

recent passage of Senate Bill 191, which bases a large part of teacher evaluation on the achievement of students, teachers are under pressure to emphasize the year-to-year growth of each individual. This results in reluctance on the part of some teachers to increase inclusiveness in the general education classroom, Fleury said.

Committee Chair Suzanne Faber said studies have shown that some districts have successfully included special education students in the classroom and that test

scores have improved as a result. She agreed to provide some documentation at the next meeting.

Fleury said that there will be a change in labels for those with disabilities in the next few years. One major change will be that those with conduct disorders will no longer be eligible for special education services.

She also announced that the district has received a three-year grant for Response to Intervention program at Palmer Lake Elementary School and Lewis Palmer High

school. This grant includes funds to pay substitutes so that teachers may attend training.

The Special Education Advisory Committee meets at 6:30 on the second Wednesday of each month at the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be on Nov. 14.

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Monument Board of Trustees, Oct. 15

Retiring police officer honored for 34 years of service



Above: On Oct. 15, the Town of Monument honored police officer Kevin Swenson (center) for over 34 years of service. Chief Jake Shirk (right) presented a framed citation and Lt. Steve Burk presented a shadow box to Swenson. Photo by Jim Kendrick

- Kevin's dedication to the Police Department was unwavering and he could always be counted on.
- He has a kind heart and would be willing to give the shirt off his back to help someone in need.
- Kevin was known to constantly have a smile on his face even when he was in pain and always had a kind word to say.

Some of Swenson's remarks were:

- After his service in the Air Force he became an emergency medical technician for E&E ambulance service and a lifeguard at Monument Lake.
- He listed many of the technological changes that occurred during his 34 years, such as no longer timing speeders with a stop watch.
- I'm really glad I worked here for the past 34 years.

The board recessed for a reception for Swenson, his family, friends, and colleagues.

Trustees' comments

Palmer Ridge High School student Brianna McCuen of the Palmer Ridge Student Council said she would participate in this board meeting as a nonvoting member because her alternate, Palmer Ridge student Eric Marter, was unable to attend this meeting. McCuen and Marter were selected to attend Board of Trustees meetings throughout the Palmer Ridge school year to provide a student perspective on local matters. Marter is the primary representative in the fall and McCuen the primary in the spring.

Trustee Jeff Kaiser noted to Director of Development Services Tom Kassawara that some new Monument residents had expressed concerns about stormwater drainage near their new homes in Promontory Pointe and would pass their paperwork and contact information to him after the meeting so Kassawara could provide a town response.

Public comments

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District firefighter Mike Keough, representing the Monument Firefighters Association, gave a briefing on the 3-mill tax increase initiative the district placed on the November ballot as question 5C. Raising the current property tax mill levy from 8.5 mills to 11.5 mills would be a 35.3 percent tax increase.

Some of Keough's presentation remarks, summarized, were:

- The district has 36 full-time firefighters, three stations, and two ambulances out of Stations 1 and 2.
- The district budget depends on property taxes collected, which are falling with declining assessed values.
- If 5C doesn't pass, the 2013 district budget will be less than the 2008 budget.
- Starting in 2009, the district had to make substantial cuts to crucial line items.
- He worked proactively to make those cuts without affecting any response or anything the public can see.
- Up until now the district has been able to do that by cutting administration costs, firefighter training, uniforms, station maintenance, vehicle maintenance—delaying those things and not doing preventive maintenances on apparatus and stations.
- Hopefully the housing market would return, and it would be a seamless transition that the public wouldn't realize at all.
- That's unfortunately not the case, and the next cut in 2013, which the board has resolved as the only way to balance the budget and make ends meet, is to close Station 3 and to lay off three firefighters. That's obviously not something anybody wants to ever see—a reduction of service. That's the last thing the public needs or the firefighters want. So we're looking for as much support as we can.
- We're trying to make a big effort with our firefighters that are off duty to educate people about what's

By Jim Kendrick

On Oct. 15, the Monument Board of Trustees and Police Department honored Officer Kevin Swenson for his 34 years of service to the Town of Monument at a retirement ceremony at the start of the Board of Trustees meeting. Swenson joined the department in January 1978.

Mayor Travis Easton announced that he had received a letter of resignation from Trustee Rick Squires. Easton noted that applications for appointment as a replacement trustee are available at the town website: <http://www.townofmonument.net/BOTVacancy.html>. The minimum town residence requirement is one year.

Swenson honored

Chief Jake Shirk and Lt. Steve Burk presented Swenson with an impressive shadow box and a plaque to commemorate his retirement. Some of the comments Shirk made to Swenson were:

- Living the life of a law enforcement officer is no easy accomplishment. Constantly rotating schedules, loss of much needed sleep, working on holidays, missing precious time with family members, court appearances on scheduled days off, and sometimes less than appreciative clientele are but a few of the challenges that face the men and women of law enforcement.
- Not only did Officer Swenson answer that call, he did so for a very long time.
- He has been a great friend to all and is well liked by his co-workers and the citizens he has so selflessly served.

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