

Issue #42 — Volume 4 Number 9 — Saturday, September 4, 2004

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Palmer Lake Town Council wrestles with water rates



August 12: Attorney Jim Kin administers the oath of office to newly appointed Palmer Lake Town Council member Trish Flake while council members Gary Coleman and Brent Sumner (left to right with backs to camera) an an estimated 70 residents watch. *Photo by Tim Hibbs*

By Tim Hibbs

The Palmer Lake Town Council, in response to feedback from town citizens, once again delayed proposed increases to the town's commercial and residential water rates. The Town Hall was filled to capacity for the Aug. 12 meeting.

More than a dozen speakers came forward to voice their opposition to the increases. The contentious 3½-hour meeting was recessed at one point by Mayor Nikki McDonald to bring order to the proceedings.

(Continued on page 2)

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Wescott FPD considers new alliances

|By Jim Kendrick

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District is considering an alternative alliance with the Black Forest, Falcon, and Cimarron Hills fire districts now that Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District (TLFPD) has repeatedly rejected Wescott's direct participation in Tri-Lakes' merger talks with Woodmoor/Monument. The Tri-Lakes board has also eliminated any option for Wescott participation in a closest force response agreement.

Although Wescott and Woodmoor/Monument signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in April that would have created an interim fire authority to unify operations between the two districts, Woodmoor/Monument abruptly initiated exclusive merger talks with Tri-Lakes in May. In June, Woodmoor/Monument asked Wescott to prepare a similar draft MOU that would have also included Tri-Lakes, but Tri-Lakes has repeatedly rejected the three-way MOU.

At the Woodmoor/Monument board meeting on Aug. 24, President Si Sibell, Vice-President Rod Wilson, and Treasurer Jeremy Diggins reversed their position on pursuing an MOU with Wescott. Each of the three advocated termination of the MOU with Wescott and said they now agree with statements made by TLFPD President Charlie Pocock and Treasurer John Hildebrandt over the past three months opposing Wescott's participation. Director Bob Harvey was

absent that night and newly appointed Director Bob Hansen said "I am uninformed on this issue" and was not ready to vote. A formal vote to terminate the two-way MOU was postponed by Sibell until September so these two W/MFPD board members would have a chance to vote on the termination.

In addition, Wescott Chief Bill Sheldon confirmed that Woodmoor/Monument Chief Dave Youtsey notified him that Tri-Lakes had written Wescott out of the closest force response (CFR) agreement with Woodmoor/Monument.

Wescott is interested in considering the alternative alliance, though Sheldon said there had been no formal discussions with the other three districts. He said he has had informal conversations with each of the chiefs of Black Forest, Falcon, and Cimarron Hills about increased cooperation. An informal meeting between the chiefs and chairs of the boards of Wescott and Black Forest was held at 7 p.m. on Sept. 1. No announcements were made after that session.

For more fire district news see page 20-25.

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PALMER LAKE AUG. 12 (Cont. from p1)

Liquor Licensing Authority Board:

The town council met first as the Palmer Lake Liquor Licensing Authority Board at 7 p.m. The Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts requested approval for a total of six events for the remainder of the year. No representative from the

center was present during the meeting. McDonald noted that the request was similar to past requests submitted by the center. However, Town Attorney Jim Kin advised that since the details of the request were contained in packets supplied to council members, a valid vote could be held.

Trustee Max Parker moved for acceptance of the request, which was seconded by Trustee Gary Coleman. The request was approved unanimously, and the Liquor Licensing Authority Board meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Town Council Meeting: The Town Council meeting was then called to order at 7:09 p.m. Kin administered the oath of office to Trish Flake, who immediately assumed her new duties as trustee.

Water Rates

At McDonald's request, Parker read the text of Ordinance 3-2004, the proposal to increase the basic commercial water rates. The ordinance modifies Sections 13 02.060 (B)(1) and (2) of the Palmer Lake Municipal Code and

Section 1, B(1) and (2) of Ordinance 11-2002. McDonald asked for comments from the board members and received none. McDonald then opened the meeting for comments from the audience.

Eddie Kinney said that residents are being asked to subsidize businesses with this rate increase because they do not pay a use rate of at least \$6.70 per 1,000 gallons, which the town has said is its cost to produce water. The use rate for commercial taps is \$2 per 1,000 gallons. Kinney asked, "Why should commercial business get by cheaper?" He contended that commercial rates should be raised to at least the same level as residential rates.

Resident Charlie Pocock complained that there was only one citizen on the Water Committee, then acknowledged that Flake was also a citizen member. (However, Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department Chief Julie Lokken also serves as a citizen volunteer on the Water Committee.) The Water Committee was formed after the July 8 Town Council meeting to provide citizen input on the rate increase proposals.

Pocock started to review the history of the committee but then deferred to Flake, at her request. Flake reviewed the water update handout she had written and distributed at the meeting. She stated that the handout serves as minutes of the Water Committee meetings and indicates the amount of work done by the committee and the rate changes the committee had agreed to.

Pocock said he disagreed with the committee's conclusions from their second meeting. He stated that he agreed more closely with the proposal offered in a mailing titled the Palmer Lake Independent News sent to town residents. After a lengthy presentation on which water figures and costs he agreed with and which town figures he thought were erroneous, Pocock suggested that the proposed rate increases be continued to a future meeting and asked that the Water Committee meet again to reexamine the available data on water usage and rates.

In response, McDonald noted that \$133,000 exists in the town's water capital improvement fund, which is not enough to cover the costs of a serious failure in the infrastructure. She stated that there are few remaining tap fees (30-60) that may be available in the future due to build-out, and they will add little money to the water capital improvement fund. Only five tap fees had been assessed to date for 2004.

She said the basic rates bring in only about \$180,000, which is \$200,000 short of the requirement to stay out of the red. Increased costs for water treatment chemicals, more stringent and frequent water testing, higher electricity costs for the new well, and the need to expand cash reserves to cover repairs all influenced the proposed plans. McDonald also stated that a predictable revenue stream is needed to develop an effective

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(Continued on page 4)

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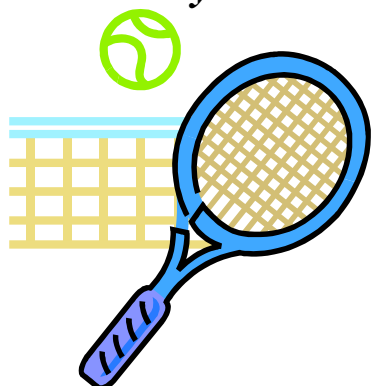


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Augie Mendoza recently moved to Tri-Lakes and hails from *San Antonio, Texas*. His background in kids programs and non-profit sport and character building programs is too lengthy to mention here. Come on down at any of our events to meet these two exceptional individuals!

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PALMER LAKE AUG. 12 (Continued from page 2)

budget for the town. She asked, "What if we have three years of above average rainfall and water usage goes down? Where will the money for operating costs and maintenance come from?"

Several residents voiced other concerns to the board. Sue Coons asked if the 5,000-gallon base water allocation could be used without restrictions. She also expressed some frustration in getting answers to her questions at town council meetings. Susan Miner said commercial users attract visitors who generate sales tax revenue, then suggested that by continuing the decision, more citizens would get involved.

Rogers Davis said the new well had a 350-gallon-per-minute output and suggested that the board take off the watering restriction. "We have the water. Just open the tap. Get rid of the restriction. The way to make revenue is to open the tap." Parker replied there is still a drought despite the increase in rain and that unrestricted water use might drain the reservoir, forcing the town to supply a higher amount of much more expensive well water.

Eric Dale contended that most of the town's residents found out about the rate increases by the notation made on their August water bills. Dave Davidson said he attended the Water Committee meetings but was not allowed to speak since he wasn't a committee member. He said he was appalled by the way the last town hall meeting was run and that the town had too many employees.

Richard Harding asked how much well capacity was being used, then said the town should "open the valve and see what happens." Several people commented about errors in figures published by the town on balances in the water enterprise and capital improvement accounts.

Sherry Brown asserted that the town needs to be run as a business, and the council has a fiduciary duty

to its citizens. Brown noted that there are many private wells in the area and felt that well owners should also be required to pay a part of the cost of developing and maintaining public water facilities.

Trustee Gary Coleman noted in response that he was a well owner, and was already paying for the bond issue that funded the new well. He further stated that the costs to operate, maintain, and deepen his well as the aquifer drops come directly from his own pocket and not from the town.

Anne Jones said that the basic fees should cover minimum operating expenses if minimal usage continues, plus enough to build the repair and maintenance reserve to an acceptable level over a short period. If usage does increase, use rates should cover the non-linear costs of additional treatment and operational expenses of wear on infrastructure, plus the very high costs to supplement low-cost reservoir surface water with electrically pumped high-cost well water.

Parker stated that when citizens were asked at the July meeting to volunteer for the Water Committee, only three people responded. He also noted that a water expert attended the first committee meeting and found that the rates proposed for Palmer Lake were "reasonable" when compared to similar Colorado communities. Flake and Parker acknowledged the inaccuracies in the published figures and stated that they should have been validated before presenting them to the public. Flake committed to check similar information in the future before publicizing it.

The meeting turned acrimonious as town residents continued to present their points of view. Several residents stated that they didn't feel all the facts had been presented for analysis and also suggested that votes on the two rate proposals be postponed. After a particularly heated exchange between members of the board and attendees, McDonald recessed the meeting for 15 minutes to let tempers cool.

After the meeting resumed, with a police officer present and tempers settled, resident Kim Makower announced that he was the publisher of Palmer Lake Independent News, a two-page bulk mail flyer. The single sheet of standard-size paper had listed an alternative rate proposal that advocated a lower base amount of water to keep the base rate as low as possible. He said he supported the motion to table the increases so there could be more citizen review.

McDonald noted that several people who had contributed to the \$430 Makower said he had received had told her they were upset because they thought they had made a charitable contribution to the town's water fund. Miner said there had been no names listed on Makower's flyer, that it used unidentified sources, and did not provide balanced input to the discussion.

The council unanimously tabled the residential and commercial rate increase ordinances. Trustee Chuck Cornell's motion to lift the current watering restrictions failed due to lack of a second. A list was passed around to obtain more citizen volunteers for the next Water Committee meeting. Of the 70 residents in attendance, 11 signed up.

Committee Reports

Roads: Coleman read a letter from Palmer Lake Police Officer Rob Hamilton thanking Roads Supervisor Bob Radosevich for his help in arresting a fugitive on Starview Road.

Meadow Lane Extension: Developer Randy Jones asked the board for direction on whether to move the trees in the street right-of-way that neighboring property owners don't want to see removed or to re-route the extension of Meadow Lane to the edge of the current right-of-way to leave as many trees in place as possible. Jones recently resigned as the PLTC Roads Trustee because of the continuing controversy regarding his development of this parcel. Several

(Continued on page 5)

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PALMER LAKE AUG. 12 (Cont. from page 4)

Westward Lane residents provided comments to the council.

Resident Tom Martinez expressed concern about wetland and floodplain issues within Jones' development. He said the earth-work Jones had done had resulted in flooding at his house and that there is significant erosion around the wetland already. He asked the town to compel Jones to follow all proper procedures to assure compliance with applicable regulations and guidelines.

Resident Tim Nolan concurred with Martinez. He discussed the flooding in the area in 1997 and spoke at length of the town's obligation not to make the adjacent floodway more dangerous to neighboring homeowners. Coons observed that she had frequently spoken to the council on this issue for four years. She said it was "only yesterday" that a trustee (Coleman) came out to look at her property, and that no neighboring property owners were notified of the visit so they could talk to him while he was there.

Rich Frane said that a six-foot culvert feeds into his one-foot culvert and that he had dug a 230-foot ditch by hand to keep his house from being washed away. He added that erosion had created a six-foot hole on Nolan's property and that creation of more roofs, driveways, and roads would make flooding more likely and dangerous.

Jones responded by saying "To begin with, I'm the culprit." He said the development had been built to the specifications the town had set forth and also those of Kevin Stilson of Regional Floodplain Management. He acknowledged that sediment had covered a neighbor's patio. He said he didn't believe he should be required to go through a full planning hearing process with the Planning Commission and Town Council just to move his road within the already approved right-of-way (platted in 1955). "If it's okay with the Army Corps of Engineering, why do I need your approval?"

Kin said the Planning Commission needs to investigate the need for a variance, and the Town Council needs to determine that Jones is in compliance. Therefore, Jones should make a standard application that would be handled by a normal review process.

Revitalization: Miner said she is attempting to organize an effort to revitalize Highway 105 as a "Main Street, USA" type project in order to qualify for grants to make improvements to the business center of the town. She asked the town if it would provide a 50 percent match to a state grant to hire consultants to develop plans for Main Street type improvements. Parker recommended that the matching funds come from local business owners who would directly benefit from these improvements. Any other funds needed for the match would have to be budgeted for in 2005.

Fire: Chief Lokken asked the council to decide whether or not volunteer firefighters can

have red or red/blue emergency lights on their privately owned vehicles. Kin noted that deciding to allow the lights won't change the town's legal relationship with the volunteers and probably won't affect its insurance rates. He cautioned, however, that the town could incur liability if the permit process isn't properly followed, and insurance rates could increase.

Flake noted that the lights would not decrease volunteer response time, and Trustee Brent Sumner recommended against the proposal. Parker made a motion, seconded by Sumner, to recommend a no vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Other: Parker noted that he has been working on a \$60,000 grant for an Emergency Response Plan, and the grant is currently in the second phase of the process. Notice was given of the Palmer Divide Public Safety Group Homeland Security exercise drill at Centennial Park west of the lake. The exercise was scheduled for Aug. 14.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.



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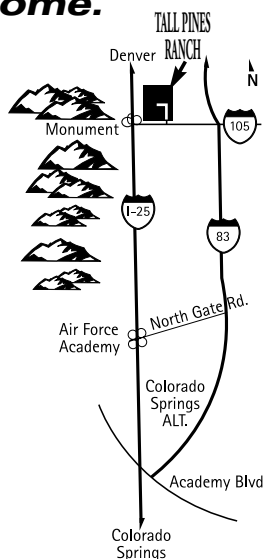
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11 2.50 acres	20 2.50 acres	29 2.50 acres	34 2.77 acres			
10 2.50 acres	21 2.50 acres	28 2.50 acres	35 2.50 acres	40 2.62 acres	49 2.71 acres	
9 2.51 acres	22 2.50 acres	27 2.60 acres	36 2.51 acres	39 2.86 acres	50 2.71 acres	
8 2.50 acres	23 2.50 acres	26 2.50 acres	37 2.52 acres	38 2.52 acres	51 2.61 acres	
7 2.50 acres	24 2.50 acres	25 2.50 acres	3 3.40 acres	2 3.40 acres	1 3.40 acres	52 2.54 acres
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PALMER-LAKE AUG. 5 (Continued from page 6)

needed to supplement the flow. Water usage, however, is up considerably for this time of year. He added that the Colorado drought monitoring Web site still shows that the state is in severe drought.

Owners of the Willow Creek townhouse development on Highway 105 are requesting a commercial account for outside water. Water usage in the development is up because it has planted more grass than originally agreed upon and because bluegrass is being used. Bluegrass is very water intensive. Each unit has its own interior residential tap, but the community association waters the common areas.

Cornell noted that the rate for "outside" commercial water is the same as the residential rate, and that the community association would be required to purchase a commercial tap at an additional cost of \$20,000 while realizing no savings. However, Cornell stated that commercial water rates are going to be revisited in upcoming council meetings, so the new residential and commercial water rate ordinances can be put into effect at the same time, tentatively the September billing cycle.

Mayor's report: Mayor Nikki McDonald noted that the town office staff is short-handed over the next two weeks because of vacations. Interviews for a receptionist will begin once all staff members have returned.

Business Licenses: Scott Mitchell requested a license for his business, Burning Magpie Art Glass, a commercial stained glass company, to be temporarily located at his residence, 2547 Rocky Ford Drive. Mitchell noted that he had not yet found a satisfactory and affordable commercial location. Trustees asked a number of questions about the location of the home business, impact on neighbors, materials used, glass and lead waste disposal, and future expansion plans.

Since the business is to be located in a private residence, the town's attorney would need to be consulted about adding restrictions to the business license that would limit the volume of production from that location. Flake asked Mitchell to bring documentation to the Aug. 12 Town Council meeting showing that his landlord, who lives next door, approves of him starting up this business within the residence. McDonald said the town attorney would be suggesting conditions to his license that will require him to move to a commercial space once the business reaches a transitional level. The council will vote on Mitchell's application at the Aug. 12 meeting.

Rod Snow requested vacation of an interior lot line easement for lots 5 and 6 in the Lakeview Heights neighborhood. Coleman noted that such requests are not considered in the town council workshops. He said Snow would need to attend the Aug. 12 council meeting and secure all approvals by the time the application is submitted.

Water Rates: In response to citizen requests, the trustees at the July 8 Town Council Workshop formed a Water Committee to gather data and present further information on proposed ordinances to raise commercial and residential water rates. This committee met on July 14 and 20, and developed a summary document that was distributed to the public. From this input, Town Ordinances 3-2004 (increasing the basic commercial rates) and 4-2004 (increasing the basic residential rates) were developed. Both ordinances would go into effect with the September 2004 billing cycle. Each requires that, starting in 2005, rates be reviewed annually at the August or September Town Council meeting.

McDonald said the town was "not

trying to do something to anyone. This is for everybody." Planning Commissioner Gary Atkins remarked that growth in the town without growth of the budget would lead to severe budgetary problems because of the future costs of maintaining new infrastructure created by developers. He said water rate increases were inevitable with new and aging pipes and wells. McDonald stated that if the town goes bankrupt, the state, rather than the county, would take over services and that the rate increase should surprise no one.

Resident Kim Makower read four questions and answers e-mailed to him by Charlie Pocock, one of the three citizen members of the Water Committee. Pocock contended that, rather than losing money for the last five years as stated at a previous council meeting, the Water Department has consistently operated at a profit. Pocock said that production costs for water equaled \$6.50 per 1,000 gallons, but commercial users are only being charged \$2 per 1,000 gallons. He suggested that a more equitable system be put in place and wrote that not all information relevant to the proposals has been made available to the public.

Lokken, acting as a private citizen volunteer on the Water Committee, disagreed with Pocock's premises and conclusions, saying they may be based on bad data. McDonald concurred, saying some charts used by the committee had incorrect rate information. Lokken said that all three of the committee's citizen representatives agreed that basic water rates needed to increase. She asked the trustees to revisit the commercial overage rate structure and ensure that it would be sufficient to cover costs of production.

Residential rates were scheduled for a vote at the Aug. 12 meeting. Further discussion of the commercial rate increase is likely to postpone a vote on that ordinance. Berreth indicated that notice of the increase in residential water rates, scheduled to begin on Sept. 1, had been printed on cards distributed to all town water users.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. The next PLTC Workshop will be held at 7 p.m. in Town Hall on Sept. 2. PLTC Workshop meetings are normally held the first Thursday of the month.

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Monument Board of Trustees meeting Aug. 16

By Jim Kendrick

On Aug. 16, the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) approved the metropolitan service district plan proposed for the Walhborg addition that was annexed by the town on Aug. 2. The board also heard requests for eight scheduled guests and approved a regulation change for kiosk and mobile businesses. Trustee George Case's letter of resignation from the BOT was accepted with regret.

The BOT is seeking applications for a replacement trustee. Inquiries by potential candidates should be made to Town Manager Rick Sonnenburg at 884-8012 or by e-mail to rsonnenburg@townofmonument.com.

Quarterly water report: Former Mayor Betty Konarski is the town's representative and reported on activities of the Palmer Divide Water Group and the El Paso County Water Authority. The authority has funded three ground-water resource evaluations to enhance understanding of groundwater

flow and aquifer storage in the Denver basin, effects of pumping from Denver Basin aquifers on water levels and interactions between ground water and surface water, and the development of effective water level monitoring. Also being developed by the authority is a revised "Transit-loss Model" that will more accurately predict and measure the amount of water that is delivered to the Arkansas River by the five various water regions contributing to the flows in Monument and Fountain Creeks.

The Palmer Divide Water Group is working with the Colorado Water Conservation Board on a study to secure a drought-proof water supply to the region. The northern providers subgroup is working with water attorneys Halepaska and Company to maximize the benefit of coordinating the uses of treated water discharged by regional wastewater treatment facilities. The group is also advocating full capture of the state's consumptive rights of Colorado River water.

Police station: Resident Rick Squires has applied to be on the sub-committee of the Police Advisory Committee that will help design a new police station. He was project manager for construction of the World Arena and Plaza of the Rockies in Colorado Springs.

Street closures: The BOT unanimously approved a resolution that authorizes the closure of Adams Street south of the last house on the morning of Sept. 18 from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. for the health fair sponsored by the Grace Best Elementary PTO. The board also unanimously approved a request from High Country Store to close Washington Street in front of the store on Sept. 11 from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. to hold a "High Country Chili Cook Off."

Mountain Farmer: Owner Nom Hellbusch asked the board for guidance on how to seek vacation of the Third Street right-of-way between the railroad tracks and Mitchell Avenue that also serves as the entrance driveway to his Mountain Farmer garden

supply business. He was advised to consult with the planning staff on the documentation and forms required to initiate the legal review through the planning commission and BOT.

Grant: Lee Kilbourn sought \$3,000 of BOT discretionary funding for an application for a 50 percent matching grant from the state for organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring. The state will offer 16 of these grants to Colorado communities with populations under 20,000. The \$6,000 would pay for four consultants to enhance the downtown area as a Mainstreet grant candidate in the future. The board unanimously approved the \$3,000 match.

Tri-Lakes Cares: Executive Director Judith Pettibone requested that up to \$26,236 of town construction fees be waived on the new Tri-Lakes Cares building to be built on Jefferson Street. Requested fee waivers included land use permit fee of \$100, the 2 percent use tax of \$2,406, traffic impact fee of \$10,825, drainage impact fee of \$3,905, and water tap fee of \$9,000. Attorney Paul Durbin noted that some or all of these fees are waived for other public service buildings such as churches and schools. Tri-Lakes Cares has outgrown its 3,400 square foot office space in the D-38 Big Red building. Town Planner Mike Davenport said the planning staff would draft a recommendation on which, if any, fees might be waived.

D-38 land dedication: Superintendent Dave Dilley asked the board to assist him in getting the Jackson Creek developers to complete the required dedication of land called for in the Regency Park annexation agreement. He said it called for a dedication of 25 acres and an option for 7.5 acres more within five years of the first dedication. The landowners dedicated 7.0 acres of the 27 acres Creekside Middle School was built on and took a tax deduction for the rest of this acreage as a donation. D-38 has taken the position that the donated land does not count against the 32.5-acre dedication total. The landowners' position is that the school has received 27 acres of the requirement already and owes it only the small remainder of 32.5 acres. D-38 needs 34 acres for the expansion of Lewis-Palmer High School, if the ballot issue for a separate building is passed in November. The trustees took the position that this is an issue between the Jackson Creek landowners and D-38 only on advice of Town Attorney Gary Shupp. He said the wording of the Regency Park annexation documents and current town regulations differ and only a court could

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decide what D-38 is entitled to. A few days after the BOT session, D-38 filed a lawsuit against the landowners and the town seeking a court order for dedication of about 24.5 acres.

Mobile business regulations: Karen and Tim Evans, owners of Chick and a Windshield, objected to the Planning Commission's recommendation to limit kiosk or mobile parking lot businesses to only three locations within town limits. The board agreed unanimously, allowing up to three locations to be approved administratively by town planning staff, but requiring the fourth and subsequent locations to be reviewed by the Planning Commission and BOT.

Franchise Fee letter: Board members chastised a representative of Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA) regarding a letter the association sent out to its customers regarding an uncollected 3 percent franchise fee. In 1995, the town passed the franchise fee on all utilities on residential and commercial billings. MVEA has never collected the fee and sent out the letter when the town inquired about where the nine years of revenue was. MVEA has taken the position that they only can remit the tax they have collected which to date is zero. Board members voiced their objections to the MVEA representative saying their letter appeared to blame the town for wanting nine years of back taxes. They said MVEA should pay the back taxes without collecting them from users. None of the board members participated in passing the franchise fee or even knew of it until recently. The statute of limitations on back taxes is six years. No action was taken by either side but a meeting between the town manager and MVEA general manager was suggested. Treasurer Judy Skrzypek asked that MVEA cease referring customer inquiries to her.

Wahlborg: The board narrowly approved formation of a metropolitan district within the recently annexed Wahlborg addition by a vote of 4-2 with trustees George Brown and Gail Drumm opposed. They expressed concern about creating another situation similar to the high debt of Triview Metropolitan District and questioned how the mill levy could generate enough revenue to pay the salaries of full-time district personnel. No citizen spoke in opposition. The metro district service plan calls for the district to perform all municipal services other than police, water, and sewer and be funded by a mill levy not to exceed 35 mills. The metro district will also perform several services typically assumed by homeowner associations as well. Community metro districts are becoming more common in small Colorado towns. The town will now be provided sewer service by five districts, fire by two districts, water by two districts, and road maintenance and snow removal by two districts.

In other actions the board

unanimously approved:

- Preparation of a mini-grant application to Greater Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) for an amount under \$40,000 to ensure that the town would have sufficient matching funds remaining in the BOT discretionary fund if awarded in 2004.
- Preparation of a GOCO construction grant application for \$96,000 with a town match of \$64,000 to fund the construction of restrooms at Limbach Park. A survey was conducted to enhance the grant application but only four of 1000 surveys mailed to residents were returned.
- A contract for \$150,446.40 for annual town asphalt maintenance.
- The joint Aetna health insurance policy for the employees of the town and Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District is up for renewal and all town employees picked the option with higher co-pays so the town's budgeted increase for health benefits would still cover the entire premium.
- Sonnenburg notified the board that

he had administratively approved a change order refunding \$525.10 by T. Lowell Construction, Inc. for a raw water line between well 9 and the water treatment facility at well 8.

- The July financial report that shows sales tax revenues were slightly higher than expected.
- Payments over \$5,000 including \$10,209.82 to GMS, Inc for engineering services and forwarding of \$15,656.60 in state-collected tax revenues to Triview Metropolitan District.
- A report by Skrzypek on the installation of computer servers in Town Hall and the Police Department.
- A payment of \$15,660.96 for road construction to SchmidtConstruction Company.
- A payment of \$10,986 for relocation and utility connections for a 12 foot by 24 foot portable building donated by D-38 to

the rear parking area of the Police Department.

- Appropriation of up to \$30,000 for the entry display to be constructed on the southwest corner of Second Street and Highway 105. The additional \$5,218.90 requested for three flagpoles and illuminating lights was not approved.
- The liquor license renewal request of the Jackson Creek Chinese Restaurant.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 p.m. The next meeting is on Tuesday, Sept. 7 at Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Sept. 6 is a holiday. BOT meetings are normally held on the first and third Monday of the month.



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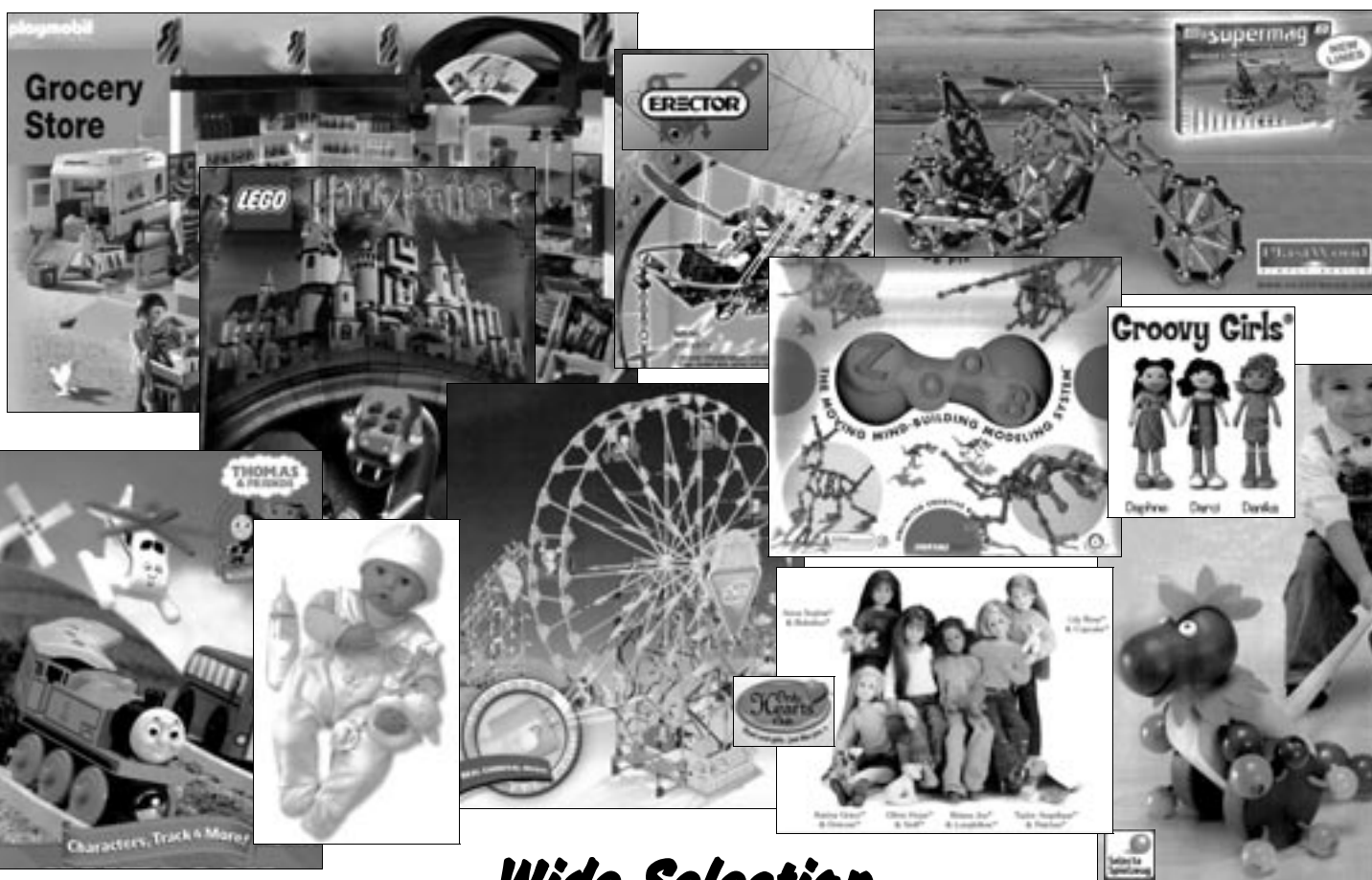
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Monument Planning Commission meeting Aug. 11

By Jim Kendrick

The Monument Planning Commission once again has returned to a full membership of seven commissioners with the appointments of Eric Johnson and John Kortgardner, plus alternate Tim Davis.

A dozen Lariat Ranch residents complained that Vision Development's new alignment for Kitchener Road southwest of Leather Chaps destroys their views (which they paid \$5,000 to \$18,000 to protect) and that spacing from major roads is now reduced.

New Commissioners Seated

The newly appointed commissioners were provided 3-inch thick loose-leaf binders containing a variety of subdivision and zoning regulations, local and regional development plans, and numerous planning and special district maps. Commissioners Ed Delaney and Larry Neddo were absent.

Jackson Creek Plans

Vision Development's Rick Blevins gave an overview of his company's plans and issues for the build-out of northeast Jackson Creek. His discussion focused on the area north and east of Creekside Middle School to Higby Road and their compliance with the third amended zoning plan for Regency Park. He said 28 of the 223 acres will be devoted to parks, trails, and open space. Although Vision Development could build 707 dwelling units with the current zoning, they are planning for 599.

When asked when an elementary school would be built, Blevins said the houses are being built but they are not filled with kids. Many of the streets zoned Planned Residential Development-2 (PRD-2) are empty-nest homes, he said. The landowner has already given 27 acres of land to District 38. The future elementary school site is adjacent to Creekside Middle School on its west side. The original 10-acre elementary school site northwest of Leather Chaps and Kitchener is now mouse habitat.

Town Planner Mike Davenport said that District 38 was updating its plans regarding area elementary and high school construction, but the issue remains unresolved. Chairman Lowell Morgan asked if cash-in-lieu of dedicated land was part of the negotiations. Davenport said that Regency Park dedication and donation rules apply to this situation and they differ from town rules. These rules are defined in the town's intergovernmental agreement on annexation of Regency Park, which includes Jackson Creek.

Commissioner Jim Thresher noted that parks remain inadequate and said, "Kids go from the Classic area to the Keller park," referring to the two homebuilders' separate subdivisions. Commissioner Kathy Spence said that Jackson Creek's lack of parks is similar to the shortage of parks at Highlands Ranch, where the development spans several miles with only tiny pocket parks. She said Blevins should make the development "desirable."

Blevins briefly discussed the improvements his company is making in widening Baptist Road between Jackson Creek Parkway and the northbound ramps of I-25. He said the beginning of "temporary" or "throwaway" improvements to ease congestion has been held up by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department (FWL) never approving their mouse habitat mitigation plan for this short segment of the roadway. Originally, the widening of the road to four lanes was to have been completed before Home Depot opened. Then the completion date slipped to Dec. 31, six months after the store opened. There is no longer an estimated date for completion of the widening construction.

The phrase "throwaway" refers to the fact that the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will destroy this widened road segment if or when they rebuild the interchange. CDOT has already approved the proposed interim widening plan. However, it appears likely that no funding for the permanent interchange improvement will be available for at least 10 to 12 years.

On the other hand, Blevins noted, if the mouse is de-listed, the process will likely take five to 10 years. The issue is further complicated by a recent FWL announcement that they may change the name of the mouse to one that may be considered endangered in an even larger area—extending from the existing southern boundary in Colorado Springs beyond the current northern boundary in Wyoming into Montana.

273 Washington Street

Owner and Monument resident Stephen Walsh sought approval of a use by special review for this house that has been rented for the past three years as a commercial business. Walsh is seeking the option to rent it as a residence. He wants the temporary rezoning because local banks considered the building "business only" and would not refinance the loan under that condition. Town regulations require a hearing process in order for a commercial building to be used as a residence, even if it is actually a house.

Planner Mike Davenport reviewed all the conditions that must be met for BOT approval of this "conditional" use, saying the building met them. He also noted that the Parks and Landscaping Committee had recommended that the shed in the backyard be painted as a condition of approval. This area of downtown is zoned mixed use, meaning residential and commercial. The commission unanimously approved his request, with the shed painting condition.

Lariat Ranch Filing No. 3

Thresher recused himself from consideration of the final plat and final PD site plan for Lariat Ranch Filing No. 3 and took a seat in the audience.

Blevins presented Vision Development's plans

for the final phase of Lariat Ranch, which lies north and west of the completed phases of Lariat Ranch and south of Creekside Middle School and extensive mouse habitat. The proposal calls for 98 semi-custom homes and six landscape tracts for open space and trails. The proposed density is 2.54 dwelling units per acre, although the zoning (PRD-4) allows up to four per acre.

Blevins again referred to the substantial impact the mouse has had on the original plans for Jackson Creek, and said the fire station and police station in the original plan would likely be adjacent to the planned electrical substation to the north.

He also listed changes that had been made in direct response to residents' concerns. Concerns included:

- Standing water that may be a breeding ground for West Nile virus
- Sheriff's office intervention in the bulldozing of scrub oak groves
- Loss of open space
- Heavy construction trucks running stop signs on Leather Chaps (despite reports to Monument police)
- Heavy machinery endangering children
- Need for parks and trails to serve existing homes
- Planned pocket parks too small to be used by anyone
- Not knowing the area would be changed from the original plat
- Effects on views at existing homes and lots bordering the new filing
- Grading along the edge of Kitchener Road
- Issuing of construction permits without seeing the final grading plan
- Smaller distance between Kitchener Road and existing western Oxbow Drive houses than originally planned
- Blowing dirt during construction, causing illness to people with allergies
- Lack of common area maintenance
- Noise from construction
- Impact on the mouse (many Preble's mice were found dead in window wells after grading)

The most controversial issue was the concern of homeowners on Oxbow Drive, next to the new filing, who had paid premium lot fees of up to \$18,000 to Keller Homes and felt that the new construction would destroy the "protected views" of Mount Herman and the Palmer Divide that they had paid for. Blevins said several times that he would attempt to have the homebuilders in the new filing limit the height of their homes, but they should seek redress from Keller, who built their homes, and their real estate agents who may not have protected their interests.

The commissioners and Town Attorney Gary Shupp agreed in general with Blevins' position of "buyer beware," but were sympathetic to their concerns. They suggested that the citizens with view issues should seek redress from Keller Homes, noting the town could not help them. Morgan noted that a precedent had been set in establishing a requirement for one-story houses on some lots in the Carriage Project.

Blevins and Davenport responded to a number of concerns and questions from adjacent homeowners. One question that remained unresolved for the citizens was the grade and path of Kitchener Road, which has changed since the original platting due to mouse habitat. Kitchener now intersects with Leather Chaps farther south than originally planned, and the contours of the land force the road's surface to be much higher than originally planned.

Kitchener will now be much closer to the back fences of the homes on Oxbow instead of over 100 feet as originally planned. The road surface will be at or above the level of their ground floor windows. The steep grade of the Kitchener Road drainage ditches will mar their view and could create storm water runoff problems. Blevins said the road must rise to the level of the existing Kitchener intersection on the opposite side of Leather Chaps and not exceed a 4 percent grade. After the meeting, these residents

(Continued on page 11)



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discussed the options they would have if they were to sue Keller.

After the public hearing was closed, Morgan expressed dismay over the impact of piecemeal development by different developers; the other commissioners concurred. Davenport said that Police Chief Joe Kissell would have the dump truck/stop sign issue revisited, that Town Engineer Tony Hurst would inspect the grading, and that he would contact the county health department to notify them of stagnant pooling of drainage water around the site. Blevins requested a meeting with all the concerned homeowners before the BOT meeting on Sept. 7.

The commission voted 3-1-1 to approve the final plat and final PD site plan, with Kortgardner opposed and Thresher angrily abstaining. Thresher then returned to his seat at the commissioners' table after a recess at 9:45 p.m.

Zoning and subdivision regulation change

Background: Davenport has been working on creating a single integrated and consistent zoning and subdivision document. He had hoped to have it completed before the April election, but the previous BOT had not finished the approval. A number of individual regulations have been changed.

Trustee Gail Drumm had previously requested that Davenport prepare a document that shows the original and final wording of every change to every regulation before the BOT votes on it. However, Davenport has said in the past that the amount of work involved in preparing a "before-after" document would be enormous. The previous Planning Commission had held hearings on all the revisions in the consolidated regulations for two years under the direction of then Chairman Dave Mertz, who is now a trustee. The planning staff has been three times as busy this year processing applications for numerous annexations and new subdivisions, and Assistant Planner Tamara Nazario recently moved out of town. Davenport has said he does not know when he will be able to complete the document Drumm has requested.

Action taken: The commission unanimously approved the following proposed changes:

- The definition of vehicle use area for a kiosk and mobile parking lot business (applies to licensing of businesses such as hot dog cart vendors and parking lot windshield repair services)
- A new specification that all plans must additionally comply with Regional Building's Volume II of the Drainage Criteria Manual for El Paso County and Colorado Springs
- A four-page appendix that lists definitions of the standards for a traffic impact analysis for new construction
- Addition of a list of examples of the types of fire code standards builders must comply with, to encourage them to consult early with the fire marshal to avoid expensive changes
- Addition of a three-page appendix that lists water standards to make them more accessible to citizens and applicants

Shupp distributed a liability orientation briefing prepared by the town's insurance provider (CIRSA) for each commissioner to have as a reference. The commissioners asked Davenport to list the businesses that are considering building at Monument Marketplace. He said they include Wells Fargo Bank and

Kohl's. Another building will house a coffee shop, a mortgage company, and a Verizon cell phone outlet. He added that if Wal-Mart does decide to build a 200,000-square-foot store on Pad A, then the 50 percent completion threshold will have been met, and the

developer will begin construction of the clock tower.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m. The next meeting will be held at Town Hall on Sept. 8 at 6:30 p.m.

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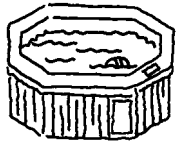
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Monument Parks and Landscape Committee Aug. 10

By Jim Kendrick

On Aug. 10, landscape architects Paul Poppert and Bryan Kniep of Land Patterns, Inc. presented their final draft proposal for the new downtown "Historic Monument" entrance signs to the Monument Parks and Landscape Committee. Their plan also included suggestions for other improvements along Second Street east of Beacon Lite Road.

The committee unanimously recommended the design to the Board of Trustees (BOT) and also recommended that the BOT approve unbudgeted structural engineering design work costing about \$1,000 as the next step toward completion of the project. Poppert and Kniep provided guidance on the appropriate types of plants and the amount of work that could be done by volunteers for ongoing maintenance and weeding of the plant beds.

The entrance signs are to be installed at the intersection of Highway 105 and Second Street using \$30,000 in community development funding. Any additional costs would be paid for with BOT discretionary funds. The larger sign is 20 feet wide and will be placed on the southwest corner, while the smaller 5-foot wide column sign will be on the northwest corner. The ledge-stone veneer is similar in style to the masonry on the recently constructed bridge over I-25, and the color is similar to that of Monument Rock. The cement will be a complimentary beige cream color.

There will be a variety of trees and plants that should provide color in spring, summer, and fall. Three flagpoles costing an additional \$5,000 were also added to the larger sign, two 30 feet tall and one 35 feet tall, in addition to the banner pole. The plants will be irrigated, and the sign and flag poles will be illuminated. The cost of the lighting equipment is included in the estimate, but the labor for installing it is not.

The design must also be approved by the

Colorado Department of Transportation, as it is in their right-of-way. The larger entrance display would cost approximately \$34,000, while the newly proposed smaller display would cost about \$14,000.

GOCO grant: The committee reviewed results of a citizen survey conducted by the town on preferred park improvements that will be part of a town application for another Greater Outdoors Colorado grant. Four surveys were returned out of 1,000 sent out to Monument addresses.

The recommendation of the committee parallels the survey result that the top priority is to expand and improve Limbach Park. The consensus was that there should be a new master plan that includes a new stage, consolidated playground equipment, off-street parking, and restroom facilities.

The committee also discussed the feasibility of seeking a one-year grant that would pay for a full-time employee to serve as a "Main Street" manager who would coordinate the town's new projects for Second Street and the businesses on cross streets. The committee then unanimously recommended a permanent parks manager position for the town.

Town Planner Mike Davenport responded to questions about the Public Works Department performing weed cutting instead of weed killing, the town's approval of the Wahlborg annexation proposal, which new stores might be built in the commercial area of the Wahlborg property and the Monument Marketplace, the status of Walgreen's inquiry about a downtown location, and whether the empty Rite Aid building might be filled.

There were no decisions on any of these issues. Davenport distributed a handout from the town's insurance provider (CIRSA) to committee members for their information.

The meeting adjourned at 8 p.m. Parks and Landscape Committee meetings are normally held at Town Hall on the second Tuesday of the month. Their next meeting will be held on Sept. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

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Monument Sanitation District Board meeting August 17

By Jim Kendrick

The board of the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) accepted the letter of resignation that board president Connie DeFelice submitted on Aug. 16. DeFelice said there was a conflict of interest between the board having to address actions regarding dissolution of the district and her husband, Sam, owning a number of sewer easements within the district. The board has 60 days to appoint a replacement director and will advertise for candidates. Lowell Morgan was elected to the vacated position of chair of the board.

Treasurer's report: Richard Pankratz has purchased a \$7,000 commercial restaurant tap for the 1,100 square-foot expansion of the Pankratz Art Gallery near Second Street and Beacon Lite Road. A grease interceptor has been installed so the space can be rented as a restaurant. The first tenant will finish the interior of the expansion to their specifications and determine the number of additional fixture units required.

Tap fee revenue has already slightly exceeded the amount budgeted for all of 2004. District Manager Mike Wicklund noted that since 1996, almost every sanitation district in the state has adopted a minimum requirement for pre-treatment of grease from restaurants. He noted that some older restaurants do not have grease interceptors due to "grandfather clauses," citing Director Jeremy Diggins' Coffee Cup Restaurant, where the only available space is under the street pavement in front of the building.

Diggins said a grease trap, which typically is inside a restaurant and holds up to about 40 pounds of grease, works well if kept clean. A grease interceptor is usually located outside the building and may hold 1,500 to 3,000 gallons. He added that an outside grease interceptor is usually the best choice for a restaurant. Wicklund said it is district policy to encourage in-depth pre-construction meetings with new building owners to ensure that all requirements have been discussed.

Copper Measurements: The Environmental Protection Agency and state Health Department are negotiating new standards for a variety of chemicals and metals in the treated wastewater discharged into Monument Creek. There have been a few measured values of test samples this year that exceeded the maximum amount of "potentially dissolved copper" (17.4 parts per billion), although all the most recent test samples from June were well below the average maximum test reading of 12.0 parts per billion.

Joint Use Committee: Morgan reviewed the outcome of the three-hour Joint Use Committee (JUC) meeting on Aug. 16. The committee consists of two board members each from MSD, Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, and Palmer Lake Sanitation District as well as some employees of the Tri-

Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF), located at the south end of Mitchell Avenue.

Morgan said the committee had a lengthy discussion on options regarding the testing for ultra-low limits of copper in the water discharged by the WWTF into Monument Creek. They concluded that a different testing protocol should be attempted using more completely decontaminated equipment and containers for sending the water samples to a consultant lab for testing. The deionized water used to clean the sampling equipment can have up to 10 times the allowable average concentration of copper (up to 120 parts per billion), and the plastic bottles used to store and ship the water samples are formed on copper molds that can also contaminate the inside of the bottles.

Morgan and Wicklund reported that the new ultra-low maximum limits have also caused many other sanitation districts to change testing methods as part of a "statewide learning curve." The district's lawyer, Tad Foster, is working on negotiations regarding the standards for a new WWTF permit, which must be renewed by November. The occasional high copper readings may have resulted from illegal waste dumping upstream of the WWTF, but a new testing regimen will still be enacted.

The new testing regimen will affect how future construction is designed at the WWTF. The MSD board decided they want a more precise contract with the designer of the building. The previous architect for this addition is no longer working on the project because of cost overruns he incurred without a written contract.

The addition as now proposed contains a foyer with a receptionist

station, three new offices, three lab work stations with appropriate firewalls and ventilation, and a conference room for JUC meetings. The MSD board would like to reduce the original design cost of \$600,000 to \$450,000 or less.

Dissolution of MSD: John Dominowski and Ernie Biggs submitted a revised form of application for dissolution of MSD after receiving proposed corrections of their first form from Secretary Glenda Smith. MSD attorney Larry Gaddis noted that there is no basis in law for the revised application's clause that restricts the transfer of MSD assets to the town of Monument, eliminating the option of another sanitation district—such as Woodmoor, Palmer Lake, or Donala—taking over.

Gaddis said he had consulted a law firm that specializes in special district formation and dissolution to verify his legal opinion on the Town of Monu-

ment restriction. Gaddis advised the board that it must do what is best for its constituents if MSD is dissolved, regardless of the desires of Dominowski and Biggs. Morgan concurred, noting that Woodmoor is already a co-owner of the WWTF and has five times more sewage flow than MSD, while the town has never been responsible for any sewer system.

Gaddis also said that MSD faced substantial legal costs in dissolving its relationship with the JUC as well as sewer line right-of-way owners. Wicklund said he had met with Biggs to try to resolve issues underlying the legal action.

Wicklund said Biggs adhered to the position that the board should allow the dissolution without any legal opposition or he would be forced to resurrect his newsletter called *Eye on Monument*

(Continued on page 14)





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Mon. Sanitation District (Continued from page 13)
that he and Dominowski published prior to the
Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) recall elec-
tion on Sept. 11, 2001. Biggs then sent Morgan an
e-mail stating the board should vote to dissolve
the district, with the same “Eye on Monument”
threat. Morgan was one of the trustees recalled in
that BOT election.

Morgan said Biggs should attend a board
meeting to discuss political issues, rather than
discuss them with MSD employees. Gaddis said
the most appropriate action by Dominowski and
Biggs would be to lobby for a change in legisla-
tion that would allow petitioners to direct who
should take over a dissolved district. Director
Jeremy Diggins said “having a vote of the people
is the way to go.”

Wicklund noted that only 75 percent of the
district lies within Monument’s boundaries—less
than the 85 percent minimum required for the
town to be able to unilaterally take over MSD.
However MSD only serves a third of the town’s
residents and is only one of five sewer districts
serving Monument residents.

Diggins said all the special districts should
go away. Wicklund said that very few small towns
in Colorado provide their own water or sewer
services, relying on special districts to provide
these utility operations. He added that if the town
had followed the district’s advice and annexed
the Zonta parcel south of Wakonda Hills, they
would have the minimum 85 percent of land area
required to take over unilaterally. Wicklund said
that the special districts are more efficient in pro-
viding water than the town has been.

Wicklund reported that the new sewer ease-
ments for the new SDK buildings by Mitchell Av-

enue have been recorded. The board unanimously
approved the new connections. The board also
unanimously approved the preliminary drainage
plans that will be submitted to the town as part
of the Trails End annexation package. The parcel
is adjacent to the southern and western boundar-
ies of the Villages of Monument subdivision and
extends from the west edge of Old Denver High-
way across the railroad tracks. The portion west
of the railroad tracks and along the parcel’s south
border is mostly mouse habitat. The discussion on
creation of zero discharge permits was deferred to
the next board meeting.

While confirming who would attend the
statewide Special District Association conference
in September, Diggins said he may miss the next
two board meetings for his wedding and honey-
moon respectively. Diggins said his fiancé is an
employee of Biggs. Diggins purchased the Coffee
Cup Restaurant from Dominowski after manag-
ing it for him. Dominowski owns the shopping
center that includes the Coffee Cup, and Diggins
rents the space for the restaurant from him.

On Aug. 26 Biggs and Dominowski brought
in a third form of application to dissolve the dis-
trict. This document also directs that MSD assets
should be taken over by the town even though the
district has informed them that state statutes don’t
allow petitioners to choose the entity that would
take over a district’s assets. It is Gaddis’s legal
opinion that the statutes instruct the board of
directors to decide “in good faith” which entity is
best suited to take over the services and assets of
a dissolved district.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. The next
meeting is on Sept. 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the district
office at 130 Second St. The MSD meetings are
held on the third Tuesday of the month.



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Triview metro district board meeting Aug. 25

By John Heiser

At its regular meeting Aug. 25, the Triview Metropolitan District Board of Directors approved \$12,000 to improve traffic safety at Creekside Middle School as a response to concerns raised by Jackson Creek resident Patty Abraham. The board also discussed the status of various developments within the district, including improvements at Homestead Park, being coordinated by Jackson Creek resident Tonya Bjurstrom, and the \$724,000 overrun on the cost to construct the roads and other infrastructure needed for the Monument Marketplace. Byron Glenn, Monument Mayor and husband of Triview director Julie Glenn, Lewis-Palmer School District 38 superintendent Dave Dilley, and transportation manager Hal Garland also attended the meeting.

Creekside Middle School Traffic Safety Issues

Abraham said her son is in the sixth grade at Creekside. She expressed concern about traffic safety at the middle school when parents are dropping off or picking up children. She noted that there is significant traffic congestion. She added that some parents are parking in the driving lanes and children are crossing between cars. Abraham said the school zone signs on Leather Chaps are too close to the school to be optimal. She concluded, "I would hate to see an accident or fatality."

Ron Simpson, manager of the Triview district, cited the recent completion of Leather Chaps Drive to Jackson Creek Parkway, the start of the school year, and the increase in enrollment at the school as contributing factors to the problem but said, "This is more than just a school opening awareness issue." He called for cooperation between the Triview district, Lewis-Palmer school district, and the town.

Simpson said that Roger Miller, traffic engineer with Triview district's engineering consultant Nolte and Associates, reviewed the situation and defined four steps for addressing the problem.

1. Revised traffic patterns to reduce congestion near the school, at a cost of about \$2,500 for signs, curb and gutter, and restriping of some of the parking areas.
2. Add in-street pedestrian crossing signs and flashing lights to the school warning signs, at a cost of about \$5,800.
3. Add a four-way stop at Leather Chaps and Creekside Drive, at a cost of about \$300.

4. Install pedestrian-activated crossing signals on Leather Chaps Drive at a cost of about \$115,000.

Simpson said he supported steps 1 and 2 but expressed concern about steps 3 and 4. Regarding the proposed four-way stop, he said, "There are problems when a school is located on a collector street. I'm sorry, but the collector street was there first. Adding a four-way stop destroys the money spent building Leather Chaps as a collector." He added, "I recommend against Step 4. I don't know that I want kids controlling traffic on a collector street. We might instead signalize the intersection."

Miller stated, "The biggest issue is that cars are parking in the travel and turn lanes. I counted 21 cars parked there and saw kids walking in between the cars." District president Steve Stephenson asked, "What about crossing guards?" Dilley said, "It is not a decision we have made." He noted that there are questions about dependability of crossing guards and potential liability issues for the school district but said, "We are willing to reexamine this issue. I will be discussing it with my board." Garland added that 85 percent of the kids are bused, using 17 buses.

Dilley noted that the governor signed a bill encouraging children to ride bicycles to school. He offered to work with the Triview district to pursue grant money to improve bicycle routes to and from the school.

Rick Blevins, representing the Jackson Creek developer, said the restriping and sign changes should be done right away and then the district should look at adding flashing lights. Simpson noted that solar powered flashing lights would be about twice as expensive but would eliminate the expense of having electrical power brought to the signs.

The board unanimously approved expenditure of \$12,000 to cover implementation of Step 1 and Step 2. Direc-

tor Martha Gurnick, who made the motion for the expenditure, suggested the district seek partial reimbursement from the school district and the town.

Homestead Park equipment

Jackson Creek resident Tonya Bjurstrom reported on residents' efforts to acquire playground equipment and make other improvements to Homestead Park. She said \$6,900 has been raised. She said the group favors a swing set and climbing area and offered to work with the district to apply for a \$30,000 Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant to help with the cost.

Bjurstrom noted that the residents' donations combined with the \$5,000 in district funds approved at the June 23

board meeting more than satisfy the 30 percent matching funds requirement for the GOCO grant. The board unanimously approved working with the residents to apply for the GOCO grant.

Monument Marketplace status

Blevins representing Marketplace developer Vision Development, Inc., reported that construction plans are progressing for the Wells Fargo bank branch. It is scheduled for completion within the next four to five months. He added that discussions with Wal-Mart and Target are continuing.

Swimming Pool

Simpson reviewed a memo from the

(Continued on page 16)

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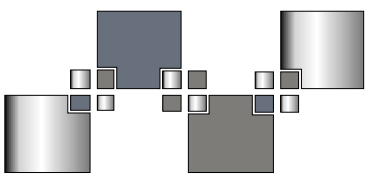
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SOLEX AWNINGS

TRIVIEW (Continued from page 15)

Woodmen Hills Metropolitan District on their experience with operating swimming pools. He said they contracted with the YMCA to operate their pools. Simpson noted that the Woodmen Hills district recommended one large pool oriented to use by children, noting that the lap pool is not being used very much. The Woodmen Hills district also noted that initially residents were in favor of a pool, but preference now is for non-pool recreational facilities such as tennis courts.

WWTF

The Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF) is jointly owned by the Triview district, the Donala district that serves Gleneagle, and the Forest Lakes Metropolitan District that currently does not have any users.

Chuck Ritter of Nolte and Associates, engineering consultant for the district, reported that the district prepared a list of questions regarding the planned ex-

pansion of the WWTF. GMS, the engineering consultant for the Donala Water and Sanitation District, will prepare responses. Ritter said Triview is interested in postponing the more expensive phases of the project and is looking closely at ways to reduce costs. He added that Triview is now expected to pay 52 percent of the estimated \$8 million cost for the expansion.

In response to a question from Stephenson, Ritter said the designers favor conversion to use ultraviolet light to disinfect the effluent from the plant. He said this process is preferable to the current system using chlorine gas or an alternative process using liquid chlorine.

Ritter said that Union Pacific Railroad has visited the site of the proposed at-grade crossing of the rails for access to the WWTF and moved some equipment but has not returned. The current crossing goes under the tracks using a trestle that will not accommodate the construction equipment needed for the expansion of WWTF.

Reuse water at the Marketplace

Ritter said there are problems regarding reuse water for irrigation of individual pad sites and interior landscaping at the Marketplace. Blevins added that the reuse system has not been piped to the interior of the Marketplace site.

Simpson said, "Reuse water is really needed for peripheral landscaping, Jackson Creek Parkway, and the school." As to the potential for Marketplace tenants irrigating with reuse water he said, "We can't guarantee that they will be permitted."

The State Department of Health and Environment grants permits for applications of reuse water from wastewater treatment plans. Simpson said, "We are not going to require that small users tie into the reuse system." He added that larger users such as Wal-Mart or Target might be required to irrigate with reuse water.

Water supply

Simpson announced that Triview's water supply system is approaching capacity with the currently approved subdivisions. He said, "The next subdivision will require another well."

Mountain View Electric Franchise Fee
Peter Susemihl, attorney for the Triview district, said electric service users within the town including the Triview district have received letters from Mountain

View Electric (MVEA) stating that MVEA failed to collect a 3 percent franchise fee called for by their 1995 agreement with the town. He said the fee was to have been paid to the town in exchange for use of utility easements, power poles, and other town facilities. He added that the wording of the agreement obligated MVEA to pay to the town those fees it collected. Since it collected no fees, he said that MVEA's position is that it does not owe the town any money and further that it is the town's responsibility to collect back fees. Susemihl added that a six-year statute of limitations applies.

MVEA says it intends to collect the fee on future bills, although electric use by governmental entities will be exempt. Susemihl said he will request the town amend the franchise agreement with MVEA to explicitly exempt Triview from paying the fee.

School district filed suit against Jackson Creek Developer

Susemihl reported that the Lewis-Palmer school district has filed suit against the Jackson Creek developer over a dispute regarding land dedication.

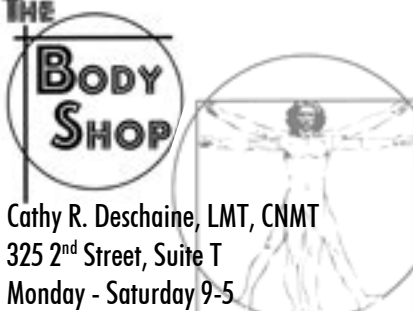
Blevins said the developer had ongoing discussions with the school district regarding land for potential expansion of Lewis-Palmer High School. He later said the dispute arose over interpretation of the amount of school land called for in the Regency Park annexation agreement signed by the town in the 1980s and may be connected to cost estimates used to support a ballot issue on expansion of the high school.

Phase G overrun

Phase G is the collective label for the roadway, water, wastewater, reuse water, and drainage improvements associated with the Monument Marketplace project. Blevins said Phase G was budgeted at \$7.5 million. The final cost was \$8,223,944, which is 9.6 percent over budget. He said \$397,606 of the \$723,944 overrun was for additional landscaping and irrigation in the medians. The remaining \$326,338 was due to unexpected difficulty with earthwork, additional paving expense, erosion control, and problems with unmapped fiber optic cables encountered when constructing the sewer interceptor.

The Triview Metropolitan District Board of Directors normally meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month, 4:30 p.m., at the district offices, 174 N. Washington St. The next meeting will be held Sept. 22.

For further information, contact the Triview Metropolitan District at 488-6868.




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Donala Water and Sanitation District Board Aug. 18

By Jim Kendrick

Consultant Roger Sams, of GMS, gave the Donala Water and Sanitation District Board an overview of his firm's plans to install a sequencing batch reaction (SBR) wastewater treatment plant at the Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF). General Manager Dana Duthie noted that water usage is down this summer due to the frequent rain.

The Donala board will begin consideration of rate proposals for the coming year at the next board meeting. Duthie was especially concerned that all lot owners be informed of these considerations so they would be aware of any change in the "availability of service" (AVS) fee they must pay annually until they actually initiate water and sewer service. A notice about the AVS rate considerations will be sent to all undeveloped lot owners as well as current customers. President Charlie Coble was excused from the meeting.

WWTF Background

Sams began his presentation by noting that Donala is a co-owner of the WWTF that is located about a mile south of Baptist Road, just west of the railroad tracks. Triview Metropolitan District and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District are the other two owners. The plant's Colorado Health Department permit allows treatment of a maximum of 875,000 gallons of wastewater per day. The plant is also rated to handle a maximum of 2,091 pounds of organic load or biochemical oxygen demand (BOD). Normally the need to expand a WWTF is triggered by reaching the organic load limit before the limit on discharged (effluent) water flow rate is reached.

Sams then presented a time-line chart that showed several projections of flow through the plant for the next five years, 2005 through 2009. The current proposal calls for construction to be completed by December 2007.

Sams also noted that planning for expansion must begin when a WWTF begins to operate at 80 percent of its liquids or solids capacity. Construction for the plant expansion must be underway not later than when the plant is operating at 95 percent of its capacity, which will occur in mid-2006 under the most conservative (highest flow rate) projection. Construction must be completed before the plant exceeds the specified capacity of the permit.

The plant is currently operating on average at between 40 percent and 50 percent of its maximum BOD design capacity, and just over 500,000 gallons per day. There have been occasional peaks in the past five years up to 700,000 gallons per day, depending on the season and amount of rain. The district's program for sealing its wastewater lines with new linings has substantially reduced the amount of groundwater that seeps into them through small leaks in the joints or holes caused by penetration of tree roots, which has substantially cut peak flows after storms.

Donala serves a primarily bedroom community (Gleneagle) that produces wastewater flows that peak at 2.0 to 2.6 times the average flow during the evening throughout the year. Current construction plans call for the expansion to increase the capacity to 1.75 million gallons per day and, at complete build-out for all three districts, up to between 2.6 to 3.0 million gallons per day.

Forest Lakes has already purchased all the capacity it will ever need and will not be investing in this expansion. Donala should be covered by the currently planned expansion and will be fully built-out before the expanded plant's capacity is exceeded. Triview's build-out will require another expansion at some time in the future, and only Triview will pay for that expansion.

The Donala/Triview/Forest Lakes WWTF is surrounded by contiguous mouse habitat on three sides and the railroad track to the east, eliminating the option to use more land area than already exists inside the fence. The current driveway goes under a railway trestle bridge and is often flooded. The bridge opening is narrow and restricts the size of the trucks that haul out the solid waste sludge. The opening is also

too narrow to allow access by a tanker truck large enough to economically haul out liquid sludge.

A private at-grade railroad crossing is projected to be built just south of the existing trestle bridge to eliminate these two constraints. The estimated cost from Union Pacific for construction is \$65,000 plus about \$45 per hour for a flagman while it is being built. When completed, the crossing will be gated and only accessible to employees going in and out of the plant to ensure the safety of the private crossing.

SBR choices

The current plan is to convert the facility, while it remains fully operational, to the SBR process. Sams said the proposed SBR designs call for a more vertical process that can be built upon existing structures, in part, and will use a smaller footprint than other treatment regimes such as the lagoon process in operation at the Tri-Lakes WWTF on the south end of Mitchell Avenue.

Some SBR equipment will be installed in the same locations as existing equipment, but deep excavations will allow the maximum building heights to remain essentially unchanged. An equalization basin will be added to the facility to temporarily store peak influent (in-coming) flows that are released at a lower constant rate after the peak surge of inflow passes. A new influent pumping station will be needed to lift wastewater to the top of the processing equipment to begin treatment.

Two different methods of performing SBR wastewater treatment have been observed by representatives of the co-owner districts during site visits to existing SBR installations. Current proposals show that acquisition costs are about the same (only 2 percent difference), but estimated operating costs by the vendors differ substantially. The board agreed with Sams and Duthie that this difference in operating costs needs to be investigated further before the board makes a decision on which system to install.

One process, provided by U.S. Filters, uses blowers similar to jet engines that are driven by electricity to aerate the digestion of wastes, while the other process, provided by ABJ, uses clusters of porcelain diffusers. The cost of electricity accounts for most of the difference in operating costs. The dramatic difference in these costs was called "hard to believe" and requires further analysis.

Another choice is whether to use chlorine or ultraviolet (UV) light in the final treatment stage before the effluent is discharged into Monument Creek. Chlorine is more effective in controlling the growth of biological wastes in the effluent water than UV light, but chlorine can harm fish and plant life downstream over time. Tighter constraints on released gaseous and liquid chlorine are expected in future regulations. Donala cannot and does not release any chlorine in the plant's discharged (effluent) water that enters Monument Creek. Any chlorine is removed by a sulfur dioxide process.

The operations coordination committee, which includes representatives from each of the three owner dis-

(Cont. on page 18)

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tricts will need to make significant decisions before the 15-month construction project commences in the fall of 2006. The equalization basin is needed for operations by the old and new plants. Board members asked about the recent fluctuations in concrete and steel prices

and their predictability during the construction phase.

Sams also reviewed the various types of construction and operational approvals that must be obtained throughout the process that leads to a new five-year permit for the com-

pleted plant. There was also concern about how the changing standards for released metals are becoming increasingly more difficult to meet. The board unanimously approved the GMS plans, but deferred the decision on which type of SBR process and disinfection process to install.

Financials

Duthie noted that water usage in July was the lowest in 11 years, but that new tap fee revenue was much higher than average. He said that Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA) needed prompting to fulfill their agreement to give credits when Donala turns off their heavy equipment during electrical peak usage periods. Donala appears to have lost about \$27,000 in credits so far this year, because MVEA did not send out the signal to shut down during the peak.

Duthie said the problem is compounded because of the cool summer and lower MVEA revenue. Peaks are occurring now about 2:30 p.m. rather than at 5 p.m. as in previous years, and often MVEA does not turn off the power to Donala until after the peak has passed. His staff will continue to seek full credit for the district.

Payments of \$106,000 and \$30,000 were approved for AmWest for drilling. Duthie also discussed Donala's membership in the El Paso County Water Authority, noting that the dues will be going up as the initial grant money provided to the authority by the Board of County Commissioners is used up. This may cause the number of participating districts to go down, further increasing dues. He said he would be attending a meeting of the Palmer Divide Water Group on Aug. 19.

Transit Loss Model

Donala is pursuing the use of a new evaporation model that would increase the financial credits the district would receive for the amount of effluent delivered to the Arkansas River.

Transit Mix

Construction of a concrete batch plant between I-25 and the railroad tracks next to the northern boundary of the Air Force Academy has been proposed by Transit Mix. Even though the property lies within the Forest Lakes metro district, Transit Mix has proposed obtaining water and sewer service from Donala by tapping into lines that lead to the WWTF. Forest Lakes has no plans to build infrastructure in that part of their district in the near future.

Duthie said the plant's wastewater would have a high pH level that would be beneficial to the WWTF, if it does not contain waste that is difficult or costly to remove. Duthie said the plant would be charged at least the same rates and taxes as other customers, if not more. However, Transit Mix would have to take over maintenance of the dirt service road that runs from Woodcarver, just south of the Santa Fe trailhead to the WWTF, due to the damage the cement trucks would cause.

The meeting went into executive session at 3:25 p.m. for discussion of a variety of issues. There were no further announcements after the executive session concluded.

The next meeting is Sept. 15 at 1:30 p.m. at the Donala building, 15850 Holbein Drive.

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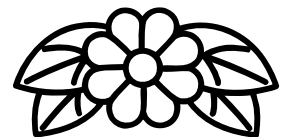
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Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District Board Aug. 10

By Jim Kendrick

The Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District Board (WWSD) reported on Aug. 10 that it completed most of its planned construction for the year, spending about \$1.7 million of the 2004 allocation of just over \$2.0 million. The state has not yet developed a compliance schedule on new limits metals discharged by wastewater treatment facilities (WWTF) so the district will receive a temporary permit until all required studies are finalized. The financial report was accepted unanimously. Treasurer Jim Wyss was excused.

Copper limits

Woodmoor, Monument, and Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD) co-own the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) at the south end of Mitchell Avenue. Recently, a few dissolved metals ratio test results have been higher than the current maximum standards for potentially dissolved copper in the plant's discharged water. However, those new standards are considered very stringent (12.0 parts per billion average with a maximum sample of 17.4 parts per billion).

District Engineer Mike Rothberg of Woodmoor said that Monument Sanitation District's (MSD) test results were higher than Woodmoor's but taken on different days. Rothberg doesn't believe Woodmoor's results were in error.

The ongoing delays in resolving the revision of the discharged metals standards between the state and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continue. The EPA Water Quality Control Commission has said it will not issue emergency rules and will only address the issue after the state water quality control division forwards its new emergency rules in November.

Installation of two new blowers purchased by MSD will be delayed until after this standards issue is resolved. The increase to four blowers will substantially increase the maximum capacity of the plant but will also require issuance of a new permit. MSD will own the new additional flow capacity. However, MSD is interested in purchasing some biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) or solids loading capacity from WWSD because MSD is nearing its limit on the amount of solid waste it is permitted to deliver to the WWTF. Woodmoor is well below its limit.

Operations Update

District Manager Phil Steininger said Monument Creek flows are up slightly this year. A new roof is being installed at the North Booster Station along with some new plaster. Well 8 is still undergoing pump repairs due to a sand block; some iron and bacteria were also found when the pump was pulled out.

The final proposal for water and sewer service to the Wahlborg addition has been given to Zephyr Development, following annexation of the 140-acre parcel southeast of Highway 105 and Knollwood. The developer has asked for an option to be able to lease two additional increments of available water (0.93 acre-feet per acre and 0.50 acre-feet per acre) in case there is a commercial user that needs an exceptional amount of water. The lease would cost about \$21,000 per year. The consensus was that there would be little likelihood of actual use of the extra water, but that the additional revenue was welcome.

The Greenland Preserve development is beginning construction on Phases II and III. Their current use in Phase I is well under 0.5 acre-feet per acre. The developer of the Walters multifamily subdivision parcel had asked the Board of County Commissioners for a waiver to exceed their maximum allocation of WWSD water; the request was denied.

Other issues

The landscaping at the South Treatment Facility is complete. Irrigation of the landscaping may require installation of a booster pump for a new line running from the South Filter Plant. The Lake House Easement issue has not been settled yet, as one property owner wants a separate easement for each of his three properties. The board unanimously approved adoption of the American Wastewater Association M3 manual of water supply practices, an industry standard safety manual, initiation of monthly safety meetings,

and a tentative schedule of topics for the first several sessions. Procedures for the water and wastewater operations will be standardized.

District Attorney Erin Smith supported the decision to begin budget preparation at the next board meeting. The board then went into executive session; there were no announcements after this session, and the meeting was adjourned after returning to open session. The meeting date for September has been changed to Monday, Sept. 20, at 1 p.m. at the WWSD building at 1845 Woodmoor Drive.

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Donald Wescott FPD Board meeting Aug. 18

By Jim Kendrick

At its meeting on Aug. 18, the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) board listened to two of three planned insurance presentations in preparation for a decision that must be made before the current policy expires. The board approved the final Audit Report for 2003.

The board also discussed the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District's rejection of expanding the Memorandum of Understanding (which Wescott has with Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District) into a three-way fire authority.

Insurance Proposals

The first proposal was from T. Charles Wilson Insurance Co., a service based in Aurora. The quote of \$12,000 did not include coverage of the district's two Chevy Impala staff cars, the new brush truck, or a \$1 million umbrella liability rider. The additional vehicle coverage increased the proposal to \$13,373, and the umbrella policy brought the total premium to \$14,390.

The quote for a continuation of the current policy with Volunteer Firefighter Insurance Service (VFIS) of Colorado is \$17,699, but will increase slightly to cover all the board members. The VFIS policy provides for complete replacement of losses, while the Wilson proposal has more deductibles.

Treasurer's Report:

The district has received about 95 percent of its expected revenue for 2004. The report has been adjusted to comply with the format recommendations of the auditor.

Chief's Report

SDA Conference: Chief Bill Sheldon asked the board members to finalize their attendance plans at the Colorado Special District Association Conference in

Steamboat Springs, which begins on Sept. 22. President Brian Ritz reviewed the list of breakout sessions to ensure that at least one of the board members attends each important session.

Health Plan: Sheldon discussed the vote on the Fire and Police Protection Association (FPPA) statewide health and benefit plan. He said 57 percent of DWFPD personnel voted in favor, 16 percent were opposed, and 27 percent did not vote. Because not enough people voted, the proposal was rejected. He added that none of the seven Falcon fire district employees and none of the 12 Tri-Lakes employees voted on the plan. Sheldon said that FPPA will continue to advocate the new benefit plan and seek another election. He expressed his hope that more people would participate in the election.

Unification Update: Sheldon discussed the participation of DWFPD's Scott Ridings, with Brian Jack of Tri-Lakes and Mike Dooley of Woodmoor/Monument, in developing the closest force response (CFR) subcommittee's proposal. Wescott would be allowed to send a fire engine to a medical emergency in the Tri-Lakes district's area bounded by Higby on the north, I-25 on the west, and Baptist Road on the south. However, the Wescott AMR ambulance would not be sent on a medical response, because Tri-Lakes does not want to relinquish the revenue for a transport from Jackson Creek, Kingswood, or Fox Run.

Sheldon said he was concerned about having the ambulance respond out of district with no option to transport a critically ill person, who must wait for the Tri-Lakes ambulance to arrive. It is Wescott policy that their engine accompanies the Wescott AMR ambulance on a medical emergency. The Wescott ambulance always has an AMR paramedic onboard, while Tri-Lakes' ambulance may not.

DWFPD has not committed to participating in this CFR proposal because of the transport issue and because of Tri-Lakes' refusal to let Wescott participate in merger decisions. There is also no reciprocity in the agreement that would have Tri-Lakes assist within the Wescott district on medical emergencies.

Former board president Bill Lowes expressed concern that residents in this southeastern portion of TLFPD are in a "no man's land" because they can't receive timely service.

Physician Advisor: Dr. Dave Ross of Penrose Hospital discussed medical protocols for the districts he advises, including Wescott, Woodmoor/Monument, and Palmer Lake among others. He is also the physician advisor for AMR ambulance service in El Paso County; AMR provides ambulances to the Wescott and Black Forest fire districts. Ross said he is working with Dr. Marilyn Gifford of Memorial Hospital, physician advisor to Tri-Lakes and other districts, to standardize these protocols among all the fire districts.

The board then went into executive session at 9:17 p.m. to discuss negotiations. The open meeting resumed at 10:09 p.m. The board announced that no decision had been made regarding participation in the CFR plan with Tri-Lakes and that they will try to strike the correct balance between the best interests of the district and the Tri-Lakes community as a whole.

Ritz asked that a list of needed maintenance and improvements for both district stations be completed in time to be incorporated in the 2005 budget.

Sheldon asked for an increase in the training budget from the special ownership tax revenue of \$82,875 that exceeds the 2004 budget of \$40,000. He proposed sending two full-time and two volunteer employees to the fire academy in Telluride. He and Assistant Chief Vinny Burns will also be attending the third phase of the new four-part national fire chief training course, but would like a third person to attend this training as well, once Sheldon gets a final estimate of the additional cost.

Run Report: The pairs of figures for each category are for June/July. The district responded to 55/47 calls: medical 35/23, traffic accident 4/6, automatic alarm 7/6, structure fire 0/3, fire 0/4, brush fire 3/0, hazardous materials (haz-mat) 1/1, smoke 1/1, odor 0/1, gas induced fire (GIF) 1/1, illegal burn 0/1, public assist 3/0, and standby 0/1. Mutual and automatic aid totals were 64/58: Medical 1/1, traffic accident 1/1, structure fire 3/0, brush fire 1/0, haz-mat 1/0, smoke 1/0, GIF 0/1, AMR ambulance 56/55.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m. The next meeting will be on Sept. 15 at 7 p.m. in Station 2 on Sun Hills Drive.

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Tri-Lakes FPD board meeting Aug. 19

By John Heiser

At its regular meeting Aug. 19, the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District Board of Directors discussed plans for the firefighter residency program and the status of the construction of Fire Station 2 on Roller Coaster Road near Highway 105. The board also unanimously approved inclusion of a parcel east of Highway 83 belonging to Robert and Cheryl Bates and accepted International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) membership by district personnel. Director Keith Duncan was on vacation.

Financial Report

Treasurer John Hildebrandt reported that receipt of ambulance revenue is more than \$36,000 over budget. Hildebrandt added that as of the end of July, expenditures exclusive of those associated with construction of Fire Station 2 stood at 60 percent of the budgeted amounts, 2 percent over the anticipated levels as of this point in the year. Hildebrandt said Station 2 expenditures are greater than expected, partially due to the six-month delay in getting Board of County Commissioners' approval. The delay resulted in a \$40,000 escalation in construction costs and \$20,000 in legal fees.

District board president Charlie Pocock said a wraparound loan will be used to fund the additional expenses. Pocock added that the district will begin negotiations for financing the purchase of two new pumper fire trucks. At the April 15 meeting, the board authorized \$230,000 per truck.

Chief Robert Denboske said the first truck is to be kept at Station 2, which is expected to begin operation in October. The second truck is scheduled for delivery in April 2005. Hildebrandt noted that \$24,000 was budgeted in 2004 for payments on the first truck.

Denboske added that the district has received a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant covering 70 percent of the cost of the equipment to be carried on the first truck. He said an additional FEMA grant will be sought to help cover the cost of the equipment for the second truck.

Chief's Report

Denboske reported as follows:

- During July, the district responded to 101 calls, bringing the total so far this year to 652, which is 7 percent more than the same period in 2003. The 101 calls during July were: 46 medical, 22 fire, 23 traffic accidents, 5 public assists, and 5 hazardous materials; 36 people were transported to area hospitals.
- There are 82 district personnel, an increase of 18 from last month.
- A new class for probationary volunteer firefighters was held Aug. 24. Over half the students are certified EMTs and firefighters. Denboske said that if 15 of the 18 students graduate, that will cover 60 shifts per month. Pocock added that there are 240 shifts during a 30-day month with two manned stations. He said the paid staff will cover 120 shifts and volunteers will cover the other 120 shifts. Considering the current number of district volunteers, Pocock added, "We are in very good shape manpower-wise."
- On Aug. 23, Tri-Lakes will begin providing ambulance service to the Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District, replacing AMR.
- The district received a \$175,000 FEMA grant with a requirement for 10 percent matching funds from the district.
- Bryan Jack was promoted to Battalion Chief. Pocock added that Jack will oversee wildland firefighting, be the chief for station 2, and administer the firefighter

residency program.

- There have been six applicants for the four openings in the residency program. Tests will be held Sept. 11 to select the four participants.

The board unanimously approved direct electronic payroll deposits and electronic payments to the IRS of payroll withholding. The board unanimously approved a 10 percent increase in charges for hazardous materials responses.

Station 2

Ron Thompson, assistant chief and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Coordinator, reported as follows on construction of the new station on Roller Coaster Road near Highway 105:

- Installation of drywall is almost complete.
- Appliances will be delivered Sept. 29.
- Furniture will be delivered the first week in October.
- There have been some delays and difficulties in working with Mountain View Electric.

EMS Report

Thompson reported that the district will purchase a four-wheel-drive ambulance. He said about \$15,000 will be saved by combining the Tri-Lakes purchase with the Castle Rock Fire Department's purchase of two ambulances. He said that doing it this way the final price for the new Tri-Lakes ambulance will be about \$25,000 less than the other bids received by the district.

The board unanimously approved joining the American Ambulance Association. Thompson said the association provides information on industry trends and lobbies congress on behalf of the ambulance industry. The board also unanimously approved a personnel manual addition categorizing Health Information Protection Act (HIPA) procedure violations and setting associated disciplinary actions.

Pocock noted difficulties obtaining payment for some ambulance services. He said Blue Cross often pays ambulance service reimbursement to the patient. The district then is faced with the sometimes-difficult task of obtaining payment from the patient.

Residency Program

The board discussed a draft of the procedures for the firefighter residency program. This will be further

discussed at the Sept. 16 meeting.

IAFF

Lieutenant John Vincent reported on research into membership in the IAFF. He said the union provides educational opportunities and a variety of other benefits. There is no cost to the district. Firefighters who join pay \$20 per month. The proposal is that members of the Tri-Lakes district who are interested would join Woodmoor/Monument Local 4319. Vincent noted that this would enhance unity with the Woodmoor/Monument personnel. He said the local is considering changing its name to Monument Local 4319.

Denboske added that although IAFF can serve as a collective bargaining unit in negotiations with municipalities, the statutes do not permit a similar role in negotiations with a special district such as the Tri-Lakes district. Vincent characterized it as more of a professional association. The board unanimously endorsed offering firefighters the opportunity to join the IAFF.

Inclusion Hearing

The board held an inclusion hearing on the petition for inclusion of a parcel owned by Robert and Cheryl Bates at 1753 Pondview Place. The petition was unanimously approved.

The meeting ended with an executive session to discuss personnel issues.

The Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District board normally meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at the district firehouse, 18650 Highway 105 (near the bowling alley). The next meeting is scheduled for Sept. 16.

For more information, call Chief Denboske at 481-2312 or visit www.tri-lakesfire.com.

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Woodmoor Monument FPD board meeting Aug. 24

By Jim Kendrick

On Aug. 24, the Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District (W/MFPD) Board reaffirmed the position it had taken in signing an agreement on July

6 to be dispatched to every medical and fire emergency within the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District (TLFPD). The board gave W/MFPD Chief Dave Youtsey the authority to make decisions on

whether or not to respond to specific TLFPD calls, even though the El Paso County Sheriff's Office dispatcher is required to dispatch both fire districts to all emergencies in either district, based on the joint July 6 directive. Treasurer Jeremy Diggins' motion to eliminate the assistant chief position failed due to lack of a second. Director Bob Harvey was absent.

After the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. and the audience had left the meeting, the board held an unannounced and unadvertised executive session on an unspecified topic. Youtsey and Recording Secretary Donna Arkowski were asked to leave the boardroom before the executive session began. There have been no announcements about the purpose of the executive session or about whether the board made any decisions. Normally, such an announcement would be made when the board returned to the open session, but it had already been adjourned.

There were no public comments from the 10 people in attendance. The board had no comments or corrections regarding the minutes for the July 27 regular W/MFPD board meeting.

Revision of Dual Dispatching Agreement

Sibell indicated there were discrepancies that had emerged since the dual dispatching agreement between W/MFPD and TLFPD was signed on July 6. He noted he had received a copy of a letter Youtsey sent to TLFPD Chief Robert Denboske and Renee Lovely, Fire and EMS Supervisor of the El Paso County Sheriff's Office Communications Center, on types of Tri-Lakes calls that Woodmoor/Monument would not be responding to. Sibell then gave Youtsey a copy of the dual dispatching

at 8 a.m. on Aug. 23, the date that Tri-Lakes would replace AMR as the ambulance service provider for W/MFPD.

Youtsey's e-mail of Aug. 23 to Denboske and Lovely says, "Woodmoor/Monument will not be responding to dispatches to traffic accidents, medicals, automatic fire alarms, or haz-mat incidents outside of our jurisdiction based solely on 'dual dispatching.' ... [An] agreement, MOU, or IGA has not been signed and/or enacted to provide for that. We will continue to respond to wildland and structure fires, as always, based on the North Group Automatic Aid Agreement matrix."

Diggins asked if former Assistant Chief Jim Rackl had given Youtsey a copy of the document. Youtsey said no copy was in the papers Rackl gave him when he returned from vacation. When asked "Who would have given it to Rackl?" no board member said they had given it to him and Diggins acknowledged that he did not know who else might have done so. Youtsey added that had he known the document existed, he would have brought his concerns to the board immediately.

Rackl and Youtsey have repeatedly said during district and joint board meetings preceding this Aug. 24 meeting that they were never allowed to participate in any of the discussions, never provided a preliminary copy of any document prepared by any of the firefighter subcommittees, nor were they provided any copies of any documents reviewed or signed by the W/MFPD board.

TLFPD's Chief Denboske and Assistant Chief Ron Thompson have never said at a board meeting whether or not they were allowed to review or participate in considerations of draft agreements. It is unusual for fire districts not to allow their chiefs to participate in operational decisions, particularly those with substantial budgetary implications.

Youtsey then asked if the joint board minutes reflected any other policies or decisions the board members had not informed him of. Administrative Assistant Donna Arkowski said she had told TLFPD Board President Charlie Pocock that she would not be attending or recording the minutes of the last two joint board meetings and that no minutes had been provided by Pocock for review or approval by the W/MFPD board.

After it was determined that Youtsey's question could not be answered, he asked Sibell, "May I keep a copy of this agreement?" Sibell permitted him to make a copy of the dual dispatching agreement after the regular meeting adjourned.

Youtsey said he would ask Denboske if he could meet with him on Aug. 27 to work out a specific matrix of types of calls and locations that specifies when each district would respond to a dispatch into the other district's jurisdiction for other than a structure or wildland fire. Youtsey objected to the current draft matrix, which was prepared by firefighters on the joint operational commonality subcommittee without review or comment by the chiefs. That matrix calls for a Tri-

(Continued on page 23)



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The current draft matrix calls for a Wescott engine only, but not Wescott's AMR ambulance, to go to areas in the Tri-Lakes district south of Higby Road for all four types of calls. While there is always an AMR paramedic assigned to the AMR ambulance, there are occasions when there is no Wescott paramedic on the engine. Tri-Lakes is not tasked in this matrix to provide any reciprocal increase in engine assistance to emergencies within the Woodmoor/Monument or Wescott jurisdictions, beyond the current long-standing North Group agreements on structure and wildland fires.

Youtsey estimates the current matrix would at least double the number of responses by Woodmoor. There is no estimate on what additional workload would fall on Woodmoor/Monument if Wescott decides not to participate in a closest force response agreement.

Financial Report

Sibell asked if there were any comments on the "Cash Recap," Arkowski's monthly financial report. Diggins said the board should approve the minutes of the July 27 meeting and made a motion to that effect. Sibell said the motion passed unanimously. After a motion to accept the "Cash Recap," Sibell also said it had passed unanimously. Neither time was there a request for a formal vote. Only Diggins and Wilson said they were in favor of the two motions; Sibell did not say he was for or against either motion, calling into question whether they actually received the minimum three votes necessary.

Sibell noted that the district had spent 68.38 percent of its budget, \$907,121.90 of \$1,326,572 appropriated, as of July 31.

Chief's Report

Board members declined copies of the final audit report for 2003. Youtsey said there would be a copy in his office for their review if they wanted to read it later and noted there were no changes from the draft report.

Grant: Youtsey noted that he prepared the list of bunker gear to be purchased with the proceeds of the \$46,400 FEMA grant. He said the board should approve the purchase orders by the end of September in order to comply with the conditions of the grant. He also gave the board members a list of milestones for preparing the district's 2005 budget.

Resignations: Two more employees have submitted resignations. Chris Sobin left as of Aug. 27 to take a position with South Metro Fire Protection District near Denver. Chris Gschweng's resignation is effective Sept. 15 when he will move to take a position in California. Both are paramedics as well as

firefighters. Youtsey said candidates for the three empty positions will be interviewed in September and the positions should be filled by the end of the month.

Youtsey noted that the district no longer administers its own agility drills and now accepts the national certificate for Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT), which is administered at several locations throughout the state. The district will, however, continue to administer the same nationally certified screening test that has been used in the past. There are no other W/MFPD employees with paramedic certification or national registry, so the district must advertise for candidates from outside the district. The district will still be able to schedule one paramedic per shift.

Youtsey added that he had received two applications for the vacant assistant chief position and expected one or two more by the closing date of Sept. 6. Diggins asked if the assistant chief position was feasible and needed, adding "I don't feel it's needed." Wilson concurred. Youtsey said he had felt the same way until Rackl started working at the district. "Having had one [an assistant chief], I sure appreciate it."

Diggins said that having "six administrative personnel out of 15 positions, almost half, as supervisors was too many." However, in most fire districts, captains are considered to be line operational personnel. He asked that the assistant chief duties be delegated to the captains. Sibell concurred saying, "Captains should handle day-to-day operations. It's their job."

The previous board had created and provided funds for the assistant chief position. Diggins made a motion to eliminate that position. Sibell, who agreed the position should be eliminated, said the board should delay the decision until Sobin's and Gschweng's positions are filled, but offered no explanation why. There was no second of Diggins' motion, so the motion failed.

Employee/Family Hospitalization Plan: Aetna Insurance proposed raising the rates 18 percent, then reduced the rate increase to 14.4 percent. Plan costs have gone up in part due to a much larger number of family members being insured since last year. The district has only budgeted for a 10 percent raise, so the co-pays were increased for primary and specialist office visits, in-patient hospitalizations,

and prescriptions.

Employees have two plans to choose from, but the upgraded plan will no longer be entirely paid for by the district, and the employees had to decide by Aug. 31 whether to accept the larger co-pays or make up the difference in premiums to retain the same co-pays. The new policy begins on Sept. 1. The benefit administrator

met with the district on Aug. 12 and announcements on all details of the benefit changes were posted. The board did not discuss increasing the budget to cover the entire rate increase for employees and their families in 2005.

Calls for July: There were 67 calls in July bringing the total for the year to

(Continued on page 24)

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date to 382. The July calls included: Structure fire – 2, automatic alarms – 5, medical – 43, traffic accident – 9, public assist – 2, other 6.

Promotions: Mike Dooley and Greg Lovato were promoted to Captain. Their spouses pinned on their new rank insignia.

Appointment: Bob Hansen was unanimously appointed (3-0) to replace Russ Broshous, who resigned in July because he has moved out of the district. Hansen—who was a candidate in the May elections and was supported by the firefighters union—is retired and said, “I have all the time in the world to devote to the firefighters and I’m happy

to serve.” He did not take the oath of office. Arkowski said no board member had asked her to prepare any of the required paperwork. Hansen has up to 60 days after appointment to complete the required forms and be sworn in. He did not vote on any issue at this meeting.

Memorandum of Understanding: Sibell asked “Do we wish to participate or not?” with regard to the signed MOU with Wescott. Diggins said that without TLFPD participation in the MOU, 30-days’ notice should be given to Wescott to terminate it. Wilson agreed saying, “We need to give Wescott 30-day notice.” Hansen said he was uninformed on the issue. Sibell said that no one had

a copy of the MOU to refer to on how the motion needed to be worded. Wilson then asked that his remarks about terminating the MOU with Wescott be removed from the record. Arkowski would not agree to alter the tape recording or edit the minutes of a public meeting as Wilson had requested.

Wescott had prepared a draft three-way MOU on June 29, based on a specific request by the W/MFPD board. TLFPD permanently tabled the matter at its regular board meeting July 15 and reiterated its rejection of the three-way MOU at the Aug. 3 joint board meeting of Tri-Lakes and Woodmoor/Monument. Tri-Lakes does not allow Wescott to participate in the joint board meetings. Due to revenue consideration, TLFPD had agreed to allow Wescott medical engine personnel to treat medical emergencies in Jackson Creek, Fox Pines, and Fox Run but will not allow Wescott’s AMR ambulance to transport even the most critical patients to a hospital.

Closest Force Response: DWFPD Chief Bill Sheldon responded to Diggins’ question about whether Wescott would continue to participate in a closest force response agreement for medical calls within the Tri-Lakes district south of Higby Road. Sheldon said he could only express his personal opinion, which was not his board’s policy, that Tri-Lakes was asking an awful lot to expect Wescott to provide costly services to Tri-Lakes residents without being allowed “to sit at the table” when policy decisions are made. He said he would take the latest Woodmoor request back to his board.

Wescott Treasurer Dennis Feltz added that Diggins had just said that Tri-Lakes does not want Wescott to participate even though Woodmoor had requested his board to submit a three-way MOU draft. Diggins replied that he did not know Tri-Lakes’ position. Sibell asked why the board would want to table the MOU again. Diggins said he would not support the MOU without Tri-Lakes’ participation.

Dr. Dave Ross (physician advisor to W/MFPD, DWFPD, and AMR Ambulance) asked when Tri-Lakes or Woodmoor would assist with medical calls in the Wescott district. Diggins replied that he had no comprehension of how such an arrangement would work. When questioned about why the board would vote to terminate

the MOU if it did not understand how it would work, Diggins said he had not made a motion. Sibell said the issue should be tabled until members of the board understand the new ambulance agreement with Tri-Lakes.

Dual dispatching: Youtsey said the only written guidance he had received from the board calls for W/MFPD to send its engine and all four employees to every dispatch by the Sheriff’s Office to every call in Tri-Lakes. Youtsey discussed his recent decision not to respond to a Tri-Lakes asthma call at Roller Coaster and County Line Road when he saw the Tri-Lakes ladder truck and ambulance were already crossing the Highway 105 bridge over I-25 enroute. He said he didn’t know how he would answer a Woodmoor/Monument resident’s question of why his engine was so far outside his district if they had received another call within his district.

He said the Woodmoor engine was not needed for this Tri-Lakes call. He noted that the dual dispatching agreement called for the Woodmoor engine to drive past the Tri-Lakes station to Red Rocks Ranch and Palmer Lake in some cases, while the Tri-Lakes truck would not respond.

The board agreed that Youtsey could meet with Denboske to discuss changes to the agreement prepared by Dooley and TLFPD Battalion Chief Brian Jack and approved at the Aug. 3 joint board meeting. Youtsey had never seen the agreement until after the boards approved it that evening. Youtsey said he would prepare a revised draft of the dual dispatching plan for consideration by the Sept. 6 joint board meeting so his people could have “clear-cut directions on when to respond and when to cross district boundaries.”

Sibell called for a citizen volunteer to review W/MFPD policies and procedures. Resident Bill Ingram volunteered and was approved unanimously. (Youtsey e-mailed all the documents to Ingram the next day.)

The next W/MFPD meeting will be held on Sept 28 at 7 p.m. The next joint board meeting will be held on Sept. 6 at 7 p.m. at the TLFPD station. There has been no announcement about whether Wescott will continue to pursue operational agreements with Tri-Lakes and Woodmoor/Monument regarding medical calls.



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Homeland Security Exercise Aug. 14

A Homeland Exercise and Evaluation Program was conducted by the Palmer Divide Public Safety Group on Aug. 14 at the Centennial Park of Palmer Lake and the Palmer Lake Regional Park. Formed in 2003 to address public safety issues within the Tri-Lakes and surrounding area and to provide mutual aide in responding to large-scale emergencies, the safety group consists of the Palmer Lake and Monument Police Departments, the Tri-Lakes and Woodmoor Monument Fire Departments, and the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department. Activities for the day

tested first-response capabilities in the event of the deployment of weapons of mass destruction. The safety group, under the direction of Palmer Lake Chief Dale T. Smith, was awarded a grant earlier this year by the Department of Homeland Security. The grant helped to fund the homeland security exercise, whose purpose was to test each department's current response capabilities and to develop and refine regional emergency operation and response plans.



Above: Donald Wescott FPD Firefighters Jim Biskner and Sean Pearson scrub down the protective suits of El Paso County Haz-Mat team members Jerry Rigney and Steve Sweet after their exposure to simulated "chlorine and explosives" as their county safety observer Larry Coburn checks their progress. *Photo by Jim Kendrick*



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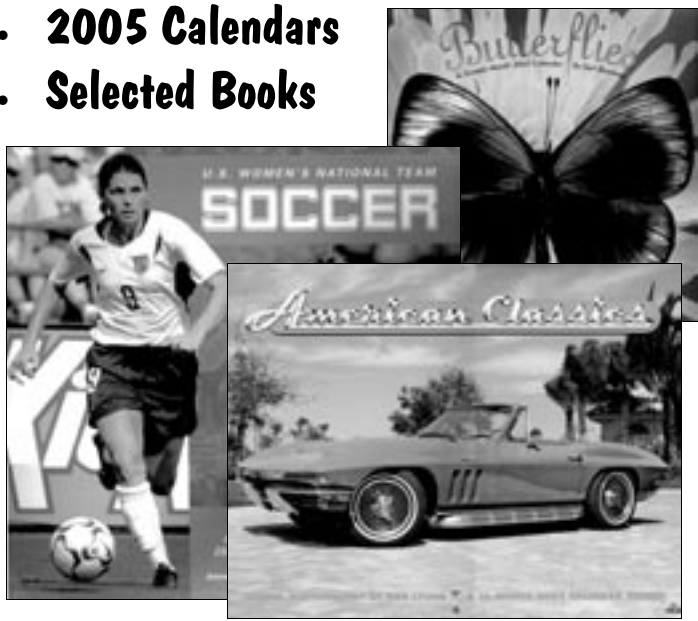
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Lewis-Palmer School Board meeting Aug. 19

By Tommie Plank

In an historic move, the Lewis-Palmer Board of Education adopted an election resolution that will put a record four questions on the Nov. 2 ballot. District 38 electors will be able to vote on all four questions, all of which address how to deal with growth in the area's schools:

- 1) Monument Academy Charter School is asking to increase taxes by 1.0 mill for 10 years for capital construction needs: \$310,000 in 2005 and by whatever amounts the 1 mill raises for each of the following years. (Recently the General Assembly approved a provision that enables charter schools to place a capital construction question on any ballot on which the local school district has an issue before the voters)
- 2) A question for an additional \$750,000 in taxes each year beginning in 2007-08 for the purpose of paying the costs of operating and maintaining a second high school if the bond question for the second high school passes

- 3) A question for a bond issue of \$33,500,000 to construct a second high school for 800 students, including renovating and enhancing the current athletics facilities. (Questions 2 and 3 are contingent on both passing for either one to go into effect)
- 4) A question, which is the unanimous preference of the Board of Education, for a bond issue of \$29,795,000 to establish a ninth grade center near the current high school, including construction of a separate building and renovating and enhancing the current high school, athletic facilities, parking lots, and commons in order to accommodate 800 additional students.

This is the most complicated bond or tax issue the district has ever placed before District 38 voters. Although the members of the school board and administrators believe that a freshman center is educationally and fiscally the best way to address growth at the high school level, they also recognize that there is support in the community for a full second high school and chose to let the voters decide which direction the district will take.

But the Board also wanted the voters to understand that a smaller second high school would require additional money to operate, and that the approval of the dollars to build the school must be tied to approval for the money to staff and run it. An extensive effort to educate voters about the ramifications of the passage or failure of each question will be needed. A bond election committee is in place and will soon begin disseminating information.

The Board approved a resolution stating that it wants to retain authority to be the exclusive authorizer of charter schools within the District 38 boundaries, pursuant to new state statutes. This action was discussed with the District's existing charter school and both the District and the Monument Charter Academy agree that this is the best approach.

The Board approved the list of goals for the school board and superintendent to accomplish during the 2004-2005 school year:

School Board Goals

- To pass the bond election in November enabling the district to establish a ninth grade center and to renovate and enhance the current high school campus to educate 800 additional students, to renovate and enhance the district's existing high school athletic facilities, and to renovate and enhance parking lots and the commons area at the existing high school campus
- To design and plan future high school programs

- To provide oversight and leadership into the promotion and development of Professional Learning Communities
- To provide opportunities for prospective board members to obtain information about running for and serving on the board of education
- To gather information from the public regarding perceptions of how the school district is performing
- To develop a districtwide communication plan

Superintendent Goals:

- Develop a structure and implementation plan/policy to deal with fixed assets, including land assets
- Ensure that financial impact statements are attached to future proposals
- Revise District Crisis Plans
- Revise District Policy Manual (possible on-line presence)
- Develop and implement an administrative mentoring plan
- Update District Growth Plan
- Promote and develop the Professional Learning Communities concept

The Board also approved the District Accountability and Advisory Committee's (DAAC) charge for this year, which includes five target areas. Members of DAAC will receive the charge at their first meeting on Sept. 14.

Director of Financial Services Joe Subialka reviewed the two building projects that were recently completed: the building of a new Transportation Facility and the renovation of the Administration Building. Both projects were completed without using bond funds or affecting the district's bond rating. General Fund Reserves were transferred to the Building Fund to pay for construction of the new Transportation Facility. The total cost of that project was \$1,718,778, which was under the estimated budget amount of \$1.8 million. The remaining amount of \$81,221 was transferred back into the General Fund, as approved with the adoption of the 2004-05 fiscal year budget.

The District Administration Building was renovated and a new Ground Source Heat Pump heating and cooling system was installed at a total cost of \$2,326,990, considerably under the estimated \$3,175,200 cost to build a new administration building. The useable space in the building was increased from 14,275 square feet to 22,680 square feet to house increasing numbers of employees. This project was funded primarily through a loan and a lease-purchase agreement.

Director of Assessment, Research and Technology Ray Blanch reviewed the Northwest Evaluation Association computer adaptive assessments that will be pilot-tested in math in grades 5-8 this school year. He explained how this program will assess individual students' test results in a timely manner that will enable teachers to respond to the needs of students in an efficient and effective way. The program can be expanded to other subjects, and will track individual students' growth in a longitudinal manner.

The Board presented two commendations to district employees. Teale Kocher, Human Resources, received a commendation certificate for handling all personnel functions by herself as more than 57 new teachers were hired this spring and summer while the district was between personnel directors. And Joanne Jensen, secretary to the superintendent and the Board of Education, received a commendation certificate for her extraordinary efforts in helping with district activities.

The next Board of Education meeting will be Sept. 16 at 7 p.m. in the Learning Center of the Administration Building.

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County commissioners commit an additional \$195,000 for Milam Road condemnation

By John Heiser

On July 29, following a two-hour hearing, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) voted 3-2 to continue pursuit of condemnation of private property for right-of-way (ROW) for the extension of Milam Road north of Shoup Road. Commissioners Wayne Williams, Chuck Brown, and Tom Huffman voted in favor. Commissioners Jim Bensberg and Jeri Howells voted against.

On Aug. 12, the BOCC implemented the July 29 action by voting 3-1 in favor of transferring \$195,000 in tax revenue from the Road and Bridge Fund to the General Fund for use by the county attorney's office as part of that condemnation action. This brought the county's financial commitment to \$395,000. The total cost of the roadway is estimated at \$1.1-\$1.2 million.

Background

On Oct. 12, 2001, Fourth Judicial District Court Judge Kirk S. Samelson prohibited the extension of Milam Road through the Black Forest Regional Park in response to a suit brought against El Paso County by the Friends of Black Forest Regional Park (FOBFRP). Samelson ruled that the southernmost 80 acres of the park are subject to the federal Sisk Act. The land must be used for a park not a road. This means the existing park road north of Shoup Road cannot be widened or paved or serve to reach the entrance of Cathedral Pines, a subdivision proposed to be built on the north edge of the park by developer Dan Potter.

The extension of Milam Road was proposed to provide more direct access to Potter's 161-lot Cathedral Pines project. Without the extension of Milam Road, Cathedral Pines could use available access points from several surrounding roads; however, many of those roads are in poor repair and in need of design improvements. Improvements to those roads would likely be a condition for approval of the project if it were redesigned without the Milam Road access. Nearby residents are concerned that the additional traffic generated by the increased density approved for the subdivision would create a hazardous situation on those roads and diminish their quality of life.

On Dec. 16, 2002, the BOCC voted 4-1 to authorize condemnation proceedings to acquire an 80-foot right-of-way easement immediately west of the southernmost 80 acres of park covered by Samelson's ruling. Commissioners Duncan Bremer, Ed Jones, Brown, and Huffman voted in favor. Howells was opposed. The commissioners authorized up to \$200,000 in taxpayer funds to cover legal expenses associated with the action. According to Bill Lewis, then assistant county attorney and now

county attorney, the property owners whose land is being acquired must pay their own attorney fees associated with the eminent domain negotiation and any related court action.

On April 24, 2003 the Colorado Court of Appeals unanimously upheld Samelson's ruling.

On Dec. 1, 2003, the Colorado State Supreme Court unanimously refused to hear the BOCC's appeal of Samelson's ruling. At that time, then County Attorney Mike Lucas confirmed to OCN that the commissioners would move forward with their 2002 decision to condemn land on adjoining lots just west of the park's boundary in order to extend Milam Road parallel to the park's present dirt access road.

July 29 hearing

Lewis summarized the proposed revisions to the condemnation agreements approved in 2002.

He said a major reason for changing the agreements was that the cost for acquisition of 7.5 acres of right-of-way (ROW), initially estimated at \$300,000 to \$350,000, increased to over \$611,000 when the appraisals were completed. He said the developer's position is that they cannot afford the increased costs and so need \$195,000 in additional financial assistance from the county.

Lewis said the public will receive a roadway worth \$1.1 to 1.2 million in exchange for an investment of the initial \$200,000 plus the \$195,000 being sought.

Lewis said the \$150,000 contribution from the developer and the \$195,000 county contribution included in the revised agreement were calculated assuming the final cost for ROW acquisition would not exceed \$527,000. He said that if it exceeds that amount, additional contributions from the developer and or the county will be needed.

Lewis said that if the BOCC approves the revised agreement, firm

offer letters would be issued within 10 days giving the property owners two weeks to accept or reject the offers. He said litigation could commence against those who reject the offers within about 45 days.

As to the issue of whether the county should be contributing to this project, Lewis said, "This is how we get roads built." He characterized it as a "delicate balance of county contribution and developer contribution." He said, "No court has the authority to review the propriety of the county contribution." He said the project is in furtherance of the 1987 major transportation corridors plan on which the developers have relied in preparing their plans. The 1987 major transportation corridors plan is currently being revised.

Lewis said land is needed from 9

or 10 properties. Three of the properties are south of Shoup Road. Of those three, settlements have been reached with two. No settlements have been reached with the six or seven property owners north of Shoup Road.

John McCarty, county engineer and head of the county department of transportation, noted that the extension of Milam Road is not shown as needed through the year 2030 in the draft revised corridors plan; however, preservation of a potential Milam Road right-of-way is shown as needed in the year 2050 version of the draft revised plan.

McCarty said he has spoken with David Wismer, owner of the Shamrock Ranch property north of the proposed Cathedral Pines subdivision. He said

(Continued on page 28)

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Wismer has placed the eastern 640 acres of the property in a 50-year conservation easement and set up a trust holding the property as an inheritance for his grandchildren. The trust must sell the property at the end of the 50-year conservation period. McCarty said

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it would be likely that it would be developed at that point.

Howells questioned the public purpose being served by this condemnation.

Potter said the demand for the roadway is not driven by developers but is instead being driven by the marketplace. He noted that without the road, the county would have no road access to 160 acres of the park. He also reminded the BOCC that the project is donating an additional 208 acres of parkland.

Ken Sparks, attorney for the property owners, expressed concern that the 2002 condemnation action and the ensuing protracted delay has "cast a shadow on the properties" making it virtually impossible for the property owners to sell or refinance their properties. He characterized the action as a taking of property rights and questioned the amount of control over the condemnation proceeding the BOCC had given to the developer.

Chris Rodacy, who owns the parcel on the northwest corner of Shoup and Milam Roads said he would lose the largest amount of land. He noted that the county's appraisal is \$80,000 less than the one he obtained. He added that if the county pursues the condemnation, it would be litigated at considerable expense to the property owners and the county. He quoted from Samelson's ruling: "The primary purpose of the road is to provide access to the Cathedral Pines subdivision."

Black Forest Community Club President Eddie Brackin noted that extension of Milam Road to Hodgen Road on the draft 2050 corridors plan was done after the public meetings. The Black Forest Community Club supported the 2050 plan when it showed Milam not extending all the way to Hodgen. He added that there is projected to be insufficient density in the area to require that Milam be a through road.

Resident Rebecca Schinderle noted the county's widely reported \$300 million backlog in roadwork and asked, "Why are precious funds being spent on this project which is not even on the \$300 million list?"

Resident Cynthia Miller said that if the condemnation goes forward she will lose 1.32 acres, almost one-third of her five acre parcel. She said, "The road will be within 60 feet of my living room and bedroom." Referring to the BOCC she said, "This group was willing to perform an unlawful act [building the road through the park]. The only reason you were stopped was because a group of citizens spent thousands of dollars

of their personal funds to fight public officials funded by public dollars. The payback to those citizens for preventing you from committing this unlawful act has been this punitive desire to build this road come hell or high water. The 2030 corridors plan shows no need for Milam Road north of Shoup Road. My property is not for sale; therefore, you are in the process of taking my property by your power of eminent domain. This taking is not for the good of the public. This taking is about power, greed, and political favors."

Gary Schinderle, representing the FOBFRP, said the approvals of the Cathedral Pines project were based on the now obsolete 1987 corridors plan and noted that the draft 2030 plan no longer shows Milam being extended north of Shoup. He said the FOBFRP have spent more than \$140,000 in legal fees to fight the county's actions and remain committed to keeping the park road-less because construction of the road would devastate the park. He said the existing roads that provide alternative access to the Cathedral Pines subdivision currently use only about 1/8 of their capacity.

Amy Phillips, chair of Black Forest Land Use Committee, said, "We promoted the plan to go through the park and avoid taking any land. The whole nature of Milam Road has now been reconsidered." She added that there were access issues from the very beginning of this project and said that limitations on access is an important factor that needs to be carefully considered before approving subdivisions. Regarding the proposed condemnation, she said, "It is a mess and you are hurting people. Please put a stop to this."

Walter Lawson asked, "How many access points does a subdivision need?" He said that the costs to the public have been great in pursuit of the interests of a private developer. He said, "Staff time and in-house attorney time is not free." Noting that part of the proposed road will be constructed through the 160-acre portion of the park not covered by the Sisk Act, he said, "It was planned as a park. Public money has been invested here for a long time. Protect the park at all costs and keep it whole."

During rebuttal, Leonard Rioth, attorney for the developer, reminded the BOCC that the developer is donating 208 acres of new parkland. He said, "FOBFRP sued you and that forced the road over onto their property." He described the relationship between the developer and the county as "a partnership." He said, "This is a requirement for the county's transportation system. We need to move this forward."

In making his motion for approval of the revised agreement, Williams said, "I agree that this needs to move along. I believe this is a public purpose. At the Wal-Mart hearing, it was evident that people rely on plans." He said the proposed road implements the major transportation corridors plan.

Huffman spoke in favor of Williams' motion saying, "People expect roads on section lines." He characterized using the existing access roads as unfair to the residents on those roads.

Howells spoke in opposition. She said, "There is so much opposition, I don't see it as a practical process. There are other points of access. Look at the money expended and additional money needed trying to justify what we are doing. Maybe we should be spending that money to bring the other roads up to handle the traffic. I do not like the use of eminent domain. I don't like at all taking private property."

Chuck Brown said, "This is future planning we need to do. If it had been done years ago we wouldn't have this problem."

August 12 meeting

No one from the public spoke in favor or opposed to the action. Williams made the motion for approval of the expenditure of \$195,000. He said, "The Black Forest Preservation Plan specifically provides for Milam Road to be a two-lane corridor. This helps enact the Black Forest Plan." Williams, Huffman, and Brown voted in favor. Bensberg voted against without specifying reasons for his opposition. Howells was absent.

County Planning Commission Aug. 17 and Aug. 24

By Steve Sery

Once again, the El Paso County Planning Department's backlog of projects required two meetings in August. They were held at the new Regional Building on International Circle, in Colorado Springs, which is still not quite complete, so there were some minor glitches in the building mechanics.

There were five items related to the northern El Paso County area, plus the first of two hearings on an amendment to the County Master Plan.

The first was a request for approval by Classic Development for the final plat of High Forest Ranch Filing Number 3. This is a 194-acre parcel zoned PUD, with a plan for 53 single-family lots. It is located south of Hodgen Road and east of Highway 83. This item was unanimously approved as one of the consent items.

There were two items dealing with a proposed Sprint cell phone tower located just north and east of the intersection of Northgate Road and Highway 83. These items were continued to the September meeting, as Sprint did not provide current and proposed

coverage maps of this and other locations they considered. They have been repeatedly asked to furnish this information when making tower applications.

A request for a one-lot minor subdivision on 12.83 acres located three-quarters of a mile north of Walker Road and 1½ miles east of Highway 83. This was to correct an old improper subdivision of 60 acres. The applicant was unaware of the issue until he attempted to obtain a building permit. This application "legalizes" the property. It was approved unanimously.

A request for final plat approval of Forest Gate Filing No. 1. This is a 203-acre parcel zoned PUD located at 8875 Burgess Road. The plan is for 50 single-family residential lots. It was approved unanimously.

There was a first hearing on an amendment to the El Paso County Master Plan, the Major Transportation Corridors Plan. The plan considers regionally significant transportation resources that serve El Paso County needs, emphasizing functionality rather than political boundaries. The plan identifies short-term (2005-2010), near-term (2015-2020), and long-term (2025-2030) horizons. The plan also identifies po-

tential build-out needs (beyond 2050) for preserving transportation corridors to accommodate traffic demand.

There have been a number of public meetings to raise issues and concerns and to look for alternatives—resulting in this "preferred" plan. Public input was heard at this meeting. Almost all of the comments were from the transportation committee of the Black Forest Land Use Committee. A large percentage of the plan impacts northern El Paso County.

To look at the plan on the Web, go to www.elpasoMTCP.com. A second hearing on the plan is scheduled for Sept. 21, and the public is encouraged to attend and provide input.

There will likely be a notice of openings on the El Paso County Planning Commission in the near future. While the County Commissioners are concerned that there are already too many people from the northern part of the county on the commission, anyone interested in applying should watch for the notice.

BRRTA Special Meeting Aug. 6

By Jim Kendrick

The Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority (BRRTA) held a special meeting on Aug. 6 to complete their discussion, begun on July 9, on prioritizing its many remaining design tasks. The board had decided at the July meeting that no such decisions should be made until after the July 15 Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) hearing on the Wal-Mart rezoning request. Wal-Mart had said it would finance about \$3.8 million in road improvements if allowed to build a supercenter across from the King Soopers shopping center. Some of that was to be reimbursement for road improvements the Monument Marketplace developer is required to construct.

The vote against the rezoning request complicated BRRTA's decision-making by leaving it with only a small amount of future revenue from traffic impact fees that will be paid by developers as Jackson Creek is built out. BRRTA currently has no available county funding to draw upon and now has far fewer options to implement the extensive road-building mandate on the segment from Tari Drive west past I-25, the railroad tracks, and Hay Creek Road.

Although the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will eventually pay for the improvements to widen the bridge and ramps at Exit 158, no state money is expected to be available for this construction project in the next decade. The widening of Baptist Road between Jackson Creek Parkway and Struthers Road—which the town of Monument had initially required to be completed before Home Depot could open—has been indefinitely postponed due to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife request for another impact study on adjacent mouse habitat.

The county commissioners who sit on the board also discussed the status of the proposed countywide Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA)

ballot initiative for the November election. If the measure is approved by the voters, some of the one-cent PPRTA revenue may fund construction of those portions of Baptist Road that were not on Wal-Mart's list. However, the construction projects to be included in the final PPRTA construction project list has changed and their priority within the ballot issue has not been determined.

Wal-Mart

At the July 9 session, consultant engineer Steve Sandvik of PBS&J had reviewed his preliminary engineering survey of needed Baptist Road improvements. These improvements would have supported the build-out of Monument Marketplace, Wal-Mart's former proposed site, a like-sized shopping center directly east of the King Soopers center, and continued build-out of the majority of the Jackson Creek residential areas.

Wal-Mart had promised to help finance some of these improvements: widening of the off-ramps at Exit 158; widening of Baptist Road between Jackson Creek Parkway and Leather Chaps; construction of a frontage road for the Lutheran church and existing homes on the south side of Baptist Road to Leather

Chaps; extension of Jackson Creek Parkway south to Struthers Road; acceleration/deceleration lanes for each of these sections; and dual left-turn lanes for all four directions at the Jackson Creek Parkway-Baptist Road intersection. The board chose not to make any decisions on July 9 about where and when to spend money for actual engineering design until it knew the outcome of Wal-Mart's rezoning request.

PBS&J Survey Findings

Sandvik reviewed the sequence and costs of preliminary and final engineering design for each aspect of the needed road improvements. Near-term issues

(Continued on page 30)



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include defining the needed right-of-way for flattening the existing grade changes along each segment of Baptist Road, as well as writing correct legal descriptions and conducting appraisals for each piece of property that must be purchased for road widening. He noted that the only Preble's mouse habitat is east of the King Soopers center.

BRRTA Staff Director Conner Shepherd said

that the remaining balance of limited traffic impact fee funds currently available to BRRTA or projected to be collected in the future would only be sufficient to widen Baptist Road between Jackson Creek Parkway and Leather Chaps. Sandvik said this would cost \$460,000 and that current spending is already at \$137,400 for the engineering survey activities he'd discussed. Appraisal and legal description of the needed rights of way for this short segment will cost about \$44,219.

Sandvik said approval of the PPRTA in November would reduce BRRTA's need for federal funds. CDOT will pay for the permanent improvements to Exit 158 and Baptist Road west to the entrance to the Diamond Shamrock (formerly Total) gas station and east to Jackson Creek Parkway.

PBS&J will provide the full set of plans needed to solicit bids for Jackson Creek Parkway to Leather Chaps, but only preliminary layouts for the taper from four lanes to two lanes east of Leather Chaps. Cost of this future planning work is about \$277,000. Shepherd praised PBS&J for reducing this cost from \$294,000. Glenn said Home Depot had contributed \$105,000 for widening west of Jackson Creek Parkway. Improvements from Leather Chaps east to Tari Drive will cost about \$6.3 million.

Priorities

Monument Mayor Byron Glenn said he thought BRRTA should focus solely on widening Baptist Road between Leather Chaps and Jackson Creek Parkway for use by the residents of Jackson Creek who have paid most of the BRRTA fees, rather than spend money on engineering studies for the other segments. Most of the other Baptist Road improvements will not be built in the near future due to lack of funding, even if the PPRTA is approved.

New traffic lights

Glenn also proposed that the current right in/right out access to the King Soopers center on Baptist Road be changed to a full motion intersection with a traffic light, in addition to the proposed light at Leather Chaps. This access to the King Soopers lot is about 900 feet east of the Jackson Creek Parkway traffic light. Glenn said this would provide full motion access to the future commercial parcel across the street from King Soopers. Under the current proposal to the town of Monument, this existing right in/right

out access would be the only Baptist Road entrance to the new strip mall to be built east of the King Soopers center on the north side of Baptist Road.

County Commissioner Wayne Williams disagreed and suggested that a full motion intersection with traffic light be built further east—at the center or the east end of the

strip mall to be built east of King Soopers. Triview Metropolitan District General Manager Ron Simpson agreed with Williams' proposal. Triview is responsible for all infrastructure north of Baptist Road in this area through its intergovernmental agreement with the town of Monument.

Shepherd suggested that the developer of the new strip mall should pay for the improvements Wal-Mart had offered to finance. The developer of the proposed strip mall, just east of the King Soopers center, had planned to use only the existing right in/right out Baptist Road access and the existing access between the gas station and day care center on Jackson Creek Parkway. The parking lot for this new center would lie well below the existing and planned grade levels for the adjacent portion of Baptist Road. All the board members agreed this developer would now have to pay for a substantial part of the BRRTA improvements.

There was some discussion of whether the existing right in/right out access could be retained if Williams' proposed intersection location were approved. Normally, lights would be at least one-quarter mile apart.

Either intersection proposal would have substantial implications for drainage, grading, and mouse habitat due to the amount of dirt that would have to be moved to eliminate existing steep grades and create adequate drainage. The new shopping center will require a 60-inch drainage culvert under the existing right in/right out access by the bank.

Triview said it will not participate in future BRRTA improvements, having paid the full cost of the new Leather Chaps and Jackson Creek Parkway extensions. Bonds issued by Triview financed the road extensions to the Home Depot, then north to Higby Road. The bonds will be repaid by Jackson Creek residents and business owners through property and sales taxes.

Payments Approved

A payment for \$850 to BRRTA accountant BKD was approved unanimously, as was a payment of \$33,606 to PNS&J for engineering work.

Board Member Issues

After some further discussion about what changes may occur in the PPRTA process, former county commissioner and BRRTA board member Duncan Bremer suggested that BRRTA will never have more than half the money it needs to perform its planned duties. He asked, "Where does the other half come from if the PPRTA proposal fails?" He said BRRTA traffic impact fees have to be increased.

Brown said that the PPRTA would pay for Leather Chaps to Tari over its 10-year life and that BRRTA would pay for Jackson Creek Parkway to Leather Chaps only. Williams said that no more cost estimates should be prepared for other than this segment until after the November PPRTA ballot issue vote.

Sandvik suggested that Baptist Road west of the Shamrock gas station remain at only two lanes to save money. Brown added that the total cost of Baptist Road improvements from I-25 to Roller Coaster Road was about \$25 million and is "a pipe dream" if the PPRTA is not approved, since no county money would be available for 10 to 12 years.

Bremer then suggested that BRRTA initiate a sales tax to make up for the loss of Wal-Mart and possibly PPRTA funding. Williams again said this proposal should be made only if the PPRTA ballot issue is voted down.

The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m. The next BRRTA meeting will be at 2:30 p.m. in Monument's Town Hall on Oct. 8.

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County Water Authority meeting September 1

By JoAnn McNabb

"Water availability does not stop growth," said Karla A. Brown, executive director of the Colorado Foundation for Water Education. Brown was speaking at the Sept. 1 meeting of the El Paso County Water Authority (EPCWA). Her organization is responsible for circulating non-biased water information throughout the state.

For those in the county who are hoping that their faucets will still spew forth with the wet stuff, Brown proposes some resources that might be tapped for the tap. She stressed the importance of using the Web, and pointed interested well watchers to www.cfwe.org for information and publications.

Those needing a primer on the subject of water might start with the Colorado River Basin Compact that was mentioned several times during the meeting. This 1922 agreement determines the water rights to the Colorado River and its tributaries. EPCWA Manager Gary Barber calls this compact, which was negotiated by California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico and Colorado, the "lifeblood of the Western States."

Barber says that "cross-basin" compacts may soon be in the works. Apparently these may involve agreements between other river basins such as the Arkansas and Platte Rivers.

Transit Loss Model

The Transit Loss Model was discussed, proving

once again that water is more complicated than H₂O. Transit loss is the process by which water is lost going downstream (roughly 0.5 percent per mile). The EPCWA is trying to get funding for a U.S. Geological study to mitigate water loss on Monument and Fountain Creeks. This project is called the Transit Loss Model. This budget issue and budget approval will be discussed at the October EPCWA meeting.

State water legislation

Water lobbyist Pat Ratliff, presented current issues from the Colorado State Legislature. Her source, Rick Brown at the Colorado Water Conservation Board, said that cross basin issues have not been looked at yet because they are too hard. He estimates a January time frame.

Ratliff also said the drought is not over, based on the reserves not being anywhere near where they should be. She stated that enforcement policies against illegal wells on the South Platte will be filed and moved to court. Ratliff also commented on the establishment of recreational waterways such as that of a kayaking course in Pueblo. She said the effect was to control growth since designation of such waterways effectively stops above-stream water development. She said Senator Jim Isgar has raised the issue of coal-bed methane having a deleterious effect on aquifers.

Consultant's report

Barber talked about the intense water situation on the

Western Slope in regard to agriculture. About 60,000 acres will be removed from agricultural production in the Rio Grande Valley. Barber, at this point, discussed the concept of "Rotating Fallow," which might be a partial solution for Colorado. Farmers would be paid for periodically not planting.

The El Paso County Water Authority normally meets the first Wednesday of each month at 27 E. Vermijo St., Colorado Springs, 3rd Floor Hearing Room. The next meeting is Oct. 6 at 9 a.m. For information, call 520-6300.



Karla Brown presents her views on water education.
Photo by JoAnn McNabb

WIA meeting September 1

By Chris Pollard

The first major item on the agenda was a request from Dale Beggs, Colorado Commercial Builders, to use the word Woodmoor in the name for the commercial center to be built as part of the Wahlborg property development. There was a certain irony in this because over the last few months, while the developers had discussed the project with the WIA, they had gone out of their way to be annexed into the town of Monument. This goal had been reached recently and so the proposal to call it "The Village Center at Woodmoor" was met with a chilly reception.

Susan Shields, acting chair and Vice President of the Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA), said this would be inconsistent with the fact that the area was not actually in Woodmoor and also that Woodmoor was a trademarked name. Chief of Public Safety Kevin Nielsen pointed out that the name was similar to the already named Woodmoor Center and could result in confusion in emergency situations.

Ron Yamiolkoski, Director of the WIA Architectural Control Committee, said the developers had chosen to become part of Monument and not Woodmoor and had chosen not to align with the WIA covenants. He believed they had incorporated words referring to Woodmoor in the last paragraph of their rules and regulations and he wanted to request that they remove them to avoid confusion.

It became clear that the board was universally opposed to the proposal and Dale Beggs left the meeting.

Jim Woodman, Director of Forestry, addressed the next item on the agenda which was to discuss the \$45,000 in grant money for 2004 for fuels reduction in Woodmoor. He wanted to use some of this to educate residents about the fire risk in the area. So far education and consulting had only been given on an individual basis and a series of meetings had been proposed to educate residents about opportunities for lowering the fire risk on their property. He had written a short paper, in consultation with the Forestry Service, purposely addressing Woodmoor so people will better un-

derstand the suggestions for defensible fire space.

Major suggestions were that there be a 15-foot region around the house that is free of trees, that wood shake roofs be replaced by more fire resistant ones, and that care be taken to prevent burning embers from getting under flammable structures like decks. He also encouraged homeowners to work together on their fuel reduction plans because many lots presented hazards to adjacent ones. The majority of the money was to be made available in the form of \$500 grants to individual home owners to make improvements to the fire safety of their trees and other vegetation.

Susan Shields then introduced the new member of the board, Gina Hagglof, who had accepted a request to become the new treasurer to replace Mike Varnet.

The next item on the agenda was a further change in the board as Ron Yamiolkoski, ACC director, announced his resignation. When he accepted the position he was mostly working from home but had recently been given extra responsibilities that required him to work in Denver. He had asked Elizabeth (Liz) Miller to finish out his term. She had been a member of the architectural control committee for many years. Her nomination was approved unanimously.

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NEPCO highlights HOA best practices

By John Heiser

The Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations held a Home Owners Association (HOA) president's forum Aug. 14. Below are some of the recommendations that came from that meeting.

- It is important to become thoroughly familiar with your association's key documents: Covenants, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations. Make sure your key documents are up to date.
- The Colorado Common Interest Ownership Act (CIOWA - C.R.S. 38-33.3) forms a useful legal framework for the conduct of HOA affairs. Associations formed prior to 1992 should consider electing to be governed by CIOWA. A link to the state statutes can be found at www.ourcommunitynews.org/links.htm#State.
- Consistency and fairness in covenant enforcement

is essential. Written rules and regulations can be helpful in ensuring consistent treatment of complaints.

- There is considerable value in establishing a neighborhood representative system where each volunteer is responsible for contacting residents in one portion of the subdivision. This can be used for welcoming newcomers and distributing HOA newsletters and other information.
- Web sites can be an effective way of making available key documents and other HOA information.
- E-mail can be very helpful for reminding residents about upcoming events and for alerting HOA members to time-critical issues such as bears, crime, etc.
- Resident directories listing names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses are

generally very useful to residents.

- Awards for landscaping, holiday decorations, etc. and annual events such as a clean-up day can help build community spirit.
- It is generally preferable to have volunteers handle the affairs of the association because that avoids the expense and impersonal tone that result from using management companies to administer the HOA.
- Smaller HOAs may wish to consider contracting with larger HOAs for some services.

NEPCO will hold their Annual Meeting, Saturday, Oct. 2, 9:30 a.m., at the Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Drive.

For further information, contact NEPCO President Beth Courrau at 488-0284 or bethcourrau@adelphia.net.

August Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

The first week of August saw a brief break in the wet, cool weather. High pressure building out of the desert southwest began to influence our weather, bringing a warmer air mass, with less low-level moisture. This is the more typical summer monsoonal pattern that affects our region this time of the year. (Last summer, this high was not in a favorable position for producing precipitation, and conditions were hot and dry as a result.)

This didn't last long, however, as more beneficial wet weather moved in during the first week of August, while temperatures remained at or below normal. Measurable precipitation fell from weak thunderstorms during the afternoons and evenings on the 3rd and 4th, but the real "fun" moved in on the 5th. Morning clouds greeted us—Mother Nature's way of letting

us know there is plenty of low-level moisture in the air, a key ingredient for fueling strong thunderstorms and heavy rain. This is exactly what formed by mid-afternoon, as strong to severe thunderstorms quickly built over the Tri-Lakes region. Areas from the crest of the Palmer Divide south through Colorado Springs and east of I-25 were hit hardest. Once again, heavy rain and hail accompanied many of the storms.

That Friday and Saturday saw more afternoon and evening thunderstorms, with highs holding in the upper 70s to low 80s. Most of the region's low-level moisture was scoured out by a cold front and gusty northerly winds Sunday morning.

More severe weather greeted us at the beginning of the second week. On the afternoon of the 9th, scattered thunderstorms developed, with severe

weather common across Elbert, Lincoln, and northeastern El Paso Counties. Several weak tornadoes touched down north of Calhan in southern Elbert County, and large, damaging hail was reported, with 4¼-inch hailstones around Ramah.

The next evening, a strong line of thunderstorms blasted through the region from north to south, with winds gusting to 70 mph, large hail, and brief heavy rain. A funnel cloud was also reported at the intersection of Highway 83 and 105, but the most spectacular part of this line of thunderstorms were the mammatus clouds that formed just before sunset. Be sure to take a look at some of the pictures of these beautiful cloud structures at www.kktv.com. Also, you will find a definition and description of how these unusual clouds form.

Morning low clouds and cooler than normal temperatures stuck around the 11th and 12th, as highs reached into the 60s. Quiet conditions returned from the 13th through 15th, so the weather was perfect for the Black Forest Parade and Festival, with mostly sunny skies and mild temperatures.

The cool, wet weather continued during the middle of the month, as more strong to severe thunderstorms pounded areas of the Tri-Lakes region on several days. Strong thunderstorms developed on the 18th, with heavy rain falling in many areas, ahead of a cold front. Most of the region collected between .50 to 1.50 inches, adding to the already impressive totals we have received this summer.

We awoke the 19th to fog and low clouds and chilly temperatures. Highs reached the low 50s, setting another record for the coldest high temperature recorded on the date. Isolated strong thunderstorms developed on the south edge of the Tri-Lakes region on the 21st, with 3-inch hail reported 5 miles east of the Air Force Academy.

The next day started off quietly, with sunny skies and cool temperatures, but severe thunderstorms quickly developed around 4 p.m. Once again,

heavy rain caused flash flooding for many areas, and pea-sized hail was common throughout the region.

Most areas around the Tri-Lakes region have now surpassed their average rainfall for an entire calendar year in just eight months! It is safe to say we are no longer in a meteorological drought. However it's important to let Mother Nature continue to do the watering for you when possible because the human demand on our water resources continues to grow, and this keeps the Front Range in a socioeconomic drought.

The last full week of the month started off quiet enough, but the first fall-like cold front moved through on the 26th. Brief heavy rain, gusty winds, and cooler temperatures developed by early afternoon on the 27th as a strong jet stream moved overhead, but most of the activity was over later in the evening. Many residents reported frost on the morning of the 28th, and the next few mornings were chilly. Scattered afternoon and evening thunderstorms returned for the last two days of the month. Overall, the month saw below-normal temperatures and above-normal precipitation—the third in a row for us.

A Look Ahead

The month of September is a transition month for the Tri-Lakes region, with summer and winter conditions common. September 2003 was a perfect example of this, with snow above 7,000 feet on the afternoon of the 13th and a record high of 87 degrees recorded on the afternoon of the 27th. Low temperatures regularly fall below freezing by the end of the month, but we often see sunny, mild afternoons. This September is forecast to start off on the mild side, but it will be interesting to see what happens as we head into fall.

The monthly forecast for September 2004, produced by the Climate Prediction Center (<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/30day/>), is calling for a better than average chance of slightly below normal temperatures and above normal precipitation.

For a complete look at monthly climate summaries for the Tri-Lakes region, please visit <http://users.adelphia.net/~billkappel/ClimateSummary.htm>.

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August 2004 Weather Statistics

Average High	74.3°F
Average Low	45.9°F
Highest Temperature	86°F on the 1st
Lowest Temperature	36°F on the 28th
Monthly Precipitation	3.10"
Season to Date Precip.	7.11"

Remember, weather affects all of us every day and is a very important part of life on the Palmer Divide. If you see a unique weather event or have a weather question, please contact us at our_community_news@hotmail.com.

Bill Kappel is the KKTV 11 News morning meteorologist and a Tri-Lakes resident.

Drought in Colorado

By Bill Kappel

With all the rainfall we have been receiving since early June, one might wonder why there are still water restrictions in place.

Let's first discuss drought and its various definitions. According to the National Drought Mitigation Center (<http://www.drought.unl.edu/whatis/concept.htm>), "Drought is a normal, recurrent feature of climate, although many erroneously consider it a rare and random event. Although it has scores of definitions, it originates from a deficiency of precipitation over an extended period of time.... This deficiency results in a water shortage for some activity, group, or environmental sector."

From the above description of drought, it's easy to see how many of us can get confused about the current situation. It all depends on your particular perspective and your needs for water. In reality, we have received above-normal amounts of moisture since the beginning of the year. So if your view of drought centers on watering your plants, you have been blessed with ample moisture. However, if you are a water resource manager, you have seen several years of below-normal snowpack and the levels at 60 percent of average, and wonder how you will meet the needs of all your customers.

So what definition fits best for us? The Colorado Climate Center (<http://climate.atmos.colostate.edu/drought.shtml>) has looked at this question and come up with the following definition for drought in Colorado: "A period of insufficient snowpack and reservoir storage to provide adequate water to urban and rural areas.... This better fits Colorado, as 80 percent of our surface water supplies come from melting snowpack."

One variable is the human demand on water supply. It is certainly possible to have above-normal precipitation but still have a water shortage. This is defined as a socioeconomic drought. We place a high demand on water every day. When combined with the fact that we live in a semi-arid climate that is highly variable year to year, it becomes very easy for us to get into difficult water situations.

The meteorological drought we experienced from 2001 through 2003 was in the middle range as far as severity compared to past droughts—culminating in 2002, which set numerous records for extreme dryness. On top of the lack of precipitation in our region, the mountains received much-below-normal snowfall; over the long term, this is what affects our water supply the most.

Droughts in the 1930s, 1950s, and 1970s were more extreme for longer periods. However, two issues made this recent drought seem much worse than it was. First, we were coming out of one of Colorado's wettest two-year periods in the past 500

years. In fact, 1999 was our wettest year on record. In addition, the decades of the 1980s and 1990s were much wetter than normal. Second, human demand and consumption have dramatically increased over the past decade, placing much higher demands on the water supply, causing shortages even when precipitation has been normal.

So, the question of whether we are in a drought depends on your perspective and needs. Therefore, it is important to educate yourself about the various definitions of drought and which factors affect the Tri-Lakes region the most.

There are resources that keep track of the water situation in the Tri-Lake region every day. First, www.rain-check.org is a group of over 130 volunteers within El Paso County who report precipitation (rain, snow, and hail) daily and provide the most complete picture of the precipitation in our region. Second, my Web site at <http://users.adelphia.net/~billkappel/Weather.htm> provides daily, monthly, and yearly updates about the unique weather and climate in the Tri-Lakes region.

For water-saving tips, visit the Colorado Springs Utilities Web site at <http://www.csu.org/residential/conservation/page2837.html>. To learn more about Colorado's water situation and policies, read the paper titled "A History of Drought in Colorado" at <http://climate.atmos.colostate.edu/pdfs/ahistoryofdrought.pdf>. This provides a detailed description of Colorado's water resources and how we got to where we are today. Feel free to contact me anytime with your weather and climate questions at bill_kappel@yahoo.com.

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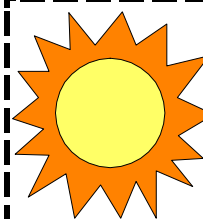


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Letters to Our Community

Letter Guidelines

Our Community News welcomes letters to the editor on topics of general interest. The OCN editorial board has established a policy that we do not knowingly print letters that have appeared in substantially the same form elsewhere. Please include full name, home address, and day and evening phone numbers. A limit of 300 words is recommended. Letters may be edited for length, grammar, and accuracy. Send your letter to editor@ourcommunitynews.org or mail to Our Community News, P.O. Box 1742, Monument, Colorado 80132-1742. In response to problems receiving e-mail, if you send your letter by e-mail, we will send an e-mail acknowledgement. If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please call 481-4164 to confirm that we have received your letter.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in letters to our community should not be interpreted as the view of OCN even when the letter writer is a reporter for OCN.

Disgusted in Palmer Lake

To those of you who attended the Aug. 12 Palmer Lake Council meeting, please accept my sincere apologies for my inappropriate behavior—and especially Mr. Jim Rhatigan. Jim, you were right, I was out of order, and I'm sorry for that. I am, however, totally disgusted by the rude, uncivil, arrogant, and downright mean behavior I've witnessed lately by some of my "so called neighbors" towards a group of their own, who volunteer their time and energies to help make Palmer Lake one of the greatest places to live on Earth. I haven't seen the kind of pack mentality as I saw last night in a long time—at least not since the batch plant issue. Mean-spirited, rude behavior should have no

place in our community, nor should those who don't stand up to defend those who try unselfishly to do so much for us. Finally, my wife, Mayor McDonald, who has donated her time and energies to this town for almost 25 years has had to endure countless, unfounded, mean, personal attacks from those who've done nothing to contribute to our community except to voice their gripes and complaints. Well folks, if I can't get her to resign as mayor, and I'm truly trying to do just that, you'll have to put up with her another year and a half. And if I'm lucky, I'll have to put up with her another 40 years or so. **Bill McDonald**

To County Commissioner Williams

You have voted to condemn a portion of nine properties in your district. These properties are in Black Forest, and one of those properties is ours. Through your power of eminent domain, you are attempting to force us to sell our property so that it can be used as a private entrance to a new development. Although there are other access roads to this development, a new beautiful entrance through private property and the upper 160 acres of Black Forest Regional Park is the only route you are considering. We are completely baffled as to why! Have you ever seen the property that you are so willing to condemn? At your convenience, we are inviting you to our home. Wear your walking shoes and let's take a look at the property on which you want to build a road. If you are so eager to condemn private property, don't you think you should see it first? We are looking forward to hearing from you. Ray and Cindy Miller

Towering concerns

On Sept. 21, the El Paso County Planning Commission will hear the continuation of a request by Sprint to erect a 115-foot tall cell phone tower on a 5-acre parcel just off Highway 83 at Northgate Road. This issue was heard earlier by the commission and sent back for further clarification despite a strong recommendation by the Planning Department staff that the rezoning for the tower be denied. The staff report based their recommendation on the fact that the area is zoned RR-3 and not commercial, as required for the tower. Highway 83 is a designated scenic highway and a 115-foot tower will rise about 80 feet above the surrounding trees at that point. There exist other suitable sites, including an existing one on Roller Coaster Road, which could be shared with another phone company, and it is bad planning practice to encourage a proliferation of such towers in the Black Forest area. Any citizens who may want to oppose this project should attend the Planning Commission meeting on Sept. 21 and/or write to the commissioners. **David Wismer**

Just say NO to the RTA

I addressed the Board of County Commissioners Aug. 26 to explain why my group, SaveTheSprings, is recommending a "No" vote on the upcoming Rural Transportation Authority (RTA) sales tax ballot measure in the Nov. 2 election. [The Pikes Peak RTA proposal would levy a 10-year one cent sales tax on county and Colorado Springs residents of which 55 percent would be used for corridor road construction projects, 35 percent would be used for road maintenance and 10 percent would be used for public trans-

portation. The road construction tax would cease after ten years, but the maintenance and transit portions of the tax would continue indefinitely.] In a nutshell, the group believes the sorry state of area roadways is primarily a result of the failure of cities and the county to adopt a pay-as-you-grow approach to new development. An RTA is only prudent if it's part of a comprehensive plan for dealing with the challenges growth presents to our area. Perhaps that can be on the ballot next year. We would support that.

SaveTheSprings, a citizens' advocacy group formed to preserve and enhance our attractive quality of life in the Pikes Peak Region, wants area governments to assess new developments for the full costs of their impacts. For more information, visit www.savethesprings.org Following is an excerpt from my comments to the commissioners.

"This [1 percent sales] tax is just another disguised attempt to get current residents to add to the hundreds of dollars in annual growth subsidy we already pay through our utility bills. ...When new developments are built, they're not required to fund improvements to our roadway network outside their borders to fully offset their impact, even though they consume the capacity of that network. Colorado Springs City Council regularly approves annexations and development plans, which are projected to result in worsening traffic congestion. The city projects a revenue surplus for each of these annexations. If that's true, why aren't we seeing the benefits? Let them apply that surplus to improving our major arteries, unless of course that surplus never materializes.

We can't keep up with road improvements and maintenance when the impacts of growth aren't fully funded by that growth. Fifteen years of record growth with these inadequate policies have now caught up with us. It's foolish to further burden citizens with this tax to apply a Band-Aid—without first correcting the root causes of the problem.

Any sales tax increase to fund transportation network improvements must be accompanied by an excise tax on new developments to fully cover their impacts on our roadways. It must be accompanied by an end to the multi-million dollar subsidies of utility infrastructure for new developments that come out of our utility bills. And it must be accompanied by a regional reality check on the state of the water supply for our entire area, with prudent, honest reporting, planning and the necessary action. Heads must come out of the sand. Failure to adopt a pro-active, comprehensive approach to managing growth and its costs will guarantee declining quality of life in the Pikes Peak region, along with increasing poverty and shrinking disposable income.

There's no reason to expect this RTA will even come close to solving our transportation problems; yet if we pass it, we know from experience our leaders will conclude we citizens are happy to continue to bear the burden of community expansion. A "no" vote on this measure will give notice that everyone must come to the table to manage and fund the problems growth creates. We have to get much smarter about managing our growth. We're told time and again that growth will happen. It's unavoidable. If that's true, then why subsidize it? Why not capitalize on it? Why not plan for its costs? Charge appropriate fees. That will actually bring dollars into town. That is economic development."

Dave Gardner



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Stanley Cup visits Palmer Lake



By Jim Kendrick, former hockey coach

There are few images that match the moment when a newly victorious champion player or coach holds the Stanley Cup overhead to the cheers of a packed ice hockey arena—after enduring the bumps, bruises, and injuries of over 100 National Hockey League games in a nine-month long quest for what many say is the hardest championship to win in all of professional sports. One of the great traditions of ice hockey is for each member of the championship team that wins the Stanley Cup to be able to do anything they want with it (within reason, as defined by hockey players) for 24 hours.

This year the members of the Tampa Bay Lightning are having the chance of a lifetime to display, hug, and kiss hockey's silver "holy grail" in their homes, on their boats, or any other reasonable setting they may desire. The mirror tradition to this is that no player will touch it until this time, for fear of jinxing their chance to win it. For example, team captain Dave Andreychuk played 22 years in the NHL before he could hoist the 35-pound trophy overhead and circle the

rink to the roar of the crowd and before he could have his 24 hours with the Cup and one of the "white gloves guys" who escort it.

The residents of Palmer Lake and students of Lewis-Palmer High School (LPHS) shared in the glory of being able to touch the cup on Aug. 13, thanks to the graciousness and civic pride of Eric Lawson, the Tampa Bay Lightning's strength and conditioning coach, who resides in Red Rocks Ranch.

Lawson met the cup at DIA that morning to take temporary possession of the century-old trophy under the relaxed, but watchful, eye of Mike Bolt, one of three "keepers of the cup" who have been made nationally famous (albeit anonymous) through a series of hockey game telecast commercials.

Bolt and the other "keepers," famous for always wearing white gloves when holding the cup, are employees of the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto and spend most of the year on the road as the Cup makes "guest appearances" at events such as charitable fund-raisers, conventions, and even the occasional NHL game. Lawson and Bolt demonstrated anew that hockey players are among the most approachable and down-to-earth of professional athletes.

For three hours, the cup was constantly surrounded. At the gazebo in front of Town Hall, several generations of giggling kids, beaming grandparents, and current and former hockey players of all abilities got to see, touch, and hug the Cup. Lawson also displayed the cup in front of LPHS where his son Tim, a senior, was helping prepare freshman for their entry into the world of high school. He even surprised a few local shopkeepers with visits enroute. The rest of the "Stanley Cup Day" was spent at a party at home, where most of the guests were friends of the children.



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19527 Kershaw Court, Kings Deer—5 bedroom Victorian style in a modern package with Enkenbolt woodwork throughout the main level. His/hers main level offices, formal dining room, large kitchen with granite countertops and beautiful hand painted mural. Upper level master with two bedrooms, open walkway, and laundry. A/C. Professionally landscaped. Seller says 'SELL' and would be happy to accommodate a quick close. **JUST REDUCED!! \$549,000** MLS #409471



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It's the School Bus Time of Year



By Judith Pettibone

We all blinked and found ourselves seeing school supplies on sale and children standing at the bus stop. It always seemed to me that the “new year” was more appropriately celebrated by the first day of school. New beginnings often lead us to musing, and with musing may come the need for more information. No surprise that there are books to help ...“back to school books” to enlighten, inform, and even amuse.

My Kindergarten

By Rosemary Wells, \$16.99

Really, this has to be the quintessential kindergarten book for the “newby kindie,” especially if the buyer is a fan of Rosemary Wells (of the Max books fame). Charmingly illustrated with Wells’ trademark animals, this is an ambitious picture book. It even has a table of contents! Under the competent wing of teacher Miss Cribbage, the book takes the reader through a wonderfully imagined kindergarten year, from “The First Day of School” to “Word for the Week” through all the holidays. Reading it made me wish for the Osh Kosh B’Gosh days once again.

The Banana Blew Up in My Backpack!

By Louise Zito, illustrated by Bill Crowley, \$12.00

Much to the delight of children of all ages, local author and elementary teacher Louise Zito recently published her first book. A not-so-classic “homework excuse” is colorfully described in this short picture book. A laugh-out-loud experience for the reader is in the works as the young boy explains how the smelly, gooey homework paper in his hand came to be. No one will ever look at a banana in quite the same way again.

Wemberly Worried

By Kevin Henkes, \$15.95

A “beginning of school classic” captures the thoughts of brand-new students entering their first day of class. Wemberly is a worrier—at home, in the park, in the morning and at night. As time slowly approaches for dear Wemberly to go to school, her worries increase. As she enters her classroom, all seems overwhelming to her. Her teacher, however, has the perfect solution. In a flash, the day is done and Wemberly is on her way home ... no worries left. Henkes captures this emotional experience flawlessly in word and picture.



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How to Do Homework Without Throwing Up

By Trevor Romain, \$8.95

“Do not read this book if you love homework” says the back cover of the book. Jokes, cartoons, and witty text pepper this little book, written for late elementary school age. However, woven between the laughs is practical advice, which, if taken, just might help the student create a learning atmosphere of his or her own. Other titles by the same author include True or False? Tests Stink and Bullies Are a Pain in the Brain.

It's All in Your Head: A Guide to Understanding Your Brain and Boosting Your Brain Power

By Susan L. Barrett, \$9.95

This compact book describes itself as an “owner’s manual” on the brain. Barrett’s goal is to give a young person a primer on what’s in one’s head and how to maximize what’s there. Chapters range from brain research, intelligence, thinking, and memory to creativity. A casual style, with bullet points to simplify and summarize, makes the book accessible to all. And although written with the middle schooler in mind, we adults might do well to pay attention to her words. For example, Barrett reminds us that the brain needs care just as we would tend our muscles before an athletic event. Using the acronym RED, she talks about Rest, Exercise, and Diet. This could be an excellent, bit by bit read-aloud for the whole family.

Not Much, Just Chillin': The Hidden Lives of Middle Schoolers

By Linda Perlstein, \$13.95

Oh gosh, Middle Schoolers ...the age that everyone has something to say about! When we live with or work around middle schoolers, we are alternately bemused or horrified by the rapidity of change—in them and in our reactions to them. Perlstein spent a year observing a middle school in Maryland, and this book is the result. Including notes, bibliography, and discussion with the author, this book captures the early adolescent’s roller coaster ride in an intelligent and illuminating way. The New York Times reviewer said, “Chillin’ may not make parents feel more comfortable about early adolescence’s arrival in their household, but it will certainly make them more prepared.” Parents looking for comfort about Middle School might want to skip this frank book, but those looking for information about what is “out there” might want to take a peek.

How to Survive Your Freshman Year

By Hundreds of College Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors Who Did, \$12.95

I know, I know, you have already said a tearful goodbye at the dorm and have turned your teen’s room into the den (just kidding). Actually, a book like this is often better sent (read first by you) sometime in the middle of October (maybe with your Halloween goodie box). By then, some of the information enclosed might actually be absorbed. After listening to my two daughters’ incredible roommate experiences, the heading for chapter 5 (“Dorms, The Good Life?”) assured me that this book knows what it is talking about: “Even if your roommate is a snoring, stingy, angry, psycho slob, the good news is that there are probably several more-or-less normal human freshman living close by—probably right next door. Make sure you get to meet them.”

Okay, so you may already have sent off your kindergarten, middle schoolers, and even your college student (gulp), and you are sitting back with your mug of tea. Before you grab your newest fall read, you may want to pick up a book to give you some insight on this latest transition of yours.

Until next month—when we will be looking at The Edgar Awards and delicious mysteries just in time for Halloween—happy reading!

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On the Trail

Limbaugh Thrills and Spills

By Tim Watkins

Living here is great! We have access to some very special terrain and landscape that is unique and gorgeous. Some of the trails here flow through, around, or near some special landforms, wonderful vegetation, and sweeping vistas. Some of the vistas are changing due to growth and rapidly expanding population. Many trails are now impacted by increased and changing usage. One of the all-time favorite trails has seen the most impact recently. The trail has always been accessed by crossing private land. The landowners generously allowed that. When some of the land was recently developed, it effectively shut down the exit of the Limbaugh trail to the south. Some folks who have been using the wonderful access saw fit to try to rectify the situation and unintentionally wreck-ti-fied more than they planned.

An attempt was made to build a trail on private and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land without first gaining permission. Both public and private owners reacted by more effectively closing down the south access, as is their right. The USFS doesn't want any new trails. The long-term plan does not allow for any trail construction along this part of the Front Range.

EEK! Now what? The plan is under some form of revision...but cross your fingers. Or better yet, abide by the wishes of the USFS to not build new trails and, of course, the rights of the landowners to not have their land used without permission.

There are some people working in the wings, most notably Chris Tirpak, who has spent many hours researching property boundaries and mapping private and public lands. He has contacted the private landowners and the USFS representatives in an attempt to create a solution to the problem for those of us still wanting to use one of the most wonderful trails we have in our area.

As it stands now, the landowners are considering options to use the trail exiting northward only—this is still private land from Inspiration Point eastward and should be respected. Exit or enter only northward at the bottom. When the trail hits the “colonel’s road,” continue northward and go down along the fence line or the trail by the old Forest Service cabin. And, of course, if hiking/biking upward, use the same route in the opposite direction. The best way to avoid problems with trespass issues is to exit Limbaugh Canyon before Inspiration Point at the willow break and go up the gully to Balanced Rock Road and descend there, instead of coming all the way down Limbaugh.

The southbound part of the possible future trail access is closed for now and needs to be worked out with the USFS and landowners. It is fairly complicated and requires some diplomacy and patience. So, the request is this: Please treat the land as something extra special. The privilege of its use can be restored with some patience. Respect private property as well as public lands. Don't misuse or abuse the trail, and help to maintain it. The negotiations to make an old trail that has been used for decades into a trail to last for future generations without hindering the landowners or forest rights are paramount, as is our access to recreational use of the land.

There are ideas and possibilities being worked out with the USFS and the landowners that might take some time. For more information, contact Frank Landis or Jeff Hovermale at USFS, 477-4201, or contact me, Tim Watkins, at Balanced Rock Bike and Ski and I can update you on progress so far.

Dirk at The Wine Seller has a plan to do some cleanup and trail work. Volunteers will meet at 11:30 a.m. on Sept. 19 at Balanced Rock Bike and Ski and at noon will ride up Mt. Herman Road for an easy and fun ride. Hikers

are encouraged to truck/carpool up Mt. Herman and meet the mountain bike riders around 1:30 p.m., when cleanup and trail maintenance will commence. Afterward, we'll run/ride/walk to Palmer Lake, where we will reconvene at Guadala-Jara's patio around 4:30 for a free glass of beer courtesy of The Wine Seller.

There are some other projects to participate in, like the monthly trail maintenance work by the Friends of Monument Preserve (the forest service work center/fire center trail maintenance). Want to do more than learn about the issues and needs? For more information on all these activities, contact Balanced Rock Bike and Ski, 488- 9007, or Dirk at The Wine Seller, 488- 3019. This is our house; let's make it last and keep it right.

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High Country Highlights Plant Zones

By Woody Woodworth

It seems every gardening book and nursery catalog refers to plant hardiness zones, also known as climate zones or growing zones. If you're new to gardening, you may be wondering what all the fuss is with these zones and how to find out which zone you are gardening in.

Basically, plant hardiness zones are a guide to help you know which plants will grow where you live, so you don't plant things that will soon die because they can't manage your region's temperatures. Plants vary in the temperature extremes they can endure. Basic laboratory testing can determine the lowest sustained temperature a particular plant type can withstand, but, as gardeners, we still need to know how these measurements relate to our own gardens.

The average minimum temperature is not the only factor in figuring out whether a plant will survive in your garden. Soil types, rainfall, day-time temperatures, day length, wind, humidity, and heat also play their roles. For example, although Austin, Texas, and Portland, Oregon, are in the same zone (8), the local climates are dramatically different. Even within a city, a street, or a spot protected by a warm wall in your garden, there may be microclimates that affect how plants grow. The zones are a good starting point, but you still need to determine for yourself what will and won't work in your garden.

Most gardeners in Colorado use the USDA plant hardiness map that divides North America into 11 hardiness zones. Zone 1 is the coldest; zone 11 is the warmest, a tropical area found only in Hawaii and southern-most Florida. In between, the zones follow a fairly predictable pattern across the continent—though a closer look will reveal scattered variations.

Generally, the colder zones are found at higher latitudes and higher elevations. Monument and surrounding areas range from a Zone 3 along the Palmer Divide area to a Zone 5 near Gleneagle.

Plant encyclopedias may refer simply, for example, to "Zone 4," which generally means the plant is hardy to that zone (and will endure winters there) and generally can withstand all the warmer zones below. More detailed information may indicate a range of zones (i.e., "Zones 4-9"), which means the plant will only grow in those zones and will not tolerate the colder and warmer extremes outside them.

But remember, zones are only a guide. You may find microclimates that allow you to grow more than the books say you can. By the same token, you may find to your dismay that some precious plant—one that's "supposed" to be hardy in your zone—finds its way to plant heaven instead.

Some nurseries, garden centers, and other western gardeners refer to the Sunset Zone map, rather than the USDA plant hardiness zones. The Sunset zones and maps are listed for every plant in Sunset's Western Garden Book, which is considered an outstanding gardening reference in the West.

However, the USDA zones are still of importance to Colorado gardeners, since the USDA zones are used in the rest of the country. When you order plants from catalogs or read general garden books, you need to know your USDA zone in order to be able to correctly interpret references.

Woody Woodworth owns High Country Store and is a member of Garden Centers of Colorado and the Green Industry.

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Masonic Lodge recognizes Community Service

Teacher Donna Sage, Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department Chief Julie Lokken, and Monument Police Chief Joe Kissell were recognized by the Centurion Daylight Lodge of Monument for their service to the community at the Mason's annual awards picnic Aug. 1. More than 100 people were in attendance.

Sage retired this past June from Kilmer Elementary School after 30-plus years in District 38. Lokken has served in the Tri-Lakes area for the past 13 years. Kissell has served more than 28 years in law enforcement.

Below: Bruce Fritzsche of Centurion Daylight Lodge congratulates Chief Julie Lokken, Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department and Chief Joe Kissell, Monument Police Department for their service to the community. Unable to attend, was Ms. Donna Sage, teacher in District 38 for more than 30 years.]



Bird Watch on the Palmer Divide

Hummingbirds: Selasphorus species

By Elizabeth Hacker

Summer is an extraordinary season on the Palmer Divide, partly due to the multitude of wildflowers and the vivacious little hummingbird. The two species that frequent this area are the broad-tail and the rufous. The name hummingbird was derived from the humming sound made when these tiny birds flap their wings.

It is easy to mistake a broad-tail for the ruby-throated hummingbird because of their similar red throats and iridescent green coloring. As its name implies, the broad tail is what distinguishes it from its more tapered-tailed cousin, which primarily resides east of the Mississippi. In contrast, the male rufous is unmistakable because it has an iridescent orange throat with a bright red-brown underside. The rufous (or as I refer to them, “rough-house”) is without question the more aggressive of the two species.

Broad-tails will arrive as early as mid-May. We always hope they don’t make their appearance too early because of the unpredictable and often harsh May snowstorms that all-too-often frequent this region. Snow, freezing temperatures, and strong winds can be devastating to early migratory birds, especially the little broad-tails, who are already exhausted from their long migration. The rufous hummingbirds arrive in August, and because they aggressively chase off their summer cousins, I often associate their arrival as a sign that summer is coming to an end.

ummingbirds are unique in the bird world because of their small size and their flight pattern. They hover upright by flapping their wings in a figure-eight motion in front of a flower as they reach for food with their extensible tongues. To move away, they must fly backward; only hummingbirds are capable of this maneuver.

With a wing-speed of around 50 flaps per second, their wings appear little more than a blur.

Being very small, yet highly active, these birds maintain a high body temperature, a fast breathing rate, and a rapid heartbeat. They must consume two-thirds of their weight in food each day to survive. Only briefly will they take a rest before continuing on their quest for the next meal. Two hours without food is about their limit. Their primary food source is nectar from a variety of flowers, but they also consume tree sap, aphids and other small insects, and spiders.

Hummingbirds are the aerial gymnasts of the bird world. To attract a mate, the males will rocket skyward, then abruptly dive back toward earth—only to level off just before hitting the ground. Once the male attracts a mate, the birds often fly in tandem from flower to flower.

Females generally lay two white eggs about the size of a pea and rear their young alone. Nests are cup-shaped and very small—only 1 inch in diameter. Nests often occur in stands of scrub oak, but have been reported in many other locations, including wind chimes! Nests consist of leaves, twigs, and mosses and are wound with spiderwebs so they can expand as the chicks grow. Incubation lasts about 18 days, and in another 20 days the adolescents fledge.

In the early 20th century, one fashion trend was to adorn women’s hats with hummingbirds and their nests. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 was passed to stop the commercial trade in bird parts because of the concern that the hummingbird might follow the passenger pigeon to extinction.

Hummingbirds will come to feeders if the sugar-water is fresh (it should be changed every other day).

But be aware that feeders also attract house finches, insects, and sometimes bears. A better idea might be to plant flowers (red ones are their favorite) such as monarda and trumpet vine in a garden or in a hanging pot. Once a food source is established, get ready for hours of entertainment.

Elizabeth Hacker is an artist and freelance writer. E-mail your questions and bird finds to her at editor@ourcommunitynews.org.

Below: Hummingbird drawing by Elizabeth Hacker. A color version is posted at www.ourcommunitynews.org/v4n9bird.htm



The Society Page: Society calls on the Estemere

By Leon Tenney

The Palmer Lake Historical Society held its annual tour and social at the Estemere on Aug. 28 at the generous hospitality of Roger and Kim Ward, the current owners of this Victorian mansion located at the heart of historic Palmer Lake. Over 270 folks toured the mansion, and a few visitors toured the grounds only.

This year, the committee was headed by Hans Post, who did a marvelous job organizing and coordinating all the festivities. Again, Mike Wicklund manned the gate at the parking lot. Jodi Watkins, Paula Whittier, and Sandy Russell ran the bake and book sales at the Carriage House. Sam Swancutt played the bagpipes, which reverberated off the hills of Palmer Lake. Another

group of musicians, the Monument Hill Brass Quintet featured the former D-38 school superintendent, Ted Bauman, and Pa Kettles of high school band director fame.

There are over seven levels in the Estemere mansion, which was considered innovative for its day with its walk-in closets and fire escape chains in all the bedrooms. The original owner lived for a time in England and copied a floor plan from the house in which he stayed; this included a widow’s walk, even though Palmer Lake is not on the seacoast. Dr. Thompson, a dentist, began building this mansion prior to 1887, then went bankrupt and disappeared in 1890.

Over the next 100 years, the numerous owners kept

adding on to and modernizing this mansion. The Wards had to decide to which period they would restore each room. For instance, Kim Ward chose the 1920s as the historical period to restore the kitchen. What is apparent to all is the care the Wards have given in restoring this favorite historic landmark in Palmer Lake. Thank you for sharing.

The house is described in greater detail in a pamphlet that is available at the Lucretia Vaile Museum in Palmer Lake and is open most Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Hopefully, Roger and Kim Ward, who led the tours, will have an open house next year for the local society.

Lewis-Palmer Serteens make a difference

By Caitlin Baran

Over the past three years, a group of students at Lewis-Palmer High School have volunteered nearly 12,000 hours of time to their community. These students form the club known as Serteen. Serteen is a youth sponsorship of Sertoma. With around 140 members and growing every year, Serteen is one of the largest clubs in Lewis-Palmer High School.

The members of Serteen share a common passion to make a difference in the world through the giving of their time. It is because of this collectively shared passion that many events are made possible each year. Some of those events include: the annual Empty Bowl Dinner, where students set up, serve, and clean up; the Fall Festival, where students assist in setting up and participate at several vendor booths; and the Fourth of July Parade, where students enter a float they build, help with the Children’s Parade, and clean up the entire parade route.

However, these events only make up a small portion of a wide range of organizations that Serteen serves. Members of the community regularly turn to Serteen to fill their needs for volunteers as these students have proven to be a reliable source of manpower.

Their dedication to mankind has made the 11-year-old Lewis-Palmer High School Serteen Club one of the top Serteen clubs in the nation, winning awards

such as the Sertoma International Serteen Club of the Year Award (twice), Sertoma International Publicity Award, and the Governor of Colorado’s Youth Philanthropy Award. In 2004, the Lewis-Palmer High School Serteen Club sponsored a Serteen club in Russia, and today continues to support the Russian Serteens.

Below: Serteen Club officers and sponsors: left to right, Katie Magerko, secretary; Sharon Thompson, teacher advisor; Scott Limbird, treasurer; Grant Gossett, publicity; Caitlin Baran, newsletter; Mark Swanson, teacher advisor; Sean Moon, Webmaster; Cameron Barton, vice president; Max Williams, Sertoma advisor; and Shawna Fehrman, president.




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Special Events and Notices

Wine Seller's Fall Concert Series at TLCA

The Wine Seller's concert series continues into the fall, with tastes from area restaurants, wine, Serrano's coffee, and beverages available. On **Sept. 4** Colorado Saxophone Quartet will perform everything from jazz and classical music to avant garde. Chinook Ensemble, a woodwinds group, will play **Oct. 16**, and Hausmusik String Quartet will play **Nov. 13**. The Saturday night concerts are at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA), located at 304 Highway 105 in Palmer Lake. Tickets for each concert are \$10 for members and \$12 for nonmembers and are available at The Wine Seller, The SpeedTrap, and TLCA. Doors open at 7 p.m. and shows start at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 481-0475 or visit www.trilakesarts.com.

Farmer's Market in Monument

The Farmer's Market will be in downtown Monument **every Saturday until Oct. 2**, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Lewis-Palmer School District yard on the south side of Second Street between Jefferson and Adams.

First Annual Chili Cook-off

This open competition will take place on **Sept. 11**, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at High Country Store, 243 Washington St., Monument. The cook-off will feature judging, tastings, and lots of chili. Washington Street will be partially closed that day for the event. All proceeds go to the Tri-Lakes Cares Building Fund, so get a team together today. Pick up an entry form and rules at the downtown Monument stores or contact Woody at High Country Store, 481-3477.

Rummage and Bake Sale

The Homemakers of Monument will hold their annual rummage and bake sale **Sept. 11**, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Monument Town Hall, 166 Second St. Proceeds will go to a local charity, and unsold items will be donated to charity too. Donations of useable items will be accepted at Town Hall on Sept. 10, 1-4 p.m. For more information, call Lorena, 481-8418.

Gleneagle Woman's Club

The Gleneagle Woman's Club has over 100 members and holds monthly luncheon meetings featuring speakers. The annual membership drive meeting will be held **Sept. 17** at the Gleneagle Golf Club, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Program speaker will be Sheila Whelan of Sheila Whelan Designs. Within the club are many interest groups including investing, gourmet cooking, book review, hiking, bridge, and many more. Call Cecelia Neill, 481-1283, to make your reservation. For more information call Julie Bloom 481-1906.

Tri-Lakes Women's Club Luncheon Meeting
The first meeting of the season will be **Sept. 17**, 11 a.m., at Perry Park Country Club in Larkspur. The program will feature a Tri-Lakes Update: "Proud of the Past and Confident in our Future," by Monument's former mayor, Betty Konarski. The Knotty Pines will provide dessert music. Make reservations by calling Jackie Timura at 481-6923 or at www.tlwc.net under reservations.

Tri-Lakes Women's Club membership is open to women living in School District 38. Luncheon meetings with programs are held September through May. Tri-Lakes Women's Club sponsors Wine and Roses and the annual Pine Forest Antiques Show and Sale. Proceeds from fundraisers benefit local nonprofit groups. More information at: www.tlwc.net or call Kay Wantman at 481-6240 or Paula Johnson at 481-9376.

Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District BBQ and Open House

Local residents are invited to enjoy some good food and tour the South Water Treatment Plant and recently planted demonstration Xeriscape garden, where they can learn about grasses, trees, and garden plants that thrive in the Tri-Lakes area with little water. The event is **Sept. 18**, noon to 3 p.m. at 17250 Leggins Way, off Higby and Bowstring Roads in South Woodmoor. For more information, call 488-2525.

Trail Maintenance Volunteers Needed
Want to make a difference, get some exer-

cise, meet nice people, and get a free glass of beer at the end of a rewarding afternoon? Meet at 11:30 a.m. on **Sept. 19** at Balanced Rock Bike and Ski, and at noon head up Mt. Herman Road for an easy and fun ride. Hikers will truck/carpool up Mt. Herman and meet the mountain bike riders around 1:30 p.m., when trail maintenance will commence. Afterward, the volunteers will run/ride/walk to Palmer Lake and meet at Guadalupe Jarra's patio around 4:30 for a well-deserved free glass of beer, courtesy of The Wine Seller. For more information phone Tim at Balanced Rock Bike and Ski, 488-9007, or Dirk at The Wine Seller, 488-3019.

Chamber Business Exposition: Expose Your Business

The Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce will hold its fourth annual business expo **Sept. 21**, 4-8 p.m. at the Pine Crest Event Center in Palmer Lake. Meet your local business owners while enjoying a wine and beer tasting and food festival. For more information, call the chamber at 481-3282 or visit www.trilakesexpo.com.

Railroad Festival

The fourth annual railroad festival, sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, will be held **Sept. 25**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., starting at the Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. The festival will feature model train layouts from local clubs, and door prizes, too. The cost for a family of two adults and up to four children is \$10. Single adult tickets are \$3, children 5-16 are \$2, and children under age 5 are free. For information, phone the chamber at 481-3282.

Black Forest Slash-Mulch Site Closing in September

If you've been meaning to trim and thin your trees, now is the time! You can still dispose of the slash at the Black Forest Slash-Mulch Site, a wildfire mitigation and recycling program of the El Paso County Solid Waste Management Department. The site is located at the southeast corner of Herring and Shoup Roads in Black Forest.

Residents may bring slash that is no longer than six feet and no wider than eight inches in diameter to the slash-mulch site, where it will be ground into mulch and recycled. Slash is accepted **through Sept. 25, Thursday evenings 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.** The cost is a donation of nonperishable food that will be distributed to nonprofit Black Forest organizations. No stumps, roots, lumber, railroad ties, dirt, weeds, or household trash will be accepted. Loads must be covered and tied, and children and pets must stay inside the vehicle while at the site. Mulch will be available till Sept. 25. Those bringing their own tools may load mulch free of charge.

For more information, call El Paso County Solid Waste Management at 520-7878 or Ruth Ann Steele at 495-3107, or visit www.bflash.org.

Win a New Car!

Tri-Lakes Cares (TLC) is an organization dedicated to helping those in our community struggling for a variety of reasons. TLC is currently operating out of a small garage-like structure off

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Third Street in downtown Monument. This building barely allows them enough room to store the necessary food items to provide to their clients on a daily basis. To alleviate this problem, TLC has purchased land and hopes to build a new home base. To do this, they need our community's assistance.

TLC Executive Director Judith Pettibone, the Monument Hill Sertoma Club, Jeff Jensen of Pikes Peak Acura, and active citizen Carolyn Laband have coordinated a raffle of a new 2004 Acura car, with all proceeds going to the construction of TLC's new building. Tickets cost \$20 each, or three for \$50. There will be cash prizes of \$1,000, \$750, and \$500. The drawing is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 1 at the Lewis-Palmer High School Homecoming football game.

Raffle tickets can be purchased at Covered Treasures, Edward Jones Investments, Pankratz Gallery, Petal Pushin', Pikes Peak Acura in Colorado Springs, The Rockhouse, and Tri-Lakes Printing.

AARP "Triple the Fun" Trip

Triple the fun with the AARP trip to New York City, Philadelphia, and Atlantic City! The dates are **Oct. 3-7** and the cost is \$539 for five days and four nights, including eight meals, plus \$286 for airfare. For more information, call Kay, 481-4429, or Edna, 495-2443.

DWFPD Open House in October

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District will host its annual open house on **Oct. 16** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at their station at 15415 Gleneagle Drive, one block south of Baptist Road. Over 400 people attended last year and Firefighter Jim Biskner says there are plenty of attractions for the entire family: Flight for Life Helicopter display, AMR ambulance tour, El Paso County Search and Rescue, Smoky the Bear, and kids' favorite—Safety House. Using "Hollywood Smoke," Safety House teaches kids how to stop-drop-roll to escape a house fire and how to stay low and check doors for heat on the other side when determining an escape route. Kids are encouraged to come early for this enjoyable training because there is always a line to get into Safety House. There will also be a sign-up booth for community CPR and automatic electronic defibrillator training courses being organized by Battalion Chief Jeff Edwards, who has just returned from Air National Guard duty in Iraq. Lunch will be served by the firefighters. For more information call 488-8680.

**Creative Crafters Showcase
Craft Show Coming in October**

Over 100 professional artists and crafters will be exhibiting their wares on **Oct. 23**, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and

Oct. 24, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The show is at Lewis Palmer High School, 1300 Higby Road. Admission is \$3. For more information, call Noreen at 488-3046 or email her at indigolights@msn.com.

Does God Still Speak To Man?

He spoke to me and that is why my family and I are now in Colorado Springs. Did God have something to do with your moving here? Many other people I've talked with are here in the Springs as a result of hearing from God. If you are one of the many people that have a story behind the move, write a brief description and mail or e-mail it to me at genescaif@yahoo.com or Gene Scalf, PO Box 62412, COS, CO 80962. It is no coincidence that you are here. God has a plan and you're part of it. What part will each of us play? Through joint effort and focused prayer; perhaps we can find out. The Lord has put it on my heart to document as many of these stories as possible. Yes, God is still speaking.



Christmas concert singers needed

The Tri-Lakes Music Association is forming once again to put together a community-wide Christmas concert, Phil Barfoot's "Portraits of Christmas," to be performed at Lewis-Palmer High School Dec. 10-12. The proceeds from this event will be donated to Tri-Lakes Cares, a local nonprofit organization.

Singers and musicians are being sought to perform in this year's concert. Anyone with a desire to sing and have fun is encouraged to come and join this group. In past years, the choir has consisted of 100 to 125 members as well as 20 to 25 orchestra members. A children's choir will also be recruited. There will be two rehearsals each week starting Sept. 12. For those who can't make a weekly rehearsal, the association has practice tapes

that allow a singer to practice the concert material at home.

"This event is truly a community wide happening, very similar to the very successful annual Empty Bowl Dinner" said Bob Manning, founder and co-director. "The group that comes together to perform these musical works does it out of the goodness of their heart and soul. We spend countless hours preparing for and putting on a very professional concert."

The concerts have raised over \$10,000 for Tri-Lakes Cares. For further information, contact Bob Manning at 481-3883 or Nichole Murphy at 481-3903.

Empty Bowl Dinner needs Potters and Bowls

By Ruth Higgins

August may seem early to be contemplating an October event, but to make the Empty Bowl Dinner—a popular fund-raising event now in its 13th year—the huge success it has been in the past, it takes that much preparation time. This year's dinner will be held Oct. 13 at Lewis-Palmer High School. Everything—from soups, bowls, and desserts to napkins—is donated, and all proceeds go to Tri-Lakes Cares, a local charity.

The coveted bowls, donated by more than 25 Colorado potters and art schools, are a big attraction.

In the past, people have lined up for two hours to get their pick of a bowl, which is theirs to take home after the dinner. The wonderful homemade soups to fill them, as well as desserts, are supplied by local churches and businesses.

Linda Pankratz, of Pankratz Studio and Gallery in Monument, is now contacting potters and art schools for their pledges of bowls. Churches and businesses will be contacted soon, as well, for their contributions. It is hoped that all will continue to pledge generously and help make this year's event another success.

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Meeting at Antelope Trails Elementary School, located on the southwest corner of Baptist Road and Gleneagle Drive
NEXT SUNDAY, September 12th, we'll meet at The Classical Academy, 975 Stout Road
From I-25, take exit 156A onto Northgate Rd (east). At Voyager Rd turn right (south). Take a right on Stout Rd.

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Our Community Calendar

Although we strive for accuracy in these listings, you are strongly urged to double-check the time and place of any event you wish to attend by calling the info number for that event.

GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Tue., Sep. 7, 6:30 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **Tri-Lakes and Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District Joint Focus Group Meeting on Unification**, Tue., Sep. 7, 7 p.m., conference room at Tri-Lakes Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Normally meets the 1st Tues. each month. Info: 481-2312 (TL) or 488-3303 (W/M).
- **Monument Planning Commission**, Wed., Sep. 8, 6:30 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **Forest View Acres Water District Board Meeting**, Sep. 8, 7 p.m., Arapahoe Well Building, 188 Rock Ridge Road, off Hwy 105 near Palmer Lake. Normally meets the 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 488-2110.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Workshop**, Wed., Sep. 8, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets the 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Combined Workshop and Meeting**, Thu., Sep. 9, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets the 1st Thu. each month for the workshop and the 2nd Thu. each month for the Council meeting. Info: 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.
- **Monument Parks and Landscape Committee**, Tue., Sep. 14, 6:30 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 2nd Tue. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **Donala Water and Sanitation District Board**, Wed., Sep. 15, 1:30 p.m., Donala building, 15850 Holbein Drive. Normally meets the 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 488-3603 or visit www.donalawater.org
- **Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Board**, Wed., Sep. 15, 7 p.m., Station #2, 15000 Sun Hills Drive. Normally meets the 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 488-8680 or 599-4068.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Meeting**, Wed., Sep. 15, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets the 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.
- **Board of County Commissioners**, Thu., Sep. 16, 9 a.m., 27 E. Vermijo, 3rd Floor Hearing Room. (Location may vary; call to confirm.) Normally meets the 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 520-6300.
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board Meeting**, Thu., Sep. 16, 7 p.m., Learning Center of the Lewis-Palmer Administration Building, 2nd and Jefferson. Normally meets the 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 488-4700.
- **Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Thu., Sep. 16, 7 p.m., conference room at Tri-Lakes Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Normally meets the 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 481-2312.
- **Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District BBQ and Open House**, Sat., Sep. 18, noon-3 p.m. Tour South Water Treatment Plant and the water smart educational Xeriscape garden and enjoy good food and company. 17250 Leggins Way, off Higby and Bowstring Roads in South Woodmoor. Info: 488-2525.
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District**, Mon., Sep. 20, 1 p.m., 1845 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets the 2nd Tue., of each month. Info: 488-2525.
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., Sep. 20, 6:30 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission**, Tue., Sep. 21, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (Off Union Blvd and Printers Parkway). Normally meets the 3rd Tue. and optionally the 4th Tue. each month. Info: 520-6300.
- **Monument Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Tue., Sep. 21, 6:30 p.m., 130 2nd. St. Normally meets the 3rd Tue. each month. Info: 481-4886.

- **Triview Metropolitan District Board Meeting**, Wed., Sep. 22, 4:30 p.m., district office, 174 N. Washington St. Normally meets the 4th Wed. each month. Info: 488-6868.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission**, Tue., Sep. 28, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (Off Union Blvd and Printers Parkway). This hearing will be held only if there are uncompleted items from the Sep. 21 meeting. Info: 520-6300.
- **Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Tue., Sep. 28, 7 p.m., 1855 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets the 4th Tue. each month. Info: 488-3303.
- **Monument Police Advisory Committee**, Wed., Sep. 29, 6:30 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the last Wed. every second month. Info: 481-2954.
- **El Paso County Water Authority**, Wed., Oct. 6, 9 a.m., 27 E. Vermijo, 3rd Floor Hearing Room. Normally meets the 1st Wed. each month. Info: 520-6300.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., Oct. 6, 7 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets the 1st Wed. each month. Info: 488-2694 or visit www.woodmoor.org.
- **Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Annual Open House**, Sat. Oct. 16, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Come see the Flight for Life Helicopter display, AMR ambulance tour, Smoky the Bear and more. Lunch will be served by the firefighters. Donald Wescott Fire Station, 15415 Gleneagle Drive. Info: 488-8680.

LOCAL LIBRARY EVENTS

- **The Palmer Lake Library** hours are Tue.-Fri., 10 a.m.-6 p.m., and Sat., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
- **The Monument Branch Library** hours are Mon.-Thu., 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri. & Sat, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun., 1-5 p.m. 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library Bookbreak**, every Mon, Wed., and Fri., 10:30 a.m. A short read-aloud session particularly suitable for preschoolers. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library Storytimes**, every Tue., 10:30 & 11:15 a.m. For preschoolers ages 3-7. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Palmer Lake Library Storytimes**, every Wed., 10:30 a.m. Stories and more for toddlers and children. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
- **Monument Library: Paws to Read**, Read with a Dog Program, every Wed., 3-4:30 p.m. Make a new friend and have a pawsitively good time while reading with a trained dog. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library Toddler Time**, every Thu., 10:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m., Rhymes & rhythms for kids up to 24 months. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library Snuggle-Up Storytimes**, every Thu., 7 p.m. Evening stories; PJs and blankies welcome. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library: Heroes Without Glory—Goodpeople of Colorado History**, Wed., Sep. 8, 11:30 a.m. Storyteller John Stansfield will share factual stories featuring admirable if little-known men and women and their contributions to early Colorado. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library: Tri-Lakes Friends of the Library Booksale**, Sat., Sep. 18, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Stock up on books at unbelievably low prices. Thousands of books will be available at only \$3/bag. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library: All Aboard Kids!** Sat., Sep. 25, 3-4 p.m. Children who love trains will thoroughly enjoy this fascinating program about Colorado railroad history. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Adult programs**
- **Monument Library: Beginning Computer Classes**. Check at the desk for the schedule of free classes for beginner computer users. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.

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- **Monument Library Discussion Groups for Adults: Socrates Cafe**, every Tue., 1-3 p.m. Discuss philosophy, religions, spirituality, and the common threads among humanity. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library Senior Synergy**, every Wed., 10-noon. Join this group dedicated to empowering individual growth through life-long learning and positive relationships. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library: Talk English!** Mondays, beginning Sep. 13, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Intermediate and advanced English language learners are invited to practice speaking social English at these free informal conversation groups for adults. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Palmer Lake Book Group**, Fri., Sep. 10, 9 a.m., Palmer Lake Library. Join this free book discussion about "Big Stone Gap" by Adriana Trigiani; registration is not necessary. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
- **Monument Library History Buffs**, Wed., Oct. 6, 1-3 p.m. Read a historical book, share what you learn. Normally meets the 1st Wed. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library September Display**: Train buffs will thoroughly enjoy a G-gauge (garden) display of model train engines and cars. Plus, the talented and creative Monument Branch Library staff will exhibit weavings, quilts, photographs, and paintings. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.

For other library events, please check <http://ppld.org/communityconnections/calendar>.

OTHER EVENTS

- **Farmers Market in Downtown Monument**, Saturdays, to Oct. 2, 7 a.m.-1 p.m., on the Lewis-Palmer school district yard on the south side of 2nd St. between Jefferson and Adams. Info: 884-8017.
- **Diabetes and Stroke Prevention Classes**, Thursdays through Sep. 20, 6-7 p.m., St. Peter Parish Education Center. Free classes on nutrition, cooking, exercise, and stress reduction. Open to the public, to the first 25 who sign up. To register, call Liz Slusser, 488-8639.
- **Air Force Academy Toastmasters Club**, every Mon., 5:30-6:30, Oracle Building off Voyager Parkway. Info: call Don, 481-8435, or visit www.d26toastmasters.org.
- **Friday's at the Chamber sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce**, Fri., Sep. 3, 8-10 a.m., 300 Highway 105, next to the Village Inn. The chamber welcomes members to our Friday Morning Coffee's. Coffee and pastries will be another sweet way to network and to say "Thank you" for your continued support. Normally meets the 1st Fri. each month. Info: 481-3282
- **Western Museum of Mining & Industry**, New in the Changing Exhibit Gallery: GOLD! Now through June 30, 2005. Cost: \$7 adults, \$5 students & seniors, \$3 children age 3-12. 1025 E. Northgate Rd. Take I-25 to the Gleneagle Exit (156A); the museum entrance is immediately east of I-25, just opposite the north entrance to the U. S. Air Force Academy. Info: 488-0880.
- **Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts and The Wine Seller Concert Series: Colorado Saxophone Quartet**, Sat., Sept. 4, 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m. The quartet performs jazz, classical music, and avant garde. Tickets, \$10 for members, \$12 nonmembers, available at The Wine Seller, The SpeedTrap, and TLCA. 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake. Info: 481-0475 or visit www.trilakesarts.com.
- **Black Forest Chapter of AARP Potluck Luncheon**, Wed., Sep. 8, 11:30 a.m., Black Forest Community Church, Shoup and Black Forest Road. Normally meets the 2nd Wed. of each month. Info: Electa Beckner at 596-6787 or Chuck Eaton at 495-2443.
- **Ben Lomond Gun Club, Tri-Lakes Chapter**, Thu., Sep. 9, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes Fire Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Normally meets the 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 481-3364.
- **Tri-Lakes Networking Team Monthly Social & Dinner**, Thu., Sep. 9, 6:30-9 p.m., Woodmoor Country Club. Connect with women in business. Normally meets the 2nd Thu. each month. Info: Tonya Whaley, 484-0677; Rhonda Fullmer, 481-6352.
- **A Rummage and Bake Sale sponsored by the Monument Homemakers Club**, Sat., Sep. 11, 8

a.m. - 2 p.m., Monument Town Hall. Proceeds will be donated to a local charity. Usable items will be accepted Friday, Sep. 10, 1-4 p.m., at Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd Street. Info: Lorna 481-8418.

- **First Annual Chili Cook-off**, Sat. Sep. 11, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., High Country Store, 243 Washington St., Monument. This is an open competition with judging, tastings, and lots of chili! All proceeds go to the Tri-Lakes Cares Building Fund, so get a team together and pick up an entry form and rules at the downtown Monument stores. Info: 481-3477.
- **La Leche League of Tri-Lakes**, Tue., Sep. 14, 10 a.m., Family of Christ Lutheran Church. This worldwide organization provides mother-to-mother support for mothers who choose to breastfeed. 675 Baptist Rd. Normally meets the 2nd Tue. each month. Info: 481-2909.
- **Women's Business Owners and Managers Luncheon**, Tue., Sep. 14, 11:30 a.m., King's Deer Golf Club. RSVP and info: 481-3282.
- **Gleneagle Women's Club Annual Membership Luncheon & Meeting**, Fri., Sep. 17, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Gleneagle Golf Club. Sheila Whelan of Sheila Whelan Designs is the program speaker. Reservations: Cecelia Neill, 481-1283; Info: Julie Bloom, 481-1906.
- **Tri-Lakes Women's Club**, Fri., Sep. 17, 11 a.m., Perry Park Country Club in Larkspur. Featured speaker is Betty Konarski, former Monument mayor. The Knotty Pines will provide dessert music. Reservations: Jackie Timura, 481-6923 or at www.tlwc.net under reservations.
- **Palmer Lake Historical Society: "Historic Cripple Creek" Bus Tour**, Sat., Sep. 18, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Members only, limited space, cost \$10 per person. Info: 488-9450.
- **Mt. Herman Trail Maintenance**, Sun., Sep. 19, 11:30 a.m., Balanced Rock Bike and Ski. Bike up Mt. Herman Road or truck/carpool to meet the mountain bike riders around 1:30 p.m., when trail maintenance will commence. Afterward, run/ride/walk to Guadala-Jara's in Palmer Lake at 4:30 for a free glass of beer courtesy of The Wine Seller. Info: Tim, 488-9007 or Dirk, 488-3019.
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce Business Expo**, Tue, Sep. 21, 4-8 p.m., Pinecrest Events Center in Palmer Lake. Meet your local business owners while enjoying a wine and beer tasting and food festival. Info: 481-3282
- **Palmer Lake Citizens for Community Awareness**, Thu., Sep. 23, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. All are welcome to join this community group. Normally meets the 4th Thu. each month. Info: Jaqui Parker, 487-7434.
- **MOMS Club of Monument New Member Social**, Fri., Sep. 24. Come meet other stay-at-home moms and kids! Normally meets the Fri. before the last Wed. of the month. Info: Denise Bowe, 488-0552.
- **Railroad Festival**, Sat., Sep. 25, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., starting at the Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. This annual event features operational model train lay-outs from local clubs, and nifty door prizes too. Cost: \$10 for a family of two adults and up to four kids, or \$3 per adult, \$2 for kids 5-16, and kids under 5 free. Info: 481-3282.
- **Monument Homemakers Club Monthly Potluck Lunch**, Thu., Oct. 7, 11:30 a.m., Monument Town Hall. Normally meets the 1st Thu. each month. Info: Kay Reuteler, 488-3263.
- **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers**, Thu., Oct. 7, 7 p.m., Church of Woodmoor, Furrow Rd. Normally meets the 1st Thu. each month. Info: 488-0074.
- **Creative Crafters Showcase Craft Show**, Sat. Oct. 23, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Sun. Oct 24, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Lewis-Palmer High School, 1300 Higby Road. Info: 488-3046 or indigolights@msn.com.

To have your event listed in Our Community Calendar, please contact John Heiser at 488-9031, our community_calendar@hotmail.com or P.O. Box 1742, Monument, Colorado 80132.

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