

# Our Community News

Volunteers reporting on community issues in Monument, Palmer Lake, and the surrounding Tri-Lakes area



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## Local Events

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

- **Rocky Mountain Music Alliance Concert**, Sat., Sep. 1, 7 p.m.
- **Monu-Palooza Music Festival**, Sun., Sep. 2, 1 p.m.
- **Bill Nance Memorial Blood Drive**, Tue., Sep. 4, 1-5 p.m.
- **D-38 Home School Enrichment Academy First Day**, Thu., Sep. 6
- **NEPCO Meeting**, Sat., Sep. 8, 10 a.m.-noon. Active shooter class.
- **Random Acts of Kindness**, Sat., Sep. 8, 1-4 p.m.
- **Front Range Open Studios**, Sat.-Sun., Sep. 8-9, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Friends of Monument Preserve (FOMP) Trail Work Night**, Tue., Sep. 11, 6-8:30 p.m.
- **WMMI Steampunk Celebration**, Thu., Sep. 13.
- **Public Forum on D38 Ballot Measures**, Thu., Sep. 13, 6:30 p.m.
- **Larkspur Autumn Harvest & Craft Fest**, Sat.-Sun., Sep. 15-16, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Bines & Brews Hopfest**, Sat., Sep. 15, 1-5 p.m.
- **Tri-Lakes Community Blood Drive**, Tue., Sep. 18, 3-7 p.m.
- **Wardrobes & Rings, Theatrical Production at TLCA**, Thu.-Fri., Sep. 20-21
- **Art Hop** (last of the season), Thu., Sep. 20, 5-8 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society**, Thu., Sep. 20, 7 p.m. The Harvey Girls.
- **Bonfils Blood Center Blood Drive**, Sat., Sep. 29, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Art Group's 45th Annual Arts & Crafts Fair**, Fri.-Sat., Oct. 5-6, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. ■

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## Tolled express lane certain



**Above:** Using a map superimposed over an aerial photo of Interstate 25, Kraemer North America LLC Project Manager Mike McNish answers residents' questions about the I-25 South Gap Project at the CDOT open house held at Monument Academy on Aug. 20. Informational placards throughout the school's gymnasium educated the public about upcoming construction on the 18-mile section from Monument to Castle Rock, which is slated to begin September 2018. A corps of CDOT and Kraemer employees possessing first-hand knowledge of the project was available to answer questions. *Photo by Jennifer Kaylor*

By Jennifer Kaylor

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Kraemer North America LLC representatives answered questions about the I-25 South Gap Project during the Aug. 20 open house at Monument Academy.

The foremost question, "Will there be a toll?" received an affirmative nod. Installation of one tolled express lane in each direction (vehicles of three or more people are free, and the two general pur-

pose lanes are free) will result in "a corridor that moves people and vehicles more efficiently," according to CDOT. Additional changes include new overlay of existing pavement, widened shoulders, a truck climbing lane from the Greenland interchange south, and advanced communications and power technology. Variable tolls for the express lane will begin in 2022.

*I-25 GAP (cont. on page 2)*

## Fierce opposition to proposed rehab facility at former Ramada Inn site

By Lisa Hatfield and Helen Walklett

Residents packed an informational neighborhood meeting Aug. 8 in Monument to voice their opposition to a planned inpatient drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility, to be known as Mountain Springs Recovery, at the former Ramada Inn on Woodmoor Drive. Because the property is zoned C-2, which allows for a rehabilitation facility, there will be no public hearing of the application at the El Paso County Planning Commission or the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Andrea Barlow of NES

Inc., who is managing the application on behalf of Sunshine Behavioral Health (SBH), said they had submitted a site development plan to the county ahead of the purchase, and this was being reviewed by county staff.

The property is located within unincorporated El Paso County and, consequently, neither the Town of Monument nor the Woodmoor Improvement Association has jurisdiction over it. The heated meeting at the Tri-Lakes Cham-

*REHAB (cont. on page 2)*

Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education Special Meeting, Aug. 23

## "Win-win" school district bond ballot language approved

By Lisa Hatfield

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education agreed on wording for the Nov. 6 bond ballot measure at its Aug. 23 meeting. This was the culmination of a year of public input and a furious month of last-minute negotiations with Monument Academy charter school (MA) after its board asked D38 to assist building a gym and auditorium at MA's new school site by adding funds to the D38 bond issue. The board accomplished consensus by coming up with an idea to overcome a legal impasse related to MA's request and instead began collaboration between D38 and MA.

For background, see related Aug. 6 and Aug. 20 Lewis-Palmer Board of Education articles on page 4 and 6, and Monument Academy article on page 6.

MA Executive Director Don Griffin did not attend the meeting.

MA hopes to build a new "high school" at the southeast corner of Highways 83 and 105. It would include grades 6 through 12, and, "This would open up 300 elementary school seats" in MA's building at 1150 Village Ridge Pt. in Monument, said Vice President Tiffiney Upchurch.

However, negotiations on the bond wording reached an impasse on Aug. 20 due to a condition in MA's articles of incorporation, which MA did not amend.

Secretary Mark Pfoff then suggested an alternative that persuaded all five board members to agree.

After a discussion, the board directed the superintendent to create a resolution stating the "intent of the board" to ensure that the \$36.5 million bond on the November 2018 ballot would be used to construct a new elementary school and provide safety and security as previously agreed, plus up to \$3.5 million for construction of a gymnasium and/or auditorium, or similar structures, built through a collaborative agreement with MA. The recreational structure, which would be built adjacent to the new school MA wants to build east of Highway 83, would be owned by D38, although MA would manage and have full use of the facility, including the ability to rent it out. If this arrangement does not come to fruition, then funds would be placed in the capital building reserves to be used for future district construction or general obligation debt.

Other board member comments included:

- President Matthew Clawson - This would show a partnership with D38 and MA and eliminate concerns about giving money to a private nonprofit. I think we found a win-win situation that benefits our community and more importantly all the kids within D38.
- Upchurch - My conscience feels like what is right for all our kids regard-

*D38 AUG. 23 (cont. on page 4)*