

Our Community Notices

By Lisa Hatfield, Ross Meyer, and Marlene Brown, this month's calendar team. We miss Judy Barnes' expert work on the calendar and notices. If you are interested in helping OCN compile the monthly calendar and notices, please write to calendar@ocn.me.

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. Please notify us if your event listing needs to be updated.

Feeling hopeless, anxious, or depressed?

Everybody needs a little help sometimes. Pikes Peak Suicide Prevention Connection has a support group for young people, Teen Talk Group, that meets **Sundays** at 6 p.m. The Adult Peers Support Group meets **Mondays**, 7-8 p.m. The Colorado Crisis Services Line is available 24/7. Call 1-844-493-TALK (8255). For more information visit pikespeaksuicideprevention.org, or call 719-573-7447, or text 719-232-4875, or email info@pikespeaksuicideprevention.org. If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, please call 911.

Jewish Family Service offers counseling

Jewish Family Service (JFS) of Colorado's virtual counseling services are available to anyone throughout the state who is feeling overwhelmed or in crisis at this time. JFS supports everyone, not just those of the Jewish faith. JFS accepts private insurance, self-pay, Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and offers a sliding-fee schedule for those with limited financial resources and will not turn away anyone in crisis. To find out more about virtual counseling and the various services JFS offers, phone 303-597-5000 or visit the website, www.jewishfamilyservice.org.

Free income tax help, ends April 15

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program provides free income tax preparation assistance to individuals and families with a household income of \$56,000 a year or less. To find out if you qualify or to schedule an appointment, call 2-1-1 or text VITANOW to 85511 Mon. through Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

High School Senior Scholarship Applications

The Black Forest Arts and Craft Guild will be awarding at least one scholarship of \$1,000 to a high school senior. See www.bfacg.org for application and submission information. Please note that you must reside within our boundaries listed in the instructions.

Colorado COVID vaccine information

There is currently a limited supply of COVID-19 vaccines. This means a vaccine will not be immediately available to everyone who wants one. To be as fair and efficient with distribution as possible, the state has developed a phased approach to vaccine distribution to save lives and end the crisis that has been brought on by the pandemic as quickly as possible. By vaccinating people who are most likely to get COVID-19 first, we can keep more Coloradans safe.

- To see who is eligible to receive a vaccine, see <https://covid19.colorado.gov/for-coloradans/vaccine/find-out-when-youre-eligible-for-a-covid-19-vaccine>
- Residents may call Pikes Peak United Way 2-1-1 to receive information about the vaccine and assistance and other senior support services.
- Pikes Peak region community members can now text "vaccine" (for English) or "vacuna" (for Spanish) to 667873 to get contact information for their preferred vaccine provider.

Are you experiencing hardship?

Connect with Tri-Lakes Cares for assistance with groceries, rent or mortgage, utilities, car repair, and medical assistance at www.tri-lakescares.org/coronavirus. For more information, call 719-481-4864.

Volunteer with Tri-Lakes Cares (TLC)

There are many areas within Tri-Lakes Cares that you can help serve. Volunteers interact with clients, stock the food pantry, distribute grocery orders, process donations, pack Snack Packs for local youths, and contribute in many other ways to the success of Tri-Lakes Cares. Becoming a volunteer is easy and fun. For details, contact Volunteer Coordinator Nichole Pettigrew, 719-481-4864 x113, VolunteerCoordinator@Tri-LakesCares.org; or visit <https://tri-lakescares.org/volunteer/>.

Getting Ahead sponsors needed

Tri-Lakes Cares announced that it will hold a Getting Ahead class this spring. Getting Ahead is a small group program that looks at poverty and unstable situations through the lens of economic class to bet-

ter understand how our society works. Participants in the class—called "investigators"—examine their own experience of hardship as well as explore community issues that affect poverty such as housing, jobs, relationships, and transportation. The purpose of Getting Ahead is to help the investigators identify areas of action and movement in their own lives to help them move forward to a better future. Tri-Lakes Cares is proud to have offered this class yearly since 2016 (apart from last year), and many graduates of the program have improved their lives. Some have gotten better jobs, some have returned to school to work for a higher degree, and others have pursued business opportunities and artistic endeavors. Getting Ahead is not the end of poverty, but a step in the right direction. If you are interested in sponsoring an investigator through the Getting Ahead program or supporting this program with a financial donation, please reach out to Josh Green, 719-481-4864 x108 or JoshG@Tri-LakesCares.org. If you, or someone you know, might benefit from this class, please contact Joseph Figueroa, 719-481-4864 x112, JosephF@Tri-LakesCares.org for more information.

TLC needs us now more than ever

Tri-Lakes Cares is the only food pantry and human services organization located in and serving northern El Paso County through emergency, self-sufficiency, and relief programs. The community-based, volunteer-supported center is a critical resource for our neighbors in need. The best way to help support Tri-Lakes Cares is to make a financial donation. For more information about Tri-Lakes Cares or how you can help, contact Nicole Pettigrew, director of Volunteers and Community Partnership, at 719-481-4864 Ext. 111; communityengagementmanager@tri-lakescares.org; or visit www.tri-lakescares.org.

2021 Black Forest Slash-Mulch Schedule

Black Forest Slash-Mulch Program is a Wildfire Mitigation and Recycling Program. It accepts slash (trees, limbs, and brush debris only, max. length 6 feet, max. diameter 8 inches) (no stumps, roots, weeds, grass, lumber, or trash). Cost to drop off slash is \$2 per load. Mulch loader fee \$5 per bucket, about 2 cubic yards. Co-sponsored by the El Paso County Environmental Division, Colorado Forestry Association and the Black Forest Fire Department, in cooperation with the Colorado State Forest Service and the State Board of Land Commissioners. Hours: Saturdays, 7 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sundays, noon-4 p.m.; and Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 5-7:30 p.m. The mulch loader schedule is Saturdays only, 7 a.m.-4 p.m. on specified days. See www.bflash.org for form to bring with you, or phone the county Environmental Division, 520-7878. Southeast corner of Shoup and Herring Roads in Black Forest.

Donate live trees for Black Forest recovery

Black Forest Together needs your help! BFT is hoping to launch the fourth year of our Trees 4 Tomorrow program, which has transplanted just under 4,000 trees into the burn scar. We need new tree donor sites in order to launch the program. As always, all tree donations are tax-deductible. Donating your trees is a great way to help mitigate your property and help your burn-victim neighbors restore theirs. To help keep overhead and costs down: site must be 25 acres or larger, have easy access for a truck and trailer, have at least 100 trees to donate. Trees need to be 3 to 8 feet tall, with a trunk diameter of 2½ to 4 inches. Doghair (thickets of seedlings) will not be removed. If you are interested in donating to our program or know someone who is, please contact us at Resourcecenter@blackforesttogether.org or call 719-368-0500.

BOCC seeks Master Plan comments

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners draft Master Plan is launched for public review and comment. See related BOCC article on page 1 and ad on page 13. The plan will guide local development for the next 20 to 30 years. The 150-page document is available for review on the county's website at <https://elpaso.hlplanning.com/pages/draft-plan-outreach>. The county is asking for comments by **April 9**. An updated draft will then be reviewed by the county Planning Commission at a first hearing scheduled for May 5.

El Paso County Road Safety Plan

Tell us your thoughts on road safety issues in El Paso County, and where you have experienced safety concerns. The El Paso County Road Safety Plan Project Team will incorporate this feedback into the plan including, but not limited to, identifying emphasis areas, selecting proven countermeasures, and in de-

veloping an implementation list. See website to enter comments on the interactive map. epcsaferroads.com/leave-comments

Road conditions: Stay Informed

Travelers are urged to "know before you go." Gather information about weather forecasts and anticipated travel impacts and current road conditions before hitting the road. CDOT resources include:

- Road conditions and travel information: www.COtrip.org or call 511.
- Project or travel alerts: bit.ly/COalerts
- Scheduled lane closures: codot.gov/travel/scheduled-lane-closures.html
- Avalanche conditions—CAIC: www.avalanche.state.co.us/
- Social media: Twitter @coloradodot and Facebook [facebook.com/coloradodot](https://www.facebook.com/coloradodot)

YMCA Summer Day Camp & spring sports

Discover Summer YMCA Summer Day Camp for ages 5-12. Weekly sessions through Aug. 13. Register at ppymca.org/daycamp. Also register for Flag Football, Volleyball & Soccer. Find out more at ppymca.org/springsports. Financial assistance available. See ad on page 6.

Monument Hill Foundation grants

The Monument Hill Foundation, the charitable arm of the Monument Hill Kiwanis Club, has an annual granting program. Grants are awarded for projects that best advance the foundation mission of supporting youth and community in Tri-Lakes and northern El Paso County. Applications will be accepted from **April 15** through **May 31**. The grant application is available at monumenthillfoundation.org (select "Apply for a Grant") See ad on page 8.

McCord's Garden Center is open

Spring is on its way. The garden center is located at 2720 McShane Dr., Monument. For more information, call 719-375-3573 or visit www.mccordgardens.com. See ad on page 5.

Volunteer for Monumental Impact

Monumental Impact is a nonprofit in the Tri-Lakes area focused on enabling and supporting high school students in technology, engineering, and entrepreneurship with experiences and community. Monumental Impact provides opportunities for students to explore these careers and supports Bearbotics in its current competitive build season. The group was founded in 2020 and is now looking for volunteers to serve on the board of directors and/or to serve as mentors in our community. To find out more, call 719-387-7414, email volunteer@monumentalimpact.org, or visit <https://monumentalimpact.org/community/>.

WMMI seeks volunteers

Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI) has positions for docents/tour guides, front desk, landscaping, and building and maintenance. For more details, contact Loretta, 719-488-0880, or email Volunteer@wmmi.org. See ad on page 20.

Mining Heritage of Colorado Springs

WMMI is celebrating the 150th anniversary of Colorado Springs with "The Mining Heritage of Colorado Springs," through August. The exhibit will highlight the operations of the coal industry, the gold ore processing mills that stood west of the city, the railroads that serviced the coal and mining industries, Winfield Scott Stratton and his legacy, the El Pomar story, Cripple Creek railroad millionaires and their Colorado Springs mansions. 225 North Gate Blvd, Colorado Springs 80921, 719-488-0880. For additional information, <https://wmmi.org/>.

The Sisters of Benet Hill offer spiritual direction, online and by phone

People of all faiths are welcome to grow in their spiritual life through spiritual direction. Sister Therese O'Grady will help you find a spiritual director; phone her at 719-473-8764 or email stherese@benethillmonastery.org. See ad on page 11.

Sisters' Thrift & Boutique is open

The Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery have a shop full of gently used treasures, including clothing and accessories, household items, and small furniture at 8674 N. Union Blvd., Colorado Springs. Store hours are Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. The phone number is 719-282-0316. The shop welcomes donations and volunteers. For more information about Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery, visit www.benethillmonastery.org. See ad on page 11

MVEA board nominations open

The board election will take place during the annual