

receive as recognition for their vacation checks.

WIA focuses on covenant compliance over violations and fees where possible. The largest issues have been projects done without Architectural Control Committee (ACC) approval. Nearly 80 percent of projects are approved administratively, of those that go to a committee meeting, 98 percent are approved as is or changes are suggested.

2019 objectives

Bush noted that the board sees fire as the single greatest threat, which is why it continues to support the Firewise program, has raised and assessed fines for open fires, has encouraged people to mitigate, and has provided inspections, forestry experts, and mitigation grants. Another three chipping days will be done, with one in south Woodmoor.

The board is committed to developing trails in common areas, completing the additions to the Barn, and remaining engaged with the Country Club at Woodmoor and the North El Paso County Coalition of Community Organizations to keep track of local development.

Awards

A Good Neighbor award of a Home Depot gift card

was given to three couples. Jerry and Ramona Chavez were recognized for helping neighbors, inviting them to events, lending their lawn tractors, and handyman help. Jonathan and Marcy Deeds were recognized for their work with Real Alternatives to Drinking and Drugs, the YMCA, helping friends and neighbors, involvement with the Cub Scouts and building games for the annual Lewis-Palmer Elementary school carnival. Gordon and Melinda Reichal were recognized for their Random Acts of Kindness organization for Woodmoor and Tri-Lakes, collecting food and toys, visiting residents at the assisted living center, as well as organizing the first responders' barbecue and setting up a neighborhood watch meeting.

Lisa Hatfield was awarded the Vincent Elorie outstanding citizen award, named after a former member of the Woodmoor Police Department. Hatfield, the managing editor of *Our Community News*, attends and reports on local meetings, has been involved in Firewise, and has worked with her church on the Black Forest Fire recovery effort.

Board election and reorganization

Ballots were received by mail and at the meeting by League of Women Voters representatives who count-

ed and provided totals to the board on the day after the annual meeting. On Jan. 30, the board held a short meeting to certify the election results and elect officers and designate board directors as follows:

- Brian Bush, president
- Peter Bille, vice president
- Bert Jean, secretary and director of Community Outreach
- Lee Hanson, treasurer
- Per Suhr, director of Architectural Control
- Rich Wretschko, director of Common Areas
- Tom Smith, director of Covenant Control
- Ed Miller, director of Forestry
- Brad Gleason, director of Public Safety

The WIA Annual Meeting is held each year in January at Lewis-Palmer Middle School. 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.

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February Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Lots of interesting weather around the region during February, with several swings in temperatures between cold and mild and a long dry period interrupted by a week and half of unsettled and snowy conditions. For the month overall, snowfall was right at normal levels, with temperatures ending up slightly above normal.

The first five days of the month were mild and dry, with temperatures averaging 15-20 degrees warmer than average during the period. Highs reached the mid-50s at times with gusty winds off the mountains from the west producing the fabled "chinook" wind patterns. These winds descend off the mountains, warm up, and dry out the atmosphere.

However, a surge of very cold air moved in starting around 10:30 a.m. on the 6th, with temperatures dropping more than 200F in less than 20 minutes. Fog and low clouds filled in quickly behind the cold front, with snow developing during the early afternoon. Temperatures remained well below normal over the next two days as well. Overnight lows dropped well below zero on the 7th and 8th under clear skies.

Temperatures warmed to around normal levels from the 9th through the 12th, with generally quiet conditions and mostly clear skies. However, the pattern changed again as westerly winds again developed and like earlier in the month produced mild, windy, and dry conditions across the region. Temperatures again jumped well into the 50s from the 13th through the 15th as winds gusted over 70 mph at times west of the I-25 corridor.

Once again, this mild, windy weather was ahead of a major pattern change as cold and snowy condi-

tions were about to move back in. The first signs of change were felt by late morning on the 16th with snow showers and graupel falling just before noon, then several hours of snow and blowing snow during the late afternoon. Temperatures cooled during the day, falling from the mid-40s early in the morning to the singles digits by evening. Temperatures remained well below normal from the 16th through the 24th. Amazingly, temperatures remained below freezing from just after noon on the 16th through just after noon on the 22nd. This is a very long period of uninterrupted cold weather for us, especially later in February. Low temperatures were consistently in the single digits above and below zero during the period as well.

Light snow and blowing snow occurred off and on each day from the 16th through the 19th, with 4-8 inches accumulating throughout the region. Dry air took over on the 20th and 21st, although temperatures remained well below normal. This was ahead of the last push of cold and snow for the month. It was associated with a strong, record-setting snow system moving down the West Coast and through the desert Southwest.

As this storm turned the corner around the Four Corners region, moisture increased in the region. This produced a period of heavy snow during the evening of the 23rd through the early morning of the 24th. This period of snow and wind accumulated 5-10 inches of new snow across the area. Temperatures warmed slowly the next afternoon, before mild air moved in to end the month. Highs reached the upper 40s and low 50s from the 25th through the 28th as light westerly winds kept cold air just to our east. The cold air

tried to make a push into the region each evening but couldn't quite make it to locations above 7,000 feet, so we stayed on the mild side.

A look ahead

March is known for a wide range of weather conditions in the region. We can see 70° temperatures one afternoon and blizzard conditions the next. Many of us remember the blizzard of March 2003 when we received 30-50 inches of snowfall that shut down the region. However, snow that does fall begins to melt quickly this time of the year, providing beneficial moisture for our plants as we head into spring.

February 2019 Weather Statistics

Average High	39.2° (-0.6°)
100-year return frequency value max	51.9° min 32.8°
Average Low	12.9° (-0.1°)
100-year return frequency value max	21.9° min 3.7°
Highest Temperature	56° on the 3rd, 13th
Lowest Temperature	-9° on the 7th
Monthly Precipitation	0.84"
	(-0.10" 10% below normal)
100-year return frequency value max	2.10" min 0.02"
Monthly Snowfall	17.6"
	(-0.1", 0% below normal)
Season to Date Snow	97.0"
	(+26.5", 27% above normal)
Season to Date Precip.	6.08"
	(+1.94", 31% above normal)
Heating Degree Days	1067 (+29)
Cooling Degree Days	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 are on page 31.

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

Awake the Lake is alive and well

As a volunteer with Awake the Lake (ATL aka Palmer Lake Restoration Project), I am concerned with unfounded and disparaging remarks directed at our grassroots organization. Palmer Lake resident Darcy Schoening has recently been spreading outright lies about ATL, both on social media and in communication with Town of Palmer Lake Trustees. We must set the record straight.

Through a prior independent accountant's error, unbeknownst to ATL, ATL's nonprofit tax returns for the past three years were filed under an erroneous tax ID number. However, thanks to the efforts of a local Tri-Lakes CPA, the IRS is in the process of merging those files under our correct tax ID number. This accounting error has in no way jeopardized ATL's tax-exempt status, nor our not-for-profit mission.

ATL has one purpose: fundraising to improve and maintain Palmer Lake and the surrounding parks and amenities. We have organized innumerable events over the years, raising tens of thousands of dollars, ensuring that Palmer Lake remains a viable recreational

amenity to the Tri-Lakes region. Just this fall we raised nearly \$40,000 through our annual .5K "race," boosting matching funds necessary for the town's GOCO grant (awarded through ATL efforts) to complete the pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks. Not one dime raised by ATL has ever gone into the pockets of its volunteers, and our books remain open to all.

I can't speculate as to Schoening's motives in trying to damage the reputation of a volunteer group providing such a public service. Indeed, Schoening worked as a volunteer on our .5K event just a few months ago. Regardless, it is vital that Palmer Lake, and the larger Tri-Lakes region, know that ATL remains a hardworking and viable nonprofit entity, and your continued support is both appreciated and tax deductible.

Chris Cummins
Awake the Lake

D38 bond election

While I worked in the D38 school district from 2003 to 2010 as principal of Lewis-Palmer Middle School, I just recently moved to Monument. In my brief time living here, I have seen and heard a lot of information and misinformation.

Because the recent D38 bond and mill levy election was so contentious, I decided I needed to find out what is really happening for myself as a taxpayer and citizen of Monument, and while doing so, focus on

kids, education, and fiscal responsibility. Because of this, I have attended D38 board meetings and Monument Academy board meetings. I have done a great deal of research on facilities, education, state legislation, etc.

I am a conservative, and very much a fiscal conservative. It was always important to me to manage my school budget responsibly. I don't like it when my tax dollars are wasted, and I felt the responsibility to utilize D38 taxpayers' money to maximize their investment. To me, that is a basic expectation.

The D38 school board is charged with providing quality education for all students in a fiscally responsible manner to taxpayers. That does not mean a blank check. It means providing the best opportunities they can with the resources available.

I have not always agreed with the decisions made by the D38 school board over the past 18 years. I'm retired, living on a fixed income. I certainly don't appreciate how some government entities spend my tax money. Although a graduate from Douglas County and nearly a lifelong resident of Castle Rock, I voted against tax proposals for Douglas County Schools the past few years for that very reason. I want to be an informed voter. I will share what I have learned to anyone who wants to know what the facts are.

Terry Miller