

# Our Community News

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



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## Local Events

Readers should assume that event information published in this issue is subject to change and information should be confirmed a day or two before the event by calling the information number or checking the organization's website.

See pages 28-31 for event locations and other details of these and many other local events.

- **Monu-Palooza 5.0 Music Festival**, Sun., **Sep. 5**, 1-8 pm.
- **Jazz in the Black Forest Park Pavilion**, Thu., **Sep. 9**, 6:30-8 p.m. Featuring *One More Shot/Gary Kraud*.
- **Lang Community Pig Roast & Client Appreciation**, Fri., **Sep. 10**, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Wine Festival**, Sat., **Sep. 11**, 1-5 p.m.
- **Front Range Open Studios**, Sat.-Sun., **Sep. 11-12**, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- **Final Art Hop for 2021**, Thu., **Sep. 16**, 5-7 p.m.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society meeting**, Thu, **Sep. 16**, 7 p.m. *Pikes Peak Trolleys*
- **Bines and Brews Beer Fest**, Sat., **Sep. 18**, 1-5 pm
- **XCEL Power Pathway Routing Virtual Town Hall**, Thu., **Sep. 23**, 12-1 p.m. or 6-7 p.m. See ad on page 22.
- **Palmer Lake - Service in the Park Day & Creek Week**, Sat., **Sep. 25**, 9 a.m.
- **Fountain Creek Watershed Cleanup Week**, Sat., **Sep. 25-Sun., Oct. 3**
- **Monument Hill Kiwanis Empty Bowls Dinner & Silent Auction**, Wed., **Sep. 29**, 5-7:30 p.m.
- **Wreaths Across America**, Fri - Sun, **Oct. 1 - 3**
- **Front Range Maker's Market**, Sat.-Sun., **Oct. 9-10**.
- **100+ Women Who Care Bi-Annual Meeting**, Wed., **Oct. 20**, 5:30 p.m.

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## Circulation

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Monument Board of Trustees, Aug. 16

## Conexus service plan denied after hundreds protest



**Above:** Monument residents made their voices heard at the Aug. 16 Board of Trustees meeting. A controversial service plan for the Conexus property was eventually denied by the board after trustees listened to hours of public comments. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

By Allison Robenstein

The Monument Board of Trustees met at the Family of Christ Lutheran Church for its Aug. 16 meeting to make space for residents who wished to speak against the Conexus service plan. It was debated late into the night and ultimately denied.

Town Clerk Laura Hogan announced Trustee Jamie Unruh's vacant seat after she resigned on Aug. 2.

### Conexus Commercial Metropolitan District service plan denied

The board heard a request for the Conexus Commercial Metropolitan District service plan after it was continued from the Aug. 2 meeting. Town Hall couldn't accommodate all the people who wished to speak, so the request was continued to this meeting at the church. Alas, even this space was too small, with many people standing in the back of the church and even outdoors. There were 110 remote users logged on to the Webex meeting services. Several times, Mayor Don Wil-

son had to ask the audience to follow decorum because they became loud, even swearing at speakers.

The Conexus property is 169 acres along Old Denver Road. The service plan is the financing mechanism used by developers to pay for infrastructure in a new parcel. In this case, a bond of \$32 million was being requested. Of that, \$22 million would have been requested to cover construction of the sewer, water, and drainage, as well as streets, signage, and landscaping. Then, \$10 million would be used for operation and maintenance of the district. This might include attorney fees, document submission to the state, etc. Those who buy property, whether it be commercially or residentially owned, pay the bond back as mills levied against the property. This service plan includes 33 mills for this project. However, there are other existing districts, such as Triview Metropolitan District. All of these combined would make 137.439 mills levied. The existing mills levied on the property

MONUMENT (Cont. on 2)

Donala Water and Sanitation District, Aug. 19

## Radium level prompts corrective response

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

The Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board met on Aug. 19 to discuss the implications of a recent notification that its water system exceeds the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) maximum contaminant level (MCL) for radium. The board also heard a financial report, a manager's report, and an operational report.

Following the meeting, the board went into executive session to discuss water rights offers.

### Board strategizes to reduce radium

General Manager Jeff Hodge told the board that on July 23 the district was notified that tests of the district's water showed an average of 6.7 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) of radium over the last year, exceeding the CDPHE's limit of five pCi/L. The district was required to notify

customers of this measurement, Hodge said.

Hodge explained that standards for radium in drinking water varied around the world. In most places the upper limit is about 25 pCi/L, and that is the standard used by the World Health Organization.

The district's wells will be individually tested for radionuclides so that more water can be pumped from the wells with the least radium, Hodge said. In addition, the staff is looking into a radium removal process using hydrous manganese oxide (HMO), which is already being used by the Triview Metropolitan District, DWSD's neighbor to the north. Triview's HMO upgrade cost a couple thousand dollars, according to Hodge, and DWSD staff has already visited Triview to understand the HMO process.

Hodge said the district's surface wa-

DONALA (Cont. on 6)

## Monument woman's 9/11 memories still strong 20 years after Ground Zero work

By Michael Weinfeld

It's the smell she still can't shake.

Twenty years after 9/11, Sharon Williams says, "I still have the smell in my head."

Williams volunteered at Ground Zero for 2½ weeks, surrounded by the smell of death, dust, and destruction.

Williams, a volunteer for *Our Community News*, has lived in Monument since 1976. We originally discussed her experience during an interview for Monument's 140<sup>th</sup> birthday. We recently continued our discussion.

Williams vividly remembers when the twin towers fell. She was in Iowa visiting her family.

She felt she could be of service having had Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) training and experience helping firefighters in Colorado. But she also had a unique talent: She knew how to relieve the physical stress of the search dogs that were working around the clock looking for survivors and remains.

Williams got rides from firefighters and members of law enforcement who were also heading East. One ride led to another. She never had to hitchhike.

She reached New York City in three days, arriving while the rubble was still smoldering, a scene she describes as "overwhelmingly jolting." Williams was surprised by how quiet it was. The sounds of the city were missing. There weren't even any birds.

Williams thought she'd be working with first responders. But after an extensive security check, she was assigned to the Veterinary Medical Assistance Team (VMAT). Williams had been among the first in the country to be certified in treatment-based canine massage. She had completed a two-year program provided through the Boulder College of Massage Therapy and Colorado State University Veterinary School of Medicine. This was followed by extensive training in FEMA protocol for emergency canine response support services.

But the massage program was so new, the veterinarians at Ground Zero were unfamiliar with it and told Wil-

9/11 (Cont. on 2)



Sharon Williams  
Photo by Michael Weinfeld.