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Our Community News

Reporting on community issues in Monument, Palmer Lake, and the surrounding Tri-Lakes area.

Volume 2 Number 1 — Saturday, January 5, 2002

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Tri-Lakes Olympic Torch events planned for January 31

By Roy Getchell

Chairman, Tri-Lakes Olympic Torch Committee

In what promises to be one of the most memorable events for the Tri-Lakes community, the Olympic Torch will make a stop in Monument on January 31. In commemoration of the torch passing through the Tri-Lakes area, celebrations are planned in Palmer Lake and Monument.

Festivities will begin at 9 am in front of the Palmer Lake Town Hall. The celebration will move to the Monument Safeway parking lot at 11 am. Both venues will feature local entertainment and activities designed to honor our country, community, and the local torchbearers. Woody Woodworth will be the Master of Ceremonies and local musician and artist Joe Bohler will play keyboard music. A preschool class from the Sundance Dance Studio will perform a patriotic dance, and the famed and fabulous Safeway Grocery Cart Drill Team will perform one of their routines. Local schools will participate in various ways and Brookhart's Ace Hardware Store will provide 100 little American flags to add to the patriotic spirit. Members of Tri-Lakes Sertoma will help along the parade route.

The torch relay will begin at 1 pm, make its way from Safeway through the heart of Monument on the

Old Denver Highway. A "Post Torch Rally" will commence at 2:45 pm in the Lewis-Palmer High School auditorium.

Names of the local torchbearers will be released in mid-January. Each torchbearer will carry the torch a fifth of a mile before passing it on. After the torch leaves Colorado Springs on February 1, it will be carried through Manitou Springs, Woodland Park, Divide, Florissant, Lake George, Johnson Village, Buena Vista, Leadville, Minturn, and Vail. On Feb. 2, it will be carried through Eagle, Gypsum, Glenwood Springs, Carbondale, Aspen, Rifle, and Grand Junction. On Feb. 3, it will go to Arches National Park in Utah before heading to its final destination, Salt Lake City, site of the 2002 Winter Games.

The torch began its 13,500 mile journey from Atlanta on December 4th. It will be carried through 46 states, passed by 7,200 torchbearers who were randomly chosen from a pool of over 200,000 volunteers. The act of passing such an inspirational baton, hand to hand, across our nation, serves as a reminder of the connection that we as Americans share. We hope you will attend one or all of the special events that will take place in our community on January 31.

Forest Lakes hearing tentatively scheduled for January 22

The EL Paso County Planning Commission hearing on the Forest Lakes Residential Project has been tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, January 22, 9 am, County Building, 27 E. Vermijo, 3rd floor hearing room.

If the planning commission arrives at a recommendation for approval or denial at that hearing, the Board of County Commissioners will then hold a hearing and make a final decision. Opinions and comments concerning this project should be sent to the El Paso County Planning Department (Attn: Carl Schueler), 27 East Vermijo Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80903.

According to Schueler, assistant director of planning, the project may not be heard if planning staff cannot resolve remaining transportation-related issues in time.

The proposal, based on a sketch plan approved about 15 years ago, calls for 467 dwelling units on approximately 990 acres located at the western end of Baptist Road, primarily on the former Beaver Creek Ranch. The land is currently zoned for five-acre parcels. The proposed preliminary plan and rezoning request calls for a clustered design with areas of urban density coupled with open space and recreational use of two lakes.

Further information on the Forest Lakes Residential Project is at www.ourcommunitynews.org. *Our Community News* carried the story "December hearing planned for controversial Forest Lakes project" in our November 2 edition.

January meetings: important opportunity to air concerns about draft Monument comp plan

By Chris Pollard

More than two hundred years ago, Ben Franklin wrote in *Poor Richard's Almanac*, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The update to the 1983 Monument Comprehensive Plan could serve as an ounce of prevention to help avoid future clashes like the recent fights over the proposed K&C RV dealership and the concrete batch plant proposals or it might result in many more battles. The content of the revised plan will be addressed in special meetings January 8, 14, and 16.

Some portions of the 1983 Monument Comprehensive Plan are just now being implemented with the extension of 2nd Street to the Highway 105 bridge over I-25 and the north-south connection between Beacon Lite Road and Old Denver Highway. The 1983 plan also provided for the Santa Fe Trail running through the town along the old railroad bed. The 1983 plan didn't address the K&C RV dealership parcel; however, it did

show the parcels on north Washington Street north of Highway 105 as light industrial, which would not allow heavy industrial uses such as concrete batch plants.

Work on the new comprehensive plan started nearly 1½ years ago. In an effort to develop a collective vision of the future of the Town of Monument, many meetings were held starting in June 2000. Attendance included people from within the town and from the surrounding community.

The effort was derailed during the recall effort and now appears headed in a different direction than previously discussed.

Before the September 11th recall election in Monument, the consultant from Community Matters, Steve Hebert, said, "Of all the towns on the Front Range, yours has something special. I hope it is not lost during development as many other communities did as they

(Continued on page 2)

Look for our next issue
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Concerns about Monument comp plan

(Continued from page 1)

grew.” Hebert is no longer with the planning effort. The new Community Matters consultant, Barbara Cole, replaces such talk with, “You have to accept big-box stores and I am an expert in the area of getting small communities to accept them.” The current document reflects Cole’s views and raises the prospect that the unique identity of the area may be lost if such views are integrated into the final plan for future development.

Former Monument Mayor Leon Tenney notes the following as some of the issues raised by the latest Future Land Use map:

- 1. The area along north Washington Street where two concrete batch plants were proposed to be built: Under the 1983 plan, this area was shown as “Light Industrial” recommending against such heavy industrial developments as concrete plants. The draft revised plan makes this area “Planned Industrial” once again allowing the possibility of heavy industrial projects near residential areas.
- 2. The area near Monument Lake: Within the 1983 plan, this area was projected as a recreational area to enable the public to enjoy one of the town’s greatest assets, Monument Lake. Now the Land Use Map projects the major open area to the south should become a residential neighborhood and the adjoining property with a residential house to the north is projected to become a park. In short: The current vacant land becomes houses and the residential land becomes vacant parkland.
- 3. The I-25 corridor: During many public meetings in January and February 2001, the consensus was to preserve the character of the historic downtown and the views of the mountains to the west. The clear preference was a balanced community of commercial, residential, and light industrial. There was a consensus at the meetings that whatever was built in these areas, particularly to the west of I-25, should be carefully landscaped, with large setbacks from the freeway and Santa Fe Trail. The buildings were to be varied in height and not so tall as to hinder views of the Front Range. Heavy industrial plants along either side of I-



- 25, as permitted by current zoning, were generally viewed as undesirable. In the new draft plan, heavy industrial uses are encouraged. If developed according to the draft plan, the views could be spoiled and the unique identity of the town and community lost.
- 4. The area north of Highway 105 and east of Woodmoor Drive: Currently most of this is undeveloped but recently, in part based on the 1999 County Tri-Lakes Comprehensive Plan, an area west of Knollwood Drive was rezoned from RR-3 (5+ acre residential) to commercial. The land use map for the draft plan shows it as open space.
- 5. The farm south of Highway 105 immediately adjacent to South Woodmoor: Currently home to grazing cattle, the draft plan shows its future use as a business park. Those who live adjacent to the current farm have probably not considered this possibility.
- 6. The area immediately to the west of the high school. Originally planned for multi-family residential in the draft plan, this has been changed to Planned Industrial. Given the uproar over the RV dealership so close to the school this is bound to raise concerns.

New Monument Mayor Betty Konarski says her top priority is updating Monument’s 1983 comprehensive plan. She was quoted in the November 25 issue of *The Gazette* saying, “We have a great opportunity to create a diverse, lively community... The question is, will Monument create its destiny or just let things happen to it?”

Tenney notes, “This plan will be the blueprint for the town’s future and by way of location the entire Tri-Lakes area, since Monument is literally in the middle. This effort cannot be a thrown-together, developer-friendly plan done at the last minute to satisfy some bureaucratic requirement. This blueprint for our future in the Town of Monument and in the Tri-Lakes community deserves better.”

All Tri-Lakes area residents have a chance to make their views known and get answers to their questions. Meetings on the draft Monument comprehensive plan will be held:

- Tuesday, January 8, 6:30 pm, Creekside Middle School, Leather Chaps Drive in Jackson Creek, Primary topic: Jackson Creek area
- Monday, January 14, 6:30 pm, Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St., Primary topic: Residential neighborhoods west of Interstate 25
- Wednesday, January 16, 6:30 pm, Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St., Primary topic: Downtown and other business areas

Based on comments received at these meetings, Community Matters will revise and finalize the plan. The Monument Planning Commission will then schedule a public hearing to consider adoption of the update as the town’s new comprehensive plan.

Copies of the draft plan are available at Monument Town Hall, 166 Second Street. For further information, call the Monument Planning Department at 481-2954.



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Monument board plans spring completion of Beacon Lite extension, raises concerns about interchange funding, considers trails crossing lights

By Judy Barnes

At the Monument Board of Trustees meeting on December 17, the trustees decided to not open the new Beacon Lite Road extension, from Santa Fe Avenue to 2nd Street, until all sewer work and paving is completed in the spring. To open the road for the winter would cost an additional \$3,800 for temporary striping.

105/I-25 Funds in jeopardy again.

Trustee Glenda Smith made a report on the latest meeting of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments. Due to a \$58 million shortfall in Colorado Department of Transportation funds in Region 2, numerous projects will not be funded or will be cut back. The I-25 interchange in Monument is a possible target for budget cuts, and could possibly be delayed until 2016. The Monument interchange does have high priority, but its status won't be known until March when the state budget is done. Trustee Smith urges residents to contact their state senator, Doug Lamborn (471-1441 or 303-866-4835), and state representative, Lynn Hefley (598-2871 or 303-866-2924).

Baptist Road/Leather Chaps right turn lane completed.

In his Town Manager Rick Sonnenburg reported that the county has completed the westbound right turn lane on Baptist Road at Leather Chaps Drive. He also reported that Monument did not receive GOCO (Great Outdoors Colorado) Grants for Lavelett Park, Dirty Woman Creek Park, or the Monument Skate Park.

Trail crossing light options considered.

The Town of Monument is responsible for providing electrical service for a flashing pedestrian crossing light where the Santa Fe Regional Trail crosses Beacon Lite Road. Mountain View Electric Association has provided quotes for two underground installation options. For option 1, the cost for the installation of the underground electric primary line with a service drop and meter would be \$10,883 plus a deposit of \$1,600 to cover adverse construction conditions. The second option, that includes five mercury vapor streetlights along the new Beacon Lite Road corridor, would cost \$17,745 plus a deposit of \$2,000 for adverse construction conditions. The adverse condition deposit will be refunded to the town if no adverse conditions are encountered during construction. The trustees would like to compare the cost of using solar-powered lights with the costs of the two lighting options proposed by Mountain View. According to Dave Frisch of the town's engineering firm, GMS, Inc., one concern with solar-powered lights is that they are vulnerable to vandalism. Since details about the solar-powered option were not available, the board postponed making a decision about the crossing lights until their meeting January 7.

Villages at Monument Phase I approved.

Other issues on the agenda included a public hearing for the final plat and final site plan for Phase I of the Villages at Monument. Phase I consists of 24 townhomes located off Old Denver Highway. After some dis-

cussion concerning water needs and water rights, Jack Wiepking, of Wiepking Real Estate Investments, LLC, presented a review of the project for the trustees. Trustee Christopher Perry expressed concern about the shingle exteriors. Apparently the same material is used in the development where Perry lives and in the strong winds that are common there, the shingles vibrate noisily. Wiepking assured the trustees that when installed properly, as they would be at Villages, the shingle boards would not be a problem in the wind. The trustees voted unanimously to approve the final plans. The grand opening of Villages is planned for May 2002.

Mouse habitat funding sought.

Town Manager Rick Sonnenburg informed the board that the county was not in a financial position to contribute its share of the costs of some environmental engineering services related to the repair of the Monument Lake Dam. Boyle Engineering Corporation, which is doing the repairs to the dam, has submitted a supplemental invoice charging the town \$76,420 in additional fees for consulting tasks that have arisen as a result of the need for Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse habitat mitigation at the dam site. Trustee Smith suggested the Colorado Division of Wildlife be contacted to investigate availability of funding. The trustees agreed to authorize Boyle Engineering to proceed with the dam repair work and to pursue getting money from the county and the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

Policies adopted.

Other business of the meeting included approval of four new employee policies covering harassment, violence in the workplace, modified duty work program, and seat belts. A motion was also passed approving the anti-profiling policy prepared by Police Chief Joe Kissell.

Municipal Judge Ciccolella was reappointed for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2002.

The board approved the annual agreement with the Humane Society, which costs \$6,400, up from \$6,000.

The board went into executive session at 10:20 to discuss a TABOR-related finance matter, and at 10:30 the meeting was adjourned.

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Palmer Lake Town Council: New fire truck, PLVFD day, streetscape options considered, dog license fee increase

By Judy Barnes

The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting on Thursday, December 13 commenced on a positive note. Fire Trustee Scott Russell announced that the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department has acquired its long-awaited new fire truck and everyone present was invited to go outside to see and climb on the truck. Russell announced that Governor Bill Owens declared December 13, 2001 as Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department Day. Russell presented the town with two flags, a United States flag and the Colorado state flag that had been flown over the state capitol building.

The mood of the meeting began to change when the time arrived for public input on items not on the agenda. Paul Olivier, a Palmer Lake resident and former mayor, expressed his concern about a rumor he'd heard that the Town of Palmer Lake was rescinding its automatic mutual aid agreement for emergency services with the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District. Olivier was concerned because the Tri-Lakes facility is very

close, especially to the south end of town, and would enable quick response time.

Next on the agenda was a presentation of streetscape options, a project of the Colorado Center for Community Development, University of Colorado at Denver. The team addressed solutions to five problems: parking, pedestrian-friendliness and safety, drainage, the need to slow traffic on Highway 105 through Palmer Lake, and unifying the streetscape. They presented three designs that will be explored further by a committee composed of members of the Economic Development Council, trustees, and interested citizens.

The next agenda item of note was a proposal to increase dog-licensing fees. The current fees, which haven't changed since 1978, are \$5 for a spayed or neutered dog and \$15 for a dog that hasn't been spayed or neutered. The proposed fees are \$11 for a spayed or neutered pooch and \$22 for a dog that hasn't been spayed or neutered. Sue Coons and Nicole Murphy complained that proper notice hadn't been given to the citi-

zens of Palmer Lake. Town Clerk Della Gins pointed out that the meeting's agenda had been posted in nine places, including the town office and the post office. Todd Abrahamson suggested that to increase revenue, the town should "...go after speeders on weekends, those people who jeopardize the lives of our ballplayers, instead of raising fees for senior citizens on fixed incomes who have pets." The trustees decided to strive for better publication of fee issues and postponed the decision about a licensing fee increase until the January 10 meeting.

The final agenda item, discussion of ambulance service, also aroused a great deal of public interest and input. As noted in article below, "Board rethinks ambulance contract," the trustees decided to meet with members of the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District Board of Directors and to reconsider their November decision to cancel the ambulance service contract with the Tri-Lakes district.

Board rethinks ambulance contract

By Russ Broshous

At their November 8 meeting, the Palmer Lake Town Council voted to end the town's ambulance service contract with the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District and to use Larkspur's ambulance service instead. The prevailing view seemed to be that the demands of growth in the Tri-Lakes District and the fire district's responsibilities for covering accidents on I-25 made service to Palmer Lake too much of a burden for Tri-Lakes FPD. After concerns were raised about the decision, on December 13, the town council voted to delay the change until after a proposed January joint meeting with the Tri-Lakes FPD Board.

One reason given at the November meeting for the town council's termination of the Tri-Lakes contract was that in the past, the Tri-Lakes FPD did not answer every Palmer Lake call with a qualified paramedic onboard the response vehicle. Larkspur is reportedly willing to commit to doing so and has two crews complete with a paramedic available around the clock.

At the December town council meeting, resident Todd Abrahamson urged reconsideration of the decision, citing as the primary issue slower response from Larkspur than from the Tri-Lakes firehouse. During the discussion, it was also noted that Spruce Mountain Road – the primary

route for traveling from Larkspur to Palmer Lake – is often impassable during the winter months, raising questions about Larkspur's ability to fulfill its contract with the Town.

Palmer Lake resident Paul Olivier also spoke at the December meeting stating that the board's vote to switch to Larkspur service was not in the best interest of the residents of Palmer Lake. He said later he was "...livid that the board would consider such an option as ambulance service from Larkspur."

Tri-Lakes FPD Chief Keith Jensen attended the December meeting and expressed his regret over Palmer Lake's decision to end a 25-year relationship by issuing a letter giving the Tri-Lakes district 30 days notice. He also said that the Tri-Lakes district is not too busy to respond to Palmer Lake's requirements, even with the substantial growth that has occurred in the district and the district's responsibilities for covering I-25. He noted further that the Tri-Lakes FPD is now staffed full-time with certified personnel who can provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) if required. He vowed that the Tri-Lakes district would ensure the availability of an ALS-qualified paramedic on every call if that is what Palmer Lake requires.

Tri-Lakes FPD Board Chairman Oscar Gillespie said later that he totally agrees with Chief Jensen. He went on to say, "Woodmoor-Monument [Fire Protection District], Palmer Lake and our own Tri-Lakes district are now embarked on a joint study to see how we all can provide better emergency service to the area as a whole. This is not the time to be throwing stones at each other." Steve Sery, President of the Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO), seconds Gillespie's sentiments. Sery said, "The study effort and what can come from it are far too important to the Tri-Lakes area to let premature actions of this kind muddy the water. Let's give the study a chance." NEPCO has encouraged the three fire organizations to take part in the joint study to coordinate emergency services planning.

After a heated discussion at the December 13 meeting, the Palmer Lake town council voted to defer contract termination until representatives from the Tri-Lakes and Palmer Lake Boards can meet in January to discuss the matter. According to Palmer Lake Town Clerk Della Gins, "The board felt that all the facts should be put on the table and examined in a cooler atmosphere."



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Controversial 2002 budget and various ordinances adopted at special December 27 Monument board meeting

By George Barnes

At its special meeting December 27th, the Monument Board of Trustees addressed the reliability of the financial data being presented to the trustees that is used to determine the fiscal year 2002 budget. Recent reports have indicated the town has a deficit in its FY2001 spending, although actual money on hand in bank accounts shows a surplus.

According to public comment given by former mayor Leon Tenney (See "Former Monument mayor analyzes budget"), much of the present uncertainty is primarily due to two causes. First, an audit of FY2000 has not been completed and therefore previous data cannot be counted on to form an accurate FY2002 budget. Second, some fees and expenses are missing from the report and they are therefore not being counted. Mr. Tenney stated that once these factors are considered, the town may actually end up having a surplus of funds rather than deficit.

John Dominowski, a resident of El Paso County and a property owner in Monument, addressed the board and said he is worried the town does not have the financial wherewithal to pay for the FY2002 budget. He based this feeling on his review of the town's income and expenditures going back to 1999. At the very least, he noted, the history of recent tax revenue numbers should be in question. Despite concern expressed by the trustees about the proposed FY2002 budget plan, they unanimously passed Ordinances 32 and 33, which adopted the \$7,595,718.00 budget and appropriated money for various funds. Trustee Chris Perry observed that the new spending ordinances necessarily remained subject to future

amendment. Trustee Smith requested that provisions be made to give the board a monthly list of checks paid by the town. It was agreed that this would be done at the first board meeting each month.

Also at issue was a request for payment of unexpected expenditures incurred during recent repair work to the town hall. Mr. Ray Harness, of Specialty Resources, Ltd., submitted a second change order of \$3,500 for additional roof repairs conducted as a result of previously undetected damage. Trustees Byron Glenn and Perry pointed out that the board had not been kept informed of the need for the additional payments and that it was worrisome to have such things presented after the fact, especially since a first change order of \$1,550 had already been approved. The Assistant Town Manager, Mr. Mike Davenport, and the Town Clerk, Ms. Anne Holliday, noted that Mr. Harness enjoyed an excellent and long standing record with the town, and that the requested sum of \$3,500 was legitimate and warranted. Trustee Glenn made a compromise motion to pay Mr. Harness \$2,450, which represented full payment for materials and half payment for the additional labor cost. The motion carried by a vote of five to two, with Mayor Betty Konarski and Trustee Ed DeLaney opposed. The opponents of the motion said they felt the full amount requested by Mr. Harness was justified.

Resolution 50, unanimously adopted, authorized fee increases for certain venues that were actually costing the town money. Specifically, it was pointed out that the previous fee of \$25 for rental of the town hall did not cover the approximately \$32 cost of the custodian hired for the

event. Consequently, this rate was raised to \$35. The resolution also affects various Planning Department development fees.

Police Chief Joe Kissell requested an ordinance that would allow the Police Department to ticket individuals who drive onto roadways that have been closed for construction. He said that the town currently does not have any means of enforcing such unsafe driving. Town Ordinance 34-2001 was unanimously passed by roll call, with the discretionary penalty for driving past a "road closed" sign now being a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or one year in county jail.

A new town ordinance that would make it easier for future town officials to research and identify property-related concerns was passed unanimously by roll call and given Ordinance number 35-2001. Henceforth, situations involving the conditions of approval for property development and the legal descriptions of such property will be given a number based on the ordinance that allows the development.

The board finished the evening by passing several routine items that Trustee Faye Elbaum suggested would have been better considered during the normal scheduled meetings. Mayor Konarski replied that she felt the requirement for the many special meetings to date have essentially been due to the town's budgetary quandary. Nonetheless, the Mayor acknowledged Trustee Elbaum's concern and requested that it be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

A motion by Trustee Elbaum for adjournment was made at 8:10 p.m. and was passed unanimously.

Planning Commission recommends approval of Parish education center and Jackson Creek subdivision

By Lowell Morgan


At the meeting of the Monument Planning Commission December 12, public hearings were held on two items: (1) the final plat and a combined preliminary plat/site plan for St. Peter's Parish Education Center at 1st Street and Washington Street and (2) the 71 lot Homestead North at Jackson Creek final plat, combined preliminary plat/final site plan, and amendment to the Regency Park Development and Rezoning Plan, east of the intersection of Leather Chaps Drive and Creekside Drive.

The Planning Commission recommended to the Board of Trustees that the St. Peter's Parish Education Center be approved subject to the applicant putting reflectors on the existing lights in the north parking lot, which have drawn complaints from residents.

The Planning Commission had continued the Homestead North hearing from November because the applicant had taken away open space that had been in the original plat. After some discussion at the December meeting, the applicant offered, subject to approval by the Triview Metropolitan District Board, to convert lot 56, facing Leather Chaps Drive and across from Creekside Middle School, into a park. With that change, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval to the Board of Trustees.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission will be on Wednesday, January 9, 2002 at 6:30pm at Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. For information on the items to be heard, contact the Monument Planning Department at 481-2954.

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Triview board adopts budget, discusses bondholder concerns, bond refinancing, Wal-Mart water study, comp plan update, water reuse, developer fees, and sales tax collection

By John Heiser

At a special meeting December 13, the Triview Metropolitan District Board of Directors adopted their 2002 budget and discussed a variety of topics including funding for construction of Jackson Creek Parkway from Highway 105 to Higby Road, the possibility of refinancing the bonds, Wal-Mart status, irrigation using water from the wastewater treatment plant, developer fees, and collection of sales tax.

Bondholder questions \$75,000 Jackson Creek Parkway commitment.

Ron Simpson, district manager, reported that a letter from the bondholder was received objecting to the board's agreement to pay up to \$75,000 toward the completion of Jackson Creek Parkway from Highway 105 to Higby Road. The bondholder reportedly thinks assisting completion of the road is not Triview's responsibility. According to director Bud Weis, "We discussed the \$75,000 for three to four months. Why didn't they bring this up sooner? We felt this was better for the taxpayers and homeowners." Simpson

said, "We met and discussed it with the bondholder ... It was not raised as a major issue."

Bond refinancing suggested.

According to Simpson, the bonds held by the bondholder pay a blended rate of 12.21% doubly tax-exempt. Weis suggested the bonds should be refinanced. He said, "There has been no better time in the last 40 years." Peter Susemihl, attorney for the district, said, "You don't have the assessed [value of the properties] where you need it yet." Current assessed value stands at \$9.8 million producing approximately \$246,000 per year in property taxes. Simpson added, "We need 600 [houses] occupied excluding commercial." Currently about 450 houses are occupied and 515 building permits have been issued. Susemihl said, "If we get something like a Wal-Mart that would help." Monument Trustee Byron Glenn noted from the audience, "Having a Wal-Mart wouldn't kill us."

Susemihl reported it would cost \$18 million to retire all the old bonds, interest, and prepayment penalties. Since the interest rate environment is very different from what it was when the bonds were issued, Susemihl agreed to do the calculations necessary to see if refinancing is advisable.

Wal-Mart water study underway.

Simpson reported that Nolte and Associates is preparing the water study for Wal-Mart that was reported on in the December 7 issue of OCN ("Triview Metro District to prepare water study for Wal-Mart"). A partial payment of \$7,500 for engineering services was unanimously approved. Regarding inclusion into the Triview district of the 30-acre parcel across from King Soopers and negotiation of the agreement with Wal-Mart to create a Public Improvement Corporation (PIC) Simpson reported, "There will be nothing further without approval by the county." Due to opposition within the community, Wal-Mart is anticipating a prolonged process.

Concerns expressed about land use impact of comprehensive plan update.

Monument Assistant Town Manager and Planner Mike Davenport reported to the Triview board that Monument is updating its comprehensive plan. Simpson said Jackson Creek developers have concerns about some of the proposed changes. Davenport noted that since the inter-governmental agreement (IGA) between the Town of Monument and Triview was signed in 1987, there have been numerous changes as subdivisions within Jackson Creek have been approved. The school site has moved and roads have been realigned.

There has also been the necessity of working around mouse habitat. Consequently, there is a need to update the IGA and the attached land use map. Simpson said the primary concern of the district is to maintain the level of revenue projected by the 1987 agreement. He said, "Monument has the prerogative to address land use issues." He added that the district's concern is "What does it do

to our bottom line?"

In addressing concerns about the possible results of reopening the IGA to amend it, Susemihl said, "We just need a notation in town minutes."

Reuse water planned for irrigation.

Simpson reported that the water treatment plant used by Triview is one of only two tertiary treatment plants in Colorado. The system has the capacity to return most of the processed water for use in irrigation. Regulations limit use of the processed water to irrigation of office and industrial parcels. State approval is required. Triview's reuse water lines extend to Creekside Middle School. According to Simpson, the goal is to provide reuse water for irrigation of all Jackson Creek parks greater than one acre.

Bid accepted for wastewater interceptor to serve proposed industrial land west of I-25.

A low bid of \$446,000 was approved for construction of the Monument Creek wastewater interceptor. The Forest Lakes Metro district is sharing in the cost. Triview's share will be \$307,600. Providing wastewater services is an important step in opening the land west of I-25 to industrial development.

Developer fees reviewed.

Simpson reported on his research into fees charged by other governmental entities for plan reviews and site inspections. The City of Colorado Springs charges on an hourly basis. Simpson said Triview has been absorbing the cost of videotaping the interior of every sewer line. That cost runs about \$2,000 per subdivision. Simpson said, "We have been very generous [to developers]." Simpson also noted, "We haven't raised our tap fees since we started... We are \$3,500 per unit below neighboring districts." Simpson noted that even though the district is not operating in the red, it has significant debt and needs to seek other revenue sources.

2002 budget approved.

The 2002 budget was revised to incorporate the mill levy increase reported in the December 7 edition of OCN ("Triview Metro District votes property tax increase for Jackson Creek"). The revised budget projects about \$447,000 in debt service on the bonds. Director Bud Weis noted that in 2001, Triview paid approximately \$661,000 more than budgeted toward the debt service on the bonds. After a short discussion, the revised budget was unanimously approved.

Problems collecting sales tax persist.

There has been an ongoing issue of Triview obtaining its share of the sales taxes collected by Baptist Road businesses. Some businesses such as Texaco and Cost Cutters have mistakenly sent the collected taxes to Colorado Springs. Some businesses have collected 6.2% sales tax rather than the 7% that applies within the Town of Monument. Even when the proper amount of tax is collected and sent to the town, there have been many months of delays getting disbursement from the town. Triview is working with the town to rectify all of these problems. The consensus of the board was to tie payment of the \$75,000 for Jackson Creek Parkway to resolution of the sales tax collection problems.

A joint meeting with the Monument Board of Trustees is being planned for February. The sales tax collection problem is expected to be one of the agenda items for that meeting.



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Tri-Rec seeks developer funds

By Russ Broshous, President, Tri-Lakes Parks and Recreation District

As noted in the December 7 edition of *Our Community News*, the Tri-Lakes Parks and Recreation District conducted a post election survey of voters last winter to see why the electorate approved forming the district on the one hand while voting down all funding proposals on the other. One of a number of significant recommendations emerging from the survey was that the district should aggressively seek non-tax revenue sources to supplement any tax levies it might propose in the future.

The district took this to heart and immediately began seeking ways to obtain non-tax revenue. Most recently, after months of waiting for various studies to be completed by the state, the district began receiving funds from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), funds that are earned from the Colorado and Powerball lotteries and are distributed to counties, cities, towns and districts such as Tri-Rec with programs aimed at

preserving Colorado's scenic landscape. For Tri-Rec, this means about \$130,000 per year, a very significant sum capable of paying the upkeep on the Tri-Lakes trail network once it is completed.

Tri-Rec has also been discussing with the county a proposed intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that, among other things, would impose an impact fee on those wishing to develop property within Tri-Rec district. Specifically, it would require developers to dedicate to the district 5% of the acreage in their developments for the district's trails and open space programs or, at the option of the district, to pay an amount equal to the appraised value of that same 5% portion of the property as developed. To be fair to developers, the proposal is structured to permit the district to reduce this requirement if the developer is willing to alter the development plan to maximize open space within the development, or to facilitate the interconnection of trail segments that would otherwise have to be routed around it.

If the proposal is approved by the County Parks Board on January 8 and, subsequently, by the Board of County Commissioners,

then similar proposals will be presented to the towns of Monument and Palmer Lake so continuity in trail construction and open space dedication can be maintained across town boundaries. If the Board of County Commissioners and the town boards approve those proposals, the district could earn as much as \$75,000 to \$100,000 each year. This, in turn, would go toward the maintenance costs for district open space and parks such as the Ben Lomond property, assuming the land can be acquired economically and opened for public access.

Other revenue sources including grants and gifts are being investigated, all of which can mean a reduction in the district's request to voters for taxes to defray capital and operating expenses. Stay tuned to *Our Community News* for the latest Tri-Rec developments.

Heritage grant used to fund Tri-Lakes area studies

*By Mike Davenport,
Assistant Town Manager and Planner, Town of Monument*

In 2001, Monument, Palmer Lake, Triview Metro District, Lewis-Palmer School District, and the Woodmoor-Monument Fire Protection District (WMFPD), actively supported by El Paso County, received a Heritage Planning Grant from the State of Colorado, to do cooperative planning in the Tri-Lakes area. Participation is open to all jurisdictions in the Tri-Lakes region, and to private organizations such as the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce and the Woodmoor Improvement Association. The \$50,000 matching grant from the state is being used for the following planning efforts.

- Land use and transportation planning (\$45,000). This planning effort will include projections of growth and future land use in the Tri-Lakes area. A transportation plan will be developed to identify specific transportation improvements and associated costs needed to address current needs and future growth. At this time, the Town of Monument is working with the county, Colorado Springs, and Colorado Springs Utilities to obtain computerized maps of the Tri-Lakes area for use in this plan.
- Cooperative fire protection planning (\$5,000). WMFPD, Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District, and Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department have hired a consultant to identify ways to provide better fire protection in their service areas.

An application has been submitted for a follow-on grant.

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Congressional reapportionment goes to court

By Steve Waldmann

Because of an increase in the population in Colorado over the past decade, Colorado has been awarded an increase in its number of representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives. Each congressional district in the United States contains approximately 615,000 people. Since Colorado now has more than four million residents, its number of representatives will be increased from 6 to 7. However, that increase has caused significant strife between democratic and republican leaders in the state.



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In October, the Colorado State Legislature held a special session in an effort to decide how best to redraw the federal legislative districts in Colorado. Their efforts were unsuccessful, because democratic and republican leaders dug in their heels and refused to compromise.

Because his district currently contains approximately 810,000 people, our U.S. Representative, Joel Hefley, will see the size of his district decrease. According to the Colorado Secretary of State's Office, in Representative Hefley's district there are 535,831 voters. Of that number, 249,935 are republicans, 114,258 are democrats, 170,479 are independents, 795 are libertarians, 278 are greens, and 86 are members of the Natural Law Party. Representative Hefley's district - the 5th Congressional District - currently includes El Paso County, Teller County to the west, portions of Douglas County to the north, and portions of Fremont County to the southwest.

Republicans, such as our State Representative, Lynn Hefley, argue that any redistricting plan should ensure that Colorado Springs remains in one legislative district. Lynn Hefley is married to Joel Hefley. In a column in the October 21, 2001 issue of *The Gazette*, Representative Lynn Hefley stated that having one representative representing Colorado Springs in Congress would maximize its political power because that would ensure the representative would receive a seat on the powerful House Armed Services Committee.

Our county commissioner, Duncan Bremer, echoed Representative Hefley's concerns when he stated that the congressmen who are placed on the Armed Services Committee are those congressmen who represent the most bases and the largest bases, and in some cases, the largest defense contractors and the most veterans and retirees.

The views of Representative Lynn Hefley and Commissioner Bremer are in stark contrast to the position of Colorado House of Representatives Speaker Doug Dean. *The Gazette* reported that Representative Dean, a republican from Colorado Springs, told republican house members that they had to support plans they may not like in order to do what was best for the national republican party.

For their part, state democrats argue that redistricting

proposals submitted by republicans would ensure that republicans won at least five of the seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and could conceivably win six. State Senate President Stan Matsunaka, a democrat from Loveland and a candidate for governor, stated that it would be better for Colorado if the congressional districts were more competitive. Senator Matsunaka argued that southern Colorado, including Pueblo and the San Luis Valley, should have its own representative in Congress. However, because there are not enough people in southern Colorado to support a congressional seat, the district would have to include residents of southern Colorado Springs. Such a district could elect a democrat or a republican.

Since our state legislature was unable to agree on a redistricting plan, the redistricting issue is now in court. In mid-December, democrats asked a state judge to redraw the congressional boundaries. Denver District Judge John Coughlin stated that he will not issue a ruling until January 25, 2002. However, as Representative Hefley stated in her column in *The Gazette*, when the state legislature reconvenes on January 9, they could reach a compromise on the issue.

The proposed new congressional maps can be viewed at <http://staereapp.state.co.us/congressional/>. Under all proposals, the Tri-Lakes area will remain in the 5th Congressional District, and Representative Joel Hefley will continue to be our representative.

Representative Lynn Hefley can be reached at (303) 866-2924, Colorado General Assembly, 200 East Colfax, Room 323, Denver, CO 80203. El Paso County Commissioner Duncan Bremer can be reached at 520-6444, Duncan-Bremer@elpasoco.com, 27 East Vermijo Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80903-2208. Representative Doug Dean can be reached at (303) 866-2346, ddean@sni.net, Colorado General Assembly, 200 East Colfax, Room 246, Denver, CO 80203. Senator Stan Matsunaka can be reached at (303) 866-3342, stansenate@aol.com, Colorado General Assembly, 200 East Colfax, Room 257, Denver, CO 80203. Representative Joel Hefley can be reached at 520-0055, 104 South Cascade Avenue, Suite 105, Colorado Springs, CO 80903.

LP school board appoints member, reviews special ed costs, sets mill levy

By Tommie Plank

On Thursday, December 20, three candidates who had applied to complete the remaining two years of Mike Burris's term were interviewed. A member of the District 38 Board of Education since 1991, Burris resigned when his job required that he relocate to Virginia.

Elaine Silver, Jes Raintree, and G. Allen Fritts all submitted letters of interest and résumés by the December 7 deadline. Conducting the interviews in a special meeting, the four remaining board members stated how impressed they were by the qualifications of all three candidates. After the interviews and some deliberation, the board unanimously agreed to appoint Mrs. Jes Raintree to the board. She will be sworn in at the January 17 regular board meeting, and will serve until November 2003, when this term will be completed.

At the regular board of education meeting on December 13, Linda Williams-Blackwell, Director of Special Education, reported on the financial status of the special education program in Lewis-Palmer District 38. As of December 1, there were

380 students (7.7% of the student population) being served by special education programs. The national average for special education students is 10% of the student population. Total district expenditures on the program for this school year stand at \$2,249,717 (10.2% of the total budget), or \$6,215.00 per special education student. This is up from 9.8%, or \$5,350.84 per student last school year. Board members and administrators expressed concern over the escalating cost of the program.

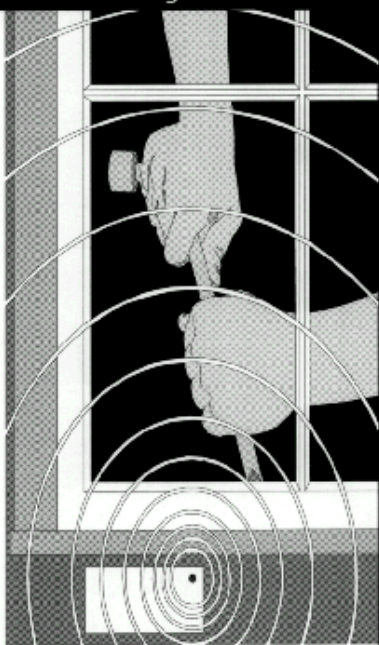
Superintendent Ted Bauman advised the board that the resolutions passed by several school districts nationwide asking their legislators for more state and federal funding for mandated special education programs have been denied. This year state and federal reimbursements amounted to about 14% of the total funds spent on special education.

The school board also set the mill levies for 2001-2002. The total mill levy was set at 47.937 mills, unchanged from last year. 35.042 mills were allocated to the General Fund. 12.895 mills were allocated to the Bond Redemption Fund.

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Rep. Hefley's helps Congress pass trade promotion authority

By Steve Waldmann

Our representative in the United States House of Representatives is Joel Hefley. Representative Hefley has long been a staunch opponent of opening America's borders to unfair trade. In the past, he has opposed the North American Free Trade Authority (NAFTA), granting most-favored nation trading status to China, expanding the powers of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (NAFTA for Africa). It is against this backdrop that Representative Hefley's recent vote in favor of granting Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) to the President is so interesting.

On December 6, 2001, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 215 to 214 to give TPA to the president. Representative Hefley was one of the 215. According to Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, Congress has the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations. However, the House of Representatives has passed a bill that gives the president power to negotiate international trade agreements and then to submit those agreements, without amendments, to the U.S. Congress for a simple yea or nay vote. Workers' rights groups and most house democrats opposed giving this so-called "fast track" authority to the president. Until last month, Representative Hefley had also opposed granting that power to

the president.

Representative Hefley's office was asked to explain this apparent change of heart. Sarah Sheldon, the representative's press secretary graciously agreed to explain the Representative Hefley's position on the issue. Ms. Sheldon stated that although it was true that in the past Representative Hefley had opposed granting the president fast track authority to negotiate international trade agreements, he had changed his mind on the issue because while he had not previously trusted President Clinton to use the authority wisely, he had no such reservations about giving the power to President George W. Bush.

Before the House vote on TPA, it was believed that the legislation was in jeopardy of not passing. It was widely reported that several republican members of the house requested and received concessions from the president in return for their vote. However, Ms. Sheldon stated that Representative Hefley did not request, nor did he receive, any special considerations for his vote. In fact, Ms. Sheldon related that Representative Hefley does not believe in seeking special favors in return for his vote.

Prior to the vote, Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert stated that the house needed to support TPA in order to show support for our president in his war against terrorism. Ms. Sheldon stated that Representative Hefley believed that his vote did show support for the president, but that he would have voted for the legislation even if the attacks of September 11, 2001 had not occurred.

Ms. Sheldon went on to state that Representative Hefley believes TPA would benefit the agricultural and high-tech industries in

Colorado. The Tri-Lakes area is home to many high-tech workers.

Following his vote in support of TPA, Representative Hefley appeared on the syndicated radio talk show, *Good Day USA*, where he explained to the host, Ellen Ratner, the reasons for his vote. Unfortunately, *Good Day USA* is not carried by any Colorado Springs radio stations. On December 19, 2001, Representative Hefley was a guest on Reggie Rivers' talk show on KHOW-AM in Denver. Since the vote, Representative Hefley has not appeared on any Colorado Springs radio talk shows to discuss his vote.

Many businesses believe that TPA will expand markets for their products. Many workers and environmentalists believe it will drive down wages and increase pollution. The U.S. Senate is expected to vote on TPA in the next couple of months.

Representative Hefley has a web site at <http://www.house.gov/hefley/>. His address is 104 South Cascade Avenue, Suite 105, Colorado Springs, CO 80903 or 2230 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20515. His phone numbers are 520-0055 or (202) 225-4422.

Our Community Calendar

- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., Jan. 7, 6:30 pm, Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Info: call 481-2954.
- **Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Tue., Jan. 8, 1 pm, Conference Room, District Headquarters Building 1845 Woodmoor Drive. Info: call 488-2525.
- **Coalition of Tri-Lakes Communities Wal-Mart Committee**, Tue., Jan. 8, 6:30 pm, downstairs break room, Bethesda building, corner of Gleneagle Dr. and Baptist Road. For info: call 488-9031.
- **Monument Planning Commission**, Wed., Jan. 9, 6:30 pm, Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Info: call 481-2954.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Workshop**, Wed., Jan. 9, 7 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 54 Valley Crescent. Info: call 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Regular Meeting**, Thu., Jan. 10, 7 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 54 Valley Crescent. Info: call 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.
- **Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority**, Fri., Jan. 11, 1:30, 27 E. Vermijo, 3rd Floor Hearing Room. Info: 303-779-4525.
- **Western Museum of Mining and Industry**, Photography: *People, places, and process*, Sat., Jan. 12, 1 pm to 4 pm, Gleneagle drive just east of I-25. For info: call 488-0880.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission**, Tue., Jan. 15, 9 am, 27 E. Vermijo, 3rd Floor Hearing Room. Info: 520-6300.
- **Monument Parks and Landscape Committee**, Tue., Jan. 15, 6:30 pm, Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Info: call 481-2954.
- **Forest Service Seedling Seminar**, Tue., Jan. 15, 6:30 pm, Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. For info: 488-2694.
- **Tri-Lakes Recreation District Board Meeting**, Tue., Jan. 15, 7 pm, Lewis-Palmer Administration Building, 2nd and Jefferson, 1st floor board room. Info: call 488-0074.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Meeting**, Wed., Jan. 16, 7 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 54 Valley Crescent. Info: call 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., Jan. 16, 7 pm, Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Drive. Info: call 488-2694 or visit www.woodmoor.org.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society Annual Potluck Dinner**, "Fiesta Grande," a mexican party, Jan. 17, 5:30 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 54 Valley Crescent. Info: 481-2323.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission**, Tue., Jan. 22, 9 am, 27 E. Vermijo, 3rd Floor Hearing Room. Possible Forest Lakes hearing. Info: 520-6300.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Tue., Jan. 22, 6:30 pm, Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Info: call 481-2954.
- **Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Tue., Jan. 22, 7 pm, conference room at Station 1 on Highway 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Info: call 481-2312.
- **Triview Metropolitan District Board Meeting**, Thu., Jan. 24, 8:30 am, District Office, 174 North Washington St. Info: call 488-6868.
- **The Friends of Ben Lomond Mountain**, Thu., Jan. 24, 7 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 54 Valley Crescent. Info: 481-2474.
- **Woodmoor-Monument Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Mon., Jan. 28, 9 am, 1855 Woodmoor Drive. Info: call 488-3303.
- **Monument Police Advisory Committee**, Wed., Jan. 30, 6:30 pm, Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Info: call 481-2954.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., Feb. 4, 6:30 pm, Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Info: call 481-2954.
- **El Paso County Water Authority**, Wed., Feb. 6, 9 am, 27 E. Vermijo, 3rd Floor Hearing Room. Info: 520-6300.
- **Monument Public Works Committee**, Wed., Feb. 6, 6:30 pm, Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Info: call 481-2954.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., Feb. 6, 7 pm, Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Drive. Info: call 488-2694 or visit www.woodmoor.org.
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Workshop**, Thu., Feb. 7, 7 pm, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 54 Valley Crescent. Info: call 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.

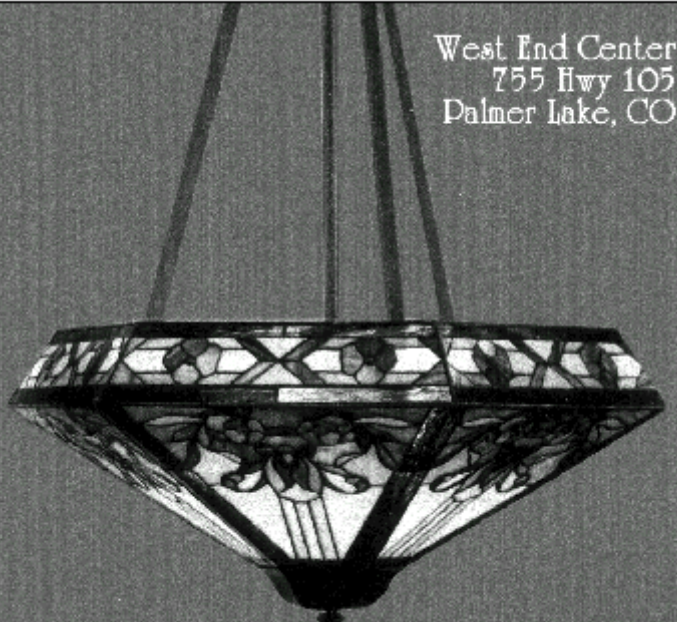
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Palmer Lake resident shocked
by behavior

As a resident of Palmer Lake for over seven years, I was shocked and appalled at the behavior of one man in the audience of the December 13th Palmer Lake Board of Trustees meeting. This person's outburst was beyond anything that I've ever witnessed at any of the meetings, including those addressing such controversial issues as Transit Mix or the dog kennel.

From his chair in the audience, this man shouted out and called a town employee a liar with an expletive that I won't ask this newspaper to repeat. His language was deplorable and he was out of order. When the public speaks they raise their hand and when acknowledged by the Board of Trustees, they come to the front of the Town Hall so they can speak into a microphone. Although this man didn't need a microphone to be heard, he also didn't follow procedure. He embarrassed myself and other Palmer Lake residents and officers as many who normally don't come to the town meetings attended the meeting. Unfortunately, an on-duty deputy marshal was around a corner and didn't hear the entire outburst or he surely would have asked the man to leave. This man should not be allowed back. Palmer Lake has more unpaid volunteers than paid employees and all devote many hours of their time to help this town operate and they should not have to put up with this sort of disrespect. This person owes an apology to the town, its employees, and its volunteers for his arrogant actions.

Name withheld upon request

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Former Monument mayor
analyzes budget

This is an open letter to the Town of Monument and the community concerning the 2002 Monument budget. Because of the lack of sound financial management in the past, the town has an information gap concerning its financial reports. The 2000 audit is yet to be completed, hence, accurate numbers for year 2000 are not available to put in the budget document. This letter is intended to help fill in these gaps.

Before we get to the 2002 budget, we must examine the 2001 budget year as a necessary starting point. Apparently, we begin with a contradiction in that the projected 2001 budget numbers show a \$400,000 loss when general fund and water budget are combined, while the money in the bank accounts as of October 31, 2001 increased by nearly \$200,000 since January 2001. How can the town show a deficit in the budget while the bank accounts show a surplus? The answer lies in those revenues that do not appear in the budget document. These omissions are impact fees the town collects for water, storm-drainage, and traffic. Some examples of these are the \$9,000 water tap fee for a single-family equivalent (SFE) and \$731 for an SFE for traffic impact fees. Without the exact figures, these impact fees may be estimated as \$600,000 for the year. When these fees are added to the projected budget deficit, it turns that deficit into a surplus, which accounts for the increase of the town's bank accounts from January 2001 to end of October 2001.

So let us review the numbers in a table for the two major parts of the 2001 budget. These estimates are from the town budget adopted at the December 27, 2001 special meeting.

Estimates of Actual FY2001	Revenues (\$)	Expenditures (\$)	Total (\$)
General Fund	1,904,159	-2,472,702	-568,543
Water Fund	1,068,789	-901,601	167,188
Subtotal	2,972,948	-3,374,303	-401,355
Impact Fees (est 12 mo.)	600,000	0	600,000
Total	3,572,948	-3,374,303	198,645

According to Issue 3 of the town newsletter, the money in the town bank accounts on December 31, 2000, was \$3,607,767. According to the town financial statement put together in November 2001, the money in these same accounts was \$3,781,233, which is an increase of \$173,466. This increase in the bank accounts for the first ten months of 2001 corresponds closely with the above figure of \$198,645 of the adjusted actual revenues and expenditures. These calculations demonstrate that the town is running in the black, not in red as some people have claimed. Note also that \$457,000 of the general fund deficit (shown above as \$568,543) through the first ten months was from buying the right-of-way for 2nd Street from the property owner in April 2001.


Next, let us look at the budget for 2002. For clarity, let us stay with the two major parts; however, we need to make a distinction between those funds needed for operations and maintenance and those funds needed for capital improvements.

Budget Estimates For Year 2002	Revenues (\$)	Expenditures (\$)	Total (\$)
General Fund			
Operations/maintenance	1,884,608	-1,960,037	-75,429
Cap. Improvemnts (parks & streets)	275,000	-1,059,000	-784,000
Subtotal	2,159,608	-3,019,037	-859,429
Water Fund			
Operations/Maintenance	1,085,991	-1,017,583	68,408
Capital Improvements	1,226,942	-1,216,942	10,000
Monument Lake Dam	2,281,000	-2,081,000	200,000
Contingencies	200,000	-200,000	0
Subtotal	4,793,933	-4,515,525	278,408
Total	6,953,541	-7,534,562	-581,021

The numbers shown above do not include the county part of the Monument Lake Dam repair project (their contribution is set by an agreement with the town, executed in January 2001), the budget for the cemetery fund, which is balanced at \$18,656, or the additional reserves of \$90,571 for general fund, and \$210,000 for the water fund. These are necessary in case


(Continued on page 11)

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(Continued from page 10)

something unexpected needs to be addressed during the year. The general fund needs therefore to be balanced by moving \$950,000 from the money in the bank. However, the water fund shows a surplus of \$68,408, since the revenues already show a \$1,216,942 withdraw from town reserves in the revenue column above. Therefore, the total town reserves at the end of October 2001 at \$3,781,233 would be drawn down by \$2,166,942 (which is the sum of \$950,000 and \$1,216,942) leaving \$1,614,291 in the bank. If the \$300,571 reserves are not spent and the town accumulates \$100,000 in the last two months of 2001, the money in the bank at the end of these massive public improvement projects will be near \$2,000,000.

What should be clear in the minds of all citizens is that these road projects, water system improvements, and the repair of Monument Lake Dam are one-time only expenditures and do not recur each year. The operation/maintenance parts of the two budgets shown above are nearly balanced at \$3,000,000 total.

Finally, let us look at the long-term financial health of the town's finances. From page 20 of the 1998 audit, the town had cash reserves of \$2,131,090 as of December 31, 1998. In almost three years, this number doubled despite the purchase of the 2nd Street right-of-way for \$457,000 last April 2001. During this period, the town was putting in the bank \$50,000 per month after expenditures were subtracted from revenues. During year 2002, many long-awaited and needed projects are being accomplished by spending these accumulated reserves: 1) repair of Monument Lake Dam, 2) completion of three road projects, which includes the 2nd Street extension and the Old Denver Highway-Beacon Lite Road connection, and 3) needed water system improvements recommended by our new Water Master Plan. We need to remember that the government of the Town of Monument is not a "for profit" organization, but a service run for the public welfare. Thus, our savings over the last three years should be spent on needed public improvements. A well-managed government can do this.

Finally, some misinformation concerning sales tax revenue was discussed during the public budget hearing held without the staff members or consultants present who had prepared the budget document. From various audits and financial statements, I have composed the following table that, in lieu of better numbers, can serve for now.

Sales Tax Revenue	Actual 1997 (\$)	Actual 1998 (\$)	Actual 1999 (\$)	Reported 2000 (\$)	Estimated 2001 (\$)	Budget 2002 (\$)
General Fund	436,757	509,466	643,309		716,006	748,274
Streets	109,441	123,446	131,730		179,002	187,068
Water Fund	273,088	316,447	389,003		440,825	460,691
Total	819,286	949,359	1,164,042	1,081,222	1,335,833	1,396,033

Note that these numbers are after the amount shared with Tri-View Metropolitan District has been taken out. No separation between the three accounts for year 2000 has been made. We must await the audit. The only out of place revenue is that reported by the past town treasurer in year 2000. It is the only year that shows a decrease in revenue. On the other hand, the last actual numbers for 1999 from our audit shows an increase of over \$215,000 over the preceding year 1998, which also seems larger than the trend line shows. As of October 31, 2001, the three funds totaled \$1,229,128 with two months of November and December to be reported. Therefore, we will easily get to the estimated year 2001 number even if we have two very low months. That would mean 2001 would be expected to show a \$250,000 increase over the reported amount for year 2000. When the data is averaged from 1997 through 2001, the average yearly increase is approximately \$125,000. The projected amount for year 2002 is half this average yearly increase, so it is probably on the conservative side.

It is my hope that this overview may provide some insight about the budget for 2002.

Leon W. Tenney, Former Mayor, Town of Monument

Serving our community: Monument Hill Sertoma collects \$3,600 for 9-11 survivors, \$21,700 for local needy

By Dick Durham

This winter, the Monument Hill Sertoma club collected money for two important causes: survivors of the September 11 attack on the Pentagon and the Salvation Army's collection for the needy in El Paso County.

The citizens of the Tri-Lakes area can be very proud of what they accomplished the weekend after September 11th. That weekend members of Monument Hill Sertoma Club set up a table at Safeway (see picture) to accept contributions for the Pentagon survivors.

It was a very moving time for the Sertoma members involved. For example, and just one of many, a woman and her son walked by, made a donation and started to walk away. Then the mother turned, brought her son back and, with a thick accent, asked if her son could shake the Sertoma member's hand. She said her son wanted to shake hands with an American.

In the two days, Monument Hill Sertoma collected \$1,800. The Monument Hill Club

matched that sum for a total of \$3,600. The total was then sent to the Army and Navy Relief Fund to be distributed to all Pentagon survivors -- military and civilian.

The citizens of the Tri-Lakes area also came together to aid the Salvation Army this holiday season.

Monument Hill Sertoma members and Lewis-Palmer Serteens put in over 600 hours at Safeway and King Soopers to raise \$21,733.26 for the Salvation Army to benefit those in need in El Paso County.

According to Captain Shevaun Malone of the Salvation Army, Monument Hill Sertoma and Lewis-Palmer Serteen raised more money for the Salvation Army than any other location in El Paso County.

Monument Hill Sertoma and Lewis-Palmer Serteens wish to thank everyone for their support of these important efforts. Thank you, citizens of the Tri-Lakes area!



Left photo: Monument Hill Sertoma Member, Tim Boyle. September 2001
Right photo: Sertomans: (l-to-r) Eddie Kinney and Benny Nasser. December 2001.
Staff photos.



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Joe Beggs to Differ

The Triview Metropolitan District

Fourth in a series by Joe Beggs

Part 1, "Property Taxes," is at www.ourcommunitynews.org/v1n7.htm#taxes

Part 2, "Just how special are these districts?" is at www.ourcommunitynews.org/v1n8.htm#beggs

Part 3, "The Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District," is at www.ourcommunitynews.org/v1n9.htm#beggs

Last month, we talked about the Woodmoor Wa-

ter and Sanitation District that provides water and sanitation facilities to the Woodmoor subdivision of our Palmer Divide.

The Triview "Metro" District is a whole new ballpark. They provide not only water and sanitation for the Jackson Creek subdivision, but they also provide for drainage, streets, parks, recreation, open space, safety protection (traffic control devices and signs), and, of all things mosquito control!

That's "a big bite-a spaghetti," and there's a big bite of land to go with that, approximately 1580 acres, bounded on the west by the Santa Fe Trail, on the east by Kingswood Estates, on the south by Baptist Road, and on the north by Higby Road.

In 1987, the entire Triview district was annexed into the Town of Monument, which currently provides police protection and land use planning and approvals within the district. Triview has an agreement since 1987 with the Town of Monument to share their portion of sales tax collected by the town within the district at 50% each. Triview also receives a property tax mill levy (currently 25 mills) and other charges and fees.

MANAGEMENT

A five-member board of directors elected from property owners within the district governs the District. None of the current five board members reside within the district, but pursuant to state law, they must own property within the district. The board members are: Kathleen Walters, Gary Walters, Jim Perry, John Riesberg, and Bud Weis. The district manager is Ronald J. Simpson, and the district administrator is Mrs. Dale I. Hill.

FACILITIES

Water

The district presently owns five water wells; a large 1.5-million gallon concrete water tank; water lines; and a water treatment plant. Along with the completion of a new well, the district is currently constructing a second water treatment plant. The

wells are all in the Denver, Arapahoe, and Larimer-Fox Hills aquifer formations of the Denver Basin.

Sanitation

In addition to owning the district's sewer lines, Triview is co-owner of a wastewater treatment plant with Donala Water and Sanitation District and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District. This plant currently produces tertiary treatment (treated reuse water) for the Gleneagle golf course. Donala currently operates the plant by agreement among the three owners.

Other Infrastructure

Triview Metro also provides and maintains public amenities such as paved streets, drainage facilities, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, streetlights, and trails and open space.

RATE SCHEDULE

Residential Water:

\$20.00 for the first 6,000 gallons used, then:
\$2.50 per 1000 gallons for 6001-30,000 gallons.
\$3.00 per 1000 gallons for 30,001-40,000 gallons
\$3.50 per 1000 gallons 40,001 gallons or more.

Residential Sewer:

\$22.50 per month (flat fee)

Other Fees (Paid by Builders):

Tap Fees: \$8,650 per Single Family Home (SFH)
Drainage Fee: \$500 per SFH
Park, Rec, and Landscape Fee: \$100 per SFH
General Road and Bridge Fee: \$75 per SFH
TOTAL Fees per SFH: \$9325.00

Now, how much are you, as a homeowner within the Triview Metro District area (let's say Jackson Creek) paying overall to Triview? If your home is valued by the county assessor's office at \$250,000, then you are paying the following yearly:

Property taxes at 25 mills: about \$560

Water fees (min., i.e., no lawn): about \$240

Sewer fees (flat fee): about \$270

TOTAL yearly: around \$1,070

I am grateful to Ron Simpson and Dale Hill for their cooperation in helping me tell this story, and I urge the residents of this district to get involved in their community and run for the two openings on the Triview Metro District Board of Directors this April!

Next time: The Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District.

Friends of Ben Lomond team with Tri-Rec for passage of ballot meas-

By Sue Buell, Chair, Friends of Ben Lomond

Friends of Ben Lomond has been working to educate the public and raise funds for purchasing the mountain for about the past eight months. There are a few people who have repeatedly helped with setting up the educational booths at fairs and festivals or helped run events and sell products. So far these efforts have raised about \$6,000. There are two more fund raising events planned for this winter and spring. (See "Friends of Ben Lomond sponsor Fitness Day February 9 and art show March 18 through April 17.")

We have a chance to help raise the remainder of what we need in one fell swoop. This is due to the

Ben Lomond Open Space project being a top priority on the acquisition list for open space land in the Tri-Lakes Recreation District's plan that will come to a vote this spring. This plan is totally different from last year's and promises focused attention on open space and trails.

If you would like to help with this form of public education about the district and its meaningful connection with FOBL, please contact Russ Broshous at 488-0074, Becky Albright at 488-9404, or Sue Buell at 481-2474. We would love to talk with you about ways of helping with this project. It is a three-month project that finishes after the voting is over, so please consider this way to help acquire Ben Lomond Mountain as publicly accessible open space.

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Palmer Lake Holiday Decorating Contest winners announced

By Susan Miner

The Palmer Lake Holiday Decorating Contest is sponsored by the Economic and Community Development Committee of Palmer Lake, Inter-mountain Rural Electric Association, and the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. This year, twenty homes were nominated, up from fourteen last year. Judges from the Tri-Lakes Center chose the winners based on the spirit of the decorations.

In the category of theme, Gene and Dianne Mellson at 587 Hwy 105 won first prize. Herman Speilkamp at 474 W. Hwy 105 won first prize for

door decoration. There were two prizes for yard decoration, with first place going to Dennis Phillips at 520 Columbine and second place going to Eileen Facenelli at 189 Shady Lane. Vernon Dreher, 86 Lower Glenway took first place in the category of house decoration. Jacob and Raeann Soles were awarded second place. The last winner is unusual in that the judges were so impressed with the display, that this house was given the prize for most creative use of materials. The address is 203 Bonsor, owners as yet unknown!

The prizes are coupons totaling \$500. The coupons are good at any Palmer Lake business. Last year, all \$500 was used to buy treats and eats right here in town.

Congratulations to all the winners and many thanks to all those who took the time to decorate this year. Our town looks very festive because of these efforts. Thank you to our businesses that also embraced the holiday spirit with their decorations. The Depot has a great display! Thanks also to our judges, Leslie Mintz, Amy Butowicz, and Elizabeth Howe for their contribution.

High Country Highlights
Gardening by Window

By Woody Woodworth, Owner, High Country
Feed & Garden

Most gardeners get the blues at one time or another during the winter. The sky has a little less light; the blooming plants that dominated your gardens for the past six months are just sticks and bones. The cold mornings remind us that spring is still a few months away and yet most of us are itching to get back into the toils of gardening. We've already taken care of most of the chores. The pots are all empty and turned upside down (except for the one I missed on the north side of the house). The hose is curled up and is waiting for another succession of warm days to be stretched out and used again. I'm not in the mood to plan anything yet, but I did make some notes and ponder what I am going to change in a couple of the gardens.

Mostly, I just stare and watch this time of the garden season from a warm spot by a window. My gaze drifts over the barren bushes and trees that once held a magnificent layer of leaves and the perennials that kept their blooms so long this fall. I don't cut back my perennials in the fall and that makes the artistic contrast stunning. The tall clumps of 'Karl Foerster' ornamental grasses show off their golden, feather-like plumage and blow softly in the wind as the smaller 'Elijah Blue' fescue along the border remain as blue as they were in the fall. The Agastache and Perovskia still hold their spherical shapes as they shadow the now purple Woolly Thyme and Turkish Veronica ground covers. The rocks along the garden borders are more visible and the paths

between the gardens are not as crowded. Flagstone is more apparent along the walkways as the 'Brilliant' Dianthus and the 'Nana' Potentilla have receded for the season. Tapestries created by the textures, forms and colors are highlighted by the morning sun and stand out more against the Junipers this time of year.

The broken sunlight through the arbor warms the small Chickadee and Junco as they pick from the feeder I hung where the honeysuckle and grapevines are planted. The pond is now frozen and the only water available is the birdbath I keep open with a small heater. The wildlife seems more abundant, but I think the leaves from the trees and brush on the nearby hill have kept the birds, deer, fox and raccoon hidden. The tall Blue Spruce offers protection to a variety of small birds and squirrels. They're enjoyable to watch as they scurry around to gather food.

That window is one of my favorite spots in the off-season. The view comforts me and prevents me from getting the wintertime blues.

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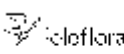
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Letters from law enforcement Most asked questions

By Joe Kissell,
Chief, Monument Police Department

The Monument Police Department is located at 154 North Washington Street. From 8 am to 5 pm, there is usually someone in the office to as-

sist with questions and situations. After 5 pm, for non-emergencies you can reach an officer by calling 481-3253. The phone system is set up to forward the call to the officer in the field on his or her cell phone after three rings. The second option is to call the sheriff's office at 390-5555. The sheriff's office dispatches calls for the police department and records information regarding the person placing the call and what the situation is. An officer from the police department will then get back to the caller. In case of an emergency, please dial 911.

We receive many calls asking questions about the department and the Town of Monument. I have listed the most common questions and hope they address questions you may have.

How many officers are on the police department?

The Monument Police Department is authorized eight full-time officers, one sergeant, one part-time officer and the police chief. In addition, there are three part-time civilian support personnel.

How big is Monument?

Monument consists of two areas. The original part of town commonly referred to as Old Town consists of residential and business areas. The second area is Jackson Creek located east of I-25 and north of Baptist Road. The total population is around 2,500 and continues to grow steadily.

Why don't you do something about the traffic on Woodmoor Drive and Baptist Road?

Although residents in the Woodmoor area may have a Monument address, the Woodmoor area is not in the jurisdiction of the Monument Police Department. The area is under the jurisdiction of the El Paso County Sheriff's Office. Likewise, Baptist Road is also under the jurisdiction of the El Paso County Sheriff's Office. The sheriff's office has a traffic unit designed to handle traffic enforcement in unincorporated El Paso County and can be reached at 520-7276.

How safe is the Monument area?

The residents of Monument and the Tri-Lakes area enjoy a high quality of life in a very safe environment. The crime rate for the area is low and most calls are misdemeanors such as minor thefts, trespass and criminal mischief. The Jackson Creek area currently experiences construction thefts because of the new houses going in.

Does the police department perform vehicle identification number (VIN) verifications?

Any officer from the police department can perform a routine VIN verification if the VIN plate has not been replaced or the number does not require confirmation using a hidden VIN on the vehicle. Both these situations require a certified VIN inspector from a Colorado state certified inspection station or the Colorado State Patrol. You can bring the vehicle along with the paperwork to the police department at 154 North Washington or an officer will come to your location if the vehicle is inoperable.

Does the police department have the equipment to unlock cars when the owner locks their keys in the car?

The police department does not unlock cars. Damage can be easily done to the door and lock system if tools such as the slim jim are not used properly creating the risk of liability to the town. Coat hangers may cause damage to the window and the rubber seal around the door. The police department will assist in locating a locksmith with the proper tools to perform the task.

Can I get fingerprinted at the police department and what is the cost?

All of the officers at the department and two of the support staff are trained in taking fingerprints. The cost is \$5.00 for residents of Monument and \$20.00 for residents of El Paso County. Fingerprinting is currently done from 10:00 am to 11:30 am and 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

How come the Monument police do not respond to calls in the Woodmoor area?

Woodmoor is under the jurisdiction of the El Paso County Sheriff's Office. From time to time, residents may see a Monument officer in the Woodmoor area when the sheriff's office requests our assistance.

Friends of Black Forest Regional Park face daunting legal bills

By John Heiser

As reported in the November 2 issue of *Our Community News*, on October 12, 2001, District Court Judge Samuelson prohibited the extension of Milam Road through Black Forest Regional Park. The order preserves the Black Forest Regional Park as a "roadless," recreational destination. The developer who sought permission to build the road through the park has filed an appeal in the case.

So far, the court battle against El Paso County by the Friends of the Black Forest Regional Park (FOBFRP) has lasted over a year and cost over \$150,000 in legal expenses. Even though FOBFRP won in court, under Colorado law, they can only recover court costs; they will not be allowed to recover attorneys' fees.

FOBFRP has already paid in excess of \$40,000 in legal fees. The balance due is approximately \$60,000. The FOBFRP

board is investigating all potential funding sources to pay the legal bills. Any revenue in excess of debts will go toward Park improvements such as: annual tree planting with the County Parks Department. FOBFRP has volunteered one workday per month to prune the tree canopy to encourage forest health and lessen the fire danger, input on the new master plan for the park, and a website.

FOBFRP is seeking tax-deductible donations from anyone who appreciates the park and would like to contribute. Contributions should be sent to:

Friends of the Black Forest Regional Park
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For more information, call 495-8570 or 495-1809 or visit www.fobfrp.org.

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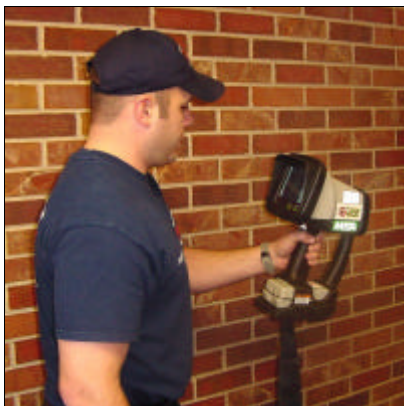
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In firefighting, every second counts!

By Karen Evans

Last year, the Woodmoor~Monument Fire Protection District – and all other surrounding districts having mutual aid agreements with Woodmoor~Monument – were the beneficiaries of a ‘gift’ to WMFPD of an infrared viewing device that allows a trained firefighter to literally see through smoke.

The device detects minute differences in temperature and displays the information as a picture on a screen. Used properly, it can enable a trained firefighter to scan a smoke-filled room for occupants or pets in mere seconds, a job that would otherwise take a team of firefighters as much as 30 minutes on hands and knees. Not only are the lives of occupants spared by timely rescue, avoiding burns



Woodmoor-Monument fire fighter/EMT, Gary Hobbes, shows off borrowed MSA 4000 Thermo-Imager.

and smoke inhalation; but the exposure of the firefighters is reduced as well.

Unfortunately, unbeknown to the fire district, the erstwhile donor had leased the device from the manufacturer and had subsequently suffered financial losses to the point that he was unable to continue making lease payments. As a result, Woodmoor~Monument was forced to return the device to the manufacturer; and there is now only one such device remaining in all of El Paso County.

Recognizing the immeasurable value of such a device in fighting fires in enclosed spaces such as houses throughout our area, Woodmoor~Monument has identified an even better thermal imaging system known as the MSA 4000. (See photo). It is more portable than the earlier model, more sensitive in detecting temperature differences, and more flexible in that it can transmit pictures to a site outside the confines of the fire, thus allowing fire commanders to monitor the progress and safety of their firefighters.

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore Reading and Resolutions

By Judith Pettibone

Be it resolved that each one of us will be a better person in 2002 ... kinder, wiser, more patient and readily moved to laugh. And of course, we will all be healthier and oh so fit. Achieving the first goals may require more than a book recommendation but getting fit is another matter -- much more easily achieved with a book in hand.

Stretching: 20th Anniversary Revised Edition
By Bob Anderson, Illustrated by Jean Anderson, \$14.95

You may have seen Bob on his bike on the trail up to the reservoirs or Jean on the tennis courts or hiking the Santa Fe Trail ... they are most unlike any Hollywood definition of celebrities. However, they have achieved, by any publishing standards, an amazing success with *Stretching*. From the time they appeared with Dr. Art Ulene on the *Today Show* in the 70's where he privately urged them to copyright their material, *Stretching* has sold over 3 million copies and is printed in 19 languages. Their posters for sport stretches, health conditions and work challenges can be found in health clubs, rehabilitation clinics and in medical practices all over the country.

Why this success? Because flexibility is essential to good health and injury prevention and Bob and Jean have written, as the Washington Post reviewed ... “a bible of the stretching gospel.” With a down to earth style and easy to follow instructions and illustrations, the book helps you become healthier, more flexible and better at your sport.

In 2001, after 20 years, Bob and Jean decided to revise the book. In this new edition you will find all new illustrations, eleven new everyday routines including stretches to do at your computer and desk as well as those for the lower back, neck, shoulders and arms. Included are 14 new sports routines such as Rodeo, Mountain Biking and Table Tennis.

As Bob and Jean say in their introduction, “Anyone can be fit with the right approach.”

Be it resolved to start with stretching.

Prevention's Complete Book Of Walking, By Maggie Spilner, \$14.95
Walking: the every person's exercise and, accord-

ing to research, America's number one fitness activity. Folks walk to work, walk their dogs, walk with friends, walk on treadmills and even walk marathons. There are walking magazines and programmed walking tapes. There are even walking exercise videos. So, whether you have resolved to begin or have been walking for years, what could a walking book add to your program?

Maggie Spilner has been *Prevention's* Walking Editor since 1988 and has put together a most readable and useable book on making the most of this simple and safe exercise. She includes a special six-week Dynamic Walking Program developed by Suki Munsell, PhD with techniques to give your routine more control and power. In other sections you will learn about walking poles to develop upper body strength, training for competition, using yoga to support walking, tips for fitting shoes and even helping you buy the best treadmill.

Be it resolved to see you on the trail.

Body For Life: Twelve Weeks To Mental And Physical Health, By Bill Phillips, \$26.00

If you are looking for a total fitness program with clear focus and specific directions, this book may be the perfect choice. Testimonials and photos galore may be just what you need to give this twelve-week program a try. In a very directive manner, there are charts and instructions to help you plan your daily diet, exercise program and attitude. And knowing what we all know about resolutions, the last ingredient may be the most essential of all.

In the foreword, called “The Promise”, Bill Phillips writes, “No matter who you are, no matter what you do, you absolutely, positively do have the power to change. What would it take for you to let me help you build your best body ever in as little as twelve weeks?”

Bill promises to be your “success coach” as he says he has been for tens of thousands of people from all walks of life – including folks like John Elway and Terrell Davis.

Resolutions are easy to make and these books may actually make them easy to keep.

Compared to the earlier horse and buggy version, this newer model is a rugged state-of-the-art SUV!

The downside is price – slightly over \$15,000 for the complete set. That amount is not in Woodmoor~Monument's 2002 district budget. So a number of concerned residents are trying to help by seeking a 501-C3 organization to host a collection effort from among businesses in the area under the auspices of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, from homeowner's associations willing to contribute, and from interested individuals living in the Tri-Lakes and surrounding area.

The campaign is to be called, ‘Have a Heart; Save a Life’; and it will kick off in early January, with the goal of collecting the necessary funds by February 14th. If you have a heart... and are willing to help save a life, please contact:

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Palmer Lake Yule Log Hunt continues local tradition

By Joan Murphy

On Sunday, December 16, people in Palmer Lake observed the tradition of bringing in the Yule Log in much the same way as the local tradition has been observed since it began in 1933. It is a revival of an old world custom with roots going back to ancient Egypt.

The word "Yule" comes from an old Egyptian word "Yol" meaning wheel, and this symbol was used to indicate the spirit that turns the wheel of the weather, causing the seasons to come and go. Since a primitive wheel was simply the cross-section of a log, it is easy to see the connection.

Down through the middle ages, bringing in the Yule Log continued to be an essential part of Christmas festivities, and gradually came to incorporate the idea of peace and good will. Family feuds were ended and quarreling was forbidden during the Yuletide that lasted from Christmas to Twelfth Night, January 6th. Here in Palmer Lake

bringing in the Yule Log is a ceremony in which the whole community joins. This with our Christmas Star, shining nightly on Sundance Mountain, through December to New Year's Eve, is our expression of good will to the Pikes Peak region.

The Yule Log Festival includes a hunt, a program, and a ceremony. In accordance with tradition, the Yule Log is cut, notched, and tied with a red ribbon, then hidden in the woods of the Palmer Lake Glen. This year, some 300 people joined the hunt for the ten-foot log, which had been cut and hidden by Rich Kuester. Kim Leonard, a Palmer Lake resident, found the log. Log-locating luck might run in the family; one of Kim's sons, nine-year-old Daniel, found the log four years ago. "I wasn't looking for it [the log]," said Leonard, "I wanted the kids to find it. I think the Yule Log belongs to the children. The log was hidden right at the beginning, and when the whistle blew, everyone took off and ran right past it. After I found the log, I kept calling and waiting, but none of the children came back. Later, all four of us got to cut the Yule Log and drink the wassail together. It was a nice family experience we all got to share."

While some people went out for the hunt, others stayed inside the town hall to enjoy the program that went on at the same time. This year, the program included two wonderful stories by storyteller John Stansfield; beautiful Christmas music by the Tri-Lakes Community Handbell Choir and the Men's Quartet from the Mountain Community Mennonite Church; and the Christmas Story, presented by Pastor Chris Taylor of the Little Log Church in Palmer Lake.

After the log was found, the hunters returned to the town hall as the log was dragged back with many of the children sitting on it. Kim Leonard had several rides on the log, including the final ceremonial ride back to Town Hall. Next, the log was sawed in half outside while the program audience sang Christmas carols inside. The traditional ceremony begins as the log halves are carried in. Local children from the Wassail choir carry the first pot of wassail to the stage. Four

local men made the wassail fresh, beginning early that morning. Wassail is toasted "To your health!" The finder of the log gets the first cup, and the cutter of the log gets the second cup. Then the hunters and the audience are invited to the stage and the kitchen where cups of the hot wassail are served to all. If you're not in the Christmas spirit when you arrive at the Yule Log Festival, you are sure to be when you leave!

Each year, during the ceremony, the remaining half of last year's Yule Log is carried in. The Fire Lighter, Harry Krueger this year, starts the fire with what's left of last year's Yule Log, and then half of this year's Yule Log is carried in and added to the fire. The remaining half of this year's Yule Log is then carried in and saved by the fireplace for the next year. It's no small task to get these halves up the stairs onto the stage where the fireplace is, inside the town hall. It takes three or four strong people to carry each half; they line up single file and carry the log on their shoulders.

The Yule Log committee and lots of helpers coordinate the Yule Log Festival. There are people from Palmer Lake and the surrounding area who have been helping with the Yule Log Hunt and Ceremony for many years. Whole families are involved with the preparations. Every year, on the first Tuesday of December, a Yule Log Pot-Luck Dinner is held at the Palmer Lake Town Hall. This dinner is open to anyone interested in participating. After dinner, folks sit together and make lapel pins to be handed out and worn at the Yule Log Festival. Half the people (mostly men, but not necessarily) sit together and carve notches in little pieces of willow branch that look like miniature Yule Logs. The other half of the crowd ties little pine boughs onto them with red ribbon. Each miniature Yule Log is stamped on the end with the year, so it becomes a souvenir/apel pin. Some people hang their miniature Yule Log collection on their Christmas trees. From start to finish, the annual Yule Log Festival is a rich tradition in many lives.

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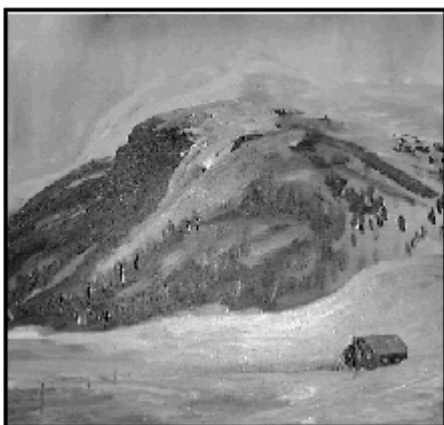
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Arts and Crafts Corner: PDQ lives up to its name

By Barb Broshous

This is about Tri-Lakes arts and crafts... not the organized kind that one finds in our wonderful Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, but rather the kind we do at home, in our dreams and in our hearts.

The Tri-Lakes is more than a place of breathtaking beauty, it also attracts residents with many beautiful talents ... from my own love – quilting – to embroidery, weaving, basket-making, painting, poetry, and many, many more. Some of our residents are world-renowned, while others are less so – but easily could be if they tried. But this is not a story about any particular person...

this is the success story of a group of women who savor the quilting art as much as I do, and who – like the little engine that could – worked hard to share it with others. Less than a year ago, a few stalwart souls got together and suggested to each other that it might be interesting to see if a quilt guild could be started along the Palmer Divide, with mem-

bership drawn from the Tri-Lakes area. There are, of course, guilds in Colorado Springs, as well as in Denver if one has the stamina to travel that far every month. But the intent of our quilters was to provide for fellow quilters a healthy, albeit addictive outlet much closer to home.

After a few phone calls and word of mouth, a date for a meeting was selected last February; and, lo and behold, some 40 women appeared at the door to start what has since become the

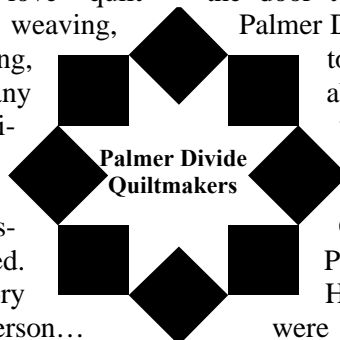
Palmer Divide Quilters – a group devoted to learning more about the art and about sharing ideas and experiences with others of common interests.

Since then, the guild has been formed with Tri-Lakes resident, Gail Wittman from Bent Tree as President and Peggy Rauch from the Heights as Vice President. Bylaws

were written, the organization incorporated, and dues collected... and, within six months, the membership climbed to 65! It seems the sky is the limit!

Now, the guild thrives, meeting monthly at 7 pm on the first Thursday of the month at the Church at Woodmoor on Furrow Road. All interested Tri-Lakes quilters (or wannabees) are welcome. Talk about infectiousness....

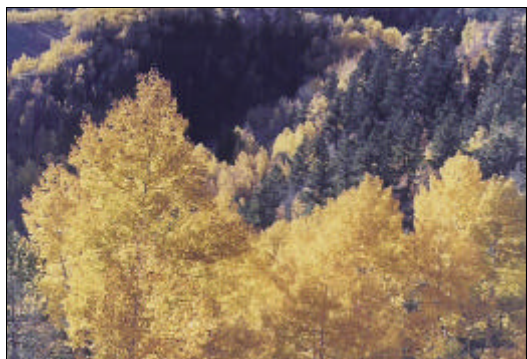
Come join in the fun!



The nature of our community: Aspens—not just another pretty leaf

By David W. Hale

When we think of aspens (*Populus tremuloides*), we immediately visualize the brilliant gold color of their leaves in late September and early October. At the middle elevations in the Colorado Rockies (~8,500-10,500 feet in Pike National Forest), we are visually treated to entire mountainsides of alternating yellow and green during the early fall. Not surprisingly, a substantial increase in mountain travel coincides with the aspens' peak color. For residents of the Colorado Springs area, Mueller State Park and the USAFA Farish Recreational Area become very popular destinations as the aspens there put on their dramatic color display. However, once their leaves have dropped in late October, the aspens become seemingly lifeless relics of their former gilded glory; indeed, among the still-green pines, firs, and spruces, the bare and fitfully swaying aspen trees seem downright depressing. As our fickle attentions become focused on snow and winter activities, we forget about the disenfranchised aspens until the next fall, when their spectacular color show begins anew.



However, there is another aspect of aspen greatness that is evident year-round and that arguably transcends their visual appeal: Some of them are the largest organisms on Earth. This "biggest" accolade is usually lavished upon the blue whale, of which the largest on record was 380,000 pounds (<http://www.extremescience.com/BlueWhale.htm>). More botanically oriented individuals would protest this misdirected acclaim, and instead nominate the General Grant tree in Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park. The largest tree on record, this sequoia's weight was estimated to be 2.7 million pounds in 1975 (<http://quercus.ca.uky.edu/treeweb/supertrees.htm>). Other size enthusiasts might recall the early 1990s report of a huge underground fungus (genus *Armillaria*), that was estimated at 22,000 pounds and 37 acres in area; since then, there have been several reports claiming larger individuals of fungus. But, these organisms are all "gravitationally challenged" compared to the largest known aspen "individual," which spreads over 106 acres and weighs more than 13 million pounds!

Before further considering this honor, some aspects of "aspenology" should be mentioned to provide a proper context. We typically think of trees as individuals, and, for most trees, this categorization is accurate; a single seed sprouts and ultimately produces an individual tree. In contrast, aspens rarely develop from seeds. These

trees exhibit vegetative reproduction, in which roots spread horizontally before producing another vertically growing tree (i.e., stem). In other words, all of the trees in a grove have sprouted from a single, extensive root system. Thus, an aspen stand consists of hundreds or thousands of interconnected, genetically identical trees representing one individual plant. According to Dr. Michael Grant (Department of Environmental, Population, and Organismic Biology, University of Colorado), the trees comprising a single clone exhibit identical characteristics such as leaf-out timing, branch angle, and bark coloration. Although there are differences in leaf size, shape, and pigmentation within a clone, the patches of differently colored trees during the fall generally represent different clones with genetically determined differences in the type and timing of coloration change.

In various journal reports and in the October 1993 issue of *Discover* magazine, Dr. Grant describes a huge aspen clone he and his University of Colorado colleagues dubbed "Pando" (from the Latin "pand" meaning spread out). This clone, located in

Utah's Fish Lake National Forest, consisted of 47,000 stems spread over 106 acres. Considering the roots, stems, and leaves, they conservatively estimated the weight of this individual at 13 million pounds. The age of this and other clones cannot readily be determined; while counting the growth rings reveals the age of a stem, it does not necessarily represent the age of the entire stand. Inferential evidence (e.g., area of clone) suggests that large aspen stands are typically 8,000-10,000 years old.

With at least one living member in excess of 13 million pounds, the aspen species clearly takes the prize in overall size category. Trendy dinosaurs, charismatic blue whales, stately sequoias, and hidden fungi all pale in comparison. Accordingly, the seasonally admired aspen really deserves our respect and admiration throughout the year, not just when at its peak fall color. While beauty is in the eye of the beholder, the aspen is not just another pretty leaf. So, as you and your family go out for some "leaf peeping" next fall, stop and consider the area covered by one of the aspen groves in front of you....you're looking at a huge, single individual.

In the February issue of *Our Community News*, I will explore another interesting aspect of the aspen.

Our community needs you

Our goal is for our volunteers to distribute this free newspaper door-to-door throughout the Tri-Lakes area. To meet that goal, we need your help to expand our distribution network. Here is that paper route you always wanted. No experience is necessary, just a willingness to get out, get some exercise, and meet your neighbors.

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So don't just sit there, opportunity is knocking. Give us a call, drop us a note, or send us an e-mail. You'll be glad you did.

Judy Barnes

Editor

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Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, housed in an historic building, welcomes new executive director

By Heidi Juell, Board Member, Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts
Several board members of the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts have been learning about the history of the facility and are planning a permanent exhibition to commemorate its unique history. Prior to 1969, the facility at 304 Highway 105 in Palmer Lake was a repair site for Denver Rio Grand railway cars, home of the Colorado Worm Growers, and retail space for an alpaca fur dealer. For many years, the Trailways bus stopped here in Palmer Lake. In 1969, Fred Walker purchased space within the facility, and over the next two decades purchased and expanded his business to utilize the entire facility. Fred Walker, to this day, is the world's largest distributor of Kaiser-Frazer car parts in the world. Although the last Kaiser and Frazer cars were built in the U.S. in 1955, car collectors continue to buy, build and repair these cars, which were industry leaders from 1947 through 1955. The 1947 Frazer sedan was the first car to have turn indicators.

Fred Walker now lives in Peyton, on 35 acres, where he stores Kaiser and Frazer cars and car parts. A permanent exhibi-

tion is planned for the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts to commemorate Fred Walker and his Kaiser/Frazer restoration shop. Events to bring Kaiser and Frazer cars to the Center are planned for the summer.

The Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts is pleased to announce that William (Bill) Geary has accepted the position of Executive Director. Bill will step into his new role at the Center on January 7. Bill brings many years of non-profit leadership experience to the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. He is an accomplished glass artist who is exhibiting in the "Astral Bodies" glass show on display through January 31.

Please check out the upcoming exhibits and variety of classes held at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. The 2002 catalog is now available and includes classes for all levels. Watch for announcements for special performances to be held at the Center.

The Lucretia Vaile Museum preserves the Tri-Lakes history

*By Roger Davis,
Director, Lucretia Vaile Museum*

The Lucretia Vaile Museum began in the basement of the current Palmer Lake town offices, originally the AT&SF Section Foreman's house. The museum quickly outgrew that building, so a new building for the library and museum was dedicated on October 4, 1981. The building was erected as a memorial to Lucretia Vaile whose bequest to the Town of Palmer Lake was used to build the structure. With the new building came new museum pieces. An area furrier who was going out of business donated the glass display cases still used in the museum. An addition was built in 1996 with money the Palmer Lake Historical Society received from the estate of Lena Royse, providing storage and administrative space.

A museum director, curator, and docents, all of whom are volunteers, operate the museum and are dedicated to preserving the past, as heritage for future generations. The museum houses many photos, articles, and artifacts of the historic Palmer Divide area. Displays are rotated every three to four months.

Museum hours are 10 am to 2 pm on Saturdays year-round and 1 pm to 4 pm on Wednesdays from June through August. We are located in Palmer Lake, at the corner of Lower Glenway and Valley Crescent Streets.

We have on display new model locomotives of the Denver & Rio Grand railroad circa 1882. The famous mountain lion "Old Disappearance" has taken up residence. Do stop by and see our comprehensive local history collection.

We operate under the auspices of the Palmer Lake Historical Society with our operating expenses mainly coming from donations. The Town of Palmer Lake generously provides the museum space and maintenance. The Town of Monument may make a significant donation for 2002 and beyond, helping the museum preserve and catalog our artifacts and archives.

Our phone number is 559-0837. If you wish to donate area artifacts, please give us a call.



The Palmer Lake Historical Society and the museum would like to thank the following businesses and individuals for their critical support for the 2001 year. We are truly grateful.

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- Sun West Communications
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- Tri Lakes Women's Org
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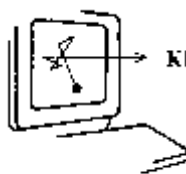
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The Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts in Palmer Lake proudly presents "Astral Bodies"

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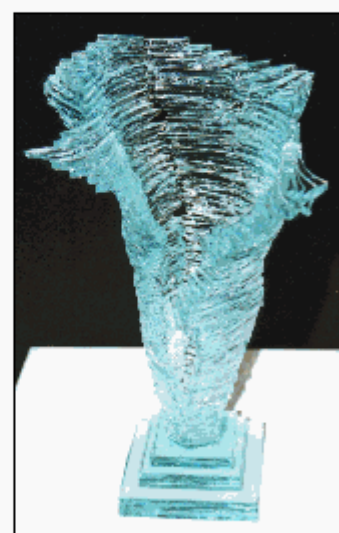
Frozen in Time by Colin Lowe
Albany, Australia

This art show, juried by Avery Anderson of Maine and Brock Craig of British Columbia and curated by local glass artist Gale Bez, is the first *glass only* art exhibition to be offered in the Tri-Lakes/Colorado Springs area.

The 80 pieces of glass gathered for this exciting show comes from an international selection of artists. Colin Lowe of Australia created an ethereal cast glass piece especially for this venue. Colin said, "*Frozen in Time* represents that suspended moment of shock and horror when I watched on television as the World Trade Towers come down." Colin has requested the purchase monies from his glass art be donated to the NYC Saint Joseph Hospital Trauma Fund. When Bob Leatherbarrow, a Canadian glass artist heard of Colin's donation, Bob also asked to donate the sale proceeds of his stunning *Disassembled Angel* glass work to the same NYC charity. These two pieces will be sold by silent bid auction.

Astral Bodies has evolved into far more than an art show. It is evidence of an outpouring of love and concern that unites our global art community, a sharing of our interlinked humanity.

Also included in Astral Bodies are B.J. Katz from Arizona showing her cast figurative work, Rick Jarvis, a nationally known hot-glass worker, Marc Leva and Ellen Abbott of Houston with their exquisite pate de verre work, and Kathy Bradford and Pati Walton two noted Colorado glass artists. Many regional glass artists are represented showing their varied glass forms and technique.



Vessel by Gale Bez
Black Forest

Open to the public. Free admission. The show runs through January 31st.

Classes

Guest Artist Series

- **Three day/pottery classes**, ages 16+, Mon, Feb 11-Apr 8, 12:30-3p, 3:30-6p, 6:15-8:45p
- **Beginning to Intermediate Pastels**, ages 16+, Wed, Jan 16 - Feb 20, 6:30-9:30p
- **Children's Clay**, ages 5-13, Sat, Feb 16-Mar 23, 10a-noon
- **Children's Art Exploration**, ages 5+, Thu, Jan 10-Mar 14, 4:30-6p
- **Beginner's Collage**, ages 16+, Wed, Jan 9-Feb 13, 2-3:30p

Art Class Series

- **Adult Figure Drawing**, ages 16+, Every Thu, 7-9p
- **Open Clay Studio**, ages 16+, Every Thu, 1-3p

Workshop Series

- **Healing through Artistic Expression**, all ages, Sun, Jan 20, Feb 10, Mar 10, 10a-5p
- **Exhibition Design & Installation**, all ages, Sat, Feb 16, 10a-noon
- **Exploring Methods of Surface Design in Clay**, ages 16+, Sat, Jan 5 & 12, 10a-1p, Jan 26, 10a-2p, Feb 2, 10a-noon
- **"Stars" Theater Performance Intensive**, Wed-Sat, Jan 2-5, 1-4p
- **Precious Metal Clay I**, ages 14+, Sat., Jan 19, 10a-5p
- **Precious Metal Clay II**, ages 14+, Sat, Feb 9, 10a-5p
- **Watercolor**, ages 16+, Fri-Sat, Jan 18-19, 9a-4p

Well-Being Series

- **Tai Chi for Life**, all ages, Sat, Jan 5-26, 1-2p and 2-3p
- **The Artist's Way**, ages 16+, Wed, Jan 2-Mar 20, 7-9p
- **Sixteen Dance Classes** in Ballet, Pre-Pointe, Jazz, Hip Hop, ages 6+, evenings. Bunny ballet, ages 4-5, Mon, Jan 7-Feb 25, 3p
- **"Stars" Theater Performance Troupe**, Middle School students, Mon, Jan 7-Feb 25, 4-6p
- **Modern Dance**, ages 6+, Mon, Jan 7-Feb 25, 6-7:15p

Classes have minimum and maximum enrollment.

Call or come to the Art Center for more information.



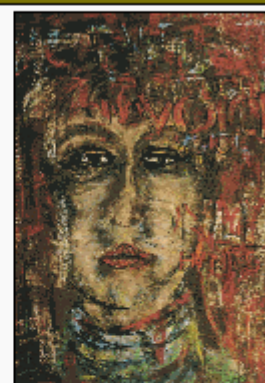
"In Your House - A People's History"

A Mixed Media Installation

By Amy Butowicz

In the Lucy Owens

Gallery through January 31st



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