderWerf represent Palmer Lake in the state’s opioid settlement case. Currier pointed out that representation by VanderWerf would not influence the funds the town would receive from any settlement.

The board voted unanimously to approve Resolution 36-2022, which authorizes an intergovernmental agreement with El Paso County to allow VanderWerf to represent the town.

Miller Timber wins mitigation bid

The board approved Resolution 35-2022, which authorizes the mayor to contract with Miller Timber to thin foliage, remove logs and chip slash for about \$4,000 per acre. The town has about 24 acres to mitigate, Collins said, adding that most of the funds to pay for the work were from grants.

Executive session

The June 23 meeting ended with a brief executive session to discuss negotiations related to a possible annexation.

Highlights of operation reports

- Collins said the staff had been pricing insurance for the town and had found that its current insurer, the Colorado Intergovernmental Risk Sharing Agency, was still the most economical provider.

- The parking kiosk the town installed by the Reservoir Trailhead has generated \$12,000 in revenue, enough to cover the cost of implementation, Collins said.
- A water diverter is being installed over the door to the town’s library to better manage rainwater.

The next two board meetings are scheduled for July 14 and 28. See the town’s website at www.townofpalmerlake.com to confirm times, dates and locations of board meetings and workshops. Meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 719-481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

Palmer Lake Board of Trustees Workshops, June 9 and 23

Town debates Fire Department merger and cannabis revenues



Above: The Town of Palmer Lake scheduled multiple workshops on revenue-generating ideas to address the budget shortfall that has been discussed at several recent Board of Trustees meetings. The feedback gathered at these workshops will inform decisions made by the trustees on actions to take and/or ballot initiatives to support. Photo by Creighton Smith.

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees held workshops on June 9 and 23.

TLMFPD chief presents the case for merging with Palmer Lake

At the June 9 workshop, Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) Chief Andy Kovacs presented an overview of fire services and resources that TLMFPD could offer to Palmer Lake.

Kovacs described the district’s current assets, resources, and financial health. TLMFPD, which recently merged with the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD), serves an area of 62 square miles. It has five fire stations that are staffed daily with full-time firefighters. TLMFPD purchased 14 acres east of

Station 1 on Highway 105 and envisioned building a regional training center on the property. TLMFPD has 23 firefighters and recently added a third advanced life support (ALS) ambulance. The district recently purchased a second tower/ladder truck and a wildland firefighting engine, he said, and already has a snowcat, two woodchippers, and two water tenders from the DWFPD merger.

Kovacs reported that the combined income of TLMFPD and DWFPD in 2022 is \$16 million. The board, he said, is fiscally conservative about spending taxpayers’ money and has an investment account of \$1.5 million along with a fleet capital account and capital improvement account to save for expected replace-

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Above: Andy Kovacs, Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) chief, presented an overview of services offered by the district. He talked about advantages of TLMFPD providing services to Palmer Lake either by contract or by merging with its Palmer Lake Fire District. Kovacs fielded questions by board trustees and town residents and extended an offer to answer any additional questions they had later. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

ment, repair, and remodeling. TLMFD collects impact fees from Monument every time someone builds an undeveloped parcel. To have TLMFD provide fire service to Palmer Lake would cost each resident an additional \$10 per day, Kovacs estimated.

He explained options for providing services to Palmer Lake and an appreciation of and commitment to continue treasured community events. He

said the combined fire district could benefit from economies of scale. Kovacs noted that Fire Station 1 is in an excellent position to serve Palmer Lake well under the National Fire Protection Association benchmark for ALS of 8 minutes 90% of the time. TLMFPD is active in the community and participates in local events with the Town of Monument and local homeowners' associations. Noting the TLMFPD motto of "Proud traditions, dynamic

future," Kovacs said it wants to honor time-tested traditions. Trustees and residents asked about the impact on the town's Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating, star lighting, and

chili supper events and what would happen to staff. PLFD Chief Christopher McCarthy said the ISO rating would re-

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main the same at ISO 4 or improve to ISO 3. Kovacs said he would integrate full-time staff into the district, although their role might change. Kovacs, noting that he got his start as a volunteer firefighter and managed a 200-member volunteer program, envisioned using the volunteers as a wildland fire mitigation crew and providing certifications and credit should they apply to work in the district.

Kovacs encouraged attendees to review TLMFPD's website, including their strategic plan, DWFPD merger feasibility study, and annual report. He urged residents to contact him at akovacs@tlmfire.org or 719-484-0911 for additional information.

See the TLMFPD website at <http://tlmfire.org>, view a video of the meeting, and download the presentation at <https://bit.ly/pl-tlmfpd-workshop>. For information about the Palmer Lake Fire Department, see <https://www.townofpalmerlake.com/fire>.

Board explores adult use cannabis revenue

Following its regular meeting on June 23, the board held a workshop to delve into the financial impact that sales of adult use cannabis in Palmer Lake could have on the town's dire financial situation, should those sales be allowed.

Mayor Bill Bass began the workshop by saying the purpose was not to debate cannabis use, which is legal in Colorado.

He pointed out that tax revenue generated by sales of adult use cannabis would be "other people's money that we have been leaving on the table." Bass said the town would have to use more than one of the three financial strategies the board had identified. The goal is to make Palmer Lake economically viable and put it on a path to prosperity, he said, adding that the town is at a tipping point between thriving or deteriorating. "When we ran, we had no idea of the financial condition of the town. The first budget was a real surprise. Quite frankly, you were told wrong; the town does not have plenty of money," Bass said.

Bass then reviewed two other financial strategies: a mill levy increase and consolidation of the Palmer Lake Fire Department with the TLMFPD. A mill levy increase of less than 35 mills would not bring the town to operating standards, might require another mill levy increase in two to four years and would place the financial burden on residents. The proposed fire district merger would remove a critical service from the town and would increase the mills residents pay for fire prevention from 10 to 18.4 mills, Bass said.

He contrasted adult use cannabis sales with the two previous strategies, pointing out that the cannabis option removes the financial burden from residents and the town can regulate issues like security, odor, and traffic. Cannabis

sales in Colorado were over \$2 billion last year and generated \$423 million in taxes at the state level. Focusing on possible revenue in Palmer Lake, Bass estimated that first year gross sales could be \$15 million and could generate \$1.5 million in tax revenue for the town. Additional measures such as a small mill levy increase might be needed in addition to cannabis sales, Bass said.

Bass calculated that it would take a 35 mill increase to generate just over \$1.5 million, the amount expected to be generated by the first year of adult cannabis sales. Bass argued that choosing the right financial strategy could be the difference between thriving or going into receivership and becoming part of Monument. "This board is not pro tax increase; we're not pro cannabis. We are pro Palmer Lake," Bass said.

Following Bass' comments, the audience of about 50 had a chance to ask questions and make comments.

Attendees raised the issue of whether the board could approve sales on its own without putting the issue before the voters, which Bass said was possible. Rich Kuehster, who served on the Palmer Lake Board of Trustees when the current ordinances regulating cannabis were passed, pointed out that a mill levy increase on the ballot, if passed, would take a year and a half to yield revenue to the town. He encouraged the board to approve the sale of cannabis with a vote of its own

rather than putting the issue on the ballot in November. Throughout the workshop, several other residents asked the board to take their own vote on the issue to generate revenue as quickly as possible.

Resident Onan Floyd pointed out that there were no sales of adult cannabis between Denver and Manitou Springs, and cannabis businesses in Palmer Lake would have a base of about 25,000 people. He thought the board's estimate of first-year sales and tax revenue were accurate.

Resident Jim Parko said he and his wife are in the cannabis business in Pueblo. Based on his experience, he thought the board's estimates were accurate. He pointed out Colorado Springs would soon be voting on adult sales, and this would limit media coverage for Palmer Lake's decision. Even if Colorado Springs approves adult use cannabis, Douglas County will not, so Palmer Lake will still benefit from its proximity to a prohibition area. He urged the board to act quickly.

Resident Ed Kenny opposed raising the town's mill levy and argued legal sales were safer than street sales.

Resident George Sweet said he worked at a cannabis store in Manitou Springs and thought the board's estimates were in line with the sales at that business. He said he believed cannabis sales drew customers from all walks of life.

Resident Linda Elliot raised concerns about traffic, increases in crime, and break-ins. Trustee Karen Stuth responded that the town could address those issues if they occurred.

Resident Cindy Hanson said she had lived in the town since the mid-1970s, and cannabis had been used in the town all that time.

Resident John Russell, who served on the Board of Trustees previously, said the estimates of revenue were too high. He felt revenue would drop off quickly.

Resident Sharon Black asked about impact on home values. Stuth said there were studies showing home values increased in neighborhoods with adult use sales and added that if the town went into receivership, home values would plummet.

The workshop ended with Trustee Darin Dawson emphasizing that additional tax revenue equivalent to a 35-mill increase must be found to keep the town moving forward. It is up to the community to decide, he said.

Workshops are scheduled on an as-needed basis. See the town's website at www.townofpalmerlake.com to confirm times, dates and locations of board meetings and workshops. Meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 719-481-2953.

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Monument Board of Trustees workshop and meeting, June 20

Permits for business lake use approved

By David Futey

NOTE: Our Community News (OCN) is urgently seeking a reporter to cover the Monument Board of Trustees, which usually meets twice a month. Reporters can attend in person or watch the meetings online. Our OCN reporter volunteers will train and help you learn how to write articles summarizing “what was discussed and what was decided.” If interested, please contact John Heiser, OCN Publisher, (719) 488-3455, johnheiser@ocn.me.

At its June 20 meeting, the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) conducted a workshop regarding Monument Lake permits for business use on public property followed by the Board of Trustees meeting.

Board workshop—Monument Lake use permits

The BOT workshop involved a discussion to determine whether to continue or discontinue offering Monument Lake use permits to businesses. Present Town of Monument code stipulates that a business cannot conduct business on public property without a special permit. A permit fee is presently \$250, and a business license is \$75. From 2017-21, the town issued lake use permits for business use, allowing two business permits per year. There was no permitting system before 2017.

Monument’s insurance allows permitting with the following stipulations: A business would be required to have \$1 million in insurance, which is typical for all vendors who seek a permit with the town; the town should also be named as an additional insured; the business should provide a certificate of liability; and participants of any classes held by the business must sign a waiver designating the town harmless if an incident occurred. It was undetermined who would be responsible if a situation exceeded \$1 million in damages.

To determine peak lake use hours, Monument town staff tracked cars, total people, anglers, non-anglers, watercraft (boats, kayaks, paddle boards) once or twice a day, usually four days a week for about one month starting on May 18. Peak hours in that time frame were generally weekends and weekday afternoons, and the lake will become more crowded as the summer progresses.

The discussion focused on the positives and negatives of offering the permits. The issuing of permits would allow the town to schedule businesses in off-peak hours, but to allow businesses to use the lake is not in the best interest of the citizens of Monument and would create additional congestion at the lake. It was stated that Monument Lake is very crowded with the continuing development occurring around it.

The board ended the workshop at 6:25 p.m. with no motion or action since this topic was a discussion item on the following board meeting agenda.

Board of Trustees meeting Thompson Thrift Residential plan approved

By a 5-2 vote, the board approved Resolution No. 42-2022, a Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) for Thompson Thrift Residential. The Planning Commission, by a 4-2 vote, and the town staff had recommended approval to the BOT. The Planning Commission’s “no” votes arose from a concern about potential traffic congestion created by the project.

Thompson Thrift Residential—Village of Jackson Creek will be a Class A residential development west of Jackson Creek Parkway at Harness Road. The Final PUD is consistent with the preliminary plan for the development that was approved by a board vote of 7-0 on April 5, 2021. No variances and revisions were

requested in the final PUD. The area was previously rezoned from industrial to multi-purpose to comply with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. This 13.14-acre project is part of a nearly 47-acre preliminary plan site that will eventually be fully developed.

The Thompson Thrift Residential site is projected to have 264 multi-family residential units in one-, two-, and three-bedroom configurations. The maximum building height is 48 feet. The site will have four points of access, including Strata and Harness Drives off Jackson Creek Parkway. There will be common areas such as a clubhouse, pool, and dog park, and general and disabled parking. The

design is consistent with the Village of Jackson Creek Preliminary Planned Development Site Plan Guidelines. Triview Metropolitan District will provide water and sanitation services and maintain the roads. The project is expected to be completed in 2025.

A Thompson representative stated that Monument has a need for an additional and more affordable housing alternative to single-family homes due to its growing workforce. It was stated that the average single-family home in Monument is \$750,000, requiring a median income of \$135,000 to afford that mortgage level. This suggests the average Monument mortgage is \$4,172 per month

based on current interest rates, while the projected average apartment rent at the proposed area would be \$2,166 per month. Part of the board discussion regarded the need for affordable housing for entry-level police, fire, teachers, and retail employees.

In a related note, the widening of Jackson Creek Parkway is being designed by Felsburg, Holt & Ullevig Inc. with a design completion date of December 2022. Once the design is at 30%, it will be posted on the town website for the community to review. The projected construction start is early 2023.

Public comments included a statement by Terri Hayes, chief executive of-

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ficer of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development and Visitor Center. She spoke about the need for a community to have diversity in housing because of the staffing issues businesses are facing in the area, and to enable employee housing near employers. Two Monument residents raised concerns about the number of apartments being built in the

town. One resident asked if there is a cap on the number of rental units, while another stated that there are 1,200 apartment units already approved in some form, accounting for 35% of the housing stock. He said they are not priced for entry-level employees at a \$2,000 monthly rent.

Final Plat for Village at Jackson Creek approved

By a vote of 6-1, the board approved Resolution No. 43-2022, a Final Plat for Village at Jackson Creek Filing No. 1. The Planning Commission, by a 4-2 vote, and the town staff previously recommended approval to the BOT. This 46.973-acre plat was rezoned on April 5, 2021 and is consistent with the approved Preliminary Planned Development Site Plan.

It has four lots in the 4.364 to 17.045-acre range, and the lots could be subdivided. There are three tracts. Tract A is dedicated for open space, utilities, and drainage while Tracts B and C are streetscape tracts. Triview will provide water and wastewater service. Multi-unit dwellings are subservient to commercial entities in the overall plan, so it's required that dwellings make up less than 50% of the use. There was no public comment on this resolution.

Eagle Rock Distributing Co. resolutions approved

By a vote of 7-0 for each resolution, the board approved Resolution No. 44-2022, a Preliminary/Final Planned Unit Development for Eagle Rock Distributing Co. and Resolution No. 45-2022, a Final Plat for Eagle Rock Subdivision Filing with an amendment.

Before voting on these two resolutions, town staff presented information on Land Dedication Procedures, Land Dedication Standards, Credit for Parks and Open Space, Fees-in-Lieu of Dedication as these pertained to Resolution No. 45-2022. This review was needed to determine if the proposed 1.2-acre grassy area in the Eagle Rock Final Plat meets the purpose and intent of land dedication or if a fee-in-lieu of dedication is appropriate. The plat is permitted for commercial, distribution, industrial, utilities, parking structures, and offices.

Town staff recommended approval with a condition requiring fee-in-lieu of dedication because the grassy area did not meet town land dedication requirements. The board eventually voted to amend the resolution to include the fee-in-lieu of dedication. The town staff calculated the fee as \$97,255.62

A Falcon Commerce Center (FCC) representative stated that the area has 224 gross acres with 33 of them being open space and 29 of which are designated for the protected Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat. An additional 1.76 acres of proposed open space along the Santa Fe Trail in a Preliminary PUD will be presented at the July board meeting.

The discussion continued with Resolution No. 44-2022, a Preliminary/Final Planned Unit Development for Eagle Rock Distributing Co. The development is 23.39 acres with the facility to contain offices, beverage storage and distribution, a building height of 49 feet with 262,500 square feet and an adjacent 10,000-square-foot maintenance facility. The Forest Lakes Metro District will provide water and wastewater service for this

and all FCC development. The Planning Commission voted 6-0 and the town staff recommended approval. This is part of the FCC-approved Planned Development sketch plan.

Eagle Rock representative Mike Economos said the company intends to employ 100 workers at the site and has 6,700 customers across the Front Range including restaurants, bars and grocery stores. Eagle Rock wants to consolidate its warehouses from six to three with Monument as its southern distribution facility. Deliveries from the facility will be staggered between 3 a.m. and 9 a.m.

Terrazzo Drive will be extended 2,000 linear feet to accommodate traffic from the Eagle Rock facility to West Baptist Road. A roadway study showed it and the surrounding roads can support the anticipated and already approved development occurring in the FCC area.

The discussion on Resolution No. 45-2022, a Final Plat for Eagle Rock Subdivision Filing No. 1, focused on parkland dedication. The board had three options regarding the dedication: approve with a condition to pay fees, approve determining the park requirements have been satisfied, and continue to allow the applicant time to fund an independent study. The board approved the resolution with the amended condition that Eagle Rock pay the \$97,256 fee.

Public comments included a statement by Johan Moum of the Palmer Divide Soccer Club. He spoke about the lack of and inability to acquire land to build field space for youth sports as baseball, soccer, and other recreational uses. He said collecting the fee would assist his and other organizations and the town toward their goals of youth sports facilities and park improvements.

Tri-Lakes Cruisers Car Show approved

By a 7-0 vote, the board approved Resolution No. 47-2022, authorizing the issuance of a Special Event Permit for conducting the Tri-Lakes Cruisers Car Show. Town staff members have approved the event in the past administratively. However, this year's event needed board approval because the attendance was projected to exceed 1,000. The event is scheduled for Aug. 28 on Second Street.

MOU approved

By a 7-0 vote, the board approved Resolution No. 51-2022, allowing for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the state Energy Office and the Town of Monument for Energy Performance Contracting Consulting. The town will receive technical assistance from the Energy Office to seek energy audits. This would assist the town in determining if it would qualify for performance contracting for energy savings. There is no cost to the town. Grants are available for energy efficient HVAC and lighting projects.

Lake use permits approved

The board voted 5-2 to allow lake use permits. The topic was discussed during the workshop conducted before the regular meeting. After a lengthy discussion, including a possible increase of the permit fee, the board approved allowing the permits on first-come/first-



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serve basis. Businesses could operate only during off-peak hours, and the staff would set the number of permits allowed. Further discussion on this topic will be conducted at the July board meeting because a related ordinance might need to change.

Financial assurance guarantee for water tank project

By a vote of 7-0, the board approved the expenditure for a letter of credit regarding the water tank project near Red Rock Ranch on a 2.5-acre site, which is in the

county's jurisdiction. El Paso County requires financial assurance to issue an erosion and storm water control permit for the project. This letter of credit stipulation was passed last year by the county and applies to developers, towns, water districts, and any type of municipality.

The financial assurance for the Red Rock water tank is \$140,000 but might be lowered to \$70,000 through negotiation with the county. The town's bank can provide the town with a letter of credit that meets the financial assurance requirements at a cost of \$700. The contrac-

tor on the project has provided the town with a performance bond for the town's financial assurance. If the town does not adhere to the project requirements, it could pay up to \$70,000. A letter of credit might also apply to a water tank project on Monument Hill, because it is outside the town's boundary and in the county.

The meeting ended at 9:34 p.m.

The Monument Board of Trustees usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 5 due to the Fourth of July holiday. Call 719-884-8014 or see www.townofmonument.org for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for BOT or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutesonline.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

David Futey can be reached at davidfutey@ocn.me.

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, June 2, 21 and 28

Unification hits speed bump; board votes to obtain station appraisal

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) meeting on June 2, the board met virtually via Zoom technology to approve the signing of the broker of record. On June 21 at the regular meeting, the board tabled approval of the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) for the provision of Emergency Services from Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) and deferred the signing of the letters directing the transfer of personnel pension and insurance plans. The board also approved an appraisal for a property valuation of Fire Station 6 (formerly DWFPD Station 3).

Directors Charles Fleece and Mike Forsythe were excused on June 2.

Special meeting June 2

On June 2, the board approved 3-0 for T. Charles Wilson to represent general liability insurance, workers compensation, and One Digital, representing medical, vision and dental insurance as the broker of record. See www.ocn.me/v22n6.htm#dwfpd and #tlmfpd. The June 2 meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Regular meeting June 21

Forsythe joined at 4:20 p.m. and left at 4:42 p.m. on June 21.

Unification with TLMFPD—process update

DWFPD attorney Emily Powell of Ireland

Stapleton Pryor Pascoe PC law firm updated the board on the IGA for provision of emergency services from TLMFPD, and noted the following:

- The principal negotiation on all the unification documents for the IGA is complete, and the primary IGA document is also complete and ready for signature.
- A resolution promising to follow through with all the items in the IGA will only need to be considered by the TLMFPD board.
- DWFPD is required to inform all the third-party service providers of the merger it is entering into with TLMFPD, stating all employees will now be sponsored by TLMFPD.

Powell said the process had hit a "speed bump" relating to the letter sent to Colonial Insurance, and the transition had not been as seamless as expected. The clear direction received from staff was to draft a letter to Colonial Insurance, requesting termination of the short-term disability program, and the other policies were to be rolled over from DWFPD into the TLMFPD plans.

The revisions provided from Colonial Insurance changed the deal and stated that only the two life insurance policies were being rolled over, that the employees would either have the option of enrolling in the TLMFPD policies or to pay on an individual private pay basis to

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stay on their current plans, and the changes were not pursuant to the original DWFPD contract. The response is not surprising and typical of private providers

that are not used to these fire department mergers, said Powell.

Powell recommended the board approve the change of broker letters associated with

the HRA and FSA plans, and table everything else until another meeting can be arranged after all direction had been received.

Treasurer Duane Garrett said he is not opposed to taking a little extra time to make sure everything is on track.

Secretary Larry Schwarz said the letter seemed almost like a template letter and not tailored to the district needs. Due to the vagueness of the Colonial Insurance letter, the board should delay until early next week, said Schwarz.

Gunderman and Fleece agreed it was best to wait until everything is clear before moving ahead.

Kovacs said he expects that the Colonial Insurance issue can be easily resolved, and there was likely a communication issue. He and the combined district Director of Administration Jennifer Martin would be available on June 23 to meet via conference call with Colonial Insurance and Powell.

Powell suggested a "special meeting" via Zoom for the board to approve the remaining documents on June 28 at 10 a.m.

President Mark Gunderman made a motion to table approval of the IGA and three transfer request letters to various service providers of memberships, insurance, and pension benefits.

The board approved the motion, 4-0.

The board approved the Change of Broker letters associated with the HRA and FSA plans, 4-0.

Note: The board held a "special

meeting" via Zoom on June 28 at 4 p.m. to approve the IGA for the full-service provision of emergency services from TLMFPD and approve three letters, informing service providers of the transfer process of employee benefits. Powell explained that the process of transferring each benefit to TLMFPD had been talked through with Colonial Insurance on Jun. 23, and the project and goals have now been realized, and Colonial Insurance had approved a modified letter requesting the transfer of benefits. The board unanimously approved the IGA and the letters individually. The "special meeting" adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Station 6 appraisal

Gunderman requested the board consider the sale of Station 6 (formerly Station 3, located on Sun Hills Drive in Colorado Springs) and said until the property can be appraised, the board is "flying blind."

Powell recommended the board obtain an appraisal to discover how much the property is worth and said the board has a fiduciary duty not to sell the property under market value, and there are restrictions on use such as a fire station or residential housing.

The board approved obtaining the property assessment, 3-0-1. Fleece abstained.

Station and facilities update

Kovacs updated the board as follows:

- The district is evaluating the future of the stations and had a meeting with a

Denver-based architectural company to discuss options.

- Station 3 (Woodmoor Drive) had been appraised on June 21, and the report will be shared with the board in July.
- A decision to either rebuild Station 3 or move it south to an available property on Jackson Creek Parkway will need to be made eventually.
- The district is also considering a partnership with the Town of Monument Public Works Department for the district training center. The 7-acre site is located at Synthes and Mitchell Avenues. The district would be better neighbors by not building at Station 1.
- The district currently drives engines to the Denver South Metro Fire District for apparatus repairs and servicing, but the process is not cost effective and time efficient.
- The TOM facility would include a vehicle maintenance and service bay, and the district has been asked if an additional bay is needed for fire apparatus. See TLMFPD article on page 16.

Chief's report

Kovacs noted the following:

- Ambulance billing was 40% above normal year to date. The district accepted

DWFPD (Cont. on 16)



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June 8–August 17, 2022

JUNE 8	7pm	Ashtonz
JUNE 15	7pm	Mosquito Pass
JUNE 22	7pm	WireWood Station
JUNE 29	6:30pm	Go Go Girtzilla & Eighty3
JULY 13	7pm	Missy and the Dirty Secrets
JULY 20	7pm	Mojo Filter
JULY 27	7pm	Skin & Bones
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AUG 10	6:30pm	WireWood Station
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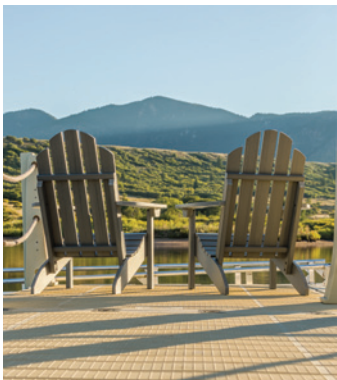


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DWFPD (Cont. from 14)

- all 17 calls in May into Colorado Springs (beyond the combined district border). The requests are far more manageable now than the American Medical Response requests in January. See www.ocn.me/v22n2/v22n2.htm#dwfpd.
- All call types are trending higher than in May last year.
 - Battalion Chief Shannon Balvanz is working with Director of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner on wildland mitigation home inspections.
 - The chipping calendar is full through October.
 - The old cascade Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) air tank filling system was sold to the

Divide Fire Protection District. The district purchased the more efficient Scott SmartFill RevolveAir cascade system for \$61,000, and it is installed and operational at Fire Station 1 (Highway 105).

- The district completed Vent and Search and Man Versus Machine (machinery extrication accident) training at the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District Training Center.
- The combined district completed over 770 hours of training in May.

Note: The DWFPD and TLMFPD boards receive the same report every month. See the TLMFPD article on page 16.

Department kudos

Fleece said that the training at Station 6 (formerly Station 3) continues, and not only does the district have great firefight-

ers, the firefighters also have good hearts. His nanny took his boys to visit the engine, and the staff made it a really special treat for his boys. The district has a great team of firefighters, doing good work and loving on the people in the community.

Gunderman said he had met several different crews at the grocery store and they are all working well together, even the new hires, and it seems like they have worked together forever, it feels so positive and genuine.

Garrett said, "It is a true testament to the leadership."

Station 1 Highway 105 grand reopening

Kovacs announced the "grand reopening of Station 1" scheduled for Saturday, July 30 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. The public is invited to attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony,

ny, tour the facility, meet the firefighters, and enjoy lunch provided by Emergency Incident Support. RSVP to spopovich@tlmfire.org.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of every month at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, at 4 p.m. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for July 19 at 4 p.m. Meeting attendance is open to the public in person or via Zoom. For joining instructions, agendas, minutes, and updates visit www.wescottfire.org or www.tlmfire.org or contact Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich at 719-488-8680.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.me.

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, June 22

District rebrands

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) meeting on June 22, the board rebranded the district, received the 2021 audit presentation, and approved an engine for 2023 and funding for a water line connection to a fire district property. An executive session to discuss paid leave and family insurance was held at the beginning of the meeting.

Organizational name change

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs said the unification of the district with Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) had identified the need to rebrand and create a new organizational name. Surveys were conducted both internally via Survey Monkey and externally via social media, and in total over 30 names were

suggested, with some suggestions from a local rebranding group. See www.ocn.me/v22n5.htm#tlmfpd.

In a dead heat, the firefighters wanted "Monument Fire" and the community wanted to keep "Tri-Lakes" in the name. The district struggled with making a decision without upsetting either group, and staff and board members returned to the drawing board to look at seven new names with the rebranding committee. In the previous several days, staff and board members had many conversations, realizing the names were too broad and that consideration should be given to future mergers within the region.

Kovacs said that when he is asked where his place of work is, he refers to Monument. With standing room only,

Kovacs asked the firefighters in the room to share their thoughts, and the board then heard from numerous firefighters. The consensus was to drop "Tri-Lakes" and adopt "Monument." Some of the comments made were:

- Working with other agencies, everyone knows where Monument is, just north of Colorado Springs or just below the Palmer Divide.
- After working here for 20 years, it makes the most sense, and it has been a long time coming. About 90% of the combined district staff agree it should be Monument Fire—proudly serving Tri-Lakes, Woodmoor, Gleneagle.
- Working with the district for 16 years, the past three chiefs have tried to change the name three times, and every time we ask for "Monument" we were told no, because we are waiting on another department merger.
- "Monument" is how the crews identify the district.
- One crew took a different approach and quoted the definition in the dictionary defining "Monument" as an outstanding enduring and memo-

rable example of something, a site of historical importance or interest, and a structure or statue of stone in memory of someone special.

- Most people outside of Monument do not know the other names of the neighboring communities.
- Monument has a lot of history and ethos to get behind.
- We are proud to live and work here, and Monument is ... the center of the community and the small surrounding communities all buy groceries in Monument.
- From a Wescott perspective, staff members at DWFPD have struggled with "Donald Wescott" and the prospect of having an easily recognizable name is desirable. Often the Wescott residents ask, "Where is Wescott?" Well, actually it is not a place, and it is enticing for both departments to get behind a new name and put the patches on.

President John Hildebrandt said citizens care more about competent firefighters saving lives than the name on the truck. The cost to rebrand everything is about \$150,000, but it could be done slowly, with certain things quickly, such as logos

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8:00 am Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce
- 3:00 pm Street Fair - 2nd Street and Washington Street

9:45 am Monument Hill Kiwanis Children's Parade
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10:00 am Monument Hill Kiwanis 4th of July Parade
- 12:00 pm Downtown Monument - 10am Air Force Flyby

8:00 am Kids' Zone - Monument Community Presbyterian
12:00 pm Church, 3rd & Jefferson

10:00 am Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce
- 5:00 pm Family Friendly Beer Garden
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- 5:00 pm Monument

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on apparel, and vehicle decals later. The firefighters need a name they can be proud of.

Director Jason Buckingham said it is good to see the pride and passion expressed by the firefighters tonight, and it is unusual in the fire service to see a 90% consensus.

Treasurer Tom Kelly said the organization serves the community and the residents pay for the fire services, and they should be given consideration.

Director Terri Hayes said she was opposed to the name change and asked the firefighters to consider the future and the taxpayers. The firefighters refer to themselves as “Monument,” but the community knows the department as “Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District.” Educating the residents if the decision is “Monument” will take years to achieve, and it cannot wait. The name change will need to happen fast, and it is a big expense for taxpayers.

Secretary Mike Smaldino said he was 100% for “Monument Fire,” but it could be an uphill battle in the future when a mill levy increase or community support is needed.

Director Tom Tharnish said most residents, including those residing in the unincorporated El Paso County communities, believe they live in Monument, and there is no time like the present to rebrand and support the firefighters with an easily recognizable name change.

Vice President Roger Lance said it was important that the Wescott firefighters were included in the decision process because they are equally important to the board.

Hildebrandt said education will be important, and he requested the board approve “Monument Fire Protection District—proudly serving the Tri-Lakes area.”

The board approved the name change, 7-0. The final full title of the combined district has yet to be determined.

Director of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner thanked everyone in the room for deciding on the new organizational name, and he thanked Kovacs for bringing both departments together in unison. There is no division now, and I am excited to come up with the new logo, said Bumgarner.

Kovacs said that as a people pleaser, he struggled knowing that some people may not be happy with the name change decision, but the level of humility that the firefighters have brought to the process was exceptional, and they have shown perseverance as firefighters do. Had they known the process would be upsetting to some, they would have done whatever it took to please everyone. “I do not see two separate departments now, just one organization working together seamlessly,” and he applauded everyone for moving the district forward, ultimately serving the community to the best of their ability, said Kovacs.

2021 audit presentation

Certified public accountant Mike Collins of Erikson, Brown and Kloster LLC presented the 2021 audit and announced the district had received an unmodified opinion and an A+ rating. Collins noted the following:

- An increase in cash due to property tax increases (assessed property values).
- Increased revenue from impact fees for 2021.
- The capital improvements made to Station 1.
- The losses were from the disposal of capital assets (depreciating items) that were removed appropriately from the accounts during the remodel.
- The cost of communications increased mainly due to higher IT subscriptions.
- Wages increased due to wildland deployments and overtime wages.

The auditors will continue to monitor the effects of the 2022 unification process, but they cannot anticipate all the ways the merger will affect the district, said Collins.

Director of Administration Jennifer Martin thanked her team Laura Yearous and Jenny Bilbrey for their hard work during the audit process.

The board approved the 2021 audit as presented, 7-0.

Type 1 engine presentation

Kovacs said that due to the nationwide supply-chain challenges and production delays, the district was requesting approval to purchase the planned 2023 Type 1 engine in advance, for a cost of \$841,860. Kovacs confirmed the following:

- The Wildland Type 3 engine is delayed by a year and now expected in June 2023. See www.ocn.me/v21n6.htm#tlmfpd.
- The new mid-mount tower ladder truck is expected in October 2023. See www.ocn.me/v22n5.htm#tlmfpd.
- A squad vehicle is expected this summer for Station 5 (Shamrock Station/Highway 83). See www.ocn.me/v22n3.htm#tlmfpd.
- Two ambulance chassis (budgeted for 2023 and 2024) have been pre-ordered and reserved. See www.ocn.me/v22n5.htm#dwfpd.

Bumgarner said that knowing the supply-chain issues, the new 10-person (includes 2 DWFPD personnel) apparatus committee had discussed the details for equip-

ping a new Type 1 engine, and he said:

- The district engines are a “Jack of all trades” and carry equipment that is not used every call. A lighter engine could be created by removing some of the equipment, allowing for a tighter turn radius.
- Attack hose is weighty and difficult to maneuver and lowering the hose bed would be a benefit for the firefighters.
- The engine will have a 510-horsepower engine, enough torque to handle the hills within the district, but carry 250 gallons less than the current engines.
- The front-line engine will likely go to Station 4 (formerly DWFPD Station 1), currently the busiest station for calls. www.ocn.me/v22n2.htm#dwfpd.
- The Pierce Corp. has an engine in production for what would have been used as a dealer sample sales engine rotating from state to state, and it matches the design specification the committee discussed.
- The engine is scheduled to be completed in December and available to the district January/February 2023.
- The district had planned to purchase an engine in early 2023, but the current manufacturing process is taking 24 months before delivery.

Smaldino requested the sum difference between previously purchased engines and the proposed Type 1 engine, originally projected for the 2023 engine, and said Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) engines are costing about \$750,000 without all the “bells and whistles” and there has to be an end to the open checkbook at some point, the district just cannot afford to get everything.

Bumgarner said he does not know why the CSFD engines are costing less, and why the TLMFPD engine is \$250,000 more, but the chassis is reinforced to carry more water capacity and they operate with larger engines due to the varying terrain throughout the district, and those items cost more.

Kovacs said the following:

- The two current district Type 1 engines are considered the “Swiss army knives” in the industry, and it is redundant to carry the full gamut of equipment. There is a cost savings to be had with specialty resources, such as a squad or truck.
- There are safety concerns when it takes a full leg extension just to get on to the step and into the cab. During the winter months, he joined a call and had nearly fallen flat on his face onto a snow-covered lawn in part due to the lack of a sidewalk and the excessive height of the district engines.
- The district’s largest, strongest firefighters are doing an overhead press to get the hoses back on the tray, it takes five people to complete the task, and the two engines are way too big for the district’s needs.
- The district is not naïve to the cost of the apparatus, and the 2023 budget will be scrutinized intently to maintain fiscal responsibility, knowing the district may need to ask for a fire house, apparatus, and additional firefighters.
- The district had budgeted about \$900,000 for a replacement engine to be received in 2024.

The board approved the purchase, 7-0.

Water bore project—Fire Station 1

Kovacs said the district and the board had discussed spending \$50,000 for the design for the water bore project under Highway 105 to the Station 1 property. The property is now annexed into the Town of Monument, and the district has an obligation to use the town water through the domestic water supply system instead of the well system. See www.ocn.me/v21n7.htm#tlmfpd.

The board approved \$121,743 for the water line connection to fire district property, 7-0.

Station 1 Training Center update

Division Chief of Operations Jonathan Bradley said the district is still looking at different styles and foundations for the Training Center, with the possible use of shipping containers to lower costs. There is the potential for building the training center on a 7-acre site within the Town of Monument, but until the district confirms the site, and a soil test is completed at Station 1, a price cannot be determined.

Executive session

The board moved into an executive session at 6:33 p.m. pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes Sections 24-6-402(4)(b) with legal counsel Maureen Juran to discuss legal questions on district obligations and options under the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act (FAMLI).

When the board returned to the regular session, no action was taken.

Chief’s report

Kovacs said the following:

- A Residential Assessment Rate drop in 2023 and 2024 will result in about a \$260,000 drop in revenue. At some point the district will need to advise the El Paso County Assessor that the mill levy will need to be offset to absorb the loss. See www.ocn.me/v19n12.htm#tlmfpd.

- He and Bumgarner had met with FirstNet AT&T representatives to discuss placing a cell phone tower on the Station 5 property. The rental would provide some additional revenue to the district, but it is a low priority due to the unification process. The district will revisit the proposal in December or January. See www.ocn.me/v21n10.htm#dwfpd.
- The EMS division is conducting a 60-day trial on a dictation service that cleans up the medical reports to ensure no contradictory statements are made, preventing possible liability on the district. Battalion Chief of EMS Sean Pearson and EMS Coordinator Stephanie Soll already review every report, and it is time consuming.

Pearson said the service runs on a phone app, and the report is dictated to the phone, and then the dictation

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service creates the report within two hours. The typical time to generate the report via the service is about one hour, and then hospital staff would have access to the district report. See DW-FPD article on page 13.

Grant received

Kovacs thanked Tri-Lakes Monument Women's Club for gener-

ously issuing a grant of \$1,806 at the request of Lt. Jon Bodinsky. The grant was used to purchase three Seek Reveal Fire Pro X handheld thermal imaging cameras for each ambulance, said Kovacs.

Station 1 grand reopening

Kovacs announced the "Grand

reopening of Station 1" scheduled for Saturday, July 30 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. The public is invited to attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony, tour the facility, meet the firefighters, and enjoy lunch provided by Emergency Incident Support. RSVP to spopovich@tlmfire.org.

Note: OCN used a recording to

write this article due to a scheduling conflict that occurred after another fire district board meeting was rescheduled.

The meeting adjourned at 10:11 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of the month. The next regular board meeting

is scheduled for Wednesday, July 27 at 6:30 p.m. at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For Zoom meeting instructions, agendas, minutes, and updates, visit www.tlmfire.org or contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin at 719-484-9011.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.me.

Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, June 22

Probationary staff take the oath of office; ladder truck approved

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD) meeting on June 22, the board administered the oath of office to probationary staff, approved a ladder tower truck purchase, and heard about a communications failure.

Oath of office administered

The district chaplain, Father Brad Noonan led the room with an invitational prayer before the swearing in ceremony.

Fire Chief PJ Langmaid said, "The district waits to administer the oath of office and badge to probationary staff because, in his opinion, the firefighter's oath is to the community and not to an administration, but to the mission, and the community gets to bear witness to that."

Chairman Nathan Dowden welcomed the families and friends of the staff and administered the oath of office to the following former probationary staff: Lieutenants Brandon Jones and Cody Poole and fire-

fighters John Singsheim and Luke Morrone. Family members and friends pinned on the rank badges after the oath of office had been administered.

Probationary firefighters Michael Alverado and Maria Fine were unable to attend the ceremony.

Langmaid said, "Regardless of current events, and what people may think, we are still a nation of laws, and the community must hold the district accountable for maintaining the highest standards."

Ladder tower truck proposal

Langmaid said that for several months the district had been discussing the needs for a ladder truck within the district, and he said:

- If the district were to order a ladder truck by the end of this summer, it would cost no less than \$1.5 million for a basic mid-mount ladder truck, and it would not be delivered for two years.
- The price was not some-

thing that the board and the community members were comfortable with, and a member of the community asked the department to look for a used ladder truck. See www.ocn.me/v22n6.htm#bffrpd.

- Immediately after the May board meeting, Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg fortuitously found a 2005, mid-mount ladder tower in pristine condition for \$250,000, with only 25 miles on the odometer.
- The apparatus had belonged to a volunteer fire department in Pennsylvania. At a minimum, it will require repainting to match the department colors. The addition of a LED light package would bring the total cost to about \$390,000 (includes a light package, paint/decals, and transport via hauler to the district).
- Brindlee Mountain Fire Apparatus of Alabama is the most reputable used dealership in the nation, and the application of paint, graphics and the light package can be done on site.
- Piepenburg visited Brindlee to inspect the ladder truck, and district mechanic Gavin Smith opted out of the visit to save money. After consultations and information received from Piepenburg, Smith could not find any major issues with the truck.
- The maintenance logs are not available, and the cost for a warranty is unknown.
- About 90 days will be needed for the paint/decal completion and the light package would take 60 days, plus transportation to the district.
- A massive spending spree will not be necessary to "out kit" the ladder truck, and the district has extrication equipment, but even though it has a full complement of ladders, they are heavier and Duo Safety Ladders are significantly lighter.
- Paying cash for the ladder truck would allow the district to allocate funds in the 2023 budget to pay for the 2023 tender, or it could be financed when it is received in August 2023.

Hinton said that in the short term, the district has plenty of cash to pay for the used ladder truck and a down payment of \$275,000 for the Pierce engine in August 2023. The district has \$815,480 in the Capital Improvement Reserve Fund, and



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Above: From left, Chairman Nathan Dowden administered the oath of office to firefighters Luke Morrone, John Singsheim, and Lieutenants Brandon Jones and Cody Poole. Director Chad Bhenken is seated in the background. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

BFFRPD (Cont. from 18)

he also recommended paying cash for the used ladder truck. The Capital Improvement Reserve Fund would be left with \$201,097, with the opportunity to bring the fund back up to \$655,495 when the 2023 budget is approved. In 2023 there will be more Capital Improvement Reserve Funds than needed to pay for the tender, but should the funding be needed for staffing, the bank has provided an option to finance the tender when it is received in August 2023.

Note: The board approved a two-wheel-drive Pierce Enforcer Pumper engine for \$631,544 at the April 21, 2021, meeting and a 2,000-gallon Pierce commercial cab tender for \$360,000 at the Jan. 19 meet-

ing. See www.ocn.me/v22n2.htm#bffrpd.

Dowden and Hinton recommended everything be completed at Brindlee to reduce labor costs.

Director Kiersten Tarvainen asked if there was a way to price out the paint, graphics, and light package within the state to compare costs.

Langmaid said the district could use Pierce Manufacturing of Frederick, Colo., for the lighting package in 2023, but some body problems may be uncovered once the old lighting is removed. The paint and decal work may also be available in state, but the timeline could be an issue.

Director Chad Behnken asked when the ladder truck could be placed into service, given that training will be involved to bring staff up to speed.

Langmaid said the plan is for 2024, when additional development will allow for a staffing increase. There will be tremendous energy to get the ladder truck staffed as soon as possible—the opportunity to purchase the truck presented itself much sooner than expected—but the target for a fully equipped ladder truck, staffing, and training is 2024. It will take 12 additional personnel to go through a hiring process, then attend a fire academy, and the earliest date to put the ladder truck into service would be a year out, but the community cannot afford to do all that right now, said Langmaid.

Vice Chairman Jim Abendschan made a motion to proceed with the purchase of a used ladder tower truck for \$250,000, to include transportation costs of \$10,500, and the board will decide on a paint and light package later, for a total not to exceed \$350,000.

The board approved the motion, 5-0.

Communication issues prevail

Langmaid said a significant event had occurred on June 1 in a dual jurisdiction area in Colorado Springs. The call came in on the El Paso County side as a reported explosion, and it appeared to have been caused by the deployment of multiple air bags in a truck that drove away. The incident highlights the ongoing major communication issues between the City of Colorado Springs and the rest of

the county, with the city update reporting an active shooter incident. Operational security issues also occurred during the call, and the county Sheriff’s Office and the Colorado Springs Police Department also struggled with the same communication issues. The Sheriff’s Office also oversees district communications, said Langmaid.

Leadership kudos

Dowden said he and Tarvainen had attended an exceptional leadership conference presented by Echelon Front-Muster in Denver, and it was of extraordinary value. Kudos to Langmaid for identifying the conference training program, said Dowden.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month at Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. Meetings are open to the public in person or via Zoom. The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 20 at 7 p.m. For joining instructions, updates, agendas, and minutes, visit www.bffire.org or contact Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn at admin@bffire.org or call 719-495-4300.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.me.

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, June 13

Board opts out of state medical leave act

By James Howald

The Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) board met on May 9 to decide whether to participate in the state of Colorado’s recently passed Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) program. The board also heard updates on the Lake Pump Station (LPS) and the Central Water Treatment Plant (CWTP). The board planned the replacement of the test equipment that measures the degree of leakage from the earthen dam at the southern end of Woodmoor Lake and discussed district infrastructure improvements required by the Monument Junction East and West developments. The board also heard operational reports.

The meeting ended with an executive session.

Board decides to wait on FAMLI act

District Manager Jessie Shaffer advised the board to take a cautious approach to implementing the FAMLI act. FAMLI is an insurance program, Shaffer said, that requires employees to pay into the program and offers up to 12 weeks of paid leave in return. If the district participates, employees could take paid leave to care for their own or a family member’s health condition, to care for a new child, to arrange for a family member’s military deployment, or for other reasons.



Above: The Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) has installed a sound wall on three sides of the drilling site for Well 22 just south of County Line Road and east of I-25. The new well is just east of a lift station owned by the district. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Shaffer said the board could choose to opt out now but would have the choice to join later. Private employers must participate, he said, but quasi-governmental agencies such as WWSD have a choice. Shaffer said he had concerns about the fiscal durability of the program and thought premiums might go up in the future. Participation could be a tool to recruit employees, he said, adding he felt that the district’s benefits are already very competitive. Shaffer also pointed out that if the district decided to participate now, but wanted to leave the program later, withdrawing a benefit could create friction with employees.

Erin Smith, the district’s attorney, said the program required participants to begin paying into the program in 2023, and benefits would be available in 2024. She also pointed out that even if the district chose to opt out, individual employees could make their own decision to participate, which would require them to pay the monthly premium themselves.

Board President Brian Bush said he thought the program might act as a disincentive for employees to accumulate their own district-provided sick leave.

The board directed Shaffer to opt out of the program for the time being.

Infrastructure upgrades near completion

Shaffer and Operations Superintendent Dan LaFontaine told the board that two of the district’s long-running capital improvement projects—the newly replaced LPS and the rebuilt CWTP—are virtually complete and are back in production. Both projects increase the district’s resiliency and ability to meet peak water demands during the warmer months by allowing the LPS to convey surface water to both treatment plants and by allowing the CWTP to process surface water. Before the CWTP was upgraded, only the

South Water Treatment Plant could process surface water, creating a higher risk that water source might be unavailable during months of peak demand.

Shaffer said the LPS had been operational since June 1 and was only missing some windows and siding. The CWTP began processing surface water in early June. LaFontaine said the surface water treatment process at the CWTP was being adjusted and “dialed in” to address taste and odor issues typical of surface water. LaFontaine said he felt confident the right treatment plan would be developed and taste and odor issues would decrease as the district moves to the use of surface year-round and not just during the high-demand months.

Shaffer emphasized that the road around Woodmoor Lake would remain closed due to safety concerns until the contractor was finished at the LPS.

Dam safety equipment to be replaced

Shaffer told the board that the dam at the south end of Woodmoor Lake was inspected for safety annually and monitored for leakage monthly though the use of piezometers, which detect potential leaks by measuring the water pressure inside the dam. At the last inspection, the district was told the existing piezometers should be replaced. Shaffer said safety consultants recommended the existing 27 piezometers should be abandoned and replaced with seven new meters. Shaffer added that several of the existing meters had already been abandoned, and others were not operational due to silt. Shaffer said the existing meters were in place when the district took over the management of the lake from its previous owner and the safety consultants had advised that seven new meters were adequate.

The board directed Shaffer to pro-



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ceed with the replacement, which is expected to cost \$100,000.

New infrastructure required for Monument Junction

Shaffer said both Monument Junction developments would require the installation of pressure reducing valves along the border of the developments to isolate the development in its own pressure zone. Pressure reducing valves take a high upstream water pressure and reduce it, Shaffer explained. Five pressure valves would be required. The developer would pay for three and WWSD for two, Shaffer said.

The board voted unanimously to authorize Shaffer to proceed with the project.

Highlights of operational reports

- The district’s financial report showed that revenue from tap fees continues to be high due to the rapid pace of residential construction.
- Well 10 is back in production after maintenance, and Well 9 is due for maintenance.
- The district has begun replacing water meters with new more technically advanced meters that are easier for the district to read and better integrated with billing software.
- Well 22, a new well that the district plans to drill just south of County Line Road and east of I-25, has been permitted by El Paso County, and drilling is expected to begin soon.

Executive session

The meeting ended with an executive session for discussions on buying or selling real property and on potential agreements with Colorado Springs Utilities, the Town of Monument, Donala Water and Sanitation District, Cherokee Metropolitan District and Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 11 at 1:00 p.m. Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of each month at 1 p.m. at the district office at 1845 Woodmoor Drive; please see www.woodmoorwater.com or call 719-488-2525 to verify meeting times and locations.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee, June 14

Three districts leaning against wastewater regionalization

By Lisa Hatfield

The Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) Joint Use Committee (JUC) met on June 14. It discussed the status of its projected participation in the North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI), which is looking much less likely, and voted on new officers.

TLWWTF is owned in equal one-third shares by Monument Sanitation District (MSD), Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD), and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD).

The three-member JUC acts as the board of the facility and consists of one director from each of the three owner districts’ boards. The JUC voted that starting in July, MSD Treasurer Laura Kronick will replace MSD Director John Howe as the JUC president; WWSD board Secretary William Clewe will be the new JUC vice president; and PLSD board member Reid Wiecks will be the JUC’s secretary/treasurer. Wiecks ran the June meeting.

NMCI opinions expressed

As a side note at the end of the meeting, WWSD Manager Jessie Shaffer expressed doubt on WWSD’s participation in the NMCI wastewater project.

NMCI might have used a gravity-driven system to connect smaller northern El Paso County wastewater districts with Colorado Springs Utilities’ more sophisticated and currently underutilized wastewater treatment facility, the J.D. Phillips Water Reclamation Facility.

Wiecks said PLSD will not participate for financial reasons, and Parker said MSD will not be participating in the project either.

Other northern El Paso County wastewater dis-

tricts—Triview Metropolitan District, Donala Water and Sanitation District, and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD)—have also been considering participating in NMCI since 2018 when the idea first surfaced.

See related WWSD, MSD, Triview, and Donala articles between pages 20 and 22 in this issue. FLMD has not met since March 2022. See background at www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#msd and www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#tvmd.

2021 audit not yet ready

Plant Manager Bill Burks said he has not yet received the final version of the 2021 audit from John Cutler & Associates for the JUC to review, but he expects to send it to the members soon so they can vote to approve it at the July meeting. It needs to be submitted to the state by end of July.

Managers’ reports

MSD District Manager Mark Parker said MSD just completed acoustics testing of its system, which is a new, more efficient way of checking the lines for blockages than using video camera scoping. PLSD District Manager Becky Orcutt said PLSD is now also using the same technology.

Burks reviewed the April Discharge Monitoring Report, flow and BOD (biological oxygen demand), metals, and nutrients testing for TLWWTF and had no concerns to report. TLWWTF continues to perform well above state-required parameters.

The facility has removed 197.35 dry tons of the 295 tons of biosolids budgeted for this year. Burks hoped to get it all done by end of June.

The facility master plan draft has been received from

Tetra Tech. Burks and the operators are reviewing it next to see if they have questions. He hopes to have that draft to the JUC soon for its review. The process for nitrogen removal is one of the topics that is still a question.

TLWWTF operator Doug Johnson passed his Class B state wastewater certification, and the JUC praised him for his accomplishment over a relatively short amount of time. Burks really appreciates his hard work.

For the Colorado Wastewater Utility Council (CW-WUC) update, MSD Environmental Compliance Coordinator Jim Kendrick could not attend the meeting but had concerns and asked Burks to share letters from the EPA for the JUC to review regarding accelerating nutrient pollution reductions in U.S. waters.

Burks told about topics discussed at the June 7 AF-CURE (Arkansas Fountain Coalition for Urban River Evaluation) meeting. This included the periphyton report from Otter Tail Environmental, applying for party status for antidegradation designations to regulatory review of streams in the South Platte, and 2023 draft budget timing. The Arkansas Basin Hearings will occur in 2023, and that might add to regular legal costs for AF-CURE.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. July 12 at the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility, 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of the month and are open to the public from all three owner-districts. For information on virtual meeting access, call Bill Burks at 719-481-4053.

Lisa Hatfield can be reached at lisahatfield@ocn.me.

Monument Sanitation District, June 15

Monument proposes water and sanitation consolidation

By Jackie Burhans and James Howald

The Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board met twice in June: It held its regular board meeting on June 15 at which it scheduled a workshop meeting for the next evening. Monument Mayor Don Wilson and Monument Town Manager Mike Foreman attended the board meeting to propose that MSD be combined with Monument’s Water Department to form a consolidated organization with its own board. The MSD board heard a draft audit presentation and voted on two resolutions.

Consolidated water and wastewater

Since 1963, MSD has provided wastewater service to its customers, some but not all of whom live in the town of Monument. MSD’s service area runs from County Line Road to Baptist Road. A map of MSD’s service area can be found here: <https://monumentsd.colorado.gov/about-us/district-map>.

Wilson said he wanted to start a discussion about combining MSD, which provides only wastewater service, with Monument’s Water Department to form an organization providing both services governed by its own board. Wilson said he was always looking for ways to increase efficiency and save money. Consolidating water and wastewater services had been discussed with an MSD board member in the past who is no longer on the board, he said.

Foreman said he is always looking for ideas about how to improve the town. He envisions customers serving on the consolidated board. He pointed out that currently some customers receive two bills, one for water and one for sewer. He argued two separate bills meant some customers were paying twice for administrative costs and went on to detail how the town had improved its billing services, including increasing the collection rate. Foreman suggested that a first step could be having Monument’s billing and customer support staff take over those functions for MSD.

If the transition to consolidated billing goes well, Foreman suggested two more steps: MSD using Monument’s sewer operator staff in place of its own and then forming a single water and wastewater district with its

own board. Foreman also suggested that MSD could move to office space provided by the town and rent its offices to another business.

Both Wilson and Foreman pointed out that some Monument Board of Trustees (MBOT) members who live east of I-25 vote on issues that don’t affect them but do impact residents west of I-25. They thought that was an impediment to good decision-making. Foreman suggested forming a committee with two MBOT members who live west of I-25 and two members of the MSD board.

Following Wilson and Foreman’s presentation, the board voted to hold a workshop meeting the next evening to discuss how to proceed.

Board workshop consolidation

At the June 16 workshop, MSD board members gathered to discuss the proposed merger with the Monument Water District. Board member Skip Morgan said that the town had made a similar suggestion about 15 years ago, which was declined. Dan Hamilton, board president, said he had attended two other events after the board meeting with Foreman, who emphasized the town just wanted to start the conversation. Director Laura Kronick offered to take notes so that MSD had something in writing to document its discussion and questions. Hamilton said that the workshop shows that MSD is giving the proposal honest consideration and that the town wants to know if MSD is interested and will bring a serious proposal.

Morgan said that there could not be a joint water and sanitation district because of differing coverage areas, which was why the state has 500 special districts. Director John Howe noted that the Wakonda Hills area, which represents 15% to 20% of MSD’s customer base, is not in the town and has its own wells.

The board discussed the possibility of consolidated billing, explaining the current processes, costs, and customer satisfaction. Board members wondered if there was a tangible benefit to MSD customers in terms of cost savings and convenience and asked if there would be a charge to MSD for the town to do the billing.

The board reviewed the suggestion of MSD moving its offices to town office space and renting its office to another building. Hamilton noted that the town felt this would support economic development by opening the space to a retail business that generated more tax dollars. Parker said the proposed space was in the Code 1 building the town acquired, and the MSD staff would go from offices to cubicles. He also expressed concern about board meetings and community rental space. Board Director Marylee Reisig asked if MSD would be charged rent in the town’s office space and whether it would retain ownership and continue receiving rent from its current building.

The board questioned the makeup of a consolidated district. They also discussed if the new organization would report to the Monument Board of Trustees or operate autonomously. The board wondered who would be eligible to be on the board and who would have the controlling authority. Kronick said in theory if Monument passes the proposed home rule charter, it creates districts from which to choose board members.

Kronick said the workshop was worthwhile, bringing up some good questions. Morgan said that MSD needed to know the bottom line of the town’s vision over the next five years.

Audit shows good financial health

Derek Watada of Olson, Reyes, & Sauerwein LLC, the district’s auditing company, presented a draft of the results of the district’s financial audit for 2021. Watada said the audit process went well and found no major issues. He did see instances where more separation of duties would improve the district’s processes but acknowledged that small organizations often struggled with this. Watada said overall the audit report was clean.

The board voted unanimously to approve the draft report as presented.

Resolutions passed

The board voted to approve Resolution 06152022-1, which designates the district manager as the custodian of records and as the person responsible for handling

Colorado Open Records Act requests.

The board also debated Resolution 06152022-2, which defines how the board will review financial reports. The resolution specifies that if a board member has a question about a report or an invoice, that question should go first to the district manager and may then be discussed at the next board meeting. These processes have been discussed in previous meetings, with Director Laura Kronick often arguing that the board should be more diligent in reviewing financial reports and invoices.

Kronick expressed concern that the resolution

would increase the workload of Cheran Allsup, the district’s accounts administrator. The board decided to continue its current process of filing invoices as they are paid and then pull them for discussion as needed.

After some discussion, the board voted unanimously in favor of the resolution.

Kronick said she had recently taken on the presidency of the Joint Use Committee, which manages the wastewater treatment plant used by Palmer Lake, Monument and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District. As a result, she wished to resign as treasurer of the MSD board. Director John Howe agreed to take on the duties

of treasurer in her place.

Monument Sanitation District meetings are normally held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month in the district conference room at 130 Second St., Monument. The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 20 at 9 a.m. See <https://colorado.gov/msd>. For a district service map, see <https://colorado.gov/pacific/msd/district-map-0>. Information: 719-481-4886.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

Donala Water and Sanitation District, June 16

District bows out of Northern Monument Creek Interceptor project

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

On June 16, the Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board voted against proceeding with the Northern Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) project. It also voted in favor of including a property in Chaparral Hills in the district’s service area. General Manager Jeff Hodge covered treatment plant updates and wells in his manager’s report. The board celebrated the contribution to the district made by Tanja Smith, the retiring DWSD office manager. Finally, the board briefly discussed the ongoing drought in the western United States and commented on DWSD’s water supply.

NMCI not in best interest of DWSD customers

The NMCI project proposed by Colorado Springs Utilities aims to convey wastewater produced by districts in the northern part of the county to a treatment plant in Colorado Springs, benefitting those districts by eliminating their need to treat the wastewater themselves. The board put an end to its consideration of the project by voting unanimously in favor of Resolution 2022-2, which says the project does not address DWSD’s desire to recapture and re-use its wastewater.

Hodge said DWSD had done two analyses of the potential economic benefits of NMCI, and both determined there was no financial benefit to the district. Hodge added an analysis of NMCI done by Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District Manager Jessie Shaffer showed that NMCI would need to cut its cost of participation by half for the project to make economic sense to districts in northern El Paso County.

Board President Ed Houle concurred with Hodge’s

assessment and said NMCI failed to address the question of re-use, which he saw as more important than cost.

Inclusion to service area approved

The board considered a petition from Bill and Vickie Hancock to include their property at 15220 Leather Chaps Drive in the Chaparral Hills neighborhood in DWSD’s service area. Inclusion would mean DWSD will provide water and sewer service to the property. The Hancocks agreed to pay the costs required to connect to the DWSD infrastructure.

The board voted unanimously to grant the petition.

Manager’s report covers treatment plant and wells

Hodge told the board that the work underway at the Holbein Treatment Plant would be complete by July 1. Hodge said he believed the newly replaced filter media and other upgrades at the plant would result in a reduction of radium in the water the plant treats. He said the amount of radium removed from the groundwater at the plant could double to between four and five picocuries per liter.

The district’s newest well, 16A, has been drilled, Hodge said, and well screens have been installed and the sound walls are coming down. Brett Gracely of LRE Water, the company managing the well drilling, said he expected the well to produce at close to 600 gallons per minute, based on what other similar wells are producing.

Hodge mentioned that Wells 2A and 2D were both back in production after maintenance, allowing Well 1A to be taken out of production to have a more efficient variable flow pump installed.

Tanja Smith retires

The board thanked longtime Office Manager Smith for her years of service and dedication to DWSD and its customers. Smith is retiring to Florida. Houle compared Smith’s role in the district to that of non-commissioned officers in the Air Force, who have an impact far beyond their rank. Director Wayne Vanderscheure reflected on the 10 years he had worked with Smith and wished her the best in Florida.

Drought in Western states a concern

The board meeting ended with a brief discussion of the severe drought in the western United States. Hodge mentioned that Las Vegas recently banned watering lawns. Houle added that Los Angeles had instituted a daily cap on water usage. Hodge said the water level in Lake Mead was at an historic low and pointed out that Los Angeles had instituted water restrictions.

Nonetheless, Hodge said that DWSD has an adequate supply of water, pointing to a portfolio of water sources that includes groundwater from wells and surface water from Willow Creek Ranch and from the Laughlin Ditch.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 21 at 9 a.m. Generally, board meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 1:30 p.m. and include online access; call (719) 488-3603 or access www.donalawater.org to receive up-to-date meeting information. The district office is located at 15850 Holbein Drive, Colorado Springs.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me

El Paso Board of County Commissioners, June 7 and 14

Ongoing code violation brought to commissioners’ attention

By Helen Walklett

During June, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) heard details of an ongoing code enforcement violation and approved a minor subdivision off Hodgen Road.

Code violation at Highway 83 property

Jill Fowler spoke during the public comments part of the June 7 BOCC meeting to bring awareness to a code enforcement issue on a property neighboring hers that is yet to be resolved after more than three years. Her concerns relate to the RV storage business that Steve Real Jr. has been operating on his property at 18220 Highway 83.

Fowler said, “The business is in violation of numerous sections within the El Paso County land development code not only for the fact that he’s operating the business without a special use permit but also because the RV storage does not meet setback or screening requirements. Real currently has about 25 or 30 RVs, trailers, and a semi-truck trailer parked and stored right up to my east property fence line.”

She added that while county was only made aware of the issue in October 2018, the business has been operating without approval and in violation of the code for 12 to 15 years.

Fowler explained that although Real began the process to obtain a special use permit in early 2019, there had been significant gaps in time between revised submissions, all of which required review by the planner.

She said, “Frustrating most of all is that Code Enforcement has threatened to send this matter to the county attorney’s office on at least three to five occasions. Inevitably, responses are received at the 11th hour, and that starts the clock ticking all over again because there’s always something that has not been addressed.” Describing Code Enforcement’s hands as tied, she told the commissioners, “All I’m asking for is a more timely resolution to this matter with appropriate action taken and ultimately enforcement.”

Chair Stan VanderWerf thanked Fowler for her testimony and asked staff to make sure that the matter was followed up.

Minor subdivision north of Hodgen Road approved

At the June 7 BOCC land use meeting, the commissioners approved unanimously a request by Brian Warner to allow a minor subdivision to create four single-family lots on a 40-acre property along the north side of Goshawk Road to the north of Hodgen Road. The property is zoned RR-5 (residential rural).

Lots 1 and 2 will be 5 acres, Lot 3 will be 20 acres and will contain the existing home and well, and Lot 4 will be 10 acres.

The Planning Commission voted to recommend the application for approval at its May 19 meeting. It was heard as a consent item at the BOCC meeting, meaning there was no discussion.

Highway 105 Improvements Project

At their June 7 meeting, the commissioners approved a contract amendment request to the intergovernmental agreement between the county and the Colorado Department of Transportation. The amendment reflects the fact that a portion of the previous federal funding for the project was replaced in June 2021 with 2021 COVID-19 Relief/Stimulus funding that did not require local match funding. Construction on the first part of the project is expected to start later this year.

County Planning Commission appointment

At its June 7 meeting, the BOCC approved the appointment of Josh Patterson as a regular member of the Planning Commission. His term runs until June 7, 2025. Regular members may serve two consecutive terms on the nine-member commission.

Tri-Lakes Cares additional funding

The commissioners approved additional funding of \$30,000 for the Tri-Lakes Cares Community Services Block Grant at their June 14 meeting. This additional funding became available following a reassessment of grantees in the program, and the county reached out to Tri-Lakes Cares, which stated it would be able to spend the additional \$30,000 during the period Jan. 1, 2022 to July 31, 2022. The funds are to be used only for housing assistance, including utilities.

Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.me.

CDOT Listening Session, June 29

Roundabout project being designed

CDOT planned to hold a listening session on June 29, just after OCN went to press. This is the press release sent out by CDOT on June 24:

The southeastern region of the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has identified a need to evaluate traffic operations and design of a roundabout at the intersection of Colorado 83 and County Line/Palmer Divide Avenue located at the boundary of Douglas and El Paso Counties

CDOT will host a listening session to discuss the intersection and planned roundabout on June 29 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. in the commons area at Monument Academy Middle School (East Campus), 4303 Pinehurst Circle, Colorado Springs.

The project is in the design phase. Funding for construction of the project has not been identified. There will be an additional public meeting in the fall when the project design reaches 30 percent.

For additional information about this roundabout project, see:

- Project hotline: 719-823-2177.
- Project email: CO83PalmerDivideRoundabout@gmail.com
- Project web page: codot.gov/projects/co83-palmer-divide-roundabout

Woodmoor Improvement Association, June 22

All fireworks prohibited; up to \$5,000 fine

By Jackie Burhans

The Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board met on June 22 to discuss fireworks, report on the acceptance of the South Woodmoor Preserve, and hear director and staff reports.

Board members Steve Cutler, Brad Gleason, and Per Suhr were absent.

Fireworks, including sparklers, prohibited

Chief Kevin Nielsen of Woodmoor Public Safety (WPS) said that officers will work extra duty hours on July 3 and 4 watching for fireworks, which are always prohibited in Woodmoor. He said violation notices would be issued which could result in steep fines of up to \$5,000, per WIA's rules and regulations. Board President Brian Bush said WIA is very serious about fireworks, and WIA's rules supersede county rules.

Nielsen asked that anyone seeing fireworks violations in the Woodmoor area contact the WPS mobile phone at 719-499-9771.

Nielsen also urged residents to be aware of the county fire stage restrictions as they change. In stage one, fire pits are allowed but must be a commercially purchased device with a spark arrester on top or must have been built following WIA's design guidelines. In stage two, only propane fires with an on-off switch are allowed. For more information, see: <https://www.epc-sheriffsoffice.com/services/fire-information>

He also asked that residents not park on the grass, because fires can start easily from hot engines.

Board accepts South Woodmoor Preserve donation

Bush reported that WIA accepted the donation of the nearly 65-acre South Woodmoor Preserve on June 8 from the Woodmoor Open Space Committee (WOSC). WIA has agreed to maintain and improve this open space after executing an agreement with adjacent landowners to facilitate access for mowing in narrow stretches.

It has been a 3 1/2-year process, Bush said, and is probably the last significant bit of open space to be created in Woodmoor. This donation allows WIA to provide amenities to South Woodmoor residents that had previously been unavailable. WIA plans to add trails, benches, and pet waste stations over the next few years, he added, thanking Trish Norman and the WOSC group for their efforts.

Board highlights

- Bush, who is also on the board of Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, reported that construction of all projects involving Lake Woodmoor are done as of June 1, with only minor work remaining. The trail on top of the dam will remain closed until the contractor has completed all work later this summer.
- Bob Pearsall, WIA architectural control administrator, reported that work on the main office front porch roof construction began on June 14, with the final painting scheduled for the following week.
- Pearsall said the Safe Routes to School trail project hosted a walk-through with one contractor; the state may require more. The schools received an additional \$137,000 toward this grant. He said the funds are scheduled to be released and construction started in August.
- Bush said he would like to sign WIA's road survey letter that goes to the county to give some impetus for the county to fix the highest priority roads. Bush asked that pictures be provided along with the report. Nielsen said he would also issue requests via the Citizen Connect app to request repairs.
- Forestry Director Ed Miller reported a delay in reimbursement on the last request from the wildfire mitigation grant that has been resolved. The grant has been opened to a few new areas and is expected to be open to all Woodmoor residents in mid-to-



Above: The new roof over WIA's main office was started on June 14. Final work, including painting, was done the week of June 20 to match the roof over the Woodmoor Public Safety entrance. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

- late summer.
- WIA's final two chipping events will be held on July 30-31 at Lewis-Palmer High School. The service is free to Woodmoor residents who will unload their own vehicles. Volunteers will handle feeding the slash into the chippers.
- *****

The WIA Board of Directors usually meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Barn at 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next meeting has been moved to July 20 in the conference room, due to board member availability and floor refinishing at The Barn.

See the WIA calendar at www.woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/. WIA board meeting minutes can be found at www.woodmoor.org/meeting-minutes/ once approved and posted.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

June Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Apart from some active weather at the beginning and end of the month, June was quiet and mild overall. Once again we were drier than normal, but for the second June in a row, a late season snowfall reminded us just how fun Colorado weather can be anytime of the year. Temperatures were around normal for the month, with highs below average and lows above average. Surprisingly, even with the relatively dry and quiet conditions, we didn't see any extremely hot weather with only two days during the month hitting the 90-degree mark.

The month started off well below normal conditions, with cold and wet weather continuing from the last day of May. Temperatures dipped cold enough during the early morning hours of the 1st to produce rain, then snow from just after midnight through around 6 a.m. Many of us above 7,000 feet received a dusting to 2 inches of snow, a promising way to start the month. Temperatures touched the freezing mark that morning as well, but this was our last freeze of the month, which was welcomed by our plants that had endured a snow and cold shock two weeks prior.

More typical June weather took hold the next couple of days, with just enough moisture around to spark a few afternoon and evening thunderstorms and brief heavy rain showers. The heaviest rain occurred during the early afternoons of the 6th and 7th. These thunderstorms also produced some hail around the area, with mainly pea-size hail west of about Black Forest Road, then larger, damaging hail farther east as the storms were able to interact with more moisture and instability.

Unfortunately, this pattern didn't last long as once again we transitioned into a dry regime as high pressure built in and cut off the supply of moisture and pushed the storm track back to the north. This resulted in dry and quiet weather from the second week through the third week of the month.

This was a very unusual pattern for our region in the middle of June. It is very rare that almost every afternoon doesn't see some thunderstorm development. This is because of the elevated heat source to our west, the Front Range and central Rockies. These regions provide a prime starting point for convection to start late each morning and transition into thunderstorms that move generally from west to east across our region. However, during this time, the lack of moisture in the atmosphere resulted in very weak and limited convective activity (thunderstorms). Instead, most days saw just a few afternoon and early evening clouds with limited vertical development and only a few brief claps of thunder and sprinkles. More common were smoke-filled, hazy skies courtesy of the wildfires in Utah and Arizona.

And as expected, temperatures warmed during this period, with temperatures reaching the 80s to low 90s from the 9th through the 13th. A few daily record highs were set during this time as well. After a brief cool down to normal temperatures on the 14th and 15th, temperatures again warmed to the 80s from the 16th through the 20th.

Finally, some relief from the heat and dry conditions returned just in time for the first day of summer. Cooler air worked behind a departing system in the upper Midwest and brought temperatures to below-normal levels starting on the 21st. Highs only reached the mid 60s that afternoon under partly cloudy skies. With the exception of a brief warming on the 23rd and 24th, temperatures stayed cool over the next few days. A system moving through the western U.S. served to moisten up the atmosphere. Temperatures were held to near record low levels on the 26th, with highs only reaching the mid 50's. This resulted in areas of low clouds, fog, drizzle, and rain showers on the 25th and 26th.

This cool weather and soaking rainfall were perfect after the long dry spell and produced the type of sus-

tained moisture we desperately needed. As this area of moisture and upslope wind flow moved out of the region during the last few days of the month, temperatures slowly warmed to normal levels, with upper 70s and low 80s to end the month.

A look ahead

July can be an active weather month around the region, as the Southwest Monsoon season gets going. Afternoon and evening thunderstorms are a common occurrence, and when they can tap into higher levels of moisture, flash flooding can result. Hot, stagnant weather can also take hold for a few days at time, with highs hitting the 90s on the warmest days.

June 2022 Weather Statistics

Average High	76.3° (-1.1°)
100-year return frequency value max	82.5° min 66.3°
Average Low	47.7° (+3.3°)
100-year return frequency value max	50.7° min 40.2°
Highest Temperature	90°F on the 11th, 13th
Lowest Temperature	32°F on the 1st
Monthly Precipitation	1.56"
	(-0.39" 20% below normal)
100-year return frequency value max	6.94" min 0.15"
Monthly Snowfall	1.0"
	(+0.9" 90% above normal)
Season to Date Snow	90.7"
	(-31.8" 75% below normal)
	(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30))
Season to Date Precip	8.86"
	(-0.21" 2% below normal)
	(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)
Heating Degree Days	136 (+41)
Cooling Degree Days	35 (+7)
Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me .	

Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters are on page 31.

Disclaimer: The information and opinions expressed in Letters to Our Community are the responsibility of the letter writers and should not be interpreted as the views of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.

Thanks for helping put on the Tri-Lakes Kids Fishing Derby

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Tri-Lakes Lions Club and the sponsors and volunteers who contributed to the success of the annual Tri-Lakes Kids Fishing Derby. This family-oriented event

is held each year in the Town of Palmer Lake. Although the Lions Club serves as the host, it takes participation by many in our community to make the derby a memorable event for kids in the Tri-Lakes area. Sponsors such as Bass Pro Shops, Safeway, Rosie's Diner, and Farmers Insurance, open their pocketbooks to make the tournament free for participants. Additionally, many volunteers augment Lions Club members in various capacities, providing the necessary manpower to conduct the event and create this special outdoor experience. Of course, the derby wouldn't be possible without the outstanding support from the Town of Palmer Lake. The

collaborative approach to this community service event is the key to the derby's success. Again, many thanks to everyone involved in this year's fishing derby and hope to see you next year.

Jim Hazuka

Black Forest Section 16 lease renewals

How did the two leases for Black Forest Section 16 happen 25 years ago?

These leases renew in December of 2022. El Paso County's 25-year lease for about 91 acres includes a perimeter trail/parking lot and the Slash-Mulch site, and

Academy District 20 leases 400-plus acres.

The almost-forgotten story of Cooperation, Multiple Uses, Long-Term Vision, and Management Goals for this square mile of state land in Black Forest was initiated about 27 years ago by citizens of Black Forest who were members of the Slash and Mulch Committee (SAM-COM) and the Black Forest Trails Association (BFTA).

This effort was compatible with “enhancement of beauty, natural values, open space and wildlife habitat” statutory direction for Stewardship Trust Lands.

In November 1996, Colorado Constitutional Amendment 16 reorganized the State Land Board (SLB), created the Stewardship Trust, and provided new rev-

enue stream guidelines.

By 1996 both SAMCOM and BFTA were incorporated nonprofits. In 2022 both organizations are still proudly providing public service.

Early in 1997, BFTA members approached Academy D-20 Administrator Steve Morrison (Founder of School in the Woods) about working together for long-term land uses on BF Section 16. BFTA members and Morrison approached Kurt Schroeder (EPC Parks) and the Partnership for Section 16 began.

The Partnership for Section 16 soon included SAM-COM (per EPC Solid Waste Management Administrator), Jon Fisher, and Forester Dave Root (Colorado State

Forest Service). Key Partnership citizens were Irv Perelstein and Judy von Ahlefeldt (BFTA), and Ruth Ann Steele (SAMCOM).

During 1997 and early 1998, The Partnership for Section 16 held public meetings and discussions with EPC Planning Commissioners and the El Paso Board of County Commissioners.

Together they cooperatively developed the BF Section 16 long-term Land Use Vision and Management Goals, forming the basis for the two leases which can be renewed in December 2022.

Judith von Ahlefeldt

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

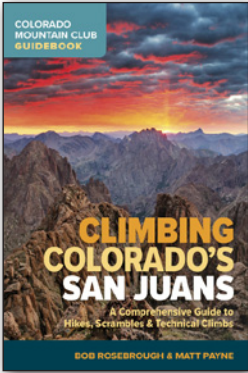
Explore the outdoors

By the staff at Covered Treasures
“Still, round the corner, there may wait, a new road or a secret gate.”—J.R.R. Tolkien

Now is an opportune time to explore the outdoors through hiking, climbing, road trips, and more. Here are some guidebooks to help you plan your adventures:

Climbing Colorado’s San Juans: A Comprehensive Guide to Hikes, Scrambles, and Technical Climbs
By Bob Rosebrough and Matt Payne (Colorado Mountain Club) \$26.95

Covering 200 peaks and 300 routes, this is the most comprehensive climbing guidebook to the San Juans. It features stunning photos and a deep dive into San Juan’s colorful climbing history. Bob Rosebrough, avid outdoorsman and mountaineer, has climbed the San Juans for more than 50 years. Matt Payne, mountaineer and nature/landscape photographer, has climbed all of Colorado’s Fourteeners and the highest 100 peaks in Colorado.



Hiking Colorado’s Hidden Gems: 40 Undiscovered Trails
By Stewart M. Green (Falcon Press) \$24.95

From the Front Range to Summit County and the Western Slope, this guide reveals 40 of the best hidden and little-known trails around Colorado. Most of the hikes have not appeared in previous guidebooks. Hikes range in difficulty from handicap-accessible and easy hikes to strenuous outings. Local author Stewart Green is a lifelong climber and professional photographer.

Hiking Waterfalls: Colorado
By Susan Joy Paul and Stewart M. Green (Falcon Press), \$24.95

Colorado boasts beautiful waterfalls. This guidebook includes detailed hike descriptions, maps, and color photos for more than 125 of the most scenic waterfall hikes in the state. Hike descriptions include history, local trivia, and GPS coordinates. Local author Susan Joy Paul has hiked, camped, and climbed around the U.S. and beyond, reaching the summits of more than 700 mountains.

4,284 Miles: A novel based on the 1916 journey of Joe Bruce and Lester Atkinson
By R.L. Greene (Divergent Mind) \$14.95

America was on the edge of greatness. The world was on the edge of war. In the summer of 1916 two young men, Joe Bruce and Lester Atkinson, journeyed on their bicycles from Colorado Springs to New York City. The Lincoln Highway was little more than a muddy path across the nation. Automobiles were in their infancy. Few had ever heard a radio. This historical fiction brings this time to life through their journey and the people they meet.

The Open Road: 50 Best Road Trips in the USA
By Jessica Dunham (Hachette) \$27.99

Organized by region, covering 50 different road trips, this guidebook will gear you up for any adventure from a weekend getaway to a cross-country trip. You can drive iconic routes, see the country, explore the landscape, and more.

National Parks: The American Experience
By Alfred Runte (Lyons Press) \$21.95

This revised fifth edition continues the story of how Americans invented and expanded the concept of national parks. Further supported with period photographs and 12 pages of color paintings, this examines the lands

that define America, from Yosemite and Yellowstone to wilderness Alaska.

Great American Road Trips: Hidden Gems
Edited By Reader’s Digest (Trusted Media Brands) \$19.99

Discover insider tips, must-see stops, nearby attractions, and first-person accounts to help you make the most of your journeys through 39 hidden gems found across the country. Some spots offer activities for the more adventurous, such as rafting or mountain biking; others include suggestions for the more leisurely traveler.

Colorado Bucket List Adventure Guide
By Don Harris (Bridge Press) \$14.89

As you travel the distance through the canyons and plains, you’ll have the time of your life in the Centennial State’s immersive beauty. This unique adventure guide features more than 100 must-see destinations, comprehensive driving instructions, GPS coordinates, the best time to visit certain destinations, weather conditions, average expenses, and much more.

Backroads & Byways of Colorado: Drives, Day Trips & Weekend Excursions
By Drea Knufken and John Daters (Countryman Press) \$22.95

In this updated and revised edition, local writers and travelers Drea Knufken and John Daters are your guides to the pinnacles of the Rockies, the sandstone valleys of the Western Slope, and the windswept prairies of the eastern state. This is the shortest route you can take to explore like a native and delve deeper into the history and magic of Colorado. Areas include: Trail of the Ancients, Grand Mesa, Gold Belt Tour, and Mount Evans Scenic and Historic Byway.

Until next month, happy reading.
The staff at Covered Treasures can be reached at books@ocn.me.

July Library Events

Summer Adventure continues; library will have booth at July 4 fair

By Harriet Halbig

The Summer Adventure reading program will continue through mid-August at the Monument Library. Join over 800 patrons to participate through reading, imagining, and moving to win prizes! Upon registration, each child up to age 18 will receive a free book.

Special programs will be offered each Tuesday from 10:30 to 11:30 at Monument Library, and *Toddler Time* will be offered each Wednesday at 9:30 and 10. The *Mon-*

umental Readers Book Club will meet on July 15 at 10:30 and the *Monumental Bookworms* will meet at 6:30 p.m. on July 12.

The Palmer Lake Library is open from 10 to 6 on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday each week. *Family Story Time* is on Fridays from 10:30 to 11:15. The *Palmer Lake Book Club* meets on the first Friday of each month at 9:30 a.m.

For detailed information on special programs,

please see the district website, ppld.org, and look under programs by location.

Representatives of the library will have a booth during the July 4 Street Fair with activities for children and the ability to sign up for a library card.

All Pikes Peak Library District locations will be closed on July 4 in celebration of Independence Day.
Harriet Halbig can be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

Palmer Lake Historical Society, June 16

The Night of a Thousand Heroes

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Palmer Lake Historical Society meeting on June 16, Cañon City author Tracy Beach described in great detail the events and heroic feats that took place during the catastrophic Pueblo flood of June 1921. In a unique and quirky style, Beach delivered the details of her book titled *The Night of a Thousand Heroes*, to an engaged and lively, interactive audience.

Beach highlighted the unusual events that took place before, during, and after the flood, showing historic photographs of the flooded downtown streets of Pueblo. Beach described how a torrential rainstorm in June that began in Salida and came through Cañon City to Pueblo caused the disaster. Unfortunately, the city had been built on an angle with sloping bluffs like a bathtub, and the fast-moving water had nowhere to go. After the levies broke, a large area of downtown Pueblo was under 21 feet of water.

Beach shared surprising, humorous stories of the

exceptional heroic residents of Pueblo, such as the story of the 21-year-old, 6-foot-7-inch telegraph manager who stayed on the first floor to send telegrams and sent the female telegraphers to the first and second floor where the windows were blacked out to avoid sun glare. As the water level rose higher, he sent the women to the third floor, and that’s when they discovered the true extent of the flooding.

When the telegraph poles needed reconnecting at the old mineral palace, allowing just enough wire to send a couple of telegraphs, the men reconnected the wires while naked to avoid being weighed down by wet clothing.

Another hero never told his granddaughter about the hundreds of people he saved that night from a flooding train car, and how the scar on his arm remained as an ever-present reminder.

The Pueblo Water Works used to help sound the alarm for the Pueblo Fire Department by opening the

steam whistle once every 15 minutes, but when the flood came the whistle was sounded three times every 15 minutes. The alert caused many spectators to get caught out in the flood by watching too closely when the levies burst.

The Army Rangers rebuilt bridges and ensured security to prevent looting. The Elks Lodge opened to shelter flood refugees and provide soup kitchens.

Members of the Boy Scouts of America helped by forming a chain of light up to the Pueblo Court House and the boys, ages 11-18, were able to deliver two babies during the evacuation at the Court House. The Red Cross arrived the following morning and in total five babies were born during the flood in the Court House. The Scouts also delivered 10,000 telegrams and connected lines, running wire down two miles of road to connect service to their camp.

It is estimated that 600 people died due to the flood, with one building losing 40 children including their

nurse to scarlet fever. Many people disappeared into the sewer and drowned running to safety when the sewers flooded and the manhole covers popped open.

The true death toll will never be fully known as many bodies were found unrecognizable, and many bodies may have been burned in the streets along with debris, after the waters subsided. River silt was everywhere, filling basements, and everything was sprayed with formaldehyde to help prevent disease, with scarlet fever and typhoid spreading rampant.

Whole families were washed away in the floods and buried in the silt of the riverbed. The last body was found miles downstream in the 1950s. It took a couple of weeks for the water to recede because it had nowhere to go, and the river was referred to as “death lake” due to the mass of floating bodies.

The Pueblo economy has never fully recovered due to the recovery cost of rebuilding the city.

Beach was born and raised in Salida and currently resides in Cañon City,

where she writes extensively about Colorado history. Beach is the author of five nonfiction books with two more in the works this year. Other works include *The Tunnels Under Our Feet: Colorado's Forgotten Hollow Sidewalks* and *Frozen to the Cabin Floor: The Biography of Baby Doe Tabor*.

The Palmer Lake Historical Society usually meets on the third Thursday every month. The next event, scheduled for Thursday, July 21 from 1-4 p.m., will be guided informative walking tours of Palmer Lake by local history experts. The group will also meet on Saturday, Aug. 6 from 1-4 p.m. on the Village Green to celebrate the Palmer Lake historic Chautauqua, with museum and walking tours, live entertainment, working artists, film presentations, and an ice cream social. For additional details, visit www.palmerdividehistory.org.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.me.



Above: Above: Presenter and author Tracy Beach described the tragic events of the June 2, 1921 historic flooding of downtown Pueblo as they unfold in her book *The Night of a Thousand Heroes* at the Palmer Lake Historical Society monthly program. An extensive array of items discovered over time in the silt-filled basements were on display including items of clothing, toys, a wooden radio, various product tins, and silt blocks imprinted with tiny kitten paw prints and evidence of a Miller moth. Photos by Natalie Barszcz.

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Colors and plants that repel mosquitos

By Janet Sellers

When I lived in Japan years ago, I noticed that the noren curtains at most doorways were indigo and white, and at a certain height. I thought maybe this traditional noren might repel the abundant bugs like mosquitos or flies.

I recently happened upon an article at Earth.com that concurs with this idea, stating, “a new study led by the University of Washington (UW) has found that, after using olfactory cues to detect potential hosts to bite, mosquitoes tend to fly toward specific colors, including red, orange, black, and cyan, while ignoring other colors such as blue, white, green, and purple. These findings help explain how mosquitoes find hosts, since human skin, regardless of its particular pigmentation, always emits a strong, red-orange ‘signal’ to their eyes.”

Plants in pots or in the garden are known to repel mosquitos and other pesky critters. These include citronella (a scented geranium), lavender, basil, rosemary, marigold, catmint, bee balm, mint, sage, and others. Essential oils of these also repel the bugs but may be toxic if applied near or on pets.

Gunning down pests with soap and water

A squirt bottle with water and a mere teaspoon or so of dish soap will kill wasps and other unwanted insects around the house and garden. The soapy spray will clog their spiracles, the pores that they breathe through, and will kill them in a few minutes. These bugs have important jobs to fulfill like eating fly larvae, but they don't have to be in our living areas.

Hummingbird Festival Aug. 5-6

The rufous hummingbirds begin their migration back from Canada to Mexico through Colorado in late July, joining all-season broad-tailed hummingbirds in our area. A local tradition is the popular Hummingbird Festival every August, this year on the 5th and 6th at Happy Landing Ranch, on Roller Coaster Road near Jackson Ranch and the Higby Road area. Details to follow. The festival features hummingbird art, hummingbird lore, hourly hummingbird talks, a farmers market, and fair booths.

Janet Sellers is an ethnoecology researcher, writer, speaker, and chronicler of life



Above: Students from Palmer Ridge and Lewis-Palmer High Schools help out at Monument Community Garden. From left are Hayden Fields, Kaylei Fields, Lily Poteet, Braeden Turner, Todd Osborn, and Emmalyn Nono. The students helped to remove and flip garden weeds and the compost pile areas, creating aeration and mixing the green plants as nitrogen into the soil. Local late spring weather patterns had wreaked icy havoc on the seeded garden, allowing the perennial spearmint and weeds to dominate. But within a week after clearing those, many crop seeds that the clubs had planted back in March sprouted and began to thrive. New strawberry and tomato plants were set in to make up for lost time, while the midsummer seedlings were put in on time in the various garden beds. Photo by Janet Sellers.

and landscapes. She lives in Woodmoor, Colo. Contact her with your success tips

for local nature and garden ideas at JanetSellers@ocn.me.

Art Matters

Public art: a key for modern community development

By Janet Sellers

Public art, or art in public places

Art in public places denotes that artists have made art and it has been placed, usually through a jury process, into a public area. The moniker of public art generally connotes that the art has been commissioned by a public entity and fulfilled by an artist. Either way, art out in the public eye helps revitalize cities, towns, and suburban areas to the tune of improving community enjoyment and property values. Towns, cities, counties, and states are increasingly including 1% or more in a tax or in the development phase to set aside funds for this valuable addition to communities.

The public art becomes one of the top lures for tourists and locals alike. Journalist Kelly Pedro shares this trend in an article for developers and investors at Realtor.com and espouses the value of such art. Weaving art throughout an area to create interest and ambience, the art in public places can make something spectacular out of something that was once less than desirable. Art becomes a magnet for interest and draws people into the area. Builders are increasingly incorporating art into neighborhoods and emerging developments to bring dis-

cerning buyers and tenants willing to pay top dollar.

New Tri-Lakes Views 2022 sculpture map online

In June, Tri-Lakes Views installed 10 new sculptures for the 2022 rotating exhibit after a hiatus in the COVID-19 era. The new sculptures were installed on pedestals throughout Tri-Lakes, including two new pieces at Monument Town Hall, five new sculptures at the Big Red D38 administration building, and a new sculpture at Bella Art and Frame gallery.

Tri-Lakes Views has been supporting public art in our area since 2003, installing pedestals and infrastructure for a plethora of art in public places. This year, instead of a paper map brochure, the state-of-the-art cell phone app, Otocast, will guide visitors on our newest local public art walk and drive tour. The free app offers audio narratives by the artists as well as by the site owner, including artist interviews and artist statements about the art.

To use the system, which is basically a talking map of our local public art walk, download the Otocast app. Put in the ZIP code or town of choice, in our case 80132. The app will immediately bring the viewer to the appropriate page. Participants

can click on the image of the artwork and that art story begins.

Janet Sellers is an artist, writer, speaker, and educator. She exhibits her artworks in cities and museums in Colorado and other places around the globe. She can be reached at JanetSellers@ocn.me.

Right: Installed in June, the steel sculpture *Spiky Shovelus*, by artist Michael Mladjan, is a play on words, since the sculpture in the shape of a flower with leaves on stem is actually made of shovel heads, painted brightly, and is installed facing Highway 105 from Monument Town Hall. **Below:** Near the entrance to Town Hall, Rain Cascade is a ceramic sculpture by artist Vicky Smith. Photos by Janet Sellers.



Snapshots of Our Community

Tri-Lakes Lions Club Fishing Derby, June 4



Above: The Tri-Lakes Lions Club held its annual kids fishing derby on June 4. More than 250 kids from 4 to 14 years old signed up to catch fish in Palmer Lake and enter their catches into the contest for the biggest fish. According to Jim Hazuka (**Left**), Lions Club secretary and co-chairman of the Fishing Derby, Parks & Wildlife stocked the lake with rainbow trout a day before the derby—apparently the pH level of the lake water was not suitable for stocking previously. Parks & Wildlife provided fishing rods for those who did not bring their own. Bass Pro Shop provided nice prizes for kids who placed in the tournament, including tackle boxes, fishing rods, and other items. Parents and others helped kids rig fishing rods and bait their hooks. *Photo by Steve Pate.*

Work day in Fox Run Park, June 8



Above: On June 8, Friends of Fox Run Park took 15 tons of road base and spread it over the trails at the north end of the park. Throughout the summer, the group is asking for volunteers to help put down the trail base and repair the trails, which are used by thousands of visitors each month. *Photo by Marlene Brown. Caption by Janet Sellers.*

Evans at Art Hop, June 16



Above: On June 16, Bella Art and Frame gallery hosted Julia McMinn Evans as its featured artist for June during Art Hop. Here Evans stands with her abstract expressionism painting *Magnificent Orchestra*. Evans greeted guests and shared her art philosophy about her ongoing search for depth and contemplation of the soul. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

Waterwise garden opened, June 15



Above: The Monument waterwise garden officially opened on June 15 at Second and Adams Streets. Members of the Monument Parks Department and the public were on hand for the ribbon cutting. **Below:** The garden is full of plants that don't need a lot of water to grow. The purpose is to teach people about water-saving techniques. The plants are labeled so people can get ideas for their own gardens. *Photos courtesy of the Town of Monument.*



Palmer Lake Historical Society Annual Ice Cream Social, June 19



Above: Palmer Lake Historical Society (PLHS) board members and volunteers serve free pie and ice cream to attendees at the well-attended Father's Day Ice Cream Social on June 19. On a warm and sunny afternoon, the annual tradition continued with many families enjoying a slice of pie and a scoop of ice cream as they relaxed on the Palmer Lake Village Green and listened to singer/songwriter Craig Walter perform popular songs on the Town Hall porch. Families and an array of dogs and their owners examined the private vintage car display along Middle Glenway Street, while **(left)** a young deer buck voraciously pruned the shrubs at the Sanitation Department. The free event was made possible with donations from the PLHS, Rock House Ice Cream, the Village Inn on Duryea Drive, Colorado Springs, and Bella Panini. For information on the PLHS, visit www.palmerdividhistory.org. *Photos by Natalie Barszcz.*



TLC reopens client market



Above: On June 16, Tri-Lakes Cares (TLC) staff welcomed back clients to a newly renovated market. Clients can now go into the building to shop for groceries and meet their case managers and neighborhood nurse. The new hours of operation are Mondays and Thursdays from 11a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 to 6 p.m. No appointments are needed to receive groceries during these walk-in hours. The mission statement for TLC is "a community-based, volunteers-supported resource center whose purpose is to improve people's lives through emergency, self-sufficiency, and relief programs." This is the first time since the pandemic started in March 2020 that TLC has reopened its doors to the public at 235 N. Jefferson St. in Monument. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

Ham radio field day, June 25



Above: Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL) Field Day 2022. Every June, more than 40,000 hams throughout North America set up temporary transmitting stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill and service to our communities and our nation. It combines public service, emergency preparedness, community outreach, and technical skills all in a single event. Field Day has been an annual event since 1933, and remains the most popular event in ham radio. WØTLM, the Tri-Lakes Monument Amateur Radio Club, held its Field Day event at Black Forest Regional Park on June 25. Get involved by attending one of WØTLM's monthly meetings or weekly on-air nets. There are no dues, no costs, and no obligations—just plenty of learning, support, fun, and community. See WØTLM.com for details. *Photo courtesy of Tricia Olson.*

Parade of Ponds, June 25-26

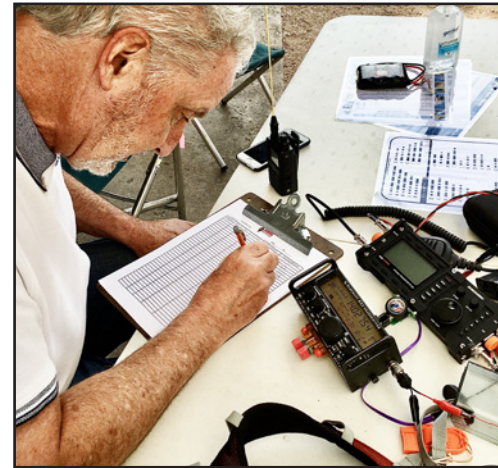


Above: Purely Ponds' annual Parade of Ponds was held June 25-26. Here, the Kershaw Pond in Kings Deer showcases a backyard pond with plant bog and scenic stream, complete with iris, koi fish and water lilies. The self-guided pond and waterfall tour featured 14 landscapes, with proceeds benefiting the Boys and Girls Club of the Pikes Peak region. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

WIA chipping days, June 25-26



Above: Tri-Lakes residents brought tree limbs and slash to Woodmoor Improvement Association's chipping days on June 25-26 at the south parking lot of Lewis-Palmer High School. A new drop-off system meant there were no lines, and trailers were unloaded quickly, making it easy for everyone to reduce "ladder fuels" on their property. WIA is hosting another set of chipping days July 30-31. Accepting: branches, bushes, logs up to 8 inches in diameter, and pine needles. As in previous years, no construction materials, rock/rubble, stumps, or garbage will be accepted. Only clean slash/logs will be accepted. Please contact the WIA Office with questions at 719-488-2693 x 4. Non-Woodmoor residents are asked to make a donation. *Photo by Woodmoor Covenants and Forestry Administrator Justin Gates.*



Above: Max, KØXF, operates the WØTLM club station making voice contacts across the country at Ham Radio Field Day 2022 in Black Forest Regional Park. *Photo provided by Robert Ray.*



Above: Greg/WØGAS at our Tap Out Your Name in Morse code for a "Kiss" table coaches a visitor on using the telegraph key to send Morse code for chocolate candy prize (Hershey's Kiss). *Photo by Steve Galchutt.*



Left: Pavilion at Black Forest Regional Park. *Photo provided by Robert Ray.*

Why advertise in OCN?

- OCN is mailed FREE to every resident and business in the Tri-Lakes area. We mail more than 21,700 copies every month and put another 700 copies in stacks throughout the area. OCN has the largest mailed circulation and the third-largest circulation among local newspapers in El Paso County after The Gazette and The Colorado Springs Independent. We put copies of OCN into the hands of those people most likely to buy your products or services: local residents and businesses.
- OCN is a primary source for Tri-Lakes area news. Since its founding in 2001, OCN has been presenting unbiased, detailed coverage of Tri-Lakes area governmental entities and their deliberations and actions. Credibility is key. Advertising in a credible medium typically rubs off on the advertisers in that media.
- OCN gives preference to Tri-Lakes area businesses. As part of OCN's long-standing commitment to encouraging the economic health of the Tri-Lakes area, we offer a significantly discounted ad rate to Tri-Lakes area businesses as a way to help local businesses like yours succeed.
- OCN's low ad rates and monthly publication schedule help stretch your ad budget. OCN has one of the lowest ad costs per printed copy of any local publication. Since OCN is a monthly publication, your ad is out there for a month—more than four times longer than other local papers. Many of our advertisers tell us they're still getting calls in the third and fourth week of the month.
- OCN doesn't use contracts. You aren't tied down. Adjust your advertising month-to-month to meet your changing needs. Our advertisers run ads in *OCN* because they see benefit in it, not because they're bound by a contract they signed months before. To reward frequent advertisers, OCN has a Frequent Advertiser Bonus (FAB) rewards program. You earn up to 10% of your ad cost as a reward you can use to reduce the cost of future OCN advertising. The more you advertise with OCN, the more you save. Thanks to our FAB rewards program, OCN advertisers have saved more than \$102,000!
- You are supporting a good thing. Your advertising dollars support a unique all-volunteer, Tri-Lakes-focused effort to present factual, comprehensive news to all Tri-Lakes area residents and businesses.

And the best reason of all: It works!

Crystal Wright, Crystal's In-Home Training - "I have had the best success with advertising in the Our Community News for my business. 95% of my new clients are coming from this local paper, and I couldn't be more pleased. If you are thinking of advertising in the Monument area, I recommend you advertise with this paper."

Mike Smith, Woodsmith Custom Creations - "OCN is the only paper that works for me. I've tried other newspapers, one that comes out daily and another that comes out weekly. Compared to the results I get from advertising in the OCN the other papers are flops. I get a fairly priced ad in my targeted area with calls referencing my ad every month. It can't be beat!"

Randi and Dale Sehestedt, Woodmoor Handyman and Snow Plowing - "OCN is the only paper we advertise in and it consistently brings us plenty of good local customers. Great paper and great people to work with."

Mary Sue Hafey, Fringe Benefits Custom Interiors - "Since I starting advertising with OCN years ago, it has helped brand my company while consistently increasing my exposure and sales!"

Elba D'Asaro, Spa Medica - "OCN ads work!"

Mike Reaster, Guitar Lessons - "Ads in OCN work great for me. I tried other local papers and got no response. Thanks to my ads in OCN, I can work from home and make a decent living. All my work comes from my ads in OCN."

For more information on advertising, go to www.ocn.me/advertise.htm or contact John Heiser at (719) 488-3455 or ads@ocn.me.

An important message for our readers OCN needs your help!

Our Community News is an all-volunteer organization. For the past 20 years, our volunteers have provided unbiased reporting on important local issues, including real estate development, fire departments, school districts, and water availability. We have provided a very favorable platform for advertising local businesses. We have published letters to the editor to allow you to express your opinions on events affecting the Tri-Lakes area.

Now we find that we have more tasks than we have volunteers. Some vital jobs where we could use your help:

- Reporters. Reporting on local meetings, what they talked about and what they decided.
- Mailing assistants. Counting and lifting tubs of papers to take the monthly mailing to the post offices and stacks of papers to local businesses, loading and unloading mailing tubs from a truck at two locations, preparing postoffice paperwork, tub labels, subscrip-

- tion labels, etc.
- Drivers. Driving a rental truck to various post offices once a month.
- Ad sales assistants. We need volunteers who love *OCN* to contact local businesses and encourage them to advertise in *OCN*.

The time and skills involved vary greatly from job to job. OCN will provide whatever equipment and training you need.

Please join us today! Meet a group of interesting and committed people. Learn new skills—use your enthusiasm and creativity to benefit our community and celebrate unfiltered information.

Please call Publisher John Heiser at (719) 488-3455, or email johnheiser@ocn.me to see how you can contribute. Contact John today! He is waiting to hear from you. Together we can ensure that OCN continues to provide a vital service to our wonderful Tri-Lakes community.

Our Community Notices

By Janet Sellers

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. Please notify us if your event listing needs to be updated.

Drop the Distracted Driving

Colorado has a law that bans texting while driving for drivers of all ages. CDOT found that most people have a "Do Not Disturb While Driving" feature on their phone in a recent survey, but many don't know how to use it. The unexpected can happen in an instant. Be proactive, learn how to enable this feature see DropTheDistraction at distracted.codot.gov.

The safety stop is now state law

Bicyclists in Colorado now have safe and legal options for navigating through intersections after governor Jared Polis signed Colorado house bill 22-1028 into law on Wednesday, April 13, 2022. The new law, which allows bicyclists and users of low-speed conveyances to treat stop signs as yield signs and stop lights as stop signs when they already have the right of way, goes into effect immediately statewide. Info: bikecoloradosprings.org.

Neighborhood safety

What qualifies as suspicious activity? "If you see something, say something." It's vital to report to local law enforcement. Suspicious activity can refer to any incident, event, individual or activity that seems unusual or out of place. Some common examples of suspicious activities include: A stranger loitering in your neighborhood or a vehicle cruising the streets repeatedly. Someone peering into cars or windows. Here's what local authorities and Colorado Department of Public Safety says is needed information: Who did you see; what did you see; when did you see it; where did you see it; why it is suspicious. Call 911 or your local law enforcement agency.

Rotary Club coming to Tri-Lakes

Rotary International has 1.4 million worldwide with clubs in every country on this planet. Rotary focuses on local and international communities on improving education, saving mothers and children, clean water, sanitation, growing local economies, and protecting the environment via its member business professionals, teachers, real estate persons, developers, medical doctors, nurses, housewives, and re-

tired people serving to change lives locally and globally. Local info: Dr. Qureshi at 719 229 1648 or kqureshico@yahoo.com and www.Rotary.org.

Seniors Driver's License Electronic Renewal

With the implementation of the Driver's License Electronic Renewal By Seniors Act (HB21-1139), Colorado seniors now have the permanent ability to renew their driver license or identification card online, but there are new laws to understand. Information is online via mycolorado.state.us. Some restrictions apply to drivers aged 21-80, and drivers over 80 need a special doctor's statement. Coloradans who are concerned about an elder family member's ability to drive should email dor_mvhelpdesk@state.co.us.

DMV online and kiosks

Clerk & Recorder's Office provides motor vehicle and driver's license services. 30+ services at mydmv.colorado.gov. Renew registration online or at a kiosk. Make appointments. check in for appointments and wait where it's convenient for you. The DMV encourages Coloradans to skip the trip and use its online services whenever possible. So before your next trip to the DMV, remember to save time, go online. Visit DMV.Colorado.gov/Save-time for more information. See epcdrives.com.

CO 21 (Powers Blvd.) &

Research Pkwy. construction

Work will be completed in fall 2022 and will consist of replacing the current at-grade intersection with an innovative Diverging Diamond Interchange by constructing an overpass for Powers Boulevard/Colorado Highway 21 traffic to move continuously through the intersection over Research Parkway. For many more details and rendering of final configuration, including a video showing new traffic flow, see <https://cccpi.net/cdot-powers-research.pdf>.

Slash/mulch program

Location: Southeast corner of Shoup and Herring Roads, drop-off open Apr. 30-Sept. 11, Sat., 7 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sun. noon-4 p.m., and Tue., Thu. evenings 5-7:30 p.m. \$2 drop-off fee for slash, loyalty card offers a discount. Free mulch, self-loading from May 14 through Sept. 17. Info: visit www.bfslash.org.

Beetle trunk drop off site

There is now a safe drop-off site for infested tree trunks at 6725 Foxtrot Ln. 80924,

near Black Forest Rd. and Woodmen. Open 6 am to 7 pm daily. Closed July 1 -Sept. 30 (during flight season.) Mountain Pine Beetle infested trunk wood only, up to 20" size, small amounts of deadfall and standing dead trunk wood acceptable, no branches and/or debris of any type or size allowed. Thank you for assisting in all forest mitigation. Questions? Call or text Charles Newman 7 am -7 pm only, 719-352-6168

Emergency Financial First Aid Kit

If a disaster happened today, could you easily find your crucial household, financial, and medical documents to recover quickly? Use the checklists in the free Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK) to ensure nothing is missing. Get the EFFAK at: <https://go.usa.gov/xHC2m>.

MVEA offers rebates

For information on MVEA's energy efficiency rebates, visit www.mvea.coop/save-energy-money/rebates/, or call 800-388-9881. See ad on page 12.

The Sunflower is for people with non-visible disabilities



Watch for green and yellow sunflower lanyards, bracelets, and ribbons, discreet ways to make the invisible visible. Wearing the Sunflower discreetly indicates to people around the wearer including staff, colleagues and health professionals that they need additional support, help or a little more time. However big or small, your help moves us closer to a society where people recognize that an offer of help, understanding and kindness can make a huge difference to the daily experiences that a Sunflower wearer has.

Palmer Lake trailhead parking kiosk

For visitors wanting to park up close to the trailhead, patrons will be required to pay for that parking space. The kiosk was installed in February and staff is testing the hardware. Please note that the kiosk is for debit and credit payments only and the parking payment receipt needs to be displayed on the dash of your vehicle. Take care to confirm that the license plate number printed on the receipt matches your vehicle. The parking fee is \$5 plus processing fee and is subject to change for special events, holidays, etc., as determined by the Town Board.

Area code required for local calls

Colorado customers with numbers in the 719 and 970 area codes should dial 10-digits (area code + telephone number) for all local calls. They will still count as local calls. Check your safety and security alert devices to be sure they are programmed with 10-digit dialing. You can still dial just three digits to reach 711 (relay services) and 911

(emergency services) and other local three-digit services including 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, 711 or 811 are currently available in your community, dial these codes with just three digits.

Openings on Monument boards

The Town of Monument has openings on its Planning Commission and Board of Adjustments. For more information, visit and to download an application, go to <http://townofmonument.org/261/Available-Board-Openings>.

Openings on Palmer Lake boards

The Town of Palmer Lake continues to seek volunteer residents to serve on upcoming potential seats for the Planning Commission, the Parks Commission, and the Board of Adjustments. The Planning Commission meets once a month on the third Wednesday. The Parks Commission meets a minimum of once a month but also has opportunities to be involved in Work Groups for various Park areas. The Board of Adjustments meets up to once a month on the first Tuesday, as needed. To qualify, you must be a resident of the Town of Palmer Lake for a minimum of 12 consecutive months and be at least 18 years of age. See www.townofpalmerlake.com.

Tri-Lakes Cares Needs Your Support

Tri-Lakes Cares is the only food pantry and human services organization located in and serving northern El Paso County through emergency relief and self-sufficiency programs. The community-based, volunteer-supported center is a critical resource for our neighbors in need. The best way to help support Tri-Lakes Cares is to donate. Visit <https://tri-lakescares.org/donate> to find out how to donate money, medical items, personal supplies, or food. Please check the web for current needs in our food pantry at <https://tri-lakescares.org/donate/current-needs>. Donation drop-off hours are Monday thru Thursday, 10 am to 4 pm. For more information about Tri-Lakes Cares or how you can help, contact Nicole Pettigrew, director of Volunteers and Community Partnerships, at 719-481-4864 Ext. 111.

WMMI seeks volunteers

WMMI has positions for docents/tour guides, front desk, landscaping, and building and maintenance. For more details, contact Loretta, 719-488-0880, or email Volunteer@wmmi.org.

Free services for seniors

Mountain Community Senior Services offers free transportation and handyman services to Tri-Lakes seniors. Private transportation to medical appointments or a grocery store is now provided by Envida, 719-633-4677. If you need grab bars in the bathroom, a ramp to your door, or repair of stairs or railings, please call 719-488-0076, and leave a message or visit www.coloradoseniorhelp.com.

Senior Beat newsletter—subscribe for free

Each monthly Senior Beat newsletter is full of information for local seniors, including the daily menu of the senior lunches offered Monday through Friday at the Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Highway 105, Palmer Lake. It also contains the schedule of the classes and events for the month at the Senior Citizens Center and senior-friendly library programs. To subscribe, send an email with your name and mailing address to SeniorBeat@TriLakesSeniors.org. Senior Beat can also be viewed on-

line at www.TriLakesSeniors.org.

Can you volunteer today?

- OCN needs your help. See article on page 28.
- Links to local organizations with an immediate need for volunteers are listed on the county's website, www.elpasocountyhealth.org/volunteering-and-donations, for groups like Care and Share, Crossfire Ministries, blood donations, Early Connections (volunteer from home opportunity), foster an animal, Medical Reserve Corps of El Paso County, Salvation Army, Silver Key, and United Way (ongoing opportunities).
- The Colorado State University Extension office in El Paso County has several opportunities for individuals interested in volunteering. <https://elpaso.extension.colostate.edu/volunteer-opportunities/>
- Committed to building healthy, caring communities, these El Paso County volunteer-based and non-profit organizations rely on the hard work of individuals like you. Reach out today and find out how you can play a part by becoming a volunteer in El Paso County. Get involved in El Paso County volunteering non-profits and organizations! <https://www.americantowns.com/el-paso-county-co/volunteer-organizations/>.
- The El Paso County Sheriff's Office Volunteer Program is composed of a collective citizens group with a true and common desire to partner with the El Paso County Sheriff's Office by volunteering their services while learning more about the internal workings of the law enforcement community. <https://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com/volunteer-program-0>.
- The El Paso County Volunteer Program is a wonderful opportunity for citizens to learn about the various functions of county government as well as give back to the community. The County's numerous boards and commissions need your experience, talents and time. <https://bocc.elpasoco.com/volunteer>.
- The El Paso County Fair started as a potato festival in 1905 and has grown into so much more. We will be celebrating our 117th Fair, July 16th -23rd! <https://www.elpasocountyfair.com/p/getinvolved/volunteer-opportunities>
- The Friends of El Paso County Nature Centers is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit whose mission is to support Bear Creek and Fountain Creek Nature Centers. The organization is comprised of an executive board of elected officers and a general membership governed by official Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation as a 501-c-3 nonprofit organization. <https://community-services.elpasoco.com/nature-centers/nature-center-volunteers/>
- Children's Literacy Center provides free one-on-one literacy tutoring to Tri-Lakes children in grades 1-6 who are reading below grade level! Tutoring is at the Tri-Lakes Senior Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30-6:30 p.m., and our Summer Session will run through Aug. 14. For more information, to become a volunteer tutor or to enroll your child, visit www.childrensliteracycenter.org or email Christine Jeffson at Christine@childrensliteracycenter.org. ■

Our Community Calendar

By Janet Sellers

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 info number for that event. Please contact calendar@ocn.me with changes and additions.

GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

- **Forest Lakes Metropolitan District, Pinon Pines Metropolitan District 1, 2 & 3 board meeting.** Typically meets quarterly on the first Mon. at 4 pm Meetings are held via teleconference. For virtual joining instructions and updates see www.forestlakesmetrodistrict.com.
- **Monument Board of Trustees meeting,** Tue., **July 5,** 6:30 pm, Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets first and third Mon. Info: 719-884-801, www.townofmonument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees for remote attendance links.
- **Palmer Lake Board of Adjustments,** Tue., **July 5,** 5 pm, Palmer Lake Elementary School Library, 115 Upper Glenway, Palmer Lake. Normally meets first Tues
- **El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regular meeting,** every Tue., July 5, 12, etc., 9 am. View agendas and meetings at www.agendasuite.org/iip/elpaso. BOCC land use meetings are being held every first and third Tuesday of the month as needed at 1 pm Centennial Hall, 200 S. Cascade Ave., Suite 150, Colo. Springs. Info: 719-520-6430.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission meeting,** Thu., **July 7,** 9 am Regional Development Center, 2880 International Circle, Colo. Springs. Meetings are live-streamed on the El Paso County News & Information Channel at <https://www.elpasoco.com/>

- news-information-channel. Normally meets first & third Thu. (as required). Info: 719-520-6300, <https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com>.
- **Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) meeting,** Sat., **July 9,** 10 am - 12 pm., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Members of local HOAs welcome. Usually meets bi-monthly second Saturday of the month. www.nepco.org.
 - **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District board meeting,** Mon., **July 11,** 1 pm, 1845 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Meets second Mon. Info: 719-488-2525, www.woodmoorwater.com.
 - **Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee meeting,** Tue., **July 12,** 10 am 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets second Tue. Info: Bill Burks, 719-481-4053.
 - **Palmer Lake Sanitation District board meeting,** Wed., **July 13,** 9 am, call-in only: 650-479-3208, Access Code 76439078, 120 Middle Glenway. Meets second Wed. Info: 719-481-2732. www.plsd.org.
 - **Monument Planning Commission meeting,** Wed., **July 13,** 6 pm Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets second Wed. To see the options for remote public participation in each meeting, visit www.townofmonument.org/263/Planning-Commission-Board-of-Adjustment. Info: 719-884-8028. www.townofmonument.org.
 - **Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting,** Thu., **July 14,** 5 pm Palmer Lake Elementary School Library, 115 Upper Glenway. Usually meets second and fourth Thu. Info: 719-481-2953, all for current meeting location. www.townofpalmerlake.com.
 - **Monument Academy School Board meeting,** Thu., **July 14,** 6 pm at the East Campus in the band room. 4303 Pinehurst Circle. Meets second Thu. Info 719-481-1950, <https://www.monumentacademy.net/>

- school-board/board-meeting-minutes/.
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 board meeting,** Mon., **July 18,** 6-10 pm, Normally meets third Mon. This meeting of the Board of Education will be live-streamed on the district's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCcommunity, agenda, supporting documents at <https://go.boarddocs.com/co/lewispalmer/Board.nsf/vpublic>. Info: 719- 488-4700, vwood@lewispalmer.org, www.lewispalmer.org district's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/LPSDCcommunity. The agenda and support-

Lightning ⚡ Electric

For ALL Your Electrical Needs
Residential • Commercial • Industrial
Service Calls • Reasonable Rates • Free Estimates
Fully Insured & Licensed
Master Electricians

David Lambert (719) 243-2257 Keith Profita (719) 243-2258

Skunks-Coons-Squirrels-Snakes-Woodpeckers

 **ANIMAL MOVERS**

Matt Penfound (OWNER) (303) 660-4816
Professional Trapper (719) 570-1757

- ing documents, where applicable, can be found here: <https://go.boarddocs.com/co/lewispalmer/Board.nsf/vpublic> Contact Vicki Wood. Phone: 719.481.9546 Email: vwood@lewispalmer.org Website: <https://www.lewispalmer.org>.
- **Monument Board of Trustees meeting**, Mon., **July 18**, 6:30 pm, Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets first and third Mon. Info: 719-884-801, www.townofmonument.org/260/Board-of-Trustees for remote attendance links.
 - **Donald Wescott Fire Protection District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Tue., **July 19**, 4 pm, Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at www.wescottfire.org or contact Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich at 719-488-8680. Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday.
 - **Monument Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **July 20**, 9 a.m., 130 Second St. Zoom meeting. Find joining instructions on the website. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-4886, www.colorado.gov/msd.
 - **Academy Water and Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **July 20**, 6 pm. Usually meets third Wed. Public can join the Skype meeting: <https://join.skype.com/PAcujKTn7Nrh>. Check the website for a link: <https://academywsd.colorado.gov/notices-and-alerts>. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-0711, <https://academywsd.colorado.gov>.
 - **Palmer Lake Town Planning Commission meeting**, Wed., **July 20**, 6 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets third Wed. Info: 719-481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
 - **Woodmoor Improvement Association board meeting**, Wed., **July 20**, 7 pm, Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets fourth Wed. Info: 719-488-2693, www.woodmoor.org.
 - **Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Wed., **July 20**, 7 pm, Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at www.bffire.org or contact Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn at 719-495-4300. Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday.
 - **El Paso County Planning Commission meeting**, Thu., **July 21**, 9 am Regional Development Center, 2880 International Circle, Colo. Springs. Meetings are live-streamed on the El Paso County News & Information Channel at <https://www.elpasoco.com/news-information-channel>. Normally meets first & third Thu. (as required). Info: 719-520-6300, <https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com>.
 - **Donala Water & Sanitation District board meeting**, Thu., **July 21**, 1:30 pm, 15850 Holbein Dr. Meets third Thu. Check the website for the access code for the electronic meeting Thu. Info: 719-488-3603, www.donalawater.org.
 - **Triview Metropolitan District board meeting**, Thu., **July 21**, 5:30 pm, 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302, Monument. Normally meets third Thu. Info: 719-488-6868, www.triviewmetro.com.
 - **Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Wed., **July 27**, 6:30 pm., Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, Monument. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at www.tlmlfire.org or contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin, at 719-484-0911. Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday.
 - **Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting**, Thu., **July 28**, 5 pm, Palmer Lake Elementary School Library, 115 Upper Glenway. Usually meets second and fourth Thu. Info: 719-481-2953, all for current meeting location. www.townofpalmerlake.com.
 - **TLMFPD Station 1 Grand Reopening**, Sat., **July 30**, 11 am - 1 pm. Info: www.tlmlfire.org or 719-484-0911.

WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS

- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., **June 30**, approx. 9 am–2 pm. We need YOUR help, even for an hour two, getting the papers ready to mail. Contact AllenAlchian@ocn.me to sign up and get the address and exact times.
- **The Centering Prayer Group at Black Forest Community Church**, first **Sat.**, 8:30-10 am The Old Log Church. Centering prayer opens and closes the meetings with discussion and fellowship in between; open to all. Contact Rev. Roger Butts, 719-433-3135, for information.
- **Half Day Prayer Group at Benet Hill Monastery**, first **Sat.**, 9 am - 12 pm. All vaccinated guests are welcome. Contact Sister Therese at (719) 355-1638 or (719) 355-1650 or stherese@benethillmonastery.org. See ad on page 3.
- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Club meeting**, every **Sat.**, 8 am. www.MHKiwanis.org, MonumentHillKiwanis@gmail.com for details; guests are welcome at weekly meetings featuring speakers on a variety of topics and a free continental breakfast at normal meetings. Memberships open to the public. Join the 150+ men and women of the Tri-Lakes area who work together to make a difference for youth and our community. Info: RF Smith, 719-210-4987, www.MHKiwanis.org.

- **Neighborhood Net Ham Radio**, every **Sat.**, 10 am Amateur ham radio operators practice for emergencies on weekly repeater nets so neighbors can help neighbors. Sign up at www.mereowx.org/neighborhood-net or contactus@mereowx.org.
- **The Wine Seller Free Wine Tastings**, every **Sat.**, 1-4 pm, 2805 Roberts Dr., Monument. Info: 719-488-3019, www.thewineseller.net.
- **Palmer Lake Art Group**, second **Sat.** A variety of art programs are offered after the social gathering and business meeting. Guests welcome. 300 Hwy 105, NE corner of I-25 and 105. 9:30 am. Info: 719-460-4179, www.palmerlakeartgroup.com.
- **Lions Club Bingo**, every **Sat.** (except the first Sat.), 8:30 am-1 pm and first Mon., 5:30-10 pm Tri-Lakes Lions Club's portion of the proceeds benefit those in need in the Tri-Lakes community. Updated info and location: Jim Naylor, 719-481-8741 or www.trilakeslionsclub.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Parkinson's Disease Support Group, SUSPENDED**, third Sat.; if you need any help, please call Syble or Barry. 10 am-noon, Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St., Monument. Come for socializing, discussions on Parkinson's-related issues including available support, and occasional speakers. Info: Syble Krafft, 719-488-2669; Barry (group president), 719-351-9485.
- **Faithful Friends discussion group, on summer hiatus**, usually third **Sat.**, 3-4:30 pm Wesley Owens Coffee. Info: Ellen, 303-526-5000 or Sandi, 719-237-3359. All ladies are welcome to our open discussion group.
- **Benet Hill Monastery**, Let us pray with you, walk in the forest, come up and visit prayer sites, every **Sunday** worship is 10:15 a.m., 3190 Benet Lane, 80921. See ad on page x.
- **Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church**, every **Sun.**, 8 and 11 am traditional, 9:30 am contemporary. Both in-person (no registration necessary) and live stream at www.tlumc.org/live. Watch live or on replay: www.facebook.com/tlumc, www.youtube.com/tlumc.org. Info: 719-488-1365, www.tlumc.org. 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. See ad on page 2.
- **Fuel Church** Sunday Service, every **Sun.** Service times, 11:00 am Live service streaming at www.fuelchurch.org at 11:40 am on www.fuelchurch.org. Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Nursery and kids' service. Non-denominational, spirit-filled. Need prayer? Email us info@fuel.org. See ad on page 3.
- **Ridgeview Baptist Church**, every **Sun.**, 10:30 am, temporarily meeting at 9130 Explorer Dr., Colorado Springs, 80920. Info: 719-357-6515 or www.ridgeviewcolorado.org. See ad on page 6.
- **Women's A.A. Step Study**, every **Mon.**, 6:30 pm, meeting remotely, check for details. Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 Baptist Rd. Park in west lot. Info: 866-641-9190.Al-Anon Zoom Meeting, Just for Today Online, every Mon., 9:00 - 10:00 am Zoom Meeting ID: 889 4142 7446, Password 349309
- **Al-Anon Zoom Meeting**, Just for Today Online, every **Mon.**, 9-10 am Zoom Meeting ID: 889 4142 7446, Password 349309.
- **Monument Life Recovery Group**, every **Mon.**, 6:30-7:30 pm, The Ascent Church, 1750 Deer Creek Rd. This faith-based support group is for those seeking freedom from all hurts, habits, and hang-ups. Day-care provided for children under age 11. Info: 303-946-2659, www.liferecoverygroups.com/meetings/life-recovery-group-3/.
- **Amateur ham radio W0TLM** (Tri-Lakes Monument ham radio Association), third **Mon.** All amateur ham radio operators or those interested in becoming one are welcome. Info: Joyce Witte, 719-661-9824, Joyce-witte@gmail.com; www.W0TLM.com.
- **Centering Prayer Group at Benet Hill Monastery**, every **Tue.**, 10-11 am. All vaccinated guests are welcome. Contact Sister Therese at (719) 355-1638 or (719) 355-1650 or stherese@benethillmonastery.org.
- **Essentrics Fitness Program at Senior Center**, every **Tue.**, 9 am & **Thu.**, 10 am, Lewis-Palmer High School modular building across from the YMCA, on Jackson Creek Pkwy. Registration & info: Sue Walker, 719-330-0241, www.trilakesseniors.org.
- **GriefShare Support Group**, last **Tue.**, 10:30 am-noon. Tri-Lakes Senior Center, across the street from the YMCA. The Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance has partnered with Colorado Palliative and Hospice Care to host a 13-session grief support group in Monument. RSVP & info: Sue Walker, 719-330-0241.
- **Children's Literacy Center**, every **Tue. & Thu.**, 5:30-6:30 pm Provides free one-on-one literacy tutoring to Tri-Lakes children in grades 1-6 who are reading below grade level. Tutoring is at the Tri-Lakes Senior Center. For more information, to become a volunteer tutor, or to enroll your child, visit www.childrensliteracycenter.org or email Christine Jeffson at Christine@childrensliteracycenter.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Women's Club Monthly meeting**, third **Wed.**, 11 am - 2 pm, Wedgewood Black Forest, 12375 Black Forest Rd. Meetings are open to all members of Tri-Lakes Women's Club. Meets third Wed. To

- become a member, or learn about the club, visit our website at www.tlwc.net or email sleggie26@me.com.
- **Senior Citizen Luncheons**, Connections Café sites, every **Wed.** will have “grab and go” (prepared meals). A \$2.25 donation is requested. Please call 719-884-2300 to reserve your meal. Meals on Wheels and Home Delivered Meals will deliver frozen meals for the week to Monument. Food Pantry offers a “pick up only” model for clients. Mon.-Fri., noon-12:30 pm, Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy. 105, Palmer Lake. See the menu for the month in the Senior Beat newsletter. Stay for bingo the second Thu. Reservations are requested at 719-884 2300.
- **Colorado Springs Philharmonic Guild Listening Club**, third **Wed.** Free virtual event. Maestro Wilson will conduct monthly hour-long programs. RSVP at www.cspguild.org.
- **Gleneagle Sertoma**, first and third **Wed.**, 11:45 am to 1 pm at Beasts and Brews, 7 Spectrum Loop, Colorado Springs. The longest continuously serving civic service organization in northern El Paso County features a program speaker addressing local topics of interest. Duane Gritzmaker, dwgritz@gmail.com or 719-649-9220.
- **Senior Social**, fourth **Wed.**, 12455 Black Forest Rd. Info: www.aarpchapter1100blackforest.weekly.com.
- **Tri-Lakes Church of Christ** Wednesday night fellowship classes, every **Wed.**, 6-7:30 pm, 20450 Beacon Lite Road, Monument (corner of Beacon Lite & County Line Roads). Info: 719-488-9613, greg-smith@trilakeschurch.org, www.trilakeschurch.org.
- **Kehilat, Zoom Bible Study**, every **Wed.**, 6:15 pm Bring your hungry and tired so they can be filled and more blessed. Ms. Williams, 719-453-6279.
- **Tri-Lakes Cruisers**, first **Wed.**, 7 pm. A nonprofit car club. Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce community room, with numerous activities and events each month. Club membership applications are now being accepted and are available on the website: <https://tl-cruisers.weebly.com>.
- **AARP Black Forest #1100**, second **Wed.**, noon. All ages welcome. In-person, Black Forest Lutheran Church, 12455 Black Forest Rd.
- **Senior Bingo**, third **Wed.**, Silver Alliance Senior Center, Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Masks required. Space is limited to 16 participants. RSVP & info: Sue Walker, 719-464-6873, or email sue@monumentalfitness.
- **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7829**, third **Wed.**, 7 pm, Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce community room, 166 2nd St., Monument. New members welcome. Info: Post Commander and POC Bruce Beyerly, Bruce.Beyerly@gmail.com.
- **VFW Auxiliary to Post 7829**, third **Wed.**, 7 pm, The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. Guests are welcome to join; contact carlsonmkc@aol.com for instructions on how to connect. If you are a relative of a veteran who served on foreign soil during war or other military action, you may be eligible. Info: Kathy Carlson, 719-488-1902, carlsonmkc@aol.com.
- **Al-anon Meeting**: Monument Serenity AFG, every **Thu.**, 7-8 pm, Ascent Church (formerly the Tri-Lakes Chapel), 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. Info: MonumentSerenity@gmail.com.
- **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers**, first **Thu.**, 6:30-8:30 pm at Monument Chamber of Commerce building, 166 2nd St, Monument, CO.
- **Al-Anon meeting**: Letting Go, every **Thu.**, 9-10:15 am at Ascent Church, 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. For additional information go to www.al-anon-co.org.
- **Networking breakfast**, first and third **Thu.**, Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce in person or via Zoom 166 2nd Street Monument 7:30 - 9 am free registration at www.TriLakeschamber.com.
- **Fuel Church Griefshare**, every **Thu.**, 5:30-7:30 pm 643 State Highway 105, Palmer Lake. Email info@fuel.org. 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake.
- **A.A. Big Book Study**, every **Thu.**, 7 pm, Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 W. Baptist Rd. Call 425-436-6200, access code 575176#.
- **Friends of Fox Run Park**, fourth **Thu.** Zoom meeting, 7 pm, email friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com, they will email you the link the day of the meeting. Join the growing group to learn about volunteering and supporting the park for forest safety, trails, trees, education, more. Info: friendsoffoxrunpark@gmail.com.
- **MITEE Open Builds** (Monumental Impact for Technology, Engineering, and Entrepreneurship), every **Fri.**, 4-6 pm All those involved in technology and engineering and those tinkering on projects. All high school students and adults are welcome. Jeanette Breton, 719-387-7414, jeanette@monumentalimpact.org; www.monumentalimpact.org
- **Gleneagle Women's Club**, membership luncheon, third **Fri.**, Sept-June, various venues, 12 activity groups, i.e., hiking, bridge, etc. Guests welcome. For information contact Amy Miller (310) 941-1590.
- **Silver Center Book Club**, second **Fri.**, 11 am-noon,

Senior Center across the street from Tri-Lakes YMCA, on Lewis-Palmer High School campus. All are welcome. Coffee & snacks served. RSVP & info: Sue, 719-330-0241.

- **Concerts in the Park**, Limbach Park, weekly on **Wed.**, June 8 - August 17. See ad on page 14.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Monument Hill Farmers Market**, every **Sat.**, 8-2 pm, 66 Jefferson St., Downtown Monument. See ad on page 5.
- **Monument Hill Kiwanis 4th of July celebrations** Mon., **July 4**, honoring our heroes “our educators” with: fun run, pancake breakfast, street fair, kids parade and 4th of July parade and more. See ad on page 16.
- **Festival on the Fourth at Palmer Lake**, Mon., **July 4**, 2-10 p.m. West Side of the railroad tracks on the west side of Palmer Lake. Vendors, to join volunteers or sponsorships, contact ctgraff75@gmail.com.
- **D-38 Big Red 4th of July Celebration**, Mon., **July 4**, 10-3pm, live music, food trucks, D38 swag, more, 146 Jefferson St. See ad on page 9.
- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Palisade Peaches fundraiser**, last day to place order: Tue., **July 26**. see ad on page 16.
- **“Crepes and Cruisers”** Jackson Creek Senior Living welcomes the Tri-Lakes Cruisers Car Club on Sat., **July 9**, 10 a.m. - noon for a classic car show. All ages invited for crepes and Chef Michael Longo’s signature almond punch; live music with Gus Meza. Free, RSVP is requested. Call 719-725-6060 or visit our website events page to secure your spot. Attendees please park on the north side of the community. Jackson Creek Senior Living, 16601 Jackson Creek Parkway
- **Ashes to Beauty**, Colorado Springs Garden Club garden tour, Sat.-Sun., **July 9-10**, 9-5pm. Showcasing the Waldo Canyon fire recovery, fundraising tickets (proceeds benefit Colorado State University extension) at local garden centers, details: www.colorado-springsgardentour.org.
- **Western Museum of Mining and Industry**, summertime family days, Sat., **July 9**, **Aug. 20**, 225 Northgate Blvd., www.WMMI.org. See ad on page 20.
- **Covered Treasures Bookstore**, Sat., **July 9**, 1-3 pm, two Colorado photographers book signings. Todd Caudle of Skyline Press will sign his revised *Colorado Wildflowers* book along with his various other titles and Matt Payne of Matt Payne Photography will sign his book, *Climbing Colorado’s San Juans: A Comprehensive Guide to Hikes, Scrambles and Technical Climbs*. July Art Hop at Covered Treasures Bookstore, **July 21**, 5-8 pm, Roger Greene signs his recent historical novel, *4284 Miles* and others., 105 Second Street, Monument.
- **Vacation Bible School**, St. Matthias Episcopal Church, 5:30-8pm, Mon.-Thu., **July 11-14**, 18320 Furrow Rd. See ad on page 5.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce**, After Hours Networking Event, Tue., **July 12**, 5 pm-7:00 pm Free for chamber members, \$15 for non-members. Details: www.trilakeschamber.com. 719-481-3282.
- **Party for the Parks**, Sat., **July 16**, 2-9 pm, 17360 Jackson Creek Pkwy. See ad on page 14.
- **Pikes Peak Brewing Company, Hops and Hot Rods**, Sun., **July 17**, 1756 Lake Woodmoor Dr., see ad on page 13.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, Thu., **July 21**, 1-4 p.m. special event meeting at Palmer Lake Town Green and Gazebo. Guided Walking Tours of Palmer Lake, Local history experts, informative walking tour of the town. Starts at the Village Green for Palmer Lake Town Hall, stops at Estemere, other historical buildings, ends at the Rock House Ice Cream Shop. Tours about 45 minutes, groups limited to 12. Additional details: www.palmerdividehistory.org. Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent St., Palmer Lake, CO 80133. PLHS meets third Thu., Info: 719-550-0837, www.palmerdividehistory.org.
- **Monument Art Hop**, Thu., **July 21**, 5-8 pm, in Historic Downtown Monument, live music, local artists, outdoor activities, food trucks, more! Info: www.downtownmonument.org. See ad on page 2.
- **Tri-lakes/ Monument fire station 1 reopening ceremony**, Sat., **July 30**, 18650 Hwy 105, RSVP, spopovich@tlmfire.org
- **June/July 2022 WIA Chipping Days**, Sat.-Sun., **July 30-31**, south parking lot of Lewis-Palmer High school. NOTE: shifting to a resident slash drop-much like the Black Forest Slash Pile. Residents queue up in their vehicle and are released progressively to self-drop slash in a central location. WIA and its contractors will no longer unload your vehicle for you. This change will allow up to 5 vehicles to unload at once rather than the 2-3 vehicles being unloaded as in previous years. The same type of materials will be accepted. Slash/logs up to 8 inches in diameter, pine needles, etc. As in previous years: NO construction materials, rock/rubble, stumps, or garbage will be accepted. Only clean slash/logs will be accepted. Please contact the WIA Office with questions at 719-488-2693 x 4.

- **Speed Trap Bistro**, Live Music, 84 Hwy. 105. Open 7 days for breakfast, lunch, weekends until 11 pm. See ad on page 5.
- **Monumental Med Spa**, special botox offer Thu., **July 21**, 10 am-6 pm , at the loft, 4 Hwy 105 Palmer Lake.. See ad on page 7.
- **A Better Hearing Center**, special offers. 574 Hwy. 105, Monument. See ad on page 11.
- **Cornerstone Cleaners**, special offers through **July 31**. 1030 W. Baptist Road, near King Soopers. See ad on page 4.
- **Eagle Wine & Spirits**, special offers through **July 31**. Baptist Road next to King Soopers. See ad on page 3.
- **Monument Cleaners**, special offers through **July 31**. 15932 Jackson Creek Pkwy., in Monument Market-place. See ad on page 5.
- **Noel Relief Centers**, new patient special. 1840 Woodmoor Drive, Suite 109, Monument. See ad on page 8.
- **Pure Romance** by Amy Yocum-Vos, special offers through **July 31**. www.pureromance.com/AmyYocum-vos. See ad on page 4.
- **The Living Room Plants**, special offers through **July 31**. 12229 Voyager Pkwy, Suite 100. See ad on page 5.
- **Tri Lakes Collision and Auto Service Center**, special offers through **July 31**. 2101 Wolf Court, Monument. See ad on page 5.
- **YMCA fall sports sign up now**, ppymca.org/sports. See ad on page 6.
- **Make It Work: 3D Printers**, Mon., **Aug 1**, 4pm-6pm: Bring in your broken 3D printer and we’ll see if we can help you get it working again. Offered at 55 Adams Street. Hosted by Monumental Impact to raise funds for programs. Donations appreciated. Contact enable@monumentalimpact.org for more information.
- **Return of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua**, Sat., **Aug. 6**, 1- 4 pm. Historic Chautauqua: museum tours, entertainments, working artists music, and film presentations, walking tours of Glen Park, Old Town Historical home tours Friends of the Tri-Lakes Library annual ice cream social, early afternoon. Palmer Lake Town Hall village green.
- **Technology & Engineering Camps**, **Aug 1-12**, 9 am-3 pm. Various 1-day, 2-day and 5-day sessions. A diversity of topics in programming, robotics techniques, 3D Printing, circuitry and more. Entering grades 5th thru 12th. Offered by coaches, team members, mentors and interns with Monumental Impact and Bearbotics at 55 Adams St (Grace Best) in Monument. Net proceeds benefit programs. Register at https://monumentalimpact.org/summer-programs/ or email, enable@monumentalimpact.org, for questions.
- **Hummingbird Festival**, Fri.-Sat., **Aug. 5-6**, 10-3 pm, Happy Landing Ranch, 17435 Roller Coaster Rd., Hummingbird art, hourly hummingbird talks, farmers market booths. Vendor space available: marlene.fourgates@gmail.com or (719)492-0355 or (719)213-8658.
- **Western Museum of Mining and Industry, Western Saloon night fundraiser**, Sat., **Aug. 6**, 6 pm, see ad on page 20.
- **Elementary / Middle School Robotics Information Session**, Sat., **Aug 13**, 10-11:30am. We invite teachers, parents and community members to visit with us in the Bear Cave of Bearbotics to discuss oppor-

tunities to collaborate and offer FIRST LEGO League (FLL) to our area students. 55 Adams St (Grace Best) in Monument. Info: coachbreton@bearbotics4068.org.

Our community calendar carries listings on a space-available basis for Tri-Lakes events that are sponsored by local governmental entities and not-for-profit organizations. We include events that are open to the general public and are not religious or self-promotional in nature. If space is available, complimentary calendar listings are included, when requested, for events advertised in the current issue. To have your event listed at no charge in Our Community Calendar, please call (719) 339-7831 or send the information to calendar@ocn.me or Our Community News, P.O. Box 1742, Monument, Colorado 80132.

Letters to Our Community

Our Community News welcomes letters to the editor on topics of general interest to readers in the Tri-Lakes area. We do not knowingly print letters that are substantially the same as letters that have been submitted to other publications. To ensure that OCN contains a variety of viewpoints, each letter writer is limited to a maximum of one (1) letter per issue and six (6) letters within a twelve (12) month period. To submit a letter, please:

- Email your letter, preferably as an attached Microsoft Word document, to **editor@ocn.me** or mail a copy to **Our Community News, P.O. Box 1742, Monument, CO 80132-1742**.
- Identify your submission as a letter to the editor and confirm that it has not been submitted to any other publication.
- Include a suggested headline or title that summarizes the topic you are addressing.
- Limit your letter to no more than 300 words including your suggested headline and closing.
- Include your full name, home address, phone numbers, and email address, if you have one. Only your name will be published.
- Submit your letter so we receive it no later than midnight, Friday, two weeks prior to the publication date.

If you have not received an acknowledgement two days after your email submission or one week after you mailed your letter, please contact Jennifer Kaylor, Managing Editor, at (719) 488-3455 or editor@ocn.me. At OCN’s sole discretion, we may ask you for clarification of your statements. Include references, such as website links, in your letter for any facts and figures you cite. OCN does not guarantee every letter will appear in print or on-line and does not guarantee a publication date. The number of letters printed on a particular topic or in a particular issue may be limited. Letters containing personal attacks or endorsements for or complaints about individually-named commercial products or services will not be published.

Content

Articles in Our Community News focus on the deliberations of Tri-Lakes area governmental bodies such as the Monument Board of Trustees, Palmer Lake Town Council, and many of the local water, sanitation, fire, and school district boards.

Unlike papers that try to figure out what the “story” is and then get quotes on each side to presumably lead the reader to conclude what the “truth” is, OCN’s role is to report in detail on public meetings of local governmental entities. We report what was talked about and what was decided. By reading OCN, you can find out what you might have learned if you had attended those public meetings. In this context, “truth” is that the articles accurately represent what transpired at the meetings.

The content of ads, inserts, and letters to the editor in OCN is solely the responsibility of the advertisers and authors who place those ads, inserts, and letters. The appearance of an ad, insert, or letter in OCN does not imply endorsement of the ad, insert, or letter’s content or purpose. While OCN does not knowingly run false ads, inserts, or letters, we do not research the accuracy of that content. Readers are encouraged to do their own research prior to committing to use the products or services offered or accept the conclusions of letters to the editor. Readers with concerns about the content of an ad, insert, or letter should take up those concerns with the advertiser or author.

Contact John Heiser, Publisher, at johnheiser@ocn.me or (719) 488-3455 with any questions.

Look for our next issue
Saturday, Aug. 6

Ad space reservations due: **Fri., July 15**
Finished ad artwork due: **Fri., July 22**
Letters to the editor due: **Fri., July 22**
Calendar items due: **Fri., July 29**

Visit our website to read, download, and search all the back issues at
WWW.OCN.ME



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Event information: calendar@ocn.me

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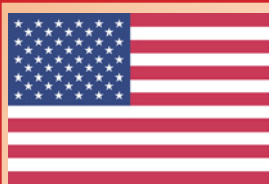
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