

Happy New Year! from the all-volunteer staff at

Our Community News

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

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Free

Visit 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 21-23 for event locations and other details of these and many other local events.

- OCN mailing days, Thu., Jan. 4 & Feb. 1, approx. 7-9:30 am
- Palmer Lake Outdoor Classic Youth hockey camp, foundation game event, Sat., Jan. 6, 9-11 am. Adult Tourney, Sun., Jan. 7, 3:30-7 pm
- The Love Shop: Restyle Your Furs, Wed.-Thu., Jan. 10-11. See ad on page 10.
- FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) Qualifier, Sat., Jan 13, 7 am-5 pm
- Palmer Lake Historical Society Annual Potluck Supper and Membership Meeting, Thu. Jan. 18, 6 pm; (doors open at 5:30 pm).
- NEPCO meeting, Sat., Jan. 20, 10 am-12 pm. Lean about HOA issues.
- Annual Broomball Tournament on frozen Palmer Lake, Sat., Jan. 20, 2-4:30 pm.
- St. Peter Catholic School open house, Sun., Jan. 28, 8 am-3 pm. See ad on page 2.
- Ham radio technician license 20 hour course, introductory session in person Sat., Feb. 17, 1-3 p.m.



See pages 18, 19, 20, and 24 for photos of local holiday festivities.

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Hazel Miller at TLCA, Dec. 16



Above: On Dec. 16, Hazel Miller and her backup band *The Collective* gifted an energetic musical evening to the near capacity audience at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA). Miller, a 2023 inductee into the Colorado Music Hall of Fame, encouraged the audience, "If we play anything you want to dance to, get yourself up." Numerous audience members took her up on that suggestion throughout the evening as Miller and the band weaved holiday, rhythm and blues, and other genres during their lengthy one set performance. The set song list included *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*, *Let the Good Times Roll*, Keb' Mo's *She Just Wants to Dance*, *Please Come Home for Christmas*, Stevie Wonder's *Signed, Sealed, Delivered*, John Mayer's *Stitched Up* and an Aretha Franklin medley of *Chain of Fools/Respect/Freedom*. Photo by David Futey.

Lewis-Palmer District 38 Board of Education, Dec. 5 and 11

Board installs members, discusses four-day week and fall surveys, and announces departure of superintendent

By Harriet Halbig

Following certification of November election results, the Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education held a special meeting to administer oaths of office and elect officers as required by state statute.

Newly elected members of the board are Dr. Patti Shank and Todd Brown. Continuing members are Kris Norris, Ron Schwarz, and Tiffney Upchurch.

Following the oaths of office, Upchurch was nominated to serve as president and Norris as vice president. There were no other nominations for the two offices, and they were elected on a voice vote. Shank was elected secretary and Schwarz was elected treasurer.

Upchurch then said that Chief

Business Officer Brett Ridgway would serve as assistant treasurer and Vicki Wood would serve as assistant secretary.

Upchurch then appointed Brown as director at large.

Members of the board then signed affidavits of confidentiality.

Following the special meeting, a work session was held to receive a report from Schneider Electric following the end of the construction phase of its program to reduce energy and utility costs for the district and to improve security measures. To view the PowerPoint of this report, please see boarddocs under the Board of Education tab on the lewispalmer.org website.

D38 BOE (Cont. on 2)

Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, Nov. 29, Dec. 14 and 21

Town attorney steps back; 2024 budget adopted

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans
The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees (PLBOT) held a special meeting and an executive session on Dec. 21 to address reports in the media that Town Attorney Matt Krob was facing sexual assault, third-degree assault, and child abuse charges from an arrest in 2022.

At its regular meeting on Dec. 14, the board adopted a budget for 2024. In its capacity as the local licensing authority, the board considered an application to transfer

a liquor license. The board held a public hearing to consider an application for a conditional use permit in a Convenience Commercial zone. Parks Commission Chair Reid Wiecks gave the board an update on recent progress on the trail and bridge work underway at the Elephant Rock property. The board considered several resolutions and ordinances. Finally, the board held an executive session following its Dec. 14 meeting.

PALMER LAKE (Cont. on 7)

El Paso County Planning Commission, Dec. 7

Access plan for Hwy 83 addresses safety

By Helen Walklett

At the Dec. 7 El Paso County Planning Commission meeting, the commissioners received a presentation of the proposed Access Control Plan (ACP) for the stretch of Highway 83 from its junction with Powers Boulevard to County Line Road, a length of almost 10 miles.

The county's Department of Public Works, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the City of Colorado Springs have worked together to develop the plan. CDOT led the work because it owns and maintains the corridor.

Future traffic volumes along this portion of highway are expected to increase in the range of 17% to 86% by 2045. Without changes, this increase is expected to result in increased delays, congestion, pollution, and crashes. The ACP is a long-range plan aimed at improving safety and mobility.

Arthur Gonzalez, CDOT, explained that the plan optimizes the location, number, and types of access to the highway to improve safety by reducing the number of locations where all types of road users might come into conflict. It provides adequate access for adjacent properties while better using the local road system. It is also a tool to help the county, the city, and CDOT make access decisions during development and redevelopment, and streamlines the access permitting process.

Gonzalez said there are currently 72 individual access points along this section of highway. Thirty percent are public streets and 70% are private driveways and most allow for full movement, meaning there are no turn restrictions, allowing potentially dangerous situations to arise. Some access points could be closed or consolidated under the plan, but no changes are currently planned.

The plan was developed with public input, and Gonzalez said it addresses concerns raised by stakeholders. These include speeding, noise, and number of large trucks, lack of turn lanes, safety around the Stagecoach Road intersection, and a need for more traffic signals. Although the plan does not address speed limits, Jason Nelson, CDOT, said that to address excessive speeding instead of just committing to signalizing intersections, CDOT was committing to roundabouts.

Nelson said, "There's a lot of benefits to installing roundabouts on 83. It's a residential corridor. Commercial is starting to get sprinkled in there but we're hoping to get ahead of that and maintain that residential feel so a bunch of roundabouts I think will divert truck drivers, I really do." Nelson said a roundabout at the intersection Highway 83 and County Line Road had been designed but there was currently no funding earmarked for such a project.

The plan itself does not identify specific projects. Changes would come only if a problem with traffic flow or safety came to light, properties were developed or redeveloped.

EPC PC (Cont. on 2)