

## Hugs & high-fives at Limbach Park



**Above:** Hundreds of parents and children greeted Santa and Mrs. Claus for high fives and hugs amid the bright lights of a police cruiser and fire truck for the grand entrance at the annual Monument holiday tree lighting ceremony at Limbach Park on Dec. 1. *Photos by Janet Sellers.*

## Talking with teens, Dec. 4



**Above:** On Dec. 4, Lewis-Palmer School District 38 hosted a panel discussion for its Connection and Conversation series. Dr. Mark Mayfield presented a short overview redefining success, understanding and supporting the social and emotional wellness of our youths. The panelists addressed questions submitted in writing by the audience. Topics included nutrition, social media monitoring (the average teen watches 9.5 hours a day), and excessive emphasis on academic achievement causing stresses and anxiety and depression among our youths. Panelists are, from left, Todd Walker, Mark Haug, Erika Nash, Gwen Simbeck, Ryan Eells, Mark Mayfield, and Karen Brofft. See related Art Matters column on page 26. *Photo by John Howe.*

## Dakota Blonde at TLCA, Dec. 14



**Above:** On Dec. 14, Dakota Blonde returned to the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA), offering a mix of songs that left the sold-out audience wanting for more by the evening's end. Dakota Blonde band members Ernie Martinez, Don Pinnella, Mary Huckins, and Tony Raddell performed a song list that included fan favorite originals Dig Real Deep, The Ballad of Mary's Car, and The Wing Jig, covers such as I've Just Seen a Face by the Beatles and Dooley by the Dillards, and seasonal songs Little Drummer Boy and Feliz Navidad. With strong lead vocals by Huckins and instrument play particularly by Martinez, who was awarded 2018 Instrumentalist of the Year by the Western Music Association, Dakota Blonde demonstrated the versatility and range that make them a TLCA and Colorado Springs-area favorite. *Photo by David Futey.*

## Wreaths Across America, Dec. 15



**Left:** On Dec. 15, the Ladies Auxiliary VFW Post 7829 organized participation in the national program Wreaths Across America. More than 100 people attended Monument Cemetery to witness and help with laying a wreath on each veteran's grave. The program included speeches by Monument Mayor Don Wilson, Rep. Terri Carver, and coordinator of the event, Kathy Carlson. *Photo by John Howe.*

## Over 1,500 attend North Pole event



**Above:** Rose Dunphey, left, leads students and parents from the Home School Enrichment Academy in traditional holiday songs. *Photo by Harriet Halbig.*

*By Harriet Halbig*

About 1,570 people attended the Monument Hill Kiwanis Club's 13th annual North Pole at Tri-Lakes Arts and Crafts Fair on Dec. 1 at the Grace Best Education Center. Program manager Bob Nissen reported that the event was a great success. Seventy-seven vendors offered their wares including quilted items, treats, clothing, and various other gift offerings.

Eight entertainment groups performed during the event, including Miguel Dakota, finalist on America's Got Talent, the Tri-Lakes Methodist Brass Ensemble and students from Kilmer Elementary, the Lewis-Palmer Homeschool Enrichment Academy, Palmer Ridge High School, and a dance group from the Dance Art Academy.

The Tri-Lakes United Methodist Women's Cookie Walk, offering homemade cookies and other treats, attracted a large crowd in the gymnasium, selling out by 1:30 p.m.

Proceeds from this event benefit the Tri-Lakes Community Nurse, Crawford House Quilters, Palmer Divide Blanket Brigade, and the Days for Girls Project.

Tri-Lakes Cares benefitted through the donation of 684 pounds of food, \$764 in cash and a large bin of toys. Booth rental fees support District 38 school programs, and the use of the facility is donated by the district.

## Keaggy wows TLCA audience, Dec. 7



**Left:** On Dec. 7, Phil Keaggy performed the first of two sold-out shows at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA). Starting with *Nellie's Tune*, an instrumental about his grandmother, Keaggy played for nearly two hours without intermission, much to the delight of the audience. Using a foot pedal board with 12 pedals, Keaggy was able to add sounds and do a studio mix on the fly that provided choreographed background music to his phenomenal guitar playing. He learned to play guitar at age 10 after his brother brought home a Sears Silvertone guitar. He then learned guitar licks by playing 45 rpm records at 33-1/3 speed. It was that humble start in his hometown of Youngstown, Ohio, that led to over 40 years in the music industry with over 60 albums that span rock to Christian music. Information on upcoming events at TLCA is at [www.trilakesarts.org](http://www.trilakesarts.org). *Photo by David Futey.*

## Fa La La La! Dec. 16



**Above:** The Tri-Lakes Music Association presented a series of Christmas concerts in December at Palmer Ridge High School, Monument. Concert-goers were treated to renditions of *Frosty the Snowman*, *Dance of the Reed-Flutes*, and *Jesu Bambino*, *O Holy Night*. The orchestra and choir came together to deliver *Holly Jolly Christmas*, *Sing Noel*, and *Give Me Christmas*. The concert also included performances of *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* and *Mary Did You Know?* The well-attended concerts were free to all attendees, and monetary donations were gratefully accepted by Tri-Lakes Cares and Tri-Lakes Music Association at all the events. *Photo and caption by Natalie Barszcz.*

## Kiwanis shares magic of reading



**Left:** Kiwanian Bob Evans reads to Lewis-Palmer Elementary School first-graders. Dec. 17 marked a day of stories for kindergartners and first- and second-graders at Lewis-Palmer Elementary School. Ofie Lopez organized seven members of Monument Hill Kiwanis who volunteered their time to read to different classes. Lopez plans to organize more throughout the school year. *Photo provided by Lewis-Palmer Elementary School Principal Jenny Day.*