

Treecycle available thru Jan. 7



Left: Thayer Guida, left, and Jadon Guida helped at the El Paso County Youth Sports' Annual Treecycle on Dec. 30 at the Monument location at Baptist Road Trailhead on Old Denver Road. These boys and their teammates volunteered their time and muscle power as a fundraiser for the Lewis-Palmer District 38 lacrosse team, which accepted donations for each tree dropped off.

Treecycle is available two weekends, the last weekend in December and the first weekend in January, ending Jan. 7. The trees will be chipped into mulch, which will be distributed free to anyone who can bring their own containers and bring the mulch back home to supply nutrients to their own landscape areas. The tree mulch will not only help to naturally eliminate weeds but also keeps moisture in the soil, and it allows rain and snow to settle into the earth and keep the trees and landscape healthy. The nutrients from the chipped trees will eventually decay and offer the cycle of nutrients to help trees and plants grow. While the native habitat in our area is basically ponderosa and oak, which need their own species-specific nutrients, using this kind of mulch is cost-effective and environmentally friendly. It will support not only the plants and trees but also wildlife, children and pets, in terms of keeping the ground safe from harmful chemicals. Contrary to common belief, nothing in the pine needles or pine will cause acidic soil, because once the soil has been created from the material decay, it is relatively neutral. Pine and our scrub oaks have some essential oils that keep out unwanted bugs and weeds, and that is very garden-friendly. For information on Treecycle, 520-7878, www.csyouthsports.net/treecycle. Photo by Lisa Hatfield. Caption by Janet Sellers.

Random Acts of Kindness



Above: The Random Acts of Kindness group (RAK) has blossomed into the wider Tri-Lakes community after it started with a group of five families at Family of Christ Lutheran Church this fall. RAK meets the second Saturday of each month to reach out into the community. Service so far has included collecting food for Tri-Lakes Cares, collecting toys for Santa on Patrol, raking leaves, visiting residents of Bethesda Gardens Assisted Living Center, cleaning gutters, and retrieving a wind-blown gazebo. Residents who either want to give help or ask for help can contact Melinda Reichal at 719-313-0688 or mreichal@aol.com. Photo by Gordon Reichal.

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.

Join the Y for free, ends Jan. 15

The Pikes Peak YMCA is offering a promotion: pay no join fee if you register by Jan. 15. See ad on page 6. Register at www.pymca.org; or at the Y, 17250 Jackson Creek Parkway, Monument; or phone 481-8728.

Tri-Lakes Meals on Wheels needs drivers

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

Meals on Wheels

If you're a homebound senior age 60 or older, you might qualify to receive meals delivered to your home through Silver Key. See ad on page 5. To register or volunteer, call 884-2370.

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. Register at www.pymca.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. For details, contact the studio: 481-8208, info@thesundan-

cestudio.com, or www.thesundances-tudio.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. For entry qualifications and to complete an online entry form, visit www.mvea.coop/youth-programs.

April elections

Make sure your voter registration is up to date at www.govotecolorado.com.

County commissioners prohibit camping in vehicles

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously to revise a 2010 illegal camping resolution to include the occupation of motor or recreational vehicles in the definition of camping and stipulates that such vehicles cannot be occupied for more than 48 hours in county rights of way. The county could adapt an "encroachment permit" to accommodate short-term visitors of residents who come to town in large recreational vehicles that may not fit in driveways and need to park along roads and rights of way for longer than 48 hours. A video of the full discussion on the new camping restrictions is posted on the county YouTube channel at: <https://youtu.be/NZ0wxjISdH4>.

Tiny homes now permitted in many county zones

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners has unanimously approved

modifications to county land use regulations to accommodate the current popularity of so-called "tiny homes." Changes will allow the placement of tiny homes in many El Paso County zones where residential housing is permitted if they meet certain safety, functionality, and appearance requirements. Certain "length of stay" restrictions have been removed for approved RV campgrounds. Tiny homes are permitted in zoned mobile parks and may be used as principle dwelling places in certain county residential zones. They will also be permitted as "accessory structures" in other zones subject to compliance with other requirements established for specific subdivisions and developments.

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.

Save your sewer system! Fats, oils, and grease problems

Pouring grease down your drain can cause clogs in home plumbing and adds extra expenses to the wastewater treatment process. Grease from cooking, gravy, cooking oil, and sauces may look harmless as a liquid, but when it cools it gets thick and sticky. If you pour grease down your drain, it sticks to pipes and eventually can cause clogs and messy overflows. Prevent backups in your home by pouring all grease from bacon, fried chicken, and other cooking grease into a can, putting in the freezer, then tossing it in the trash.

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. See ad on page 13. 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. See ad on page 3. Call or visit: 124 First St., Monument; 481-1855; www.petertherock.org.

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.

Residence vacation check

The El Paso County Sheriff's Office will conduct vacation checks of homes of county 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 text alerts

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

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.