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Local Events

See pages 27-31 for details of
these and many other local
events.

- **11th Annual North Pole at Tri-Lakes Arts and Crafts Fair**, Sat., Dec. 2, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **Downtown Monument's Small Town Christmas**, Sat., Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
- **Monument Tree-lighting Ceremony with Santa**, Sat., Dec. 2, noon-6 p.m.
- **Community Forum on possible commercial development**, Tue., Dec. 5, 6:30-8 p.m.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber Monthly Education Series: Speed Networking**, Wed., Dec. 6, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.,
- **El Paso County Hazardous Materials & Recycling Collection Facility**, Sat., Dec. 9, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- **Annual Handbell Christmas Concert**, Sat., Dec. 9, 7 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Yule Log Pot Luck Dinner**, Tue., Dec. 12, 6 p.m.
- **Foot Care Clinic**, Wed., Dec. 13
- **St. Peter Catholic Church: On This Christmas Night Concert**, Fri., Dec. 15, 7 p.m.
- **Tri-Lakes Music Association Annual Christmas Concert: The Story of Christmas**, Fri.-Sun., Dec. 15-17, 7 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun.
- **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., Dec. 15
- **Wescott Fire Department Santa Patrol**, Sat., Dec. 16, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- **Annual Palmer Lake Yule Log Hunt**, Sun., Dec. 17, 1 p.m.
- **Silver Alliance Christmas Party**, Thu., Dec. 21, noon-2:15 p.m.
- **Monument Police Santa on Patrol**, Sat., Dec. 23, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., Dec. 29
- **County's Annual Treecycle**, Sat.-Sun., Dec. 30-31; Jan. 6-7, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. ■

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The Palmer Lake Annual Supper and Starlighting Festival showed its continuing popularity as huge numbers lined up for a chili dinner Nov. 25 to open their holiday season. The chili aroma permeated the air, and folks were entertained by the festivities as they waited to enter the holiday-decorated dining room. The Palmer Lake volunteer firefighters and Kiwanis Key Club youths from Palmer Ridge High helped everywhere from the kitchen to the gazebo and popcorn stand. Proceeds will benefit the Fire Department. *Photo above by John Howe. Photo at right by Arlene Fisher-Olson taken from the long line at left in the photo above. See page 26.*



Lewis-Palmer D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee, Nov. 14

Charter school application panel reports its findings

By Harriet Halbig

The District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) of the Lewis-Palmer School District received the results of a review by the application subcommittee of the Monument Academy Expansion application at its Nov. 14 meeting.

The subcommittee made an in-depth review of the application and compared its results with those of the Charter School Institute (CSI) review. CSI is the state chartering body. Monument Academy is chartered exclusively by District 38, but a comparison of findings seemed significant.

The findings of the two bodies were essentially in agreement and complimented Monument Academy (MA) for submitting a solid application includ-

ing an innovative leadership program concept. The school is well-established with over 20 years of history and its slightly different high school approach could offer an alternative to district families. With a future population of 500, the school could alleviate pressure on the other high schools as the district grows.

The subcommittee recommended that the Board of Education approve the application with the provision that a specific list of items be addressed. These include:

- A stronger commitment to state-required testing
- Continued commitment to small class sizes
- Aligning curriculum with state graduation requirements and re-

vising SAT, graduation rate, and dropout rate targets

- The application states there will be no summer school. Clarify how credit recover will occur.
- Clarify how students with severe special needs will be served.
- Ensure that students will not "bounce" between traditional and charter schools, as this could complicate credits toward graduation.
- Ensure that the budget is adequate to complete construction and staffing of school
- Ensure that the contract includes clear documentation of joint agreements regarding compliance with state and federal requirements.

MA high school (cont. on page 2)

Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education, Nov. 16

Board OKs Monument Academy Expansion application—with conditions

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education conditionally approved the Monument Academy (MA) Expansion application, heard updates on the Long Term Facilities Planning process,

and discussed some policy changes at its Nov. 16 meeting.

MA Executive Director Don Griffin and Chief Executive Officer and Principal Elizabeth Davis attended the meeting to report on activities in the 49 days

since the application was submitted. MA proposes to build a high school to accompany its elementary school.

Griffin reported that the District Accountability Advisory Committee

Board of Ed. (cont. on page 4)

MA high school (cont. from page 1)

During the discussion that followed, Administration Liaison Cheryl Wangeman said that the academy could offer its own bond to raise funds for the construction of the school or could combine with the district to do so. She said that the academy has a 3 percent reserve at this time. In the past they have often put money aside from the per pupil funding from the state to pay for construction or improvements on the present site.

Board Liaison John Magerko reminded that public comments will continue to be accepted up to 90 days after the application is accepted and during the negotiation period.

MA faculty members and subcommittee member Howard Bonser commented that the site for the school must be determined before further planning would be done. He assured DAAC that MA would take as long as necessary to complete the job right.

The committee voted to approve

the recommendation of the subcommittee.

Long Term Facilities Planning update and preschool forum

DAAC Co-chair Anne-Marie Hasstedt, a member of the Long Term Facilities Planning Committee (LTFP), reported on the process underway throughout

this year, including several community meetings, nine committee meetings, surveys, and other events. The committee is examining demographic information and considering construction priorities through 2024.

The committee recommends the construction of two new elementary schools along the I-25 corridor. With this in mind, they have examined the available properties, including space on the property where Bear Creek Elementary stands, the property where Grace Best Education Center stands, and district owned property in the Forest Lakes subdivision, and at the intersection of Highways 83 and 105.

The committee currently sees the construction of an elementary school at the Bear Creek site and conversion of Bear Creek Elementary back into a middle school as the most feasible.

However, due to the large population of Bear Creek Elementary, were it to be converted, two elementary schools would be needed.

Regarding the use of Grace Best as an elementary, a number of problems arise, including proximity to an assisted living facility, traffic congestion, proximity of the bus barn, and expen-

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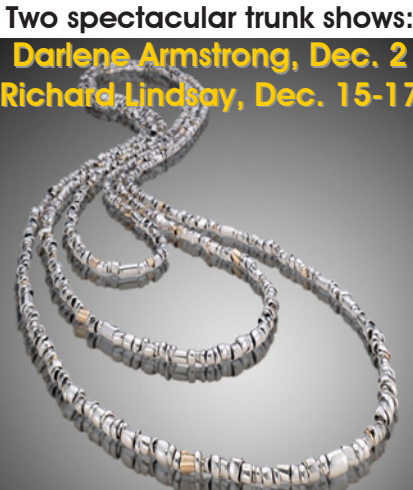
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Annual Yule Log Hunt
Sun., Dec. 17, 1 pm
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sive deferred maintenance issues.

Another concern of the committee is crime prevention with environmental design. The use of portables is discounted due to the inability to provide adequate security.

Preschool forum

A brief discussion followed on preschools in the district and whether it is preferable to follow the current policy of decentralization or to centralize all in one building.

The panel reporting consisted of Lewis-Palmer Elementary School Principal Jenny Day, Kilmer Elementary School Principal Drew Francis, Child Find Coordinator Jennifer Hinderberger (who determines the need for special education services), and teacher Teresa Smacker.

Francis commented that an advantage of decentralization is the ability of the young child to feel they are a part of a school from an early age.

Day also said that this was an advantage, although her preschool also serves children who will later attend Prairie Winds Elementary. The Lewis-Palmer Elementary site also offers extensive special education services.

The Palmer Lake preschool is located near the district administration building.

The advantages of centralizing preschool services also are many. The Lewis-Palmer preschool is top heavy with special needs students, while the Palmer Lake preschool is top heavy with Colorado Preschool

Program students who are viewed as high risk whether due to single parent families, foster families, or economic hardship.

Combining these two groups with the general population would offer the ad-

vantage of allowing students access to various specialized services such as speech therapists and making it easier to evaluate students' needs for possible special education services.

Also, a centralized facil-

ity would allow the preschool teachers to share best practices and ideas. Moving the pre-

schools would also allow for more classroom space in their present locations.

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Francis commented that Kilmer presently has a waitlist for its preschool, a problem that could be solved by centralization.

When asked about the difference between private and public preschools, district Preschool Coordinator

Julie Jadomski said that there are few local options for a private preschool, these being a Montessori School and Monument Academy. The former Little Sprouts preschool has closed.

The district preschools provide curriculum that dovetails with kindergarten curriculum, said Jadomski. Also, private preschools are not mandated to provide special education services, while public preschools are required to do so and any tuition is provided by the state.

Regarding the location of a centralized preschool, it may be part of one of the new elementary schools.

The committee made no formal recommendation.

Other matters

Magerko reported that there will be an estimated 2 percent increase in funding for next year.

He congratulated Chris Taylor and Tiffiney Up-

church for their election to the Board of Education and thanked Sherri Hawkins for her service on the board.

Magerko urged members of the committee to continue to interact with others in the community, realizing that few answers are black and white, and always going to the source of information rather than believing everything they read on the internet. He urged all to be skeptical but not cynical in their approach.

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee meets five times per year. Locations vary. The next meeting will be at 7 p.m. on Jan. 16 at Lewis-Palmer Middle School, 1776 Woodmoor Drive, Monument.

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

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of students. This is partially due to space constraints once playgrounds and parking are considered.

Board Secretary Mark Pfoff commented that he is disappointed that the board will apparently be offered only one recommendation from the committee. He would prefer to see all evidence and scenarios considered.

Board Vice President Matthew Clawson also said he would like to see at least two or three alternatives.

Brofft assured them that all options will be in the committee's final report.

Clawson suggested that the schedule for approval of the report should be pushed back in order to allow the two new board members to acclimatize themselves.

Brofft suggested a Jan. 9 work session to discuss the options.

Clawson asked whether a year-round school schedule would help alleviate some of the problems of capacity.

Abernethy responded that running the schools year round would further exacerbate the problems of deferred maintenance.

Brofft commented that there would also be a salary cost to running year round, resulting in a new round of contracts.

Financial audit report

John-Paul LeChevallier, director of independent auditing at CliftonLarsonAllen, reported that the district's records were clean and thanked the staff for the prompt provision of all requested materials.

The board voted to approve the audit and directed Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Wangeman to provide the final report to state authorities.

Safety and Security update

Chief of Safety and Security Dennis Coates reported on developments in the district safety and security protocols.

He said that all employees have been trained on the provisions of the Claire Davis Act, requiring that school districts take all reasonable care to prevent

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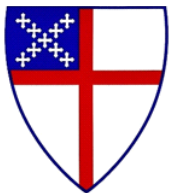
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Above: First-graders from Kilmer Elementary signed the lyrics to *God Bless America* at the November board meeting. *Photo by Harriet Halbig.*

acts of violence in schools.

He also explained Raptor, a program in the elementary schools requiring proper identification of adults entering the building. If it is determined that an adult should not be there, the school resource officer is notified.

There is now a second school resource officer on staff, allowing for improved traffic control and a more visible presence, Coates said.

All radios have been reprogrammed, and there is an agreement on the use of particular channels and language so that response to an emergency is consistent.

Other recent changes include the moving of the Lewis-Palmer High School bus loop from the south to the north side of the school and the closing of one of the Palmer Ridge High School entrances in the morning. Now there is a safety monitor at each entrance.

Every building now has a notebook of emergency procedures. The grounds and maintenance staff has been trained in emergency response, as have the secretaries at each location. Professional development continues through the use of webinars and contacts with law enforcement.

There will be an increased number of drills in response to various potential situations.



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Above: Ascent Church Elder David Reed, left, and Pastor Scott Campbell, center, received recognition from Superintendent Karen Brofft, right. *Photo by Harriet Halbig.*



Above: Board Treasurer John Magerko recognizes Becky Yoder, left, for 10 years' service on the Audit Committee. *Photo by Harriet Halbig.*

Future plans include a reunification drill to emulate a situation where a school is evacuated, and all students are moved to another location. Camera systems in both high schools will be improved. Compliance with the National Incident Management System (part of the Federal Emergency Management Administration) is anticipated in January.

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Above: On November 16th, ahead of the regular Board of Education Meeting the Lewis-Palmer School District hosted a farewell reception for outgoing board members Dr. John Magerko and Mrs. Sherri Hawkins seen here second from left and 3rd from the right respectively. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Policy discussion
Director of Personnel and Student Services Bob Foster moderated discussion of Policy JICDD regarding violent and aggressive behavior, and JICDE regarding bullying.

Director Sarah Sampayo said that policy JICDD should require notification of parents of the perpetrator and victim of any act of violence. Currently it is only required that the principal and school resource officer be notified. Following discussion, it was agreed that the parents should be notified within a reasonable period of time.

The board also heard the first reading of policy JLCD regarding the administration of medication. A change was added to require that permission forms be renewed and submitted each year.

The board declined to approve the change pending changes in board personnel.

Community recognitions

Pastor Scott Campbell of the Ascent Church was recognized for the fund-raising run in September that raised \$15,000 for suicide prevention. Lewis-Palmer High School, Palmer Ridge High School, and Discovery Canyon were each rewarded \$5,000.

Becky Yoder was recognized for 10 years of service on the audit committee.

Public comments

Music teacher Tom Chapman thanked Magerko and board President Sherri Hawkings for their service and expressed anxiety about the results of the recent election, being concerned that priorities might change.

Lewis-Palmer Middle School student Makenzie Garcia spoke of Operation PJ, a program she founded to provide new pajamas to children in need. The collection period this year is throughout November, and she hopes to provide pajamas to children in Texas who survived the hurricane and chil-

dren in California who survived fires. Bridget O'Connor and Phyllis Robinette thanked Magerko and Hawkins for their service.

Burhans thanked the district for sponsoring public deliberation sessions on district issues.

The board went into executive session to discuss leased or sale of real property, negotiations regarding the geothermal system at Palmer Ridge High School, and the evaluation of the superintendent.

No further business was conducted following the executive session.

The Board of Education of the Lewis-Palmer D-38 schools meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month in the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson

St., Monument. The next meeting will be on Dec. 21.

Harriet Halbig can be contacted at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

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Lewis-Palmer D38 Public Deliberation Outreach, Nov. 6

Community members, facilitators discuss sixth-grade and options for Grace Best



Above and on facing page: Facilitator Carrie Bennett explains the results of public deliberation regarding sixth-grade students in the elementary vs. the middle school. Photo by Harriet Halbig.

By Harriet Halbig

The Lewis-Palmer school district sponsored a Nov. 6 community outreach forum in the form of a public deliberation exercise on the use of Grace Best Education Center and the pros and cons of moving sixth-grade students from the elementary schools to the middle school.

This forum is part of the Long Term Facilities Planning process that began early this year and has included sur-

veys and several committee meetings including community members, district staff and administration, and RTA Architects, the consultants who have sought and organized the information into several scenarios.

Attending the Nov. 6 forum were three school principals, two candidates for the Board of Education, a student, and about 40 members of the public, divided into roundtables of about eight persons

each. Each table was served by a facilitator who encouraged those participating to listen to one another with an open mind. An attempt was made to have a diverse variety of viewpoints represented at each table.

Carrie Bennett of Learning Through Difference LLC, was the facilitator for the event. She explained the ground rules for the deliberation.

Participants were provided with a wealth of background material on both questions.

As part of her explanation, Bennett said that there is a category of problems that has no set solutions but instead involves trade-offs, is values-based, and is open to different interpretations. An example of such a problem would be prioritizing water use among urban users, farmers, and recreation. The issues under discussion that evening were of a similar nature.

The ground rules simply required individuals to listen to one another, balance participation so that no one viewpoint or individual dominates the conversation, and respect one another's differences.

The sixth-grade discussion took up more than half the time spent. Some of the considerations were:

- Safety of remaining in the elementary school vs. new opportunities and expanded course choices in middle school
- Travel time and proximity of the neighborhood elementary vs. more distance to the middle school
- Maturity level of sixth-graders and wheth-

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er they required protection from influence of older students After each table reported some of its discussion, an informal show of hands determined that the majority would favor returning the sixth grade to the middle school.

District Superintendent Karen Brofft, in response to a question, said that such drastic changes could not take place until the board decides on the use of all facilities and budget priorities.

The discussion regarding the use of the Grace Best Education Center was more complex and indecisive.

The building itself was constructed in three sections: the single-story front part that was constructed in the 1957, the two-story section added in 1988, and the gym. The building is currently being used for the Homeschool Enrichment Academy, the Transitions program, storage in the oldest section, and space for such enrichment programs as the robotics team. The gym is frequently rented for community use.

Although currently contained following abatement in 2008, asbestos remains in the older part of the build-

ing, making it impractical for use as an elementary school without major improvements.

Four options were presented:

- Leave the facility as is
- Tear down the entire building
- Tear down the oldest part
- Remodel the building into an elementary school

Some concerns included:

- Serving niche programs vs. the needs of the district as a whole
- Money spent on renovation now vs. money spent on new construction in the future
- Building a world-class facility vs. saving money and having a good enough facility
- Advancing the district's vision vs. balancing the budget

Architect Doug Abernethy of RTA Architects estimated the cost of the various options, reminding those attending that asbestos is in the mechanical systems and in the soil around the building.

Other concerns about Grace Best as an elementary include the proximity of an assisted living facility and traffic patterns in the area with a narrow

street to the west and difficulty of access for buses.

The Grace Best campus also includes the district's bus barn, which may need to expand with growing population, and diesel storage tanks.

Due to the complexity of the problem, the group declined to state preferences for the use of Grace Best.

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

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Teacher Spotlight: Georganna Rapaport



Georganna Rapaport teaches fourth grade at Palmer Lake Elementary School and is in her fourth year there. She completed her student teaching at Prairie Winds Elementary and spent a year there as a second grade teacher before her husband's military career took them out of state. When he retired, they returned to Monument and Lewis-Palmer School District.


After earning her degree in marketing at Virginia Tech, meeting her husband, and living at a number of Army

bases, they discovered Colorado. She loves the weather here as it is much nicer than the weather of upstate New York where she grew up, but she, her husband, and her two kids do visit family there each summer.

Georganna worked in marketing before getting her master's degree in education from Regis in Denver. She even took a class taught by Ted Bauman. Now, Georganna assists with professional development at PLES and loves the culture of "let's

try it." She believes that the school environment is a place of belonging for students and that the staff truly care about their students. Her goal with her students is to help them find their purpose.

Georganna dreams of traveling to French Polynesia, getting a doctorate in psychology, and perhaps, teaching abroad. In the meantime, she is a golf and hockey mom who makes sure she takes care of herself each morning by hitting the gym before school.



LPSD

Upcoming Events

December 21: Last day of classes prior to break

Board of Education Meeting,
Admin Building, 6 p.m.

December 22: Teacher work day

December 25-26: District closed

January 1: District closed

January 9: Monument Academy students return

January 10: All students return

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Monument Academy School Board, Nov. 9

Board revises budget, modifies teacher representative policy

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board met on Nov. 9 for 16 minutes to adjust revenue projections, discuss curriculum planning, and modify the teacher representative board policy. Principal and Chief Academic Officer Elizabeth Davis was absent due to illness.

Revenue adjustments and budget revision
Board Treasurer Patrick Hall reported that the full-time equivalent (FTE) pupil count had been adjusted down from 919 to 913 for the purposes of budgeting, resulting in a small revenue drop. He noted that October's budget shows a small loss of \$4,000 because the \$10,000 paid to all coaches is paid twice a year but budgeted monthly. Hall's report noted a yearly principal payment of \$380,000 on Oct. 1 with an outstanding bond balance of \$13.3 million. Hall noted that the debt service to FTE ratio of \$1,016 for 912 students compares to D38's ratio of \$1,228 for 5,375.5 FTE.

Board President Scott Saunders brought up the discussion and approval of the revision of the 2017-18 revised budget that included updated revenue based on actual numbers and decreased expenditures. The board unanimously approved the revision with no discussion. The 2017-18 revised budget along with prior budgets are available at <http://bit.ly/ma-budget>.

Curriculum planning
Director Don Griffin provided the principal's report in Davis' absence. He reported that Davis is working with the curriculum committee on elementary and middle school scope and sequence. They are also starting to work on the high school curriculum. Davis has been sending people to different educational opportunities so that MA has some in-house expertise as they go into a two-year development once they receive approval for the high school.

Teacher representative board policy
The Governance Committee recommended three small revisions to Teacher Representative to the Board policy 1515. Changes include modifying the

term from one year to two years, revising the process to replace a teacher representative by following the same process as School Board bylaws, and softening the requirements for attendance because some meetings don't affect teachers. The board unanimously approved the proposed changes and noted that current teacher representatives are grandfathered in or out depending on their preference. Board policy 1515 can be seen at <http://bit.ly/ma-policy1515>.

Other highlights

- Griffin reported that he met the new executive director of the Colorado Military Academy (CMA) charter school next to Peterson Air Force Base. CMA has a lot of members of families from Peterson and Fort Carson. He noted that their 130,000-square-foot building was given to them by the Department of Defense. They don't yet have a playground, auditorium, or gymnasium but the building is amazing.
- He noted that the district has to wait for the election to be certified, which was expected to occur between Nov. 22 and 24. D38 then has 10 days to install the new board and 15 additional days to set up the organization, but usually the installation and certification happen at the same time. He noted that the second high school application public hearing on Nov. 16 would be seen by same board as the first hearing, which he said is good for continuity.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, Jan. 17 at the Monument Academy library at 1150 Village Ridge Point. The MA School Board usually meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. There will be no December meeting, and the January meeting date has been adjusted. Meetings are adjusted as needed to avoid conflicts. Information on the MA School Board, including schedule, minutes, committee and finances can be found at <http://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board>.

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

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Nov. 15

Voter approval increases TLMFPD revenue for 2018 and beyond

By Lisa Hatfield

The Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD), meeting on Nov. 15, discussed the infusion of about \$2.93 million in additional revenue that will be provided to the fire district by the property tax increase of "up to 6.9 mills" approved by district voters in November and the many effects it will have on the proposed 2018 budget. They also heard presentations about the new administrative office space, IT system upgrades, the maintenance status of the fleet, and changes to the district's training program.

Treasurer John Hildebrandt and Director Tom

Tharnish were excused.

Board needs to certify exact mill levy amount in December

Because 61 percent of over 10,000 ballots cast in TLMFPD's territory approved the issue 5A property tax mill levy increase (see election results on page 20), TLMFPD now has the option of adding up to 6.9 mills to the current 11.5 mills, per \$100,000 of assessed value to its budget.

Fire Chief Chris Truty said that due to a higher than expected property value assessment in 2017, the proposed 2018 budget reflects a 6.6 mill levy increase rather than the 6.9 mills approved in the ballot measure. This would still reach the same dollar amount the district said it needed before the election to reach its goals. It would give the district a 0.3 mill cushion for future budgets without needing to go back to community for a vote if that "extra" \$140,000 were needed when it certifies its mill levy in future budget years.

Vice President Roger Lance said, "this budget does not get us much growth, it just sustains us next year," and he thought TLMFPD should certify the whole 6.9 mills right away in 2018 and put the extra toward a cushion for new equipment.

Director Terri Hayes disagreed, saying TLMFPD should stick to the dollar amount it had calculated it needed before the election to meet its goals and "not go to the max" just because they could. Also, the new



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budget already includes a new category that had not been there in the past to set aside extra money for a future equipment fund. President Jake Shirk and Director Jason Buckingham also thought they should just use 6.6 mills this year, since that figure would be enough to generate the revenue to meet the challenges outlined this year to district voters.

The directors will vote to certify the exact mill levy amount at the Dec. 6 meeting.

Draft of 2018 proposed budget will include additional revenue

Truty presented the draft 2018 budget, assuming that the board certifies an additional 6.6 mills above the current 11.5 mills. If so, the 2018 proposed budget estimates that revenue will increase from \$6.15 million in 2017 to \$9.08 million, primarily because of the mill levy increase ballot measure approval. Total expenses are then proposed to increase from \$6.19 million in 2017 to \$8.87 million in 2018.

As promised by TLMFPD before the election, draft budget categories with the most noticeable increases included, but were not limited to:

- Wages increase from \$3.48 million to \$4.6 million
- Buildings capital outlay increases from \$35,000 to \$410,000
- Communications expenses increase from \$133,450 to \$231,535
- Three new vehicles (one each: fire, medical, and administrative) for \$360,000
- Creating a separate savings fund for future vehicle, equipment, and communications replacement and depositing \$507,000.

For all the details of the proposed budget, see <http://tlmfire.org/budget> or attend the Dec. 6 meeting when the directors will actually vote. No members of the public spoke either for or against the proposed budget at the public hearing on Nov. 15.

Wage increase will be decided next month

Another decision at the December meeting, besides the mill levy assessment resolutions, budget appropriations, and budget approval, will be the exact amount of the 2018 wage increase. Truty said the number in the proposed budget will increase enough so that in 2018 wages will meet the 2017 Front Range average, "rather than being 25 percent below that. It will be a huge, huge leap for us, it will keep and attract more people." Comparable districts listed by the district in the 2017 election materials include Fountain FD, Frederick/Firestone FD, Brighton FD, Colorado Springs FD, Castle Rock FD, South Metro FD, and West Metro FD. Also see www.ocn.me/v16n12.htm#tlmfpd1115.

Chief's report

Truty publicly thanked some specific people who supported the ballot measure, including resident Dave Betzler who chaired the advocacy group, Micah Coyle, Aaron Wood, Mike and Andrea Keough, resident Michael Winton, and Paul Hanley from George K. Baum. "This was a team effort, not just the chief officers and also the union. None of this would have happened without everybody's participation."

Truty said the move of TLMFPD's administrative offices was complete. "We are back in the district, and it's a step up from what we had before.... I think it's a good fit for us." He invited district residents to see the new offices at 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 103, Monument. Note: According to the proposed budget, rent for the new space will cost \$35,525 a year now, which is more than twice the cost of the similar-size office space TLMFPD was leasing on Gleneagle Drive, which was not inside TLMFPD's territory.

Fire Marshal/Administrative Battalion Chief Jamey Bumgarner outlined the improvements in technology since TLMFPD had chosen a new IT contractor. "We wanted to make the system robust to support the organization moving forward," he said, explaining improvements in internet speeds and standardization of internet equipment at all three stations and the new offices. Truty said internet speeds are 25 to 50 times higher than they were, for less expense than before, thanks to the new IT firm, and this would allow video conferencing between the fire stations to help

with training, for example.

Deputy Chief Randy Trost's comments included:

- We have never gotten the quality and character of paramedic and firefighter candidates like this before in a hiring process! Some were also applying to Colorado Springs FD and other bigger districts but considering TLMFPD at the same time.
- All three fire engines, 2211, 2212, and 2213, need some type of service related to age, call volume, or original design. The motors are just tired. 2212 is in the shop with an oil leak, and it doesn't look good. We might need to borrow a rig in the one-year interim between ordering and taking delivery on a new fire engine.
- A superficial remodel of Station 3 is underway, but in the next three years, each station will go through a thorough design and re-envisioning process with ideas from the firefighters now that the mill levy has been approved.
- We are doing research on the right kind of new extrication equipment to buy.
- Staff motivation to serve on research committees is much better now. The money is there, and we can purchase items next year; this changes the momentum.

Trost said that one shift had been able to test-drive a fire engine demo on Nov. 13, experiencing driving on different grades with different horsepower motors and suspensions. Truty said "The word's out. (Companies) are dropping by about every week" with demonstration fire trucks.

Training update

Battalion Chief of Training Jonathan Bradley, who joined TLMFPD in September, presented an overview of his progress in the last few months. His comments included:

- I spent time with the crews to find out broad categories of training they needed and how to address delivery of training.
- Office Administrator Jen Martin and I have been digitizing training records and creating a records management system so that no one will ever lose a certification due to missing an expiration date.

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- We have established a new pattern of training, first doing company-level training of individual skills and then going out in the field to put it all together in real-life scenarios.
- We have set up a 2018 training calendar, prioritized, so that guys can plan around big events such as wildland refresher training.
- We have applied to have a state-recognized Emergency Medical Service (EMS) training site here so we can do customized continuing education on our own without relying on the hospital site. The hope is to create a confederacy of other North Group districts to share instructors and course content.
- Penrose Hospital won its bid to copy a paramedic training program from St. Anthony's in Lakewood. We will be able to send paramedics trainees there too for six-month turnaround time instead of 1-1/2 years. It is huge for us.

The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Dec. 6 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information, contact Jennifer Martin at 484-0911. For upcoming agendas, see <http://tlmfire.org/board>.
Lisa Hatfield can be reached at lisahatfield@ocn.me.

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Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Nov. 21

After mill levy win, district looks to finalize budget

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) Board of Directors met on Nov. 21 as it awaited final revenue numbers from the El Paso County Assessor's Office to finalize the budget. All board members were present except Harland Baker, who was excused.

Chief Vinny Burns thanked the community in supporting the overwhelming victory in raising the levy from 7 to 21.9 mills in the Nov. 7 election (see election results on page 20). He expressed special thanks to those who worked on committees and pitched in to get the levy passed. Capt. Sean Pearson echoed Burns' gratitude on behalf of the firefighters.

2018 budget approval briefly postponed

Burns stated that not much had changed regarding the 2018 budget since the board's October meeting. He explained that he was waiting for final numbers from the Assessor's Office, which should come in seven to 10 days. Burns noted that revenue was estimated at \$2.297 million. Because of the district's reduced size, Burns stated that the Special Ownership Tax revenue was conservatively cut from \$250,000

to \$75,000. He estimated \$1.5 million would be placed in reserves to prepare for capital improvement projects.

Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich explained Resolution 2017-005 that, if approved by the board, would change the district's current accident and sickness policy and coverage through the Heart, Circulatory and Cancer Trust that is part of the Special District Association of Colorado pool. The change would create a \$6,000 savings for the district and would bring it into compliance with legislative changes. The board unanimously approved the resolution.

Resident Dennis Feltz asked if the insurance change benefitted volunteers retroactively. Popovich replied that the insurance changes, effective Jan. 1, 2018, would only apply to active volunteers who have served for a certain period of time and career firefighters. Burns and Ridings confirmed that the parameters were established by the state of Colorado.

Special awards given

Burns presented certificates of commendation to Pearson and Assistant Chief Scott Ridings for their hard work in coordinating and developing the



Above: Assistant Chief Scott Ridings, left, and Capt. Sean Pearson received honors for their exceptional work in training local fire districts. *Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.*

highly successful North Group live fire training at the clubhouse of the former Gleneagle Golf Course.

Bank balances increase

Popovich reported on the district's October bank balances, which increased by \$5,245 overall. Director Joyce Hartung requested an amendment to the October minutes to reflect that Burns responded to resident Gary Rusnak's question about the Station 2 easement.

Chiefs' reports

Ridings reported that Wescott responded to 27 EMS calls and 30 fire calls for a total of 57 responses in October. Average response times were 5:41 for EMS and 5:20 for fire, and an average 5:35 per call. Mutual Aid was given on 14 calls and received on four calls. None of the calls resulted in fire loss. Popovich notes delay in notices

Feltz, the only resident in attendance, stated that he had requested but not received notices of board meetings and meeting minutes. Feltz also requested a copy of the budget. Popovich apologized for the delay in meeting notices and minutes. Board President Greg Gent indicated that

a budget would be made available. Burns' review of the budget clarified that a budget would not be ready until December.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Santa Patrol set for Dec. 16

After the meeting, the district reported that Wescott's annual Santa Patrol, where Santa rides a fire truck through the district's neighborhoods and hands out candy to kids, is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 16. Santa's route will be posted on the website, listed below.

The next DWFPD board of directors meeting will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 5, at 7 p.m. Note that this meeting is being held two weeks in advance of its normal schedule. The meeting location is Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Drive. Please call (719) 488-8680, a non-emergency number, for more information, or visit www.wescottfire.org. The district is also on Facebook and Twitter.

Jennifer Kaylor can be reached at jenniferkaylor@ocn.me.



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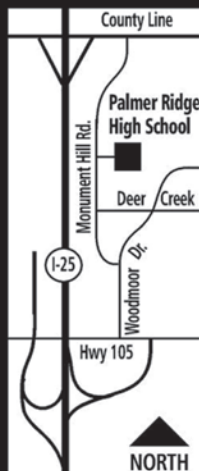
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Monument Planning Commission, Nov. 8

Wagons West development proposal advances

By Kate Pangelinan

On Nov. 8, the Monument Planning Commission approved and recommended the Wagons West housing development's Annexation, Zoning, and Preliminary PD Site Plan.

Commissioners Kenneth Kimple, Ed Delaney, Daniel Ours, and Jim Fitzpatrick were in attendance.

Wagons West proposal

The Wagons West property is adjacent to Old Denver Road and north of the Monument Ice Rink, covering 34.714 acres. The proposed housing development would be composed of 131 residential dwelling units, with 54 attached single-family homes and 77 attached single-family townhomes. The applicant—Wagons West LLC, in connection with NES Inc. as a consultant—intends to complete this project in two phases.

Phase 1 of the Wagons West housing development would feature a percentage of the planned townhome-style residences, built with access from the south of the property. This would also be when the detention pond and lift station are built. Visual representations of these different housing options, as well as maps of the property, are available at <https://monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com/Document/cd956052-42bfe711-80bf-001fbc00ed85/Packet110817.pdf>.

Andrea Barlow, representing NES, explained that a goal of this development is to contribute a wider range of housing options to the town. Houses in Monument increased in price by about 10 percent over the last year, and many professionals commute to the town because their sala-

ries would not accommodate living inside it. The Wagons West townhome residences are intended to cost \$230,000 to \$250,000, providing more opportunities for young professionals, new families and empty nesters looking to downsize to find affordable housing in Monument, she said. The single-family houses that are intended to come in a later phase of development will cost \$260,000 to \$280,000. Both types will feature two to three bedrooms as well as garages that will accommodate at least two cars. Sixty percent of the townhomes will have two-car driveways.

A bit over 15 acres of open space would remain to the north of the development, and a park would be situated between groups of houses. Teachout Creek runs from east to west across the northern half of the property. There would be 550 feet between the Wagons West development and the existing neighborhood to the north, and 610 between this proposed project and the homes to the west. Two points of access would be provided off Old Denver Road. Extra parking spaces would be provided for visitors, alongside the option of parking on the street.

There is sufficient water on the property to support the development, Barlow said. Water rights for this land would be deeded to the town, and a future well site area left clear.

The staff recommended conditions including providing a way to cross the road to reach Old Denver Trail, accommodating for drainage, and developing turn lanes.

Public hearing

Topics brought up during the

public hearing included concern for the endangered Preble's meadow jumping mouse, as it was suggested that the safe spaces set aside for the mouse have been shrinking with new developments, and frustration from Trails End residents who do not believe they received proper notice about this project. Worry was also expressed about how this development might impact the creek, and an attendee called for more accommodation of non-vehicular ways of getting around. A sidewalk leading farther into Monument was suggested, so families could walk or bike in greater safety.

One citizen noted that he lives 615 feet away and remembers receiving a letter explaining the project. He expressed support for the development and stated that realtors may not be entirely truthful about the possibility of future developments in an area to try to sell homes. He noted that this can't be the Town of Monument's responsibility.

The applicant responded, saying that traffic studies have been conducted as well as studies pertaining to the protected mouse. A piecemeal, incomplete sidewalk could be dangerous, and so it is thought improvements would be best made over time.

Results

Commissioner Kimple moved to approve the Wagons West development's proposal with the suggested conditions, and it was approved unanimously. The project will now go on to be reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

Other business

Commissioner Kevin Geisbert has stepped down, so the town will be accepting ap-

plications for a new Planning Commission member. Other commissioners' terms will be expiring soon, too, so new positions will open.

If a Monument Planning Commission meeting is held in December, it will be at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 13, at 645

Beacon Lite Rd. Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of the month. Information: 884-8017 or <http://www.townofmonument.org/meetings/>

Kate Pangelinan can be reached at

katepangelinan@ocn.me.

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Monument Board of Trustees, Nov. 20.

Pay raise for police proposed

By Lisa Hatfield

On Nov. 20, the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) debated with staff when and how to incorporate a police officer pay raise, which was just suggested at the Nov. 18 budget workshop, into the 2018 budget. They also heard updates on code enforcement, the Village Center Metro District, and the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce.

The board also celebrated the promotion of one of the Police Department detectives. Mayor Pro-tem Don Wilson ran the meeting in the absence of Mayor Jeffrey Kaiser.

The Nov. 6 meeting had been rescheduled to Oct. 30 and was then canceled.

Police officer promoted

Monument Police Chief Jake Shirk said, "It is not too often that the Police Department gets the opportu-

nity to promote one of our own to the next level." He said even eight years ago when he hired Joseph Lundy, he noticed Lundy's courage, fortitude, professionalism, and desire to be a great officer for MPD.

Shirk said with Town Manager Chris Lowe's support, MPD was able to add a third sergeant position to "mentor our own to take our positions when we are gone." Lundy was the top scorer on

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the test, and Shirk said he was proud to offer him the position. See photo on right.

Trustees demand police salary increases

On Saturday, Nov. 18, the trustees and

staff met at a budget workshop where apparently some of the trustees made a surprise request that the 17 sworn police officer salaries be raised from the current \$46,000 per year step in grade (SIG) to somewhere between \$48,000

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Above: Monument Police Department (MPD) Detective Joseph Lundy, center, was promoted to sergeant by Police Chief Jake Shirk on Nov. 20. Shirk praised Lundy's wisdom, knowledge, professionalism, and insight and appreciated his hard work and dedication to MPD. *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*

and \$56,000.

Because of this suggestion, at the Nov. 20 regular meeting, Town Treasurer Pamela Smith provided a re-worked draft budget to the trustees that attempted to incorporate the range of suggested options for higher salaries and their associated benefits, retirement and tax implications, and other technical complications but would still be a balanced budget as required by state statute. Note: This new draft document could not be included in the public board packet due to the very short turnaround time. She did provide updated copies of the new draft to the trustees.

"Because of the complexity of this, we should have started this way back, way back in May or June. We are trying to push this that the board requested so it can take effect Jan. 1, but it was just introduced on Saturday," Smith said.

For example, she said if the SIG is raised to \$52,000 per year, it would require finding \$130,000 more in the 2018 budget to cover the difference. This would require either financing some budget items or making cuts. "You are investing in the Police Department, and you are also committing future boards and funds because these amounts are only going to grow," she told them. She and Lowe presented a list of suggested projects that the trustees could cut from the 2018 budget, including the wi-fi project for downtown, the pocket park on Washington, the dock extension at that lake, the bathrooms at the lake, and the electronic ticketing system.

Smith emphasized the need to make a decision soon, if the trustees wanted to make the change for 2018, because of county and state requirements for posting notices about budget meetings and turning in final budgets. If the town misses its deadlines, the county could withhold property tax revenue and the state could withhold sales tax revenue.

Trustee Greg Coopman asked Shirk if raising the salary to \$52,000 would make Monument more competitive in the marketplace. Shirk said it would help, and \$50,000 would help too. Note: One officer position has been unfilled for over a year, and one candidate who had applied recently just withdrew his application.

Trustee Jeff Bornstein said, "I was a little grumpy on Saturday, and for that I still apologize." His concern was that if MPD did not have enough officers, the safety of the other officers and the community would be at risk. "It's time. We have the money.... It's nice to make decisions on what to spend and what

not to especially when you don't live here (as some town staff members live outside the town limits). And it's the board's decision."

Town Attorney Alicia Corley said, "My concern is that the board does not normally set salaries." Bornstein raised his voice. "If we lose officers, and an accident happens, and three or four thousand people sue the town, when CIRSA drops us, who is going to take ownership and get canned?... It is not for the town staff to direct the board. The board is supposed to direct the staff."

Lowe disagreed with Bornstein, saying he has not heard of a board that sets individual salaries for particular job titles in a town.

The board consensus was to direct Smith to incorporate \$52,000 and related costs as the new sworn officer salary in a new draft of the 2018 budget, and the trustees would bring their own ideas for what to cut to balance the budget instead of just using the suggestions from Smith and Lowe. Smith recommended that since timing was so tight at the end of the year, instead of scheduling just a budget workshop, they could have a special meeting where they could vote too.

Coopman said he had not heard anyone say they were not in favor of an MPD pay increase, but that it needed to be done responsibly and thoroughly. He suggested a resolution, along with the budget itself, to record that the trustees specifically approved the pay increase.

The special budget meeting, open to the public, was set for Saturday, Dec. 2 at 9 a.m. so that on Dec. 4 the final budget could be approved.

Facilities and compensation committees discussed

Lowe recommended that, "as an alternative to the way we have had to tackle it this year," and "as a calmer way of getting trustees into the budget discussions earlier in the process," the trustees should be involved, along with staff, in the research and decision-making much sooner in the budget process. He suggested that two trustees join a new compensation research committee, and two different trustees join a facilities research committee. "Then the other board members would have to trust those two to do the heavy lifting and would give a recommendation to the board."

The trustees agreed that this would be a good idea to start in early 2018.

Town manager's report

Lowe's written report summarized changes to the format of the 2018 budget, but this was not discussed by the

trustees on Nov. 20. Changes described include adding capital lease payments to the debt service fund and setting up capital projects funds for specific departments' projects and improvements that fit set criteria. This will involve shifting expenses and revenues worth hundreds of thousands of dollars related to the water enterprise fund, the 1 percent 2A Water Acquisition, Storage, and Delivery (ASD) sales tax, the town's general fund, and the 2 percent sales tax collected by the state.

As of the Nov. 20 draft version of the 2018 budget, \$884,250 in capital projects (CIP) in the general fund (GF) was funded, and \$4.53 million of CIP in the GF was unfunded. In the water enterprise fund (WEF), \$345,000 in CIP was funded, and \$1.55 million in CIP was unfunded. Staff and trustees are still working to determine how to fund all the 2018 budgets. Total projected revenue for 2018 is \$6 million.

For technical financial details, read the Nov. 20 board packet or contact Lowe or Smith.

Other points in Lowe's report included:

- The town clerk developed the nomination petitions and candidate information packet for April 2018 election.
- MPD is working with Tri-Lakes Monument FPD on active shooter training and coordination responses.
- MPD officers have taken more reports this year than ever before.
- Wagons West annexation and zoning has been reviewed by Monument Planning Commission (See related MPC article on page 13) and is scheduled for the Dec. 4 BOT meeting.
- We are scheduling a meeting with the new district manager of Triview to discuss a few projects of mutual interest.

Code enforcement update

The town's code enforcement subtractor, Susie Ellis of Community Preservation Specialists Inc., told the trustees about her interactions with residents since Aug. 7 when she took over the code enforcement task from the town. She has logged 101 cases so far and said her objective is to first help people understand what the code says and offer suggestions to them on how to comply. Her comments included:

- I am informing and educating people about the town ordinances, just like (Town Clerk) Laura Hogan did before me.
- I only go into a homeowners' association if they need my help. Otherwise they do their own enforcement (of their covenants).
- The town website will have answers to some common questions soon.
- It does not do any good to be aggressive with people

when they just need to be educated first. It takes a little more time, but results are better.

Note: To be fully informed, Monument residents who live in the town limits need to check both town ordinances at https://library.municode.com/co/monument/codes/code_of_ordinances as well as specific homeowners' association rules for their neighborhoods.

Note: People with "Monument" mailing addresses do not necessarily live inside the town; they may live in unincorporated El Paso County. To see if you live within the boundaries of the Town of Monument, see zoning map at <https://arcg.is/0TTjib>.

Village Center Metro District request

Jim Romanello from Village Center Metro District (VCMD) appeared before the trustees to request that VCMD could make another presentation to the board in its quest

for solvency. "We need your help. We are asking for you to help us raise our property taxes." See www.ocn.me/v17n2.htm#mbot, www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#mbot0918, www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#mbot1002.

Over the last year, VCMD and the town have had trouble

communicating and reaching consensus about possible resolutions to VCMD's revenue and debt problems. On Sept. 18, VCMD had a public hear-

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ing requesting a material modification to its service plan where VCMD and the town disagreed about the actual cost of maintaining roads inside VCMD. The discussion was continued to Oct. 2, but no trustee made a motion on VCMD's request, so nothing was voted on then.

On Nov. 20, after an emotional discussion about who did and did not want to communicate with whom, the board consensus was to allow VCMD to make another board presentation after the first of the year, and meanwhile Romanello would reach out to Lowe.

Chamber of Commerce goals explained

Terri Hayes, president of Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development (Coalition) (EDC) and visitors center, presented the trustees and the audience with three facets of the Chamber's roles. They included:

- Providing information to new residents and visitors. Hayes hopes to find a volunteer to staff the Chamber on Saturday mornings.
- Attracting both primary businesses (which generate revenue from outside the Front Range) and secondary businesses (which redistribute local revenue) and figuring out how to put our energy into things we can influence. See www.ocn.me/v15n5.htm#mbot0406.
- Hosting the July 4 Street Fair and Beer Garden in historic downtown, up to eight summer concerts at Limbach Park, the Bines and Brews Festival at Limbach Park, and at the Chamber facility on Second Street hosting the Chamber Breakfast Networking group, monthly business education series, and many public group meetings.

Bornstein thanked Hayes for all the events on the west side of town and then suggested having a concert on east side of the highway at the clock tower north of Texas Roadhouse. Hayes said she would check into the logistics.

Countywide water planning

Lowe said that at Trustee Dennis Murphy's suggestion, Lowe went with Public Works Director Tom Tharnish and Principal Planner Larry Manning to meet with Craig Dossey, executive director, El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department, to talk about countywide water planning.

The result was "refreshing," since Dossey told Lowe the county was a neutral party that could facilitate between water providers and developers, and the town was invited to participate in the steering committee meetings. Lowe said leadership needs to come from the county to help the numerous special districts and municipalities collaborate on securing future renewable water supplies.

Checks over \$5,000

The BOT approved the consent agenda unanimously. It included the following checks over \$5,000:

- Colorado Springs City Finance, MPD 2017 radio user fees – \$6,160
- Triview Metro District sales, motor vehicle, and regional building use tax – \$172,574
- El Paso County Treasurer, 2016 PPT on Mitchell Land – \$7,282
- Berkadia, 1979 GO Bond for water – \$19,960, final payment
- CWRPDA, April 1, 1997 Limited GO Water bonds – \$73,920
- CWRPDA, Oct. 1, 1997 Limited GO water bonds – \$73,920, final payment
- CWCB, Aug. 1, Monument dam loan – \$54,099, final payment
- Wells Fargo Capital Lease, June 14 – \$39,071
- Wells Fargo Capital Lease, due Dec. 4 – \$39,071, final payment
- Wells Fargo Capital Lease, April 1 – \$69,431
- Wells Fargo Capital Lease, April 1 – \$65,135
- Wells Fargo Capital Lease, July 15 – \$49,688

The consent agenda also included a resolution extending the term of Municipal Judge John Ciccolella through Dec. 31, 2018.

Public comments

- Resident Nancy Swearingin asked the trustees if they were so adamant about the \$52,000 police salary, how many of them had voted down affordable multi-family or subsidized housing that someone making that salary could afford to live in?
- Joseph Whitman asked about the Comprehensive Plan and if the town was doing its planning in a vacuum. What other towns are being used as a model for Monument's future? Or are we going off-azimuth into the desert? What about our support elements to keep up with growth?

At 8:25 p.m., the board went into executive session for receiving legal advice on the Forest View Estates litigation. Town Clerk Laura Hogan told OCN that the board did not take any votes or make any announcements after the meeting resumed.

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. A special meeting to work and vote on the budget is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 2. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Dec. 4.

Call 884-8014 or see www.townofmonument.org for information about live video streaming of meetings. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for the Board of Trustees or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monument-townco.minutesondemand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

Note: "Planning 101, An Overview of the Planning Process from Start to Finish," is a workshop for the Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Board of Adjustments, and the public on Jan. 8, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. at the Monument Town Hall.

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

Palmer Lake Town Council, Nov. 9

Discussion of Great Outdoors Colorado grant becomes heated

By James Howald

The Palmer Town Council met once in November, on Nov. 9, when the trustees discussed the town's preliminary 2018 budget. Also, Michelle Connolly, the forester for the Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP), presented the findings of the Home Ignition Zone assessment she and her team did on the town of Palmer Lake. Jeff Hulsmann and Bill Fisher, representing the Awake the Lake committee, reported to the Town Council on the current state of the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant.

Direction for GOCO grant sparks debate
Hulsmann addressed the Town Council, describing the work the Awake the Lake committee is doing to add a bridge spanning the railroad tracks and connecting the park with the town of Palmer Lake. He

emphasized the need for a bridge that would provide a safe way for users of the park to cross the railroad tracks and get to the town's businesses. Hulsmann said Awake the Lake was ready to move forward with the construction of the bridge, but felt there was reluctance to proceed on the part of the Town Council. He asked the board to approve the expenditure of \$130,000 to move earth in preparation for the construction of the bridge.

Palmer Lake Park includes areas on both sides of the railroad tracks and had a previous Master Plan in 2007 that was updated for the \$350,000 GOCO grant the town received in 2015.

Architect Fisher, who designed the proposed bridge, said final approval from the railroad was imminent, and that he had been told Awake the Lake could "proceed with confidence."

Several trustees expressed concerns with the idea of approving the expenditure requested by Hulsmann. Trustee Mark Schuler said that no contractor had yet bid on the work, and that final approval from the railroad was not in hand. Town Attorney Maureen Juran said she saw a risk that the town might pay for the earthwork and then the final approval from the railroad might not appear. Trustee Paul Banta and Mayor John Cressman also expressed concerns about approving the funds for the earthwork.

Banta went on to say he felt Awake the Lake had done a great job with fundraising, but the town was still responsible for the grant. He said he felt there needed to be better coordination and teamwork between the town and Awake the Lake.

These concerns led to a frustrated response from Hulsmann, who argued that it was not practical to wait to move forward with the project until all these issues were resolved.

After further discussion that sometimes grew heated, Hulsmann agreed that Awake the Lake would be responsible for the costs of the earthwork. Juran said this would address her concern about spending town money before final approvals were in place. Hulsmann said he felt the town and Awake the Lake were not pulling in the same direction, but he was glad the project could move forward.

The town doesn't want to spend the GOCO funds until Awake the Lake actually gets the approval from the railroad on the bridge design. But the dirt moving should happen now to avoid weather delays, since



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Savings account information added to budget

During the review of the of town’s preliminary budget for 2018, Trustees Mitch Daniel and Mark Schuler asked Town Clerk Tara Berreth if the budget properly documented all the town’s financial assets. Specifically, they asked if funds in savings accounts were included.

Mayor John Cressman directed the town staff to revise the budget by documenting reserve funds held in savings accounts.

Home Ignition Zone assessment raises concerns

Michelle Connolly, speaking on behalf of CUSP, showed the council a map of fire risk for the town of

Palmer Lake that her team had developed. To assess the risk of fire, her team looked at 458 properties in the town between Feb. 6 and Nov. 3.

Connolly’s team assessed factors on each property, such as: visible street address on the house, length of driveway, vegetation overhanging the roof, type of roofing material used, whether debris was present on the roof and in gutters, type of soffit, type of window, type of siding, and several other factors in determining the risk of fire.

She said that overall, her team expected to see more fire risk in The Glen than they found. She attributed this to the amount of fire remediation work that has been done in that neighborhood.

According to Connolly, the largest risk factor was vegetation, brush, and trees within 5 feet of homes. The next largest risk was the presence of ladder fuel,

which is live or dead vegetation that allows a fire to climb up from the landscape or forest floor into the tree canopy.

Connolly pointed out that when wildfire strikes, a blizzard of embers and burning debris creates spot fires. She emphasized the importance of being proactive to address these issues.

“We don’t want Palmer Lake to become the Santa Rosa of Colorado,” Connolly said.

The two meetings for December will be at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 14 and Dec. 28 at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 481-2953.

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

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, Nov. 9

Board hears preliminary discussion of rates

By James Howald

On Nov. 9, Rob Wadsworth and Richard D. Giardina, both of Raftelis Financial Consultants, spoke to the board about possible changes to the district’s rates. Their discussion focused on how to set the rates for non-potable water, and what changes, if any, to make to the Renewable Water Investment Fee (RWIF). The board also held a public meeting on the proposed budget for 2018 at the November meeting.

District has seen “pretty significant growth”

In their opening remarks, Wadsworth and Giardina pointed out that the district had about 3.3 percent more customers paying monthly bills than in 2016. Tap fees, which are paid when new houses are connected to the system, are also up significantly, raising the question of how to use this extra revenue.

Wadsworth and Giardina said that they did not see a need to raise water rates in 2018, but a rate increase of 2 percent, beginning in 2019, would raise enough money to finance all the district’s capital improvement projects. They said they initially thought it would take a 4 percent increase in rates to do that, but as they developed their analysis they concluded the growth in the district would increase revenue to the point where those projects could be funded with a smaller increase.

Non-potable water rates too low to recover cost of the service

Wadsworth and Giardina told the board that historically residential water service has subsidized the

non-potable water service that the district delivers to a small set of customers who need that service. The Lewis-Palmer school district and the golf course are the two largest customers for non-potable water, which is not treated before it is delivered.

The cost of non-potable water is influenced by the cost of the dedicated lines used to deliver it, they said. Previous analyses of the cost of non-potable water had overlooked some universal costs of the service, and including those costs showed that the district has been undercharging that small set of customers.

The board asked Wadsworth and Giardina to continue their rates-setting work based on the assumption that non-potable rates will increase in 2018.

RWIF to remain unchanged in 2018

Wadsworth and Giardina asked the board to give them some direction on whether to include a lower RWIF in their calculations, or leave it unchanged in 2018. The consensus of the board was to leave the RWIF unchanged at \$43 per month in 2018.

Proposed budget for 2018 has few changes

In the public hearing for the proposed budget for 2108, District Manager Jessie Shaffer mentioned that the Town of Monument had passed a 10 mill increase in taxes for water, which would allow the town to compensate WWSD for certain overpayments WWSD had made, and that that revenue had been added to the budget.

An additional \$100,000 had been added to the budget to repair pinholes that have appeared in PVC

pipe used in some locations in the district. Assistant District Manager Randy Gillette said the additional funds would be used to replace 400 feet of damaged pipe.

Gillette also mentioned the project to rebuild a siphon on the Chilcott ditch had been completed slightly under budget.

The next meeting is scheduled for Dec. 14 at 1 p.m. Meetings are usually held at the district office at 1845 Woodmoor Drive on the second Thursday of each month at 1 p.m. See www.woodmoorwater.com or call 488-2525 to verify meeting times.

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

Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility Joint Use Committee, Nov. 14

Final payment made on total phosphorus removal tertiary clarifier expansion

By Lisa Hatfield

On Nov. 14, the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) Joint Use Committee (JUC) applauded the completion of the chemical total phosphorus (TP) removal tertiary clarifier expansion, approved its 2018 facility budget, and discussed ongoing efforts to keep the facility running at its best possible efficiency and meet or exceed legislated requirements.

TLWWTF operates as a separate joint venture public utility and is owned in equal one-third shares by Monument Sanitation District (MSD), Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD), and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD).

The three-member JUC acts as the board of the facility and consists of one director from each of the three owner districts’ boards: WWSD board Director at Large Rich Strom, president; MSD board Chairman Ed DeLaney, vice president; and PLSD board Director Pat Smith, treasurer/secretary. Other board and staff members of the three owner districts also attended, including MSD District Manager Mike Wicklund, PLSD District Manager Becky Orcutt, and WWSD District Manager Jessie Shaffer.

Final payment made for new construction

Facility Manager Bill Burks told the JUC that he had made the final payment of \$24,788 to Aslan Construction for the chemical TP removal tertiary clarifier expansion. The expansion’s construction contract was awarded to Aslan on May 12, 2015. See www.ocn.me/v15n6.htm#tljuc0512

Burks then mentioned a credit and one more change order that he had received just before this meeting that weren’t included in the October JUC ac-

counts payable report. The total cost of the construction was originally estimated at \$1 million but has crept up to more than three times that amount. Burks said he would work with Shaffer and Wicklund, who have been keeping a construction cost spreadsheet of their own, to present the JUC with the total actual cost. See www.ocn.me/v14n9.htm#tljuc-0812.

Note: TLWWTF was not originally designed to remove phosphorus because there was no such requirement in place or forecast when the activated sludge plant was built. See www.ocn.me/v14n9.htm#tljuc-0812.

Burks said that the facility’s September Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) showed phosphorus levels averaged 7.1 mg/l on the influent coming into the facility, 3.2 mg/l in the effluent at the discharge point into Monument Creek, and reduced to 0.68 mg/l at Baptist Road as plant life absorbed the nutrients along the way.

TLWWTF will have to start complying with the new state Reg. 85 annual rolling median treated effluent limit of 1 mg/l for TP at the end of the TP clarifier expansion’s compliance period in the facility’s current five-year discharge permit, on Nov. 1, 2019. The first monthly annual rolling median used as a 1 mg/l permit limit will take effect on Nov. 1, 2020, after a full year of initial tests results have been reported in the monthly DMRs. See www.ocn.me/v17n11.htm#tlwtjfuc.

2018 budget approved

No members of the public attended or spoke during the public hearing on the facility’s 2018 budget. The required separate resolutions to adopt the budget and to appropriate the sums of money set forth in the

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budget were both approved unanimously. Revenue to operate and maintain TLWWTF comes from the three owner districts, which contribute varying amounts based on percentages of biological oxygen demand (BOD), flow, sludge removal, and construction projects. Figures for 2017 and estimates for 2018:

- 2017 budgeted revenues were \$1.24 million
- 2017 actual revenues were \$1.15 million, about 7 percent less than budgeted
- 2017 budgeted expenditures were \$1.21 million
- 2017 actual expenditures were \$1.11 million, about 8 percent less than budgeted
- Estimated 2018 revenues were \$1.19 million, about 4 percent less than budgeted for 2017
- Estimated 2018 expenditures were \$1.15 million, about 5 percent less than budgeted for 2017.

Projected 2018 expenditures include several pieces of replacement capital equipment, repairs, maintenance, plant operator expenses, and special and chemical monitoring, but it does not include construction costs, since the chemical TP clarifier is complete. This 2018 budget also does not include costs for the chemicals needed to run the TP clarifier since Burks has already taken it offline, after a brief compliance testing period earlier this year. Burks has stated at several JUC meetings that he does not plan to operate the TP clarifier in 2018 in order to avoid chemical costs for alum, polymer, and/or sodium hydroxide which are used to chemically remove TP by the process of flocculation, saving up to \$200,000 in 2018. See www.ocn.me/v17n11.htm#tlwtfjuc.

Managers’ reports

Neither Orcutt, Shaffer, nor Wicklund had anything to report during the district managers’ agenda item.

Burks presented the DMR for September. The facility is operating very well.

However, he said TLWWTF “had an issue” with the Ceriodaphnia dubia portion of the third-quarter Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) Test. In the previous quarter, there had been a problem with the fathead minnow portion of the facility’s WET test, but the plant is still in compliance, he said. The JUC discussed whether they needed to find a testing facility that would not give TLWWTF so many “false positives.”

Also, there was a question related to BOD, which

measures how much oxygen the organisms in the wastewater consume as they process the organic waste. In the flow and BOD analysis for influent from MSD, WWSD, and PLSD, the figures looked normal for September.

However, for October, Wicklund pointed out that the sampling numbers indicated a 20 percent jump in BOD, to 90.3 percent of TLWWTF’s rated BOD capacity of 5,600 pounds of organic waste loading per day. Burks was not able to quantify the spike because it was so high, and he said he would change the testing dilution for the November tests so that it can be discussed in detail at the December meeting.

Even including this spike, the average for the year is 29 percent of hydraulic loading and 61 percent of organic loading, but the state only looks at one month at a time, Burks said. Note: the Colorado Water Quality Control Act requires that if a facility has more than three months in a row at 80 percent of either of these two designed capacities, it would be required to start engineering design for expansion construction to meet the higher influent treatment demand.

The proper amount of aeration from the blowers assists aerobic bacteria in the facility’s activated sludge aeration basins to do their part in the biological decomposition treatment process. Wicklund said that the JUC may have to spend money to add to or change its aeration blower capacity in the future. The JUC discussed several options Burks could investigate in the meantime, including asking the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CD-PHE) to reclassify the plant’s BOD capacity from 5,600 back up to 9,800 pounds.

After asking Burks what he thought caused the surge, Shaffer said he had a theory that he would first discuss with WWSD Assistant Manager Randy Gillette, before providing information to the JUC. His working theory was that when WWSD discontinued its ozone demonstration scale project in October and emptied the backwash waste holding tank, this might have added substantial extra organics to the TLWWTF influent from the South Woodmoor WSD collector line.

AF CURE update

Burks summarized the Nov. 7 meeting of Arkansas

River/Fountain Creek Coalition for Urban/Rural River Evaluation (AF CURE). He said Brown & Caldwell Environmental Engineer Andrew Neuhart, who has replaced Sarah Reeves as the AF CURE coordinator, reviewed the Colorado Water Quality Control Division (WQCD) Oct. 10 rulemaking hearing on the Colorado nutrient Regulation 85 and Regulation 31 Section 31.17. The Division’s decisions, which AF CURE supported, included:

- The stricter Reg. 31.17 interim values for phosphorus and nitrogen for rivers and streams were delayed to 2027.
- Colorado Nutrients Control Reg. 85 was extended through 2027.
- Implementation of the final nutrient limits for existing wastewater treatment facilities was postponed for five years to 2027.
- The nutrient incentive program, aimed at facilities that can already achieve effluent concentrations lower than the Regulation 85 effluent limitation, was adopted. This could benefit facilities by extending their compliance schedules to meet variances for phosphorus or nitrogen after 2027.

Burks said he had contacted Aimee Konawal, environmental data unit manager for the WQCD at CD-PHE, to find out more about how to apply for the incentive program for nitrogen. Burks thought the facility could easily meet the current Reg. 85 15 mg/l limit for total inorganic nitrogen (TIN) and use the extended time frame to search for funding for treating nitrogen in the future if the far more stringent interim value limits for TP and total nitrogen in state Regulation 31.17 replace the Reg. 85 TP/TIN limits sometime after 2027. He did not want to pursue the phosphorus incentive program, though, because it costs so much to ratchet down TP levels well below the tight 1 mg/l limits in Reg. 85 that already take effect under the facility’s current five-year discharge permit in November 2019, well before 2027, creating a need for much higher operational costs eight years early.

Other AF CURE topics Burks mentioned:

- AF CURE approved the 2018 contract for Brown & Caldwell, including \$62,500 for nutrients modeling and \$45,000 for Andrew Neuhart to

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- John 1:14

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provide services as AF CURE’s new coordinator with the state and EPA.

- TLWWTF can now stop sampling at its locations at Smith Creek near the mining museum and at Dirty Woman Creek by Old Denver Road, after creating a two-year existing ambient concentration baseline for many potentially toxic Monument Creek instream dissolved constituent organics, chemicals, and metals.
- Environmental attorney Connie King said that water wells in Widefield are less than 100 feet deep, making them more vulnerable to contamination from toxins like the perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs) in firefighting foam used at Petersen Air Force Base.

Wicklund said that MSD Environmental Compliance Coordinator Jim Kendrick, who is also vice chairman of AF CURE, attended the Nov. 13 Water Quality Control Commission Issues Formulation Hearing on the triennial

review of the Arkansas and Rio Grande basins, Regs. 32 and 36 (5 CCR 1002-32 and 5 CCR 1002-36). Wicklund also said Kendrick was attending the Nov. 14 Water Quality Control Division stakeholder meeting on Reg. 93 responsive prehearing statement negotiations on the Section 303(d) List of Impaired Waters and Monitoring and Evaluation List instead of the JUC meeting. Burks said Neuhart talked about prehearing statement issues including effects of the Waldo Canyon Fire and storm precipitation.

Wicklund said that currently, Monument Creek is on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list of “impaired” streams because of stormwater runoff from “non-point sources of E. coli” such as wildlife, cattle, and domestic animals. He said TLWWTF improves the quality of the stream by diluting it with TLWWTF’s much cleaner discharged effluent.

Sharing resources

Burks thanked the Town of Monument for donating and delivering about 10

loads of used asphalt to TLWWTF for use in extending the driveway down to the new chemical TP removal tertiary clarifier expansion building. He was also grateful to contractor Lou Williams for his advice and to WWSD for the use of its backhoe to complete the work in-house.

Discussion of Don Quixote and OCN

Burks told the JUC that he stood by his statements made at the October JUC meeting regarding Fort Carson’s wastewater treatment plant operation and lack of conservation of potable water. See www.ocn.me/v17n11.htm#tlwtfjuc.

Burks said that he found out through a third party that, after an OCN reader alerted Fort Carson staff to his comments, he is no longer allowed on Fort Carson’s wastewater treatment premises.

Strom said, “You are on the right side of this issue, there is no doubt. I appreciate that you are Don Quixote

at the moment.” But he and Orcutt said the JUC was not the forum to take on this issue. Burks said even the Fort Carson staff was disappointed at how much paperwork they would need to do to make needed changes at their facility.

At Burks’ request, at 11:02 a.m. the meeting went into executive session to discuss personnel matters. Strom stated that he did not anticipate making any announcements after the meeting resumed.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. Dec. 12 at the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility, 16510 Mitchell Ave. The JUC annual meeting, which is a public meeting, will be Dec. 13 at La Casa Fiesta in Monument. Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of the month and are open to the public. For information, call Bill Burks at 719-481-4053.

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

Triview Metropolitan District, Nov. 14

Board hears central irrigation control proposal

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Triview Metropolitan District Board of Directors convened on Nov. 14, hearing Water Manager and Independent Conservation Consultant Evan Miles of Conservative Waters, Inc. present his recommendations for a centralized irrigation system controller that he said would ensure greater water, time, and energy efficiencies. Interim District Manager James McGrady updated the directors about well repairs, road and open space maintenance, staffing, and proposed 2018 budget details. The board approved a number of resolutions and heard several comments from residents.

Vice President Mark Melville ran the meeting in the absence of President Reid Bolander.

Triview is a Title 32 special district within the 80132 ZIP code that provides roads, landscaping, open space maintenance, and water and sanitation services to Jackson Creek, Promontory Pointe, Sanctuary Pointe, and several commercial areas. The Town of Monument provides land use planning, police, and general governance for the district’s property owners.

Cloud-based smart irrigation considered

In an audit of Triview’s landscaping irrigation system, Miles discovered that 14 out of 24 of the sprinkler system’s clocks were malfunctioning to some degree. Triview has roughly 300 sprinkler zones and 4,000 sprinkler heads. The board affirmed Miles’ estimate that 75 to 90 percent of the district’s water consumption is directed to landscaping. Evapotranspiration (ET) is the loss of water from the earth and plants to the atmosphere, explained Miles. Common water wasters are overwatering (such as watering during or immediately after a rainstorm), improper nozzle design or placement, evaporation, and wind. Different plants and soils lose water at different rates, and Triview’s current irrigation system does not address these differences.

Miles emphasized that he is an independent consultant and has worked with a variety of irrigation companies. He recommended a cloud-based smart irrigation system developed by the company ETwater (see <https://etwater.com/> for more information about the company). ETwater is Smart Water Application Technology (SWAT) certified and its system would include:

- Centralized control.
- Scientific irrigation scheduling (as opposed to an intuitive system) from every zone within the district’ boundaries that replenishes only what is necessary. Zone microclimates are assessed on temperature, soil radiation, soil type, wind, plant type, root zone, slope, and exposure.
- Communication provided by a cloud-based 4G network (not Wi-Fi) that is available to staff via cell phones, tablets, and laptops. Can incorporate redundancy to prevent massive water loss.
- System automatically alerts district employees about specific problems in specific locations that then serve as work orders for staff and hone manpower efficiency. Before/after photos can be stored in the cloud to confirm completion of

work orders. If problems are not addressed, the alert is given greater priority.

- Monitoring of water use and flow control (as opposed to water pressure) to automatically shut off water when malfunctions occur.
- Responsiveness to weather forecasting.
- Easy access to hardware that is protected from the elements.
- Mapping of stations and zones on Google Maps for easy location.

In response to questions from the board, Miles added that the system does not place water sensors in the ground because they clog easily and deteriorate quickly, and the system could use reuse water as well as potable water. When asked about new developers building in Triview, Miles affirmed that the district could establish new standards to fit the needs of smart irrigation. (However, the Town of Monument makes all land use and final site plan approval for development within Triview.) There is also no limit to the amount of additional capacity that can be incorporated into the smart irrigation system, he said.

Miles cited a conservative water savings estimate of 20 to 50 percent annually and added that he has not seen savings less than 40 percent in Colorado Springs. Miles quoted a cost estimate of \$66,000 for materials, \$50,000 for analysis, installation, training, and initial intensive monitoring, and then \$5,000 per year for the 4G data cell plan monitoring the system. With \$50,000 allotted to water system in the 2018 draft budget, the board considered splitting the cost between the 2018 and 2019 budgets. McGrady cautioned against the split because of the severity of the need and problems associated with a “Band-Aid” approach. The board also considered the pros and cons of hiring one or more contractors to deal with alerts from the system.

In summary, Miles stated that he believed ETwater would provide “the most bang for the buck” by providing the highest potential for increased efficiency and aesthetic value while simultaneously providing greater control and decreasing infrastructure stress. If approved, preliminary installation work could begin as early as January 2018 with the goal of testing for uniformity in April and achieving full functionality by May. The final decision will be made when the directors vote on the 2018 budget at the Dec. 12 meeting.

Discussion lends clarity to 2018 budget

McGrady informed the board that because the public announcement about the 2018 budget was not officially published prior to the Nov. 14 meeting, the public hearing on the budget will be conducted at the Dec. 12 board meeting, but the board could review the budget at the current meeting as originally planned.

McGrady focused first on capital expenses. Under the general fund, the budget included \$1.2 million to “catch up” on street and open space improvements. Funds have been prioritized to hire contractors for fertilizing and weed control, maintain equipment, and employ additional staff to support the irrigation system. Calculating \$387,000 to mill and overlay one

mile of road with a plan to complete 2 miles per year, McGrady suggested an annual estimate of \$700,000 to \$1 million for street improvements for following years. A well-laid road should last 15-20 years, McGrady commented, and Triview has “20-plus” miles of road.

The budget included \$25,000 in matching funds for Public Works Superintendent Gerry Shisler to apply for a \$75,000 Great Outdoors Colorado (GoCo) matching landscape master plan grant. . The grant would likely cover consultant fees for the new irrigation control system. A second \$350,000 grant is a potential source of funds once the master plan is complete.

McGrady summarized that the district needed to streamline road maintenance, create a good mapping system, and coordinate repair and maintenance bids with the Town of Monument to capitalize on economies of scale. The primary goal of the landscape budget is to employ a corps of staff and contractors to attack the spring workload, get ahead—and stay ahead—of maintenance, and manage the irrigation system.

Under the enterprise fund expenses, the board discussed the current and anticipated rising cost of treating wastewater at Donala, including \$1 million needed in 2018 for an arsenic treatment system. McGrady reported that the truck yard had been cleaned and will be reconfigured to make room for the newly purchased Conex, an outdoor storage unit. Shisler praised the temporary workers who cleaned the yard, tested and winterized the snow removal equipment, and prepared the spring/summer equipment for storage.

Director Jim Otis asked if there would be more discussion about many items in the budget that had not been specifically discussed yet and were usually spread out over the whole year. McGrady asked the directors to email him with specific questions before the Dec. 12 final budget discussion and approval.

McGrady proposed possible uses for assets in the water and wastewater enterprise fund such as well improvements, permitting to jump-start the reuse system, funding an Integrated Water Resources Plan, or purchasing renewable water. McGrady commented that the backwash water hasn’t been metered accurately, which makes it difficult to account for all water use, and Water Superintendent Shawn Sexton confirmed that is a regulatory requirement. McGrady closed the budget discussion stating that the enterprise fund is strong on assets but begs the question of how to knit all of the needs and resources together. A less detailed version of the draft budget is posted on Triview’s website at <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/triviewmetro/triview-metropolitan-district-proposed-2018-budget><https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/triviewmetro/triview-metropolitan-district-proposed-2018-budget>.

McGrady reminded everyone that the 35 mills that Triview residents pay in property taxes is strictly to service debt. The operational budgets have to survive on sales tax and water and wastewater rates and

fees. See revenue and pie charts at www.ocn.me/pdf/v17n9%2013.pdf.

Residents bring requests, praise, and complaints

Resident Karen Halenkamp stated that Bear Creek Elementary School students’ lives are in danger because parents are driving recklessly and parking inappropriately. Halenkamp requested that the curbs near the crosswalks be painted to prevent parents from parking too closely to the crossing areas and impeding visibility.

Four other residents echoed one another’s complaints about the weeds and overall degradation of neighborhood common areas. A brief discussion about snow removal revealed that confusion remains about who or what entity is responsible for shoveling around mailboxes. Erik Demkowicz, Andrew McPherson, and Ken Kimple also praised McGrady on the progress that has been accomplished since his arrival. For more information about the district’s landscape and winter street maintenance policies, see <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/triviewmetro/district-policies>.

McPherson asked questions about proposed water rates increases. McGrady said the increases planned this year were “to make ends meet,” but in 2018 Triview would do a detailed cost-of-service study regarding water rates.

In response to a comment regarding lack of up-to-date information on the district’s website, Otis explained that the website is currently provided by the state of Colorado for free, which limits its functionality. The board is considering website management options.

Sexton spoke on behalf of “all the people who work with me in the district, Rob Lewis, John Baker, and Greg Clausen, and offer support to Jim, our new district manager and all you board members.”

Operations update

Sexton and McGrady updated the board on water and road operations, respectively, that included:

- Repaired a failed well A8 electrical pump. Contracted with Applied Ingenuity to replace that well and conduct preventive maintenance and exploratory testing on another well.
- Repaired a break on an improperly installed two-year-old 8-inch water main in the King Soopers parking lot.
- Began preparations for a December state inspection and analysis of recordkeeping.
- Contracted with Avery Construction to pave, mill, and fill cracks starting in Jackson Creek. Scheduled another contractor to begin concrete work—cross pans, curb and gutter, some sidewalks—after Thanksgiving. Winterized the sprinkler system. Hired a landscape contractor for fall turf fertilizing as a way to test job-specific contracting.

Resolutions and other items approved

McGrady presented action items that were approved unanimously and included:

- Resolution 07-2017 Triview’s Annual Administrative Resolution—this establishes specifics such as meeting times, staff expectations, Board of Directors’ roles, and publication of public

- hearings.
- Triview’s Public Record Policy—this brings the district into full conformance with fees.
- Resolution 08-2017 Modifying Water Development Requirements and In-Lieu-of-Fees/Supplies—this maintains the district’s discretion on a case-by-case basis and establishes a preference for renewable water to those bringing in-lieu-of water supplies. See <http://www.ocn.me/v17n11.htm#tvmd> for detailed information on in-lieu-of fees.
- A request by Creekside Developers Inc. to form an overlapping metropolitan district located wholly or partly within Triview—this serves as a funding mechanism to build roads and stipulates that the word “Triview” not be in the name.
- Financials—checks over \$5,000 and September 2017 financials were accepted as presented. Revenue is slightly ahead of schedule. Developer Classic Homes has been reimbursing the district monthly.
- The board approved a motion to accept the \$75,000 GoCo grant regarding master planning development to fund a grant with a \$25,000

combination cash and in-kind match from Triview and authorize Director Marco Fiorito to sign a letter of support.
The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

The next Triview Metro Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 5 p.m. at the Fairfield Inn, Mt. Herman Conference Room, 15275 Struthers Road, Colorado Springs. Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of the month. Information: 488-6868 or see www.colorado.gov/triviewmetro. Triview is also on Facebook.

- Triview official posting locations are:
- El Paso County Clerk and Recorder’s office
 - Park at intersection of Venison Creek and Kitchenener Way
 - Park on Gold Creek and Creekside Drive
 - Mailboxes at Burke Hollow and Talus Road
 - Park on Old Creek Drive and Toreva Drive
 - Triview office: 16055 Old Forest Pt., Suite 300, Monument, CO 80132
- Jennifer Kaylor can be reached at jenniferkaylor@ocn.me.

Nov. 7 election results

By Erin Poole

This is a summary of some of the official results of the Nov. 7 election. Ballot titles are abbreviated here. See www.epcvotes.com for full election results. Overall voter turnout for El Paso County was 153,832 voters (38.83%). The winning outcomes are shown in bold.

El Paso County Ballot Measure 1A

Without imposing new taxes or raising tax rates, shall El Paso County be permitted to retain and spend \$14,548 in excess 2016 revenue to invest only in the following infrastructure: The I-25 corridor gap local share and other roadway safety and improvement projects, up to \$12 million; disaster recovery projects; and parks, trails and open space projects?
Yes: 102,187 votes (67.2%); No: 49,868 votes (32.8%)

City of Colorado Springs Ballot Measure 2A

Without imposing any new tax or increasing any existing taxes, shall Ordinance No. 17-69 of the City of Colorado Springs be approved authorizing: the collection of stormwater service fees for the sole purpose of funding through a City enterprise, the construction, improvement operation and maintenance of public stormwater facilities and a public stormwater system in the City?
Yes: 55,511 votes (53.7%); No: 47,883 votes (46.3%)

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Ballot Measure 5A

Shall Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District taxes be increased \$2,900,000 annually by increasing property taxes rate from 6.9 mills to 18.40 mills for funding the operations of the District to provide

proper fire protection, emergency response, and safety for the residents, property owners and businesses of the district?
Yes: 6,618 votes (61.76%); No: 4,098 votes (38.24%)

Donald Westcott Fire Protection District Ballot Measure 5C

Shall Donald Westcott Fire Protection District Northern Subdistrict Taxes be increased \$1,418,411 annually by increasing the subdistrict’s property tax of 7.000 mills by 14.900 mills to be used for continuing provision of services, programs and facilities within the subdistrict?
Yes: 2,157 votes (62.50%); No: 1,294 votes (37.50%)

D20 Director, 4-year term

Karin Reynolds 13,182 votes (24.85%); Thomas LaValley 11,123 votes (20.97%); William H. Temby 10,353 votes (19.86%), **Doug Lundberg 10,370 votes (19.55%);** Eric S. Davis 8,012 votes (15.11%). **Note:** Currently, the margin between LaValley and Lundberg indicates a recount may be required; the Elections Department will know after the results are certified. Should a recount be necessary, it must be completed by Dec. 7.

D38 Director District 1, 4-year term

Sherri Hawkins 5,161 votes (47.60%); Chris G. Taylor 5,686 votes (52.42%)

D38 Director District 3, 4-year term

Tiffany Upchurch 5,866 votes (53.88%); Thomas DeAngelis 5,022 votes (46.12%)
Eris Poole can be contacted at erinpoole@ocn.me

El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Oct. 31, Nov. 7, 9, 14, and 16.

Voters thanked for passing TABOR excess revenue ballot item

By Helen Walklett

At the El Paso Board of County Commissioners’ (BOCC) Nov. 9 meeting, Commissioner Mark Waller thanked the citizens of the county for passing the measure on Nov. 7 to allow the county to keep excess revenue above the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) cap. This will be spent on infrastructure improvements. The BOCC also made decisions relating to the Monument Hill Road Safety Improvements Project and to the High Forest Ranch, Jackson Ranch, and Majestic Pines developments.

November ballot question

Speaking at the BOCC’s Nov. 9 meeting following the results of the Nov. 7 election, Commissioner Waller said, “I couldn’t be more pleased with the results and more pleased with the citizens of El Paso County stepping up and voting greater than 2-to-1 to allow us to take excess TABOR dollars and use those for critical infrastructure needs that were neglected, necessarily so, during the Great Recession.”

The BOCC voted to put the measure on the Nov. 7 ballot following discussions at its Aug. 29 and Sept. 5 meetings. The \$14.5 million in excess 2016 revenues will be used to repair roads, improve parks and

trails, and complete the remaining projects from the September 2013 flooding. Some of the funds will go toward accelerating the widening of I-25 from Monument to Castle Rock. See <http://www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#epbocc>

Monument Hill Road Safety Improvements Project

At its Oct. 31 meeting, the BOCC approved two requests relating to the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority’s I-25 Monument Hill Road Safety Improvements Project, which expects to start construction in summer 2018. The project, which has a budget of \$3.965 million, will correct deficiencies in the roadway. Enhancements are expected to include improvements to sight distance, horizontal and vertical alignments, drainage and water quality, as well as the addition of shoulders and intersection improvements.

The BOCC approved two easements that the Department of Public Works had identified as necessary to allow construction to be carried out. The first is a non-exclusive permanent easement being acquired from GEB Holdings LLC for the sum of \$20,400. The second easement is a temporary construction ease-

ment relating to property owned by International Students Inc. and situated on a portion of Lot 2 of the Greater Europe Mission subdivision on Base Camp Road. The property owner is donating the property required for the project to the county.

- Other decisions made included:
- Nov. 7—the partial release of a check for grading and erosion control at Lot 48, High Forest Ranch Filing No. 2 for \$43,088 (plus accrued interest) following completion and inspection of 80 percent of the work.
 - Nov. 14—an application for preliminary acceptance of certain streets within Jackson Ranch Filing No. 2 into the county road maintenance system following the completion and inspection of the public improvements in this subdivision.
 - Nov. 21—the final release of letter of credit for public improvements of Majestic Pines Filing No. 1 for \$54,281 following the completion and inspection of the public improvements in this subdivision.

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

Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations Inc., Nov. 18

Energy representatives inform and enlighten

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations Inc. (NEPCO), in keeping with its efforts to provide educational forums for homeowners associations (HOA) representatives, hosted guest speakers from Mountain View Electric Association Inc. (MVEA) and Black Hills Energy (BHE) on Nov. 18. MVEA Chief Executive Officer Jim Herron and BHE Community Affairs Manager Carly West addressed various topics pertinent to their respective organizations. Also, NEPCO Vice President Tom Vierzba outlined steps for getting county roads prioritized for repair or reconstruction.

Herron discusses MVEA's history and statistical points of interest

The MVEA mission is "to provide our members with reliable and affordable electric service that is consistent with sound engineering and business practices," stated Herron. Formed in 1941 and headquartered in Limon with a second office located in Falcon, MVEA is a member-owned electric cooperative that Herron described as a hybrid between an investor-owned utility (IOU) and a municipality.

IOUs are owned by stockholders who don't necessarily receive service from or live within the service area of the utility, and the board of directors is elected by stockholders. A municipality is owned by the government and people of a town, but no one has a certificate of ownership. People who receive MVEA's services are called member-owners. They hear updates, share feedback and provide input at the co-op's annual meeting and district Lamplighter dinner meetings.

Herron laid out a few MVEA facts that included:

- Counties served – Arapahoe, Crowley, Douglas, Elbert, El Paso, Lincoln, Pueblo and Washington.
- Power source – MVEA purchases its electricity from Tri-State Generation and Transmission and delivers it to the member-owners.
- Number of employees – 140, supplemented by a host of contractors who work on new construction.
- Miles of energized line – 6,055
- Meters per mile – average of 8.80, but can reach 8 miles per meter in rural areas
- Service territory – 5,000 square miles
- Number of meters – 53,285, 75-80 percent of which are within a 5-mile radius of Colorado Springs
- Number of members – 45,000
- Territory – 85 miles high and 96 miles wide.

What is impact of local growth on MVEA?

Herron commented that Monument is in the fastest-growing "township" in its area.

He said that the line extension policy for developers is that they "pay the first and the last dollar" of new lines and "the new growth pays its way." MVEA tries to anticipate the growth and prevent the need for upgrades.

Management and money

MVEA is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors that is elected by the membership, with each director representing one of the seven districts. Considered a self- or unregulated utility, the board establishes rates, policies, and oversight. The "backstop" for unresolved complaints is the Public Utility Commission (PUC). The board's monthly meeting agendas and approved minutes are posted at the Limon and Falcon offices and on the website. See <https://www.mvea.coop/> for more information.

Rates generate the revenue for MVEA, and profits, or "margins," are allocated back to the membership as capital credits according to the amount of patronage or revenue that a member has paid on account. MVEA will pay about \$3.5 million in capital credits in December 2017 and will have retired about \$55 million to members since its inception.

Expectations for 2018

Herron stated that the co-op spends about \$20 million in electrical system infrastructure and \$1.8 million in other capital improvements annually. He expects residential rates to remain the same in 2018. MVEA will continue to encourage members to use more efficient energy such as LED lights, Energy Star appliances, whole home air conditioning, and certain types of heat pumps. See <https://www.mvea.coop/save-energy-money/rebates/>.

Programs such as Operation Roundup, in which a member's electric bill is rounded to the next whole



Above: Mountain View Electric Association Chief Executive Officer Jim Herron and Black Hills Energy Community Affairs Manager Carly West answer questions posed by homeowners association representatives at the Nov. 18 meeting of the Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations Inc. *Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.*

dollar, will continue to sustain organizations and individuals who've been affected by catastrophic circumstances. MVEA will continue to support high school students by making available 14 \$1,000 scholarships. Three students will also be chosen through an essay contest to either go to Washington, D.C. or participate in a youth camp near Steamboat Springs.

Finally, Herron confirmed that protecting member information and preventing any interruption in the delivery of services through cyber security will always remain a top priority.

West provides Black Hills profile

West confirmed that BHE, a part of Black Hills Corp., is a publicly-traded IOU. Managed by a 10-member Board of Directors, CEO and Chairman Dave Emery serves as the only employee-director on the board. BHE is governed by the PUC to ensure reasonable rates while recovering enough to be profitable, investing in safety, infrastructure, environmental controls, and keeping BHE economically viable.

West enumerated statistics regarding BHE that included:

- States served – Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, South Dakota, and Montana
- Number of customers – 1.2 million for all eight states, 273,000 for Colorado only
- Types of services – gas and/or electricity, depending on location
- Number of employees serving Colorado – 320
- Service area description – communities primarily fit a rural or mountain profile; Colorado has the greatest service density

The cost of doing business

West reiterated Herron's statement that energy costs continue to stay low. Colorado and the Rocky Mountain states routinely have some of the cheapest gas prices in the country because they supply most of their own oil and gas needs with little help from other regions. Continually seeking low gas prices, BHE purchases excess gas to place in storage, which is a big part of serving its remote customers in mountain communities. BHE is selling off the exploration and production side of its business assets and will no longer own any refineries by the end of 2018. Annual operating revenue for BHE's 2017 Colorado gas is \$160 million.

West explained the monthly rate structure and said customers may voluntarily support BHEAP, the low-income energy assistance program. BHE must file a rate review with the PUC in order to raise rates, but no rate increase is anticipated for Colorado gas at this time. Residential rebates are available to customers who purchase energy-efficient appliances.

Benefits to customers and the community

Additional community services that BHE provides include:

- A free online tool to assess the energy efficiency of a home.
- A discounted rate of \$100 for a technician to con-

duct an in-person energy efficiency assessment and provide recommendations.

- A low-income energy assistance program and weatherization program.
- Cost savings passed on to affordable housing organizations like Habitat for Humanity affiliates.
- Free Energy Saving Trees program through the Arbor Day Foundation. Free, 2-foot dormant trees are shipped directly to a customer's home address. A tool that helps determine the most energy efficient (to maximize sun and wind protection) planting site is included.
- Training for local fire departments on how to deal with natural gas fires and joining local chambers of commerce in supporting other organizations.
- Adoption of the Cyber Top 20 program, which intensifies internet safeguards and reduces risks that may jeopardize BHE's assets, system, and customer information.

West asked residents to "Take the safety message to heart!"

- Protect your meter from snow, ice, and debris and treat it gently.
- Be attentive to the telltale rotten-egg gas odor and get out immediately if you suspect a gas leak. Leave doors, windows and lights "as is" and call 911 from a safe location.
- Appliance installation should only be done by a certified professional to maintain codes and standards.
- Prevent major damage and subsequent costly repairs by calling the free 811 service "before you dig."

Herron and West addressed how the two utilities respond to large-scale evacuations such as wildfires. MVEA and BHE both have comprehensive disaster plans in place, but the approach is essentially the same—everything is shut down. Restoring electrical service is a quicker process, however, than restoring gas service.

County road repair prioritization requires data

Vice President Tom Vierzba, following up on El Paso County Commissioner Darryl Glenn's encouragement at the last NEPCO meeting to get involved in the road repair and reconstruction selection process, identified the steps individuals can take to advocate for specific county-owned roads. The El Paso County Department of Public Works Transportation Division assesses roads according to surface distress, structural adequacy, and other factors, then assigns a Pavement Quality Index (PQI) rating from 0-100. A chart showing PQI for roads in the Tri-Lakes area determined that 53 percent need to be reconstructed.

By taking photographs, documenting problems, and gathering data including a road's PQI, citizens may submit a request to the Highway Advisory Commission (HAC) no later than August for final possible approval by the El Paso Board of County Commis-

sioners (BOCC) in January.

Referring to current development, Vierzba noted that although the Pilot Travel Center (PTC) was approved by the town of Monument in September, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) actually owns that section of Baptist Road west of I-25; therefore, PTC must also receive CDOT approval. See www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#mbot.

Regular business items addressed

Member-at-large Mike Aspenson announced that NEPCO Director of Community Outreach Jennifer Cunningham recently resigned to pursue a business startup. He opened the annual election explaining that all five spots on the Board of Directors were available. No one self-nominated, and the membership voted to elect the current directors for another two-year term.

Robert Swedenburg reported that NEPCO now

consists of 41 HOA members and 8,806 homes.

The next NEPCO meeting is scheduled for Jan. 13, 2018, from 10 a.m. to noon, at the Monument Town Hall conference room, located at 645 Beacon Lite Rd, off Highway 105.

Jennifer Kaylor can be reached at jenniferkaylor@ocn.me.

Woodmoor Improvement Association Board of Directors, Nov. 15

Board reports current highlights

By Jackie Burhans

The Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board met on Nov. 15, providing highlights of current business. Board members Brian Bush, Jennifer Cunningham, and Lee Hanson were absent.

Board report highlights

- The 2018 budget is posted on the website along with past years at <http://bit.ly/wia-budget>.
- There will be an ice carving demonstration in front of Gallery 132, next to the Coffee Cup, on Dec. 9 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- WIA is running at 3.5 percent under budget and has 56 unpaid accounts.

- There were 16 HOA violations in October, with five being scheduled for hearings.
- Year-to-date there have been 646 projects submitted with a 98.3 percent approval rate.
- Woodmoor Public Safety (WPS) notes that holiday mail and packages should be retrieved as soon as possible and encourages email notifications for package delivery.
- WPS is seeing an increase in coyote sightings. Information and reporting on coyotes and other wildlife can be found on <http://bit.ly/wps-wildlife> at the bottom of the page.
- The Governance tab on the website has been

changed to read “Covenants.”

The WIA Board of Directors usually meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Barn at 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next meeting be on Dec. 13 due to the holidays.

The WIA calendar can be found at <https://www.woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/>. WIA board meeting minutes can be found at <https://www.woodmoor.org/meeting-minutes/> once approved and posted.

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

November Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

It was a warm and dry November around the region, much like last year. Temperatures averaged nearly 10°F above normal, an amazing departure from normal. This also resulted in several days of record high temperatures. We did get a couple brief visits from winter weather, but these were short-lived and didn’t produce enough moisture to get us above normal levels for the month.

The first week of the month saw temperatures 5 to 10 degrees above average with highs in the mid-50s to low 60s. Gusty winds held temperatures warm at night as well, with lows only reaching the low 40s on the 1st and 4th.

A quick-moving cold front moved through late on the 6th and kept highs below freezing on the 7th. Areas of flurries and freezing drizzle developed, with mainly cloudy skies and areas of fog on the 7th through the 9th. About an inch of snow fell during the period, but never caused any problems as it was spread out over days and was generally very light.

Temperatures warmed to the low 60s over the next couple of days, with mainly clear skies. Slightly cooler air arrived on the 15th, but this only resulted in 40s for highs versus the 60s the previous couple of days, which was still above average. The same pattern happened over the next couple days, with 60s return-

ing on the 16th and 17th, then a return of cooler air on the 18th. However, this shot of cooler air was accompanied by more moisture.

The cold front moved through around 6 p.m. on the 18th, with clouds quickly filling in behind the front. Light rain quickly changed to snow that evening, producing 1-3 inches of snow before midnight. But this was another quick-moving storm, with clear skies returning by early the next morning. This allowed for chilly temperatures that morning, but the sunshine also allowed highs to reach the low 50s that afternoon. Highs again reached the low 60s on the 20th before yet another quick-moving cold front brought brief snow showers the morning of the 21st.

High pressure from the west moved in and strengthened over the next few days and highs soared into the 60s and low 70s, peaking on the 27th. The month ended with a couple quick-moving cold fronts, which kept temperatures at more normal levels. The first front raced through around 1 a.m. on the 28th, leaving behind some low clouds in the morning and temperatures that were about 30 degrees colder than the day before. Conditions were sunny and quiet on the 29th, before a final cold front moved in on the 30th, knocking temperatures back to normal levels.

A look ahead

In December, daytime highs often stay below freez-

ing and overnight lows can drop well below zero. The month is generally dry, however, with several light, fluffy snowfalls. Gusty winds are also a common nuisance during the month. A white Christmas is fairly common for the area, with either snow on the ground or a snowfall on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Let’s hope the pattern shifts from the dry, mild conditions we saw during fall and we start getting some much-needed moisture.

November 2017 Weather Statistics

Average High	57.4° (+8.8°)
100-year return frequency value max	55.5° min 38.5°
Average Low	30.0° (+9.7°)
100-year return frequency value max	27.5° min 14.1°
Monthly Precipitation	0.41” (-0.18”)
100-year return frequency value max	3.80” min 0.16”
Monthly Snowfall	3.7” (-7.1”)
Highest Temperature	71° on the 27th
Lowest Temperature	16° on the 18th
Season to Date Snow	7.8” (-14.0”)
<i>(the snow season is from Oct 1 to Sept 30)</i>	
Season to Date Precip.	0.88” (-1.54”)
<i>(the precip season is from Oct 1 to Sept 30)</i>	
Heating Degree Days	640 (-226)
Cooling Degree Days	0 (0)

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me.

Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters to the editor are on page 31.

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

A better way for health care

First, I am a fiscal conservative. I hate waste and stupidity. I was senior management for most of my life and then both my wife and I owned our own businesses. We know what it’s like to make payroll and build a business. The hours are long and the decisions are often tough.

Now, Bernie Sanders made a big point of pushing a “health care for all” in the 2016 election. As one would expect, there was a lot of pushback from Congress. “How would this be paid for? This is just another example of runaway socialism.”

I’m going to skip past the politics and just go to the facts. The World Health Organization has two interesting stats, both published in 2016. First is the ranking of world healthcare systems, where the U.S. ranks 37th (No. 36 is Costa Rica). Second is life expectancy, where the U.S. ranks 31st (and Costa Rica again outranks us at No. 30).

OK, let’s look at spending per capita. According to the 2016 report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), we spend an average of \$9,024 per person. France (which has the No. 1 healthcare system), Germany, Canada, UK, and Japan are all spending less than half what we

spend—and all have better results.

What if all the money that is paid into health insurance companies by businesses, local, state and federal governments and individuals was instead paid into a general medical insurance fund? The probable result would be lower costs, better care, and longer life.

I know this sounds like a crazy leftwing idea, but if it saves money and produces a better outcome for Americans, it might be worth thinking about.

Kent Jarnig

Too much speeding on I-25

What is going on? While most drivers on I-25 between Castle Rock and the Springs drive at or around the speed limit, some number of them wildly flaunt the limit. When on I-25, I try to drive at the posted speed limit, and observe that many other drivers are doing the same. At the same time, however, other drivers pass us, sometimes going at least 85 mph. Do

they not care, do they not recognize that their disregard for safe driving puts them and others at risk of a serious crash? It seems that not a day goes by without my receiving an email from CDOT about a crash on I-25 between Monument and Castle Rock.

What then can we law-abiding citizens do? As far as I can tell, one reasonable and simple action is to tell our elected officials and law enforcement officers that we will not stand by and allow these unsafe drivers to continue their reckless disregard of traffic laws. Personally, I have written a letter to *The Gazette* (it was published), and have corresponded with the Colorado State Police (response: not enough troopers).

I can’t help but wonder what the response would be if we all, or least a great number of us, wrote or called and demanded better enforcement of our traffic laws? Perhaps nothing, perhaps something. It’s at least worth a try.

Ross Meyer ■

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Books for the discerning reader

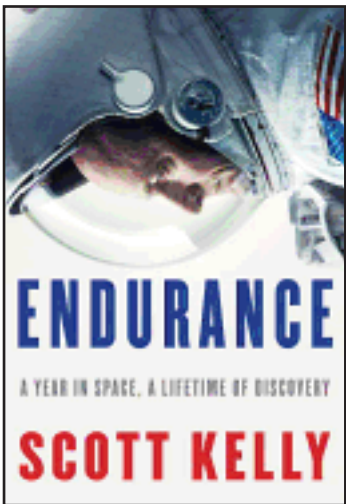
By the staff at Covered Treasures

“You can make positive deposits in your own economy every day by reading and listening to powerful, positive, life-changing content and by associating with encouraging and hope-building people.”— Zig Ziglar

Here are a few suggestions of some great books for the discerning readers on your holiday list:

Endurance: A Year in Space, a Lifetime of Discovery
By Scott Kelly (Alfred A. Knopf) \$29.95

Veteran of four spaceflights and the American record holder for consecutive days spent in space, Scott Kelly has experienced things very few have. He describes navigating the extreme challenge of long-term space-flight and life in zero-gravity: the devastating effects on the body; the isolation from everyone he loves and the comforts of Earth; the catastrophic risks of colliding with space junk; and being unable to help should tragedy strike at home. The latter was an agonizing situation Kelly faced when his twin brother's wife, U.S. Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, was shot while he still had two months in space to complete. Kelly's humanity, compassion, humor, and determination resonate throughout as he recalls his rough-and-tumble New Jersey childhood and the youthful inspiration that sparked his astounding career.



Leonardo Da Vinci

By Walter Isaacson (Simon & Schuster) \$35
Based on thousands of pages from Leonardo Da Vinci's notebooks and new discoveries about his life and work, Walter Isaacson weaves a narrative that con-

nects Da Vinci's art to his science. He shows how Da Vinci's genius was based on skills we can improve in ourselves, such as passionate curiosity, careful observation, and an imagination so playful that it flirted with fantasy. With a passion that sometimes became obsessive, Da Vinci pursued innovative studies of anatomy, fossils, birds, the heart, flying machines, botany, geology, and weaponry.

Becoming Leonardo: An Exploded View of the Life of Leonardo Da Vinci

By Mike Lankford (Melville House) \$28.99
For a different approach on Da Vinci, this book is unlike anything ever written about the Renaissance genius. Mike Lankford explodes every cliché about Da Vinci and then reconstructs him based on a rich trove of available evidence—bringing to life for the modern reader the man who has been studied by scholars for centuries, yet has remained a mystery. Lankford transports readers back to a world of war, plague, court intrigue, viciously competitive famous artists, and murderous tyrants with exquisite tastes in art.

Origin

By Dan Brown (Doubleday Books) \$29.95
The fifth book in the Robert Langdon series navigates the dark corridors of hidden history and extreme religion. Langdon and Vidal must evade a tormented enemy whose all-knowing power seems to emanate from Spain's Royal Palace itself and who will stop at nothing to silence billionaire Edmond Kirsch and his discovery that "will change the face of science forever." On a trail marked by modern art and enigmatic symbols, Langdon and Vidal uncover clues that ultimately bring them face-to-face with Kirsch's shocking discovery and the breathtaking truth that has long eluded us.

Artemis

By Andy Weir (Crown) \$27
The bestselling author of *The Martian* returns with a near-future thriller, a heist story set on the moon. Life on Artemis, the first and only city on the moon, is tough if you're not a rich tourist or an eccentric billionaire. Everything changes when Jazz sees the chance to commit the perfect crime, with a reward too lucrative to turn down. But pulling off the impossible is just the start of her problems, as Jazz learns that she's stepped into a conspiracy for control of Artemis itself, and she'll have to hatch a truly spectacular scheme to have a chance at staying alive and saving her city.

Wild Horse Country: The History, Myth, and Future of the Mustang

By David Philipps (W.W. Norton & Company), \$27.95
Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter David Philipps traces the rich history of wild horses in America, investigates the shocking dilemma they face in our own time, and points a way forward that will preserve this icon for future generations. Philipps explores how wild horses became so central to America's sense of itself, and he delves into the hold that wild horses have had on the American imagination, from the early explorers to the best-selling novels of Zane Grey to Hollywood Westerns.

"There's so much more to a book than just the reading."—Maurice Sendak

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

December Library Events

Enjoy holiday music and a planetarium at the library

By Harriet Halbig

You can experience a variety of things at the library this December, from choral holiday music to a planetarium to creation of last-minute gifts.

Family programs

The December Fun for the Family program on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 2:30 to 4 is Planetarium at the Library. We will crawl into an inflatable planetarium and explore our galaxy, solar system, and constellations as they are projected onto the dome. We will discuss such things as the meaning of days and years on different planets and the interaction of the sun and planets in their orbits.

Singers from Palmer Ridge High School will perform holiday music from 4:30 to 5:30 on Dec. 12 and 14. They will be singing near the entrance and treats will be provided.

The Lego Build Club will meet on Saturday, Dec. 16 from 10 to 11:30.

Teen and tween programs

The Monument Teen Creative Writing Group will meet from 6 to 7:30 on Tuesday, Dec. 5. Join us to meet fellow writers, share ideas, do writing exercises and share snacks. No registration is required. This group is for ages 12 to 18.

Come to the library from 3:30 to 7 on Mondays to take advantage of free math tutoring with AfterMath. Students of all ages are welcome to work with adult tutors. AfterMath follows the D38 schedule and will not be offered on days when the library or the schools are closed.

Do you enjoy knitting or wish to learn how? The library hosts an intergenerational knitting group on

Wednesday, Dec. 6, 13, and 20 in the meeting room. Practice materials are provided, but attendees are encouraged to bring their own projects. Some instruction is provided for those new to the craft.

Are you concerned about bullying? Two trained educators will be at the library from 5 to 6 on Wednesday, Dec. 6 to explain Path 2 Empathy, a hands-on program that is being used in schools and elsewhere to deal with bullying and other behavioral issues. Educators, parents, students, and homeschoolers are encouraged to attend. No registration is required.

Drop by the library from 3:30 to 4:30 on Tuesday, Dec. 12 to create small last-minute gifts for friends and family before the start of winter break. Open to ages 9 to 18.

The Teen Arts and Crafts Studio will be offered on Wednesday, Dec. 27 from 4 to 6 p.m. Get ready for New Year's by creating your own noise makers, confetti sticks, party poppers, and more. Supplies will be provided. Please register at 488-2370

Adult programs

Local author Diane Sawatzki will read from her new time-travel novel, *Manyhorses Traveling*, from 2 to 3:30 on Sunday, Dec. 3. The reading will be followed by a question-and-answer session and a book signing. Copies of the book will be offered for sale, with part of the proceeds to benefit the Friends of the Library.

Please see the section above about holiday music, knitting, and the Path 2 Empathy program.

The First Thursday Craft for December will be Wood Burning. We will create picture frames, ornaments, and more for the holiday season. Registration

is required and opens two weeks before the class. All materials are provided. This program was moved up one week due to schedule conflicts.

The Monumental Bookworms will meet from 7 to 8:30 on Tuesday, Dec. 12 to discuss *The Forgotten Garden* by Kate Morton. All are welcome to attend this monthly book club sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of the Library.

On Thursday, Dec. 14 from 1 to 3, instructor Joanna Bolek from Joyful Mind Arts LLC will teach a class on creating artistic collages. All materials are provided and registration is required.

The Monumental Readers will meet from 10 to noon on Friday, Dec. 16 to discuss *Crossing to Safety* by Wallace Stegner. All patrons are welcome to attend this monthly book group.

In the display case during December are holiday items crafted by library staff. On the walls are photographs by Alatheia Bubke.

Palmer Lake Library Events

Palmer Lake's Lego Build Club is on the first Saturday of the month at 10:30. Story times for 3- and 4-year-olds are on Wednesday at 10:30 and Toddler Time for children 1 to 3 is on Friday at 10:30.

The Palmer Lake Book Group meets at 9 a.m. on the first Friday of each month. All patrons are welcome to attend. Please call 481-2587 for the current selection.

Please note that all Pikes Peak Library District facilities will be closed on Dec. 24, 25, and 31 and on Jan. 1.

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

High Altitude Nature and Gardening (HANG)

Winter's Back to Eden: No till, no tractor, no trouble gardening

By Janet Sellers

If you were like me and didn't get to prep your 2018 flower or food garden—or even come up with ideas for it—we can still get a bit more gardening in for the year and it will be ready to plant next spring. No till, no tractor, no trouble lazy gardening to the rescue! Enter the Back to Eden garden, using wood chips and fallen debris. We take our education and cues from our very own forest habitat yet again, since the forest knows what it is doing and has been successful at it. Our natural ponderosa forests do this all year long, for their entire lives of up to 600 to 800 years.

The hardest work done on a wood chip garden bed is picking up the wood chips, and picking up the manure if you use manure in your composted soil culture, and putting them around the garden. The Back to Eden wood chip garden, now a standard for home gardening and using wood chips from the property or a chip day, is just layered, not mixed.

Paul Gautschi, author, gardener, and filmmaker, states, "For an ideal Back to Eden garden, apply three to four sheets of newspaper. Then apply 3 to 4 inches of organic compost or composted manure. Then an additional 2 to 4 inches of wood chips or alternative

covering on top."

The magic is in the fungi, chewing up the chips into great humus, the organic component of soil formed by the decomposition of leaves and other plant material by soil microorganisms, and making happy food trees. Back to Eden relies on the spiritual and physical steps to the successful gardening traditions of the ancients.

Gautschi has a website, films, and more explaining the spiritual and physical steps to the successful gardening traditions of the ancients.

In our personal landscaping for an optimal food

forest of trees and garden foods, we heroically work to protect our local ponderosa forests and focus our efforts in a specific garden area and optimize the decay process to get our garden-specific humus, the ready soil, in a faster time frame. We can dramatically speed up the process and increase production in a wood chip Back to Eden garden, using chipped pine needles, chipping leaves, twigs, branches, and logs for the natural set of components that have the optimal connection to the breakdown for humus.

Once the whole pile has gone through the chipper a couple of times, it gives good diversity and is easy to use. Just put it over the ground at least 3 to 4 inches thick. I still cringe when I see the huge numbers of bagged pine needles and leaves that could create a wonder-

ful garden right in place. Experts from Back to Eden gardening traditions say we can just chop up the leaves, run the lawnmower over it or stick the weed eater into a barrel of leaves and needles to create the mulch, the black gold that makes soil so powerful and magical to grow things.

But the removal of the naturally dropped nutrients is robbery to the forest floor food bank. The trees need their natural food to thrive and withstand life's stressors. Commonly, after removing the real soil food mulch from the land, people buy chemicals to put on the earth to "fix it" or fix what was ruined, but relearning how to leave it alone, organic and safe is a growing trend.

In nature, the materials layer themselves as they fall to the ground,

beginning their process so that we have plenty of oxygen to create the decomposition of materials and thereby our sweet smelling, forest soil. If we mix the ingredients, they become acidic and may become anerobic, which gets slimy, foul and won't become productive soil. With the wood chips, there are small and large pieces. The small pieces decompose faster, while the larger ones are slower to deteriorate but they hold water better for the process, thereby complementing the small pieces as all the materials decay in due time.

The best soil makers break down the materials into the humus, and we rely on fungi for that. Fungi are known as the teeth of the forest. A thick wood chip mulch will bring in fungi and create a fungal-dominated soil, beloved by big food forest trees and woody

species. Some "experts" try to say that wood chips are a fire hazard, but wood chips are actually masters at moving and holding water. Just like trees, the wood chips can hold, store and release the water. While science experts do their work in controlled environments, they relate that information, but out in nature the answers are quite different, and investigating this humus creation relationship for the ultimate eco-protection is a worthy effort.

Janet Sellers is an avid lazy gardener (aka leave-it-natural) and active ethnoecologist promoting the dynamic relationships among people, biota, and environments from the cultures of the past and immediate present. She can be reached at JanetSellers@ocn.me.

Art Matters

Local art: for a big kick out of the most beautiful of small artworks



By Janet Sellers

While making the rounds on Small Business Saturday, I spoke with Wendy Ledsham and Dayna Morgan when I visited Monument's new Gallery 132. They were making their artwork and tending the store. The gallery is an artist co-op for paintings, glass work, metal works, jewelry and other objet d'art—even the art of chocolate truffles! Ledsham makes mandalas in paint onto a variety of objects. At the time we spoke she was putting colors onto glass holiday ornaments, in detailed myriad dots that remind me of the movement of stars in the sky. She had a set of tools just for making the size of tiny dots and dipped the nibs into the various paints and onto the glass.

Morgan, a retired IT pro, has been making jewelry and beadwork for quite some time and creates abstract, free-form medallions for necklaces in precious metal clay and beadwork. She has a showcase at the gallery and enjoys sharing her knowledge of her craft to visitors when she is at the gallery. We talked of her love of art, Southwestern spirit trees and stone sites, and her beloved horses, and we plan to go see some sacred art in the form of Ute Spirit

Trees very soon. It's always intriguing to me the way our local sacred art of Spirit Trees inspires so many people. The ancient sacred artform is precious and a natural treasure of our rare yet very local ethnoecology history, and the contemporary awareness to protect these is growing, which is also good to see.

While many think of the jumpstart of holiday fun as beginning in late November, the annual Small Business Saturday "shop small" campaign is still powerful for December, too. According to American Express, founder of Small Business Saturday in 2010: "The benefits of Small Business Saturday reach beyond just one day. According to this year's Small Business Saturday Consumer Insights Survey, 84 percent of consumers who are aware of Small Business Saturday said the day makes them want to Shop Small all year long, not just during the holiday season!"

Southwinds Fine Art Gallery, another local gallery with a group of artists, will hold a holiday art show and sale the weekend of Dec. 8 and 9. This show will focus on small works, just right for gifts and intimate spots for office or home. The small works of art

or groupings can liven up any space. There will be paintings, glasswork, jewelry, greeting cards, as well as aerial works. Some art with a holiday theme will be available for those who like to put up holiday art beyond mere decor, and lots of art for everyday enjoyment.

Southwinds has nine local artists, and the recent shows and sales have been well-attended on the artist reception evenings (for December it is Dec. 8, 4 to 8 p.m.) and on the Saturday sale days. The gallery has been at its site on the corner of Baptist and Rollercoaster Roads for nearly two decades. Just remember to look carefully for this spacious art wonderland—it is beautifully nestled in the Black Forest and surrounded thickly with ponderosa pine. It is very conveniently located close to Fox Run Park, so when you are out and about, drop by and say hello to the artists and enjoy the art on the show dates, or you can visit by appointment.

December art events

Bella Art and Frame Gallery, showcasing member artists all month, 183 Washington St., Monument.

Gallery 132, local artisan cooperative, has events Saturday, Dec. 2, for Small Town Christmas, with vio-

linist Michelle Edwards 11 a.m.-1 p.m. with a butterfly pinning demo by Steve Fisher 1-2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9, Ice Carving demo at 11:30 a.m. 251 Front St., Suite 8, Monument.

Southwinds Fine Art Gallery, spectacular and small works art show and sale Dec. 8 and 9. Public artist reception with goodies Dec. 8, 4-8 p.m., Dec. 9 meet the artists 10-4 p.m. 16575 Rollercoaster Rd., Colorado Springs.

Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, annual member and resident artist show through Dec. 30, 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake. The next call for Artists: Visions of Light photography show, early deadline is Dec. 18. View website for details: www.TriLakesArts.org.

Holiday Pop Up Shops—they really do just "pop up" impromptu so keep a look out! Did you miss any? Just see Facebook: "local holiday pop up shops" for the Tri-Lakes area.

Janet Sellers is an award-winning artist, writer, and speaker. She teaches art and creative writing in the studio, on location, and in local college classes. Contact her at janetsellers@ocn.me.



Above: Pop-up shops are notable for their ability to be more personal and unique than big-box commerce, and usually pop-ups are unannounced as a local fun surprise store. Like a trunk show in a storefront, the new venue style is popular nationwide for optimizing spaces and offering new or unique products. This pop-up shop with local coffee purveyor Lynae Thompson, with hostess gifts and holiday gift baskets, was featured during Small Business weekend at Bella Art and Frame Gallery, and will return often this season. Get the scoop on the last-minute pop-ups online with Facebook by searching "local holiday pop up shops." *Photo by Janet Sellers.*



Above: Artists Wendy Ledsham, left, and Dayna Morgan enjoy their time making art and visiting with guests at Gallery 132. The artists are part of a group of artists in the cooperative, located in the Historic Monument area. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

Snapshots of Our Community

Haggard at TLCA, Nov. 4



Above: On Nov. 4 at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, Marty Haggard, oldest son of acclaimed songwriter and country superstar Merle Haggard, performed a variety of Merle’s songs as a tribute to his dad’s influence on the music industry. Marty, named after family friend Marty Robbins, started his over 40-year music career traveling and playing with his dad’s band. That experience not only started his career but left him with numerous stories that he imparted to the audience that incorporated music legends such as Kris Kristofferson, Willie Nelson, and Lefty Frizzell along with those about his father. Marty said, “my dad was not a big talker as he spoke through his music” and through the tribute concerts he “keeps his (Merle’s) music alive.” Among his dad’s 110 top 10 hits, Marty performed *The Highway Is My Home*, *That’s the Way Love Goes*, and *Today I Started Loving You Again*. Photo by David Futey.

Student’s view of Veterans Day



Above: Today, I will be telling you a little bit about the Monument Academy Veterans Day assembly. It took place on Nov. 10. First, the people. All the people were important. There were at least 300 students, veterans, and other Monument citizens. There was the head of the Monument VFW and there were several speakers. There was one thing that stood out to me more than anything, more than the orchestra. More than the choir. The table of remembrance. It had a lot of cool and nifty items on it and they all meant something. It is round. This is for the never-ending suffering of the people who have lost someone to war. Then there was the rose. And the upside-down glass. And the Bible. And the yellow ribbon. And the white table cloth. And the candle. And the one chair. And the bread plate with the lemon and the salt. All of these items meant something vivid. Something powerful. Just for our veterans, young or old, they are all special. I think that the reason they do this is because veterans deserve more recognition than they get. They all deserve a lot of special neat things. Caption and photos by Monument Academy student Sean Perry.

Crawford Memorial dedicated



Above: Family, friends, dignitaries, veterans, and area residents, undeterred by frigid wind, gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony of the new William J. Crawford Memorial at the north end of Palmer Lake. The ceremony, held on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, was orchestrated by the Crawford Memorial Committee and supported by a vast array of organizations and individuals. Master of Ceremonies Bill Miller welcomed everyone and spoke of his deep respect and fondness for Crawford. Honored guest speaker Bob McLaughlin, retired U.S. Army colonel, recounted stories that reflected Crawford’s character and humility. Cadets from the U.S. Air Force Academy served as the Honor Guard, American Legion Tri-Lakes Post 9-11 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Crawford Post 7829 presented the flag, Justin Gittins and Boy Scout Troop 9 of Monument led the Pledge of Allegiance, the Palmer Lake Elementary School Children’s Choir and the women’s quartet Confetti sang songs to honor Crawford’s patriotism and faith, and bugler Troy Hanson of Bugles Across America closed with Taps. Beverly Kite, Crawford’s daughter, placed a wreath on the memorial and was joined by her family to cut the ceremonial ribbon. Ed Kite, Crawford’s son-in-law, offered the invocation and benediction. Crawford received the Medal of Honor for his heroism during World War II when he single-handedly destroyed several machine gun nests, allowing his platoon to advance a hill near Altavilla, Italy. Staying to tend a wounded soldier, Crawford was captured and detained as a prisoner of war for two years. To learn more of Crawford’s story, go to <http://wjccrawfordmemorialfund.com>. Photos by Tommy Olson, caption by Jennifer Kaylor.

Screenagers, Nov. 13



Above: A panel of students and adults answered questions posed by Liz Walhof (standing) after watching the film *Screenagers: Growing up in the digital age*. Pictured, from left, are Debbie Sell, D-38 high school social worker; Zoe O’Donnell, Lewis-Palmer Middle School student; Rene Mathenge, Lewis-Palmer High School student; Jason Sabater, Cyber Network Defense; Zackary Watson, D-38 parent; and Granger Blach, Palmer Ridge High School student. Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.



Above; William Crawford’s daughter and grandchildren cut a cake in his honor in a celebration lunch at The Depot that followed the memorial dedication. Photos above and below by Tommy Olson.

Above; members of Confetti as they sing *It Is Well with My Soul*. From left are Pat Walz, Mary Roughen, Sandi Knutson, and Lynn Cameron. Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.



Preserving Memories

By Jennifer Kaylor

On Nov. 15, Bethesda Gardens Monument hosted an educational program to help adult children of aging parents in the process of transitioning called *Preserving Memories and Honoring Legacies*.

Local businesses COSVideo Productions and SchurSuccess Group provided practical tips for those who need to update movies, photos and audio for longer-lasting, higher-quality storage or prepare a home for sale, respectively.

Mark Tachna, COSVideo owner, advised converting VHS videotapes, 8mm tapes, 8mm and 16mm film, vinyl records, and audio cassettes to more current media formats such as DVDs, CDs, and flash and hard drives. Tachna cautioned that the equipment designed to play the older formats, especially VCRs, can be unreliable and prone to destroying recordings.

A fun and exciting option for families to preserve memories is to create a legacy video. Tachna suggested planning interviews with friends and family members and basing the interview questions on photos. Tachna added that a photo party is a good way to organize and make decisions about the pictures that accumulate over a lifetime. More information is available on Tachna's website, coloradospringsvideo.com.

Erin Turner, associate broker and marketing and administration manager of SchurSuccess Group, provided a checklist for keeping the home moving process manageable that included:

- Know your time frame.
- Begin with the end in mind.
- Schedule backward and set deadlines—"checking things off of a list is great for releasing endorphins."
- Enlist your realtor's help to get suggestions regarding your assets and home.
- Establish five designated locations to place items into these five categories: move, family, sell, donate, and discard.
- Use colored stickers to confirm an item's designation.
- Use graph paper or a computer program to plan spacing of furniture.
- Be prepared to be overwhelmed.
- Take photos of items you want to remember.
- Throw an "asset party" before disseminating items to family members.

Michael "Whit" Whitfield, auction and appraisal services manager of SchurSuccess Group, distinguished between an appraisal and an evaluation. An appraisal is a professional opinion on the value of an asset and includes factors that contribute or detract from its value. An appraisal is mandatory when making a charitable donation. An evaluation is an informal, not-so-well researched opinion that provides guidance in deciding whether or not to keep an asset.

Whitfield added that the sale of personal property is not regulated in Colorado, so be sure that you understand the terms and conditions of any sales agreement and contract with professionals who have a good network or are at least willing to work with others in the transition profession. Additional information about SchurSuccess Group is available at schursuccessgroup.com.

Jennifer Kaylor can be contacted at jenniferkaylor@ocn.me.



Above: Erin Turner, associate broker and marketing and administration manager, left, and Michael "Whit" Whitfield, auction and appraisal services manager of SchurSuccess Group discuss ways to ease the transition to a new life phase. *Caption and photo by Jennifer Kaylor*

Dakota Blond at TLCA, Nov. 17



Above: On Nov. 17, the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) hosted Dakota Blonde. Bandmembers Mary Huckins, Don Pinnella, and Tony Raddell played original music and some well-known covers. On this night, Gordon Burt and Ernie Martinez joined the usual bandmembers. Their musical style, acoustic folk mixed with bluegrass, enveloped the audience like a warm, cozy blanket keeping the snowy evening at bay. In *Bus Stop*, originally by the Hollies, Huckins' crisp, sweet voice mixed with Raddell's and Pinnella's, creating deep harmonies. Mary's *Waltz*, a slow, flowing love song, benefits from Burt's slow methodic pull of the violin. The bass in the background of Steve Earle's *My Old Friend the Blues* imparted a hearty mellowness. *Dig Real Deep* was upbeat and encouraging. Between songs, the band's authentic friendships were in evidence in their humorous playful banter with each other. They sat among original paintings done by local artists that reflected their artistic creativity and made the venue all the more inspirational. Pictured, from left, are Pinnella, Huckins, Martinez, Raddell, and Burt. Information on upcoming events at the nonprofit TLCA is at trilakesarts.org. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

Outpouring: Demographics



Above: Irv Halter, executive director of the state Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), spoke at the Nov. 21 meeting of "Outpouring: A Local Version on TED Talks" sponsored by Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church. Halter spoke on demographic trends in Colorado, the mission of DOLA, the rural vs. urban divide, and affordable housing concerns. He has traveled over 50,000 miles and visited almost every part of the state, with a strong focus on the eastern plains, the western slope and mountain towns. He noted that Colorado has grown 10 percent since 2010 and is one of the top 10 fastest-growing states in the country. DOLA helps extraction- and agriculture-impacted communities (e.g. loss of mining jobs, drop in commodity prices), the 22,000 Colorado kids who are homeless, and communities who want to fund town managers, build courthouses, and restore riverfronts formerly used to dump tailings from mines. Halter says the "it" factor that ensures community success is an engaged public. He ended his talk with a quote from the author Wallace Stegner: "One cannot be pessimistic about the West. This is the native home of hope." Outpouring talks are held on the third Tuesday of each month at Pikes Peak Brewing Co. More information on these talks can be found at <http://tlumc.org/outreach/outpouring>. DOLA distributes over \$300 million in grants to support community development and affordable housing. More information on DOLA is available at <https://www.colorado.gov/dola>. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

Senior coffee at the YMCA



Above: Senior Coffee at the Tri-Lakes YMCA is a weekly event open to the public. Every Tuesday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. seniors meet to share coffee, provided by the Y, and swap stories, be it local news or reasons to live in Colorado. Here, several people relax after their exercise class and talk about their Thanksgiving plans. From left are Kay Cooper, Shirley Monk, and Harry Sullivan. The inset shows Tommy Olson and Arlene Fisher-Olson. *Photos by John Howe.*

Palmer Lake Chili Fundraiser



Below: Firefighters Patrick Pearce, left, and Dominic Maffia and Key Club members helped with the festivities. *Photo by John Howe. See photos on page 1.*

Our Community Notices

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

Toy donations needed for Santa on Patrol

Santa on Patrol will team with the Monument Police Department, Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, and the Palmer Lake Police Department to deliver toys and good cheer to many children in the Tri-Lakes area on **Dec. 23**, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Santa and his elves from the fire and police departments hope to deliver more than 1,000 toys again this year. New, unwrapped toys and gift cards may be dropped off by **mid-December** to the following locations: Monument Police Department, 645 Beacon Lite Rd.; Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Stations 1, 2, and 3; or Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Department administration offices, 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 103. For more information, contact Monument Police Chief Shirk, 481-3253.

YMCA 5K Race Series and Kids Fun Runs, register early to save

One race of the three-race series remains: the Jingle Bell Dec. 9 at Fountain Creek Regional Park. Sign up online at www.ppyymca.org/programs/adult/running-races/ymca-5k-race-series.

Substitute drivers needed

Meals on Wheels in the Tri-Lakes area needs substitute drivers to deliver meals Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Volunteers will have to complete an application with Silver Key and then go through a background check. For more information, phone Sue Cliatt, 481-3175.

Volunteers needed for Community Corrections Board, apply by Dec. 15

The El Paso County Board of Commissioners is seeking two community-minded citizen volunteers to serve as citizen-at-large members on the Corrections Board. Applications are due by **Dec. 15**. The volunteer application is located at www.elpasoco.com. Click on the "Volunteer Boards" link. For more information, call 520-6436 or visit www.elpasoco.com.

Tri-Lakes Y winter basketball, register now

Registration is now open for winter basketball, preschool through grade 8. The season begins Jan. 8. Financial assistance is available. See ad on page 6. Register at www.ppyymca.org; or at the Y, 17250 Jackson Creek Parkway, Monument; or phone 481-8728.

2018 Visions of Light Photographic Exhibition Call for Entries, apply by Jan. 15

Photographers of all levels are invited to submit their original photography for consideration by **Jan. 15**. For details, visit www.trilakesarts.org or email info@trilakesarts.org.

Sundance Ninja

Sundance Studio is offering a new American Ninja Warrior course for ages 4 through 17. See ad on page 15. For details, contact the studio: 481-8208, info@thesundancestudio.com, or www.thesundancestudio.com.

Tri-Lakes Women's Club Announces 2018 Grant Process, Jan. 15 through March 15

Tri-Lakes Women's Club's (TLWC) grant application for 2018 will be available online **Jan. 15** through **March 15** on the TLWC website, www.tlwc.net. Eligible organizations include nonprofit and public service organizations and public schools that serve the Tri-Lakes area. Special program and project requests are welcomed. The application package includes the instructions as well as other important qualifying information. For more information, contact Barbara Betzler, bbetz@me.com.

MVEA Scholarships, enter by Jan. 16

Each year, MVEA awards \$1,000 scholarships to 14 graduating high school seniors.

Applications are due by **Jan. 16**, 2018. For entry qualifications and to complete an online entry form, visit www.mvea.coop/youth-programs.

LEAP—Help for heating bills

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) is a federally funded program that provides cash assistance to help families and individuals pay a portion of winter home heating costs. The eligibility period for LEAP runs **Nov. 1-April 30**. Application packets will automatically be mailed to residents who received LEAP assistance last year at the address where they were living at that time. To find out if you qualify for LEAP, call 1-866 HEAT-HELP (1-866-432-8435) or visit www.colorado.gov/cdhs/leap.

Monument text alerts

Text "Monument" to 41411 to receive updates and news of meetings, weather alerts, openings and closings, as well as important town information to your phone or personal mobile device.

Forest Lakes/Pinon Pines residents needed for Citizens Advisory Council

Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) seeks five Pinon Pines residents to serve on a Citizens Advisory Council. The council will serve as a forum for Pinon Pines residents to learn about district issues and to advise FLMD on resident issues. If you are interested in serving on this advisory council to FLMD, please contact your HOA administrator, Steve Emery of Hammersmith Management, at 719-389-0700.

Residence vacation check

The El Paso County Sheriff's Office will conduct vacation checks of homes in El Paso County for residents who are on vacation. This is a great way to add security to your home when you're away for multiple days. Either a deputy or trained volunteer will visit your home while you're away and check it periodically. To add your home to their schedule, visit www.epcsheriffsoffice.com. Info: 520-7151.

Monument Academy now enrolling for 2017-18 school year

Monument Academy, a free public school of choice, features academic excellence, award-winning programs, and more. For more information or to schedule a tour, call 481-1950 or visit www.monumentacademy.net.

St. Peter Catholic School now enrolling for the 2017-18 school year

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

Volunteer weather observers needed

The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network is seeking volunteer weather observers in this area. The nationwide network is made up of volunteers who help measure and record precipitation in their areas. Learn more and sign up on the network's web page at www.cocorahs.org.

Monthly arts and crafts group forming

The Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Senior Center is looking for anyone interested in various types of arts and crafts such as needlework, knitting, beading, coloring, or quilting. If you're interested in any of these activities or have a suggestion of your own, contact Sue, 464-6873.

Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Thrift Store needs volunteers

Volunteers are needed for various tasks. The store is located at 755 Highway 105, Suite N, in the West End Center and is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. See ad on page 32. To volunteer, call 488-3495.

County Planning and Development's new website

The county's new Electronic Development Application Review Program (EDARP) allows immediate access to documents, development application processing. This is part of an ongoing county-wide effort to give residents easier access to data and im-

Why advertise in OCN?

- **OCN is mailed FREE to every resident and business in the Tri-Lakes area.** We mail more than 18,200 copies every month and put another 700 copies in stacks throughout the area. *OCN* has the largest mailed circulation and the third-largest circulation among local newspapers in El Paso County after *The Gazette* and *The Colorado Springs Independent*. We put copies of *OCN* into the hands of those people most likely to buy your products or services: local residents and businesses.
- **OCN is a primary source for Tri-Lakes area news.** Since 2001, *OCN* has been presenting unbiased, detailed coverage of Tri-Lakes area governmental entities and their deliberations and actions. Credibility is key during tough times. Advertising in a credible medium typically rubs off on the advertisers in that media.
- **OCN gives preference to Tri-Lakes area businesses.** As part of *OCN's* long-standing commitment to encouraging the economic health of the Tri-Lakes area, we offer a significantly discounted ad rate to local businesses as a way to help local businesses like yours succeed.
- **OCN's low ad rates and monthly publication schedule help stretch your ad budget.** *OCN* has one of the lowest ad costs per printed copy of any local publication. Since *OCN* is a monthly publication, your ad is out there for a month—more than four times longer than other local papers. Many of our advertisers tell us they're still getting calls in the third and fourth week of the month.
- **OCN doesn't use contracts.** You aren't tied down. Adjust your advertising month-to-month to meet your changing needs. Our advertisers advertise with us because they see benefit in it, not because they're bound by a contract they signed months before. To reward frequent advertisers, *OCN* has a Frequent Advertiser Bonus (FAB) rewards program. You earn up to 10% of your ad cost as a reward you can use to reduce the cost of future *OCN* advertising. The more you advertise with *OCN*, the more you save. Thanks to our FAB rewards program, *OCN* advertisers have saved more than **\$56,600!**
- **You are supporting a good thing.** Your advertising dollars support a unique all-volunteer, Tri-Lakes-focused effort to present factual, comprehensive news to all Tri-Lakes area residents.

And the best reason of all: It works!

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

Joan Powers, Powers Pet Porters - "Your ad is a great value and I get calls nearly every month from it."

Melissa Riesling, LPC - "Advertising with the *OCN* has been terrific! I have so many people tell me 'I saw your ad!' The *OCN* is a very affordable way to promote your business in the community."

Kerri Bohler, The Villa Restaurant - "Thanks for all you have done for us. Our ad with *OCN* was the best thing we ever did for advertising. It outshines all the rest."

Valorie Havercamp, Purple Mountain Jewelry - "I want you to know that you are truly appreciated...as is all of the great *OCN* staff! Thanks to all for what you do for the community!"

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

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

Sarah Groh, Sarah Groh Music Studio - "Your paper has been the best press I have ever had. Thanks to the *OCN* ads my plate is full and I don't think I could take on any more clients right now."

Cathy Thompson, Johan Hair Studio - "OCN is my paper of choice for advertising. The ads John has helped me design have provided a constant stream of new clients. My ads have paid for themselves many times over! Thanks John!"

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

Donna Mallon, Donna's Dolphins swim school - "This is the best advertising money I've spent! *OCN* is the best paper in town and readers look forward to every issue. I have seen a big response to my ad in this paper. I do not need to advertise anywhere else as my other advertising is word of mouth! Thank you *OCN* for your hard work to make this paper stand out from the rest in our community!"

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

prove transparency. EDARP is an internet-based platform that uses Cloud storage through Microsoft Azure and allows users access to all El Paso County development applications dating back to 1947. The public, consultants, and developers can see and download electronic copies of applications for rezoning, subdivisions, and more. The program also allows electronic submittal of development-related applications, which will reduce costs to applicants and the county. For more information, visit epcdevplanreview.com.

Become a CASA volunteer

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) offers a volunteer opportunity like no other. As appointed representatives of the court, CASA volunteers are empowered to make a lifelong difference in the lives of abused and neglected children. To learn more visit www.casappr.org or contact Kelly, 447-9898, ext. 1033; kellyp@casappr.org; www.casappr.org.

Free transportation and handyman services for seniors

Mountain Community Senior Services offers free transportation and handyman services to Tri-Lakes seniors. If you need a ride to a medical appointment, grocery shopping, or the local senior lunches, a volunteer driver will be happy to help you. Call 488-0076 to leave a message for the dispatcher. If you need grab bars in the bathroom, a ramp to your door, or repair of stairs or railings, please call Cindy Rush, 488-0076, and leave a message or visit www.coloradoseniorhelp.com.

Volunteer drivers needed for seniors’ transportation service

Mountain Community Transportation for Seniors is a non-profit, grant-funded organization that provides free transportation to Tri-Lakes seniors 60 years old and over. The program needs additional volunteer drivers. For information, email MCSS at mcseniorservices@gmail.com or call the MCSS dispatch hotline at 488-0076.

Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Senior Center, new expanded hours

The Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Senior Citizens Center is next to the Lewis-Palmer High School Stadium (across from the

YMCA). With the addition of 16 morning exercise classes, the new hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturday, 8:45-10 a.m.; and Sunday, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. The facility has a lounge, craft room, game room, and multipurpose room. Programs include bridge, pinochle, bingo, national mah-jongg, Zumba, line dancing, yoga, chair yoga, tai chi, Pilates, total body strength, better balance and strength, and many more! There’s also ping-pong, Wii video games, puzzles and board games, refreshments, a lending library, computers with internet connections, and an information table. For information about programs for seniors, visit www.TriLakesSeniors.org or call Sue Walker, 719-330-0241.

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 Mon.-Fri. 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.

El Paso County expands services to veterans

Three El Paso County agencies providing services to veterans now have satellite offices at the Mount Carmel Center of Excellence, 530 Communications Circle, Colorado Springs. The Veterans Service office at Mount Carmel is open Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4 p.m. and closes noon-1 p.m. for lunch. Call 667-3816 for an appointment. The Pikes Peak Workforce Center Mount Carmel office is open Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (closed for lunch noon-1 p.m.), and is staffed with two Workforce Center employees who help veterans with their employment needs. Call 667-3729 for an appointment. The county Department of Human Services also has a Mount Carmel office open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Help the Black Forest Animal Sanctuary (BFAS) rescue animals

Southern Colorado Animal Rescue BFAS is an animal res-

cue and rehab farm that has been helping animals since 1994. The all-volunteer organization has rescued thousands of horses, farm animals, dogs, cats, and various small wild animals and birds. BFAS provides rescue operations, adoption programs, foster and sponsorship programs, a student/horse education program, service dogs to veterans, and local and national rescue efforts. They also work with local schools and scouts. Donations are needed for supplies, and volunteers are needed for day-to-day operations. To find out how you can help, call 494-0158, email BFASFarm@gmail.com, or visit www.bfasfarm.org.

County launches new community website

Check out all the interesting county data available for you at <http://community.spatialtest.com/co/elpaso/>.

CSU Extension launches “Your Energy” website and blog

The Colorado State University Extension now has a “Your Energy” website to help Coloradans make more informed energy decisions. The site includes decision tools, fact sheets, and a blog. The decision tools can help you figure out energy savings from using more efficient lighting, low-flow showerheads, heating and cooling systems, water heaters, and more. Other tools can help you understand how much you spend on heating, cooling, and baseload electricity and your bottom line if you install a wind turbine or solar array. Visit the site at <http://yourenergy.extension.colostate.edu/>.

Free gun-lock kit

The Monument Police Department is offering free firearm safety kits to local residents through a partnership with Project ChildSafe, the nationwide firearms safety education program. Each kit contains gun safety information and a cable-style gun lock that fits most types of handguns, rifles, and shotguns. The Police Department administrative offices at 645 Beacon Lite Rd. are open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Drop by during those times to pick up a free gun-lock kit. For information, phone 481-3253. ■

Our Community Calendar

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

GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

- **Forest Lakes & Pinon Pines Metropolitan Districts Board Meeting**, Mon., **Dec. 4**, 10:30 a.m., 6385 Corporate Dr., Suite 200, Colo. Springs. Meets 1st Mon. each month. Info: 327-5810.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon, **Dec. 4**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Land Use Committee Meeting**, Mon., **Dec. 4**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 166 2nd St., Monument. All are welcome.to get involved. Give input on proposed developments in the Tri-Lakes area. Meets 1st Mon. each month. Info: TriLakesluc@gmail.com.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., **Dec. 5**, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (off Union Blvd & Printers Pkwy). Meets 1st & 3rd Tue. (if required) each month. Info: 520-6300, <http://adm2.elpasoco.com/planning/agendas/pc/pc-agn.asp>.
- **Wescott Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Tue., **Dec. 5**, 7 p.m., Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Normally meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: 488-8680.
- **Forest View Acres Water District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 6**, 6 p.m., Monument Sanitation District board room, 130 Second St. Normally meets 4th Wed. each month, Info: 488-2110, www.fvawd.com.
- **Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 6**, 6:30 p.m., TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105. Normally meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: Jennifer Martin, 484-0911, www.tlmfire.org.
- **Donala Water & Sanitation District Public Budget Hearing & Board Meeting**, Thu., **Dec. 7**, 1:30 p.m., 15850 Holbein Dr. Normally meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 488-3603, www.donalawater.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Committee Meeting**, Tue., **Dec. 12**, 10 a.m., 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Bill Burks, 481-4053.
- **Triview Metropolitan District Board Meeting**, Tue., **Dec. 12**, 5 p.m., 15275 Struthers Rd. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: 488-6868, www.colorado.gov/triviewmetro.
- **Monument Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 13**, 9 a.m., 130 2nd St. Now meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-4886.
- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 13**, 9 a.m., 120 Middle Glenway. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2732. www.plsd.org.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Workshop**, Wed., **Dec. 13**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.

- **Monument Planning Commission Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 13**, 6:30 p.m.. Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 13**, 7 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: 488-2693, www.woodmoor.org.
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Thu., **Dec. 14**, 1 p.m., 1845 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 488-2525, www.woodmoorwater.com.
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Meeting**, Thu., **Dec. 14**, 6:30 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 2nd & 4th Thu. each month. Info: 481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon, **Dec. 18**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., **Dec. 19**, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (off Union Blvd & Printers Pkwy). Meets 1st & 3rd Tue. (if required) each month. Info: 520-6300, <http://adm2.elpasoco.com/planning/agendas/pc/pc-agn.asp>.
- **Academy Water and Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 20**, 6 p.m., Wescott Fire Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-0711.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 20**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board Meeting**, Thu., **Dec. 21**, 6 p.m., Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 488-4700, www.lewispalmer.org.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 2**, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Normally meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., **Jan. 2**, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (off Union Blvd & Printers Pkwy). Meets 1st & 3rd Tue. (if required) each month. Info: 520-6300, <http://adm2.elpasoco.com/planning/agendas/pc/pc-agn.asp>.
- **Town of Monument Workshop: Planning 101, An Overview of the Planning Process from Start to Finish**, Mon., **Jan. 8**, 5:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument.. The public is invited to this workshop of the Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, and Board of Adjustments. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.

LOCAL LIBRARY EVENTS

For additional information on library events, see the library events column on page 23 and visit www.ppld.org.

- All branches will close all day Dec. 24-25. Dec. 31-Jan. 1
- **The Palmer Lake Library hours** are Tue.-Fri., 10 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sat., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587, www.ppld.org.
 - **The Monument Branch Library hours** are Mon.-Thu., 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri. & Sat, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun., 1-5 p.m. 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Book Break**, every **Mon., Wed., & Fri.**, 10:30-10:45 a.m. A short read-aloud session for preschoolers. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Paws to Read**, every **Mon. & Wed.**, 4-5 p.m. Let your child practice reading to a Paws to Read dog. No registration required. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Storytime**, every **Tue.**, 10:30-11 a.m. & 11:15-11:45 a.m. Children ages 3 and up, with a favorite adult, experience stories through books, flannelboards, puppets, songs and activities. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Peak Reader**, every **Tue. & Thu.**, 5-6 p.m. Children’s Literacy Peak Reader program. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Palmer Lake Library: Storytime**, every **Wed.**, 10:45-11:10 a.m. Children ages 3 and up, with a favorite adult, experience stories through books, flannelboards, puppets, songs and activities. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Toddler Time**, every **Thu.**, 9:30 a.m. & 10:15 a.m. Rhymes & rhythms for one- and two-year-olds. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Palmer Lake Library Family Fun: Lego Build**, Sat., **Dec. 2**, 10:30 a.m. Legos provided, please do not bring your own. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Homeschool @ MO: Christmas Fun**, Mon., **Dec. 4**, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Christmas crafts. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Monument Teen Creative Writing Group**, Tue., **Dec. 5**, 6-7:30 p.m. Grades 6-12 share ideas, do writing exercises, eat snacks. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Anime Club**, Thu., **Dec. 7**, 5-6 p.m. Ages 13/14+, eat snacks, help plan the new anime club. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Instrumental Music**, Sat., **Dec. 9**, 1-2 p.m. Young children learn about musical instruments and how to make music together. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library Family Fun: Planetarium at the**

- Library**, Sat., **Dec. 9**, 2:30 p.m. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library Teens: Last Minute Gifts**, Tue., **Dec. 12**, 3:30 p.m. Ages 9-18, drop by to make small last-minute gifts and cards. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Be your own Puppeteer**, Thu., **Dec. 14**, 4-5 p.m. Color an animal puppet and create a show. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: LEGO Build**, Sat., **Dec. 16**, 10-11:30 a.m. Build Legos with fellow enthusiasts. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library Teen Arts and Crafts: New Year's Crafts**, Wed., **Dec. 27**, 4-6 p.m. Create your own noisemakers, confetti sticks, party poppers, and more. Supplies provided. Registration required. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Meets last Wed. each month. RSVP & Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Palmer Lake Library Family Fun: Lego Build**, Sat., **Jan. 6**, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Legos provided; please do not bring your own Legos. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587, www.ppld.org.
 - **Pikes Peak Library District's Kids Web and PPLD Teens: Kids Web** at www.ppld.org features resources for school reports and homework, Tumblebooks--free online read-along books, and a Fun & Games link. A "grown-ups" link has information about local school districts, home-schooling, and more.
- Adult programs**
- **Monument Library: Socrates Café**, every Tue., 1-3 p.m. This group focuses on philosophy, religions, spirituality, and the common threads among humanity. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: German Conversation Group**, every Tue., 3:15-4:15 p.m. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Senior Chats**, every Wed., 10 a.m.-noon. Seniors, share conversation and a cup of coffee. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Knitting**, every Wed. except **Dec. 27**, 3-4:30 p.m. Adults and teens, practice materials and some instruction provided. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: Tarah, 531-6333 x1838, 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Life Circles**, Mon., **Dec. 4**, 9:30-11 a.m. Get inspiration and structure for writing your memories or history. Meets 1st & 3rd Mon. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Palmer Divide Quiltmakers Sewing Bee**, Wed., **Dec. 6**, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Path 2 Empathy Presentation**, Wed., **Dec. 6**, 5-6 p.m. This hands-on program helps decrease bullying and behavioral issues by educating young people about empathy. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: La Leche League Meeting**, Fri., **Dec. 8**, 10 a.m., Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Mothers, babies, and mothers-to-be are all invited. Meets 2nd Fri. each month. Info: Kelley, 440-2477, kdghorashi@gmail.com.
 - **Monument Library: Second Thursday Craft--Art Collage Class**, Thu., **Dec. 14**, 1-3 p.m. Materials provided, registration required. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. RSVP & Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Monumental Readers Book Club**, Fri., **Dec. 15**, 10 a.m.-noon. All are welcome to this spirited group. This month's book is Crossing to Safety by Wallace Stegner. Meets 3rd Fri. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Life Circles**, Mon., **Dec. 18**, 9:30-11 a.m. Get inspiration and structure for writing your memories or history. Meets 1st & 3rd Mon. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Monumental Bookworms**, Tue., **Dec. 19**, 7-8:30 p.m. All are welcome to this evening book club sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of PPLD. This month's book is *Forgotten Garden* by Kate Morton. Meets 3rd Tue. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Palmer Divide Quiltmakers Sewing Bee**, Wed., **Dec. 20**, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: History Buffs Book Discussion Group**, Wed., **Dec. 27**, 1-3 p.m. Meets 4th Wed. each month, Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **Monument Library: Spinning Group**, Thu., **Dec. 28**, 1:30-3:45 p.m. Explore hand spinning. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-

- 2370, www.ppld.org.
- **Monument Library: Coloring for All Ages**, Fri., **Jan. 5**, 3-5:45 p.m. Drop in once a month for coloring and light conversation. Pages and coloring tools provided. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370, www.ppld.org.
 - **The Library Channel** (Comcast 17) broadcasts 24/7. See live simulcasts of programs, recorded presentations, a schedule of Library events, children's storytimes, an adult literacy program, El Paso County Commissioners meetings, and much more. Find the schedule online at www.ppld.org, then click on the link "Happenings @ Your Library," then click on the "Comcast 17" link to search the schedule.

WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS

- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Club Breakfast Meeting**, every Sat., 8 a.m., D-38 Administration Building, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Guests are welcome to the weekly meetings that feature speakers on a variety of topics and a free buffet breakfast. Join the 140+ men and women of the Tri-Lakes area who work together on projects to support our community. Info: Bob Hayes, 481-9693, www.monumenthillkiwanis.org.
- **Bingo by the American Legion**, every Sat., game sales start at 6 p.m., games start at 7 p.m., the Depot Restaurant, in Palmer Lake. Proceeds go to scholarships and other community support activities. Info: 481-8668, www.americanlegiontrilakespost911.com/bingo.htm.
- **Watercolor Painting Demo**, with art class afterward, every Sat.-Sun., 3-5 p.m. For watercolor art for fun and good health, join Janet Sellers and get free local scene coloring pages while she demos at local cultural, coffee, and food spots. RSVP & Info: janetsellers10@gmail.com, 357-7454.
- **Fuel Church** Sunday Service, every Sun., 9:30 a.m. fellowship with free donuts and coffee, 10 a.m. main service; 14960 Woodcarver Rd. (just west of I-25 off Baptist Road). Non-denominational, spirit-led. See ad on page 10. Info: info@fuel.org, www.fuelchurch.org.
- **Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church** Worship Hours, every Sun., traditional services 8 & 11 a.m., contemporary service 9:30 a.m., Sunday school, all ages, 9:30 a.m., 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. See ad on page 3. For Christmas service schedule, see ad on page 18. Info: 488-1365, www.tlumc.org.
- **Cathedral Rock Church** Sunday Service, every Sun., 10 a.m., Tri-Lakes YMCA, 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy, Monument. See ad on page 11. Info: www.cathedral-rockchurch.org.
- **St. Matthias Episcopal Church** Holy Communion, every Sun., 10 a.m., 18320 Furrow Rd. (1/2 mi. N of 105). See ad on page 5. Info: 426-9809, www.saint-matthias.org.
- **Tai-Chi Class**, every Mon., 9-10:30 a.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Cost: \$5. Drop-ins welcome. Info: 481-2953, www.townofpalmerlake.com.
- **Seniors: Tai Chi Classes**, every Mon., 11-noon, Senior Center at Lewis-Palmer High School (across from the YMCA). This soft, slow, and gentle form of exercise has many benefits. Registration required. \$3 suggested donation. RSVP & Info: 464-6873.
- **Seniors Monday Movie Matinee**, every Mon., 1-4 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center located on Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Free movies and snacks. See the schedule of films in Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance *Senior Beat*.
- **Sew Motion Knitting & Crochet Social Group**, every Mon., 3-5 p.m., 862 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Drop in, work on your yarn related projects. Info: 481-1565, www.sew-motion.com.
- **Artfully Speaking Toastmasters**, every Mon., 5:45 p.m., DeVry University, 1175 Kelly Johnson Blvd., room 13. Info: Jon Walsh, 640-9428; www.artfully-speaking.toastmastersclubs.org.
- **Women's A.A. Step Study**, every Mon., 6 p.m. Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 W. Baptist Rd. Info: 481-0431.
- **Yin Yoga Classes**, every Mon., 6:30-7:45 p.m., Yoga Pathways Studio, 755 Hwy 105, West End Center, Suite A (3/4 mile west of Safeway). A slow yoga practice; all levels welcome. First class always free. Info: Deb Harano, 338-8467; DimensionsYoga@gmail.com.
- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Bingo**, every Mon., 7:30 pm, Carefree Bingo, 3440 N. Carefree Circle, Colo. Springs. All proceeds benefit those in need in the Tri-Lakes Community. Info: mark.zeiger@gmail.com.
- **Adult Literacy Class**, every Mon. & Wed., 6-7:30 p.m., D-38 Admin. Building, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Open to the public. Info: 488-4700.
- **Senior Citizen Luncheons**, every Mon.-Fri., 12-12:30 p.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. See the menu for the month in the Senior Beat newsletter. A \$2.25 donation is requested. Stay for bingo the 2nd Thu. each month. Reservations are requested, phone 884-2304.
- **Western Museum of Mining & Industry** (WMMI), open Mon.-Sat., 9 a.m.-4 p.m., 225 North Gate Blvd. (I-25 Exit 156 A). Daily guided tours at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Cost: \$9 adults, \$8 military/AAA, \$7 seniors & students, \$5 children 3-12, free to children under 3 & museum members. Info: 488-0880, info@wmmi.org, www.wmmi.org.

- www.wmmi.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Silver Alliance Thrift Store**, open Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 755 Hwy 105, Suite N, in the West End Center. Seniors 62+ get a 20% discount on Wednesdays. All proceeds support Tri-Lakes Senior Programs. To donate furniture, call 488-3495 for a pickup. See ad on page 32. Info: www.TriLakes-Seniors.org.
 - **Tri-Lakes YMCA Senior Coffee**, every Tue., 9:30-11:30 a.m., 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy, Monument. Members and non-members are welcome. Socialize, have coffee and snacks in the front lobby. Free. Info: 630-2604, hbrandon@ppymca.org, www.ppymca.org.
 - **Al-anon Meeting: Monument Serenity**, every Tue., 7:30-8:30 p.m., Ascent Church, (formerly the Tri-Lakes Chapel) 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. Info: Kay, 481-9258.
 - **Act II Thrift Shop**, open Tue.-Fri., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Proceeds benefit Tri-Lakes area non-profits. Info: 487-3268, cara@mynorthlandchurch.org, www.mynorthlandchurch.org/act-ii.
 - **Tri-Lakes Awana Club**, every Wed., 6-7:45 p.m., 14960 Woodcarver Rd. (just west of I-25 off Baptist Road). For kids ages 5-12, club hosted by Fuel Church. Info: www.trilakesawana.org.
 - **Tri-Lakes Church of Christ** Wednesday Night Fellowship Meal (Free) & Classes, every Wed., 6-7:30 p.m., 20450 Beacon Lite Road, Monument (Corner of Beacon Lite & County Line Roads). Info: 488-9613, gregsmith@trilakeschurch.org, www.trilakeschurch.org.
 - **D-38 Home School Enrichment Academy**, every Thu., 8:20 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Grace Best Education Center, 66 Jefferson St., Monument. Use east entrance on Adams Street. Info: ctanner@lewispalmer.org, or enroll online at www.lewispalmer.org/domain/543.
 - **Al-anon Meeting: Letting Go**, every Thu., 9-10:10 a.m., Tri-Lakes Chapel, room 209, 1750 Deer Creek Rd., Monument. Info: Kay, 481-9258.
 - **A.A. Big Book Study**, every Thu., 7 p.m., Family of Christ Lutheran Church, 675 W. Baptist Rd. Info: 481-0431.
 - **Tri-Lakes Chamber Monthly Education Series: Speed Networking**, Wed., **Dec. 6**, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., 166 Second St., Monument. Free. Be prepared to introduce yourself and your business in 2 minutes; bring business cards and a name tag if you have one. Register online, www.trilakeschamber.com/events-calendar.htm. Info: 481-3282.
 - **Gleneagle Sertoma Luncheon Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 6**, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., Liberty Heights, 12105 Ambassador Dr., Colo. Interesting speakers and programs; all are welcome. Meets 1st & 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Garrett Barton, 433-5396; Duane Gritzmaker, 481-2424; www.gleneaglesertoma.org.
 - **Monument Homemakers Club Monthly Potluck Lunch & Meeting**, Thu., **Dec. 7**, 11:30 a.m., Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, 166 Second St., Monument. Meets 1st Thu. each month except Jan. and unless D-38 is delayed or closed. Newcomers welcome. For a ride to the meeting, call Faye Brenneman, 488-0076. RSVP & Info: Irene Walters, 481-1188, or Bev Wells, 488-3327.
 - **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers**, Thu., **Dec. 7**, 6:30 p.m. social, 7 p.m. meeting, Trinity Lutheran Church 17750 Knollwood Dr., Monument. Meets 1st Thu. each month. Info: pdq504@gmail.com.
 - **Tri-Lakes Lions Club**, Thu., **Dec. 7**, 6:30 p.m. social, 7-8 p.m. meeting, The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. Meets 1st Thu. each month. Info: David Prejean, 434-7031.
 - **La Leche League Meeting**, Fri., **Dec. 8**, noon-1 p.m., Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Mothers, babies, and mothers-to-be are all invited. Meets 2nd Fri. each month. Info: Kelley, 440-2477, kdghorashi@gmail.com.
 - **El Paso County Hazardous Materials & Recycling Collection Facility**, Sat., **Dec. 9**, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 3255 Akers Dr., Colorado Springs. Open the 2nd Sat. each

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- **Palmer Lake Art Group**, Sat., **Dec. 9**, 9 a.m., Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. A variety of art programs are offered after the social gathering and business meeting. Guests welcome. Meets 2nd Sat. each month. Info: 487-1329, www.palmerlakeartgroup.com.
 - **Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group**, Sat., **Dec. 9**, 9:45-11:30 a.m., The First National Bank of Monument, 581 Hwy 105. Meets 2nd Sat. each month. Info: Gail, 481-3711.
 - **Palmer Divide Photographers Group**, Mon., **Dec. 11**, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. All are welcome. Meets 2nd Mon. each month. Info: www.pdphotographers.com.
 - **Chess Nuts**, Tue., **Dec. 12**, 5-9 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center. Any age, any skill. Learners welcome. Drop in and leave when you want. Bring your own board and pieces if you have them. Meets 2nd & 4th Tue. each month. Info: www.TriLakesSeniors.org/chess.
 - **Pikes Peak Music Teachers Association meeting**, Tue., **Dec. 12**, 9 a.m., Graner Music, 4460 Barnes Rd., Colo. Springs. Music teachers and students, meet for coffee, a meeting, and program presentation. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Susan Marten, 231-9272, www.ppmta.org.
 - **Black Forest AARP Potluck Lunch & Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 13**, noon, Black Forest Lutheran Church, 12455 Black Forest Rd. Christmas music by the Fermatas, a recorder group. All ages welcome. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: Stan, 596-6787, or www.aarpchapter1100blackforest.weebly.com.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Wed., **Dec. 13**, Senior Center located across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on the Lewis-Palmer High School campus. A registered nurse examines your feet and provides foot care advice, toenail trimming. Cost: \$30 for a 30-min. visit. Meets 2nd Wed. and last Fri. each month, by appointment only. Info & appointments: call the Visiting Nurse Association, 577-4448.
 - **Senior Bingo**, Thu., **Dec. 14**, Mountain Community Mennonite Church, 643 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake, after the senior lunch. Come for lunch at noon, then stay and play. Free! Prizes! Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: Maggie Nealon, 488-3037.
 - **Bridge**, Thu., **Dec. 14**, 1-4 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center located on Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Walk-ins are welcome. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Reservation suggested: call Judy, 626-399-2733.
 - **Legacy Sertoma Dinner Meeting**, Thu., **Dec. 14**, 6:30 p.m., Monument Hill Country Club, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. New members and visitors welcome. Meets 2nd & 4th Thu. each month. Info: Ed Kinney, 481-2750.
 - **Ben Lomond Gun Club**, Tri-Lakes Chapter, Thu., **Dec. 14**, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes Fire Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 481-3364.
 - **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., **Dec. 15**, Senior Center located across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on the Lewis-Palmer High School campus. A registered nurse examines your feet and provides foot care advice, toenail trimming. Cost: \$35 for a 30-min. visit. Meets 2nd Wed., 3rd and last Fri. each month, by appointment only. Info & appointments: call the Visiting Nurse Association, 577-4448.
 - **Tri-Lakes Parkinson's Disease Support Group**, **NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**, 10 a.m.-noon, Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St, Monument. Normally meets 3rd Sat. each month. Info: info@co-parkinson.org, www.co-parkinson.org.
 - **Amateur Radio W0TLM** (Tri-Lakes Monument Radio Association), **NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**. All amateur radio operators or those interested in becoming amateur radio operators are welcome. Normally meets 3rd Mon., 7 p.m. Info: Joyce Witte, 661-9824, Joycewitte@gmail.com; www.W0TLM.com.
 - **Fibromyalgia Support Group**, Tue., **Dec. 19**, 5 p.m., Police Station, 7850 Goddard (1 block off Academy on Kelly Johnson near Chapel Hills Mall), Community Room just inside main entrance. A DVD will play 5-6 p.m.; meeting starts at 6 p.m. Share concerns and success stories and talk to a D.O. Learn how you can become pain-free. No charge, no products sold. Meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: 481-2230.
 - **Outpouring: TLUMC Supporting our Community**, Tue., **Dec. 19**, 7 p.m., back Barrel Room at Pikes Peak Brewing Company, 1756 Lake Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Everyone is welcome. Meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: LWeber1971@aol.com; for current speaker info go to <http://tlumc.org/outreach/outpouring>.
 - **Gleneagle Sertoma Luncheon Meeting**, Wed., **Dec. 20**, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., Liberty Heights, 12105 Ambassador Dr., (off Voyager Blvd in Colorado Springs). Interesting speakers and programs; all are welcome. Meets 1st & 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Garrett Barton, 433-5396; Duane Gritzmaker, 481-2424; www.gleneaglesertoma.org.

- **Senior Bingo**, Wed., **Dec. 20**, 1-2 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center, Lewis-Palmer High School campus. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Sue Walker, 464-6873.
- **Drummers!** Wed., **Dec. 20**, 6:30 p.m., Yoga Pathways, Suite A, West End Center, 755 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Free and open to all ages. Bring any kind of drum or other hand percussion instrument. Beginners welcome! Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Nan, 466-1257, nananddon@hotmail.com.
- **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7829**, Wed., **Dec. 20**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument, New members welcome. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Post Commander Joe Carlson, 405-326-2588, jcarlson@vfw7829.org, www.vfw7829.org.
- **VFW Auxiliary to Post 7829**, Wed., **Dec. 20**, 7 p.m., The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. New members welcome. If you are a male or female relative of a veteran who served on foreign soil during war or other military action, you may be eligible. Meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Kathy Carlson, 488-1902, carlsonmkc@aol.com.
- **Senior Tea**, Thu., **Dec. 21**, 12-1:30 p.m., Senior Center at Lewis-Palmer High School (across from the YMCA). Come early to socialize, bring a side, salad, or dessert to share. Volunteers needed. Now meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: Sue, 464-6873.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society: NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**. Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 559-0837, www.palmerdividehistory.org.
- **Chess Nuts**, Tue., **Dec. 26**, 5-9 p.m., Tri-Lakes Senior Center, across the street from the YMCA. Any age, any skill. Learners welcome. Drop in and leave when you want. Bring your own board and pieces if you have them. Meets 2nd & 4th Tue. each month. Info: www.TriLakesSeniors.org/chess.
- **Senior Social**, Wed., **Dec. 27**, 1-4 p.m., Fellowship Hall of the Black Forest Lutheran Church, 12455 Black Forest Rd. Meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: aarpchapter1100blackforest.weebly.com.
- **Foot Care Clinic**, Fri., **Dec. 29**, Senior Center located across the street from the Tri-Lakes YMCA, on the Lewis-Palmer High School campus. A registered nurse examines feet and provides foot care advice, toenail trimming. Cost: \$35 for a 30-min. visit. Meets 2nd Wed., 3rd and last Fri. each month, by appointment only. Info & appointments: call the Visiting Nurse Association, 577-4448.
- **Free Lunch and Learn: Family Holiday Struggles and Support**, Fri., **Dec. 29**, 1:30-2:30 p.m., INNOVA Recovery Services, 1824 Woodmoor Dr., Ste. 101, Monument. The program is continued from November. Please RSVP so they know how much food to order, 719-445-9330. Info: www.innovarecovery.com.
- **Gleneagle Sertoma Luncheon Meeting**, Wed., **Jan. 3**, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., Liberty Heights, 12105 Ambassador Dr., Colo. Interesting speakers and programs; all are welcome. Meets 1st & 3rd Wed. each month. Info: Garrett Barton, 433-5396; Duane Gritzmaker, 481-2424; www.gleneaglesertoma.org.
- **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers**, Thu., **Jan. 4**, 6:30 p.m. social, 7 p.m. meeting, Trinity Lutheran Church 17750 Knollwood Dr., Monument. Meets 1st Thu. each month. Info: pdq504@gmail.com.
- **Tri-Lakes Lions Club**, Thu., **Jan. 4**, 6:30 p.m. social, 7-8 p.m. meeting, The Country Club at Woodmoor, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument. Meets 1st Thu. each month. Info: David Prejean, 434-7031.
- **Lupus Support Group**. If you suffer with an autoimmune disease and want to connect with others, you are welcome to join this group. Info: dmbandle@hotmail.com.
- **Myasthenia Gravis** Association of Colorado Support Group. Location varies. Info: Carolyn, 488-3620, www.4-mga.org, 303-360-7080, 4mga@4-mga.org.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Club's 11th Annual North Pole at Tri-Lakes Arts and Crafts Fair**, Sat., **Dec. 2**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Grace Best Education Center, 66 Jefferson St., Monument. Browse hundreds of handcrafted items from 75 vendors, the Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church Cookie Walk, and holiday music by D-38 school groups. Admission is free with nonperishable food items, toys, or cash donations for Tri-Lakes Cares. See ad on page 7. Info: www.monumenthillkiwanis.org, or contact Bob Nissen, 304-8705, Bob@mifigroup.com.
- **Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery: Christmas Crafts at the Monastery**, daily through Sun., **Dec. 10**, Mon.-Sat., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sun. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., 3190 Benet Lane, Colo. Springs. Shop the gift store for meaningful crafts made by the sisters. See ad page 12. Info: 633-0655, www.benethillmonastery.org.
- **Christmas Art Workshop by Little Picasso Art Studio**, Sat., **Dec. 2**, **Dec. 9**, & **Dec. 16**, 10-11:30 a.m. For elementary age children. Cost: \$79, materials included. RSVP & Info: 930-2239, Phrushartwork@aol.com.
- **Downtown Monument's Small Town Christmas**, Sat., **Dec. 2**, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Kids' activities and crafts, hayrides, open houses, and more. Ice skating at Limbach Park 1-5 p.m., Santa arrives at 5 p.m. to light the tree and visit with children afterward. Info: 481-2954.

- **Monument Tree-lighting Ceremony**, Sat., **Dec. 2**, noon.-6 p.m., Limbach Park, 151 Front St., Monument. Demonstrations and holiday performances by local schools and churches begin at noon, food truck, food drive for Tri-Lakes Cares, tree-lighting with Santa at 5 p.m. Bring a new, unwrapped toy for Santa on Patrol. See ad on page 8. Info: 481-2954.
- **Darlene Armstrong Trunk Show at Santa Fe Trail Jewelry**, Sat., **Dec. 2**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 106-A Second St., Monument. See ad on page 2. Info: 481-0250.
- **Small Town Christmas at Covered Treasures Bookstore**, Sat., **Dec. 2**, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., 105 Second St., Monument. Jeannie Mobley will sign her middle-grade novel, *Bobbie Lee Claremont and the Criminal Element*, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; and Mike Torreano will sign his Colorado western, *The Reckoning*, 1-3 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Info: 481-2665.
- **Small Town Christmas at Gallery 132**, Sat., **Dec. 2**, 251 Front St., Monument. Violinist Michelle Edwards 11 a.m.-1 p.m., painting demonstration by Sarah Gonzalez 1-2 p.m. Shop locally-made items at this local artisan cooperative. See ad on page 10. Info: www.gallery132.com.
- **The Vanity Box Holiday Open House**, Sun., **Dec. 3**, 1-6 p.m., 755 Hwy 105, Suites O & P, Palmer Lake. Drop in for food, drink, and drawings. See ad on page 3. Info: 481-1763, www.thevanitybox.com.
- **Do Good Drinking**, Tue., **Dec. 5**, 5-8 p.m., Pikes Peak Brewing Co., 1756 Lake Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Meet representatives of four local non-profits participating in the Give! 2017 Campaign. Door prizes, snacks. \$1 for every beer purchased will go to the participating nonprofits. Info: Christine, 481-4864 Ext. 110.
- **Community Forum on possible commercial development**, Tue., **Dec. 5**, 6:30-8 p.m., Tri-Lakes Chamber and Economic Development Corp., 166 Second Street, Monument. Preliminary overview & community input meeting by Schuck Communities about 23-acre commercial development on Old Denver Road. Pizza and drinks will be served. RSVP & Info: Terri, 481-3282, terri@trilakeschamber.com.
- **OMG II: Harrison Estate Sale**, Thu.-Sun., **Dec. 7-10**, Thu.-Sat. 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; 1770 Pinnacle Ridge Lane, Colo. Springs. Thousands of high quality, name brand items new in boxes, furniture, storage and organizational supplies, and more. See ad on page 10.
- **Black Rose Acoustic Society Holiday Show/Sing-along Potluck with Bettman & Halpin**, Fri., **Dec. 8**, 7-10 p.m. Black Forest Community Center, 12530 Black Forest Rd. at Shoup Road. Last names A-Q, please bring appetizers; R-Z, please bring desserts. Cost: \$10 general, \$5 BRAS members, \$5 nonmember students with ID. Info: Joe Maio, 528-6119, jrmtn@comcast.net, www.blackroseacoustic.org.
- **Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery: Advent Retreat-An Advent Pause, Show up, Slow down**; Sat., **Dec. 9**, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 3190 Benet Lane, Colo. Springs. All are welcome. Cost: \$45. See ad on page 12. Register at www.benethillmonastery.org, registrations@benethillmonastery.org, or 633-0655 Ext. 132.
- **Covered Treasures Bookstore Book Signings**, Sat., **Dec. 9**, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., 105 Second Street, Monument. Courtney Miller will sign his mystery, *It's About Time*, and his Cherokee Chronicles historical fiction series. Info: 481-2665, www.coveredtreasures.com.
- **Gallery 132 Ice Carving Event**, Sat., **Dec. 9**, noon, 251 Front St., Monument. Shop locally made items at this local artisan cooperative. See ad on page 10. Info: www.gallery132.com.
- **Annual Handbell Christmas Concert**, Sat., **Dec. 9**, 7 p.m., Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St., Monument. The Tri-Lakes Community Handbell Choir invites everyone to come and enjoy a variety of holiday music presented by many community musicians. Free; a free-will offering will be taken. Info: Betty Jenik, 488-3853.
- **Palmer Lake Yule Log Pot Luck Dinner**, Tue., **Dec. 12**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Circle. Please bring a potluck dish to share and place settings for your family. See ad on page 2. Info: 481-2953.
- **Monument Hill Farmers Market Winter Indoor Market**, Sat., **Dec. 15**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Grace Best, 66 Jefferson St., Monument. Many new vendors plus all your old favorites. Meets every 3rd Sat. through April. See ad on page 5. Info: 592-9420.
- **Richard Lindsay Trunk Show at Santa Fe Trail Jewelry**, Fri.-Sun., **Dec. 15-17**, Fri.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-4 p.m., 106-A Second St., Monument. See ad on page 2. Info: 481-0250
- **St. Peter Catholic Church: On This Christmas Night Concert**, Fri., **Dec. 15**, 7 p.m., 55 Jefferson, Monument. All are welcome for an evening of holiday music. The event is free, however, a free-will offering to benefit Tri-Lakes Cares will be accepted. See ad on page 2. Info: www.Petertherock.org.
- **Tri-Lakes Music Association Annual Christmas Concert: The Story of Christmas**, Fri.-Sun., **Dec. 15-17**, 7 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., Palmer Ridge High School, 19255 Monument Hill Rd., Monument. Admission is free; a free-will offering will be collected to support Tri-Lakes Cares and student scholarships for eligible high school seniors. Park in the lower parking lots, enter at the auditorium entrance. See ad on page 12. Info: www.trilakesmusic.org.

- **Wescott Fire Department Santa Patrol**, Sat., **Dec. 16**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Meet Santa on his fire truck with the Wescott firefighters. See the schedule map at www.wescottfire.org. Info: 488-8680.
- **Annual Palmer Lake Yule Log Hunt**, Sun., **Dec. 17**, 1 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Trek up the mountain in search of the Yule Log. Hunt participants should arrive 11 a.m.-noon. The winner will ride the Yule Log back to town and get the first cup of wassail. Non-hunters can stay warm indoors with carols and stories. See ad on page 2. Info: 481-2953.
- **Holiday Make & Take: Last-Minute Gift Classes at Sew-In-Tune**, Sun.-Mon., **Dec. 17-18**, 10 a.m-4 p.m., 252 B Front St. (in the alley), Monument. Cost: \$12 each 90 min. session. See ad on page 11. Info: 310-5363.
- **D-38 District Middle School Band Concert**, Mon., **Dec. 18**, 7 p.m., Palmer Ridge High School, 19255 Monument Hill Rd., Monument. Info: 867-8600.
- **D-38 District Band Concert**, Tue., **Dec. 19**, 7 p.m., Lewis-Palmer High School, 1300 Higby Rd., Monument. Info: 488-4720.
- **Silver Alliance Christmas Party**, Thu., **Dec. 21**, noon-2:15 p.m., Senior Center . Free lunch, games, gifts, and prizes for all. Reservations are required and space is limited. Sign up at the Senior Center, lunch at the Mennonite Church, or call Sue at 330-0241.
- **Santa on Patrol**, Sat., **Dec. 23**, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. The Monument Police Department, Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, and the Palmer Lake Police Department will team up to deliver toys and good cheer to many children in the Tri-Lakes area. Info: 481-3253.
- **Cathedral Rock Church Christmas Eve Service**, Sun., **Dec. 24**, 10 a.m., Tri-Lakes YMCA, 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy, Monument. See ad on page 11. Info: www.cathedralrockchurch.org.
- **Fuel Church Christmas Service**, Sun., **Dec. 24**, 10 a.m.; fellowship with free donuts and coffee, 9:30 a.m.; 14960 Woodcarver Rd. (just west of I-25 off Baptist Road). Non-denominational, spirit-led. See ad on page 10. Info: info@fuel.org, www.fuelchurch.org.
- **St. Matthias Episcopal Church Christmas Eve Services**, Sun., **Dec. 24**, 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. 18320 Furrow Rd. (1/2 mi. N of 105). Traditional music and Holy Eucharist. See ad on page 5. Info: 426-9809, www.saint-matthias.org.
- **Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church Christmas Eve Services**, Sun., **Dec. 24**, 10 a.m., 3 p.m., 5 p.m., 7 p.m. & 9 p.m., 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. See ad on page 18. Info: 488-1365, www.tlumc.org.
- **County's Annual Treecycle**, Sat.-Sun., **Dec. 30-31; Jan. 6-7**, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Baptist Road trailhead, Baptist Road & Old Denver Hwy. Recycle your Christmas tree. Trees are ground into mulch that is given away free. Remove all decorations from your tree before dropping it off. Bring your own tools and containers for mulch. Cost: \$5, benefits community youth sports programs. Info: 520-7878, www.TreeCycleCOS.org.
- **Town of Monument Workshop: Planning 101, An Overview of the Planning Process from Start to Finish**, Mon., **Jan. 8**, 5:30 p.m., Town Hall Board Room, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument.. The public is invited to this workshop of the Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, and Board of Adjustments. Info: 884-8017, www.townofmonument.org.

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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 Managing Editor Lisa Hatfield at (719) 339-7831, or email editor@ocn.me to see how you can contribute. Contact us today!

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Our Community News (OCN), with a circulation over **18,200**, is a unique all-volunteer monthly newspaper mailed FREE to every resident and business in the Tri-Lakes area. *OCN* is a primary source for Tri-Lakes area news that gives advertising preference to Tri-Lakes area businesses. *OCN's* contract-free low ad rates and monthly publication schedule help stretch your ad budget while supporting an important Tri-Lakes-focused effort to present factual, comprehensive news to all Tri-Lakes area residents.

For advertising information, contact
John Heiser, (719) 488-3455,
ads@ocn.me, or visit
www.ocn.me.

- **Monument Police Department Active Shooter Class**, Wed. **Jan. 10**, 10 a.m.-noon, Tri-Lakes Chamber Of Commerce, 166 Second St., Monument. Chief Jacob Shirk will present ways to respond to an active shooter situation. RSVP & Info: Laura, 481-3282, www.trilakeschamber.com/events-calendar.htm.
- **Rocky Mountain Music Alliance Concert**, Sat., **Jan. 20**, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church, 20256 Hunting Downs Way, Monument. Award-winning soprano Tsvetana Bandalovska collaborates with pianist Dr. Zahari Metchkov. Tickets: adults \$10 online at www.rmmaonline.org or \$12 at the door. Students with ID, and children 12 and under are free. Info: Coleen Abeyta, 630-8165, Coleen.Abeyta@gmail.com, www.rmmaconcerts.org.

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

Look for our next issue
Saturday, January 6

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

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

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 six letters within any twelve month period. To submit a letter, please:

- 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.
- Limit letters to no more than 300 words.
- Include your full name, home address, day and evening phone numbers, and email address, if you have one.
- Email your letter to editor@ocn.me or mail it to P.O. Box 1742, Monument, CO 80132-1742.
- Send your letter at least 10 days before the “first Saturday of the month” when the paper is published.
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The Rabbi's Corner
The Most Important Commandment—Part III

By Oswald Garagorry

We have established through the two previous articles that neither Jew nor Christian know the most important commandment in its entirety. Yet, both segments of these populations assume and are ready to defend their partial knowledge as if it were a full understanding of the subject.

So today I'd like to begin analyzing why this sad partial knowledge of the subject is occurring. From the Jewish perspective, the teachings of the Torah are elevated and for this subject they will quote the Shema as if it was the most important commandment. (*Deut 6:4*) “Hear Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one...” Yet, this passage is misread as if, after the word “one” there was a final period putting an end to the subject. To the contrary the next word after “one” is the conjunction “AND” the same conjunction that exists in the Hebrew text as “VE.” The function of a conjunction is to unite what was stated preceding it with what is stated following it. In general, the Jewish person has never learned what is united to it by the conjunction “ve.” I am not sure of why; but I think that the Jews like to deal more with facts than feelings, and what comes after and is united to it by the conjunction deals more with feelings than with facts. Therefore what comes after the conjunction “and” or “ve” is ignored. So this is what comes after the ve... and we quote verbatim, (*Deut. 6:6-9*) “...and (ve) you are to love Adonai your God with all your heart, all your being and all your resources.” Moshe then went further and stated, “These words which I am ordering you today are to be on your heart and you are to teach them carefully to your children. You are to talk about them when you sleep at home and when you are traveling on the road, when you lay down and when you get up. Tie them on your hand as a sign, put them at the front of a headband around your forehead and write on the door frames of your house and on your gates.” Dear Mishpaha, let me ask you, what have you done in light of these instructions from our Torah? We have chosen the first part and we have ignored the last part. We affirm that HaShem is One and we have our mezuzahs with only the first part of the entire set of instructions from our Torah, placed at our front doors. Why don't we take the entire text of instructions literally and practice these instructions given to us from HaShem through Moshe in the same way we do with the first part before the conjunction “ve”? May we propose in our heart to love HaShem and to practice the instructions found in his Torah.

Therefore, as we quoted above, the Most Important Commandment is *Deuteronomy 6:4-9*.

In the next issue of *OCN* we will analyze the Christian perspective of the Most Important Commandment. Shalom to you.

Dr. Garagorry is the Rabbi of Aliyah Congregation that meets on Saturdays at 10 a.m. at the Mountain Community Mennonite Church,

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