

D38 hosts 13th annual chess tournament, Feb. 9



Above: (left) Caleb Landrum makes his first move. **(right)** Ana De Angelis enjoys learning to play chess along with her third-place win. **Below:** Kids play and resolve

issues with the help of a referee while parents watch from the sideline. *Photos by Jackie Burhans*



By Jackie Burhans

On Feb. 9, School District 38 held its 13th annual chess tournament at Lewis-Palmer Elementary School. Steve Waldman, who runs the event, said there were 117 chess players at this event, which is the second-largest school district tournament in the state. The event benefits from the support of many teachers and staff members from a number of the schools in the district. Key Club members from Lewis-Palmer and Palmer Ridge High Schools volunteered at the events. The event was

open to all kids who live in the school district at all grade levels, including charter and homeschooled kids. Kids sit at tables as parents observe from the side, and the students work out their issues or ask a referee to mediate. Students learn good sportsmanship, concentration and competition. Award winners were recognized at the Feb. 11 school board meeting. See the D38 article on page 1.

Jackie Burhans can be contacted at jackieburhans@ocn.me

Palmer Lake enjoys Winterfest



On a sunny but cold Sunday, Feb. 9, Palmer Lake held its annual Winterfest with free ice skating and hot dogs. The event, which included a silent auction, benefitted Glen Park playground. Skaters clung to one another or skated on their own over the ice-covered lake. Several bonfires were built and maintained by the local Fire Department to stave off the chilly temperatures. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

RRR: Firewise Site of Excellence



In destructive wildfires, at-risk communities that have reduced the number of flammable trees and shrubs survive with much less damage, but neighborhoods that have not managed the number of trees are devastated. Red Rock Ranch (RRR) is one of seven communities across the country selected as a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Firewise USA Site of Excellence, which teaches people how to adapt to living with wildfire.

After consulting extensively with the Colorado State Forest Service and Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District beginning in 2017, the RRR Firewise Committee has a well-coordinated wildfire safety effort in progress, including fuels reduction for 70 homes and counting, wildfire assessments of nearly 40 homes, two community meetings, door-to-door distribution of information, and getting feedback from residents.

A new regular Firewise habit—regularly scheduled neighborhood slash collection and chipping days, has gotten additional support from the Coalition for the Upper South Platte crew and chipper and the Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church's Emergency Preparedness Group.

When individual homeowners go it alone, they protect their homes, but when the community works as one, the intangible things that brought residents to the woods in the first place, the beauty and sense of community, survive as well.

For information about obtaining Firewise USA recognition or Community Wildfire Protection Plans, contact Forester Dave Root, Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) Woodland Park Field Office, at (719) 687-2921. The Red Rock Ranch Community Wildfire Protection Plan is available on the CSFS website at: <https://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/colorado-community-wildfire-protection-plans/>. *Photo by Dave Betzler.*

Human trafficking awareness



Left: From left, OCN volunteers John Howe and Sharon Williams, speaker Molly Griffiths, a representative for Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT), and Sister Rose Ann Barman, OSB of Benet Hill Monastery, chat before human trafficking awareness talks began at Library 21c on Feb. 11. This talk, "Protecting Our Precious Cargo," one in a four-part series, covered transportation agencies with an overview about TAT and "Recognizing and reporting human trafficking," sponsored by the Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery in Black Forest. Experts say that human trafficking is modern-day slavery and is expected to overtake illegal drug activity as the top illicit crime worldwide with nearly 21 million victims annually in what is a \$32 billion industry. The internet and social media are fueling the rapid growth by luring victims with various promises of attention, affection, job offers, and false promises. People can call 911 to report suspected trafficking, reporting vital information such as descriptions of the people, vehicles, and license plates. The talks emphasized that there would be no slave industry without buyers, which is the root of the problem. Legislation is underway to convict the buyers of such services as well as those selling human beings for sex or labor or both. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

People can call 911 to report suspected trafficking, reporting vital information such as descriptions of the people, vehicles, and license plates. The talks emphasized that there would be no slave industry without buyers, which is the root of the problem. Legislation is underway to convict the buyers of such services as well as those selling human beings for sex or labor or both. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

Black Forest Together, Feb. 12



Left: From left are Dave Root, assistant district forester, Colorado State Forest Service, Woodland Park District, and Linda Rollins of Black Forest Together. At the Black Forest Fire Department, Station 1, on Feb. 12, Jennifer Cowan of Black Forest Together Inc. presented findings of the 2013 Black Forest Fire and discussed ways to mitigate and restore properties in the Black Forest community. Residents also received guidance from Root and Rollins. Resident Chris Ferguson shared her experience as a donor to The Trees 4 Tomorrow program. The transplant program moves trees from donor properties in the Black Forest area to properties in need of reforestation. In 2018, Trees 4 Tomorrow transplanted 1,032 trees around Black Forest. For additional information, visit: BlackForestTogether.org or contact: Black Forest Together, 11460 Black Forest Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80908, phone: 719-495-2445 or email: resourcecenter@blackforesttogether.org. *Photo and caption by Natalie Barszcz.*

Residents also received guidance from Root and Rollins. Resident Chris Ferguson shared her experience as a donor to The Trees 4 Tomorrow program. The transplant program moves trees from donor properties in the Black Forest area to properties in need of reforestation. In 2018, Trees 4 Tomorrow transplanted 1,032 trees around Black Forest. For additional information, visit: BlackForestTogether.org or contact: Black Forest Together, 11460 Black Forest Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80908, phone: 719-495-2445 or email: resourcecenter@blackforesttogether.org. *Photo and caption by Natalie Barszcz.*