

# Our Community News

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



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Issue #271 — Volume 23 Number 10 — Saturday, October 7, 2023

Free

Visit [OCN.ME](http://OCN.ME)  
on the web.  
We now have  
audio posted  
for many of the  
recent articles  
and videos for some events.



## 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 25-27 for event locations and other details of these and many other local events.

- OCN mailing days, Thu., Oct. 5 & Nov. 2, approx. 9 am-2 pm.
- Pikes Peak Brewing Company Pop-up Smokehouse, every Fri., & Sat. until it's gone. See ad on page 2.
- Romance at the Chautauqua, play, Fri. & Sun., Oct 6 & 8.
- WMMI Miner's pumpkin patch, every Sat. in Oct. See ad on page 9.
- Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day, Sat., Oct. 7, 9 am
- Meet your firefighters event, Sat., Oct. 7, 11-2 pm.
- PTSD: What You See, Feel, Do About it, Sun., Oct. 8, 1-3 p.m.
- MVEA Member appreciation day, Wed., Oct. 11, 11 am-1 pm.
- Annual pumpkin giveaway! Sat., Oct. 14, 10 am-2 pm.
- Kiwanis Fundraiser wine and dining, Sun., Oct. 15. 1-4 pm. See ad on page 3.
- Lifting Spirits Going Out of Business Sale, Mon.-Thu., Oct. 16-26. See ad on page 8.
- Love Shop Restyle Your Fur Event, Mon.-Tue., Oct. 16-17. See ad on page 8.
- 100+ Women Who Care Bi-Annual Meeting, Wed., Oct. 18, 5 pm.
- D38 Fundraiser Dream Team vs Harlem Wizards, Wed., Oct. 18, 7-9 pm. See ad on page 9.
- AARP Drivers Safety Class, Thu., Oct. 26, 12 - 4 pm
- St. Peter Catholic School Trunk or Treat, Fri., Oct. 27, 5-7 pm.
- YMCA 5K Creepy crawl, Sat., Oct. 28. See ad on page 6.
- Front Range Maker's Market, Sat.-Sun., Oct. 28 - 29. See ad on page 28.

Right: A powered paraglider flies over Monument Rock and the Mount Herman Trail in the early morning Sept. 8. Photo by Chris Jeub.



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## Circulation

Print Run: 23,480  
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## Fox Run Regional Park Lantern Festival, Sept. 22



Above: El Paso County Community Services hosted the September Water Lantern Festival at Fox Run Regional Park on Sept. 22. The festival was dog friendly with a dog costume contest and featured lights, music, food trucks, and more. As people gathered along the shoreline of the pond, the moon rose and at dusk they launched their decorated lanterns. Ryan Dorough, Recreation and Cultural Services program planner, said it was very successful lantern launch. For more events at area El Paso County parks, go to <http://communityservices.elpasoco.com/parks-and-recreation/>. Photo by Marlene Brown.

El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Aug. 29 and Sept. 14, 26, and 28

## Approvals for the Flying Horse North service plan and increased parking at Pumpkin Patch

By Helen Walklett

During September, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved the Flying Horse North (FHN) service plan with a total debt cap of \$400 million, the largest of any El Paso County metro district. It also heard a special use application from Colorado Pumpkin Patch to increase the allowed parking numbers at its pumpkin patch. The commissioners also made decisions relating to a Tri-Lakes area property and received a Tri-Lakes Cares update.

### Flying Horse North service plan

At the Sept. 28 BOCC land use meeting, the commissioners voted to approve the service plan for FHN Metropolitan Districts Nos. 1-5.

The application came to the BOCC from the Aug. 3 El Paso County Planning Commission hearing with a 5-3 vote recommending approval. The commissioners opposed at that meeting questioned the district's financial ability to discharge the proposed indebtedness on a reasonable basis.

The 910-acre area covered by the plan is the property for which a revised sketch plan was approved in November 2022. See <https://www.ocn.me/v22n12.htm#epbocc>.

Attorney Russ Dykstra, partner,



Above: Arguments were made both for and against the Colorado Pumpkin Patch's proposed increase of parking space to accommodate its growing popularity at the Sept. 7 El Paso County Planning Commission meeting. The Planning Commission voted it down, but the El Paso Board of County Commissioners voted on Sept. 14 to allow the increase in parking as well as open a discussion to perhaps allow access to Highway 105. Photo by Chris Jeub.

Spencer Fane, representing the applicants, said they had taken the Planning Commission's concerns very seriously and had revised the financial plan after further analysis, reducing the esti-

ated home values for the hotel and custom lot single-family homes to \$3.5 million and the branded flats to \$2.5

BOCC (Cont. on 2)

Monument Fire District, Sept. 27

## Fleet purchase approved; budget impact of Nov. ballot items; community paramedic proposed

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Monument Fire District (MFD) meeting on Sept. 27, the board approved two new engines, received the first presentation of the proposed 2024 budget, and heard about a proposed community paramedic concept.

President Mike Smaldino was excused.

### Two engines approved

Secretary Jason Buckingham requested the board approve resolution 2023-05 of the Board of Directors of a lease-purchase agreement with PNC Equipment Finance LLC for the financing of two new Pierce Velocity Pumper Engines and authorizing the execution and delivery of them. See [www.ocn.me/v23n9.htm#mfd](http://www.ocn.me/v23n9.htm#mfd).

v23n9.htm#mfd.

Division Chief of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner said that nothing in the original proposal presented at the August board meeting had changed, and the delivery is estimated to be in 2025. The total for the two engines is estimated to be about \$1.712 million.

The board approved the resolution, 6-0.

### 2024 budget presentation

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs presented the first look at the proposed 2024 budget and said:

- The county assessor provided the assessed valuation numbers for the property tax revenue for 2024,

with and without the passing of Proposition HH. (Proposition HH is a question on the November ballot proposing a statewide bill that would implement property tax reductions and allow the state to retain and spend excess state revenue.)

- If Resolution HH fails, the state Legislature is already working on another tax measure for 2024. Initiative 50 would put a 4% cap on revenue and continue to impact special districts.
- The district estimates about \$15.1 million in property tax revenue

MFD (Cont. on 7)