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Issue #259 — Volume 22 Number 9 — Saturday, September 3, 2022

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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.

- **Ann Shimek ceramic art retrospective**, reception Fri., **Sep 2**, 5-8 pm; Exhibit open Sat., **Sep. 3**, 12-8 pm.
- **Fox Run Regional Park Free Concert**, Thu. **Sep. 8**, 6 - 8 pm.
- **Jackson Creek Senior Living Hawaiian Luau**, Fri., **Sep. 9**, 4-6:15 pm
- **9/11 Memorial ceremony**, Sun., **Sep. 11**, 6:40 am
- **Black Forest slash/mulch site drop-offs end**, Sun., **Sep. 11**
- **The Last 2022 Monument Art Hop**, Thu., **Sep. 15**, 5-8 pm. See ad on page 2.
- **Baptist Road Dental, Dr. Hill open house**, Fri. **Sep. 16**, 4 pm-7 pm. See ad on page 11.
- **Native American Sacred Trees and Places Annual Meeting and Conference**, Fri.-Sun., **Sep. 23-25**.
- **Pikes Peak Brewing Company Oktoberfest**, Sat., **Sep. 24**, 11 am-11 pm. See ad on page 2.
- **Creek Week Clean-Up**, Sun., **Sep. 25**, 9 am,
- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., **Sep. 29**, approx. 9 am-2 pm. Information on page 28.
- **Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day**, Sat., **Oct. 1**, 9 am
- **Grow your business workshop**, Wed., **Oct. 5**, 8:30 am-3 pm. See ad on page 5.
- **Water Lantern Festival at Fox Run Park**, Sat., **Oct. 8**, 4:30-8:30pm
- **Empty bowls dinner and silent auction**, Wed., **Oct. 12**, 5-7:30 pm See ad on page 14.

In this issue

School District 38 News 1-6
Palmer Lake News 1, 6-9
Monument News 10-13
Fire District News 14-18
Water & San District News 18-20
County News 20-21
WIA News 21-22
Weather 22
Letter 22
Columns 22-24
Snapshots 25-28
Notices and Calendar 28-31
OCN Information 16, 28, 31-32

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Burney Sisters at TLCA, Aug. 20



Above: On Aug. 20, the multi-talented Burney Sisters brought their eclectic style of music to the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) stage. The Columbia, MO-based trio of Bella, Olivia, and Emma demonstrated vocal range, complementary harmony, and musical talents seemingly well beyond their age. Olivia is the oldest at 17. Playing a mix of their originals and covers from influences such as The Staves, the variety of instruments played during the evening included electric bass, electric and acoustic guitar, cello, keyboard, and fiddle. That variety led to the diversity of song genres—bluegrass, folk rock, Indie and infusions of classical and punk. Olivia said, “We have traveled the U.S. and play anywhere that will have us.” The TLCA audience must have felt very fortunate that this was one of their stops, awarding the sisters a standing ovation at the close of their performance. *Photo By David Futey.*

Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education, Aug. 22

Board approves wording of property tax ballot initiative, recognizes staff

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education discussed and approved wording of a ballot initiative to increase property taxes solely to improve compensation of teachers and non-administrative staff at its Aug. 22 meeting.

Chief Business Officer Brett Ridgway presented background information in support of the initiative. A recent market study ascertained that teachers and hourly employees in the district are compensated 10% less than the regional average and of the 11 districts compared in the study, D38 offers the lowest starting pay.

The 6% raise given staff at the end of last year does not close the gap, as this amount was provided to all districts in the state.

Ridgway explained that the funding

formula used by the state favors districts with declining enrollment, a large English Language Learner population, and a large population that qualifies for free or reduced lunches. Consequently, the per-pupil revenue provided to D38 is among the lowest in the state.

The proposed mill levy override would provide 7.45 mills to the district. The 1999 override was for a fixed dollar amount which has since lost over 40% of its value due to inflation and rising home values.

The proposed override would provide about \$5.6 million annually to the district's general fund and \$1 million to Monument Academy. This translates to an additional \$258.89 per year for a home valued at \$500,000.

The new revenue is expressly and solely to improve compensation for

teachers and non-administrative staff. Expenditures will be monitored by a citizens' Financial Advisory Committee, which will report to the Board of Education.

Ridgway said the funds from the mill levy override would be listed separately in his monthly financial reports so that it is easy to monitor their use.

Several individuals offered their opinions during the public comment segment of the meeting. All were in favor of the initiative. Some of the opinions involved the effect of increasing turnover among staff and the feeling of insecurity it brings to students. Others said that it is unacceptable that the district's paraprofessionals are earning less than employees at McDonald's. Others expressed the fear that the district will lower its hiring

D38 BOE (Cont. on 2)

Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, Aug. 11 and 25

Elephant Rock developer chosen; cannabis and mill levy questions go to voters

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

In August, the Palmer Lake Board of Trustees decided three issues that they have discussed with the community for months: They chose a developer for the Elephant Rock property, they finalized language for a ballot initiative putting the question of retail sales of adult use cannabis before the voters, and they completed a ballot initiative requesting a mill levy increase.

The Aug. 11 meeting ended with an executive session.

The Carter Payne gets the nod

At the Aug. 25 meeting, the board voted to move forward with the proposal presented by The Carter Payne to develop the Elephant Rock property that the town acquired from the Living Word church.

Mayor Bill Bass asked the board to give the staff direction on proceeding with the proposals from The Carter Payne; Duncan Bremer, Matt Dunston, and JW Roth; and Richard and Lindsay Willan. The three proposals were reported in *Our Community News* here: <https://ocn.me/v22n8.htm#plbt>.

The financial aspects of the plans were presented in a workshop meeting that can be viewed on page 8.

The Carter Payne vision included dining, outdoor activities, community gardens, a brewery, and spaces for artists.

Trustee Glant Havenar started the discussion by saying she was ready to have an agreement in principle with one developer. Trustee Samantha Padgett

PALMER LAKE (Cont. on 6)

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D38 BOE (Cont. from 1)

standards and that the culture of excellence is no longer a sufficient incentive to come to work here.

In his board member comments, board President Chris Taylor said a lot of work was put into the initiative, and voter approval would result in bringing compensation up to average in the area. He said it is past time to improve compensation, as evidenced by the high turnover rate among staff.

The board approved the proposed wording of the initiative and appointed Vicki Wood as the district's election representative to notify the county of its intent to participate in the Nov. 8 election.

To view the meeting in its entirety, go to the district website, lewispalmer.org, choose Board of Education, meetings, and livestream.


Staff recognition

Palmer Ridge High School Principal Dr. Adam Frank introduced theater teacher Josh Belk, who has been named the 2022 Colorado Thespians Teacher of the Year. Executive Director of Operations Chris Coulter introduced Julie Abeyta, the new D38 transportation supervisor, and her




Above: At the D38 board meeting Aug. 22, Palmer Ridge High School (PRHS) principal Dr. Adam Frank introduced theatre teacher Josh Belk to recognize him for this prestigious award from the Colorado State Thespians (CSP). In its press release, CSP noted that Belk allows students to succeed and fail and teaches life lessons along the way. Belk said he strives to create positive connections between students and teachers and also among theatre teachers in the state. Pictured from left to right: Board member Theresa Phillips, Belk, Superintendent KC Somers, and Frank. *Photo by Jackie Burhans*

assistant, Mike Shad. Superintendent KC Somers commented that Abeyta's department is responsible for 120 vehicles and 350 activity trips per year and ensuring




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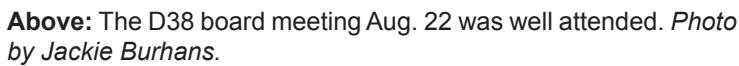
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Regarding hiring, Somers reported that 86 new teachers have been hired and 10 positions remain open. Over 30 classified positions remain open, as do positions in Nutritional Services, custodial positions, and paraprofessionals. Hiring continues, but Somers reported that several individuals who were

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Whetstine said that the resource materials will be avail-

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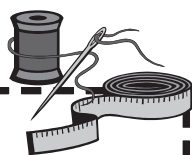
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able to view at the administration building. The board will vote on whether to adopt the use of the resources at its September meeting.

Financial planning and analysis

Ridgway explained the format for his upcoming financial presentations.

When asked whether he could correct issues from the previous audit, he responded that he arrived after the past fiscal year but he will review the issue.

Colorado Association of School Boards update

Board Secretary Tiffiney Upchurch reported that the Colorado Association of School Boards will hold its del-

egate assembly in September. She proposed submitting three proposals: the first is to eliminate the Budget Stabilization Act and pay the state's districts the \$370 million still owed them. Two other proposals referenced the guarantee of local control in the Colorado constitution and forbid the state from requiring districts to use specific curricula or meet conditions to receive funding.

The board approved submission of the proposals.

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the district's learning center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be on Sept. 19.

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

Monument Academy School Board, Aug. 1 and 11

Board approves student handbook changes

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held its regular meeting on Aug. 11 to discuss changes to the elementary and secondary student handbooks and to announce a board vacancy. They also had a special meeting on Aug. 1 to go into executive session to discuss the

chief operation officer's (COO) performance. The meeting on Aug. 11 ended with an executive session also considering the COO's performance and other issues.

Student handbooks reviewed

COO Merlin Holmes sent a draft of proposed changes and incorporated the board's responses. The administration of each campus initiated most of the changes, Holmes said, to align the handbook with policy.

For the secondary handbook, Middle School Principal Colin Vinchattle said some areas still had an elementary aspect they wanted to eliminate. Other changes reflected the expansion of the High School, which would include student drivers this year. He said the administration refined the discipline section to talk about philosophy generally rather than containing specifics. Kurt Walker, the elementary principal, said there were fewer changes to the elementary student handbook.

Board Vice President Lindsay Clinton asked if it was possible to provide a narrowed version with the

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most important items to ensure every parent will read and sign it, knowing that many won't read all 50 pages. Vinchattle said they held a parent town hall covering the significant areas. Board member Joe Buczkowski asked if parents wouldn't also have to sign the complete document. Another change requested by the board was to update the donations section, which did not reflect the larger donation MA will be requesting.

New board member Emily Belisle requested several modifications to clarify procedures and policy on early dismissal, prearranged absences, carline (where cars line up to drop off students or pick them up), and the disciplinary action report (DAR) process. She also asked to add information on MA's character curriculum and why public displays of affection were not added to the unwanted behavior section, along with adding vandalism, property damage, theft, profanities, racial slurs, and sexually charged language. Board member Misty McCuen relayed an incident where girls had been harassed but had been reluctant to come forward because they didn't know the available resources. Finally, Belisle asked about communicating expectations, including notifications of lengthy teacher absences. Attorney Brad Miller, who joined the meeting in progress, said that in a handbook, which is a living document, he recommended the board not go down rabbit holes. He also noted that MA needs to protect employee privacy and urged MA to encourage leadership to be thoughtful and discreet about communication rather than embody that in policy.

The board made two separate motions to approve the elementary and secondary student handbooks with direction to administration to make changes discussed in the meeting. Both handbooks, with changes, were approved unanimously.

Board vacancy announced

Board President Ryan Graham announced that he had received written notice that McCuen would resign as of Aug. 12. McCuen gave an emotional statement thanking the board for the privilege of serving for the past two years and said it was a difficult decision but the right one for her family. She said she strongly believed in the

role of parents in education, including character education, and that, even with her involvement with the board, she wanted to have a more direct influence. She and her husband have decided to homeschool her four children, she noted. She is confident that the team at MA will continue to do great work and will miss being there to see teachers and staff.

Graham moved and the board voted unanimously to notify the MA community of the vacancy to be filled through June 30, 2023, and to post eligibility rules, post a form for candidate submission, and provide the general timeline of the appointment process.

Executive sessions focus on COO performance

On Aug. 1, the board held a special meeting and went into an executive session to discuss specialized details



of security arrangements and COO job performance and to receive legal advice on specific legal matters related to the aforementioned topics. After three hours, the board returned to direct legal counsel to enact actions mentioned in the executive session concerning the COO's performance. They did not provide details of those actions.

At the end of the Aug. 11 meeting, the board went into executive session to again discuss specialized details of security arrangements and COO job performance relative to the action taken on Aug. 1, and to receive legal advice on specific legal matters regarding student issues and related to the aforementioned topics. After an hour and 40 minutes, the board returned and took no action.

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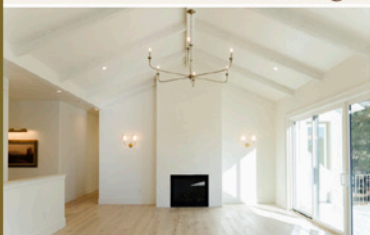
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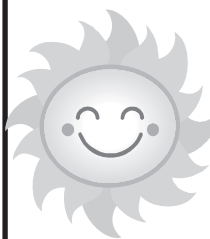
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Highlights

Board meeting highlights include:

- Holmes said MA had discussions with Leading Edge, a before and after school care provider, which would start once the school's state license was approved.
- The board directed Holmes to return at the Sept. 8 meeting with a memorandum of understanding with Leading Edge that legal counsel had vetted.
- Chief Financial Officer Marc Brocklehurst announced that MA hired Jason "Jake" Dicus as development and mission engagement manager.
- Brocklehurst reported that the county is assisting MA with getting its request for a bid on work on the Highway 105 recirculation plan on a government site that will reach a larger audience, hopefully in the fall.
- McCuen noted that on Aug. 30 the School Advisory and Accountability Committee would meet and

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begin discussing the school's Uniform Improvement Plan.

- Buczkowski reported for the Finance Committee that the D38 mill levy override, if passed, would improve MA's metrics and allow it to borrow more for phase 2. MA has other plans for phase 2 with a smaller scope if it does not pass.
- Board member Danny O'Brien said a vulnerability assessment would be conducted by the Colorado Department of Education on Sept. 1 on the East campus, followed by the West campus.
- The board agreed to add two fundraisers to the campus calendar for Grandparents Day and a gala.

The MA School Board meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. The next regular board meeting will be on Thursday, Sept. 8, at 6 p.m. on the East Campus. See more information at <https://bit.ly/ma-boe>.
Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

PALMER LAKE (Cont. from 1)

asked for a board retreat for further discussion. Trustee Karen Stuth said she saw no purpose in further delay.

Bass suggested the board direct staff to start discussions with The Carter Payne and the Willans, who had agreed to combine their plans. He emphasized this was not a formal award, but a request to start a negotiation.

Havenar moved to begin negotiations with The Carter Payne. To loud applause from the residents present, the board voted unanimously in favor of Havenar's motion.

Retail cannabis sale heads to ballot

At its Aug. 11 meeting, the board tabled the discussion of an ordinance that amended the town's current code in such a way that retail cannabis sales would have become legal. Had the board voted in favor of the ordinance,

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sales would have become legal without the question going to the voters. Havenar moved to table the ordinance; Bass, Trustee Nicole Currier, Trustee Jessica Farr, Havenar, Padgett, and Stuth voted in favor. Trustee Darin Dawson was not present at the meeting.

Town Attorney Matthew Krob presented two approaches to the ballot language that he thought embodied the board's discussion to date: a simple yes or no question, with the board to draft the rules and regulations later, or a more complicated question that, in addition to authorizing sales, would reference an ordinance detailing the rules and regulations that would be written and posted on the town's web page for review before voters cast their votes.

Havenar said she wanted to hear from the residents at the meeting. Residents commented on how the ballot language should be worded and discussed the implications of having retail sales and a mill levy increase on the same ballot.

Resident Jim Parco explained that 9.5% of all retail cannabis sales would return to the town in the form of tax revenue. He also made the point that the most important question was whether to permit retail sales.

John Cressman, previously the mayor of Palmer Lake, and Paul Banta, who served on the board, both advised the board to make the ballot language a simple yes or no question.

Stuth said she preferred ballot language that included the rules and regulations that would govern sales.

Havenar moved that the board approve putting a ballot initiative before the voters in the simplest form, without rules and regulations. Bass, Currier, Farr, Havenar, and Padgett voted in favor, passing the motion. Stuth voted no.

The final decision on the retail sales initiative was made at the Aug. 25 meeting. The board considered this language: "SHALL THE TOWN OF PALMER LAKE ENACT AN ORDINANCE PERMITTING THE OPERATION OF NOT MORE THAN TWO (2) REGULATED RETAIL MARIJUANA STORES WITHIN THE TOWN?"

Stuth pointed out that previous versions of the language had specified, in addition to a cap of two businesses, that the businesses must be in their "current locations."

In light of Stuth's comment, the ballot language was amended to read:

"SHALL THE TOWN OF PALMER LAKE ENACT AN ORDINANCE PERMITTING THE OPERATION OF NOT MORE THAN TWO REGULATED RETAIL MARIJUANA STORES IN EXISTING MARIJUANA BUSINESS LOCATIONS IN THE TOWN?"

Stuth moved to accept the amended language. The motion passed, with Bass, Currier, Havenar, and Padgett voting yes and Farr voting no. Dawson was not present at the meeting

Mill levy increase language decided

In August, the board continued its efforts to draft a ballot initiative that would increase the town's mill levy. They held a special meeting devoted to this topic on Aug. 15. The focus at the special meeting was on whether to ask voters for a single larger increase or for two smaller increases over two years, on how much to request and on how a mill increase would relate to the retail sales of adult-use cannabis.

At the Aug. 15 special meeting, Krob put three versions of the mill levy ballot language before the board: the first for a single increase, the second for two increases to the mills over two years, and the third tying the mill increase to the revenue generated by cannabis sales, should that initiative pass.

At the Aug. 25 meeting, the board returned to this issue, focusing on the first and third options presented at the special session. Town Administrator Dawn Collins explained some of the legal requirements for the initiative language to the board, pointing out the initiative would have to specify the amount of any increase and state the current mills collected. She added that the board had previously agreed to tie the mill increase to tax revenue generated by the retail sales of cannabis.

The board considered two updated versions of the mill increase ballot language. The first version reads:

"SHALL THE TOWN OF PALMER LAKE TAXES BE INCREASED BY NOT MORE THAN \$1,370,000 IN TAX COLLECTION YEAR 2023 AND BY WHATEVER ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS ARE GENERATED ANNUALLY THEREAFTER BY INCREASING THE GENERAL OPERATING MILL LEVY FOR GENERAL MUNICIPAL PURPOSES BY 15 MILLS FROM THE CURRENT 11.238 MILLS TO A MAXIMUM OF 26.238 MILLS IF BALLOT QUESTION 1A PASSES, OR BY 30 MILLS FOR A MAXIMUM OF 41.238 MILLS IF BALLOT QUESTION 1A DOES NOT PASS."

The second updated version reads:

"SHALL THE TOWN OF PALMER LAKE TAXES BE INCREASED BY NOT MORE THAN \$1,370,000 IN TAX COLLECTION YEAR 2023 AND BY WHATEVER ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS ARE GENERATED ANNUALLY THEREAFTER BY INCREASING THE GENERAL OPERATING MILL LEVY BY 30 MILLS FROM THE CURRENT 11.238 MILLS TO A MAXIMUM OF 41.238 MILLS FOR GENERAL MUNICIPAL PURPOSES AND SHALL THE TOWN BOARD BE AUTHORIZED TO ADJUST THE RATE WITHOUT FURTHER VOTER APPROVAL SO LONG AS THE RATE DOES NOT EXCEED 41.238 MILLS?"

Resident Jim Parco commented that the real question before the community was how to save the town. He pointed out that voting yes to both retail sales and a mill increase would save the town using other people's money. Voting no on both would send the town into receivership, he said.

Stuth moved to accept the first version of the language. That motion was amended to replace "maximum" with "not to exceed." The motion passed with Bass, Currier, Havenar, Padgett and Stuth in favor, and Farr voting no. Dawson was not present at the meeting.

Bass thanked the board for doing the work required to reach a consensus on this issue.

Executive session

The Aug. 11 meeting ended with an executive session to consider matters that may be subject to negotiations, possible annexation, open records requests, and personnel matters.

The next two board meetings are scheduled for Sept. 8 and 21. The Sept. 21 meeting is a joint meeting with the Planning Commission that starts at 4 p.m. 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.



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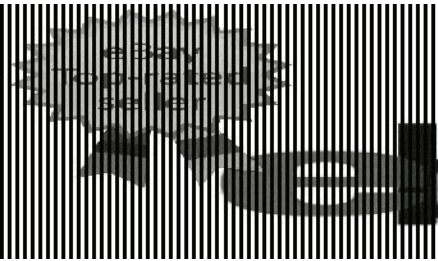
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Palmer Lake Board of Trustees workshop and special meeting, Aug. 11 and 15

Elephant Rock financials and mill levy override discussed

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans
The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees held a workshop and a special meeting in Au-

gust to gather community input on two of the proposals the board has put forward to generate additional tax revenue to

meet the town's budget shortfalls.

On Aug. 11, the board held a workshop at which three developers who have proposed plans for the Elephant Rock property presented the financial side of their plans, with an emphasis on generation of tax revenue. On Aug. 15, the board held a special meeting to debate the wording of the ballot initiative, proposed for the November ballot, that would add a mill levy override to the town's existing property taxes.

The Carter Payne makes its financial case

The three development teams drew straws to determine the order in which they would present. Jeff Zearfoss of The Carter Payne started, followed by Duncan Bremer, Matt Dunston, and JW Roth, with Richard and Lindsey Willan making the final presentation

Zearfoss said his team had not made major changes to how it would develop the Elephant Rock property since its presentation to the board on June 29. Reporting on that presentation can be found here: <https://ocn.me/v22n8.htm#plbt>.

His plan would create about 50 full-time jobs and about 125 part-time jobs, Zearfoss said. His goal was to develop employees, and he focused on training new employees who might have had challenges finding jobs and getting them back into the economy.

In terms of timeline, Zearfoss said his team was ready to begin immediately with community gardens, a hop yard, and wildflower meadow and trail connections. Phase 1 would include a rehab of the main building, a buildout of the brewery and a conversion of the exist-

ing gym into an event space. It would be complete by 2023. The next phase, ending in late 2023 or 2024, would add retail spaces and an artists' co-op. The last phase would add more event venues and rehab of the existing cabins.

Zearfoss said the proposed timeline would require a \$4.25 million investment, adding that he had a firm commitment from two banks for the \$1.5 million needed to begin. He anticipated the town would receive \$185,108 in property taxes between 2023 and 2032.

Zearfoss predicted his plan would generate \$1.91 million in sales tax for the town between 2023 and 2032. He said he would add an additional 1% to the 3% sales tax the town had in place. The additional 1% fee would be divided between the town and the Palmer Lake Economic Development Group (PLEDG). The town would receive 0.5% of the fee, PLEDG would get 0.25%, and the last 0.25% would go into a grantmaking fund administered by PLEDG for grants to small businesses and other economic development efforts.

Zearfoss asked for a 20-year lease on the property. He ended by saying he was focused on the community, believed business was a force for good, and wanted the project to benefit locals as well as tourists.

Bremer and Dunston make major revisions to plan

In contrast to Zearfoss, Bremer and Dunston came before the board with a very different, and much larger, plan than they presented previously. Details about their original plan can be found here: <https://ocn.me/v22n8.htm#plbt>.

At the Aug. 11 meeting, Bremer and Dunston were joined by developer JW



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Roth, owner of the Boot Barn Hall and other venues, who is also the developer of the proposed Sunset Amphitheater. Their plan was still for a festival venue, but on a much larger scale than previously presented. They proposed a festival venue named “Palmer Lake Music Grounds” but said less than half of the festivals would be music related. They envisioned events that would be open during the day but shut down by 8 p.m. Details of their expanded proposal are here: <https://bit.ly/3QT7cMB>.

Roth said they would demolish the existing buildings, put the electrical service underground, and build a bandshell that would not block views and would send sound into the hills rather than toward residences. Bremer told the board they would build parking for festival attendees on the north side of town and shuttle attendees between the parking and the venue.

Bremer, Dunston, and Roth proposed that the town would retain ownership of the land but grant them a 99-year lease. They would pay a base rent and fees from ticket sales. They asked for no investment by the town and said they would handle all maintenance.

Their presentation said after 2025 the town would receive rent, ticket fees, sales tax, property tax and liquor tax. They estimated the town would receive \$310,000 annually from the venue.

Willens detail spa concept

Richard and Lindsay Willens proposed linking the trails on the Elephant Rock property together and renovating the existing pool into a spa. The spa would recycle its water and they would bring in mineral water from another spa in Manitou Springs. It would operate on a membership or reservation basis but would allow walk-ins as well.

The Willenses said they had several potential investors to cover the \$1.2 million need to build the spa. They also said they had spoken to Zearfoss and were considering partnering with his team.

Mill levy override refined

At an Aug. 15 special meeting, the board returned to its discussion of the ballot language for a mill levy override to appear on the November ballot along with an initiative authorizing the retail sale of adult-use cannabis. The board considered the details of the MLO from several perspectives, including:

- Likelihood of support by younger and older voters.
- How to mitigate the effect of an increase in mills on businesses.
- Whether the MLO initiative should be tied to the retail sale of cannabis initiative.
- How to give all voters an option to express their exact preference on both the mill increase and the retail sale of cannabis.
- How to make the ballot language as simple as possible.
- Whether to ask for a single mill increase adequate to meet the town’s needs or ask for a series of smaller increases.

Trustee Glant Havenar opened the discussion by telling the board that in her conversations with voters she saw that younger voters were more accepting of a mill increase but older voters were usually not in favor of an increase. She said she felt only one of the proposed initiatives would pass, and she recommended asking for one larger mill increase that was certain to meet the town’s needs.

Havenar also pointed out that an increase in mills would hit businesses harder than residents, since commercial properties are assessed at 29% and residential properties are assessed at 6.95%. She asked if it was possible to “de-Gallagherize” the town. Town Attorney Matthew Krob agreed to investigate ways to reduce the impact of an increase on commercial properties.

The board discussed methods to tie the mill increase and the retail sale of cannabis together. Krob told the board language along the lines of “if retail cannabis sales do not pass, shall mills be increased by a stated amount” would meet the legal requirements for a ballot initiative. He told the board that the two initiatives could be tied together and a mill increase could be proposed in a series of small steps or in one larger request. Krob also recommended, several times, that the ballot language be as simple as possible to avoid confusing voters.

The board did a quick straw poll on whether the mill increase question should be tied to the cannabis sales question. Trustee Nicole Currier said it would be confusing to tie them together and added that she could not accept a 35-mill increase.

Trustee Samantha Padgett and Mayor Bill Bass favored tying the questions. Trustee Jessica Farr thought they should not be tied. Havenar said tying the questions was confusing and made both unlikely to pass. Trustee Karen Stuth felt all the options discussed would confuse voters. Trustee Darin Dawson, who was traveling, exchanged texts with Bass, and he was receptive to tying the questions and would not support a mill increase larger than 20 mills.

All the trustees were against asking for a series of mill increases and favored a single request of voters.

Bass suggested the questions should be structured to propose that if retail cannabis sales passed, the mill increase should be up to but not exceeding 20 mills, and if retail sales failed then the mill increase should be 30 mills. Other trustees proposed other mill amounts for the two possibilities.

The board could not reach consensus on the question exactly how to tie the questions together and tabled that detail until the next regular board meeting.

Krob wrapped up the discussion by summarizing the requests trustees had made to staff as follows:

- Draft a simple initiative asking for a vote in favor or against retail sales of cannabis at only two stores in their present locations.
- A mill levy increase initiative that would specify a 15 mill increase if retail sales passed and a 30 mill increase if retail sales did not pass.

The consensus of the board was that these choices would give voters a set of options allowing them to express their exact preferences.

The trustees voted on final versions of the retail sales ballot language and the mill increase language at their second regular meeting. See coverage on page 1.

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.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me. Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

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Monument Board of Trustees, July 18

Board gets presentations on legislation and history, approves Falcon Commerce Center Phase 2

By Jackie Burhans

At the July 18 Monument Board of Trustees meeting, due to communication issues with Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliot, who was participating remotely, and the absence of Mayor Don Wilson, the board appointed Trustee Ron Stephens as acting mayor for this meeting on a vote of 4 to 1. Stephens opposed the motion and Elliot was unable to vote due to technical difficulties. After a delay of nearly 30 minutes, Stephens called the meeting to order. The board then went on to hear two presentations and vote on several resolutions and ordinances.

Presentations heard

Roger Lovell, an official at Pikes Peak Regional Building and Development (PPRBD), discussed recent legislation at the state level: HB22-1362 Building Greenhouse Gas Emissions (See <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb22-1362>). He noted that the Town of Monument had opposed it as had PPRBD, saying it took away local control by creating a statewide energy code board to develop model electric, solar, low energy, and carbon

codes for adoption by counties, municipalities, and state agencies.

PPRBD opposes the bill due to increased costs, Lovell said, noting that the bill establishes a timeline by which PPRBD must adopt a new building code before July 1, 2023, that adopts one of the three most recent energy codes without lessening restrictions. If PPRBD modifies its building code after that date, it must adopt the unamended 2021 energy code plus the model energy and solar-ready code that has yet to be written, he said. He said moving from 2018 to the 2021 code could cost \$11,000 per home and that PPRBD was on the 2015 energy code currently. Lovell said if PPRBD could get its code adopted and enforced locally before the deadline, it would soften the cost impact. PPRBD has a draft code, will have work sessions and staff adjustments, and will have a second round of public comment in October. After finalizing the codes, PPRBD will bring them back to its jurisdictions such as Monument for approval, he said.

Jim Sawatzki, president of the Palmer Lake Historical Society (PLHS), present-

ed historical information about the community and emphasized the importance of preserving its history. Roger Davis, director of the Lucretia Vaile Museum, noted that the society and museum serve Monument as well as Palmer Lake and on out to Table Rock and North Academy Boulevard. Davis said history need not be a memory, and PLHS needs Monument's help. Sawatzki referred to a document prepared by Dawn Collins, Palmer Lake's town manager, showing the town's in-kind donations including the use of space in the building PLHS occupies, which has a value of \$12,000.

Sawatzki asked the Town of Monument to match this donation by building it into their 2023 budget and going forward. He noted that PLHS was working on a book detailing the definitive history of the Monument tree nursery. The board directed Town Manager Mike Foreman to add this as a discussion item in the upcoming budget workshop.

Resolutions approved

The board approved all the following resolutions by a vote of 6-0.

- After a public hearing, the board approved Resolution No. 56-2022 approving a preliminary planned unit development (PUD) for Falcon Commerce Center Phase 2. The vote included the conditions that, before recording the preliminary PUD, the applicant remove notes 5 and 6 and replace them with language about complying with the town's land dedication standards by either the dedication of parkland or by the payment of fees and eliminating the retail sale of gasoline as an approved use.
- After a public hearing on Resolution No. 57-2022 approving a final plat for Falcon Commerce Center Filing No. 2 with no public comments, the board passed the motion.
- Resolution 61-2022 authorizing that the Nov. 8 Town of Monument Election be conducted as a coordinated election and appointing the town clerk as the designated election official was passed unanimously. The resolution also authorized the town clerk to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with the El Paso County Clerk and Recorder for the conduct and administration of the election.

Ordinances streamline hearings, update land use code

By a vote of 6-0, the board approved Ordinance No. 11-2022 Amending Titles 1 and 18 of the Town of Monument Municipal Code to Streamline the Hearing Procedures. Planning Director Nina Ruiz explained the first step to streamline the process, with the second step to be considered in the Aug. 15 meeting. The ordinance as presented would have limited the number of applications to be heard at one meeting and additional notification requirements. After a discussion about the pros and cons and hearing public comment, interim attorney Joseph Rivera suggested a motion to approve the ordinance with only the increased notice requirements.

The board then considered Ordinance 12-2022 Updating the Land Use Development Code and Revising the Industrial Use Table and Supplemental Use Standards. In public comments, resident Steve King did not support conditional uses, saying it made things difficult for business and property owners. Ken Kimple suggested traffic studies be conducted by an outside, staff-chosen agency. Board members Jim Romanello and Redmond Ramos agreed that the restrictions went too far. Rivera responded to board member Mitch LaKind that making uses did not remove property rights. The motion failed on a vote of 4 to 2 with Elliott, Ramos, Romanello, and Stephens opposing.

Highlights

- The agenda included an informational item acknowledging that the board had received a petition for annexation of 91 acres of land including I-25 from the Monument Meadows Mobile Home Park north to County Line Road.
- A second item acknowledged receiving a petition for annexation of about 71 acres of land on the east side of I-25, immediately south of County Line Road.
- Resident Nancy Swearingen asked the Board of Trustees to think about the fact that Monument has no renewable water source. She said the board has to build something that is sustainable now and in the future.
- Foreman thanked the Board of

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

Board approves two ordinances, cancels two workshops

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

Board approves ordinance but splits on amendment

Amy Bodigan of the Fountain Creek Watershed shared information for Creek Week, set for Sept. 24-Oct. 2. Creek Week seeks volunteers to clean litter along the creek and other open spaces throughout the watershed. Its website (www.fountain-crk.org/creek-week) invites individuals and groups "to form a Creek Crew" for the cleanup. "Get outdoors, get active, and create some good for your community and those living downstream." The board unanimously agreed with a reading of the proclamation.



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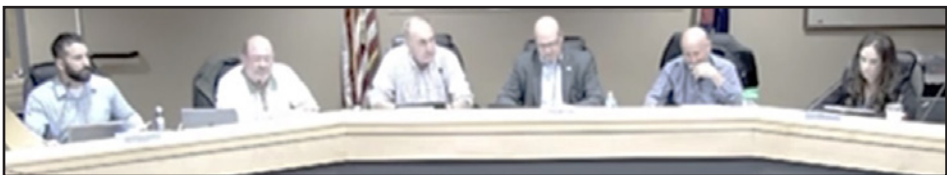
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Above: (L to R) At the Aug. 15 meeting of the Monument Board of Trustees are Trustees Redmond Ramos, Mitch LaKind, and Ron Stephens; Mayor Don Wilson; and Trustees Jim Romanello and Darcy Schoening. *Screenshot by Chris Jeub of the YouTube video.*

Board discusses and votes on ordinance

The board passed Ordinance 15-2022 updating the Land Development Code (LDC). This came following a presentation by Planning Director Nina Ruiz and lengthy discussions over whether to amend the ordinance to bring sketch plans to the board and the Planning Commission (PC).

Background: The proposed ordinance started July 5 when the board provided direction to town staff to seek alternative measures that would allow for sufficient hearings to help ensure all rules and regulations of developments were followed. On Aug. 1, the board approved the first part of that plan, to provide notice to adjacent property owners before any submissions to the town. This would allow staff and the hearing bodies to be aware of any controversial items on the agenda to see if concerns could be worked out before coming to a public hearing. This proposal was sent out to the public and the industry for comments, and supportive letters from both were included in the public record.

Modifications: On Aug. 10, the PC made four modifications to the proposed amendment:

- The PC will have final approval over sketch plans, and the BOT will not hear sketch plan applications.
- Approval of sketch plans does not obligate the board to approve them.
- Adding a review criterion requiring phased plans will not impede the orderly growth of public services and the entire land area.
- Additional modifications will be made throughout to give more importance and significance of the PC as a hearing body.

Some trustees expressed concern over the modifications in that sketch plans for larger developments were being kept from the board. Trustee Mitch LaKind asked whether it was legal for them to do so. Interim town attorney Joseph Rivera said that all plans are placed in the record and are still available, but the BOT could refuse the PC modification. Trustee Ron Stephens expressed that he is not opposed to the PC modification because of the existing clause that keeps a developer from being bound by the sketch plan. He said it cut down on bureaucracy and made the process more expeditious.

Wilson asked if the board would be liable if an approved sketch plan from the PC ends up not being approved by the board. Rivera explained the difference between “expectations” and “vested property rights,” and Ruiz clarified it further. Liability comes when owners have vested property rights, not expectations, and rights would not be given until the board gives final approval.

Proposed amendments: Ruiz summarized the three proposed amendments to the ordinance in preparation for the vote. The first proposed amendment was to combine the Preliminary PUD and the Final PUD into one. Procedurally there would be no difference, but one single zoning action would instead be provided. Ruiz explained what is necessary for a PUD submission and gave a list of requirements for all applications. Trustee Stephens expressed concern that this would limit a developer in phasing their development to adjust to market demands. Ruiz explained that in such cases developers would need to go through a process of amending their PUD, but the process would allow for more flexibility and be less restrictive.

The second proposed amendment

was to require a site plan for all PUDs. Currently a site plan is only required for non-PUDs. This would take away the ability for developers to ask for modifications of the PUD, but so far all the developers are OK with that. The site plan would be reviewed to make sure all developments would comply with the Land Development Code.

The third proposed amendment was to combine the Preliminary Plat and the Final Plat. Ruiz provided a graphic that showed how little difference there currently is between the preliminary and final plats. There were no questions from the board on this request.

Public comment came from Steve King, who generally approved of the ordinance, explaining it will make developments clearer and easier to understand. However, King expressed concerns over sketch plans, calling them a “dog-and-pony show” and “marketing pieces.” He claimed problems occur when the presented sketch plans differ from the final plans, creating misunderstandings. He also expressed concerns over the wording of “general” versus “substantial” compliance with the code. King called for more detail in sketch plans so that the board can make more intelligible decisions.

King’s comments were referenced in the discussion asking for board approval of the sketch plans, but the amendment ultimately failed on a 3-3 vote. However, the ordinance Amending Title 18 Regarding Planned Unit Development Zoning District Subdivision Regulations passed by a vote of 6-0.

Monument Academy school resource officer

By a vote of 6-0, the board passed Resolution No. 63-2022: a resolution approving an intergovernmental agreement between the Town of Monument and Monument Academy (MA) for one school resource officer for the 2022-23 school year. Hemingway spoke of how the Police Department has been working with MA in coming up with tactics and strategies to help take care of students. He proposed a school resource officer (SRO) at MA. Total cost is \$85,685.

Hemingway responded to several comments from trustees: Trustee LaKind asked for clarification of the funding metric, Wilson inquired about the work schedule of the SRO, Stephens expressed affirmation on how an active SRO helps improve mental health, and Trustee Darcy Schoening asked for clarification on the visibility of the SRO. A D38 substitute teacher asked if the same service could be provided to other schools in the district. MA board President Ryan Graham responded on how MA operates independently from D38, but Hemingway explained how D38 has great SROs through the El Paso County Sheriff’s Office that they do not want to change.

Overnight camping

Ruiz explained that there is no term within the land development code for overnight camping. The most closely related uses that may be allowed are places that are designated recreational vehicle parks or truck yards. If someone is overnight camping in a zone that is not allowed, law and code enforcement officers would be able to work with property owners to bring them into compliance.

Hemingway expressed approval of a narrower definition of overnight camping to help guide officers in handling overnight camping within Monument. Stephens raised concerns that people would move just outside the town boundaries and continue vagrancy problems, and Hemingway claimed the refining of the

code would help enforcement properly move overnight campers to more appropriate locations. Wilson asked Ruiz if any direction was needed at this time, and Ruiz replied that this was simply informational for the board.

Future well sites

Monument Public Works Director Tom Tharnish provided background concerning the original plans to dig an Arapahoe Aquifer well with water treatment plants to accompany them. Since that plan was made, the more recent Loop Project—a county project that will bring reused water back into Monument—has changed the mind of Public Works. Tharnish now says that a better plan for the town would be to drill two smaller Denver Basin wells rather than one larger Arapahoe Aquifer well. The cost is about the same, but the change would be easier to maintain, would not require treatment plants (a \$5.7 million future cost), and the town would be able to return water back to Monument’s creek system when the Loop Project finishes. Tharnish will be working with the town manager to clarify costs. The new wells could be drilled this fall and be ready for use next year.

LaKind asked if the town was still moving forward with the Loop Project, and Tharnish said the town is working out details of costs, funding, and infrastructure. Since the Loop Project involves the entire county, there are several entities involved that require many agreements. LaKind followed up, asking if drilling the smaller wells would change current projects, and Tharnish said that it would not. Schoening asked why Public Works switched to investigating this change, and Tharnish explained that it started with re-evaluating the need for the water treatment for the deeper Arapahoe Aquifer. Stephens asked for average use of water in Monument and how it has changed, and Tharnish explained cu-

bic footage usages and projections. The board approved the direction of Public Works.

Board comments

Schoening requested PUD clarification with a workshop to help get better control of zoning and development standards, with Trustee Redmond Ramos expressing support. Wilson shared concern of being “over-workshopped” this year and asked for more clarification before creating a workshop. He asked town staff for direction, and Ruiz suggested looking at amending checklists rather than revising codes. Ramos referenced public comment from King to call into question sketch plans and their lack of details.

Ruiz then agreed that a workshop or at least a discussion item may be needed if the board agreed that it was needed. Wilson claimed that “a sketch plan is what it’s supposed to be: a sketch, an idea,” and “restricting it, why not make it a final PUD?” Instead, Wilson called for board members to look at the checklists, make recommendations for changes, then add them to future discussions and clarifications with the board if necessary.

The meeting was adjourned at the conclusion of the executive session.

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 two regular meetings are scheduled for Monday, Sept. 5 and Monday, Sept. 19. 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.

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Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Aug. 16

2021 audit approved; district boundary realignment discussed

By Natalie Barszcz
At the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) meeting on Aug. 16, the board approved the 2021 audit, heard

about the future district boundary realignment, and received multiple updates regarding the unification process with Monument Fire District (MFD).
Director Mike Forsythe was excused.

2021 audit

The board approved the 2021 audit and authorized the auditor to file it with the state, 4-0.

District boundary realignment
The district's attorney, Emily Powell of Ireland Stapleton Pryor Pascoe PC law firm, said that moving forward a two-step process is required, and said:

- Step 1: The board would need to simultaneously increase the district (southern enclave) mill levy and dissolve the district in one election.
- Step 2: A district-to-district transfer would then need to be implemented, moving the district to MFD without an election.
- Everyone in the former DWFPD area of service would receive a decrease in mill levy.
- Each step would take a year to complete, and the legal process will be intensive and involve a district court, and the board will be required to order an election.
- Legal fees for 2023 cannot be projected until the board has decided how to proceed, but the board could wait if they need some breathing room.

President Mark Gunderman said he is glad the board does not need to make an immediate decision, and a discussion regarding the timeline for the process should take place with MFD board President John Hildebrandt and Fire Chief Andy Kovacs.

Powell said she would submit an estimate of attorney fees for the 2023 budget planning process but requested the board consider the 2024 presidential election year.

Gunderman said the district could consider a ballot question for the 2023 election.

After the mill levy tax issue is resolved and the district transfer is completed, the district can be dissolved, said Powell.

Unification update

Powell gave an update on the status of tasks related to the merger and said:

- The personnel transfer to MFD was scheduled to occur on Aug. 28.
- The former insurance brokers are making sure all programs are transferred on time.
- The administrative staff is ensuring that the staff is transferred on to the MFD payroll and W2 systems.
- The district will need to submit a prorated pension plan for the DWFPD personnel.
- The bill of sale for the apparatus and equipment and the quit claim deeds for Station 4 and 5 (formerly Station 1 and 2) have been drafted and will be sent to Kovacs and the MFD attorney Maureen Juran.
- The board approved a lump sum transfer of \$1.8 million at the July board meeting. The transfer to MFD will be made on Sept. 13. See www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#dwfpd.
- All the glitches have been ironed out, and everything is moving along as expected.

Chief's report

Kovacs (attending via Zoom) said the following:

- The new combined district name "Monument Fire District" logo and patch artwork was created by Engineer Lou Jones, and the district has received many compliments over the name change and patch.
- The merger is moving along smoothly and MFD appreciates the DWFPD board member support.
- The full-services contract signing and re-dedication of Station 1 was well attended. The district's official honor guard was introduced for the first time at the event, and the district appreciated the support from the volunteer group El Paso County Emergency Incident Support.
- The district participated in the Town of Monument's Fourth of July Parade and personnel assisted in about five or six minor medical issues during the event.
- The district has been hard at work training with area partners and has achieved a higher amount of training hours required of their profession.
- Battalion Chief Sean Pearson and Emergency Medical Services Coordinator Stephanie Soll have been working on a Mass Casualty incident policy. Pearson and Soll put together a simulated car accident with multiple patients at Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection Training Center. The event garnered much attention from local area hospitals, the Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Councils, and the district medical director. It is good that MFD is leading the charge in the county on developing a regional plan.
- Ambulance fee revenue has increased by 75%, in part due to the combination of the districts.
- Mutual aid calls to assist American Medical Response increased to 25 in July; the district responded to 19.
- The chipping and mitigation events continue in the HOA communities every weekend from May through September. The efforts of Division Chief of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner are greatly appreciated.

Note: The DWFPD board will meet monthly until further notice. The combined district boards receive the same Chief's report. For additional information see the MFD article on page 17.

DWFPD (Cont. on 16)



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Photo by Bonnie Nasser

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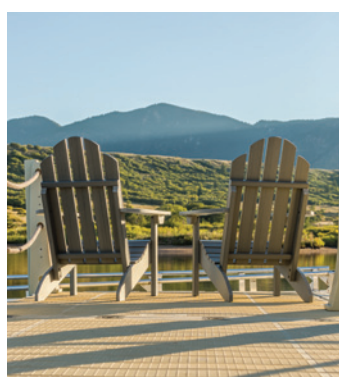


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DWFPD (Cont. from 14)

Public comment

El Paso County Emergency Incident Support President Gary Nelson said the non-profit group was proud to serve over 140 attendees at the Tri-Lakes Monument

and Donald Wescott merger, re-dedication and ribbon cutting event at Station 1 on July 30. "It was an excellent turnout and presentation," said Nelson. See the MFD article on page 17. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of the month at MFD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, at 4 p.m. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Sept. 20 at 4 p.m. Meeting attendance is open to the public in person or via Zoom. For joining instructions, agendas, min-

utes, and updates visit www.wescottfire.org or www.tlmfire.org or contact Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich at 719-484-9011.

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

Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, Aug. 17

New engine arrives in district

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD) meeting on Aug. 17, the board explored the recently arrived engine and heard about how the district might fund an approved apparatus purchase in 2023. The board also heard that the district needs to hire additional staff to operate the recently purchased used aerial mid-mount ladder truck.

Financial report

Treasurer Jack Hinton said the district had about \$3.396 million in the bank including the emergency funds, but that dropped dramatically in August. The tax revenue received in July was just over \$1 million, and that declined to about \$84,818 in August. The district is now in the cycle of living off the tax revenue received year to date until March 2023, said Hinton.

The district recently purchased a used (to be delivered) Pierce Aerial Ladder Truck for \$250,000 and paid an additional \$79,000 for paint and lights. The Pierce Enforcer Engine down payment was \$275,000 and the Capital Reserve Fund that had held \$565,683 will be reduced to \$211,683. The fund will need to be built back up before the arrival of the 2023 tender apparatus, said Hinton. Hinton also said the district is using a 10-year lease purchase agreement/loan

to complete the purchase of the 2022 Pierce Enforcer Engine. "It will be a great engine and serve the district for a long time," said Hinton. See www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#bffrpd. The district may also need to finance the 2023 tender next year to afford the training of the 12 personnel needed to operate the used Pierce Aerial Ladder Truck in 2024, said Hinton. See www.ocn.me/v22n7.htm#bffrpd. The financial report was accepted as presented, 5-0.

Public comments

Resident John Tarvainen requested the reason for the recent purchase of a ladder truck.

- Fire Chief PJ Langmaid said in response:
- There is no real complement of ground ladders within the entire north end of the county.
 - Monument Fire District (formerly Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District) had called for water trucks (tender apparatus) in the past to bring additional ground ladders, and they have a ladder truck.
 - The primary purpose of the aerial ladder truck will be to perform search and rescue and ventilation during fire calls, and bring ground ladders.
 - The district paid a total of about



Above: From left, Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg, Deputy Chief James Rebitski, Director Kiersten Tarvainen, Vice Chairman Jim Abendschan, Treasurer Jack Hinton, Chairman Nate Dowden, Lt. Brandon Jones, and firefighters Maria Fine and John Singheim pose with the new 2022 Pierce Enforcer Engine. Photo by Natalie Barszcz.

- \$329,000 for the used mid-mount aerial ladder truck and a similar new model would have cost about \$1.5 million to \$1.8 million.
- It is a big undertaking and commitment, and the goal was for the district to purchase a ladder truck for 2024, but after the suggestion from a community resident, the executive staff searched for a used ladder truck and found a suitable compromise to meet the district's needs.
- The district will take possession of the truck prematurely, and then buy equipment and hire and train additional staff to operate the truck in 2024.

Chief's report

Langmaid said the district is expecting the estimated property tax valuations from the El Paso County Assessor at the end of the month, and due to the state reduction in the Residential Assessment Rate (RAR) and the exclusion of property from the dual service area, budget revenue will be impacted. The district will be consulting legal counsel regarding an adjustment to offset the decrease in the RAR. The adjustment will be more work for the county assessor, said Langmaid. See www.ocn.me/v21n11.htm#bffrpd.

- Logistic/administrative update**
- Deputy Chief James Rebitski said the following:
- Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn hired Brooke Reid, a part-time administrative assistant, on Aug. 1.
 - Fleet repairs are being completed at Station 1 by Gavin Smith, retired from South Metro Fire District last October. He had been working one

- day a week until recently and will be working three days a week.
- The barn at Station 1 is undergoing a conversion to a ground support/fleet workshop.
- The plan is to install heaters in the barn, which is expected to be completed before winter. Smith will continue to work in the bay at Station 1 until the barn is ready.
- The district website is undergoing a remodel, making fire restriction information easier to find. See www.bffire.org.
- Highly visible fire danger signs have been installed around the district.

Operations/training update

Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg said the following:

- The district staff completed 1,344 training hours in July, 624 hours above the department minimum of 720 hours.
- The department responded to five fire calls and 37 EMS calls in July.
- The district hosted a Forceable Entry class with 30 statewide attendees.
- Wildland Fire Chainsaw certifications were completed, felling dead pine trees in Fox Run Regional Park and a few from behind Station 1.
- The Black Forest Training Center received great feedback from Falcon Fire Protection District and MFD after both districts completed multi-vehicle crash drills.
- An out-building fire occurred at a Black Forest hydroponic farm, due to a light used to keep chickens warm.
- The district responded to assist with a wildland fire in Elbert County.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Correction

Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg was traveling during the July meeting and attended via Zoom. Acting Lt. Michael Alverado facilitated the Zoom operation of the meeting. There were no other members of the executive team in attendance.

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 Sept. 21 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.

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Monument Fire District, Aug. 24

New fire station proposed

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Monument Fire District (MFD) meeting on Aug. 24, the board received a proposal for a new fire station and funding approval for the rebranding of the combined district.

Secretary Mike Smaldino and Director Jason Buckingham did not attend.

Fire Station 3 proposal

Division Chief of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner, Division Chief of Operations Jonathan Bradley, Principal Lead Architect Kevin Schaffer and Senior Associate Architect Eric Becker of OZ Architecture, Denver, presented a proposal for a new fire station to the board.

Schaffer said the architectural firm had built about 30 fire stations and won many awards, with a focus nationally on the changes in the fire service industry.

Becker said he had been specializing in fire station design for 15 years, and he is passionate about building fire stations with functional design, keeping public safety in mind. Each station design includes a recommended decontamination flow path for the safe handling of hazardous materials, said Becker.

Bradley showed photographs of the interior of Station 3 and said the following:

- Station 3 on Woodmoor Drive is about 50 years old, and in that time only one renovation had occurred.
- The station is “maxed out” on space and not built to code.
- The lack of space makes the handling of management issues inappropriate.
- Computer desks are crammed in close proximity to beds, and too many uses are performed in the available spaces. The foyer at the entrance of the station doubles as the meeting room.
- Fifty years ago, the district did not have many female employees, and currently they have to walk through the day room to take a shower.
- Accessing the bathrooms and the day room is tight due to parked apparatus.
- Due to a lack of space, medical equipment is stored in the gymnasium.
- Combining administration space at a new station would give the district an opportunity to sell the current administration building.

Becker gave an overview of three potential sites the district requested OZ Architects assess, including the current Station 3 site and two undeveloped sites on the north end of Jackson Creek Parkway near the YMCA.

Bumgarner said the highest number of calls are along I-25, and proposing a station on the north/west end of Jackson Creek Parkway, where the highest commercial growth and the most residential density exists, would allow quick and easy access to Highway 105 and keep response times below 8 minutes, said Bumgarner.

Bradley said there is a tremendous amount of overlap between Station 1 and Station 3, and moving and

rebuilding Station 3 to a more central location in a high-density area with more commercial property would give the district greater capability.

Becker said a typical fire station layout with the addition of an administration building and the correct sizing needs for the staff would need to be somewhere from 15,000 to 18,000 square feet. OZ Architecture tested each site and explored the possibility of reusing the Station 3 site after demolition, and he said:

- The existing site would require moving utilities, and there would be no possibility to add drive-through bays to avoid apparatus damage.
- There would be a lack of parking for the crew and administrative staff and no secure parking, which is becoming standard.
- No buffer between residential homes and the current site, with the potential for pushback from the residents.
- The configuration would not be ideal, and the sleeping areas would be closer to the road.

Becker said two other sites were analyzed on Jackson Creek Parkway, but one would not provide much room for expansion unless a two-story firehouse option is chosen. Building a two-story firehouse would add costs, but the concept would provide space to include additional parking and drive-through bays. The unavoidable large landscape buffer would push the building close to the parking lot, and the neighboring development would likely install a public path in front of the station. The larger site farther north of the YMCA and west of Jackson Creek Parkway with close access to Highway 105 would provide everything the district is looking for, complete with drive-through bays and a turn-around lane, said Becker.

Bumgarner said the following:

- The district has a confirmed buyer interested in purchasing the Station 3 property as is, and an appraisal has been completed.
- Funds from the sale of the Station 3 property, and the sale of the district administration suites, would go toward the new property purchase and construction of a new Station 3.
- The number one goal in the design of a fire station is to ensure the firefighters can get on the truck as quickly as possible.
- The architects have shared how that can be achieved, incorporating firefighter safety concepts and programming every square foot to ensure needs are met.

Schaffer said the following:

- The architectural design process would take about six or seven months and the construction phase is usually nine months, but due to labor and material shortages the process will take about 12 months to complete the construction process.
- The new station would be a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified build-

ing, sustainable and designed to operate at a lower cost, even though it would have a larger footprint than the existing Station 3.

Rebranding funds approved

Bumgarner said the district is proposing the cost of rebranding be split over two years with \$150,731 in 2022 and \$105,281 in 2023. The Artworks Unlimited LLC, Denver, would decal the combined district’s apparatus and vehicles within the district to save time and avoid having apparatus travel out of the district, said Bumgarner.

President John Hildebrandt said it would be nice to

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Draft Environmental Assessment Falcon Stadium Modernization,
United States Air Force Academy, Colorado

A Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Proposed Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) have been prepared by the United States Air Force to analyze the potential environmental consequences associated with the modernization of Falcon Stadium at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) in El Paso County, Colorado.

The Proposed Action includes adding restrooms and concessions to meet current building code and accepted industry standards ratios; improved parking options on site; providing multiple seating environments within various decks and price points, including premium club seating; upgrading audio/visual and Wi-Fi access to support handset connectivity throughout the stadium and to meet the expectations of attendees; and adding critical safety design measures to manage crowd flow. Modernization encompasses the need to improve overall player and attendee experience, making Falcon Stadium commensurate with other venues in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Football Bowl Subdivision.

The Draft EA and Proposed FONSI are available at the Pikes Peak Library and the following website:

**https://www.usafa.af.mil/Units/10th-Air-Base-Wing/Mission-Support-Group/
Civil-Engineer-Squadron/Installation-Management/Environmental-Management/**

Please provide any comments within 30 days from the date of this Notice of Availability. Please note that in accordance with Privacy Act provisions, the Air Force will not publish personal information of commenters, such as home addresses, e-mail addresses, or phone numbers. Please mail or e-mail comments or requests for information to:

Barry Schatz, Environmental Element Chief
8120 Edgerton Drive, USAFA, CO 80840
10CES.CENPP.Planning_Programming@us.af.mil

The Air Force is aware of the potential impact of the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the usual methods of access to information and ability to communicate. Accordingly, please do not hesitate to contact us directly at the email address provided above.

know where the capital is coming from before approving.

Bumgarner said it may come out of the operating budget from several operating fund line items that are under budget or from the capital funds, but Kovacs would not have requested the proposal if he did not already have a plan.

Director Terri Hayes said the board does not have a choice and waiting to approve the funds would cause an unnecessary delay.

The board approved the funding to pay for the re-branding costs, 5-0.

Financial report—July

Treasurer Tom Kelly said Ambulance Fees are 22% above the projected annual revenue at \$642,143 year to date. The district anticipated \$800,000 for the 2022 annual budget. Impact Fees received year to date are \$139,936, 53.7% above the projected annual revenue of \$125,000. The overall revenue received year to date is about \$11.9 million and approximately 92.4% of the projected 2022 income budget of \$12.9 million.

Overall expenses year to date are about \$5.6 million. The projected 2022 expense budget is set at about \$10.2 million.

The board approved the financial report as presented, 5-0.

Station 1 Training Center update

Bradley said the district is considering a company to construct the Training Center for a cost ranging between \$700,000 and \$1 million. The district is waiting for a meeting with the Town of Monument before determining the location of the MFD Training Facility and is investigating options for a training tower. See [www.ocn.me/v22n7.htm#tlmfpd](#).

Chief’s report

Bradley said the following:

- The district has seen an incident-by-call-type increase from June, with 268 EMS incidents and 11

fire incidents. The district responded to four mutual aid/EMS calls to both Palmer Lake and Black Forest. In comparison, the total number of incidents in July was 373, up from 332 in July 2021.

- The combined district has seen a significant increase in Ambulance Fee revenue. The increase is due to the unforeseen early departure of the American Medical Response ambulance at Station 4. The district had not planned to provide ambulance support until June 2022.
- Battalion Chief of Training Kris Mola exceeded training hours for July, with a total of 838 hours.
- The district received a grant for \$7,753 for technology to connect the cardiac monitors to the EMS reporting tablets via modem.
- The executive board of the Local 4319 appointed Lt. Franz Hankins as interim president and Paramedic John Hoeh as member at large. The Monument and Gleneagle firefighter unions are unifying, giving the firefighting staff one voice. See [www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#tlmfpd](#).

Note: The monthly chief’s report can be found at [www.tlmfire.org](#). For additional information, see the DWFPD article on page 14.

Board member comments

Hayes, chief executive officer of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development and Visitor Center, thanked Bumgarner and Firefighter/Paramedic Jay Bruchis for attending the UPS “ribbon-cutting” ceremony on Aug. 23, at the new UPS package handling and distribution center on 1671 Squadron Dr., Monument. See snapshot on page 27.

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of the month. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 28 at 6:30 p.m. at MFD 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](#).



Above: Monument Fire District board President John Hildebrandt and Fire Chief Andy Kovacs cut the ribbon at the grand reopening of Station 1 on Highway 105 on July 30. The Station 1 remodel broke ground on May 29, 2021 and cost about \$1.7 million to complete. The remodel was made possible by D2C Architects and Mark Young Construction. The project manager, former division chief of logistics retired Capt. Dean Wahl, attended the event. Tours of the facility were available, and lunch was provided and served by the volunteer staff of the northern El Paso County based nonprofit organization Emergency Incident Support. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, Aug. 18

Residents question water taste and availability

By James Howald

At its meeting on Aug. 18, the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District board heard from residents who had questions about taste and odor issues with water delivered over the last two months and about availability of water considering the rapid pace of development. District Manager Jessie Shaffer reviewed mid-year changes to the budget. The board considered an update to its policies regarding tap fees for irregular structures, and the staff presented operational reports.

The meeting ended with an executive session.

Staff addresses concerns about water

Resident Larry Johnson asked the board what it would take to improve the taste of the water delivered from Woodmoor Lake. He said others shared his concern.

Operations Superintendent Dan LaFontaine apologized for taste and odor issues that have occurred after the Central Water Treatment Plant (CWTP) was upgraded to process both ground and surface water. LaFontaine said taste issues result from the presence of organic substances and are more likely to occur with surface water stored in Woodmoor Lake than with ground water from wells.

Surface water is being treated with potassium permanganate, LaFontaine said, which oxidizes the compounds that contribute to bad taste without producing byproducts. The CWTP had recently had its processing protocols adjusted after being brought back online, and LaFontaine said he believed the changes will improve the taste of the water currently being produced.

LaFontaine also said that due to the infrastructure improvements recently completed, the entire district had been temporarily served only surface water for the first time in the district’s history, so some of the residents noticed a difference in taste. The lake was drained and refilled, and for a time water that had not been aerated and mixed in the lake was processed and delivered, contributing to the change of taste. LaFontaine said that customers who noticed taste issues should call the district’s office, and arrangements would be made to flush the customer’s delivery line to remove water treated before the last round of processing adjustments.

Board President Brian Bush said that the board had to balance water safety and taste against limited financial resources, and safety took priority over taste.

Shaffer added that so far in 2022, the water from Woodmoor Lake had not been continuously aerated, as it had been in previous years. He said with the completion of the infrastructure improvements, that problem was solved. The district would return to its previous methods of managing the lake water, and he expected taste problems to diminish.

Another resident said he was concerned about the district’s “willingness to sell our water to developers” in a time of drought. He asked if the district could ask developers to scale down their projects.

Bush pointed out that the district is a governmental organization, not a private company, and must follow Colorado law: “We are not in a position to say we simply are not going to provide you with water.”

Shaffer said he believed that the district had adequate water supply to support the buildout of Woodmoor with the zoned densities. None of the planned developments exceeded the district’s planning parameters, he said, adding that the district’s development plan was re-examined every five years. He pointed out that large developments must purchase supplemental water at much higher rates than those paid by the typical family home, and developers who choose not to pay those higher rates must scale back their plans.

The higher rates paid by developers can subsidize residential customers, he said. The district’s plan to convey water from Woodmoor Ranch to district customers is partially subsidized by the higher rates paid by developers, Shaffer pointed out. The resident asked what would happen when there were no more water resources, and Shaffer answered building would stop.

Mid-year budget updated

Shaffer noted some changes to the 2022 budget. On the revenue side, he mentioned:

- Due to higher interest rates, interest income increased from \$46,000 to \$141,000.
- Monument Junction tap fees increased supplemental water fees from \$1.6 million to \$4.5 million to date.

Expenses came in at \$13,276,400, just under the \$13,284,762 budgeted, he said.

Tap fees for irregular structures debated

Shaffer told the board that his ongoing discussion with The Country Club at Woodmoor about how to facilitate the installation of restrooms on the golf course had prompted him to consider amending the district’s policies on tap fees.

The club had originally planned to use a “permapotty” design, involving a permanent structure that was not connected to water or sewer service lines. El Paso County, however, would not approve this design because

the proposed locations were close to service lines. Connecting to those service lines would, however, require the club to pay the \$32,000 tap fee required for a single-family home for each restroom, under the existing policies, making the restrooms prohibitively expensive.

Shaffer proposed a lower tap fee for “irregular or unique structures” that would be based on the specific plumbing fixtures installed in the structure, as opposed to the tap fee for a home, which is a set fee based on the assumption there will be many plumbing fixtures installed.

The proposed restrooms would each have one toilet and one sink, he said.

The board voted unanimously to post the proposed new policy on the district’s web page for consideration, and to vote on adoption at its September meeting.

Highlights of operational reports

- LaFontaine reported that July had ended with just 1% of water unaccounted for. This follows a 2% loss in June and shows progress in the district’s ongoing effort to reduce lost water by fixing leaks, addressing inaccurate metering, and aligning reporting schedules to produce accurate measurements.
- The drilling and testing are completed for Well 22, and the sound walls are being removed. The district is beginning work on the pipeline that will connect the new well to the CWTP.

Executive session

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

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 12 at 9 a.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](#).*

Monument Sanitation District, July 20

New developments enlarge service area

By Jackie Burhans and James Howald

In August, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board discussed adding two new developments to the district’s service area. It gave final approval to the wastewater infrastructure for the Wagons West neighborhood and heard an operational report from District Manager Mark Parker.

Public hearing held on Rickenbacker Avenue inclusion

The board held a public hearing on a petition from RAO Investments to include its property, east of Rickenbacker Avenue and west of the Willow Springs neighborhood, into MSD’s service area. RAO Investments plans to build 131 homes on the property, Parker said. Polo Brown, the

company currently building homes in Willow Springs, did not object to the inclusion of the property, Parker told the board, adding that the property could connect to the wastewater infrastructure used by Willow Springs or could build a lift station and connect to a line in place on Mitchell Avenue. Parker said the Town of Monument was considering annexing the property and GMS Engineering LLC, the district’s consulting engineers, recommended including the property in MSD’s service area. No objections to the inclusion were heard, and the board voted unanimously in favor of the petition granting inclusion.

New development likely to be annexed by town

Parker told the board that Monument Ridge West, a proposed residential development just south of County Line Road and west of I-25, will likely be annexed by the Town of Monument and will be added to MSD’s service area, requiring the construction of a lift station.

Parker said MSD had received a request for inclusion from Monument Ridge West LLC, the developer, and it was being reviewed by the district’s lawyer. A pub-

lic hearing and vote would be required to complete the inclusion, he said.

Wagons West infrastructure approved

The board voted unanimously to approve the wastewater infrastructure for the Wagons West neighborhood, which is west of Old Denver Road and just north of the ice rink. The approval took the form of a bill of sale whereby the district took ownership of the sewer lines and lift station that the developer built for the neighborhood.

Manager’s report notes maintenance issues

Parker told the board that an inspection of a sewer main on Raspberry Lane had detected an imminent risk of failure. The main was clay pipe, he said, and he recommended lining the pipe, which is under new asphalt.

The maintenance needed on Raspberry Lane launched the board into a discussion of the maintenance costs that result from residents disposing of grease and other materials that will not dissolve by pouring them down their sinks or flushing them down toilets. So-called “flushable” wipes clog lift stations and valves because they do not dissolve after they are flushed the way other paper products do. Grease is another issue

that raises maintenance costs. Parker told the board about a clogged line in the Wakonda Hills neighborhood that was almost completely blocked with grease, which is unusual in a residential neighborhood. He said an effort would be made to determine which residences were responsible for the unusually large amount of grease.

The board discussed how to educate customers about proper disposal of grease, wipes, and other durable materials that increase maintenance costs.

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 Sept. 21. 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, Aug. 18

New member appointed to board

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

The August meeting of the Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board opened with the appointment of a new member. The board awarded a contract to recoat the Latrobe water tank. General Manager Jeff Hodge updated the board on the implementation of new billing system software. In his Manager’s Report, he addressed several operational issues. Finally, Brett Gracely, of LRE Water, reported on developments with the district’s plans to implement Aquifer Storage and Retrieval (ASR) technology.

Kenneth Judd appointed to board

Kenneth Judd took the oath of office, administered by board Vice President William George. Judd was appointed to fill the vacancy when Ed Houle resigned from the board because he moved out of the district. George commented that Judd had previously served nine years on the DWSD board.

Latrobe water tank to be rehabbed

The board considered five bids to recoat the Latrobe water storage tank, which stores water from the district’s R. Hull treatment plant and from Willow Ranch. The bids ranged from \$241,120 to \$489,000. Hodge said that, in addition to the Latrobe tank, the two tanks that store water from the Holbein Treatment Plant also need recoating, but the Latrobe tank was the highest priority.

The base bid was for the Latrobe tank only, Hodge said, and he recommended the board accept the bid of Swedish Industrial Coatings LLC, which was the lowest of the five bids. A contract for the two Holbein tanks may be awarded if funds are available.

The board voted unanimously to approve the recommended bid.

Manager’s report

Hodge told the board that the implementation of the new billing software from Tyler Technologies was going well and was running in a hybrid mode with the previous software. The reports in the August board packet included information from both systems, he said. The new

system will provide greater detail. Hodge complimented Christina Hawker on the extra effort she made to implement the new software and on her sense of humor. A new customer portal would be implemented, he said, and customers using their credit cards to set up automatic payments would need to re-register in the portal because the district can’t retain credit card information.

The upgrades to the Holbein treatment plant are complete, Hodge said, and new radium samples have been sent for analysis, with results expected in four to five weeks. Those samples will help establish the direction for reducing radium in treated water, he said.

Hodge reported on some of the district’s wells. Drilling is complete for Well 16A, the district’s newest well, and the district is working with GMS Engineering Inc. on a water line to connect the well to the distribution system. Well 1A is out of service due to an above-ground electrical issue. Equipment for Well 1A was damaged in transit and will have to be replaced by the manufacturer, he said.

Study of ASR moves forward

Gracely told the board that LRE was proceeding with its study of ASR. The technology requires an Underground Injection Control permit from the Environmental Protection Agency. Gracely said ASR would allow Donala and the Triview Metropolitan District to work together and to manage their wells jointly using the concept of a well field, which would treat the two districts’ wells as a unified system. The accounting model for such a system was part of the study and would be complex, Gracely said. The study is funded by a grant from the state, he said.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 22 at 1:30 p.m. This meeting was delayed one week to accommodate a regional meeting the board will attend. 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 locat-

ed at 15850 Holbein Drive, Colorado Springs.

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

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me



Above: At the Aug. 17 Donala Water and Sanitation District board meeting, District Manager Jeff Hodge reported that its ranch had acquired a new guard. He shared this photo of an as-yet-unnamed badger closely monitoring the entry point to Willow Creek Ranch near Leadville. The 711-acre ranch, acquired in November 2008, provides water rights to a renewable water source to augment Donala’s wells in the Denver Basin aquifers. For more information, see <http://www.donalawater.org>. *Photo courtesy of Donala Water and Sanitation District.*

Triview Metropolitan District, Aug. 18

2021 audit receives “clean opinion”; sewer cleaning truck approved

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Triview Metropolitan District meeting on Aug. 18, the board received the 2021 audit presentation and amended the 2021 budget. The board approved the purchase of a sewer cleaning truck and the repurchase of land. It also heard about a 10-year plan to upgrade neighborhood parks, and the planned 2024-25 chip and overlay seal in Promontory Pointe and Remington Hill. The board held an executive session to discuss multiple topics.

2021 audit

Christine McCleod of Haynie and Co., CPA & Management Consultants, thanked District Manager James McGrady and District Administrator Joyce Levad for helping during the audit and said there is nothing to prevent filing the audit with the state in compliance with the Sept. 30 extension. There were no significant audit adjustments or any disagreements with the management. The district received an unmodified or “clean opinion” for the 2021 audit.

McCleod also said the district gained a capital asset increase in 2021 from water revenues, taxes, and developer fees increasing revenue.

McGrady said the district had a mill levy increase in

2021, contributing to the increase in revenue.

Director James Otis said the financials are great, and he thanked McCleod, district accountant Cathy Fromm, and McGrady for being smart with the money that the district had when McGrady became the district manager.

Vice President Marco Fiorito said there is a night and day difference in the district finances from 2016 to 2022.

The board unanimously accepted the audited financial statements.

2021 budget revision

President Mark Melville requested the board review and consider approval of resolution 2022-08, a resolution of the TMD Board of Directors amending the 2021 budget. McGrady said the Stonewall Springs Reservoir created an additional expense that could not have been foreseen, and smaller capital improvement projects that went over budget for a total of about \$6.2 million.

The board unanimously approved the amended 2021 budget.

Note: The Aug. 18 agenda and board packet may be accessed at <https://triviewmetro.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Triview-Board-Packet-for-8.18.2022-Website-Reporter-2.pdf>.

Financial update

McGrady said that according to the intergovernmental agreement between the Town of Monument (TOM) and Triview Metropolitan District, the TOM was scheduled to transfer about \$303,779 to the Triview ColoTrust District Fund on or before Aug. 31.

Note: The 2022 budget, 2021 budget revision, and the July financial statement can be viewed at www.triview-metro.com.

Sewer cleaner proposal

McGrady said every year the district contracts sewer cleaning service for about \$180,000 to \$250,000. The high cost of a contract service coupled with the price of diesel has the district considering the purchase of a sewer cleaning truck. Due to the terrain and the ever-growing size of the district, owning a truck would be much more cost effective. The district searched for a used sewer cleaning truck, but could not find anything worthy of spending money on. A new purchase will take a year to receive within the district.

Otis said the truck could also be used by neighboring districts and it would pay for itself in about three years.

- McGrady also said the following:
- The on-site contractor could build a garage with three bays with doors, for a total of \$129,000.
 - The rate to clean a sewer pipe is \$2.75 per foot, so it would not take long to generate revenue, and the payback would be within three years.
 - If Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) has a lift station failure, it could be used. TMD was contracted to take over operational services for FLMD on Jan. 1, 2022. See www.ocn.me/v22n1.htm#tmd.
 - The district already employs two personnel who would operate the sewer truck, so no additional staff are needed.

McGrady requested the board review and consider authorizing the purchase of sewer cleaning equipment consisting of a 900-ECO 12-yard truck-mounted combination sewer cleaner mounted on a Western Star Tandem Axle Chassis for a cost not to exceed \$560,000. The purchase would be made in two cash payments, a \$180,000 down payment and the balance of \$380,000 to be paid in 2023, at the time of delivery.

The board unanimously approved the purchase by the district manager, as presented.

Property re-purchase in Buena Vista

McGrady requested the board review and consider approving resolution 2022-09, authorizing McGrady to sign closing documents related to the re-purchase of 80 acres of property located in Buena Vista, by Quarter Circle 2 Ranches LLC from TMD.

The board unanimously authorized McGrady to complete the purchase and sign the closing title documents. See www.ocn.me/v22n6.htm#triview.com and www.triviewmetro.com.

Public Works and Parks and Open Space update

Matt Rayno Parks, and Open Space Superintendent said the landscaping crews are busy because the part-time crew has returned to college. The rains have helped immensely and the district is on track to be under the 2022 water budget, “good old’ mother nature is helping us out.” The sprinkler system has a double fail-safe smart control and automatically shuts down if the district receives a quarter inch of rainfall.

Otis said he had seen the sprinklers on in the morning just over a month ago during a downpour. Rayno said it could be that the district was testing the system at 5:30 a.m.

Director Anthony Sexton said that the sensor needs to reach a quarter inch before shut-off occurs and if the amount is just under, the sprinkler system will still run.

- Rayno confirmed the following:
- The landscaping on Gleneagle Drive north is completed, including the replacement of some trees that did not make it after the original install.
 - The Jackson Creek Parkway tree and perennial shrub replacement is complete.
 - Pine beetle spray is completed on 100 trees in Sanctuary Pointe and 200 trees in the lower district.
 - The common areas are doing well.
 - The district will focus on tree and shrub pruning

- in September and getting ready for fall and winterization.
- Signs will be posted in the neighborhood for the street seal coating that is scheduled to begin in Promontory Pointe. The work will be completed under warranty. For more information, visit www.triviewmetro.com.
 - The crack sealing and concrete work is completed for 2022.

Fiorito said that maybe the dirt was not compacted enough where the utility lines lay, and it is coming apart at the seams in Promontory Pointe. It is not looking pretty, but he had not had the chance to check in Jackson Creek. It appears that the asphalt is pulling away from the trenches at the utility boxes, and chain marks exist from a USPS mail truck.

Director Sexton confirmed the “San Andreas” fault lines have developed again.

McGrady said that the original contractor did not do a good job, and after the NDS pipeline is complete, a full mill and overlay project will be scheduled for Promontory Pointe and Remington Hill beginning in 2024 with completion in 2025. It is not a good idea to go back and fix just one or two streets, said McGrady.

Fiorito also requested that a 10-year plan be developed to upgrade the parks.

McGrady confirmed the upgrades will begin with the oldest parks in Jackson Creek.

Note: For updates on the Northern Delivery System and the district’s participation in the Northern Monument Creek Interceptor project, visit <http://www.triview.com>.

Sanctuary Pointe Park update

McGrady said he had a meeting with Classic and the developers of Sanctuary Pointe to discuss the installation of synthetic turf, a pavilion stage, and paths. The turf alone is \$1 million and the district is working with Classic on the cost share for the project.

FLMD update

Water Superintendent Shawn Sexton said the state inspection of the FLMD pump house began at 9 a.m. and finished at 2:30 p.m. There were no violations, but suggestions were offered. The state pays particular attention to the cleanliness of the facilities, and the crews had to work “hard and heavy” to ready the facility for inspection, to include installing shelving, and FLMD will be billed accordingly. The startup cost investment has been made, and the next inspection will be much smoother with less prep.

TMD will be inspected in December, but the district has been heavy on the record-keeping side and the inspection is expected to be much smoother.

McGrady said the district has received nothing but praise from FLMD Manager Ann Nichols, and the residents are also thrilled with the level of service. Matt Rayno has got it down.

Rayno said the crews initially went in “guns blazing” to make a difference, doing the checklist items that had usually only occurred twice a year. FLMD is now saving water with TMD, compared to the previous contractor.

Board member comments

Fiorito thanked the district on behalf of Promontory

Pointe Homeowners’ Association Social Committee Chairperson Ann-Marie Jojola for all the support from TMD for the National Night Out event on Aug. 6.

Executive session

The board moved into an executive session at 8:09 p.m. in accordance with Colorado Revised Statute 24-6-402(4) (a), (b), (e), to discuss acquisitions, receive legal advice on negotiations in regard to the Northern Delivery System, water litigation matters for 2022-24, and property transactions and instructions to negotiators, if needed. McGrady confirmed after the meeting that no action was taken when the regular meeting resumed.

The board adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of the month at the Triview Metropolitan District office located at 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Sept. 15 at 5:30 p.m. For Zoom meeting instructions, agendas, minutes and updates, visit: <https://triviewmetro.com> or call 719-488-6868.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.



Above and right: Decorative landscaping completed by the talented Triview Metropolitan District (TMD) staff at the intersection of Baptist Road



and Leather Chaps. The development of Jackson Creek began in the late 1990s, but until July 2022 it had no decorative landscaping feature to anchor the entrance to the community, only a dirt pile with a sign. Over the past several years, TMD has enhanced and maintained the landscaping throughout the development, reflecting a cohesive aesthetic between each neighborhood. *Top photo by Natalie Barszcz. Crew photo provided by GroundFloor Media.*

El Paso County Planning Commission, Aug. 18

Black Forest rezone recommended for approval despite neighbors’ concerns

By Helen Walklett

At the Aug. 18 El Paso County Planning Commission meeting, the commissioners voted to recommend for approval a request to rezone an almost 40-acre property from RR-5 (residential rural) to RR-2.5 (residential rural). The commissioners also recommended for approval a minor subdivision request for a Black Forest property.

Terra Ridge North rezone

The commissioners voted to recommend for approval a request by Terra Ridge North owner and developer Philip Shay Miles to rezone his almost 40-acre property located south of the intersection of Black Forest Road and Hodgen Road from RR-5 to RR-2.5. Miles told the commissioners that he planned to have 11 single-family lots on the rezoned property. No preliminary plan has been filed at this time.

Kylie Bagley, planner II, Planning and Community Development, said the property was surrounded mostly by RR-5 zoning with one area zoned PUD (planned unit development). She said 16 adjacent property owners had been notified and she had received one response in favor and two in opposition, one of which was from the HOA (Homeowners’ Association) south of the property.

During the public comment part of the hearing, six neighbors spoke in opposition, raising concerns about access, increased traffic, water availability, and a sense that a 2.5-acre zoning would not fit with the established character of the surrounding 5-acre community. One neighbor spoke in support.

Miles said the rezoning would only increase the lot

numbers by four from the seven possible under the RR-5 zoning due to the topography of the property. Water would be provided by wells. Access to the development would be via an extension northward of Fox Creek Lane.

Commissioner Thomas Bailey said he didn’t feel the rezone would make the property drastically different from the nature of the surrounding area and that the applicant had to choose between 5 and 2.5 acres because there was no zoning in between the two. Commissioner Christopher Whitney disagreed, saying, “We have a lot of people here who think it is a big problem.”

Commissioner Brandy Merriam asked why the applicant was not just going ahead with 5-acre lots. Miles responded that he wanted to give additional people the opportunity to live in the area, that the application was in conformance with the county master plan, and that more homes were needed.

The commissioners voted 7-2 to recommend the application for approval. Whitney and Miriam were the no votes. Whitney explained that he had concerns about the property’s compatibility with the surrounding area should it be rezoned.

The application is now due to be heard at the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) land use meeting on Sept. 6.

McDermott minor subdivision

Also at the Aug. 18 meeting, the commissioners voted unanimously to recommend for approval an application by Scott McDermott to create three single-family residential lots on an almost 30-acre property to the

northwest of the intersection of Shoup Road and Herring Road. The property, which is zoned RR-5, is owned by the applicant’s brother.

McDermott’s intention is to move to the property to help care for his elderly parents. He told the commissioners that the entire property was lost in the Black Forest fire and that work to remove the burned timber and replant trees is ongoing. Since the fire, a house and a separate accessory living quarters have been built and these would remain on the proposed lot 1. The other two proposed lots would each be 5 acres. McDermott would purchase lot 3 and build a home on it. At present, there are no plans to build on lot 2. Any new structures would require site plan review and approval. Access to the two new lots would be via a new driveway off Herring Road.

Cheryl Pixley, Black Forest Trails Association, told the commissioners that the association was normally a review agency for applications that occur in Black Forest but that it had not been notified in this instance. She said there is a trail on the property which is a critical connection between the eastern and western part of Black Forest, and she was seeking reassurance that it would remain. The commissioners did not support her request that a formal condition be imposed to ensure this. They felt it was a matter between the association and the property owner. McDermott said the family supported the trail.

The application is now due to be heard at the Sept. 9 BOCC land use meeting.

Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.

El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Aug. 2, 9, 16, and 23

Planning Commission changes and additional Tri-Lakes Cares funding approved

By Helen Walklett

During August, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) made decisions relating to the El Paso County Planning Commission, additional funding for Tri-Lakes Cares (TLC), and school district resource officers

County Planning Commission reappointment and bylaw changes approved

At the Aug. 9 BOCC meeting, the commissioners approved the reappointment to the Planning Commission of associate member Commissioner Brandy Merriam. Her term runs until Aug. 2, 2023.

The commissioners voted to approve and adopt amendments to the Planning Commission's bylaws at

their Aug. 23 meeting. The Planning Commission had approved the amendments at its July 21 meeting. The changes mean that a regular member may now apply for reappointment after expiration of their term whether it be their first or second term. Previously, a member had to wait a year after expiration of their second term before being able to reapply.

Tri-Lakes Cares additional funding

During August, the commissioners approved two separate amounts of additional funding totaling \$68,000 for the TLC Community Services Block Grant. This follows a funding allocation of \$30,000 that was approved in June. This latest funding increase enables TLC to extend services through Dec. 31. The funds are to be used only for

housing assistance, including utilities.

School resource officers

At the Aug. 9 BOCC meeting, the commissioners approved an agreement between the county and Academy School District 20 and the county and Lewis-Palmer School District 38 to provide school resource officers for the year to June 30, 2023.

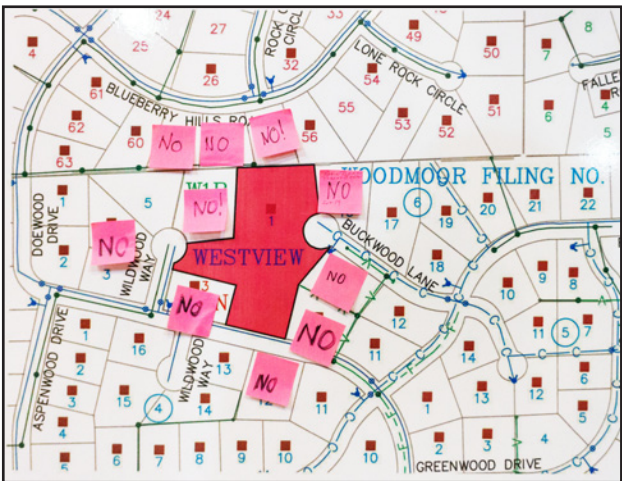
Ambulance permit issued

At the Aug. 23 BOCC meeting, the commissioners approved a permit for one ambulance for the Monument Fire District after the vehicle passed county inspection. The one-year permit runs until July 31, 2023.

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

Woodmoor Improvement Association, Aug. 24

Residents bring lawyer to subdivision appeal, hear about D38 MLO



Above: Residents attended the Woodmoor Improvement Association board meeting to appeal an Architectural Control Committee decision to allow the owner of 1 Westview to re-subdivide his lot back to its original four-lot configuration. Ten lot owners marked the location of their property on a plat map in relation to the lot in question and indicated their objection to the decision to allow the re-subdivision. One owner hired a lawyer to argue why this should not be permitted. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

By Jackie Burhans

The Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board met on Aug. 24 to hear an appeal of a subdivision decision, listen to a presentation on the upcoming Lewis-Palmer D38 mill levy override (MLO), and consider an offer by WOSC LLC to support signage in the new South Woodmoor Preserve (SWP). A larger than usual crowd of nearly 30 residents attended the board meeting; board Vice President Peter Bille was absent.

Residents' lawyer raises concerns about subdivision

A group of residents attended the meeting to appeal a decision by the WIA Architectural Control Committee (ACC) to allow a replat of one lot into four. ACC Administrator Bob Pearsall reported that the property at 1384 Buckwood Lane is currently platted at one big lot and showed the property with the new setback lines to demonstrate that the ACC's approval did not create illegal lots. The ACC approved restoring the lot lines to what they were in 2010.

Residents representing 10 properties surrounding this lot, designated as 1 Westview, introduced themselves, giving their addresses, expressing their opposition to the ACC's decision, and indicating their property on a map. Paul Danborn, an attorney representing one property owner, spoke on the matter. Two main acts govern homeowners association (HOA) conduct, he said. One is the Colorado Common Interest Ownership Act (CCIOA) which is part of the Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS), and the other is the Colorado Non-Profit Corporation Act (CRS 7-121-101 to 7-137-301).

Because WIA was founded in 1971 and CCIOA was passed in 1992, most of its provisions do not apply. However, the definitions in CCIOA (CRS 38-33.3-103) do apply, and they define the declaration as all documents, however titled or enumerated, including plats and maps. Danborn said he did not believe the ACC or the board had the authority to approve a re-subdivision of a lot that will create three new lots because that would be an amendment to WIA's declaration. An amendment, he noted, requires the approval of 75% of the owners according to WIA's covenants. However, CCIOA section 217 amended that to 67%, he said. Danborn strongly suggested the board consult with its attorney Lenard



Above: At the Aug. 24 meeting of WIA, D38 superintendent KC Somers explained the mill levy override (MLO) ballot issue. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Rioth and table the decision until the board discusses it with him in executive session.

Danborn also said there are fiduciary duties that all board members have to owners that include the duty of loyalty, impartiality, and diligence, according to CRS 7-1-401. Another section of CCIOA, CRS 38-33.3-302(3) (b), applies and specifies that a decision on an "owners' application for architectural or landscaping changes shall be made in accordance with standards and procedures set forth" and "shall not be made arbitrarily or capriciously." Danborn asserted that there are no standards and that the covenants in Article V, Section 4 say lots cannot be subdivided without ACC approval. This change is not a minor lot boundary adjustment but creates three new lots, which will change the membership roster of WIA and its voting structure. The new owner has the right to make the request, but WIA has the right to tell him to get 67% of the owners to approve it. Nothing in the minutes, Danborn said, tell him what arguments or counter-arguments were made. He said the board has difficulty reviewing the ACC's thought process because it's not in the minutes. That is the definition of proceeding without guidelines, standards, and procedures; it is borderline arbitrary and capricious, Danborn concluded.

Board member Ed Miller noted that residents had combined lots for a long time to lower their taxes and dues. They later re-subdivide the lots and sell them; however, they must pay all back dues with interest. Board member Brad Gleason asked if the lawyer was saying the board should never have allowed the dissolution of plot lines; Danborn agreed that it should not have without amending the declaration with the members' approval. WIA Board President Brian Bush asked if Danborn agreed that the El Paso Board of County Commissioners had the ultimate authority. Danborn replied that their approval is necessary, but the land use development code says they must comply with the HOA covenants, conditions, and restrictions. Gleason asked if Danborn agreed the board's job is to look after the best interest of the entire community and wondered how this appeal helped all Woodmoor rather than just the owners of adjacent lots. Danborn reiterated that it was necessary to use standards, procedures, and guidelines and urged the board again to seek legal counsel. Finally, Bush said the board would take this under advisement, consult with Rioth, and table any decision on the appeal.

D38 mill levy presentation

School District 38 Superintendent KC Somers presented the upcoming MLO ballot issue that the D38 school board unanimously voted for at its last board meeting. He noted that D38 is proud to partner with WIA and had started school the previous Tuesday, serving 6,500 students. It was a great start, he said, noting that the district

has done well despite the challenges of COVID, and it was looking forward to excellent learning on behalf of all our kids.

Somers said the MLO would "solely and expressly" be used for compensation for teachers and non-administrative staff, who are significantly behind their El Paso and Douglas County peers. D38 is at least 10% behind in compensation across the board. This gap has led to significant turnover and instability in attracting and retaining the best. The district has hired 87 new teachers and 50 support staff but still has unfilled positions, which leads to larger class sizes. D38, he said, is among the lowest-funded districts when you add per pupil revenue (PPR) plus local revenue (MLOs and bonds).

The MLO is a fixed 7.450 mills, which equals \$4.31 per month for each \$100,000 in home value. A \$500,000 home, as assessed by the county, would pay \$260 per year. This would raise about \$4.5 million and raise teacher pay to about the average level. D38 is not looking to be at the top level, Somers noted. D38 starting teacher pay is currently at \$38,000 compared to an average of \$45,000 in nearby districts. The average pay for all teachers in D38 is \$53,000 but is 10% below surrounding districts. Increases in state revenue allowed D38 to approve raises of 6%, but D20, one of its main competitors, was able to offer 10%, so D38 still could not keep pace.

Bush asked how the MLO related to statewide initiative 63, which did not receive enough signatures to get on the ballot. Somers replied that the MLO is completely different since it is a local issue, and the district would be accountable for every dollar generated via a citizen advisory committee. Of the \$5.5 million estimated revenue in the first year, \$4.5 million would go to D38-operated schools, and about \$1 million would go to Monument Academy (MA), based on a per pupil count of about 19% of total students. MA would be accountable for its share of the money.

Other board members questioned where D38 would end up compared to other districts if this passed, why this issue was coming up now, and how to position this request in this economically challenging time. Somers answered that this would put D38 right in the middle, raising our total mills to 46, while Cheyenne Mountain has a mill rate of 55 and D20 has a cap at 60 mills. He also said this is not a new phenomenon but has been years in the making, noting that the last MLO passed in 1999 for a fixed-dollar amount of \$4 million. Somers said a lot of research had to go into expressing this need, and the board has been working since last fall and wanted to be very specific and do this with intentionality and integrity.

Somers also said the data tells us we have consistently been fundamentally behind our competitors and are seeing the highest turnover since the 2008-09 recession.

sion. Not asking for this now kicks the can that much farther down the road, Somers said, and impacts our kids today and tomorrow. This creates the question of what we are willing to invest to preserve the type of educational quality we have known for years.

The audience asked questions about the impact on retirees on a fixed income, where to find the ballot language, the percentage of the current budget for administration vs. teaching staff, and concerns about financial management. Somers said the district was making a concerted effort to communicate to a broad audience and provide an opportunity for a dialog. He said that a spring survey with 2,500 respondents, of whom 30% were parents and the rest did not have kids in school, showed a favorability of 60% if the MLO was designed around compensation and was clear about why. Previous issues, he said, were more confusing and lacked accountability. The ballot language is available on the web at <https://bit.ly/d38-board-mlo>.

Administrative salaries represent around 8% of the total salary budget, which is “lean and efficient compared to other districts,” Somers said. The MLO would be focused primarily on teachers, bus drivers, nutritional and clerical staff, and bus drivers. Finally, Somers said the district must be front and center regarding transparency and accountability and has a financial advisory committee composed of community members.

Somers said the MLO is important because it’s what is best for kids, the learning environment, and the community. He quoted Mark Twain, who said, “Out of our public schools comes the greatness of our nation.”

WOSC offers signage for SWP

Tish Norman, director of WOSC LLC, which donated the South Woodmoor Preserve (SWP) to Woodmoor, presented a proposal for new signage that WOSC would fund. WOSC raised over \$2.2 million to purchase land, part of which was donated as the SWP to WIA with an agreement for WIA to install trails, benches, and pet waste stations over time. WOSC would like to see two more benches and pet waste stations paid for in part by WIA and in part by ProTerra, the developer building on the remaining land. It would also like to see all-aluminum map stands, trail name signage posts, and split-rail corner broken fences west of Falcon Trail. The corner broken fences would help delineate between open space and private property. WOSC is offering to purchase all maps, trail signage posts, and broken fences for about \$5,000 and is asking WIA to install them.

Norman said the trail maps would include a member dedication in the left corner recognizing the neighbors who saved this open space. The trail names for the connected trails would be Preserve Loop, Falcon Trail, Coyote Trail, Prairie Dog Trail, and Detention Pond. Norman provided a list of pros that included the fact that WOSC would pay for the beautification of SWP and that signage would prevent neighbors from getting lost, noting that South Woodmoor dues have supported the North Woodmoor common areas for years. She also conceded that this would cause a difference in how SWP looks from North Woodmoor common spaces but pointed out that it already looks different and offered that North Woodmoor could raise funds to update signage or WIA could budget for it.

Bush said the board would discuss this offer and provide an answer to WOSC.

Board highlights

- HOA Administrator Denise Cagliaro noted that The Barn would serve as a voting site in November, and rentals would not be available during that time.
- Gleason said that school is in session and asked residents to watch their speed and avoid distractions.
- Miller said that both chipping weekends had been very successful, handling 606 loads which totaled 385 cubic yards of limbs, pine needles, and slash, and raised \$387 in donations.
- Board member Steve Butler reported that The Barn had ordered and received new tables, saying the old tables were available to Woodmoor residents for \$10 each.
- Butler also asked for a motion to spend \$3,000 to address a drainage issue in front of The Barn, repiping it to direct the water to the storm drainage system. The board unanimously approved this request.

The WIA Board of Directors usually meets at 7 pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Barn at 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next meeting will be on Sept. 28.

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 contacted at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

August Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Overall, August was a fairly average month around the region. The North American Monsoon System was active at times, with several periods of enhanced activity during the month as plumes of moisture moved into the region. Temperatures were right about normal, with high temperatures slightly cooler than average and overnight lows slightly warmer than normal.

This is a good reflection of the relatively high levels of moisture present and the resulting cloudy skies. It keeps temperatures down during the day but warmer at night. Precipitation was more variable, with some areas receiving well above normal rainfall and others a little below. That all depended on whether some of the heavier rainfall events happened to move over your neighborhood.

The month started off mild and active, with temperatures generally above normal from the 1st through the 6th. Each day received scattered thunderstorm activity as well, although amounts were generally less than a tenth of an inch each day. More widespread thunderstorms occurred on the 7th from early afternoon through evening. These storms had more moisture to work with—some of the storms produced 1-2 inches of rain in a short timeframe, especially along the I-25 corridor.

Following the wet start to the month, quiet conditions moved in for the next few days, with dry conditions and mostly sunny skies from the 9th through the 13th. Temperatures were mild during this time as well, with highs in the mid- to upper 80s.

Monsoonal moisture began to move back into the region on the 14th, and this time it was enhanced by an area of low pressure. This storm system added extra lift to the atmosphere. When this happens, the atmosphere becomes very efficient at producing precipitation. This was most evident on the 15th and 16th when widespread thunderstorms produced heavy rain at times throughout the region. The heaviest rainfall occurred just to our north in Douglas and Elbert Counties into the southeastern suburbs of Denver where 2-3 inches of rain accumulated quickly. This produced some urban street flooding and several stranded vehicles. For the Tri-Lakes region, most of us received a half to one inch of rainfall during this period.

The last week and a half of the month was generally quiet, with a less active monsoon pattern over the Tri-Lakes region. Most days saw afternoon cumulus clouds build up, with scattered thunderstorms over the mountains, but these storms had a very difficult time moving off the mountains. Therefore, we had limited precipitation from the 21st through the 31st. The wettest day was the afternoon of the 26th when a line of thunderstorms produced around a quarter-inch of rainfall for just about everybody.

A look ahead

September is a transition month for the region, with the last tastes of summer mixed in with our first morning freezes. Leaves begin to change by the end of the month as well and in some years a little snow can happen. The overall weather pattern is generally one of tranquil-

ity, with our chances for thunderstorms dwindling and blizzard conditions not quite ready for prime time. We are often greeted with sunny, pleasant afternoons, with highs from the mid-70s early in the month to the mid-60s later in the month. Our first sub-freezing low temperatures usually occur during the third week of the month, so prepare those tender plants.

August 2022 Weather Statistics

Average High	80.5° (-1.0)
100-year return frequency value max	83.9° min 72.9°
Average Low	51.6° (+1.2)
100-year return frequency value max	55.2° min 46.8°
Monthly Precipitation	1.30"
	(-1.60", 56% below normal)
100-year return frequency value max	6.07" min 0.94"
Monthly Snowfall	0.0"
Highest Temperature	88° on the 5th
Lowest Temperature	46° on the 24th
Season to Date Snow	0.0"
	(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip.	11.99"
	(-6.07", 30% below normal) (Jan 1 to Dec 31)
Heating Degree Days	33 (-29)
Cooling Degree Days	66 (+22)

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.

Monument Academy School Board is breaking the law

The Monument Academy School Board recently updated their dress code for Middle School and High School students. Unfortunately, that dress code now violates Colorado law. Even more unfortunately, the School Board doesn’t care.

The School Board believes that students should dress in the manner that the School Board believes that good little boys and girls should dress. The Colorado Legislature has determined that the School Board’s opinion on the matter is irrelevant.

The School Board has stated that girls should not wear ties and boys should not wear skirts, nail polish, or makeup. A couple of years ago, the Legislature passed a law that said that Charter Schools cannot discriminate against a student because of the student’s Gender Expression, which is defined as an individual’s way of reflecting and expressing the individual’s gender to the outside world, typically demonstrated through appearance, dress, and behavior. Therefore, if a girl believes that wearing a tie is her way of reflecting her gender to

the outside world, the school has no right to prohibit her from doing so.

The School Board’s dress code policy is not the first time that Monument Academy has expressed its contempt for students who are members of the LGBTQ community. As we should all recall, in February they issued a Proclamation in which they essentially stated that they were opposed to the law that required them to al-

low transgender students to use the bathroom that corresponded to a student’s Gender Identity.

The Monument Academy School Board is out of control and is creating an environment that is not good for our young people. They need to either start obeying the law or close their doors.

Steve Waldmann

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Noteworthy young adult reads

By the staff at Covered Treasures

“Read widely. To me it is that simple. Every new book you read puts language and imagery and storytelling techniques into your head that weren’t there before.”—

E. Lockhart

Fall is brimming with outstanding young adult book choices. Here’s just a sampling:

The Heir’s Betrayal: The Fallen Heir Book 2

By Rachel Hetrick (Via Veritas Vita Press) \$15

Book two in The Fallen Heir Duology is a perfect prequel to local author Rachel Hetrick’s *Infiniti Trilogy*. This duology is the story of Diomedes, the rebellious crown prince and heir of Phildeterre. Exiled from the castle, betrayed by his father and royal council, Diomedes has

been seeking the object that could empower him with magic. Facing frozen wastelands and poisonous desert creatures, the disgraced prince ventures deep into Phildeterre, following the call of something greater than he or his companions can understand. Each step brings Diomedes closer to a decision that once made can never be changed; the choice is heavy, and the cost is high.



Daybreak on Raven Island

By Fleur Bradley (Viking) \$17.99

The critically acclaimed local author of *Midnight at the*

Barclay Hotel brings a thrilling new mystery novel inspired by Alcatraz prison. Tori, Marvin, and Noah would rather be anywhere else than on the field trip to Raven Island prison. When the three of them stumble upon a dead body, miss the last ferry home, and then have to spend the night on Raven Island, they find that they need each other more than ever. They must work together to uncover a killer, outrun a motley ghost-hunting crew, and expose the age-old secrets of the island—all before daybreak.

Love & Olives

By Jenna Evans Welch (Simon & Schuster, \$12.99)
This Mamma Mia!-inspired tale is about a teen girl finding romance while trying to connect with her absent father in Santorini, Greece. Liv doesn't have a lot of fond memories of her father, who fled to Greece when she was only 8. When Liv suddenly receives a postcard from her father explaining that National Geographic is funding a documentary about his theories on Atlantis, Liv jumps at the opportunity to help. But not everything on the Greek island is as perfect as it seems. Liv begins to discover her father may not have invited her to Greece for Atlantis, but for something much more important.

Hush

By Dylan Farrow (Wednesday Books) \$10.99
Graceling meets Fable in this exciting debut novel. They use magic to silence the world. Who will break the hush? Seventeen-year-old Shae has led a seemingly quiet life. When her mother is murdered, she can no longer pretend. Not knowing whom to trust, Shae journeys to unlock the truth, instead finding a new enemy keen to

destroy her, a brooding boy with dark secrets, and an untold power she never thought possible.

Along for the Ride

By Sarah Dessen (Viking) \$11.99
Nights have always been Auden's time, her chance to escape everything that's going on around her. Then she meets Eli, a fellow insomniac. Now, with an endless supply of summer nights between them, almost anything can happen. Sarah Dessen is the winner of the Margaret A. Edwards Award for her contributions to YA literature, as well as the Romantic Times Career Achievement Award. *Along for the Ride* is soon to be a Netflix film.

Family of Liars

By E. Lockhart (Delacorte Press) \$19.99
This prequel to *We Were Liars* is the story of another summer, another generation, and the secrets that will haunt them for decades to come. A private island off the coast of Massachusetts; an ocean churning with secrets and sorrow; a fiery, addicted heiress; an irresistible, unpredictable boy; a summer of unforgivable betrayal and terrible mistakes. Welcome back to the Sinclair family. They were always liars.

Two Can Keep a Secret

By Karen McManus (Ember) \$10.99
Ellery's never been to Echo Ridge, but she's heard all about it. Her aunt went missing there at age 17. And only five years ago, a homecoming queen put the town on the map when she was killed. Now Ellery has to move there to live with a grandmother she barely knows. The town is picture-perfect, but it's hiding secrets. The thing

is, secrets are dangerous, and most people aren't good at keeping them.

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



Above Covered Treasures Bookstore celebrated its 29th anniversary on July 9. The bookstore opened in the Chapala building on Second Street in 1993. In its 29 years, it has survived a flood from a plumbing leak and a robbery. Owner Tommie Plant says they owe their longevity to their many loyal patrons. From left are shopper Linda LaFierre, bookstore workers Pam Sparks and Paula Primavera, owner Tommie Plank, and shopper Dina Duran. *Photo by Creighton Smith. Caption by John Howe and Michael Weinfeld.*

August Library Events

Math tutoring suspended, regular programming resumes

By Harriet Halbig

The free math tutoring program offered on Monday afternoons has been suspended for the fall semester due to a shortage of qualified volunteers, especially in the areas of algebra and geometry. If you would like to volunteer to help with this valuable program, please apply online at the district's website, ppld.org. We hope to resume offering this resource in the spring.

In the meantime, Monument Library maintains a list of local professional tutors in a variety of subjects. Regularly occurring programs in Monument include *Story Time* for ages 3 and up on Tuesdays from 10:30 to 11:15 and *Toddler Time* at 9:30 and 10 on Wednesdays. Come to the library on Tuesdays from 4 to 5 to read to a patient dog during *Paws to Read*. Monument Library is open Monday-Wednesday

from 9 to 7, closed on Thursday and Sunday and open on Friday and Saturday from 10 to 6. Palmer Lake Library is open from 10 to 6 Wednesday through Friday. *Family Story Time* is on Fridays from 10:30 to 11:15. *Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me*

Palmer Lake Historical Society, Aug. 6

Chautauqua days remembered

By Natalie Barszcz

The Palmer Lake Historical Society met on Aug. 6 to celebrate Chautauqua days in Palmer Lake. Long before silent movies, radio and television, rural Americans relied on Chautauqua assemblies for their cultural entertainment. By the late 19th century, over 400 permanent Chautauqua assemblies were established, and by 1910 the circuit (traveling) Chautauquas had brought the experience to thousands of communities throughout the country. Early Chautauquas were an adult education and social movement in the United States and highly popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Chautauquas expanded to rural America until the mid-1920s. The popularity of the gatherings began to fade in the early 1930s as silent movies became popular and automobile ownership exploded. It is estimated that over 45 million Americans had been touched by the phenomenon which President Theodore Roosevelt called "America at its best." At the Palmer Lake Historical Society Annual Chautauqua Days, about 150 attendees gathered in the Town

Hall to watch Palmer Divide Productions' *Summer Sojourn*, a history of Glen Park and the first Rocky Mountain Chautauqua. Jim Sawatzki and Gary Atkins led tours in the late afternoon and the Friends of the Tri-Lakes Library volunteers served ice cream from the Rock House to the attendees, as the Skean Dubh Celtic acoustic band played on the village green. The Lucretia Vaile Museum was open to the public during the event. ***** The Palmer Lake Historical Society usually meets on the third Thursday of every month. The next event at Palmer Lake Town Hall is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 15. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for a presentation at 7 p.m. by Flint Whitlock and Terry Barnhart on their co-authored biography titled *Capt. Jepp and the Little Black Book: How Barnstormer and Aviation Pioneer Elrey B. Jeppesen Made the Skies Safer for Everyone*. For additional details, visit www.palmerdividehistory.org. *Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.me.*



Left: Attendees fill the Palmer Lake Town Hall to capacity on Aug. 6 to watch Palmer Divide Productions Summer Sojourn, a film about the rise and fall of the Chautauqua. **Right above:** Cathy and Chuck Loeffler attend the Palmer Lake Historical Society Annual Chautauqua Days celebration on Aug. 6. Celtic acoustic band Skean Dubh is pictured in the background performing for the attendees, on the Palmer Lake historic village green bandstand. **Right:** From left, Jim Sawatzki, AJ Butler, Bill Nelson, and Andy Kolb (seated) are pictured in the Glen at the Palmer Lake Historical Society event on Aug. 6. Sawatzki led a group of four around the Glen in Palmer Lake, expertly describing the layout of the Chautauqua camp, with a focus on the existing and former buildings, and the unusual number of intact concave tented hip roofs that are numerous in the Glen. *Photos by Natalie Barszcz.*



Palmer Lake Historical Society

Refurbished sign a historical legacy for Palmer Lake

By Patricia Atkins

Dan Elders has lived in Palmer Lake for over 50 years and calls it his hometown. He knows the area, its history and the neighborhoods very well as the owner of *The Angry Squirrel*, trimming trees, shrubs and overgrown areas throughout the region. That is how he laid eyes on the Palmer Lake sign and made it his mission to save it.

Elders recounted a job he was working on down in the Glen. He had climbed a tree to begin his work and looked from a 50-foot perch to make sure the area was clear for falling limbs. There in a wood pile he immediately recognized the sign from historical photos of the Denver & Rio Grande Station dating back to the late 1800s. It was partially covered, warped, severely cracked, and missing the P. He was given permission to rescue it from the pile and his mission began.

Elders began with attempts to straighten the sign by watering and weighting it down. Knowing that was not the final answer to this first step, he mounted a piece of plywood to the back of the sign. He then found a piece of barnwood to match, with the thickness and grain of the aged wood on the original sign, making it a board length of 10 feet and allowing room for the missing P. The P was stenciled in using the R to match the size and font. From

there it went to local artist Buzz Bloom for the painting of the trim and the addition of the missing letter.

Elders contacted Rodger Voelker, a docent at the Palmer Lake Museum and member of the Palmer Lake Historical Society board, to request the sign be mounted on the Vaile Museum/Library building. After discussion it was decided the sign should be stored in Voelker's workshop until the place to mount the sign could be decided upon. Finally, a decision to mount the sign above the Palmer Lake Town Hall's front door was made and the timing was perfect as repairs were being completed to the Town Hall.

Now the residents of Palmer Lake can enjoy this piece of history, a legacy left by Elders to his hometown.

The Town Hall was built in 1914 and is now included in the Colorado State Register of Historic Places.

Patricia Atkins is secretary of the Palmer Lake Historical Society.

Right: Dan Elders stands below the historic railroad sign on March 15. Elders fully restored the sign he found in disrepair and ensured the sign found a new home above the main entrance doors inside the recently renovated Palmer Lake Town Hall. *Photo by Gary Atkins.*



High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Nature harvest: Seeds are miracles in tiny packages

By Janet Sellers

September in our region can include surprises of sunny days, rainy days, snowy days, and more! Sometimes a combination of all of these. Mother Nature does a fine job of preparing her soil for the following year by dropping leaves, sticks and natural things, and creating spaces for her tiny helpers, bird food sources, and pollinators to overwinter. We can support our local wildlife system, too, we just need to know what to do.

Lazy gardeners, rejoice—lazy is actually efficient via inaction. No digging protects the natural soil food web, too. Leaving some leaf piles as mulch and keeping some favorite herbs in containers means you can just overwinter them indoors. Fall yard cleanup is important, and there are ways to support next year's wildlife with this year's lazy wisdom of leaving things in place where possible.

Our favorite food crops aren't native to our area. We have endless edible foraging plant life that is native, but most of us don't know about it. We plant what we know,

often the nutrient-packed cold crop greens (kale, lettuce, chard, peas, and spinach) and turnips, beets, and radishes. WebMD reports that radishes are "super healthy" because they are rich in antioxidants and minerals like calcium and potassium. Together, these nutrients help lower high blood pressure and reduce your risks for heart disease. The radish is also a good source of natural nitrates that improve blood flow.

My 3- to 4-foot-tall radish, kale and bok choy plants will give us hundreds of seeds for next year. All we did was plant, wait, and weed out the invasive spearmint. We let the plants do their thing, using the same strategy with the strawberry plants but staked the tomatoes upward for space. Hopefully, the strawberries will take over that raised bed next year.

We can still get crops in September and even plant some fast-growing seeds when we make preparations such as having frost cloth and hoops or other important protections such as mulch, particularly mulch with pine needles. In the community garden, we know that if they

don't get going this fall due to weather, they'll overwinter and thrive next spring.

Local student volunteer helpers needed

Student volunteer opportunities include local naturalist talks during the volunteer time. Students are encouraged to volunteer at the Monument Community Garden and Fox Run Regional Park. Our high schools' key clubs and National Honor Society members are volunteering regularly in community service. Garden tasks include weeding, harvesting, and soil preparation. The Friends of Fox Run Regional Park offers nature-related tasks that help the forest ecosystem.

Janet Sellers is a writer, speaker, avid nature lover, and lazy gardener, learning from Mother Nature and local gardeners alike. Send your handy tips to janetsellers@ocn.me.

Art Matters

Art, mindfulness, and focus

By Janet Sellers

Contemplative art is poetry for the eyes. The dictionary meaning of contemplate is from Latin contemplatus, past participle of contemplari "to gaze attentively, observe" from the prefix com- "together" plus templum "temple." The original meaning of the Latin contemplari was "to mark out a space for observing auguries or omens," and the temple was a holy space reserved for this purpose. We need these contemplative places.

We are bombarded by visuals in a predatory vein in big-scale ads on television, computer screens, and phones. Contemplative, mindful art puts us in the mindset of musing and wondering. It is the opposite of billboards, signs, and advertisements. Art to view or to make, especially works made by hand, is restorative for us humans. Art is important to have around us, indoors and outdoors, especially as art in public places. We can identify with a comforting sense of place around familiar landmarks of nature and art. Also, art in public places has an optimal effect on locals and visitors' attitudes.

Recently, the town of Palmer Lake installed some artworks for a rotating exhibition at the Town Hall. It is a tribute to the local art and artists as well as offering a creative touchstone moment at the Town Hall for visitors and staff. The up-and-coming Palmer Lake Arts District has plans to install outdoor sculpture rotation exhibits around town, too.

One artist being showcased now is Jim Sawatzki, a Colorado artist who is a painter, printmaker, and documentary movie producer. His films have been viewed on PBS affiliates and seen nationally on A&E and the History Channel. He was nominated for an Emmy in 2000. His 34-by-24-inch mixed media work, *Cowboy Shirt Cutout, 2021*, is currently on view.

Artist Mike Koloski's painting is also in the exhibit, titled *Frogwater, 2007*. The medium is oil on board. Koloski's paintings have appeared in galleries as well as

individual and group shows throughout Alaska, Washington, and Oregon.

September Art Hop is the last of the season

Our Art Hop is a joyful compilation of contemplative opportunities. I give mindful forest walks and mindful art-filled walks in the forest to help people connect to nature and to the nature of art as planned, convivial events. All summer in town, we've had monthly arts events bursting with creative works in our galleries: paintings, outdoor public art, live music, and pop-up art shows at some spots. Our last Art Hop of the season will be on Sept. 15. Kind of sad to end the outdoor walk about town and artful chances to meet new friends, but our downtown has a fall/winter calendar, too. Stay tuned!

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



Above: Locals now can see the new rotating exhibit at Palmer Lake Town Hall. The artwork is the premiere exhibit, featuring paintings by Artist Mike Koloski and a mixed-media cowboy shirt by Jim Sawatzki. More public art spaces are in the planning stages, including sculptures on pedestals around the town, starting with the local library grounds. *Photo courtesy of Jina Brenneman.*

Left: Artists around town shared their works at the Art Hop on Aug. 18. (L to R) Joseph Campbell, painter, was the featured artist at Bella Art & Frame gallery for August. Victoria White, 15, and a student at Monument Academy, entertained for her first-ever gig with original songs at Bliss Studios. *Photos by Janet Sellers.*

Snapshots of Our Community

Miss Monument: PRHS graduate

Right: Palmer Ridge High School graduate Anna Tossell was named Miss Monument Feb. 24, giving her a chance to compete in the Miss Colorado USA pageant in Greeley on July 3. Though she didn't win, her mother says Tossell, 19, "learned a lot about the process" and got to advocate for mental health-related issues. Alexis Glover of Colorado Springs was crowned Miss Colorado USA and will go on to compete in the Miss USA pageant Oct. 3 in Reno, Nev. *Photo by Michael Solberg.*



Party for the Parks, July 16



Above: Monument's first Party for the Parks took place July 16. Five country bands drew a crowd of hundreds, but stormy clouds rained on the party in the afternoon. Even so, it made for this beautiful double rainbow while concert goers paused their partying. *Photo by Chris Jeub.*

TLWC grant provides cameras



Above: A Tri-Lakes Women's Club (TLWC) grant has paid for three thermal imaging cameras to be used by the Monument Fire District. On July 30, TLWC members got a tutorial on the cameras that will be used in the district's three ambulances. Lt. John Bodinsky told the members the cameras "will help increase overall life safety for our citizens and firefighters." He said the cameras will help personnel search for fire victims, among other things. TLWC has awarded 18 grants so far this year totaling more than \$28,000. From left are TLWC members Debbie Heredia and Shelley Pruett, Lt. Jon Bodinsky, holding one of the three thermal imaging cameras, and TLWC members Anne Campbell, Pam Cutcliff, and Geri Bush. *Photo by Sue Leggiero.*

Hummingbird Festival, Aug. 5-6



Above: The Hummingbird Festival sponsored by The Friends of Fox Run Park was a big hit at its new location: Happy Landing Ranch on Roller Coaster Road. There were booths, bubbles, alpacas, firefighters, and many people who came to have fun. This is the third year of the Hummingbird Festival, and it is growing every year. The Friends of Fox Park had a hotdog stand and there was a lemonade stand, too. *Photo by T. McKinsey.*

National Night Out, Aug. 6



Above: Monument Fire District's "C" shift engaged in a mock football game with residents at the annual "neighborhood watch" National Night Out party in Promontory Pointe on Aug. 6. Promontory Pointe Homeowners planned the special night out complete with band PB&J, bounce pirate ship, food trucks, and a raffle at the Little Train Park. The event was well attended by the residents, the Monument Police Department, and the Monument Fire District. The National Night Out event was sponsored by FirstNet, Starbucks, Academy Sports + Outdoors Association, and Ring. Pictured from left: Rhett Armstrong, Conor Lawrence, Paramedic John Hoeh, Fletch, Syllas Bailey and firefighter Garrett O'Hara holding the football. *Caption by Natalie Barszcz and photo by Gayla Williamson.*

AARP chapter celebrates 50th



Above: Jeremiah Mora of the AARP State Office, Denver, thanked the group and congratulated Black Forest Chapter of the AARP No. 1100 for serving the community for 50 years. The chapter began in 1972 and has received 107 awards for providing outstanding community service throughout its existence, and proudly state their motto, "To Serve, Not to Be Served." The group reminisced and fondly remembered the founding members: Edith D. Wolford, Father Thomas Hanlon, and Pastor Nick Natelli, and numerous awards were presented to chapter members. The Forest Chorus performed a medley of patriotic songs at the beginning of the celebration, and the historic chapter scrapbooks and mementos were on display. The occasion was celebrated with cake and Wolford's "special punch." For more information, visit the chapter at: <http://aarpchapter1100blackforest.weebly.com>. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*



Black Forest Festival, Aug. 13



Above: From booths to the parade to the return of the outhouse races, the Black Forest Festival on Aug. 13 lived up to its theme this year of “Strong Community Roots.” The pancake breakfast started at 6:30 a.m. and there were music, live demonstrations, kids’ games, and food trucks. With close to 5,000 people attending the festival this year, it added up to be the best yet. *Photo by Marlene Brown.*



Above: This is a view of the Black Forest Festival. The AARP Chapter 1100 booth is one of the white tents at left in the photograph. People made generous donations for the cookies, houseplants, chilled water, frozen pops, and other items that the AARP Chapter made available to festival attendees. Proceeds will go to a local charity. Two chapter members also contributed their day to support the festival. Lavonne Hidy demonstrated the art of wool rug braiding, and Ray Rozak gave hayrides all day. *Photo by Stanley Beckner.*



Above: Volunteers with the Emergency Incident Support (EIS) First Responder crew took part in the Black Forest Festival parade on Aug. 13 in partnership with members of the Pikes Peak Regional Emergency Management and Community Emergency Response Team. The crew handed out about 200 free emergency blankets as well as pamphlets on fire prevention and EIS community volunteer activities. From left are Dennis Dong, Deborah Scheimann, Shelley Pruett, and Amos Scheimann. *Photo by Robin Adair.*

Furrow Road extension postponed



Above: Residents attended a community meeting on Aug. 17 to follow up on discussions about the Furrow Road extension project. Attending from El Paso County were county Engineer Josh Palmer and Traffic Engineer Chris Bland along with consultants Brent Hypnarowski and Dave Krauth of Stantec. Krauth reviewed a study Stantec provided for the county on traffic volumes, issues, deficiencies, and recommendations. He recapped information from the Nov. 4 community meeting and previewed sketch concepts on traffic-calming methods including roundabouts, center medians, and upgraded signage. Based on the result of the study, Stantec said they did not recommend extending Furrow Road at this time. Palmer anticipated the extension might be needed by 2040 per the Major Transportation Corridors Plan (MTCP) or in case of a long-term significant emergency, or an increased pace of development required traffic relief. Given the nearby Grandwood Ranch development, the road needs to function as secondary emergency access, Palmer said, but would have a barrier or a locked and coded gate. The road would not be extended, he said, without implementing calming measures like those in the sketch plans. Some residents indicated they would be happy to see the road extended so long as the calming measures were implemented, because it would give them an alternative to Highway 105. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Fox Run Park Concert, Aug. 18



Above: The Free Concert series at the Gazebo in Fox Run Regional Park sponsored by the El Paso County Community Services Department continues on Sept. 8. The Aug. 18 show featured Joe Sciallo and the Deep End and Peak Big Band (pictured). For more information about the free concerts and other events in the park, contact Ryan Dorough, recreation program planner, El Paso County Recreation & Cultural Services, Community Services Department, or www.elpasoco.com. *Photo by T. McKinsey. Caption by Marlene Brown.*

Black Forest Concert, Aug. 18



Above: In August, the Black Forest community presented evening concerts under the pavilion next to the Community Center at Black Forest and Shoup Roads. Area musicians volunteer their time to present jazz and big band music free to anyone willing to bring their lawn chairs and view the sunset performances. The Swing Factory Big Band from Woodland Park, conducted by Craig Harms, musical director, is shown on Aug. 18. The band Colorado Saxophone Quartet + 1 performed Aug. 11. *Photo by Steve Pate.*

DCC Senior Sunrise, Aug. 19



Above: On Aug. 19, Discovery Canyon Campus (DCC) seniors ended the first week of their final high school year with Senior Sunrise, an annual tradition for over 15 years. Nearly 300 seniors walked from DCC to Barefoot Park at 5:15 a.m. to enjoy a morning breakfast and activities. DCC teachers, staff, and parents of the seniors set up a buffet of breakfast burritos, donuts, muffins, fruit, and drinks, all donated by parents. The seniors then enjoyed each other's company until joining together for a class photo. DCC High School Assistant Principal David King said Senior Sunrise is a bit of "symbolism to being part of a community and going back to their younger days." He continued, "We try to do something each month for seniors to give them something to look forward to and have a memorable experience for their final year of high school." Senior Sunset will be conducted at the end of the school year. *Photo by David Futey.*

Palmer Lake fishing at sunrise



Above: I go fishing at Palmer Lake almost every morning at the crack of dawn to watch the sunrise. It's kinda become my daily meditation and it's not about catching fish (which I release if I do catch any) but more about being there and witnessing the sunrise while dancing a dry fly on the water's surface. *Photo by Steve Galchutt.*

Explosion of fall flowers, Aug. 27



Above: Looking southwest from Second Street in Monument, one can view an explosion of yellow flowers seeking the last hour of sun along the banks of Dirty Woman Creek on Aug. 27. Due to the monsoon rains, the area is bursting with an unusually large display of wildflowers. The Santa Fe Trail adjacent to Old Denver Highway can be viewed in the background, with Pikes Peak, the Air Force Academy, and Cathedral Rock in the distance. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

WMMI Family History Day, Aug. 20



Above: Palmer Lake Historical Society member Wayne Russett explains the many artifacts on display to a family, during a rare opportunity to visit Reynolds Ranch House during Family History Day at the Western Museum of Mining and Industry (WMMI) on Aug. 20. The 1890s Victorian home is one of the few remaining preserved farmhouses in Colorado, recently renovated and fully refurbished to depict the original era. The project to protect the home began in 2017 and was completed in 2020, with funding from the WMMI, grants from the State Historical Fund, the Miners' Pumpkin Patch, and the El Pomar Foundation, and many generous donations. The historic home is the last reminder of Husted, the vanished town that suffered from an economic decline in 1956 and was subsequently leveled to build the Air Force Academy. Palmer Lake Historical Society volunteers provided information, tools, and household items to enhance the experience for about 100 visitors. Hayrides, gold panning, demonstrations of the famous Yellow Jacket stamp mill, outdoor machinery, blacksmithing, and a vintage car display were included in the event. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*



UPS ribbon cutting, Aug. 23



Above: On Aug. 23, the new United Parcel Service (UPS) facility and the Monument Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 1671 Squadron Drive, Monument. Amid the locale of scenic mountains and fields of sunflowers, visitors commented positively on the state-of-the-art building. UPS started in 1907 in Seattle as a bicycle courier service and now serves globally with transports that include air, land, and its newest "equad" bikes with pedal assist in places like Manhattan, New York. The Monument facility is looking to fill over 100 full- and part-time positions for package handlers, drivers, and part-time supervisors. The jobs come with "competitive" pay and benefits including healthcare, retirement contributions, and tuition assistance. *Photos by Janet Sellers.*



Hammond heads to Zambia

Right: Monument resident Lori Hammond is among the first Peace Corps volunteers to return to overseas service since the agency's unprecedented global evacuation in March 2020. She left for Zambia in late July. The Peace Corps suspended global operations and evacuated nearly 7,000 volunteers from more than 60 countries at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hammond is helping in Zambia's health sector. She hopes her experience will help her reach her goal of getting a master's or doctorate in public health. *Photo courtesy of the Peace Corps.*



Senior center moves



Above: For about 10 years, the Tri-Lakes Senior Center (TLSC) was located at Lewis-Palmer High School. Now the center, which has merged with Silver Key, has moved. The new location is in the Grace Best Elementary School building, 66 Jefferson St., Monument.

According to Sue Walker, TLSC director, the move has given the center more room for activities aimed at helping seniors maintain social connections as well as help with physical and mental well-being. The new facility has four rooms. A physical activity room has been repainted and a new floor installed to accommodate such activities as yoga, tai-chi, line dancing (shown in the photo), and other physical activities intended to help seniors maintain flexibility, strength, and balance.

A game room hosts bingo and card games like pinochle and hand and foot (shown in photo). A bridge group dropped out during the pandemic but may restart its weekly matches. A “Mindercise” group helps sharpen mental agility, and seniors are involved in helping with children’s literacy.

Many other services may be accessed through the Tri-Lakes Senior Center and Silver Key. Please refer to the website, www.TriLakesSeniors.org, for the monthly edition of Senior Beat for details on scheduled groups and events at the center and other important information, e.g., how to find transportation to grocery shopping, medical appointments, and other services.

You may also wish to contact Tri-Lakes Senior Center at 719.464.6873 and leave a call-back number. *Photo by Steve Pate.*

Trinity Community Park opens



Above and below: The newly opened Trinity Community Park, built with volunteer labor and funding from church members is designed for people of all abilities to have a safe, close, accessible place to play outdoors. The park, which includes a swing set with an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant swing, spring toy, and climbing structure, held its grand opening on Aug. 27. The church is now pursuing grants and other funding for a second phase to include ADA-compliant walkways, ramps, surfacing, accessible swings, a wheelchair accessible merry go round and more. For more information, contact Pastor Mike Vinson, mvinson@trinitymonument.org 719-481-3072, or Tamara Schwarz, trscharz@comcast.net, 719-351-0179. See web site at <http://trinitymonument.org/trinity-community-park>. **Pictured:** Ron Schwarz, Erik Sell, Cynthia Halverson (Tri Lakes Chamber of Commerce), Rick Frampton (D38 Executive Director of Student Services), Marlys Berg, Samantha Johnson, Reanna Werner, Mitch LaKind (Town of Monument Trustee), Pastor Mike Vinson, Tamara Schwarz (TCP Team Lead), Steve Scherrer, Darcy Schoening (Town of Monument Trustee), Bonnie Angotti, Kurt Ehrhardt, Sue Ross, Dawn Kruger (Tri Lakes Chamber of Commerce). *Photo by Dave Ross*



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.

D38 free and reduced price school meals policy

Applications for free and reduced price school meals, instructions and an information letter to households are available at each school or online at www.lewis-palmer.org/nutritional services.

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 inter-

national 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 retired 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 epcdriives.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 ends Sep.

17

Location: Southeast corner of Shoup and Herring Roads, drop-off open **Apr. 30-**

Sep. 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 Sep. 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 online 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://communityservices.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.
- **El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regular meeting**, every Tue., 9 am. Please note no meeting Tues. Sep. 20. 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., **Sep. 1 & 18**, 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>.
- **Monument Board of Trustees meeting**, Mon., **Sep. 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., **Sep. 6**, 5 pm, Palmer Lake Elementary School Library, 115 Upper Glenway, Palmer Lake. Normally meets first Tues.
- **Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting**, Thu., **Sep. 8 & 25**, 5 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent, Usually meets second and fourth Thu. Info: 719-481-2953. www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **Monument Academy School Board meeting**, Thu., **Sep. 8**, 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/>.
- **Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) meeting**, Sat., **Sep. 10**, 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., **Sep. 12**, 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., **Sep. 13**, 10 am 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets second Tue. Info: Bill Burks, 719-481-4053.
- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **Sep. 14**, 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., **Sep. 14**, 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.

- **El Paso County Planning Commission meeting**, Thu., **Sep. 15**, 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., **Sep. 15**, 1:30 pm, 15850 Holbein Dr. Meets

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- 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., **Sep. 15**, 5:30 pm, 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302, Monument. Normally meets third Thu. Info: 719-488-6868, www.triviewmetro.com.
 - **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 board meeting**, Mon., **Sep. 19**, 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. Contact Vicki Wood. Phone: 719.481.9546 Email: vwood@lewispalmer.org Web-site: <https://www.lewispalmer.org>.
 - **Monument Board of Trustees meeting**, Mon., **Sep. 19**, 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., **Sep. 20**, 4 pm, Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at www.wescott-fire.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., **Sep. 21**, 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.
 - **Palmer Lake Planning Commission**, Wed., **Sep. 21**, usually meets 3rd Wed., Town of Palmer Lake, 42 Valley Crescent
 - **Academy Water and Sanitation District board meeting**, Wed., **Sep. 21**, 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., **Sep. 21**, 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., **Sep. 21**, 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., **Sep. 21**, 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.
 - **Monument Fire District board meeting**, in person or via Zoom, Wed., **Sep. 28**, 6:30 pm., Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, Monument. Find updates and Zoom meeting joining instructions at www.tlmfire.org or contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin, at 719-484-0911. Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday.

WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS

- **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. service leadership clubs, Key clubs, Builders Club and K-kids at D38 schools. Empty bowls dinner and silent auction Oct. 12. Memberships open to the public. Info: RF Smith, 719-210-4987, www.MHKiwanis.org. See ad on page 3.
- **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**, third **Sat.**, 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. If you need any help, please call Syble or Barry.
 - **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 3.
 - **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 9.
 - **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: 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.** of the month, 10:30 am-noon. • GriefShare Support Group, last Tue. of the month, 10:30 am-noon. NEW LOCATION: Tri-Lakes Senior Center, 66 Jefferson St. in the Grace Best Elementary School building. 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 **Mon. & Wed.**, 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 Grace Best Education Center, 66 Jefferson St. Monument. For more information, to become a volunteer tutor, or to enroll your child, visit www.childrensliteracycenter.org or contact Rachel Morin, Tri-Lakes Senior Center Coordinator, CLC 610-246-1047 (cell)
 - **Tri-Lakes Women's Club Monthly meeting**, third **Wed.**, 11 am - 2 pm, Speaker: Susan Davies, Executive Director, Trails and Open Space Coalition. Program: Trail and Open Space Projects in the Tri-Lakes Region, Past & Future. Susan will share with us some of the recent achievements and the vision for the future for County Parks in El Paso County. Meetings are open to all members of Tri-Lakes Women's Club. To become a member, or learn about the club, visit our website at www.tlwc.net or email sleggie26@me.com.
 - **Senior Citizen Lunches**, 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.
 - **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, Space is limited to 16 participants. RSVP & info: Sue Walker, 719-464-6873, or email sue@monumentalfitness.com.
 - **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.
 - **Monumental Impact Monthly Open House**, second **Fri.**, 5-6 pm, Grace Best East Rooms, 55 Adams St. Monumental Impact's mission is to enable and support high school students in technology, engineering and entrepreneurship. Community members are welcome to connect with us, see our space and ask about programs. Info: 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.
 - **Senior Book Club**, second **Fri.**, 11 am-noon, Silver Alliance Senior Center, all are welcome. Coffee & snacks served. RSVP & info: Sue, 719-330-0241.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Ann Shimek ceramic art retrospective, reception**, **Fri., Sep 2**, 5-8 pm; Exhibit open Sat., Sep. 3, 12-8pm.

- A pop-up Palmer Lake event presented by Palmer Lakes Arts Council, Journey's End restaurant, 11 Primrose Street, Palmer Lake.
- **Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts in Palmer Lake, oil painting class for all levels of experience, Thursdays**, (September is sold out, reserve for Nov.), 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Instructor: Monument artist John DeFrancesco. Registration \$50 at: <https://trilake-sarts.org/event/oil-painting-made-easy/>
 - **Monument Hill Farmers Market**, every **Sat.**, 8-2 pm, 66 Jefferson St., Downtown Monument. See ad on page 5.
 - **Fox Run Regional Park Free Concerts** running every **Thu.** through **Sep. 8** at the Gazebo at the ponds 6 - 8 pm.
 - **Jackson Creek Senior Living Hawaiian Luau & Polynesian Dancers**, Fri., **Sep. 9**, 4-6:15pm, Hawaiian luau party. Guests are invited to don colorful attire for a traditional pig roast, sides and dessert along with live music and entertainment. Jackson Creek's backyard oasis, 16601 Jackson Creek Parkway, Monument. This event is free and open to the public, but space is limited. Call Laura Hale at 719-725-6060 or visit jacksoncreekseniorliving.com/events to RSVP.
 - **9/11 Memorial ceremony**, Sun., **Sep. 11**, 6:40 am sharp. Please join the Monument Police Department's Honor Guard and Monument Fire Department's Honor Guard as we remember the events on Sep. 11, 2001. 645 Beacon Lite Road Monument.
 - **Fuel Church** at Mountain Community Mennonite Church, guest Pastor PJ Stevens Paul from India, Sun., **Sep. 11**, 11 a.m., 643 Hwy 105 Palmer Lake. See ad on page 9.
 - **Black Forest slash/mulch site ends Sep. 11**, at Herring Rd. and Shoup Rd. The last day to pick up mulch is **Sep. 17**. There is still time to do some of that tree trimming and slash cleanup.
 - **Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, After Hours Networking Event**, Tue., **Sep. 13**, 5 pm-7:00 pm Free for chamber members, \$15 for non-members. Details: www.trilakeschamber.com. 719-481-3282.
 - **Pikes Peak Genealogical Society**, Wed., **Sep. 14**, 6:30pm Zoom hangout, 7 pm start; meets 2nd Wednesdays, guests welcome. Usually meets at The Venue, Library 21c 1175 Chapel Hills Drive Colorado Springs (currently only Zoom). Info: ppgsPresident@ppgs.com
 - **Monument Art Hop**, Thu., **Sep. 15**, 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.
 - **Covered Treasures Bookstore**, Thu., **Sep. 15**, 5-8 pm., Fleur Bradley, author of the award-winning title, *Midnight at the Barclay Hotel*, will sign, *Daybreak on Raven Island* and Lewis Palmer graduate, Rachel Hetrick will sign her titles in her Infiniti and Fallen Heir series during Art Hop. 105 Second Street, Monument.
 - **Community, Coffee and Conversation at St. Peter Catholic Church**, Wed., **Sep. 21**, 11 am-12:30 pm, 155 Jefferson St., Monument. Join us for coffee and conversation in the Parish Ministry Center (155 Jefferson St. in Monument). All are welcome. Bring a friend! There is no cost and no agenda. We provide the coffee, you provide the conversation.
 - **(NASTaP) Native American Sacred Trees and Places Annual Meeting and Conference at LaForet Conference Center in Black Forest**. Fri.-Sun., **Sep. 23-25**. Open to the public. Learn about the Native American Culture and Culturally Modified Trees in the area via the various talks, vendors and booths. For ticket information <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-nastap-conference-annual-meeting-tickets-387782075627> or contact marlene.four-gates@gmail.com
 - **Pikes Peak Brewing Company Oktoberfest**, Sat., **Sep. 24**, 11 a.m. -11 p.m. 1756 Lake Woodmoor Drive Monument. See ad on page 2.
 - **Creek Week Clean-Up**, Sun., **Sep. 25**, 9 am, Santa Fe Trailhead/3rd St., Monument.
 - **VOLUNTEER TODAY! Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., **Sep. 29**; approx. 9 am-2 pm. We are all volunteers at OCN and 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.
 - **Western Museum of Mining and Industry, Miners' Pumpkin Patch**, October **Saturdays**, 9am - 4pm, \$10 per person in advance, \$12 at the door. Locally sourced pumpkins, (purchased separately). Games, Gold Panning and Historic Machine Demos, Pumpkin Catapult & Smashing, Farmers Market, morewww.MinersPumpkinPatch.com 225 Northgate Blvd., www.WMMI.org.
 - **Speed Trap Bistro**, 84 Hwy. 105. Open 7 days for breakfast, lunch, coffee, , merchandise, fine art, more. 8 am-2pm. See ad on page 5.
 - **A Better Hearing Center**, free hearing screenings through **Sep. 30**, 574 W. Hwy 105. Monument. See ad on page 14.
 - **Baptist Road Dental, Dr. Hill open house**, Fri. **Sep. 16**, 4 pm-7 pm. 1036 W. Baptist Rd., Colorado Springs 80921, 719-445-0490. See ad on page 11.

- **Cornerstone Cleaners**, special offers through **Sep. 30**. 1030 W. Baptist Road, near King Soopers. See ad on page 4.
- **Eagle Wine & Spirits**, special offers through **Sep. 30**. Baptist Road next to King Soopers. See ad on page 3.
- **Facinelli Motors**, special offer coupon good through **Sep. 30**. See ad on page 17.
- **Monument Cleaners**, special offers through **Sep. 30**. 15932 Jackson Creek Pkwy., in Monument Marketplace. See ad on page 5.
- **Monumental Med Spa**, special offers through **Sep. 30**; at the loft, 4 Hwy 105 Palmer Lake.. See ad on page 7.
- **Noel Relief Centers**, new patient special. 950 Baptist Rd #130, Monument. See ad on page 8.
- **Pure Romance by Amy Yocum-Vos**, special offers through **Sep. 30**. www.pureromance.com/AmyYocum-vos. See ad on page 4.
- **The Living Room Plants**, special offers through **Sep. 30**. 12229 Voyager Pkwy, Suite 100. See ad on page 5.
- **YMCA fall sports sign up now**, www.ppymca.org/sports. See ad on page 6.
- **Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day Fox Run Regional Park**, Sat., **Oct. 1**, 9 am. Come to National Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day at Fox Run Regional Park. The event will include guided trail rides, trail etiquette handouts, riding clinics, giveaways and more. All ages are welcome: from tots on stride bikes to teens. Riders just need a working bike and helmet to participate. Register online at ElPasoCountyNatureCenters.com. For more information go to communityservices.elpasoco.com/take-kid-mountain-biking/ or call 719-520-6977.
- **Grow your business workshop**, Wed., **Oct. 5**, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Palmer Lake Economic Development Group partnering with El Paso County Small Business Development Center. Lunch provided. Palmer Lake Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent, advanced reg.: [HTTP:// tinyurl.com/PalmerLakebusiness](http://HTTP://tinyurl.com/PalmerLakebusiness). See ad on page 5.
- **Water Lantern Festival Fox Run Regional Park**, Sat., **Oct. 8**, 4:30-8:30pm. Come out to enjoy the magical spectacle of the Water Lantern Festival at Fox Run Regional Park. Bring out your friends and family to decorate a water lantern and gather with your fellow community members for a wonderful evening of beautiful lights, food trucks, and special moments. Registration is required. For more information go to communityservices.elpasoco.com/water-lantern-festival-2022/ or call 719-520-6977.
- **Empty bowls dinner and silent auction**, Wed., **Oct. 12**, 5-7:30 pm. presented by Monument Hill Kiwanis Club, Kiwanis youth service leadership clubs, and Tri-Lakes cares. tickets available starting September 10. See ad on page 14.
- **Front Range Makers Market**, Sat.-Sun., **Oct. 22**, 9-4 pm, **Oct. 23**, 10-3 pm, crafts, decor, yard art, more, \$5 at the door, Lewis Palmer High School, Higby at Jackson Creek Pkwy.
- **MVEA member appreciation days**, celebrating over 80 years, lunch and pie, Wed.-Thu., **Oct 12-13**, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., free. See ad on page 12.
- **YMCA 5K race series** 3 base has one great cause. Creepy crawl 5K, Sat., **Oct. 29**; Turkey Trot Thu., **Nov.**

- 24**, Jungle jog Sat., **Dec. 10**. Stroller and dog friendly. See ad on page 6.
- **MVEA outdoor power equipment giveaway entry deadline**, Mon, **Oct. 31**. Details: www.mvea.coop/greengiveaway. See ad on page 12.

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, Oct. 1

Ad space reservations due: **Fri., Sep. 9**
Finished ad artwork due: **Fri., Sep. 16**
Letters to the editor due: **Fri., Sep. 16**
Calendar items due: **Fri., Sep. 23**

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



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Editorial content: editor@ocn.me
Event information: calendar@ocn.me

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Damaging Hail

The following is a list of areas that were impacted with 1"-1.5" hail that damaged roofs:

- **Black Forrest** - Storm date 05/29/21
- **Meridian Ranch** - Storm date 05/29/21
- **Latigo Rd & Estonville Rd** - Storm date 06/07/22
- **Wolf Ranch** - Storm date 05/29/21

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