

Our Community News

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



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Issue #259 — Volume 22 Number 10 — Saturday, October 1, 2022

Free

**OCN needs
your help!
See page 28**

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.

- **Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day**, Sat., Oct. 1, 9 am
- **WMMI Miners' Pumpkin Patch**, every Saturdays starting Oct 1., 9 am - 4 pm
- **Heartsaver CPR/AED and First Aid Training**, Register before Oct. 5
- **Grow your business workshop**, Wed., Oct. 5, 8:30 am-3 pm.
- **Water Lantern Festival at Fox Run Park**, Sat., Oct. 8, 4:30-8:30pm
- **Crafts Plus Fair**, Sat., Oct.8, Peyton
- **Empty bowls dinner and silent auction**, Wed., Oct. 12, 5-7:30 pm
- **MVEA member appreciation days**, lunch and pie, Wed.-Thu., Oct 12-13
- **Masakazu Ito guitar concert**, Sat., Oct. 15, 6 pm
- **Tri-Lakes Monument radio Association introductory amateur ham radio license class**, Sat., Oct. 15 - 22
- **100+ Women Who Care**, Wed., Oct. 19, 5 pm
- **Our Community News mailing day**, Thu., Oct. 27, approx. 9 am-2 pm. Information on page 28.
- **YMCA 5K race: Creepy crawl 5K**, Sat., Oct. 29
- **MVEA High Schoolers Win a Summer Trip contest**. Deadline Nov. 10

In this issue

Monument News 1-5
School District 38 News 1, 5-11
Palmer Lake News 11-13
Fire District News 13-17
Water & San District News 17-21
County News 21-22
NEPCO News 22-23
Weather 23
Letters 23-24
Columns 24-26
Snapshots 26-28
Notices and Calendar 28-31
OCN Information 28, 31-32

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Tim Watkins Memorial ride, Sept. 15



Article and photos by Steve Pate

On Sept. 15 five years ago, Tim Watkins rode his mountain bike into an area he loved near Mount Herman and Limbaugh Canyon. He did not return, and his family became worried. The following day, El Paso County Search and Rescue organized search teams and on Sept. 17 his remains were found partially buried off-trail. He had been shot.

Watkins is well-known to the Tri-Lakes mountain-biking community and his contribution to local trail building and maintenance was exceptional.

Last month, his family and friends gathered at the Tim Watkins Memorial site next to the Palmer Lake Library on Saturday, Sept. 17. Watkins's wife Ginger, his daughter Arielle, and his brother Da-

vid shared memories of their good times with Tim. After the gatherings in Palmer Lake, many biked south on the Santa Fe Trail, a few taking a side trip through the new Santa Fe Open Space, to the Trails End Taproom in Monument to continue sharing their feelings and memories of Watkins and to remember that no one has been held accountable for Watkins's death in the public eye.

The consensus among those attending the memorial is that someone must know what happened. The goal now is to hold an annual event on Sept. 17 to keep this unsolved crime in the public consciousness until someone comes forward with information that will lead to the person(s) who killed Tim.

For those who visit the Tim Watkins

Memorial in Palmer Lake (shown in the inset photo above), you'll notice a bike frame, a likeness of a red-tailed hawk, and other items. Jeff Tessier, who custom-built the bike Watkins rode on his last ride, contributed the scaled-down replica bike frame, and he and Rob Meeker and Meeker's son, Rob, created the hawk.

Family and friends hope that anyone who has information relevant to this tragic event will come forward and contact local law enforcement. The family also hopes that the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, with its considerable resources, will get involved.

*Steve Pate may be contacted at
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Monument Board of Trustees, Sept. 6 and 19

Developers clash with neighbors; trustees frustrated after planners quit

By Chris Jeub

The Monument Board of Trustees met Sept. 6 and 19. Police Chief Sean Hemingway swore in Police Officer Kristina DeRienzo, and trustees discussed a building moratorium. Many ordinances and resolutions were discussed and voted upon.

Moratorium discussed

The idea of a development moratorium for the Town of Monument stirred discussion among the board members, the town manager and lawyer, and community members, but included a legal threat from Classic Homes, a major housing de-

veloper in the area.

Town Manager Mike Foreman shared the employment limitations resulting from two planners recently leaving—Planning Director Nina Ruiz and Planner Debbie Flynn. Ruiz left for other

MONUMENT (Cont. on 2)

Monument Academy School Board, Sept. 1, 8, and 13

COO resigns; board fills vacancy and considers MLO

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board held two special meetings and one regular meeting in September. On Sept. 1 the board held a forum for candidates to fill its vacant position. On Sept. 8 the board selected a candidate for the

vacancy, discussed the D38 mill levy override (MLO) issue, and heard reports. Finally, on Sept. 13 the board held a special meeting to go into executive session where they discussed the resignation of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) Merlin Holmes.

COO Holmes resigns

The board called a special meeting on Sept. 13 at 9 a.m. to go into executive session "to discuss personnel matters with prior notice to [an] individual employee

MA (Cont. on 5)