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The Palmer Lake Star was lit March 10 in honor of Trustee George Reese who died March 6. The Reese family asked that donations be made to the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department in lieu of flowers. The OCN staff extends our sympathies to the family and friends of this frequent volunteer and public servant. Coverage of Palmer Lake meetings starts on page 3. *Photo by Jim Kendrick*

### *Forest View Acres Water District, March 10*

## Water district struggles with aftermath of alleged embezzlement

*By John Heiser*

More than 45 people attended the regular monthly meeting March 10 of the Forest View Acres Water District (FVAWD) board of directors. The meeting focused on the circumstances that led to the alleged embezzlement of at least \$212,000 in district funds and what should be done to keep the district's infrastructure operating.

The four board members, Tom Guenther, Kevin Lonergan, John Anderson, and Barbara Reed-Polatty, were all present. There is a vacancy on the board. Guenther, the president of the district, presided.

When contacted later, board secretary Reed-Polatty said an application was received proposing to dissolve the district. Reed-Polatty said the application was returned to the applicant because the required \$300 application fee did not accompany it.

### **Background**

The Forest View Acres Water District was established in 1957 by the late Hugh Nevins. From the initial provision of water to 27 homes, FVAWD currently provides water service to 280 residences in the Red Rocks Ranch, Clovenhoof, Villas, Sundance Estates, and Shiloh Pines neighborhoods in unincorporated El Paso County. A five-member board of directors governs the FVAWD, which also has a contract water operations manager, Dan LaFontaine, who is responsible for maintaining the equipment and infrastructure and managing all aspects of water delivery.

Reed-Polatty said she joined the board in May 2004. She said the then contract office manager, Patricia Unger, who had been working for the district since 1994, repeatedly put off her requests for bank statements. Reed-Polatty said that on Nov. 30, she and former treasurer Jeff Dull went to Wells Fargo Bank to get information and while there confronted Unger attempting to make unauthorized transactions.

Reed-Polatty said the board notified the sheriff's department, which started an investigation.

In February, a warrant was issued for Unger's arrest. Unger surrendered to authorities Feb. 16. She has been released on bail, awaiting a preliminary hearing April 18.

Guenther said, "The district attorney has documented more than 200 cases of forgery, mainly checks." He noted that the majority of the check forgeries were in the past two years although some large transactions were done in 1999. He said the alleged crimes carry a potential sentence of 4 to 12 years.

Guenther noted that Unger was not under contract in 2004. He added that the district has filed a civil suit against Unger and her husband to recover the funds.

Dull, who served as FVAWD treasurer from June 2004 through January 2005, said, "Wells Fargo Bank has quite a bit of liability."

Guenther added, "Unger was authorized only to deposit checks, not to write checks. When Norwest merged into Wells Fargo, Unger presented herself as the district's representative. She forged the names of board members who were not on the signature cards at the bank. Wells Fargo said they only check signatures on major transactions."

Lonergan added, "The DA said there has been an explosion of embezzlement in the last several years."

Guenther said the profile of an embezzler is "Aunt Bee in Mayberry."

### **Public comments**

Susan Gates asked about the financial status of the district.

Guenther replied that all the essential bills are being paid. He said the district is making monthly payments on a \$7,600 bill for the telemetry system work done in 2004.

*(Continued on page 2)*

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FVAVD (Cont. from page 1)  
He added that the lawyer has agreed to wait for payment until the civil suit is concluded.  
Ketch Nowacki, who said he is an accountant, cited three failures by members of the board:  
1. Unger was not bonded and insured.  
2. There was no system of financial controls in place. All bank statements went only to Unger.

3. The board elected to eliminate independent audits after 1998. Nowacki then called for the board members to resign or be recalled. He also suggested that the district should be dissolved and taken over by another entity such as the Town of Monument.  
David Jones said, "This board has never played by the rules and has been negligent. We need a change of direction."

Gill Moore said, "Recalling the board can wait until we fix this problem. I don't believe anyone on this board is dishonest."  
Micheale Duncan said, "The district is too large for volunteers. It should be run as a business using bonded contractors."  
Sherry Bohn expressed concern about the potential cost to eliminate volunteers.

berry Ridge development is looking to join the district, adding 20 to 24 more houses." He noted that the recently drilled Dawson well was expected to produce hundreds of gallons per minute and is producing only 20 gallons per minute. He said, "If we lose the main pump, we are all out of water. Do we have water to offer future homes?"  
Lonergan replied that Raspberry Ridge was included in the district a year ago. He added, "The Dawson well was a disappointment." He said the district's system never had redundancy and that the Dawson well was drilled as a backup. He noted that the pump in the Arapahoe well is 10 years old but the system is working well.  
Guenther added that due to the district's use of surface water, the Arapahoe well was rarely used during the first three years.

**Operations manager report**  
LaFontaine reported that during February:

- The Dawson well produced 28.4 gallons per minute, for a total of 1.14 million gallons.
- The Arapahoe well produced 97.3 gallons per minute for less than 5 days, for a total of 356,000 gallons. He noted that the Arapahoe well used to produce about 120 gallons per minute.
- Average use per customer was 4,257 gallons; 1.2 million gallons were billed.

**Financial report**  
Guenther reported that he has re-constructed a customer list and is issuing monthly bills.

Billing consists of an \$18 per month administrative fee, a \$26 per month debt service fee, and a charge for the amount of water used based on meter readings. The debt service funds go to pay off an \$880,000 bond issued in 1995 and a \$45,000 loan obtained in 2004. The water use schedule is a graduated scale:

- \$3/1,000: 0-5,000 gal.
- \$4/1,000: 5,000-10,000 gal.
- \$6/1,000: 10,000-15,000 gal.
- \$8/1,000: 15,000-20,000 gal.
- \$12/1,000: 20,000-30,000 gal.
- \$16/1,000: 30,000 + gal.


Guenther said monthly billing totals about \$20,000. He said the operating account balance stands at \$33,370, and the debt service account stands at \$14,508.

The board approved checks totaling \$29,869 for a variety of bills, including \$21,000 for Hinkle drilling, \$4,315 for LaFontaine's services, and \$1,452 for insurance. In addition, the board approved a payment of \$2,000 toward the \$7,613 owed to AmWest for work done on the telemetry system in September and October 2004.

**Executive Session**  
The board unanimously voted to go into executive session to discuss confidential matters regarding individual billing issues.


\*\*\*\*\*  
The Forest View Acres Water District normally meets the second Wednesday each month at 7 p.m. at 18852 Rockbrook Road, Palmer Lake. The next regular board meeting is April 13. For information, call 488-2110.

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Palmer Lake Town Council Workshop, March 3

# Lake study sparks spirited discussion

By Tim Hibbs

Trustees for the Town of Palmer Lake, residents, and others engaged in a lively and sometimes contentious discussion of the results of the lake study conducted by CTL Thompson. The town commissioned the study to investigate the loss of water from the lake and to make recommendations for its remediation.

Bill Hoffman presented the results of the study for the engineering firm. He illustrated his points with a diagram showing the lake in cross-section. The bottom of the lake is lined with a relatively impermeable layer of muck, which rests directly on bedrock. Little water permeates through this layer. Water primar-

ily flows into and out of the lake through a relatively porous sand and gravel layer that lines the sides of the lake. This layer mainly exists on the lake's east and west banks, with a smaller section on its south end. Hoffman said that this layer averages about 5 feet in depth, although the study did not accurately measure depths at all points around the lake's perimeter.

The firm concluded that placing a lining in the sand and gravel layer would reduce water flows from the lake. Hoffman noted that this lining would also reduce water inflows. Several of those in attendance offered opinions on this proposal.

Richard Allen, a founding member of the

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*PL Workshop (Continued from page 2)*

former Lake Preservation committee, said that lining the lake at the end of a drought year could be a mistake. Allen noted that lining the sand and gravel layer would mean that the lake would, from that point forward, require permanent augmentation.

Jeff Hulsmann, chairman of the Awake The Lake committee, agreed, stating that lining the lake “leaves us with no other option but augmentation” He said that option would make the lake into “a swimming pool.” Hulsmann offered an option to fill the lake gradually without lining it, and then carefully monitoring its inflows and outflows to help determine the ultimate course of action. Allen and Trustee Max Parker supported Hulsmann’s suggestion.

Mayor Nikki McDonald stated that the town has historically supplemented the lake with water from the town’s reservoir. She said that the bigger question is whether to fill the lake now and monitor its inflows and outflows, or to wait and take no action.

Responding to a question about the logistics of sealing the lake, Hoffman said that he was against the use of artificial sealant materials. He recommends using some of the muck from the lake bottom as a natural sealant. Parker noted that with the lake’s level currently so low, access to that material would be much easier.

**Committee Reports**

**Community and Economic Development – Buildings:** Trustee Gary Coleman invited the public to screenings

of the movie Village on the Divide, scheduled for March 5. Proceeds from the movie will be donated to the effort to fill the lake.

**Water:** Trustee Chuck Cornell noted that Water Supervisor Steve Orcutt has been replacing the pump on the D2 well. Cornell estimated that the effort would take about three weeks to complete.

**Parks and Recreation:** Trustee Trish Flake noted the town’s annual Easter Egg Hunt would be held March 26 at the Village Green.

The Columbine Arts Festival is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, June 11, at Centennial Park and the Village Green. Participants will include jewelers, artists, and several bands.

Flake noted that a permanent sign would be placed at the tennis courts in Glen Park, announcing the hours of public and reserved use.

The Parks and Recreation committee is planning a Chautauqua (summer school), though no date has yet been set. Flake said that the Chautauqua concept was started in the 1800s and is designed to mix recreational activities such as biking and hiking with educational opportunities.

She said that “affordable” Pilates and yoga classes would begin in March. The current plan calls for Pilates classes to start at 8:15 a.m. and yoga classes at 9:30 a.m.

Douglas County officials have requested that the public be allowed to begin parking at the motor sports area near the Greenland Open Space property. McDonald and Cornell sug-

gested that the request be denied, with Cornell stating that the county needs to first improve its entrance to the open space before additional parking would be considered.

The Pikes Peak Library District has a series of seven films dealing with war themes available for screening and subsequent discussion. Flake said that the committee is considering the film program, which would be held in the town hall.

**Roads:** Parker said that Roads Supervisor Bob Radosevich is expanding the town’s trial with asphalt shavings for road repairs.

**Police:** Total calls for service in February reached 122, compared to 101 in January. Twenty-seven cases were opened, with 2 custody arrests, 11 traffic/dog warnings, and 2 dog citations.

**Fire:** Trustee Brent Sumner reported a total of 16 calls for January. He stated that the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department had received a new ventilation chain saw and some new wildland firefighting equipment.

**Mayor’s Report:** McDonald requested that representatives of the media explicitly state the following in their respective publications: “Orcutt was correct in stating the Town of Palmer Lake does need a water discharge permit.” The quote relates to previous discussions about filling Palmer Lake.

**Fountain Creek Watershed:** Bob Miner reported that the hydrologic studies of the north and south forks of Monument Creek, initiated by the Fountain Creek Watershed, would not include Palmer Lake. Miner requested a letter from the town demanding that Palmer Lake be included in the engineering study, considering that the town had already committed and paid \$1,300 for its part in the effort. He stated that the Army Corps of Engineers has requested funds for their portion of the study, but congressional approval was required before those funds would be available.

**Awake The Lake:** Hulsmann said that the committee, with substantial volunteer assistance from Town Clerk Della Gray, had sent out 830 mailers asking for feedback on the committee’s effort to refill the lake. Almost 26 percent were returned, which Hulsmann said was an exceptionally high response. Of those, more than 80 percent expressed support for filling the lake.

Given that level of community support, Hulsmann said that the committee wanted to move forward with the initiative. He outlined a five-step approach:

permit with the state.

- Build a dechlorination station on county property for water discharged into the lake, as required by state regulations.
- Start filling the lake with water.

Hulsmann said that all points should be actively addressed while the discharge permit application was being processed.

Trustee Chuck Cornell said that the town’s Water Committee had met jointly with the Awake The Lake Committee to determine a cost for the water. Based on electrical cost estimates from Orcutt, plus chemical and administrative costs, Cornell said that the 31 acre-feet of water needed for the lake would cost \$15,000 to \$20,000. He felt confident that the final cost would not exceed \$20,000. He said that the water would come from the D2 well.

Hulsmann requested an opinion from the council to allow the committee to pursue the plan he outlined. He noted that the committee would like to begin filling the lake April 1.

**Business License Requests**

Kim Makower submitted a request for a business license for the Palmer Lake Tennis Club. McDonald said that the application did not provide for the sale of tennis rackets or other gear, so a sales tax license was not required for approval. However, McDonald stated that if sales other than lessons were to occur in the future, a sales tax license would be required at that time. The application was added to the consent calendar for the next Town Council meeting.

A business license application was submitted for Black Forest Tree Service by Clinton Finney. After determining that the company was selling only its services and not wood, the application was also added to the consent calendar.

**Other Agenda Items**


McDonald said the Palmer Lake Sports Riders Club had submitted a request for renewal of its agreement with the town. She said the agreement had been renewed annually for about 20 years. She stated that the club is aware that renewal is contingent on its agreement to fix the fence on the property used by the club. Renewal of the agreement was also added to the consent calendar.

Proposed Ordinance No. 3, to adopt the 2005 edition of the Pikes Peak Regional Building Code, and proposed Resolution No. 1, to adopt the 2005 Pikes Peak Regional Building Permit Fee Schedule, were approved without discussion for inclusion in the agenda of the next Town Council meeting.

No other items were raised for discussion, so McDonald adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

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## Palmer Lake Town Council, March 10

# Council votes to start pumping water into the lake

By Tim Hibbs

Mayor Nikki McDonald called the assembled Palmer Lake trustees and audience members to order at 7:02 p.m. Everyone in attendance was asked to observe a moment of silence for Trustee George Reese, who died on March 6 from complications related to knee surgery. The Palmer Lake star was lit March 10 in honor of Reese's service to the town.

McDonald then convened the Palmer Lake Liquor Licensing Authority to consider two special liquor license applications. The first of these was for the Tri-Lakes Views event scheduled for June 4 at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. The Palmer Lake Art Group submitted the second for an opening at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts scheduled for May 7. That event will be conducted from 5 to 8 p.m. Both applications were approved unanimously. The authority adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

McDonald then convened the Palmer Lake Town Council meeting. The agenda for the council meeting, as well as all consent items, were unanimously approved.

Ted Bauman, president of the Monument Hill Sertoma Club, introduced Jackie Cromer, an eighth grade student at Lewis-Palmer Middle School, to the council. Cromer is the winner of the club's Freedom Essay contest, which is conducted annually and solicits es-

says from Creekside and Lewis-Palmer Middle Schools as well as the Charter Academy. Cromer presented her speech entitled "What Freedom Means to Me."

Sue Huisman, president of the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) at Palmer Lake Elementary School, outlined the group's work on improving the playground at the school. She said that the PTO had received \$47,000 in grants and had separately raised \$17,000 to fund various improvements. More improvements are needed, however, and she outlined a grant request the PTO wished to submit to Great Outdoors Colorado for additional funds.

The request requires a municipality's sponsorship, and Huisman asked the council for its formal support. She also noted that no funds were being requested.

After some discussion, McDonald stated that she didn't feel the council had enough understanding of the issue at present to vote on the endorsement. She suggested that a vote be postponed until the April town council meeting and asked Huisman to return at that time.

## Committee Report Updates

**Parks and Recreation:** Trustee Trish Flake provided more details on the film festival sponsored by the Pikes Peak Library District. The film series is titled "War and Propaganda in Modern So-

ciety" and includes film viewings and moderated discussion after each movie. The series is proposed for the following dates: April 23 at 1 p.m.; May 4, 13, 20, and 25 at 4 p.m.; and June 1 and 22, and July 3, with no times scheduled.

She said that the total cost for film rights and materials would be about \$1,500, and asked that the council allocate \$500 for the event.

Trustee Max Parker suggested that the subject matter could be perceived as biased or controversial. Trustee Brent Sumner said that the movies are rated for adult audiences and had concerns about controlling access to the films. Flake stated that the program is actually conducted by the library district, and similar presentations had controls in place to ensure that minors would not gain unrestricted access.

Flake then moved to appropriate \$500 from the Parks and Recreation committee budget for the event. Sumner offered a second, and the motion passed unanimously.

## Awake The Lake

Chairman Jeff Hulsman said the committee had raised \$3,134.75 in donations without actively campaigning for funds to fill Palmer Lake. He circulated a mockup of a flyer intended for distribution to all residents, asking for a voluntary contribution of \$2 per month or \$25 per year. He noted that most of the work had been done to secure the com-

mittee's status as a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt nonprofit entity, which would allow all contributions made toward replenishment of the lake's water level tax deductible.

Parker asked if the county had committed any Parks and Recreation funds toward the effort. Hulsman said that such requests are presented to the county's Park Advisory Board, and their recommendations are then submitted to the county commissioners for final consideration. He said that the committee's request for funds was already on the advisory board's agenda for its April meeting.

In response to questions from the audience, he stated that the ballot sent to the 815 town residents connected to the public water system was designed to show both sides of the question about filling the lake. McDonald added that this was a deliberate decision to evoke citizen participation in

the issue and to provide guidance for the council. She said that the council wanted the townspeople to determine the council's course of action.

Hulsman added that the ballots returned constituted over 25 percent of those distributed, a very high return rate for questionnaires of this nature. Of those, 177 voted to proceed with filling the lake and 38 voted against.

Parker stated that the lake's appearance and utility were not the town's "pet project"; Palmer Lake is the town's namesake and a primary attraction to the town.

Hulsman then asked the council for authorization to start pumping water into the lake. Town Attorney Larry Gaddis advised that although the ballot only represented a straw poll, its results could be taken into account during a vote.

Trustee Chuck Cornell stated that the cost for the water would be determined by charging for the electricity and chemicals needed to get the water to the lake, plus a 10 percent addition to cover administrative costs and pump and infrastructure maintenance. He stated that the cost would be somewhere between \$15,000 and \$25,000 for the 30 acre-feet of water required for the project.

When discussion ended, Parker moved to authorize the committee to begin pumping up to 30 acre-feet of water into the lake under the cost proposal outlined by Cornell. The motion was offered as Resolution 2-2005, and was seconded by Cornell. Trustee Gary Coleman, Cornell, Flake, Parker, and Sumner voted for the motion. McDonald voted against in support of the 38 ballot respondents who had voted against the issue.

## Fountain Creek Watershed Study

Palmer Lake representative Bob Miner reported that the study managers would reconsider their previous decision not to include Palmer Lake and Monument structures along Monument Creek in the study. He also noted that the Army Corps of Engineers said that both municipalities would have to be part of the study or their contributions would have to be refunded.

## Other items

The council unanimously agreed to renew the town's agreement with the Palmer Lake Sports Riders club.

Ordinance 3-2005 was approved by unanimous vote. The ordinance specifies that Palmer Lake adopt the 2005 edition of the Pikes Peak Regional Building Code. Resolution 1-2005 to adopt the Pikes Peak Regional Building Permit Fee schedules was also approved. The ordinance and the resolution will become effective on April 1, 2005. The council adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

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Monument Board of Trustees, March 7

Two Jackson Creek developments discussed

By Jim Kendrick

New Police Chief Jake Shirk was sworn in by Town Clerk and Treasurer Judy Skrzypek, with several members of his department in attendance. Ted Bauman, president of Monument Hill Sertoma, introduced student Kelly Vicars of Creekside Middle School who read her “What Freedom Means to Me” essay; Vicars was one of several finalists in the Monument Hill Sertoma Freedom Essay Contest.

The board approved Vision Development’s request for concurrent review of the preliminary plans and final PD site plans and final plats at future hearings for two developments, Remington Hill at Jackson Creek Filing No. 1 and the Jackson Creek Commerce Center.

The meeting started half an hour earlier than originally advertised, at 6 p.m. Trustee Frank Orten arrived at 6: 30 p.m.

Board of Adjustment  
vacancy filled

Carl P. Armijo and Claudia L. Whitney applied for the vacancy on the board. Armijo, a professional civil engineer, is a construction manager for the Public Works Department of Castle Rock. Whitney is the town clerk of Larkspur. The BOT voted to appoint Armijo to fill the vacancy and Whitney as an alternate member.

Remington Hill Filing 1

Vision Development’s Remington Hill is a large residential subdivision

proposed between Higby Road and the northernmost portion of Leather Chaps. Filing No. 1 is the southwest corner of Remington Hill and, at 148 lots, comprises about one-sixth of the project.

There are two Planned Residential Development (PRD) zones in Filing No. 1. The western portion, zoned PRD-6 (six lots per acre), contains 56 lots. The larger eastern PRD-4 area (four lots per acre) contains 92 lots.

To the east, the subdivision will be adjacent to the 440-acre Sally Beck parcel, which has recently been proposed for residential development as Home Place Ranch. The north side of the development will be adjacent to Walters Commons Filing No. 1, consisting of 178 townhome units on 18.66 acres at the northeast corner of Higby and Bowstring Roads. To the west, Remington Hill will be separated from Jackson Creek Parkway by about 30 acres of commercial land.

Several roads will change: Part of the new construction will involve re-routing Higby Road away from Lewis-Palmer High School. “New Higby” will start about halfway between Harness and Bowstring Roads and extend to the southwest, intersecting Jackson Creek Parkway about 1,600 feet south of the current intersection with Bowstring and 800 feet northwest of the existing Jackson Creek Parkway electrical substation.

“Old” Higby Road will be left

intact from the current dead-end intersection with Struthers Road, through the traffic light at Jackson Creek and past the high school, to a new dead-end just east of Bowstring. Development Director Rick Blevins said it’s not yet known when these changes would be started or completed, pending completion of a traffic impact study.

In addition, Bowstring Road will be extended past old Higby and through new Higby to intersect with Leather Chaps. The intersection will be the main southern entrance to the Remington Hill subdivision.

Harness Road will also be extended past Higby to the southwest to intersect Bowstring one block north of Leather Chaps, and will become the primary thoroughfare for the center and northeast portions of Remington Hill. In the first filing, however, Harness will only extend northeast of Bowstring for three blocks.

Jackson Creek  
Commerce Center

This pie-shaped center is proposed to include a local bank, community office buildings, and local retail on 9.92 acres at the northeast corner of Leather Chaps and Jackson Creek Parkway. A 14,900-square-foot Walgreen’s will be located on the northeast corner, and a 5,675-square-foot Ent Federal Credit Union building will be adjacent to Walgreen’s.

Two strip mall-type buildings,

with 13 units of 2,400 square feet each, span the northern boundary of the parcel. Access is provided by an internal east-west street that connects Jackson Creek Parkway to Leather Chaps. There are five units in the western building and eight units in the eastern building. East of the credit union will be two 12,000-square-foot, two-story office buildings.

Blevins gave a short presentation on Vision Development’s request for concurrent review for the residential and commercial developments. Trustee Gail Drumm asked if consideration of these requests should be postponed until the new town planner, Catherine Green, “is onboard.” Green was scheduled to start work two days later, on March 9. Mayor Byron Glenn said the board would have a chance to ask questions on the details when the proposal comes back for its concurrent review public hearing.

Trustee Tommie Plank asked if the Higby and Bowstring Road projects would be part of the initial Remington Hill development. Blevins said that would be determined by Vision’s traffic study and their consultant’s recommendation for road improvement requirements.

Plank asked for confirmation that the traffic study would be completed before the application comes before the Planning Commission and the BOT. Blevins said the reports would

(Continued on page 8)



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be included in the application package. Blevins also said the Higby and Bowstring extension projects' timing would partly depend on what School District 38 wanted.

Plank then asked Blevins if negotiations were ongoing between D-38 and Vision Development. He said that the district's lawsuit against his employer was still pending. Plank said that should not keep the two parties from negotiating. He said it was not stopping negotiations and that they have been in contact.

Each of the requests for concurrent review required a separate motion. Both passed 5-1, with Drumm voting no on each, citing his preference to have Green review the requests first.

(After the meeting, Vision Development decided to only move forward on the PRD-4 portion of the Remington Hill proposal and is now calling the larger lots Filing 1.)

### Contracts approved

**Public Works garage:** The board approved the lowest bid contract of \$43,750 for foundation and slab installation for the new Public Works garage on Jefferson Street. The budget for the garage is about \$75,000. Plank asked if the building would eliminate outside storage of Public Works equipment. Supervisor Tom Wall said one purpose of the garage was to protect this gear.

**Limbach Park:** The agreed-upon period to complete negotiations for purchase of railroad land to expand Limbach Park was extended. The Nov. 19 Letter of Understanding between the town and the Union Pacific Railroad Company specified that the "Feasibil-

ity Review Period" ended on March 8. The board approved an extension of this review period until April 15 to allow more time for negotiations.

**Workshop monies:** The board approved \$3,000 for its 50 percent match with Great Outdoors Colorado, and also approved the \$6,000 contract with the Community Revitalization Partnership for a two-day workshop on downtown revitalization. The workshop will be held on May 17 and 18 in Town Hall.

**Street sweeper:** Wall recommended approval of the lowest bid contract proposal of \$150,313.30 for a new street sweeper from Faris Machinery Company. The proposed Elgin "Whirlwind MV" sweeper has vacuum capability to control dust that the town's current sweeper lacks. Wall also recommended that the town not trade in the old sweeper. He said the better option is to keep it as a spare for the first six months after the new purchase, in case any problems arise or there is a need to provide additional sweeping services.

Wall added that the town could get more by offering the old sweeper for re-sale on the open market than by trading it in to Faris. "They were literally giving us nothing for it. All they were doing was inflating the price by \$5,000 if we wanted to use the trade and then they took it right back off."

The 2005 budget appropriated \$160,000 for a new vacuum sweeper. The sweeper has a three-year warranty. Wall will investigate whether the warranty can be extended, as requested by Drumm. The board approved all his recommendations.

**New tractor:** Wall recommended ap-

proval of the only qualifying bid for a five-year lease-purchase contract totaling \$38,894 for a new John Deere Model 4720 tractor with a 73-inch bucket and an optional 17-foot right-of-way maintenance mower attachment. Currently, right-of-way vegetation is mowed with a five-foot cutter, requiring several more passes and time than the new vehicle will require.

The contract with Potestio Brothers Equipment, Inc. will exceed the multi-year lease-purchase budget appropriation of \$38,000. Wall suggested the additional cost be covered year to year from the streets portion of the budget for equipment maintenance and repair. The total purchase price is spread over five years, however. The board approved both his recommendations.

### Reports

**D-38 meeting:** Plank reported that School District 38 had met on Feb. 24 with other county and Tri-Lakes region governmental entities to develop mutually beneficial long-term growth predictions. She said two more meetings at D-38 regarding traffic growth were planned for March and April.

**Highway update:** Drumm said he had attended a Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) meeting on March 5. He noted that the cost to widen I-25 to six lanes from Colorado Springs to Monument Hill would be about \$400 million more than budgeted currently and that work remained on how to fund Baptist Road.

**Masse lawsuits:** Town Attorney Gary Shupp reported that litigation concern-

ing the two lawsuits filed against the town by Kalima Masse regarding her concrete batch plant proposal at Washington and Highway 105 was progressing slowly. He said the case the town had been litigating without assistance has been appealed to the Court of Appeals.

To date, the town's insurer, Colorado Intergovernmental Risk Sharing Agency (CIRSA), had supplied legal counsel for defense in only one of the lawsuits. CIRSA will now provide Shupp with some legal help from the same counsel for the other suit during this appeal.

**Looking ahead:** Town Manager Rick Sonnenburg submitted a draft list of 61 programs and projects that are planned for completion in 2005 for the board's "review, discussion, and prioritization." He noted that Shirk and Green had not had a chance to review or comment upon them. The board deferred consideration of the list to allow for their input and asked the staff to recommend a prioritization of the listed items. Mertz asked that an ordinance prohibiting overnight parking at Wal-Mart and other stores be added to the list.

### Traffic impact fee changed for Herb Garden Bistro

Sonnenburg passed out copies of a March 4 *Gazette* article about town traffic impact fees, along with copies of a rebuttal

e-mail he had sent to board members. The e-mail noted that Gallery Center owner Richard Pankratz's fee had been lowered from \$4,572 to \$2,182 (equal to \$2.17 per square foot). The original quote the Planning Department had given Pankratz was in error.

Sonnenburg said he had asked the reporter for a correction (which ran on March 9). The article had compared the impact fee the town was charging Pankratz to impact fees being paid by Wal-Mart in the Monument Marketplace.

Sonnenburg noted in his email that the Monument Marketplace developers for Wal-Mart "will pay approximately \$370,546 to the town for offsite improvements to Baptist Road and I-25 per their traffic report, in addition to any BRRTA fees."

Plank asked about the Feb. 22 recommendation by consultant traffic engineer Neil Geitner that the restaurant be charged the higher rate. The current "retail-low trip generation" fee is charged if projected trips per 1,000 square feet are 50 or less per day. The current "retail-high" impact fee is \$4,418 per 1,000 square feet, while the "retail-low" impact fee is \$2,165 per 1,000 square feet. Sonnenburg said that the planning staff had always considered the restaurant to be "retail-low," though this difference was not noted on Feb. 22.

(Blevins discussed his view of Monument Marketplace traffic impact fees with OCN at a Baptist Road upgrade financing meeting on March 1. Blevins noted the BRRTA fee for 633,000 square feet at \$1.25 per square foot of retail space at the Marketplace is about \$791,000. The Marketplace has been downsized from its original projection of about 678,000 square feet. Blevins said that the portion of the BRRTA fee associated with Wal-Mart's 206,000 square feet is about \$257,500. Blevins said the separate, previously negotiated Marketplace contribution for temporary improvements on Baptist Road between Jackson Creek Parkway and the interchange is about \$800,000.)

### Open Forum

Resident Richard Metro, of the Village of Monument, asked where the town would get the water for the proposed water park between I-25 and Old Denver Highway. Glenn said the development would be south of Baptist Road in the Forest Lakes Metropolitan District. The district would provide the project's annual water requirement of about 15 acre-feet per year. (An acre-foot is 325,851 gallons.)

Glenn said he would like to see a large percentage of the water park revenue used to purchase renewable surface water rights to supplement the groundwater used by the town, as a long-term investment for the future of Monument.

Metro asked when the town would be able to plow his street, Buffalo Valley Path, and if the town would have funds and personnel to plow the new streets in Trails End and Jackson Creek, since his street is not being plowed even with the newly hired streets technician. Wall said that the developer, Jack Wiepking, has not completed construction in the development so the town could not yet accept responsibility for the streets, even though they have been dedicated in the platting process.

Resident John Knoll said he was



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concerned about residential development of the campground on Mitchell Avenue without road improvements to mitigate existing traffic problems at the Second Street railroad crossing. He also said that Wal-Mart would provide a safe situation for supervised overnight parking of "very nice motorhomes" since he believed the campground is closed at times and the town is not a "motel Mecca." Drumm said he had never seen a Wal-Mart parking lot overcrowded with motorhomes.

Homestead resident Chuck Branson asked for information about the proposed Home Place Ranch development on Higby Road, east of Jackson Creek. Brown noted that developer Dale Turner's pre-application presentation in January was only a notification that he had taken an option on the parcel.

Brown said the Planning Commission and BOT would formally evaluate the development plan and possible annexation once Turner submitted an application. Brown noted that Branson and all other adjacent landowners would receive formal notification from the town before any hearings.

Homestead Homeowners Association board member Robert Fisher asked that the town strongly consider annexation of Home Place Ranch because he believed that the county would not provide as much control over the project. Orten and Brown agreed, and also suggested that the HOA contact Turner directly and schedule a meeting to discuss their concerns and recommendations as soon as possible, to help his planning.

Resident Valerie Lake asked about long-term plans for the cemetery, saying that waiting until the town nears buildout may preclude future expansion due to the accelerating pace of changes. Wall said that the 250 remaining plots may last over 30 years, given annual sales of about 8 lots. She recommended purchase of adjoining undeveloped property now to preserve its historical value as well as a future green space in a high density area of townhomes and mobile homes.

Resident Becky Knoll asked about the "latest news on filling the lake." Glenn said he was to meet with the Colorado Springs City Council the next day to present evidence about how much water the town contributes above natural Monument Creek flows and seek their cooperation in allowing the town to fill the lake.

Town water representative and former mayor Betty Konarski noted the town has a safe, new, award-winning dam and is now in water court for adjudication of its storage and purchase rights to water in Monument Creek. Colorado Springs is contesting the storage issue, based on their policy of not relinquishing any of its flow to other users until all their reservoirs are completely filled. Wall noted that there is no firm estimate on when the city's reservoirs will be filled.

Glenn concluded the

open forum by noting the town's development, the hiring of Green and Shirk to plan for it, and the improvements in Public Works to maintain it. Glenn observed that finding the funding for infrastructure improvements required for growth can be difficult. "Sometimes we need the revenues before we can actually make those improvements, so what I'm saying is we need growth before we can start actually catching up to that growth."

He said that Old Denver Highway and Baptist Road improvements require "\$5 million to \$10 million." The Baptist Road interchange requires about \$15 million, plus more for interim improvements, more than any developer "can front." He said that the town was working on a way to have bonding companies finance currently unfunded CDOT interchange improvements within two to five years, paying only the interest on the bonds with temporary public improvement fee revenue until CDOT can pay off the bond's principal.

The board then went into executive session to discuss negotiations regarding Limbach Park at 7:30 p.m. There were no announcements or actions taken at the conclusion of this executive session. The board then adjourned at 8 p.m.



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Monument Board of Trustees, March 21

Warm reception precedes cold confrontation

By Jim Kendrick

Police Chief Jake Shirk and Town Planner Cathy Green were welcomed at a reception before the start of the March 21 Board of Trustees meeting. The



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warm feelings subsided as three of four development project applicants received unfavorable news.

Ongoing revisions to the planning fee schedule and the subdivision and zoning ordinances were discussed but no decisions were made. Treasurer and Town Clerk Judy Skrzypek resigned later that evening after the board meeting adjourned.

Trustee Scott Meszaros was absent.

Fireworks funded

Financial Assistant Mary Russelavage filled in for Jeff Hulsmann of the Palmer Lake Fireworks Committee. Hulsmann had requested a contribution from the town to the committee “of the same amount as last year,” \$3,000, to come from the BOT discretionary fund. The board unanimously approved the \$3,000 donation.

Traffic impact fee for

Herb Garden Bistro reduced again

**Background:** At the BOT meeting on June 7, 2004, Monika Marky, owner of Toys 4 Fun, 155 Jefferson St., said that the town’s traffic impact fee (\$3,000) and drainage impact fee (\$943) for her store expansion were “making it hard” to succeed. The traffic impact fee was passed in 2001 and helps pay for major roadway improvements that cannot be otherwise financed by the town.

At that June meeting, the former town planner, Mike Davenport, replied that the staff did not have discretion to change or waive the traffic impact fee. Town Attorney Gary Shupp agreed and said any change in the fee without a change in the regulation would raise issues of equal protection under the law. Mayor Byron Glenn asked that the staff prepare a proposed regulation change for the board to consider, and the board deferred Marky’s traffic impact fee.

However, neither the regulation change nor Marky’s fee were addressed at the next BOT meeting, nor were they ever placed on the BOT agenda until Richard Pankratz’s similar complaint at the BOT meeting on Feb. 22, 2005. Pankratz told the BOT he had been billed for \$4,572.48 for an addition of 1,008 square feet to the Gallery Center on Second Street. The Herb Garden Bistro, a new restaurant, has leased the addition.

Traffic consultant Neil Geitner, of Integrated Utilities Group, told the BOT on Feb. 22 that the restaurant would generate over 50 trips per day and qualify for the higher of the two retail trip generation fees in the town ordinance. He added that if Pankratz could produce a traffic study that showed otherwise, the town could apply the lower retail traffic impact fee.

Geitner also recommended that the town not put the downtown area in a separate traffic impact fee zone, apart from the rest of Monument on the west side of I-25. He said the amount of land in Monument that is not in the Triview Metropolitan District is too small to further divide.

Pankratz’s request was continued, so that Geitner could make further calculations and update his data and that Marky could attend the next review of the fee.

**Discussion:** Sonnenburg said he had corrected the Pankratz fee to \$2,182 at the March 7 BOT meeting. He said the \$4,578.32 figure resulted from the staff using the wrong retail vehicle trip rate and a math error. He also noted that Marky’s expansion of Toys 4 Fun was 2,035 square feet.

Geitner calculated revenue loss estimates for two possible waivers: no charge for the first 500 square feet or for the first 1,000 square feet of new construction for a business. He estimated that 0.74 percent of the square footage built in the future would be affected by a 500-square-foot exemption (24,000 square feet) or about 1.5 percent with a 1,000-square-foot exemption (48,000 square feet). Had either of these exemptions been in effect in 2004, the lost revenue would have been about \$3,000-\$4,000 or \$6,000-\$8,000, respectively.

Geitner made no recommendation regarding either revision option. Sonnenburg said in his staff

report, “I believe the Town could afford to exempt at least the first 500 square feet via an ordinance amendment.”

Plank asked Geitner to clarify his position on the trip rate that should apply to the Herb Garden Bistro. Geitner said the higher retail classification (over 50 trips per day) “is where restaurants would normally be placed based on national figures for turnovers for restaurants.” Sonnenburg said he thought the restaurant was 2,000 square feet, which would be in the retail-high category; but at 1,000 square feet, he thought it should be in the lower category.

Pankratz said, “I really appreciate you trying to make things fairer for us downtown.” He added, “If retail business downtown is not your first priority, just say so.” Pankratz then asked if the town wanted “retail that generates tax revenue or just office space” downtown.

Glenn said that the downtown commercial zoning does not distinguish retail from other commercial businesses and that he understood Pankratz wanted a fee waiver or reduction. Any “break” or “favor” would have to be the same for any type of commercial business. The issue before the board was only the waiver for a certain number of initial square feet, not the vision for downtown.

Pankratz said he would now plan to build an office building on his undeveloped adjacent commercial property because it would be cheaper and more profitable than a retail or restaurant building.

The board unanimously approved a motion directing the staff to draft an ordinance with a waiver for the first 500 square feet of new construction.

No signs pointing to downtown

Marky told the board that she had been waiting for years for the town to put up the signs by the I-25 interchange directing people to downtown, but “We don’t see anything.” She asked how the town could charge a traffic impact fee, when she had seen no increase in downtown traffic. Glenn said that the town would eventually be able to do some improvements when sales tax revenue and the traffic impact fee fund increased in a few more years.

Sonnenburg said the town would soon be spending \$60,000 to \$70,000 for the interchange sign. Another \$3,000 will be spent in May for a two-day consultant meeting on downtown improvements. Drumm said the impact fee had already paid for the extensions of Beacon Lite and Second Street. Glenn said that no more road improvements, like the recent one on Jefferson Street, could be made without the traffic impact fee. Marky said she hoped downtown businesses are still around when the other needed improvements are made.

(Fee follow-up: Sonnenburg and Green re-measured both affected properties on March 22 and the impact fees were recalculated. Green told *OCN* that Marky’s expansion was 1,941 square feet and her revised fee would be \$3,112 for 1,441 square feet, while the Bistro’s area was in fact 1,008 square feet and the revised fee would now be \$1,097 for 508 square feet.)

Ten-Year Capital Improvement Program

The board discussed how to start to put together a long-term capital improvement program from the staff’s initial list of future needs. Brown said that priorities could not be set without a revenue projection and lists of preferred priorities from the departments. Plank asked for the locations of all the listed trails and parks and the priorities of the advisory committees. The board agreed to discuss this again soon when more of the requested information was available.

Financial report notes lagging tax revenue

Skrzypek said that sales taxes for January were about \$12,000 behind last year’s and that the number of tax defaults and property seizures for 2004 taxes were up substantially.

The board unanimously approved the financial reports as well as three payments over \$5,000. They were:



- Triview's March tax payment from the state: \$15,532.28
- Swanhorst and Company, LLC progress billing for the 2004 audit: \$8,000
- Amwest, Inc. for well 7 repair work: \$21,984.38

### County asks for comments on Pioneer Sand and Gravel application

Green said Pioneer's proposed new business on the 22.63-acre Dellacroce property at the southeast corner of Woodcarver and Baptist Road, in the county, would be a retail landscaping materials sales yard with outside storage. Staff concerns about the application, which will be forwarded to the county, included:

- Adequacy of the roads for the increased traffic
- Provisions for drainage on the road and adjacent properties
- Appearance, including the use of a chain-link fence along the front
- Odor problems due to the location of the septic system leach field on the corner of the property

Plank asked Green for installation of a flashing light at the Baptist Road crossing of the Santa Fe Trail. Sonnenburg noted that the money for the downtown trail crossing lights on Second and Third Streets were paid for by an 80-20 traffic enhancement grant from the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments.

Plank and Mertz also expressed concern about blowing dust and dirt like that from R-Rock Yard, which is already a hazard for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on Old Denver Highway and the trail.

Public Works Superintendent Tom Wall said that Pioneer would be required to connect to the Forest Lakes Metropolitan District sewer lines when they are installed next to the property.

Drumm asked if Pioneer would pay a traffic impact fee. Glenn said Pioneer's property was in BRRTA and would pay that impact fee. Pioneer would also be required to pay for part of the temporary Baptist Road and I-25 off-ramp widening as Home Depot and Wal-Mart will. Glenn added that Pioneer would also contribute to possible public improvement fees for the interest on I-25 bridge bonds that would accelerate bridge construction, if such an agreement is reached.

### Office Condo Pre-application

Developer Dan Holly gave a presentation similar to the one he gave to the Planning Commission on March 9 regarding an office building he wants to construct on Beacon Lite, adjacent to Air Academy Federal Credit Union. Comments and suggestions from the board were also similar.

[See the Planning Commission report on page 14 for more details.]

### Staff suggests new water allocation policy

Wall and Sonnenburg proposed that the town require only about 25 percent more water than is typically used for different types of residential taps in future development allocations. Actual use figures are significantly lower than the amounts currently allocated for some types of residential dwellings.

Single-family units are allocated 0.5 acre-feet of water per year, but average use is 0.39 acre-feet so there would be no change. Multifamily units are allocated 0.375 acre-feet per year, yet average use is only 0.23 acre-feet, allowing an allocation reduction to 0.29 acre-feet per year. They noted that the town would have to enforce water and landscaping constraints far more vigorously to prevent overuse.

Reducing lot sizes would also allow further water allocation reductions. Lowering the percentage of a lot that could be used for landscaping would further lower the amount of water needed for outside irrigation. More lots could be authorized and the extra tap fees could be used to purchase additional water rights or support the town's water system infrastructure.

**Discussion:** Brown said the town does not want the enforcement problems associated with landscaping and watering restrictions and they could not be delegated to a homeowners association. Glenn said the town needed to limit irrigated space by changing town regulations because the actual amount of water in the aquifers is not known. He said "Let's start doing something to be smart about water."

Glenn added that the town should not be looking to increase revenue from tap fees. Drumm said the plan would reduce irrigation but increase household use. Plank said she was opposed to more density and inevitable water use.

Wall noted that he expects only 150 more taps to be added to the town system before buildout. He

(Continued on page 12)



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said 30 more taps could be added with his proposed policy change, worth an additional \$270,000. He said the town could also have a more punitive escalating rate structure for residents who heavily water their yards. He observed that these proposals coincided with those in the pre-application development proposal for the Lake of the Rockies that was next on the agenda.

Sonnenburg suggested that enforcement of water regulations and continuous monitoring of changes made in the size and type of installed landscaping could be performed by town employees or members of homeowner associations. Brown said this type of enforcement would be a nightmare.

After further discussion, the board took no action on the proposal.

Lake of the Rockies  
pre-application withdrawn

Kim Catalano brought back his proposal for a residential and resort development by Monument Lake. He said he had made significant changes in the proposal in response to board and planning commission comments. The streets were redesigned and more commercial footage was added on a new commercial street leading to the hotel. Paved public access to the water and additional parking space was also added. The larger house lots on the west side of the dam were deleted and converted to open space with trails. Other walkways were expanded.

This pre-application included an analysis by Land Development Consultants, Inc. comparing landscape water usage under the proposed restrictions on “high water use turf to 30 percent of the total landscape area” to conventional practices. The consultant report said the approach proposed is “difficult to implement due to the need for a separate water meter for irrigation and the fact that penalties for exceeding the water budget may be difficult to impose.”

The report said the town would have to implement:

- “A system for post construction inspection” to monitor changes in the installed landscape materials,
- “Some sort of code enforcement process to make

sure there was no backsliding on the conservation protocols to hold the HOA responsible and accountable for such things as regular inspection of the individual lot and common area control systems and processes” and suggested “penalty billing for overuse of water” by “imposition of an automatic, very progressive billing system based on water meter readings or code officer summons based on total water usage by the HOA.”

The latest revision would still require a substantial portion of the 66-acre parcel to be rezoned from commercial to residential, contrary to the town’s comprehensive plan. This version called for:

- 80 room hotel with 100 seat restaurant, 200 seat conference room, and 4,000 square feet of commercial space
- 132 single homes
- 43 courtyard homes
- 20 live/work units (apartment upstairs/ store downstairs)

**Discussion:** Catalano gave an introduction but was soon discouraged by feedback from the board. He noted that the parcel had about 90 acre-feet of water per year, but the town would only credit it for 75 acre-feet.

Glenn asked Green to confirm that the single-family homes would require a zoning change. Green had not started to work for the town at the time of the previous pre-application presentation.

He said he was glad to see that the town was looking at a 20 percent reduction in the amount of water required, which would enable him to move forward and increase tap fees collected by 20 percent as well. He said his water conservation proposals, previously presented to the planning commission and board, would save an additional 10 percent in used water if carefully monitored and enforced, though “it would be a process outside the box.”

After further discussion about making the development a test case for alternative highly restrictive water and landscape rules and alternative enforcement methods, Catalano offered his water consultants’ services to the town staff to come up with the regulation changes that would be needed for approval of the higher densities in his proposal.

Then he said, “I’m not making a lot of sense now and I apologize.”

Shupp said that this proposal would probably be the last pre-application the board was going to see. He had concerns for some time that the normal staff review process was being circumvented by a series of pre-applications that could “go on ad infinitum.”

Glenn and Brown said that the lake was a public recreational asset and access would be cut off by Catalano’s proposed amount of residential. Glenn said that the Wall proposal appeared to be a change that was solely designed to allow Catalano to increase the density. He said that Catalano should find water elsewhere before bringing his application back, because the board was “not going to back off on the water or entertain a zone change that takes away our PCD zoning.” He also said that Catalano could work with the staff and bring forward an application, but he didn’t want to waste the developer’s time.

Catalano said, “Thank you very much for your frankness.” Catalano’s option on the parcel expired on March 21 and he said he has no immediate plans to continue pursuit of the project.

Zoning and subdivision  
fee changes proposed

Glenn introduced the topic noting that a change was

needed. Skrzypek reported that losses in uncollected fees were about \$80,000 in 2003 and \$30,000 in 2004. Green said that the current retainer fee schedule requires too many separate payments and does not charge enough for staff engineering reviews compared to consultant fees. Shupp said that staff fees are typically a flat rate that must reflect an average review, while consultant fees are passed through to the applicant. Sonnenburg said that there were a few more changes that needed to be made before the board voted on the proposal.

Green said that there was a lot of work still to be done on the subdivision and zoning regulation revision. She had documented where every paragraph in the old ordinances is dealt with in the new proposal prepared by former planner Mike Davenport. She said the change was a big improvement for users that alphabetizes topics and adds checklists for builders and homeowners; however, the revision doesn’t really change the rules.

Trustee Dave Mertz, who was Planning Commission chairman for the revision process, said the format changes were also meant to help the BOT apply the regulations. Shupp suggested that the revision is only a procedural overhaul and would still require future changes on a case by case basis. Green said Davenport had done a “pretty good job” in preparing the draft revision.

Reports

Glenn reported that BRRTA had met with the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority and is acquiring land for widening Baptist Road. BRRTA is looking at taking over the Baptist Road/I-25 interchange rather than create a separate RTA for early replacement of the bridge. BRRTA would pay for the improvement through bonds secured by future CDOT payments. Interest-only payments in the interim would be paid through a public improvement fee of 0.5-1.0 percent that would be charged by all area retail stores.

Plank reported that the next School District 38 growth meeting with other government entities was to be held on March 30.

Sonnenburg said the annual agreement with engineering consultant GMS was expiring in May. The board asked that the next contract be offered for competitive bids.

The board approved agendas for three work sessions scheduled on March 30, April 11, and April 25.

The board unanimously approved installation of a visual screening fence on the east boundary of the Pankratz Gallery Center on Second Street. Wall said the unattractive building and jersey barriers that currently protect well 3 on the edge of Beacon Lite are not going to be removed in April as scheduled and there would be at least a six month delay.

Wall also reported that GMS had completed design of the weir/flume system to measure Monument Creek flows, but construction will be delayed until mouse permits are obtained from Pikes Peak Regional Building Department. These measurements are needed to help validate the town’s storage claims in water court for refilling Monument Lake.

Wall and Sonnenburg are meeting with a group of residents in the Forest View Acres Water District who are seeking dissolution of that district and inclusion into the town’s water system.

Wall reported the new Public Works tractor and 17-foot right-of-way mower have been ordered.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m. The next regular BOT meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on April 4 in Town Hall, 166 Second St.



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Monument Board of Trustees Speical Meeting, March 28

## Board revises development application review fees

By Jim Kendrick

In the first of three special meetings the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) will hold between regularly scheduled sessions, the board unanimously approved a change in the fees charged to developers for town review and approval.

The change in the review fee schedule increases the flat fees that are charged for staff professional reviews of development proposals. The fees charged by consultants are passed to the applicants. The previous fee schedule was the lowest in the region, and its complexity resulted in the loss of about \$110,000 in potential revenue in 2003 and 2004. The increases raise the town's modest fees closer to the amounts charged by neighboring municipalities.

### Land options for new police station

The police building subcommittee of the Police Advisory Committee gave the BOT an update on the status of lots available for construction of a new station.

Police Chief Jake Shirk and Sgt. Rick Tudor reviewed the real estate options for a new police station. One lot on the far north-

east corner of the Wahlborg development has already been dedicated to the town during annexation. Shirk expressed interest in obtaining a lot northwest of the intersection of Jackson Creek Parkway and Higby. They said there might be a third option, to lease a building and lot and avoid purchase costs.

The board agreed to invite architects interested in designing the station to the April 4 regular BOT meeting. The projected \$3.5 million cost of the building exceeds the town's ability to issue bonds for the entire structure all at once. Architects must be willing to design the new police station so that it can be constructed in several phases.

### Other actions

The board approved ads for an interim and permanent replacement treasurer, but deferred a decision on seeking a separate town clerk.

The board continued the discussion of an extended warranty for the new street sweeper so information could be obtained to determine whether the warranty is provided by the manufacturer or the sales dealer.

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Monument Planning Commission, March 9

# Jackson Creek Market Village Plans approved

By Jim Kendrick

On March 9, the Monument Planning Commission approved the Preliminary Plat, Final Plan, and Final PD Site Plan for the Jackson Creek Market Village. This proposal includes a shopping center similar to, and just east of, the King Soopers center on Baptist Road, and an adjacent townhome development to the north on Lyons Tail Road. The commission also provided comments after a pre-application presentation for a professional office condo building on the vacant Beacon Lite lot behind the Air Academy Federal Credit Union.

Commissioners Kathy Spence and Tim Davis were absent. Davis has not attended a meeting since being appointed on Jan. 3.

## Second time around for Market Village proposal

The development consists of a 40-unit multifamily residential project on 4.34 acres on Lyons Tail Road, with 82 parking spaces and PRD-10 zoning, and a five-store strip center, with two other separate retail pads next to Baptist Road, on 5.84 acres. The Market Village strip center building is aligned with the King

Soopers strip center building, as are both pairs of pad sites and the roadways in front and in back of the stores, so that the two centers match in appearance.

The only direct access to the Market Village shopping center will be the existing right-in/right-out driveway to the King Soopers center on Baptist Road. This driveway will be named Jackson Creek Crossing Road. Baptist will be widened to five lanes at this intersection beginning in 2006, and will include dedicated left-turn lanes for both directions on Baptist; but even then, it will remain restricted to a right-out-only exit onto westbound Baptist. The grade of Baptist prevents any access at the east end of the new center.

A switchback sidewalk to the adjacent townhomes will allow direct access to the center for pedestrians, but there will be no traffic access from either shopping center to Lyons Tail. Market Village shoppers will have to drive through the King Soopers center to access Jackson Creek Parkway.

**Development has long and complicated background:** The Planning Commission approved Monument PRD 10 Development, Inc.'s preliminary plat and preliminary site plan, plus rezoning from residential (PRD-10) to commercial (PCD) for the shopping center portion of the development, on Jan. 13, 2004. It was approved with the condition that the staff's numerous proposed changes be incorporated prior to the Monument Board of Trustees' (BOT) review and final approval. The major problems were the planned private road being too narrow, insufficient off-street parking, bad placement of the access points on Lyons Tail Road, and lack of open space for children to play in.

Due to the number of changes in the revised proposal, the Planning Commission reviewed the proposal again on April 14 before it was presented to the BOT. The townhome subdivision's private road right-of-way was widened from 30 feet to 40 feet, and the street was widened to 30 feet. Driveways were lengthened to 20 feet to allow parking on them, and the number of off-street parking places was increased to 28; however, the sidewalks were not widened to 5 feet.

The private road's eastern access point was moved to align with the intersection of Kitchener and Lyons Tail, but this change required a realignment of some of the townhome buildings on the parcel. Most of the original small amount of open space was eliminated by this realignment, leaving no space for playground equipment or play areas requested by the commissioners.

The BOT approved only the rezoning request for the shopping center location at their hearing on April 19, 2004; the preliminary plat and preliminary site plan were continued. Trustees expressed the same concerns as the planning commissioners. The board asked for building elevations, although the elevations are not required for preliminary plat/plan hearings, and for more information on the project. However, the BOT approved owner and developer Miles Grant's request that the next BOT hearing be a concurrent review of the preliminary plat and final plat/final PD site plan.

**Townhome road still controversial:** The original proposal called for a 30-foot private road right-of-way with 3-foot attached sidewalks, which was rejected by the town. Board policy now requires roads in all new developments to be public, to ensure access for snow plowing and maintenance. The new policy is based on this proposal and recent problems the town has encountered with private roads that were approved in

other developments.

The town now requires a 60-foot right-of-way for roads, curbs, gutters, and 5-foot sidewalks in new construction. However, the intergovernmental agreement with the town for the 1987 Regency Park annexation only requires a 50-foot right-of-way. Triview Metropolitan District is part of Regency Park.

The proposal hadn't been discussed again since that time. The planning staff said it had brought Grant's application back to the planning commission a third time because of the long interval between BOT hearings and the number of significant changes in the proposal.

**Reviewing Agency Comments:** The staff report noted that the developer's engineering consultant, Paragon Engineering, was working on all the remaining issues raised in comments submitted to the planning department including:

- Triview Metropolitan District Manager Ron Simpson said the town should delay consideration of the proposal until the developer submits all the information requested by the district's consultants. He also said the town should consider a full-motion traffic light (left turn lights in all four directions) at the Jackson Creek Crossing Road intersection. The Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority had unanimously rejected the town's and Simpson's request for this light at its Feb. 2 meeting.
- Triview engineering consultant Nolte Associates expressed numerous concerns with the completeness and accuracy of the landscape plan, similar to those expressed by the town's Parks and Landscape Committee. Nolte also provided 68 other technical comments about the submitted drawings and five comments on the developer's revised traffic impact analysis prepared by consultant LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
- Triview's drainage consultant, Ayers Associates, recommended that 13 corrections needed to be made to the developer's drainage plan and that the corrected plan should be resubmitted to the town before the project is approved.

The county Planning Services Department and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) said they had not received a copy of the developer's revised traffic impact analysis. The county also said they did not receive a drainage analysis or a grading and erosion control plan for its review; this has been corrected, but the traffic review was delayed. They also noted the county Department of Transportation's Major Thoroughfare Task Force (MTTF) had not reviewed or recommended the application.

CDOT is requiring the developer to put \$20,000 in escrow for seven years to pay 10 percent of the mitigation costs for required Baptist Road/I-25 interchange turn lane improvements. The county is requiring an access easement to the undeveloped adjacent property to the east from the Market Village parcel. Also, Karen Rostvold of the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department is asking for a change of street names within the new development.

A related Feb. 14 memo from Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority Manager Conner Shepherd also noted that Baptist Road changes for Market Village had not been reviewed or approved by the MTTF. He also reminded the town in the memo that BRRTA's Feb. 2 recommendation for approval of dedicated left-turn lanes on Baptist Road for Jackson Creek Crossing Road "is not binding" on the county.

Acting Police Chief Sgt. Rick Tudor noted there are as many as four traffic incidents a week where cars westbound on Baptist entering the King Soopers center at the right-in/right-out access cannot slow down due to ice or sand, running over the median that separates the lanes. He also noted that the Market Village center would increase the commercial police call workload for his department in Jackson Creek and observed that the "need for extra personnel will have to be weighed."


The county Parks Department requested a 25-foot easement along Baptist Road for a trail that would connect the Santa Fe Trail to Fox Run Park.


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**Discussion:** Developer Miles Grant made a presentation that featured moving 3-D graphics that demonstrated the contours of the slopes and steep grades that define the elevations separating the residential townhomes from the commercial portion. The rear walkout basement levels of the southern townhomes and views are above the roof of the strip center. Views of the west from all the residences are also unobstructed by the shopping centers. Grant said that gabling had been added to the strip center building along with the "split-face look of the King Soopers Center."

Engineering consultant Wendell Ayres noted that the original proposal called for private roads, which the town had objected to. The plans were modified to make the interior residential roads public. Triview is only requiring a 40-foot right-of-way for these townhouse streets, compared to 50 feet elsewhere in the district and 60 feet in the rest of Monument. He added that there would be no on-street parking but that guest parking places, two per building, had been added. Town Manager Rick Sonnenburg confirmed that the townhome driveways would be at least 18 feet long.

Commissioner Lowell Morgan complimented Grant for the quality of his presentation. Morgan then asked about the slope of the land between the townhomes and shopping center. Ayres said the slope was designed to be a standard 3-to-1 grade covered with grass that would be irrigated, mowed, and maintained by the homeowners association. When asked about the 25-foot easement for the trail, Grant said "I'm not sure I can give them 25 feet, but we can sure make the accommodation for that trail to go through."

Sonnenburg asked if the King Soopers center developer Regency Corp. had given Grant an easement for a direct connection between the two centers' rear driveways shown on the revised plans. Though Grant said he expects they will reach an agreement, he added that, to date, Regency had only offered this easement with the condition of "interesting criteria" that would limit to whom Grant could rent his buildings. His alternate plan is to shift his strip center to the east, add an internal side driveway at the west end, and restrict truck traffic to one-way flow.

Delaney confirmed that there would be a 30-foot turn radius at every corner of the rear driveway at each end of the building for 18-wheel delivery trucks and emergency vehicles. He also confirmed that the rear driveway traffic flow would be one-way only, with or without the easement from Regency.

Grant then agreed to incorporate all the numerous changes requested by town staff and town consultants—before the applicant's BOT hearing—as a condition of approval by the Planning Commission. Grant said that Triview had approved a waiver of the Regency Park 50-foot right-of-way requirement for his proposed 40-foot right-of-way. However, there was no documentation of the approved waiver in his latest application packet. Grant was required to provide this documentation as a condition of approval, but not required to build 5-foot sidewalks.

Sonnenburg said MMTF will consider the Market Village application at

its meeting rescheduled for March 18.

Grant said that the escrow amount that CDOT had levied was "normal procedure and if all the developers are doing it, we certainly will comply. We'll be happy to do it." He also said that his company wanted to participate in financing the accelerated construction of the I-25 interchange through voluntary fees, if all the other developers also participated. Grant also noted that he had sold his land next to Home Depot to the developers of the Timbers project and wanted them to succeed as well through Baptist Road improvements, so they would continue making payments to him.

The commission unanimously approved the application with all the remaining conditions noted by the staff. New Town Planner Cathy Green will be responsible for ensuring that each of them is met before giving administrative approval to Grant for construction.

#### Beacon Lite office condos proposal well received

Owner and developer Dan Holly, designer Richard DeSimone, and architect John Padilla gave a pre-application presentation describing plans to build a professional office building where each office would be sold as an individually owned condominium unit. The lot is currently owned by Air Academy Federal Credit Union.

Their preliminary plan is for the L-shaped stucco and stone building to have 8 to 12 offices, ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 square feet, with an optional loft and vaulted ceiling in some. They would have pairs of side-by-side ground-level entrances with a shared portico that face the rear of the credit union or Beacon Lite.

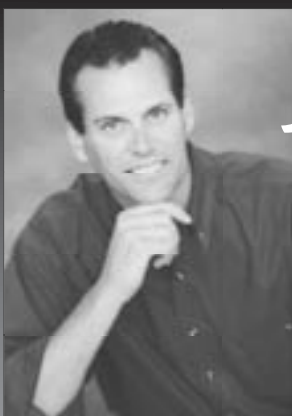
The 16,625-square-foot building would have a single access from Beacon Lite, next to the credit union driveway, and 66 parking spaces. The typical occupancy space would be for one or two professionals, a secretary, conference room, storage, and a restroom—"8 to 5 businesses" for people who have outgrown a basement office in the home.

Holly and his consultants described the success they have had with "over 200,000 square feet" of similar office condo buildings in Santa Fe, N.M., as well as their familiarity with developing office condo "HOAs" and appropriate xeriscape landscaping. They said their exterior styling would match the credit union and complement

the neighboring apartment complex. Exterior lighting would be shielded so as to not be a nuisance to nearby residents, while providing adequate security.

Town Planner Cathy Green inquired about the variety of methods

(Continued on page 16)



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that are available to finance the units, which should cost \$75,000-\$125,000. Holly said that the offices are typically financed by professionals who are well established, tired of paying rent, and use their home equity lines or refinance their homes.

He added that new businesses usually do not buy an office and that their projects have low failure and turnover rates. He noted that typical owners are very aggressive in maintaining the appearance of their businesses through the condo association. Very few are purchased as rental units. Green also noted that these businesses do not generate excessive amounts of traffic.

The consensus of the commission was that Holly's proposal was a good land use and a needed service. Commissioners also expressed unanimous concern that he ensure that he has sufficient water on the parcel to meet his projected needs. The board recommended he contact the town's water attorney for further guidance.

### Staff report

Town Attorney Gary Shupp reviewed the discussions that the BOT had with Gallery Center owner Richard Pankratz on March 7 regarding traffic impact fees for new retail construction. He also reviewed

the list of options that were practical for the town to provide some small but fair incentives for new or expanded historic district retail. He recommended an exemption for the first 500 or 1,000 square feet of new construction. Sonnenburg passed out a list of current traffic impact fee rates.

The commission asked Green to resume publication of the spreadsheets that the planning department had prepared and distributed in 2004, which listed the status of every application the town would be reviewing and every approved project that was under construction. Commissioner John Kortgardner noted

that this was the only way the commissioners could keep track of all the staff's administrative approvals on applications, as well as upcoming new proposals.

### Transportation Enhancement Grant application

Sonnenburg asked the commission for input on his two suggestions to add to a list of projects to recommend to the BOT. The BOT could then submit that list to the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) for consideration in its two-year Transportation Enhancement Grants program for 2006 and 2007. Available PPACG grant funds will total \$1,316,000 for these two years. The town's matching funds come from traffic impact fees.

He noted that the town typically has eight to nine projects on its request list and that two had been recently funded and completed. PPACG grants helped pay for the Beacon Lite extension south of Second Street to Old Denver Highway and the Jackson Creek Parkway extension between Higby and Highway 105. No further grants have been received, because the town's traffic impact fee fund for grant matches had to be built back up from zero; it now has about \$200,000.

Sonnenburg suggested that the town may wish to add Santa Fe Trail pedestrian crossings and flashing warning lights for each of the four new residential subdivisions along Old Denver Highway, plus a sidewalk on the east side of Beacon Lite between Highway 105 and Monument Meadows Mobile Home Park. The commissioners agreed to include these two items in addition to curbs, sidewalks, and gutters for the historic area.

Kortgardner proposed a bike safety program sponsored by the police department for children to promote a spring bike rally, where their helmets and bikes could be inspected. Costs would include brochures and prizes. Sonnenburg suggested that the BOT use its discretionary fund instead. Commissioner Eric Johnson asked if it would be possible to have a bike crossing under I-25, but the available culvert is surrounded by mouse habitat.

There was consensus to have the commissioners meet with the BOT at a work session on April 4 at 5:30 p.m. with this list as an agenda item. They want Green to prepare a complete project list to help them determine prioritization. The grant submission deadline is April 29.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m. The next meeting is at 6:30 p.m. on April 13 at Town Hall, 166 Second St.

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Monument Parks and Landscape Committee, March 8

## Group reconvenes after four-month hiatus

By Sue Wielgopalan

The Monument Parks and Landscape Committee met on March 8—its first meeting since November. The committee had been inactive since the departure of Mike Davenport, former town planner for Monument. Town Manager Rick Sonnenburg was present at the meeting and announced the hiring of Cathy Green to fill the slot vacated by Davenport. Green was scheduled to begin work the next day.

### Santa Fe Trails seeks neighborhood park

Santa Fe Trails residents Sylvia Musser, Diane Craig, and Phil Mahone attended the meeting to inquire about the status of the request for financial assistance in building a small playground in their subdivision. The area set aside for the park is a strip of vacant land between homes on the west side of the Santa Fe Trails subdivision.

Sonnenburg replied that nothing in the 2005 budget had been earmarked for such a project. He added that the town expected additional tax revenue of as much as several hundred thousand dollars because of the March 2006 opening of the new Wal-Mart in the Monument Marketplace. He said that one of their options would be to submit a proposal in October 2005 for the 2006 budget cycle.

Sonnenburg then said that another option would be to work through their HOA with Parks and Landscape Committee or to contact Green, the new planner. He recommended they start by constructing a park site plan.

Musser and Craig replied that they had already been working with Davenport until his resignation in December, and that their informal group had sent out questionnaires to Santa Fe Trails homeowners, asking for a "wish list" of features for the proposed park. Most residents who responded indicated that they would like to install equipment such as swings intended primarily for younger children, with benches for parents.

Sonnenburg presented an additional option of applying for a grant through Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), a program funded by proceeds from the state lottery. The state offers matching funds for approved projects; GOCO will pay 70 percent of the cost if the applicant can raise the remainder. In the case of a small amount, however, he felt that the group might best be served by asking for a town grant. He said enough line-item money was still left in the 2005 budget to support the required town match for up to a \$70,000 GOCO grant and the remaining funds were not yet appropriated.

Committee members discussed whether the land in question belonged to the homeowners association or if it was part of Monument's park system. Committee member Bob Watson said the developer had donated the land with the expectation that the homeowners association would develop it. Committee member Monika Marky didn't feel it was appropriate for the town to

fund development of a park that did not belong to Monument; requests for assistance from other homeowners associations might follow.

No recommendations regarding funding for the park were made at the meeting. Musser, Craig, and Mahone agreed to contact Green later to discuss the issue.

### Jackson Creek Market Village

The committee looked at landscaping plans for the new Jackson Creek Market Village to be built by Monument PRD 10 Development Inc. of Littleton. The development will be north of Baptist Road and adjacent to the King Soopers center on the east side. Small-scale retail commercial space and pad sites for both a sit-down and drive-through restaurant on the south side, and townhomes on the north side are proposed.

Watson and committee member Linda Pankratz commented that the legends on the reduced copies of the plan distributed to the committee were extremely small and difficult to read. Pankratz also remarked that the areas to be covered with sod were not clearly marked and therefore difficult to differentiate from walkways and pavement. Sonnenburg retrieved the full-sized drawings with larger print from the planning department archive to assist the members.

Most members agreed that while the spaces around the townhomes looked reasonably well-landscaped, plantings dispersed around the commercial area appeared sparse. In discussing the

choices of trees and groundcover, Pankratz expressed concern about the use of juniper in the parking lot islands. She felt that before long, the low-growing plant would be trampled by shoppers and would have little chance of surviving. Watson explained that in general, junipers are a reasonable choice in a high traffic area, as they are hardy and fast-growing and recover well.

The committee decided not to comment on the landscaping plans, indicating that the small size of the plant

symbols, legend, and lettering, and the overall poor quality of the representations prevented them from getting a clear idea of what was being proposed on the drawing. The committee voted to approve the landscaping plan with the condition that all town planning staff comments were incorporated in the final document. The vote was 4-0-1, with Pankratz abstaining because she said she couldn't read the print in

(Continued on page 18)

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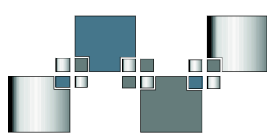
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the larger plan notes either.

The location of more development in an area where traffic congestion is already a problem led Marky to question Sonnenburg about the status of plans to improve the I-25-Baptist Road interchange. Sonnenburg replied that no definite time frame had yet been established for an upgrade of the intersection by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). He said the Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority has been discussing creative ways to move the project up on CDOT's schedule.

**Flower plantings for Limbach and Lavelett discussed**

Pankratz told Sonnenburg that Administrative Assistant Irene Walters had asked her if volunteers could be solicited, in the town's April newsletter, to plant flower beds in Limbach and Lavelett parks through the town's "adopt-a-bed" program, and whether a staff member could coordinate and supervise the operation. Sonnenburg replied that he believed paid staff could handle improvements on the committee's list, but he would check and report back to the committee in April.

**New Monument entry sign**

The new entry sign planned for the intersection of Highway 105 and Second Street could be completed this spring. Sonnenburg informed committee members that the contract was out for bid and that proposals were due around the middle of March.

Originally, \$32,000 had been earmarked for the sign and surrounding landscaping. But when the project was bid late last fall, the lowest bid ranged between \$50,000 and \$72,000. Much of the increase in the anticipated price was attributed to the risk of pouring concrete, planting, and irrigating so late in the season, and the Thanksgiving completion deadline, which gave contractors little time to complete work. During their budget meeting for the 2006 fiscal year, the Monument Board of Trustees agreed to increase the project's allotment to between \$60,000 and \$70,000.

Trustees could look at contractor proposals and select the winning bid as early as their March 21 meeting. Sonnenburg anticipates that the sign and landscaping will be completed within 90 days after a contract is signed.

Two flagpoles will flank Second

Street as part of the completed design. The poles will be used to suspend a banner over the street. Marky asked who would be responsible for the installation. Sonnenburg replied that CDOT had previously agreed to buy and erect the poles as part of the now completed overpass project. Toni Martin expressed an unanswered concern as to whether the flagpoles provided by CDOT would be sufficiently strong to hold up a banner in the high winds often experienced along the Front Range.

**Art walk banners requested**

Each year, the Historic Monument Merchant's Association sponsors summer Art Walks. The walks, intended to attract visitors to downtown, are held on the third Thursday of each month from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., from May through October. Participating merchants are open late on those days.

As a way to publicize the event, Pankratz would like the town to purchase and hang special banners on the existing decorative lightpoles that line the downtown streets. She has already found a supplier who sells blank banners at a cost of \$22 each, which could then be painted. Pankratz said these banners would not have to be hung for

the entire summer; they could be alternated with other banners that the town already owns.

Sonnenburg said he is open to the idea and agreed to look at the budget to determine if funds are available. Money exists in the budget for replacement of existing banners, but the amount may be insufficient to cover new ones.

Pankratz remarked that she has noticed that several lightpole banner arms are missing, and asked about replacing them. Sonnenburg said they could be replaced without having to look for additional money and will request that Tom Wall, public works superintendent, inventory the banner arms and replace those that are broken or missing.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. The committee will meet earlier than usual at 5:30 p.m. April 12 at Dirty Woman Park for a walk-through of Monument town parks, weather permitting. The public is invited to join them. Members will hold their regularly scheduled meeting afterward at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall auditorium, 166 Second St.

*Palmer Divide Water Group Presentation, March 16*

**Group responds to Colorado Springs stance on wells**

*By Jim Kendrick*

Donala Water and Sanitation District hosted a presentation March 16 on the Palmer Divide Water Group's (PDWG) future plans for acquiring renewable water to supplement the nonrenewable groundwater from the Denver Basin. The presentation was made by water consultant Gary Barber, who is manager of PDWG and the executive agent for the El Paso County Water Authority.

Donala's District Manager Dana Duthie introduced the presentation by noting that the group's membership has taken a fairly low profile approach to seeking additional water for constituents through

buying and storing renewable water. The group's lobbying efforts have also been low-key to date.

Earlier in the month, however, the group held a forum for State Senator Tom Wiens that focused on creating a water conservation district to gain more leverage for the region. Duthie said that this forum was triggered by Colorado Springs Utilities' (CSU) announced contingency plans for the stalled Southern Delivery System.

Barber's presentation at this session was the same one he gave to Wiens and is presenting at board meetings for all the members of the PDWG. Barber noted that the views and recommendations in his two-and-a-half hour presentation are his own.

Duthie referred to a series of Gazette articles on CSU and the Pueblo Reservoir as the impetus for the group becoming more pro-active with local press in presenting the group's views of renewable surface water issues.

In particular, he noted CSU Manager Gary Bostrum's statement that the utility's only alternative to the Southern Delivery

System would be to sink 42 wells in the Denver Basin, which Duthie said would "suck us dry." He added that CSU "has every right to do that" but creation of those wells would greatly accelerate the need for PDWG to secure renewable water rights.

Barber said that most of the issues in understanding water rights are inherently counterintuitive to those just learning about them. His briefing addressed the history of PDWG and three steps to getting renewable water. His conclusions were:

- The Palmer Divide Water Group needs Colorado Springs Utilities much more than CSU needs PDWG.
- Even at full build-out, the PDWG rate base is too small to finance a renewable water import project on tap fees and water rates alone.
- The PDWG must compete for renewable water.
- Becoming part of a Water Conservation District would make PDWG a stronger competitor.
- We must use our local water efficiently.
- Storage is important.
- The time to buy renewable water is now.
- We may need a private sector partner.



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Donala Water and Sanitation District, March 28

# Air Force Academy presents possible wastewater treatment alternative; Baptist Camp may be developed

By Sue Wielgopalan

During its March 28 meeting, the board of directors listened to a cost-saving alternative to the Upper Monument Creek Wastewater Treatment facility expansion plan. Though plans to begin work on the sequencing batch reactor are still moving forward, potential exists to reduce the scope of the expansion. An Air Force Academy representative has said their plant may be willing to process some wastewater from the three participating districts and utilize the reuse for irrigation.

Also, a local real estate company has approached the Donala District to ask about inclusion for a possible new subdivision at the site of the Black Forest Camp and Conference Center. General manager Dana Duthie briefed the board on his recent discussions with an agent for Coldwell Banker.

Secretary Don Pearson was absent.

### Palmer Divide Water Group Manager presents water resource program

Gary Barber, manager of the Palmer Divide Water Group (PDWG) and executive agent for the El Paso County Water Authority (EPCWA), presented a PowerPoint program on present and future water resources.

The PDWG was formed to pool resources of local water groups with similar goals and concerns that are otherwise too small to finance projects, broker agreements, or influence policy and legislation. The program traced the history and purpose of the Palmer Divide alliance, explained the locations and missions of various water groups, identified projected shortfalls in water supply by area, and outlined proposed actions for the PDWG.

In summarizing the water supply outlook for the Tri-Lakes area, Barber stated that the area is not included in plans for the Southern Delivery System (SDS) project, which, if constructed, will deliver water for homes and businesses within the Colorado Springs and Security city limits, but not other areas in the county.

One of the PDWG's goals is to provide attractive incentives to Colorado Springs to include northern El Paso County in the SDS project or secure other surface rights and storage capacity to meet the future needs of the PDWG's participating members. Though the present water situation is by no means urgent, Barber wants to be proactive in obtaining water now while opportunities still exist.

After Barber's presentation, the board briefly went into executive session to discuss water rights negotiations.

Upon resuming the public session, the board authorized Duthie—as Donala's representative to the EPCWA and the PDWG—to vote in favor of presenting Brush Hollow Reservoir as an alternative to the Southern Delivery System (SDS) in the Environmental Impact Statement.

The Bureau of Reclamation has asked the EPCWA to provide possible alternatives to the SDS. This could put northern communities at odds with the city of Colorado Springs, which strongly favors the SDS and is reluctant to spend additional research funds investigating the Brush Hollow alternative.

Because Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) has made the cost of inclusion in the SDS prohibitive for unincorporated communities outside city limits, northern areas feel pressured to encourage options for future renewable sources that could include them. The PDWG has already initiated discussions with the Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District, the group that would manage a Brush Hollow project.

Recent hydrologic data indicates that Denver Basin aquifers, which currently supply northern El Paso County with water, are being rapidly depleted. In order to satisfy the needs of a growing population, whose demands will soon outstrip the available supply of non-renewable well water, water districts foresee the need to secure renewable water sources in the near future.

Members of the board also voted to actively seek private partners to help fund water

(Cont. on page 20)



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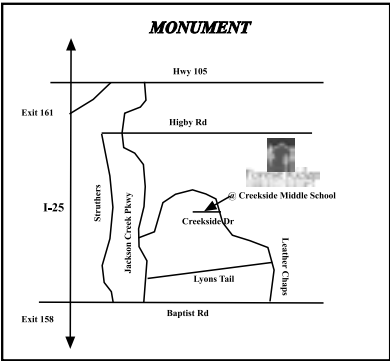
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projects, which could include remote well fields, the pipelines needed to access them, and small reservoirs to serve as storage basins.

**Investment strategies discussed**

Board members reviewed the investment strategies presented by Kirkpatrick Pettis, a firm retained by the district to manage excess capital. The funds, kept in reserve to finance large costly improvements, total approximately \$5 million. Kirkpatrick Pettis's objective

for Donala is to protect the safety of the principal and maintain liquidity of the investment, while maximizing return within those constraints. Duthie and Betsy Bray, accountant for the district, recently attended a seminar on investing public funds and reported back to board members on the value of the course. Although it was aimed at individuals whose primary job function is to manage investments, Duthie said he gained enough new information to make it worthwhile.

**Air Force Academy may offer alternative to treatment facility expansion**

An Air Force Academy representative recently announced that the academy's on-site treatment plant might be willing to accept wastewater from neighboring districts, possibly reducing or eliminating the need to expand the Upper Monument Creek wastewater facility.

During the site application meeting for the

expansion before the Water Quality Committee of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Larry Reisinger, the Academy's representative, surprised applicants and committee members by proposing that a large proportion of the wastewater intended for the Monument Creek facility be piped instead to the Academy for processing and reuse.

The Academy's wastewater treatment facility is currently underutilized; as obsolete base housing is eliminated, utilization will continue to drop. However, irrigation needs for the grounds and playing fields on the Academy have not decreased. In the past, sufficient effluent was generated through the facility to meet the Academy's irrigation demands. They now face a reuse water deficit.

Rather than pump raw well water onto the greens or buy reuse water from another source, Reisinger indicated the Academy may be open to a mutually beneficial arrangement whereby wastewater is brought in from off-site sources, treated at the Academy's facility, then used for irrigation purposes on Academy property.

Duthie considered the option worth pursuing. The partners in the Upper Monument Creek facility could possibly save millions through a reciprocal agreement by eliminating the need for expansion altogether or extending the necessity for expansion 10 to 15 years into the future. He drafted a letter in late February to the Academy indicating interest.

Though Duthie has not yet received a response, he has since learned that the Academy cannot accept outside wastewater until the treatment facility has been privatized. The Academy intends to release a request for proposals for privatization of their plant by May.

Duthie discussed the feasibility of moving Donala wastewater to the Academy, but said this created two problems. First, the costs of installing a pipeline and necessary equipment to move wastewater directly from the western edge of the district to the Academy would be prohibitive. Secondly, Donala needs a minimum of 500,000 to 600,000 gallons of effluent for augmentation; if all wastewater were shipped directly to the Academy, this amount would no longer be available.

He said a much more practical option would be to split the wastewater before the Upper Monument Creek facility and send an untreated portion to the Academy. The pipeline run would be much shorter and therefore less expensive to install, and Donala could retain its augmentation water.

Duthie also pointed out that the district has the option of submitting a bid to run the Academy's facility. However, he said assembling the proposal would be very expensive with no guarantee of winning the bid. Then there would be the costs of running the plant, including hiring and training new staff. He said that because of the size of the facility and the costs involved, he did not feel pursuit of the contract was a viable option for Donala.

The chance of draft-

ing a tentative agreement with the Academy before the next phase of the Upper Monument Creek plant expansion needs to move forward is slim, Duthie conceded. Donala, along with its partners in the treatment facility, remain interested in an alternative arrangement with the Academy and will continue inquiries while moving ahead with expansion plans.

**Treatment facility expansion financing considered**

Board members approved a newsletter that will be mailed to Donala customers in April presenting two possible options under consideration to pay for Donala's share of the treatment plant expansion. One option is to increase water and sewer rates. The other is to extend, not increase, the current mill levy.

The newsletter presents the necessity for plant expansion and financing options in greater detail. To reduce the possibility that it will be overlooked by residents, the information sheet will be mailed separately from the usual Donala newsletter.

**El Paso County Water Authority update**

Dale Schendzielos attended the EP-CWA meeting in place of Duthie, who was on vacation. Schendzielos provided members with a sheet outlining the authority's recent activities.

- Pat Ratliff, authority lobbyist, had little to report. Most legislation involving water issues of interest to the authority had been "killed" or delayed.
- El Paso county commissioners have requested that a letter formally inviting Colorado Springs to join be sent by the authority.
- Schendzielos reported that discussions during the meeting indicate the authority seems likely to pursue Brush Hollow as an alternative to the SDS.

The next meeting of the EPCWA will be on April 6, at 9 p.m. in the 3rd floor hearing room of the El Paso County Building, 27 E. Vermijo.

**Operations update**

The engineering firm GMS has resumed design work on the new Baptist Road pipeline, which, when complete will carry water from Wells 8A, 11, and 12 along Baptist to the Holbein Drive plant. Existing pipelines can carry water from all three wells when they are run at a lower rate, or two of the three at full bore.

The size of the pipe is yet to be determined and will be dependent on the direction from which the district expects a renewable water source to flow. A supplemental water source from east of the plant would necessitate the installation of a larger diameter pipe to handle the additional volume.

Bids to drill Well 9A were submitted by two companies, Lane Western and Henkel. Lane Western was awarded the contract; they outbid Henkel by \$32,000. A water judge has signed off on the necessary permit. A 30-day comment period follows, during which objections may be filed by parties who feel their water rights may be negatively impacted by pumping from the well. Work to get the well up and running will be resumed once any objections have been ruled upon and settled.

The Chaparral Hills pipeline has been completed. Donala will pay for

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half the pipeline, and recoup its investment as new homeowners hook up their sewer service. Laing Homes will reimburse the district for the other half, as per their agreement.

Global Excavation is building a pipeline from Well 13 on Latrobe to the upper lake of the golf course. Previously, each time the well was turned back on after a period of inactivity, it had to be flushed to reach acceptable quality. With no way to transport and store the water, the district had to waste it. The new pipeline will enable Donala to capture this water and store it in the lake for later sale.

### Reroute of Erickson pipeline approved

Prior to the March meeting, Donala was able to finalize an easement agreement with James Barash, at last clearing the way for construction of a sewer pipeline to serve a planned office complex and future developments on the west side of Struthers, across from People's National Bank. However, upon completion of design work, developer Gary Erickson discovered that the cost of the pipeline would be much more expensive than originally estimated.

Initially, the district wanted to install an 18-inch pipeline that could transport wastewater from currently vacant areas north of the office complex, and extending south along Struthers, to the district's lift station on Northgate Road, across from the mining museum.

Because of the topography, diameter of the pipe, and the length of the run, the pipeline would have to be buried at a great depth, in one location, necessitating a 37-foot-deep manhole. The cost of excavation, along with Erickson's share of the price of the lift station, could send the total cost of the pipeline as high as \$400,000.

Instead, Donala proposed reducing the pipe diameter to 8 inches and rerouting the pipeline, eliminating service to areas north of the complex. The smaller diameter will be able to handle new development along the west edge of Struthers, south of the planned offices, but will preclude the possibility of hooking to a southern line to carry all the district's waste to Colorado Springs.

In the unlikely event that such a need should arise in the future, a new pipeline capable of carrying a larger volume of wastewater would have to be installed.

Board members voted unanimously to approve the revised pipeline plan.

### Developers interested in purchasing Baptist camp for new home sites

Coldwell Bankers recently contacted Donala, expressing interest in annexing into the district in order to obtain sewer and water service for a new residential development on what is now the Black Forest Camp and Conference Center. The camp is located off Kingswood Road north of Baptist in a heavily wooded area. An unspecified developer would like to divide the 430-acre parcel into ½-acre home sites.

In presenting the idea to the board, Duthie said that the well water rights that would accompany the property would be adequate to cover the needs of the households at the indicated density. He informed the board that inclusion would necessitate the need for a new well, a well site donated by the developer, and possibly a new lift station, in addition to the pipelines.

Duthie also indicated that Donala might need to purchase additional capacity in the treatment facility, as the district was close to build-out and had only purchased capacity sufficient to service existing customers and the limited amount of new development within the district's current boundaries.

The board agreed with Duthie that inclusion would be acceptable as long as the developer agreed to pay for all necessary improvements.

### Monument Academy considering Brown Ranch site

The Monument Academy is considering building a new school on the Brown Ranch site off Roller Coaster Road, and has contacted Donala about providing service. Duthie informed school officials that the site under consideration presented several problems.

First, the school would need to obtain an easement through Randy Schol's planned development before the district could build pipelines to supply the building with sewer and water service. The elevation of the site would also necessitate construction of a lift station to remove wastewater. Lastly, it was also likely that a water booster pump station would be needed to satisfy fire protection requirements. Donala is awaiting further information on the academy's plans.

(Continued on page 22)



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**Bent Tree developers offer to sell deep aquifer water rights**

Doug Barber and Bob Moore recently offered to sell the Arapaho aquifer water rights they still own under Bent Tree to the Donala district. Although individual homeowners in the subdivision received shallow well water rights to the Dawson aquifer with their house

purchase, most are not aware that Barber and Moore retained deep well rights beneath the entire parcel.

Though this should not prove to be detrimental in the near future, residents will eventually be forced to confront the reality of dropping levels in the Dawson, which is the shallowest and most accessible of the four aquifers that underlie the area.

Because homeowners in Bent Tree do not own water rights, which would enable them to tap into the deeper aquifers, they will be left without a water source and nothing to offer water districts as incentive for inclusion when their current wells are no longer able to produce sufficient flows.

Though Donala is actively seeking additional sources of renewable and nonrenewable water for the district, Duthie declined to make an offer on the water rights Barber and Moore are selling. Unless residents are fully aware of the situation, Donala prefers to remain uninvolved.

**Donala contributes to Holly Holder memorial**

Board members approved a contribution of \$1,000 to be used to help fund benches and landscaping as part of a memorial in honor of prominent water lawyer Holly Holder. Holder, who lost her battle with breast cancer almost three years ago, had gained significant water augmentation rights for the Donala district.

The two memorial sites will be placed along a trail in Massey Draw near Chatfield Reservoir in Jefferson County. Organizers also hope to have the trail named the Holly Holder Memorial Trail as a further tribute.

**District installs new meters**

The district has begun installing new Orion water meters on older residences and townhomes in the district. The old meters have a 10- to 30-year life; Donala's goal is to replace them at 20 years to avoid malfunctions. Sunrise, Gleneagle, and Club Villa townhomes, as well as older single family homes nearby, are currently undergoing retrofits.

The new meters are on a yolk, which supports the meter on one side, and a backflow preventer on the other. The backflow devices, required on all

new installations since 1994, keep water from flowing back into Donala's pipeline from the home.

Homes built prior to 1994 may not currently have backflow devices installed on their water lines. Those with smaller, (3/4 inch) service who recently had a backflow device installed may experience overflow in their water heaters. Though pressure regulators should prevent pressure buildup, homeowners may need to install expansion tanks to eliminate the problem. Homeowners with the larger 1½-inch service are unlikely to experience overflow, as the larger volume of the pipes compensates for any additional pressure caused by the backflow device.

**Golf Course agreement reached**

Donala has signed a water agreement with MCTN, LLC, which owns the Gleneagle Golf Course. The water rights to Jake's Lake, which the district applied for initially, will be retained by the golf course. Water will be supplied exclusively by Donala for a period of 10 years, as specified in the contract.

In return, Donala will freeze the agreed-upon water rates for a period of two years; augmentation water to replace the amount drawn from Jake's Lake will be supplied at \$1.75 per 1,000 gallons. Donala has agreed to install any pipelines necessary to supply the golf course with water, and will retain total control over the valves that turn water to the golf course on and off. This will enable the district to keep an accurate count of the amount of water used by the golf course.

Still at issue are the pipelines that supply water from Jake's Lake to the Gleneagle greens. Bethesda Associates has not turned over ownership of the lines. Miles Scully, representing MCTN, will be expected to work out an arrangement with Bethesda for purchase, transfer of ownership, or use of the pipelines. The board voted unanimously to approve the agreement.

**Athletic facility nears completion**

Donala is putting the finishing touches on a small athletic facility in the basement of the district's Holbein office. Equipment such as elliptical trainers will be available to staff. Duthie hopes the convenience of such an area will encourage employees to exercise more frequently. In addition, the district will offer incentive programs, such as time off for reaching weight loss or fitness goals.

The board went back into executive session to consider personnel matters at 4:25 p.m.

The next meeting of the Donala Board of Directors will be on April 27, (the fourth Wednesday



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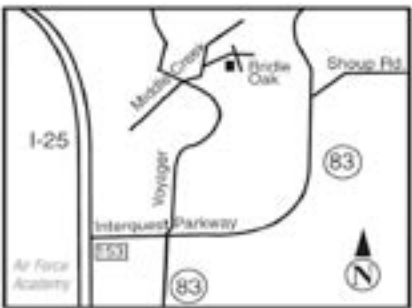


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Monument Sanitation District, March 15

Board approves higher construction bid

By Jim Kendrick

The Monument Sanitation District (MSD) Board approved its share of a cost increase for the new administration building at the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF). Director Jeremy Digins was absent.

The treasurer's report was incomplete due to the change in accountant for the district. Ray Russell, a CPA from Denver, is taking over. The previous accountant and budget officer, Barb Glab, will retire once the transition is completed.

Administrative Assistant Marna Kennedy reported that the amount of mill levy money that the county was unable to collect for 2004 has not yet been determined. The final figure will be noted in the 2004 budget and given to the auditor. An adjustment of \$799.27 will also have to be made for increase in the corrected November billing from the WWTF to MSD for treatment costs.

Joint Use Committee (JUC) items

Chairman Lowell Morgan said there was little to report from the previous evening's meeting. All measurements and test results for influent and discharged effluent water were well within limits, and no problems were reported by Facility Manager Bill Burks.

Morgan noted that the committee, consisting of one representative each from MSD and the other two owning districts, Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD) and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD), gave the committee's executive agent, WWSD Manager Phil Steininger, authority to make decisions for the JUC board on change orders costing up to \$5,000 for construction of the new treatment facility administration building.

The MSD board unanimously affirmed this change order limit. The board also authorized the transfer of a three-quarter-inch water tap that the district had never used to the JUC for the new building, if a separate tap is required. MSD will ask the other two owning districts to pay \$3,000 each for the \$9,000 value of MSD's unused tap. The water tap was previously given to MSD in exchange for a free sewer tap in a town park.

Monument Rock Business Park update

District Manager Mike Wicklund said that work on the ductile iron lines that connect the office park on the northeast corner of Mitchell and Synthes had begun with no problems.

Trails End update

Wicklund reported that he found three significant problems with the 8-inch collector lines that had been installed. "They were installed in an unconventional manner." Some of the supporting material had not been leveled before the pipe was laid on top of it, and the pipe has sagged well beyond allowable tolerances. The pipes can be up to 300 feet long but should allow a person to directly observe a lamp at the opposite end of a pipe connecting two manholes. Sags catch water

that turns "septic."

Some bedding material had been dumped on the top of the pipe, causing it to be flattened beyond allowable tolerances. Besides eventually causing cracks, flattened pipes prevent cleaning equipment from passing through the pipe later to cut tree roots and clear clogs.

The connecting manholes had not been installed prior to the pipes and were too shallow for workers to perform required inspections. Wicklund noted that all these requirements had been discussed with the highly experienced contractor in a pre-construction meeting and it had been suggested that the contractor use industry-standard laser alignment equipment.

The board unanimously supported Wicklund's direction to have them removed and replaced after he noted that contractors often try to lobby board members to overturn district manager decisions.

Raspberry Point update

The district agreed to take over ownership of the 6-inch private collection line that runs through the backyards of many of the townhouses. However, the lines may be shallower than district standard and full-size manholes the district will install may stick up out of the ground.

This subdivision has had a complicated history regarding rear property lines and gravity and lift station connections to the Monument and Palmer Lake Sanitation District systems. The private 6-inch line has been particularly vulnerable to tree root infiltration.

Wakonda Hills inclusions

The board unanimously approved the inclusion of 6 lots in this subdivision, bringing the totals that have joined the district to 50 percent.

Tri-Lakes Cares tap fee

The board discussed a request from Tri-Lakes Cares for donation of a sewer tap for its new building on Jefferson. Wicklund said he told Bob Browning that it is illegal to waive a tap fee, and he confirmed this with the district's attorney, Larry Gaddis. Wicklund said he checked the records for the house on the Tri-Lakes Cares property that had been demolished and discovered that it already had a sewer tap and a water tap. He said he had passed the "good news" to Browning.

Director compensation

Wicklund reported that the January edition of *Legislative News* included information about potential legislation eliminating the maximum of \$1,200 per year for compensation. Board members receive \$75 per meeting. He added that the removal of the cap was designed to encourage higher pay and more candidates for district boards. Director Chuck Robinove said the elimination of any maximum could lead to dishonest boards meeting daily to exploit a new

loophole. The board agreed to address the issue again if the legislation is passed.

Rocky Mountain Lube Stop  
tap fee re-calculated

Wicklund said that he had miscalculated the fixtures for an interceptor for filtering sand from car wash water, increasing the fixture count for interceptors from 3 to 6. The total fixtures for the whole business increased from 42.5 units to 47. After giving credit for the 30 fixture units already paid for at \$240 each, the total additional fixture fee for the building renovation increased from \$3,000 to \$4,080.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. The next board meeting will be held on April 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the District Office at 130 Second St. Meetings are normally held on the third Tuesday of the month.

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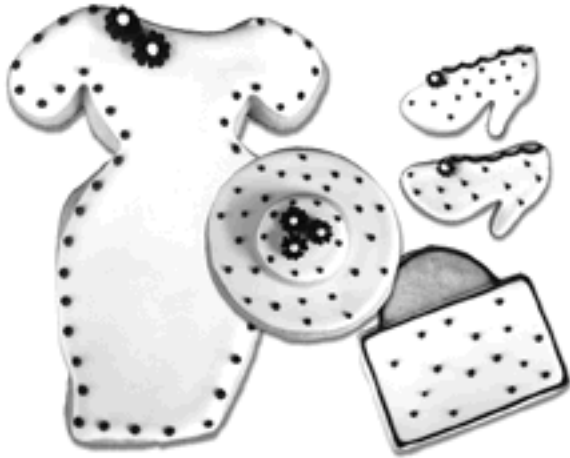


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Triview Metropolitan District, March 23

# Board discusses potential inclusions

By Jim Kendrick

The Triview Metropolitan District (TMD) board met on March 23. Director Julie Glenn’s absence was excused.

**Construction**

District Manager Ron Simpson noted that asphaltting would begin on March 24 in the construction area on Kitchener Way. The “gap issue on planning paving” that the district has with developer Miles Grant has not yet been resolved. Simpson said the district would “just go ahead and do it.”

**Bondholder matters**

Simpson spoke about an unnamed person saying, “that party” has hired an attorney to review some papers. Simpson then said, “The attorney is communicating with Mr. Turlotte.” He added that an unnamed seller has not responded to the district’s changes in an unspecified contract. No other information was given.

**District engineer’s report**

Consultant engineer Chuck Ritter of Nolte Associates reported that final decisions on the extent of Donala’s participation in the expansion of the Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility was still undecided because Donala was in preliminary discussions with the Air Force Academy to determine whether the Academy would treat some of Donala’s wastewater. These talks are on hold while the Academy seeks a contract for outsourcing management of its wastewater treatment facility.

Ritter also noted that this outsourcing would require comment from Colorado Springs Utilities and said that could make things difficult for Donala. However, this delay will not affect Triview’s efforts to finance their portion of the expansion in November.

**Green introduces herself**

After introductions, Green reported that her review of the Jackson Creek Market Village was about complete. The major remaining issues center on rights-of-way.

She also indicated that she would like to form a review board with all the special districts participating to do preliminary joint session reviews in person with the applicant. She also told the board the planning staff has stopped the town’s pre-application presentation process by developers for now until she can start this alternative.

Simpson told her that Triview’s detailed four-page letter of engineering concerns about the Jackson Creek Market Village final plat and final PD site plan should have been resolved before the March 9 Planning Commission meeting (her first day at work). Green said she agreed.

She and Simpson also discussed possible changes in the town’s sod regulations and the effect that the proposed state House Bill 1070 may have

on overruling subdivision covenants that require a high percentage of turf.

**Potential inclusion requests**

Simpson reported that the developer of Home Place Ranch on the Higby estate parcel next to Jackson Creek is seeking inclusion for water and sewer service from Triview or the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District. Simpson said the parcel has a lot of mouse, wetland, and drainage issues and might require Triview to relocate their next proposed water storage tank further uphill to serve half the projected houses in this parcel.

A new developer is interested in the Barber parcel on Baptist Road across from King Soopers and may also seek inclusion from Triview. Simpson said they will have a commercial portion that would yield sales tax revenue. He also noted that the parcel does not have enough water to meet the county’s 300-year rule; the developer will likely seek annexation in the town to fall under the town’s 100-year rule.

**Other Matters**

The board delayed a decision on re-striping Jackson Creek Parkway and Leather Chaps to gather more information to compare costs, risks and application requirements associated with standard and epoxy paint. Another factor was the date Monument would be able to use its new street sweeper that is about to be purchased. The current sweeper is very hard on paint, and the board would like to wait until the new sweeper becomes operational if possible before restriping.

Jackson Creek resident Cynthia Lafont asked the board to consider installing four-way stop signs at Leather Chaps and Lyons Tail. She said she has almost been hit several times by southbound speeders when turning left from Lyons Tail to northbound Leather Chaps. The board was sympathetic to her request, but rejected it for now.

Simpson and board President Steve Stephenson said the stop signs would create severe stacking and backups during evening rush hour once the traffic light is installed at Leather Chaps and Baptist. They also said many cars would use Leather Chaps to avoid Baptist during construction and the proposed stop signs would not be temporary.

Board members agreed that the real problem is uncontrolled speeding on Leather Chaps and the blind spot created by the curve in the road just north of this intersection. The consensus was that speed enforcement by the town’s police department was a far better solution. The board agreed to request more radar enforcement from the town.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.  
[Note: At OCN press time, the Police Department’s SMART trailer was in place on Leather Chaps as requested.]

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## Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, March 8

## Work on Walters Commons halted

By Sue Wielgopalan

Operations Superintendent Randy Gillette described the features and advantages of Woodmoor's upgraded data acquisition system for board members, and District Manager Phil Steininger gave an update on progress toward a new billing and metering system. The district's increased use of high-tech systems is helping them manage facilities, resources, and manpower.

Palmer Divide Water Group representative Gary Barber gave a PowerPoint presentation concerning the future of water resources in the Tri-Lakes region. Jim Wyss, board treasurer, was absent.

**Wells under repair**

Well 8, which is one of Woodmoor's oldest and deepest Arapahoe wells, is not yet back in service. The pump was pulled because nontoxic iron bacteria were clogging the screens. To rid the well of excess bacteria, staff decided to use an acid treatment. District Civil Engineer Jesse Shaffer said that after the first treatment some bacteria remained. The well had to be treated a second time, and some of the acid remained in the hole. The district will remove the remainder of the acid from the well and balance the pH. They expect to complete the final stages of rehabilitation before the end of March.

Well 17 showed a decline in yield, and was also pulled from service, as planned and budgeted for. The pump is out of ground while drilling consultant AmWest works on the well and equipment. The contractor is cleaning the well and will probably replace the pump. AmWest will determine whether it should also replace portions of the drop pipe. The district hopes to have the well back in service sometime in April to help with summer peak demand.

**Bowstring Sewer replacement contract awarded**

The board held a special meeting on March 3 to review three bids and listen to district staff's evaluation and recommendation on contractors for the Bowstring Sewer replacement. The winning bid, submitted by Brown Contracting based in Castle Rock, came in just under \$273,250. The bid was approximately \$100,000 less than had been budgeted for the project.

**Walters conservation easement at issue**

Steininger gave a lengthy report on the Walters Commons townhome project at Higby and Bowstring. He said builder and owner Pulte Homes Corp. had pulled all its subcontractors' earth-moving and utility subcontractor personnel and equipment offsite and stopped further construction until it received approval from the El Paso County Board of Commissioners for the Walters Commons development, which is north of Higby Road and east of Lewis-Palmer High School.

Progress on the project stalled on Feb. 15 when the county Planning Commission voted 7 to 1 for a recommendation to deny approval. At issue was a conservation easement on 130 acres of the 149-acre parcel.

In response to an earlier question from Pulte's Project Manager Charlie Williams, Steininger said that he had explained that the district's water sales policy did not prohibit selling additional water rights to the Walters should they approach the district to develop the 130 acres in the future.

Steininger said the Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) had initially voted to support a zoning variance on part of the property, allowing higher density multifamily housing on the southern 18.66 acres in exchange for the Walters' promise that the remainder of the property would be preserved as a conservation area.

He added that the WIA mistakenly assumed that by transferring all the rest of the parcel's water rights—one-half acre-foot per acre of aquifer water—to this high-density multifamily Pulte subdivision, the Walters would in essence be "drying out" the undeveloped and unsold portion of their parcel. He said the WIA believed that the lack of residual underground water rights on the remaining 130 acres would prevent its further development and maintain it as open space indefinitely based on the Walters' letter of intent that was submitted to the county in their preliminary plan package.

Though this vacant area no longer has water rights associated with it, the property's owners could purchase water at \$12,000 per acre-foot from the Woodmoor district and pipe it in. Steininger added that there would be severe cost penalties if the Walters' actual usage were to exceed any water allocation they might purchase.

Director Benny Nasser said he doesn't support adding any development after an agreement with area associations has been made. He felt that \$12,000/acre-foot for additional water would be "too cheap a penalty to pay" should the Walters decide to renege on the conservation easement arrangement. He added that in his opinion, "I think we got snookered on this" and said the \$12,000 rate should be raised significantly.

Steininger said he believed the Walters moved all the parcel's underground water rights to the Pulte portion, based on their ability to buy piped-in water from the district and that the related concerns previously expressed by board members was the reason he was asking them to review the policy at this time.

During the Feb. 15 county Planning Commission hearing, the WIA was able to convince members that enough evidence existed to support its claim that the Walters family had indeed agreed to retain 130 acres of the parcel as a conservation easement, though there is no final contract to that effect between the Walters and Pulte.

However, Pulte's letter of intent that accompanied the submitted Final Plat and Final PD Site Plan said the Walters promised conservation easement would:

- "be a buffer between the existing homes and the new townhomes."
- "eliminate the possibility of the

townhomes being built adjacent to the existing homes."

- "provide recreational opportunities that are available to all the residents in this area, not just those living in the townhomes."

- have "a non-profit organization ... that will maintain and manage this conservation easement."

The county Development Services De-

(Continued on page 26)



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partment had recommended that all Pulte's references to the conservation easement be deleted because "no conservation easement exists at this time." WIA President John Ottino's letter to the Planning Commission said, "We do not anticipate walking trails, picnic tables, etc." and that they expected the Walters to maintain the 130 acres until some sort of HOA could be formed to take it over, but only after all the planned recreational improvements were installed.

The Planning Commission is an advisory group only; the El Paso County Board of Commissioners makes the final determination, and is under no obligation to follow the recommendation of the Planning Commission. (After this district meeting, the county commissioners approved Pulte's request for Final Plat and Final PD Site Plan on March 10. The Walters family and the WIA reached a private settlement regarding the other 130 acres in a meeting in Wayne Williams' office during a recess of the board.)

#### Other developments

On March 7, board president Jim Taylor signed the amended inclusion agreement with developer WED for the Village at Woodmoor. The inclusion agreement expands the boundaries of the Woodmoor district to surround the area formerly known as the Wahlborg property. The district will provide water and sewer to Village at Woodmoor. WED also signed an agreement to build a permanent water station for construction trucks; it will be completed this summer.

Developers of Misty Acres, near the intersection of Monument Hill and County Line roads, has begun road building. The Woodmoor district is reviewing its utility plans. The next step will be installation of infrastructure.

Mel Plowman's company, MGP, has submitted preliminary development plans to the Woodmoor district for review. The subdivision, near the southeast intersection of I-25 and County Line Road, is expected to stay within the allotted half acre-foot per acre water requirement, as no request for additional water has been submitted to date. The contractor has indicated that it might replat the area.

#### Payroll outsourcing approved

Hope Winkler, office manager for the Woodmoor district, has been researching costs and benefits of outsourcing payroll accounting. Unlike most other districts, Woodmoor has been handling payroll accounts and distribution in-house. Winkler reported to the board that the "hard-dollar" costs—not counting the cost of her processing time, which is about 65 hours per year—to outsource the work are comparable. She had received a bid of \$1,518.57 from ADP. Use of the current payroll software costs \$1,390 per year. Winkler also told the board that she has been solely responsible for payroll, and does not have sufficient time or staff to cross-train an alternate. Outsourcing payroll would give the district the ability to process paychecks should Winkler take sick leave, emergency time off, or vacation during the cycle.

The board discussed the merits and disadvantages of outsourcing. President Jim Taylor expressed concerns relating to payroll taxes, and asked who would be responsible if federal payroll tax deductions were not deposited by the deadline. Winkler replied that although the payroll contractor would be liable for any fine, the district was responsible for any shortfall in tax funds. Steininger assured members that he would check references of companies under consideration for the contract.

After declining to approve Steininger's humorous suggestion that the board adopt a policy prohibiting Winkler's absence or illness, the board unanimously approved Winkler's recommendation to outsource payroll "as a test for one year," rather than renew the expiring in-house annual payroll software contract. Winkler said, "Now, I can sleep better at night."

#### Palmer Divide Water Group program featured

In late 2002, the Palmer Divide Water Group (PDWG) was formed by area providers to investigate and pursue supplemental renewable water supplies to address the projected needs of a growing Tri-Lakes population. Individually, small districts such as Woodmoor do not have the resources to explore possible sources and fund individual water import projects. By pooling their efforts, members hoped to secure future rights and facilitate the construction of storage sites where feasible.

The group has kept a relatively low profile to date, working to identify and evaluate available water sources. Under the guidance of Barber, manager of the PDWG, members have opted to assume a more

public presence. To that end, Barber has created a PowerPoint program, which he presented to Woodmoor board members. The program traces the history and purpose of the alliance, explains the locations and missions of various water groups, identifies projected shortfalls in water supply by area, and outlines proposed actions for the Palmer Divide Water Group.

In summarizing the water supply outlook for the Tri-Lakes area, Barber stated that it is not included in plans for the Southern Delivery System (SDS) project, which, if constructed, will deliver water for homes and businesses within Colorado Springs and Security city limits, but not other areas in the county. One of the PDWG's goals is to provide attractive incentives to Colorado Springs to include northern El Paso County in the SDS project, or secure other surface rights and storage capacity to meet the future needs of the PDWG's participating members. Though Barber believes the present water situation is not urgent, he wants to be proactive in obtaining additional water now while opportunities still exist.

*[For a summary of the presentation, see PDWG story on page 18.]*

After Barber's presentation, Steininger took the opportunity to discuss the importance of Woodmoor's current efforts to accurately track water flow. One tool will be the addition of a new gauge on Monument Creek just above Dirty Woman Creek. Once the transit loss model has been created and implemented, participating districts will need to submit daily reports to the state engineer in order to receive their exchange credits. More accurate information and the ability to monitor the exchange of water between systems daily will allow the district to make more efficient use of its water.

#### SCADA system updated

Gillette has been updating the district's supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system. The upgrade includes Motorola's MOSCAD radio system and makes possible more detailed and accurate reporting from all facilities in the district. Steininger pointed out that the enhanced ability to track and document information every day will become necessary once the transit loss model is completed.

The new system has multiple advantages over the old system, which was installed 15 years ago. Technicians are able to start and stop facilities remotely from the Woodmoor office or from their home computer, which can be hooked into the system via a modem. This will cut district costs by reducing travel time and overtime, as many adjustments can be made without having a technician on-site. And because of the more advanced capabilities and additional data generating locations, technicians can more easily and rapidly pinpoint problems and troubleshoot equipment.

Unlike the older system, which couldn't relay information from more than one location at a time, the new SCADA system can download information from multiple locations all at once. The system yields more precise information in "real time." Information is relayed upon request and can be monitored from the Woodmoor office.

The new system is also tied into the Monument Creek pump gallery. As water is pumped from Monument Creek, it accurately measures the volume, enabling the district to constantly track and record exchange water quantities. Previously, staff had to visit the site and read the meter, then use weekly averages to determine water flow.

Gillette said that the district added another program, called "I Historian," which will record all valuable district information such as peak day flows, an effective tool for long-range planning. The new system is also expandable; future plans include using the software to record information to produce the daily (rather than the current monthly) report forms that may soon be required by the state.

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**New meters and billing software**

Woodmoor staff continues to research options for new meters, transponders, and readers for the district. Steininger interviewed representatives from several suppliers and narrowed the field to two providers. The criteria used to evaluate the systems included features, benefits, and compatibility with software billing systems. Currently, Woodmoor uses meters built by Badger, one of the manufacturers under consideration. The other system is built by Neptune. Staff will review the advantages of each of the two systems and submit their recommendations on metering and billing systems at the April meeting.

**Fire department training  
on Lake Woodmoor**

On Sunday, Feb. 27, the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District conducted ice training exercises on Lake Woodmoor. Though Steininger had given permission on short notice to use the lake, he wanted the board's direction on whether it wished to allow such use in the future. He expressed the opinion that the district ought to accommodate the needs of local fire departments and other agencies dealing with public safety whenever feasible. He added that the training exercises had been deemed successful by the fire department, and that both parties were insured.

Taylor said he was afraid the lake could become a public nuisance, particularly if observers were unaware of the official nature of the activities. He felt winter operations were less likely to attract attention than, for example, water rescue training during the summer. Taylor and James Whitelaw stated that they did not want Woodmoor to become a recreational district.

Steininger turned to Erin Smith, attorney for the district, for legal guidance on the issue. Smith recommended that if the board intends to allow use of the lake for any kind of training, it should adopt a detailed written policy stating acceptable activities and constraints. Ron Turner added that he would like to require that notice be given to the district far enough ahead of time to publicize the event. He wanted to ensure that the public would be aware of any training in progress.

Members then discussed whether to restrict use to regional agencies only. Since Lake Woodmoor is the only sizable body of water in the area, other groups could conceivably request use of the lake as well. Turner recommended that only those agencies whose boundaries overlapped or were contained within those of the district be allowed access.

Steininger said it was in the best interest of the community for the district to help local agencies when possible. He will get more information on the needs of the fire department, such as how often and under what circumstances they will need to conduct exercises and report back to the board at a later date.

**Executive session**

The board went into executive session to discuss negotiations with Delores and Wende Younger, who own non-tributary water rights for their land near the intersection of Highways 105 and 83. Steininger had time constraints that necessitated interrupting the public session in order to conduct negotiations while he could be present.

**Joint Use Committee update**

After the executive session, the public session resumed. Steininger left to catch a plane, and Nasser left due to illness.

Turner, who is the alternate for Nasser to the Joint Use Committee (JUC), briefly summarized the March meeting. The JUC had signed the contract with Access construction to build the new laboratory. Each of the three members of the JUC—which includes Woodmoor, Palmer Lake Water and Sanitation district and Monument Sanitation District—agreed to pay an additional \$10,000 to cover the amount by which the actual cost of the facility will exceed the estimate.

**Work on new district  
rules and regulations progresses**

Erin Smith presented the first section of the draft rules and regulations to the board for approval. The section, Article I, was fairly straightforward in that it gave broad overview statements and included no new policy changes. She informed the board that subsequent sections would be presented individually, probably at the rate of one per meeting, as staff completed them. After giving members the opportunity to review the documents, she asked for input on the section, and comments and suggestions on ways to improve the process.

Turner asked that future drafts plainly show changes so that members could tell at a glance where to focus their attention.

The board then discussed the individual sections within Article I, in particular the rules of construction and the portion dealing with amendments, repeals, and additions to the rules and regulations. After the board expressed satisfaction with the document, they moved to set Article I aside as completed and give Smith permission to move forward with the remaining articles.

The meeting adjourned at 3:14 p.m. The next meeting of the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation board of directors will take place on April 12 at 1 p.m. at the Woodmoor office, 1845 Woodmoor Dr.

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# Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, March 16

## Two oldest fire engines sold

*By Jim Kendrick*

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District board approved a new benefit that would help its employees pay for income protection insurance for off-work injuries not covered by workmen’s compensation.

The district is trimming its vehicle inventory and has sold two of its original engines to a fire district in southeast Colorado. Chief Bill Sheldon’s “dead” Impala will be used for jaws-of-life and roof-removal training before it is sent to the junkyard. Assistant Chief Vinny Burns was excused, so there was no run report for February.

**Treasurer’s report**

Administrative Assistant Ginnette Ritz said she had received notice from the state that there was a \$10,000 discrepancy in the amount of mill levy tax that the Treasurer’s Office was unable to collect. This decreased the shortfall from \$14,000 to \$3,250. Ritz noted that specific ownership taxes for 2004 were much higher than expected or budgeted and more than offset the loss. The board unanimously accepted the treasurer’s report.

**Cost of addition rises slightly**

Several change orders for the expansion of the Gleneagle station were unanimously approved:

- Remove and replace gas lines: \$5,438
- Stronger I-beam to remove center pole in board room: \$1,382.80
- Additional electrical circuits and outlets: \$253.01
- HVAC installation savings: \$960 (credit)

The cost of the installation has increased from \$397,219 to \$403,332.89. Billings that have been paid to date for the project total \$19,219.50.

**Chief’s report**

Sheldon reported on a salary survey Burns conducted of area fire districts and departments. Although the district’s salaries are lower than most of the others, turnover remains extremely low.

Sheldon reported that he had received \$6,000 for the sale, “as is,” of two of the original “green fire trucks” that had been transferred from the county when DWFPD was created, “the old Allegheny pumper and the

tender.” They were sold to the Southwest Highway 115 Fire Department near Turkey Creek. Sheldon said the new owners were “pleased as punch” with their purchase. These engines have served as backup vehicles for Wescott and as loaned backup for Black Forest in recent years but hadn’t been dispatched in that role.

The board had voted unanimously to offer them to another department that would use them operationally. The remaining surplus engine will be sold or loaned to the Pikes Peak Community College fire-fighting degree program for training.

Sheldon had previously advised the board that the Impala he has used for many years as the chief’s vehicle was “dead” due to transmission failure and not worth repairing due to its 196,000 miles. The vehicle will be used in a North Group Firefighter II training class where its doors will be pried open with a hydraulic emergency rescue tool and its roof will be cut off to practice trapped occupant extraction. All useful radios and the emergency light bar will be removed and installed on the district’s other Impala. The two Chevy Impalas were purchased inexpensively as “very used” cars from the El Paso County Sheriff’s Office.

Sheldon reported that North Group would revise its automatic aid matrix for structure fire calls due to changes in membership and Larkspur’s new 3,500-gallon water tender. Franktown recently joined North Group, and several districts have acquired additional water tenders in recent months for areas without hydrants. North Group now can deliver over 30,000 gallons of water to a fire, if needed.

Sheldon noted the visit of Memorial Hospital’s new Jet Ranger medevac helicopter to the district March 12. The helicopter specializes in transports for expectant mothers and premature babies to support Memorial’s new Children’s Hospital and is a subcontractor to AMR ambulance.

Sheldon advised the board that the job descriptions have been changed as the board had requested. The three shift supervisors will evaluate their employees, and then Chief Sheldon will evaluate those shift supervisors. The board evaluates Sheldon.

After a lengthy discussion, the board voted 3-2 to provide a new insurance benefit to help its employees buy short-term disability insurance to cover time-loss off-duty accidental injuries. Directors Dennis Feltz and Kevin Gould voted no. The district will provide an \$8 per two-week paycheck to career firefighters who purchase the optional supplemental insurance.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m. The next board meeting will be held at 7 p.m. April 19 at Station 2, 15000 Sun Hills Drive.

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Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District, March 23

## Auditor contends district violated budget law

By John Heiser

At its regular meeting March 23, the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District Board of Directors discussed difficulties with the district's 2004 audit and financial records.

Treasurer John Hildebrandt reported that the auditor contends the district should have characterized lease-purchase agreements for Station 2 and new vehicles as income to the district. As a result, the auditor says that in 2004 the district was in violation of Colorado special district budget law to the tune of \$1.3 million. Hildebrandt and bookkeeper Linda Ousnamer are working with the auditor to resolve the problem.

President Charlie Pocock reported that Pikes Peak Community College has rejected one of the two fire engines (no. 10) offered and is still considering whether to accept donation of the second one (no. 11). Both engines need expensive repairs. Pocock reported that a buyer may have been found for engine no. 10.

The petition for inclusion of Wissler Ranch Filing 4 was unanimously accepted. A formal inclusion hearing will be held at a future meeting.

The board also discussed some issues regarding maintenance and use of cisterns to hold water for fighting fires in areas that lack hydrants.

### Financial discussion

Hildebrandt said he and Ousnamer spent three hours with principal auditor Greg Parsons that morning.

Hildebrandt cited difficulties arising from the requirement that the district implement Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) statement 34 accounting principles for 2004.

More information on the accounting change is on the GASB Web site at [www.gasb.org](http://www.gasb.org). Under GASB 34, statements of the district's funds are coupled with full accrual districtwide statements that give an accounting of capital assets, including infrastructure. GASB 34's stated intent is to make a governmental unit's financial viability and infrastructure investments more apparent.

Ousnamer said, "All capital equipment has to be depreciated."

Hildebrandt said, "I've never had to do this before." He later added, "We are not a taxed entity. The auditor agreed it doesn't make sense."

Hildebrandt added that characterizing the lease-purchase agreements for Station 2 and new vehicles as income to the district would increase the required 3 percent reserve by more than \$30,000. Those funds could not be used for operating the district.

Hildebrandt noted that the auditor and the Special District Association had not provided clear guidance on how to comply with the change in accounting standards.

Regarding the financial information for the Tri-Lakes district, the Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District, and the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Authority, Hildebrandt and Ousnamer reported that two of the three had been recorded on an accrual basis, while the information for the third one had been recorded on a cash basis. Ousnamer reported that even though all three have now been converted to a cash basis, unresolved discrepancies among the three sets of books at the time of the meeting made the usual formal financial report impossible.

Hildebrandt noted that looking at cash flow, the districts and the authority are operating within the budgeted amounts.

Hildebrandt added, "We had a financial discussion but no report."

Director Keith Duncan said, "We're here to make sure there is enough service."

### Part-time employees

Pocock noted that eight people have been hired as part-time employees. He said they would be charged to the stations where they work. He estimated the maximum cost for 2005 at \$64,000.

Hildebrandt noted that the board had already approved transfer of \$18,433 from the contingency fund to pay for the part-time employees.

The board decided to postpone until June a decision on amending the budget and appropriating funds to cover the full \$64,000.

Pocock noted that one of the factors leading to hiring of part-time employees was that Chief Robert Denboske and Assistant Chief Ron Thompson are now too busy to be included in the regular responding staff.

### Prospects for additional revenue

Pocock noted that there is an August cut-off for adding assessed value to the tax rolls. Construction after that would be included in the 2006 tax base but not in the 2005 tax base.

Citing Home Depot in particular, Pocock said, "I think a lot was missed last year, especially commercial property. I think income next year will be better than we might expect."

Pocock said the districts also plan to apply for federal grants under the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program managed by the Department of Homeland Security. Applications are due by April 29.

### Wissler Ranch Filing 4 petition for inclusion accepted

Pocock said Wissler Ranch Filing 4 containing 31 lots has petitioned for inclusion. The board unanimously approved accepting their petition. Pocock noted that when this inclusion is completed, all of Wissler Ranch will be within the Tri-Lakes district.

### Cistern discussion

Pocock said Elk Creek Ranch has 10,000-gallon cisterns for firefighting water. He noted that the level of water in the cisterns must be checked every month and that the district must be trained on drawing water from the cisterns. He added that the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) does not include cisterns smaller than 30,000 gallons in determining the ISO rating for the district.

He noted that the tanks must be 5 feet underground to avoid freezing and must not be more than 4 feet in diameter to avoid exceeding the suction limit of the pumps on the engines and ladder truck.

Thompson noted that in the event of a fire, one engine would stay at the cistern and fill tenders (tank trucks), each of which typically carries 3,000 gallons.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District board normally meets the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for April 20, 6:30 p.m. immediately preceding the Tri-Lakes-Monument Fire Authority board meeting at Tri-Lakes district firehouse 1, 18650 Highway 105 (near the bowling alley). For more information, call Chief Denboske at 481-2312 or visit [www.tri-lakesfire.com](http://www.tri-lakesfire.com).

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Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District, March 23

# Citizen concerns dominate meeting

By Susan Hindman

Three residents of the Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District (W/MFPD) peppered board members with financial, personnel, and operational questions at the March 23 board meeting.

Treasurer Bob Hansen's absence was excused. Chief Robert Denboske and Battalion Chief Larry Garner were in attendance.

**No financial report, but questions anyway**

Because Hansen was not present, no financial report



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was given. Board members had received copies of



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the February Profit and Loss YTD Comparison and agreed this report was acceptable and voted to approve it. There was no discussion on it until the public comment portion of the meeting.

At that time, audience members Ken Ford and Marian Taylor requested copies of the report. Discussion focused on expenditures from the reserve funds. There was some confusion over the status of the reserves and against which fund checks are written.

The two accounts were originally set up so that all incoming property tax money went to the Colo Trust account (a Denver-based financial institution) and then only what was needed to pay employees was transferred out to the People's National Bank checking account. Recently the policy changed: Colo Trust holds the reserves, and the checking account is where the property tax money will be deposited and then pay for district expenses.

"So the reserve funds and the operating funds are not together," said director Jeremy Diggins. In addition, said Denboske, the Colo Trust account "won't be touched" unless the board votes to do something with it.

However, since the bulk of the property tax money isn't received until April or May, money to pay expenses has been coming from the reserve fund. There was a \$200,000 draw from the reserve to pay those bills. The money will be replaced when the property tax money is received.

Ford asked if there has been any board discussion on what to use the reserve funds for. "I have one idea," said director Jeremy Diggins. "I'd like to see part of the money go for staffing an ambulance at station 3."

Taylor asked "How come we don't have the money to pay for staff now?" Diggins replied, "We have it, but it's not budgeted now."

Questions turned to who would get the revenues from the ambulance: the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District or Woodmoor/Monument. (The Tri-Lakes/Monument Fire Authority can't collect funds since it's not a taxing entity.) The ambulance is a Tri-Lakes vehicle, so that district would receive some of the money and a percentage of revenue would go to Woodmoor, which would staff the ambulance. But Diggins cautioned that this was only discussed at a meeting and no formal proposal had been made.

**March 2 meeting**

Ford asked the board about at a special Fire Authority meeting on March 2. He was told that while it was a public meeting, the Fire Authority board went into executive session immediately; once that concluded, they went back into a public meeting long enough to adjourn. No announcements were made concerning that meeting.

Former Woomdoor/Monument board member Tom Conroy asked for more details. Director Bill Ingram said the discussion had to do with a Woodmoor/Monument, not a Fire Authority, employee, meaning

that person was hired before the authority was put in place and not considered an "active" employee. ("Active" employees are those assigned day-to-day duties, such as firefighters, and are considered Fire Authority employees).

"I can't tell you who it was," Ingram said. "You're making too much out of this," noting state law regarding executive sessions covers this issue.

**Part-time personnel**

In response to audience concerns, board members emphasized that there are always four personnel at Stations 1 and 3—a battalion chief, paramedic, and two firefighters—all of them paid positions. At Station 2, there are always three personnel, supplemented with volunteers when needed, Ingram said.

"A paramedic is always on duty at every station," Diggins said.

While students in the Cadet Program go on fire calls and emergencies, they are put in support positions, not dangerous situations, said Denboske.

**Pagers for the board members**

At the February meeting, Denboske said, "Mr. Hansen recommended that board members be issued pagers." Denboske agreed to research cost, and noted the price of ones currently issued to firefighters. Each pager has a one-time cost of \$54 and \$6.95 monthly fee. "I think it's a good way to let you folks know what's going on."

Under federal guidelines, board members must be certified under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 to receive emergency information broadcast from the pagers. Ingram, Sibell, and Hansen are HIPAA-certified. Denboske said that they can receive information about emergencies but "they can't pass it along to their neighbor." The pagers allow the members to collect data on responses, which helps them in making policy, Ingram said.

**Dissolution of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

This document specifying cooperation between W/MFPD and the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District had been signed early last year, prior to Woodmoor's board elections, but was put on hold when Woodmoor entered into talks with the Tri-Lakes district regarding setting up a fire authority. Wescott was not included in the plan, and when the fire authority was formed, talks with them ceased.

"I brought this up because I didn't know if we had done anything in writing," said director Rod Wilson about dissolving the MOU. Garner said he had researched the files and could not locate the letter. However, board president Si Sibell said, "I distinctly remember sending a letter to the Wescott board." Denboske said he would further research the matter and report back to the board at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m. The next meeting of the W/MFPD board is April 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the Tri-Lakes district station #1, 18650 Highway 105.

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Tri-Lakes-Monument Fire Authority, March 23

Board discusses financial, operational,  
and public perception issues

By John Heiser

On March 23, following the separate meeting of the boards of the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District and the Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District, the two boards met jointly as the Tri-Lakes-Monument Fire Authority board.

Director Bob Hansen was on vacation.

President Charlie Pocock opened the meeting by expressing regret that three longtime Tri-Lakes residents, Gil Campbell, George Reese, and Harlan Close, died in the past month.

Staffing

Pocock reported that current 24/7 staffing levels are four people each at stations 1 and 3 and three people at station 2.

Financial discussion

John Hildebrandt, treasurer of the Tri-Lakes district, repeated his report on the district's audit difficulties as detailed in the article on the Tri-Lakes district on page 29.

Also as noted in that article on the Tri-Lakes district, bookkeeper Linda Ousnamer reported that unresolved discrepancies between the financial records of the two districts and the authority made the usual formal financial report impossible this month.

Hildebrandt said that so far this year, the Tri-Lakes district has contributed \$250,000 to the authority and the Woodmoor/Monument district has contributed \$195,000.

Hildebrandt added that when he became Tri-Lakes district treasurer in 1997, the annual budget was \$150,000. The fire authority budget for 2005 is \$2.582 million. He suggested it might be time to retain additional professional accounting help.

Director Bill Ingram suggested the board contact other fire authorities to see what they have done.

Vice President Si Sibell asked why a bill from the district was only recently received for ambulance service rendered in June 2004. Assistant Chief and EMS Manager Ron Thompson replied that although the district's goal is to bill within 30 days, delays are often due to difficulty in obtaining insurance information. Sibell noted that in the particular instance, a release for insurance information was signed.

Pocock added that Blue Cross often sends payment to the patient, and the district must collect from the patient.

Thompson added that Blue Cross insists that in order to receive payment directly, the district must accept assignment, which could be as little as \$72 on a \$400 bill. He added, "None of the ambulance services want to do that."

Thompson later noted that with the state tort law changes, billing for care associated with automobile accidents might involve the patient's medical insurance as well as auto insurance. He said that 50 percent of the medical calls lack complete insurance information. He said most of the 50 percent with complete insurance information involve Medicare, "which doesn't pay that much."

Director John Hartling asked if AMR has as much difficulty collecting for ambulance services. Thompson replied, "Their collection rate is worse."

Chief's report

Chief Robert Denboske reported as follows:

- The fire authority responded to 107 calls during February, bringing the total for the year to 299. The 107 calls consisted of 62 medical, 20 fire, 20 traffic accidents, 4 public assists, and 1 call involving hazardous materials.
- 48 people were transported to local hospitals.
- Station 1 responded to 42 calls, Station 2 responded to 19 calls, and Station 3 responded to 46 calls.
- All equipment is operational, although engine 2212 has a head gasket leaking oil and antifreeze. Denboske reported that the Cummins

representative said they can continue using it until it can be repaired, since Kenworth in Colorado Springs did not fix the problem the first time.

- The second Smeal fire engine ordered last year has been inspected. It should be completed and ready for delivery within the next three months. Denboske added that no reasons have been given for why Smeal is behind schedule.
- Six people passed the Fire Fighter II test, two need to retest, and five are ready for testing.
- Four people completed a hazardous materials test.
- The authority interviewed 32 applicants and accepted nine, of which three are already certified as EMTs and Firefighter I. He said the other six will go through a 15-week academy.
- Nine people are in Fire Officer I and Fire Officer II training with the Colorado Springs Fire Department at no cost to the authority.
- The authority is involved in joint training exercises with the Larkspur Fire Protection District.
- Firefighter I training will be starting soon. The class consists of 18 people, including 5 from the Elbert department.
- The authority is planning to apply for a FEMA grant to purchase a tender (tank truck) for fighting fires in areas that lack hydrants.
- The district will shortly be conducting testing and interviews to fill the slot vacated by Captain Rick Simmons who resigned in October to take a job with AMR in anticipation of a transfer to Florida.
- The district is waiting for the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) to return, supervise tests, and determine the authority's hauled water rating.

Chief Denboske also reported that the authority is hoping to conduct training exercises at the Wahlborg house on Highway 105. The training would include setting fire to the house. The house is due to be torn down in preparation for development in the area.

Former Woodmoor district board member Tom Conroy was in the audience and asked about the risks of conducting a live burn in the Woodmoor area.

The chief replied that it would be a good opportunity for the North Group departments to train together, and there are extensive safety procedures for this type of exercise. Sibell added that live burns have been conducted within the Town of Monument. Hildebrandt noted that the Wahlborg house is in the middle of a dirt field far removed from other houses and trees.

The chief reported that he met with Bill Sheldon, Chief of the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, regarding the Bardsley Place fire, the letter from the four chiefs (see the January 8, 2005, Our Community News), the associated operational review, and a proposed press release from the authority.

Denboske said Sheldon is not willing to sign the proposed press release, although the other three chiefs who signed the January letter have approved it. Sheldon has supplied a supplementary letter he wants attached to the press release. Denboske described the meeting as "very positive, a good start." He added, "It is up to Bill and I to carry forward."

The board unanimously approved an integrated press release adding Sheldon's comments. That revised press release was not yet available when OCN went to press.

Part-time employees

Denboske reported that during the first 15 days, the cost for the use of part-time employees is running below half of what was allocated. He said, "Some days, there is no need for part-timers, we are using all volunteers. With \$18,000, we will get way past June." The Tri-Lakes board has authorized \$18,433 to pay for the part-time employees through June.

EMS report

Thompson reported that the new 4x4 ambulance should have arrived in mid-March, but has been de-

(Continued on page 32)

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layed because of a defective fuse block that is being replaced by Ford Motor Company.

He also noted that an ice rescue class was held recently on Lake Woodmoor, and a class was held on mass casualty triage. He said the latter class was prompted by the Feb. 5 homeland security exercise at Lewis-Palmer High School.

**Ben Mabrey**

Responding to a call, firefighter Ben Mabrey suffered a fall at about 3 a.m. March 4 while evidently trying to use the fire pole in Station 2. His injuries were significant, including skull fractures, brain contusions, rib fractures, and a fracture of the acetabulum.

Reports on Mabrey’s progress are posted at [www.plainstopeaks.org](http://www.plainstopeaks.org). The March 25 posting of information from Ben’s father, Max Mabrey, who was the first paramedic on the scene, notes, “Ben is making good progress at this time. Max felt the hip surgery was successful and stated that he can have no weight on it for three months. Max further stated that there is a good amount of steel in the hip now. Regarding the head injury, Max said that when Ben speaks, he can tell that it is Ben again. Ben is undergoing extensive occupational, physical, and speech therapy on the road to recovery.”

**Public perception**

Pocock said Director Keith Duncan had asked why Pocock had written and released information on the Mabrey accident without involvement of the Public Perception Committee.

Pocock said he viewed the Public Perception Committee as developing and coordinating personnel profiles and news articles. He added, “It was not my intent that they take over all press release functions.”

Director Jeremy Diggins said, “We have no authority as individuals. We only have authority when we meet as a board.”

Sibell added, “The board’s mission is to set policy. Day to day operations is the chief’s responsibility, not the chair of the board.”

Pocock replied that he wrote the Mabrey press release at the request of Battalion Chief Bryan Jack.

Ingram noted that Ruth Higgins has volunteered to serve on the Public Perception Committee.

**Working groups**

In response to a question from Ingram regarding activities of the working groups, Denboske reported that the Closest Force Response Committee is continuing to work with the sheriff’s department to set up dispatching of emergency calls so they go to one of the three stations within the authority’s boundaries.

He added that the Personnel Manual Committee is still working on refining the manual.

Ingram asked if they now have job descriptions for all of the positions within the authority.

Diggins added that there is particular interest in the position of Battalion Chief. He said, “Too often, [Battalion Chief] Larry Garner seems to think of himself as the Woodmoor Chief.”

Denboske replied, “I’m dealing with it.”

Ingram asked about the status of checklists to

ensure that all maintenance and other actions are being taken.

Denboske replied that the authority is combining the best ideas from the Tri-Lakes and Woodmoor/Monument maintenance and operations programs.

Pocock said, “I’m very pleased with the way things are going.”

Diggins added, “The firefighters take a lot of pride in being part of the fire authority.”

**Meeting schedule**

Diggins suggested that the districts have one meeting per month with a combined agenda.

He asked that the directors’ packages be available at Station 1 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

The board agreed to the need for having the packages available ahead of the meeting but postponed action on the meeting schedule.

**Executive Session**

The board unanimously voted to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters. When the executive session ended, the meeting was immediately adjourned without taking any further action or making any announcements.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Tri-Lakes-Monument Fire Authority board holds regular meetings on the fourth Wednesday of each month, 7:30 p.m., at the Tri-Lakes district firehouse 1, 18650 Highway 105 (near the bowling alley). The next meeting will be held April 20.

For more information, call Chief Denboske at 481-2312, or visit [www.tri-lakesfire.com](http://www.tri-lakesfire.com).

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Fire Marshal’s Safety Tips

Hazards of propane and natural gas

*By Thomas W. Eastburn*

Propane and natural gas are used in everyday life to cook our food and heat our homes. Propane is heavier than air and tends to settle in low-lying areas such as under the deck or at ground level. Natural gas, on the other hand, dissipates upward into the atmosphere but can be trapped under exterior eaves.

Along with many of you, I enjoy preparing a meal outside on my gas grill. Checking your grill for any problems will mitigate most potentially dangerous incidents.

The most common incident we see is not following the manufacturer’s lighting directions. Both

products can form a gas pocket inside the grill, and both can present a serious hazard if exposed to an ignition source.

Time and weather or mechanical damage can affect the integrity of the gas supply line. One sign of a possible leak is the cracking of the outer hose layer, which should be repaired.

Another main cause of failure involves the pressure regulator. The pressure regulator is designed to provide a constant amount and pressure of gas. Some signs of potential failure are a popping sound, a louder and higher sound pitch, and increased flame height.

Lastly, incidents have also involved containers that were not properly secured to the grill.

Should any of these situations occur, call the fire department. If you won’t be compromising your safety, shut off the valve located on the propane bottle or remote natural gas supply valve.

Just a friendly reminder: On April 3, daylight-saving time begins once again, which means it’s a great time to change your smoke detector battery.

Until next time, be safe.

*Thomas Eastburn is fire marshal for the Tri Lakes/Monument Fire Authority.*



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Lewis-Palmer Board of Education, March 17

# Middle school boundaries changed

By Tommie Plank

The board unanimously approved a change to the boundaries of the two middle schools' attendance areas for next school year. In order to balance student enrollment at Lewis-Palmer Middle School (LPMS) and Creekside Middle School (CMS), sixth grade students living in South Woodmoor will attend LPMS. The change will be phased-in over a three-year period so that students currently attending CMS will not have to change schools. Transportation will be provided in South Woodmoor to both middle schools during the phase-in period. Parents of students living in South Woodmoor should contact Hal Garland at the Transportation Department if they have questions 488-4711.

All five district elementary schools and Lewis-Palmer Middle School will be open to accept requests for admission of nonresident students for 2005-06, subject to the approval of the principal at the school. Lewis-Palmer High School and Creekside Middle School will be closed to out-of-district open enrollment for 2005-06. These restrictions do not apply to children of District 38 employees.

Full-day, tuition-based kindergarten programs will continue to be offered at the five district elementary schools for the 2005-06 school year, following a successful pilot year. Half-day kindergarten programs will also continue to be offered at all elementary schools, giving parents an option for the program which will be best for their child.

The board authorized the superintendent to sign documents accepting the donation and dedication of 12.18 acres of land in the High Forest Ranch subdivision. The Board publicly expressed its gratitude to Classic Development-Woods, LLC for their exemplary cooperation and communication with the school district. Superintendent Dave Dilley commented that the parcel will make a beautiful site for an elementary school, and said that by conveying this land for a future school site, the developers have generously exceeded their obligations to the school district.

The Board considered several requests made by Monument Academy Charter School. The request to add Grade 11 will be acted on at the April 21st regular

meeting, after additional curriculum and enrollment information has been received and reviewed. The District will continue the process that is in place to add one grade per year, rather than approve the addition of Grade 12 at this time. Board President Jes Raintree suggested that they begin that discussion next fall, since it is a more complex matter, involving graduation and college application. They also directed the superintendent to open a review process one year early for a five-year contract renewal by establishing a subcommittee that is made up of Monument Academy officials John Genz, Chuck Holt, and Jolene Schaake and District 38 officials Raintree, Dilley, and Joe Subialka.

Middle school students Ashley Beckwith (LPMS) and Kendra Weiler (CMS) gave forensic presentations. Ashley performed "The Broken Doll" and Kendra acted out "The Great School Lunch Rebellion." Christopher McGann, a second grade student at Lewis-Palmer Elementary School, read his story, "The Brave Knight." Christopher won second place in his age group with this story in a Colorado Young Writers' Contest.

Susan M. Hansen, Ph.D., was introduced as the new principal for Creekside Middle School. Dr. Hansen is currently the assistant principal at Mountain Ridge Middle School in Douglas County, and previously was an administrator in the Cherry Creek School District. She will replace retiring Principal Barbara Mascarelli.

Teale Kocher, Personnel Assistant, and Tony Vigil and Daniel Aubain of the Technology Department, received commendation certificates for their work in setting up the new online employment application system. Keith Jacobus, Executive Director of Human Resources, described the new on-line system for receiving and reviewing employment applications from licensed candidates. He described the system as being user-friendly, and believes it will be a big improvement over the former cumbersome paper application packets.

The next meeting of the Board of Education will be at 7:00 pm, April 21 in the Learning Center of the District Administration Building on Jefferson Street.

El Paso County Planning Commission, March 15

# Subdivision of another Chapparal Hills lot approved

By Steve Sery

The Planning Commission heard three items of interest to residents of Northern El Paso County at the March 15 meeting.

The Air Force Academy (AFA) gave an informational presentation on the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone Study (AICUZ). This is an extensive analysis of the effects of aircraft noise, accident potential, and compatible land use and development upon present and future neighbors of the AFA. Showing noise contours, potential accident zones, and flight patterns, the study will be used as a guideline in planning development in the adjacent areas.

Another subdivision of a 5-acre lot in Chaparral Hills into two 2½-acre lots, with water supplied to one lot by Donala Water and Sanitation, was requested. The second lot will be served by an on-site well, with a reduction in the amount of water available (from that prior to subdivision). This property is on the north side of Lariat Lane immediately west of Gleneagle Drive. The Planning Commission waived the 300-year water rule on the lot to be served by Donala. It was approved unanimously.

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Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority, March 11

# Right-of-way acquisition advances to the next stage

By Jim Kendrick

The Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority (BRRTA) met for the fourth month in a row March 11. The accelerated pace of meetings reflects the new funding BRRTA will receive from the 1-cent sales tax

of the new Pikes Peak RTA (PPRTA) that was voted into existence in November. Widening Baptist Road near I-25 is one of PPRTA's priorities; hence the sudden rush of activity for this rural county road.

The focus of this meeting was continued engineering planning and right-of-way acquisitions. But overall financing of the project is still a problem.

Monument's Board of Trustees opted out of PPR-TA, the source of major funding for widening Baptist Road—a necessity because of new Jackson Creek retail businesses. Town retailers do not charge the 1-cent PPRTA sales tax, and Monument will not receive any PPRTA funds for improvements of its municipal roads. These funds will also not pay for improving the I-25/Baptist Road interchange; that's the responsibility of the Colorado Department of Transportation and may be a bottleneck for years after BRRTA's work is completed.

The county Department of Transportation also has responsibility for Baptist Road construction as well as the new Struthers Road, which is an extension of Jackson Creek Parkway to the south of Baptist.

Except for the I-25 interchange, Baptist will be widened and improved from just west of Tari Drive to just short of Old Denver Highway in this initial effort. Other Baptist improvements will follow in the next 10 years.

## Financial Matters

Manager Conner Shepherd noted that to save administrative costs, a formal financial report will be submitted for approval only in the first month of each quarter, as in the past. The board unanimously approved payments for accounting, legal, and management services totaling \$10,474.65.

## Engineering report

Engineering consultant and project manager Steve Sandvik, of PBS&J, gave a lengthy presentation on the current status of the design of the BRRTA improvements. He said that 45 percent of the design tasks were complete. County Commissioner Wayne Williams reported that PPRTA had approved the 2005-2006 Baptist Road improvements budgets March 9.

Sandvik reported significant progress in defining most of the individual right-of-way parcels that will be needed east of I-25. He said the projected right-of-way acquisition costs should remain within budget, but the amount of right-of-way needed for storm drainage and sewers was more than he expected. He added that it was too soon to provide a total cost esti-

mate for right-of-way.

Monument Mayor and BRRTA Chair Byron Glenn asked that PBS&J provide the details of the right-of-way to the town's planning department so it could adequately advise residents and developers. Glenn also said several public meetings would be needed to announce traffic changes required throughout the construction process.

County DOT Engineer Andre Brackin said the traffic control plan that contained this day-to-day re-routing information would be implemented by the builder/contractor for the road. He added that the county's construction and environmental schedules for the new Struthers Road parallel the one for Baptist Road to ensure proper coordination.

Monument Trustee Dave Mertz requested that Sandvik include all the utilities in the planned three-quarter-motion intersection at Jackson Creek Crossing Road so that it could be easily converted to a full-motion intersection with four dedicated left-turn lights, if conditions warrant the change.

Williams said that the approval cycle for Baptist Road right-of-way acquisition called for BRRTA to complete plans, estimates, and negotiations and forward them to PPRTA for review. Then PPRTA will write the check to the landowner.

The board unanimously approved the Resolution of Necessity for right-of-way acquisition prepared by BRRTA attorney Jim Hunsacker. The resolution authorizes these negotiations and payments.

Sandvik said that the complicated environmental negotiations regarding town/county/state wetland, floodplain, and mouse habitat might be completed on time by the end of March.

There was a lengthy discussion on the request of Brian Kay of the El Paso County Parks Department for a soft trail that would connect the Santa Fe Trail to Fox Run Park. The soft trail design is optimum for horses, bikers, and pedestrians. There was concern there was might not be enough room for a 12-foot-wide trail, particularly east of Desiree, where smoothing of steep contours would require all the available right-of-way. Kay said a narrower concrete sidewalk on such a steep grade would invite bicycle accidents.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m. The next meeting will be at 2:30 p.m. April 8 at the BOCC hearing room (third floor), 27 E. Vermijo St, Colorado Springs.

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# March Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Many residents were beginning to wonder where winter went after all the mild, dry weather we experienced throughout February and the first week of March. However, a series of storms affected the Tri-Lakes region throughout the month.

After a light dusting of snow to start off the month, the rest of the week was mostly sunny to partly cloudy, breezy, and mild. Highs reached into the 50s from Thursday through Sunday, as highs peaked near 60 degrees on the first Sunday of the month.

More traditional March weather returned to the region during the second week of the month. Tuesday the 8th brought some exciting weather as a cold front, this time with some moisture, raced through the area just after sunrise. An intense area of snow and wind developed as this front blew through and produced a quick 2-4 inches of windblown, wet snow, catching many residents and travelers by surprise. These types of storms and the wide swings in temperatures are common in March, as more moisture becomes available and the energy from the sun becomes more intense.

The rest of the week was an example of this as temperatures quickly warmed up behind the Tuesday cold front, and most of the snow had melted away by Wednesday afternoon, with highs in the upper 50s. Another weak surge of cool air moved in on Thursday knocking highs back into the 40s. Temperatures quickly rose again on Friday and Saturday, with highs peaking in the mid-60s on Saturday, bringing that feeling of spring fever to many residents.

The coldest air in over a month began to race into the region by late Saturday the 13th as snow began to fall around 10 p.m. Highs on Sunday failed to break 30°F, with snow falling most of the day—a 40-degree drop in just one day! Snow also piled up on Sunday with 3-5 inches accumulating throughout the region.

Snow continued into Monday, with another 3-5 inches of snow piling up. Temperatures were on the cold side as well, as highs struggled to reach the mid 20s. Skies cleared out by overnight Monday into Tuesday morning and, with the fresh snow on the ground, temperatures dropped to near zero Tuesday morning. Tuesday afternoon was cool as well, reaching only into the upper 20s to low 30s. But the scenery was beautiful with the fresh snow and blue skies.

Cooler air again settled in for the end of the next week, and snow developed in earnest during the late morning to early afternoon on Friday the 18th, producing just under an inch of new snowfall and keeping highs in the low to mid 30s. Saturday saw a return to quiet weather, with partly cloudy skies during the day. Seasonal conditions soon returned for Sunday the 20th as temperatures returned to seasonal levels in the upper 40s to low 50s.

But as is common this time of the year, the stronger March sunshine allowed afternoon snow to pop up throughout the region as the next storm approached the area. By evening, a steady snow began to fall, and by midnight a couple of inches had accumulated throughout the area, just in time for the first day of spring. Monday saw more snow and wind, with the wet snow sticking to the north side of everything.

The next couple of days were quiet, but unsettled weather returned to end the week of the 21st. As more moisture and cold air worked into the region on Thursday the 24th, an unusual event occurred. Around 2 p.m.,

thundersnow developed in the Tri-Lakes region, producing a quick 2-3 inches of snow and graupel (partially melted snowflakes that look like small hail). This caused several drivers in the area to slip off the road.

Snow continued to fall off and on through the evening, making for a slippery commute on the morning of Good Friday. More snow piled up Friday evening through Saturday morning, but Easter Sunday saw a return to sunshine and quiet conditions. The last week of the month witnessed breezy and mild conditions on Monday with highs well into the 60's, then things quickly turned colder with snow and wind for the final three days of the month.

As we head into April, we are already well above average in snowfall and liquid precipitation for the season. This, along with a bountiful snowpack so far this winter in the high country, should lead to a green start to spring and summer. Let's hope for another wet summer in the region. Remember, we are no longer in a meteorological drought, as Mother Nature has provided a surplus of moisture for the past year and a half. However, the number of people and businesses drawing on the water supplies is more than can be handled even in the wettest years, so please continue to utilize our water resources wisely.

## A Look Ahead

April can see a wide variety of weather in the Tri-Lakes region, from warm, sunny days to howling blizzards. April 2004 made up for a dry and mild March, as we received over 40 inches of snow during the month. Hopefully, we'll see abundant moisture again this year, as this is critical to getting our foliage off to a great start.

The official monthly forecast for April 2005, produced by the Climate Prediction Center (<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/30day/>), is calling for a slight chance of below-normal temperatures and equal chances of normal precipitation.

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

## March 2005 Weather Statistics

Average High	46.1°F
Average Low	20.5°F
Highest Temperature	55° on the 14th
Lowest Temperature	2° on the 15th
Monthly Precipitation	1.79"
Monthly Snowfall	23.7"
Season to Date Snow	91.6"
Season to Date Precip.	15.39"

Remember, weather affects all of us everyday and is a very important part of life for us in the Tri-Lakes region. If you see a unique weather event or have a weather question, please contact us at [our\\_community\\_news@hotmail.com](mailto:our_community_news@hotmail.com).

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



**March 31:** 1/2 mile east of Highway 83 off of Walker Rd and Woodhaven Dr. 4"-8" of new snow and 3-4 foot drifts.  
*sPhoto by Bill Kappel*



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The Palmer Lake Town Council has a vacancy for the position of Trustee, the term to expire April 2006. To apply please send a letter of intent with a brief summary of what you feel you can contribute to the Town of Palmer Lake in this capacity.

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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 identify your submission as a letter to the editor and include your 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 edit or@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 Susan Hindman at 481-8511 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.*

### Kudos

I just wanted you all to know that we really appreciate the great job OCN is doing keeping us all informed about what is really going on locally. The glad-handing commercial happy-news-only approach of the *Tri-Lakes Tribune* (as far as we can tell, it's not much more than an advertising supplement to the *Gazette*) seems to seek to shut down valid community interest and involvement, while OCN tells us exactly what is going on with the Wal-Mart saga, which fire departments are having trouble cooperating with which others, and possibly what we could be doing to improve intergroup communications, and everything that's coming down the pike from the town council.

We will be sending along a donation. We don't want a mailed subscription because we already get OCN (and delighted we are to see it!) in Pleasant View, but we simply want to support the excellent work you all do. THANK YOU!

**Heather Preston and Derek Buzasi**

### Small town feel being ruined

Norman and Linda Baker are not the only folks that are upset with Wal-Mart coming to Monument. I for one just finished signing to have a house built in Monument. What attracted me to

Monument was the small town feel that is quickly going away. I have no idea who is running this show or is getting their pockets lined, but I will tell you this: This town is going to lose some good residents and potential residents if this continues.

I moved from Florida seeking a place where my kids could grow, with a small-town feel without the big city influence. Again whoever is running the show is ruining that. I am hoping that all residents of Monument boycott Wal-Mart and send a message to them that they are not welcomed in a small town. There is nothing American about Wal-Mart. They are known for taking advantage of small inventors who are trying to get their product off the ground, paying very low wages to employees, and importing the rest of their stuff from China.

I am hoping that our politicians wake up and realize what they are doing to this wonderful town before it's too late—unless they already have jobs lined up with Wal-Mart, because if they don't, they will need them if they continue doing what they are doing.

**Rich Rodriguez**

### Open letter to the

#### Monument Board of Trustees

I have been reading in the newspaper that you have some confusion over the purpose and rationale of the traffic impact fees that were adopted by the Board during my tenure as Mayor. My purpose in writing to you at this time is to help resolve these issues.

Traffic Impact Fees were adopted in 2001 as part of a comprehensive package to make developers pay their fair share of impact on the Town and community. For years, those developers who built along Old Denver Highway had paid \$250 per Single Family Equivalent (SFE) for road upgrades, in particular the extension of Beacon Lite Road near Grace Best Elementary School.

The Board in 2000 decided upon a comprehensive review of impact fees. Since the property owner of the 2nd Street Right of Way (ROW) decided not to cooperate with the Town due to some previous council's inability to come to arrangements of mutual satisfaction, the Council decided to develop comprehensive traffic impact fees that would apply to the entire Town.

Further, the County had abrogated its responsibilities concerning Baptist Road improvements by forming the Baptist Road Rural Transportation

Authority (BRRTA). BRRTA imposed a traffic impact fee of \$250 per SFE on those houses built within its boundaries. However, the County exempted all of Gleneagle from BRRTA. In consideration they would toss some \$2 million into the BRRTA pot. (This funding has never materialized and since the special tax on Sales to provide money was voted down by 25 people and 4 cows, BRRTA has become almost an anomaly.) The County even turned down the Town's proposal to make Baptist Road a Town rather than a County Road.

Also, the Triview Metro District attorney objected to the Town's Traffic Impact fees applying to its district. In reciprocally, [sic] the Town would not fund any road construction within the boundaries of Triview. Also, Triview would participate in road construction benefiting its residents on adjacent ROW, such as Jackson Creek Parkway north of Higby Road. In spite of running up a district debt of over \$35 million, Triview has not helped in easing traffic congestion on Baptist Road.

In June of 2001, the Town increased its water tap fee to \$9,000 per SFE, which is approximately twice what Triview charges. The Town imposed a Storm Drainage Impact Fee on the entire Town; even Triview did not object to this one. Further, the Town imposed a Town-wide Traffic Impact Fee—except in Triview, of course—of a flat fee of \$750 per SFE and to make developers participate in road improvements in front of their projects.

Further, the Town should review all the roads within the Town and on its boundaries for improvements and who will pay. For example, the improvements along Old Denver Highway are fairly convoluted since the County is responsible for part and the Town for part; yet, the new developments in the Town have been allowed to build without commensurate road improvements. Who is responsible?

**Leon W. Tenney**

**Former Mayor, Town of Monument**

### Response from the Forest View Acres Water District

As a member of the Board of Directors (BOD) for the Forest View Acres Water District (FVAWD) since May of 2004, I would like to respond to the letter you published from Susan Gates in your March 5, 2005 edition of *Our Community News*.

At the time you published this edition, information about the embezzlement of \$212,000 from FVAWD

by Patricia Unger, who had provided contract office management services to FVAWD for 10 years, had been printed in *The Gazette* (02-17-05) and in the *Tri-Lakes Tribune* (02-23-05).

Until criminal charges were filed by the El Paso County Sheriff's Office on 02-16-05, no one on the BOD knew the full extent of what the sheriff had uncovered in the investigation. We learned of the arrest and the total amount of embezzlement from the *Gazette* reporter who called to interview the BOD on 02-16-05.

The BOD called the El Paso County Sheriff on Dec. 2, 2004, when the BOD uncovered evidence of embezzlement by Patricia Unger. For two weeks following the filing of the complaint, the treasurer of the BOD worked closely with the sheriff and the FVAWD bank to gather evidence to support the complaint.

On Dec 17, 2004, the sheriff searched, seized, and impounded all the records and computers belonging to FVAWD from Mrs. Unger's home office. At that point, the role of the BOD was to cooperate fully with the sheriff as he conducted a full investigation of the District's financial records.

We did not run the investigation. The sheriff did. At the end of the full investigation into the District's financial records, the evidence gathered resulted in the arrest of only one person, Patricia Unger.

The BOD did inform residents of the matter in the winter newsletter. Every resident in FVAWD received the District's newsletter with their February 2005 invoice. I stuffed every envelope, stamped, and delivered them to the post office myself. If a resident received the envelope, opened it, got the invoice, and chose not to read the newsletter, despite the prominent headline "FVAWD Office Manager Doesn't Work Here Anymore," that was a personal choice and is not a good reason to claim ignorance or negligence on the part of the BOD. The article presented the facts as we knew them, with no conjecture as to the outcome of the sheriff's investigation.

While Ms. Gates states that the water district is "owned" by the homeowners, it is not a homeowners association. FVAWD is a public utility, organized as a special district (water district) under Colorado law, subject to Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS), Title 32. It is governed by the BOD, who are residents of the District and are elected to four-year terms by residents of the

District who must be registered electors in the state of Colorado.

If residents choose not to run for the Board and/or choose not to vote, then they must accept personal responsibility for the results of the election process. The BOD is charged by the State of Colorado with making all short-term and long-term decisions concerning the management of all aspects of the District according to Colorado Law.



**Mother's Day is May 8<sup>th</sup>**

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Residents are welcome to attend any public meeting, regular or special, of FVAWD. Our meeting days, times, and locations for 2005 were sent to every resident in the winter newsletter (with February invoices) after FVAWD Resolution 05-02 was passed at the Jan. 10, 2005, regular meeting.

Regular monthly meetings are the venue for residents to participate, or have a voice, in the District. They cannot vote on, or make final determination on, decisions regarding the governing District, because that is the charter of the BOD.

While Ms. Gates states that "now" (that the embezzlement has been publicized) is the time to become involved, I would say that yesterday, last week, last month, last year, or last election was the time to become involved.

At the time Ms. Gates wrote this letter to the editor, and since May of 2004, when I started my tenure on the Board, I have only seen Ms. Gates at one meeting of the BOD, on Feb. 9, 2005. I'm not sure that qualifies her to make pronouncements and accusations that the District is being run with "questionable management and a lack of cooperation." The BOD operates FVAWD under CRS Title 32, as well as certain sections of Title 24, Title 29, Title 38, Title 31, Title 18, and Title 11.

When Ms. Gates urges residents that it is time "to establish a new system for the District" and to

"reorganize the district so it runs like a business" and to "recall the Board of Directors and call a new election," I have to wonder how informed she is about the laws that govern the operation of a local government agency. Colorado law specifically states how the district is to be run; it defines the "system" of the District and how it is to be organized and how the court calls for a new election.

Ms. Gates states that "The Board of Directors suspended annual independent financial audits to save money." She further states that, "there was no regulation requiring an audit, or else they bypassed the regulation." FVAWD was clearly operating under CRS 29-1-604, filing "Exemption from Audit" forms provided by the Colorado state auditor for local government agencies that qualify under this provision. Irregularities in the Exemption from Audit forms for 2002 and 2003, discovered by the state auditor, were key pieces of evidence in uncovering the embezzlement of funds.

As for her accusation that the Board is not keeping the residents apprised of the financial condition of the District, I have District newsletters that date back to 2000 in my personal files. The District has published the budget each year in either the first or second quarter of the year. The budget is openly discussed at regular monthly meetings, and residents are welcome to attend the meetings. Residents can

choose to participate and stay educated about the District or to be uninformed. But they shouldn't look to blame the Board of Directors when their choice leaves them frustrated as a problem is uncovered and confronted.

**Barbara Reed-Polatty**  
*Secretary of the BOD of FVAWD*

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## "Big Splash at the Lake" April 16

*By Jim Kendrick*

The Awake the Lake Committee is sponsoring a fund-raiser at Palmer Lake on Saturday, April 16, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The committee's goal is to have 1,000 people bring a container of water to show their support for the committee's efforts to refill Palmer Lake. There will be a prize for the most unusual water container, as well as entertainment, other prizes, and lots of fun.

The committee will have several commemorative items on hand for sale, including: Palmer Lake Posters by Dan Fraley, Palmer Lake area note cards, Big Splash Tee Shirts and Palmer Lake Ball Caps. All these items are also available for purchase daily during normal business hours at Rock House Ice Cream Shoppe, 24 Highway 105 in Palmer Lake. For more information, call 488-6917.

Another contribution option for those who wish to donate \$65 or more is placement of an engraved paving stone in the new walkway

in the Bill Crawford Memorial Park by the Santa Fe Trailhead at the north end of Palmer Lake. Crawford was a local resident who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his service in World War II. For more information, log on to [www.awakethelake.com](http://www.awakethelake.com).

Local artist Elizabeth Hacker is donating all the profits from the sale of prints of her painting, "Great Blue Heron," at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts on Highway 105. The prints come in two sizes, 11-by-16 inches and 16-by-20 inches, framed and unframed. Hacker's bird paintings are featured monthly in OCN and on its Web site. They will be published soon in an anthology.

For the motorcyclists in the area, O'Malley's Steak Pub will be sponsoring a Poker Run on April 30.

For information on either event, contact Jeff Hulsman at 488-0321, or visit the Web site [www.awakethelake.com](http://www.awakethelake.com).

**Below:** Jeannine Engel displays "Awake the Lake" fundraising items that are available at her Rock House Ice Cream Store, 24 Highway 105 in Palmer Lake. She has displayed over 350 "fish" donated by area children and residents. The fish cover her walls and ceiling and some are even on her ceiling fans. "The kids take great pride in coming back and pointing out 'their fish' to their parents and friends." Engel invites all area residents to bring a container of water to the "Big Splash at the Lake" on April 16.



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Between The Covers at the Covered Treasures Bookstore

# More “Durn Good” Reads

Last November, it occurred to us that many of our favorite books didn’t fit into any tidy theme. And because we couldn’t stand to have any of our readers miss out on these “covered treasures,” here is the second installment of our “durn good” selections. This is a chance for us to recommend new books and old favorites. Enjoy!

**Shadow of the Wind**

By Carlos Ruiz Zafon, \$15  
“I leafed through the pages, inhaling the enchanted scent of promise that comes with all new books...” After a sentence like that, you will not be surprised to read what *Entertainment Weekly* wrote: *The Shadow of the Wind* is a love letter to literature, intended for readers as passionate about storytelling as is its young hero. This book was No. 1 on Spain’s best-seller list for 18 months before Anais Nin’s daughter Lucia Graves lovingly translated it. The novel opens in an amazing place: the Cemetery for Lost Books. Young Daniel, the narrator, is invited by his bookseller father to choose a book so it will “never disappear.” He chooses a book (or the book chooses him), and the drama fatefully begins. This is a huge story filled with memorable post-World War II Barcelona, beautifully crafted characters, drama, and considerable passion, as well as Daniel’s quest to discover the mystery of his chosen book. A spectacular tale.

**A Thread of Grace**

By Mary Doria Russell, \$25.95  
Russell is one of our favorite authors. She is a paleoanthropologist by training, and her knowledge in this field led her to write two gripping and controversial novels, *The Sparrow* and *Children of God*. These were semi-science fiction, with intriguing religious and cultural themes. *The Sparrow* provided my book group with

one of its more compelling discussions. In a complete departure from her first two novels, Russell has written an equally remarkable third novel—this time, historical fiction. Following the lives of several families and individuals, Russell tells the little-known tale of the vast underground effort of a passionate group of Northern Italian Catholics who saved 43,000 Jews during the last years of the war. Russell spent five years researching this “small” piece of World War II history, leaving us a heart-wrenching yet hopeful tale of humanity at its best and its worst.

**Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking**

By Malcolm Gladwell, \$25.95  
A recent reviewer said that if you judge a book by its “aha” factor, then this one would rise to the top of anyone’s list. Following up Gladwell’s first huge hit, *The Tipping Point*, his latest offering pleases equally as well. I think it is a measure of a book’s gripping power when you find yourself repeating the examples to anyone who will listen. In *Blink*, you will discover just how quickly our minds work as we process life—and how that power can be used to help or hinder us as we navigate our years. Gladwell also has the interesting style of frequently reminding us of what he has already said. So, just as I would think I needed to page backward to have something explained, Gladwell does it for you in a non-irritating way. A super nonfiction choice!

**Sight Hound**

By Pam Houston, \$23.95  
Dog lovers’ alert: This book is for you. Fortunately, it is also for everyone else! What a lovely novel. Houston, a Colorado author known for two short-story collections, gives us the gift of her first full-length novel. Gift is not an overstatement. This novel, about “love’s ability to

conquer fear” is told through many voices—six adults and three four-legged creatures. Dante, the Irish wolfhound, is so hauntingly crafted by Houston that nearly everyone I have known who has read this book wants to own one! Set in Colorado, in city and ranch land, Houston conveys the richness of her setting well. This is a book to own and reread when a dose of hope and love is needed.

**The Secret Life of Bees**

By Sue Monk Kidd, \$14  
As an admirer of writers, I feel a kind of pride when an author’s first novel takes the reading world by surprise and storm. This lovely tale of a motherless girl who finds family in the most unexpected place with larger-than-life women, kept me up until 2 in the morning. By any measure, a willingness to be sleep-deprived is usually a good indicator of a great read. As *USA Today* says about the main character, “Lily is an authentic and winning character and her story is compellingly told.”

**Homestead**

By Rosina Lippi, \$12  
This quiet winner of the Pen/Hemingway Award and the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Award is a luminous short novel that spans 80 years in a small village in Austria. Told through the voices of the mothers, grandmothers, daughters, and wives over those eight decades, these tales of the changes in this village will stay with you long past your reading of them. This is a book to read and reread as the spirit moves.

And so we present some of our favorites for your “springtime” reading. Until next month, happy reading as you discover new books or reread a few of your own “durn good reads.”

## On the Trail

# Be mindful of where you are

By Tim Watkins

Monument has a very special part of the Front Range to recreate in. We have some wonderful scenery and trails that access it all. We are truly blessed by the grace of relatively untouched—well, not overly touched—lands. Much of it is in for radical change due to incredible amounts of growth. There is a need for people who are committed to making this all stay usable. Friends of Monument Preserve is an organization worth getting involved with if you want to keep using these scenic, recreational resources.

There are some very special needs arising in the near future and some big concerns as well. Here’s a brief list and explanation:

1. Limbaugh Canyon (Trail 715) is still shut off to through traffic southbound, from “Inspiration Point” on down, and remains so until further notice. The best alternative route is to go up the gully at a junction near the middle stream crossing, up onto Balanced Rock Road, and down from there.

However, please respect the wishes of the private landowners, who are willing to allow continued use, exiting from the Limbaugh Canyon trail to the north, past the old Forest Service cabin. They are working diligently with the U.S. Forest Service and are cooperating to make this anticipated trail reroute work for everyone. But at this point, they can prosecute anyone responsible for vandalizing signage or fences, or for other infringe-

ments on their property.  
2. The trails in the “work center” are getting huge amounts of traffic now and are in need of maintenance. The Friends of Monument Preserve will be publishing dates for trail work throughout the spring, summer, and fall.  
Meanwhile, please find alternate routes to hike, bike, ride, run, and walk when there is snow or wet conditions on the trails. There are a number of roads and places to go in the immediate area that are free from mud and snow and should be used when the trails are wet. When the trails get used wet, they get rutted from people using the outer edges of the trail, creating braided trails and deepening or rutting them, making for more direct routes for water to further erode them. This requires huge efforts to correct or control the water drainage.

These trails could be lost to us if simple courtesy to the landowners and the land itself is not observed. There are many of us who want to keep playing in this place, but we do so courtesy of the Forest Service, so treat it with the respect it deserves. There is a lot of history and a lot of wildlife here that should be carefully used and enjoyed.

To offer assistance for the upcoming spring work, phone Balanced Rock Bike and Ski in Monument, 488-9007.



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# High Country Highlights A Few Gardening Tips

By Woody Woodworth

This time of year, we get asked several questions at our garden center regarding plants, seeds, and fertilizers. I'll cover a few of the most asked questions and some general answers to most of the questions.

**When can I start planting?**

Spring planting at lower elevations on the Front Range is usually recommended when the soil warms enough to start working it—sometime between late March and mid-April. Keep in mind that new plants will require watering, and you must have the ability to water them well. At our region's higher elevations, you should be able to start planting when most of the snow cover is gone, usually mid-April to mid-May. Mother Nature has everything to do with this; each year will be different.

**Do I prune all of my shrubs now?**

Selective pruning is always best at any time of year. There is a general rule of thumb: Prune non-flowering or late-flowering shrubs in early spring, and prune spring-flowering shrubs just after the bloom. Many gardeners prune the bloom off the lilacs, broom, and pyracantha before they even flower! The late-flowering shrubs like potentilla, blue mist spirea, and roses should all be pruned now. Lots of evergreens have brown tips from lack of moisture over the winter, so prune them now as well.

**Is this a good time to plant grass seed and wildflower seed?**

Absolutely! Now is a great time, especially now that we're into our wetter months of springtime. Be sure to cover seed with about one-quarter inch of topsoil or other loose mix, then water and keep them moist. Germination takes a bit longer this time of year, but results can be astounding. The key to a good stand of grass or wildflowers is the seed. Be sure to use a reputable source that has knowledge of seeds that work well for your area.

**Should I fertilize my lawn now?  
And what kind of fertilizer do I use?**

Now is the time for doing lawns, blooming shrubs, and trees. Wait just a bit longer before fertilizing tender perennials that are just emerging from the ground—about mid- to late April for them.

**N.P.K.—what does it all mean?**

There are a million fertilizers on the market today. Choose one for your specific need. For top growth, add higher nitrogen (the letter N); for increased blooms and root growth, add higher phosphate (the letter P); and for more drought and disease resistance, add more potash (the letter K). Be aware there are numerous organic solutions on the market, so we do not have to use harsh chemicals on our ground surface. Think "green."

**I noticed my bulbs coming up and now suddenly they're gone. What happened?**

If no evidence of the plant is left behind, you probably have a critter of some kind eating your plants or carrying them off. Most of us live in this area partly because of the wildlife and like to have them around. If you're someone who doesn't want them around, the only sure way to keep them at bay is a fence. For deer, it must be a minimum of 6 feet tall. However, it is extremely difficult to keep ground squirrels and rabbits at bay, even with a fence.

If you like the animals around but would prefer they not eat your garden, there are a few things you can do. First, try to plant things that the animals don't like or prefer not to eat. Planting larger quantities of a specific plant will give you and the animals some to enjoy. And last, but certainly not least, there are many repellents on the market today that truly work. They must be reapplied regularly.

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

Art Matters

# Bits and pieces: papier-mâché

By Janet Sellers

We have blue skies and gray skies, with a sea of snow, warm air, and slushy roads. Spring is our surprise season. Do the spring snows bring you cabin fever and you feel like tearing something up to bits? How about transforming a pile of old newspapers into something besides kindling or landfill problems?

I went beyond just starting the kids on an indoor papier-mâché project; I turned it into a time travel adventure. I started researching the history of paper from an artist's perspective.

Decades ago, I learned about papers for paintings, and along the way began to collect many art pieces made of paper, along with information on its history and how it is created, used, and conserved. The price of fine art papers fluctuates with the price of cotton, and the paper I need most often as an artist comes from Egyptian cotton. I also enjoy working with Asian papers.

Sometimes I make my own paper from all kinds of fibers in a paper blender (but a household blender will do). The process of making paper is essentially the same as it's been throughout history, involving water, a pulped material, and a mold on which to dry it.

I read that paper was invented in China over 2,200 years ago from cotton fibers, and that the invention of paper gradually made its way west to Baghdad, during the Islamic culture's golden age in the 8th century. I also read that paper comes from papyrus, around since at least the 4th century b.c. in Egypt and used for administrative purposes. (Would that Duke University's papyrologists and the editors of the Paper-crafts collections at Hermes House Press could agree on their histories.)

Most people know that the Egyptians buried their

dead as mummies in decorative caskets. But did you know that the caskets were from cartons of used papyrus recycled from their administrative offices?

Our word for paper comes from papyrus. Throughout history, as each supply of paper materials became exhausted, new materials were explored. All manner of furniture, household goods, and more have been made from paper pulp molded for our use.

In Asia, lacquerware using paper was elevated to the highest art form, with gilded layers—inlays of silver and gold leaf embedded into the dozens, if not hundreds, of layers of lacquer over paper, silk, or wood utensils. In Japan, many lacquerware objects of art are protected as national treasures by the Japanese government.

There are a number of local art shows this month that focus on paper in painting, sculpture, photography, fine craft, and even movies. The Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts shows are open to view Tuesdays through Saturdays. The Monument Library art shows this month will be open every day.

Be sure to take a look in the library sculpture cases, where you will find this very newspaper transformed into objects of mystery, intrigue, and delight. Also look for the kid's exhibit highlighting the history of animation and movie optics: illusion, movement, and the persistence of vision. You can make your own optical animator—just pick up the free information slip and get into the "movies."

*Janet Sellers is an internationally known and collected artist and is director of the Monument School of Fine Arts. She can be reached at ArtSpa@mac.com.*

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Above: Drawing by Elizabeth Hacker of a Waxwingt. A color version is posted at [www.ourcommunitynews.org/v5n4bird.htm](http://www.ourcommunitynews.org/v5n4bird.htm)

Bird Watch on the Palmer Divide

Waxwings

By Elizabeth Hacker

Waxwings (Bombycillid sp.) are rarely seen on the Palmer Divide, but this year is an exception. Last month, Ron Perry, proprietor of This Place Is for the Birds—an amazing one-of-a-kind bird shop and gallery located at 2318 Palmer Park Blvd. in Colorado Springs—showed me a photograph of a cedar waxwing taken this winter. We were delighted, as neither of us had seen a waxwing here before. My husband, however, had spotted one last fall in Castlewood Canyon State Park.

I didn’t think much more about it until the following week when Janie Blankenship, who lives near Fox Run Park, reported hearing a whistling sound and then spotting a flock of bohemian waxwings. I then read the 2004 Aiken Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count results, and sure enough, there were flocks of bohemian waxwings counted at two sites in Colorado Springs, with a note saying that cedar waxwings also had been spotted on non-count days at other locations and that waxwings appear infrequently in this area.

The sightings of both species sparked my curiosity. Why have there been so many sightings this year, and is it really all that unusual?

Waxwings are highly social, migratory, nomadic, and irruptive birds. Irruptive is a term used by scientists to describe flocks of birds that for no specific reason will “invade” an area. It explains as well as any why the waxwings are here this winter. There were also large flocks reported here in the 1979 bird count, but I could find no information to compare what kind of winter that was.

There are two species of waxwings that migrate across much of North America. The bohemian (slightly larger) and the cedar waxwings are medium-sized woodland songbirds, 6 to 8 inches in length, about the size of a bluebird. But they appear larger because of the crest on their heads. They have sleek light grayish-brown plumage on much of their backs and wings. Their most striking facial feature is their crest and the black marking below it that extends from their beaks around their eyes toward the back of their head—which is reminiscent of the mask of Zorro and adds to their mystique.

Cedar waxwings have yellow highlights on their

breasts and a yellow tail band. The bohemian waxwings have rusty-colored highlights, white on their wing tips, and a yellow tail band. Both have short, slightly curved bills for plucking and eating fruit. The name “waxwings” actually comes from the red waxy “droplets” that form on the ends of the adult’s secondary flight feathers and are more noticeable on the cedar waxwing.

Their diet consists largely of sugary fruits, with some insects during nesting. They flock to fruit-bearing plants, which may explain why they are not frequently found here. Orchard growers often cover their plants with nets to save their crops from waxwing flocks that can include hundreds of birds. In winter and spring, waxwings feed on dried fruits, buds, and sap drips.

The cedar waxwings were named because they often feed on cedar berries, such as the one-seed juniper trees in Garden of the Gods, while bohemian waxwings are known to feed on kinnikinnik berries. It is the pigments found in fruit that contribute to red and yellow coloration in the feathers of birds such as western tanagers, and it is the dense concentration of carotene at the ends of the waxwings’ feather veins that form red droplets. Unique only to the waxwings, these droplets increase in number and size as the birds age, and are thought to help them select mates similar in age.

Associated with midsummer ripening of fruit, the breeding season of the waxwings is one of the latest in North America. They are often found nesting on the woodlands’ edge near streams or lakes where insects and fruit are plentiful. They often migrate to northern temperate climates near Canada where there are abundant bugs and fruiting plants, but they also nest in parts of northern Colorado.

There is much more to waxwings, but because of their rarity here, rather than taking any more time to write, I’m grabbing my binoculars and heading out to look for them before they head north! Until next month, happy birding!

Elizabeth Hacker is an artist and free-lance writer. E-mail your questions and bird finds to her at [editor@ourcommunity.news.org](mailto:editor@ourcommunity.news.org).

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The Society Page

Society sees the past with Palmer

By Leon Tenney

This month, the society got to see the latest film by Jim Sawatzki about General William Jackson Palmer and the early days of Colorado Springs. The usual gang was there: Paula Whittier, Victor Vaile, Norm and Lola Thompson, Bonnie Allen, Phyllis Bowser, and Hans Post.

For those who like to get their information without the drudgery of actually having to read, these films by Sawatzki are a fairly painless way to learn about local history. This most recent installment begins with Palmer’s life back east. He got started in Philadelphia and became an engineer. He traveled to Europe before the war. During the war, Palmer became colonel in the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry, which apparently went on independent missions, such that Palmer was promoted to brevet brigadier general by the end of the war. He always considered this to be the high point of his life, probably remembering what Oliver Wendell Holmes said about his experience in this heart-rending Civil War, “... We live life to the fullest, since in our youths, our hearts were touched by fire.”

After the war, Palmer came out west to build railroads. First, he began with the Kansas City and Pacific. He was building the line from Kansas City to Denver. On one of his trips, he saw the area that he later made into Colorado Springs. On another trip to the East, he met Queen, who later became his wife. Palmer began to promote Colorado Springs with two kinds of people: experts and his war buddies. He laid out the city and unlike Colorado City, it had strict temperance and good irrigation.

During the next 10 years, he promoted his project,

but he had difficulties with married life. His wife, Queen, needed to live in a lower, wetter climate, so she eventually moved to England and spent the last years of her life there, 1882-1894. The Palmers had three children, all girls. Palmer divided his time between traveling to visit his wife and building up the city. He began a western castle called Glen Eyrie. When his wife died, his daughters returned with him to Glen Eyrie in the Springs.

Palmer made his fortune by building railroad lines and founding new towns all over western Colorado with his Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. He never got south to the Rio Grande, because the Santa Fe beat him out for the right of way over Raton Pass. This diverted him west, which for Colorado development and mountain mining towns was probably a good thing.

Palmer gave away millions of dollars. When he sold his interest in his railroad, he got \$1 million too much, which he proceeded to give away on one last trip on the railroad. Employees and the little guys got hundreds or thousands in bonus money just by doing their jobs well.

Eventually, Palmer settled down in Glen Eyrie with his grown daughters. One morning on a horse ride, Palmer fell and became paralyzed from the neck down.

His last reunion with his war buddies was the high point of his later life. Since he could not travel, he paid the expenses for them (all 250) to come to Colorado Springs for this 45th Reunion of the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry. After this event, he traveled again to England to attend his daughter’s wedding, but she changed her mind and ran off with her father’s doctor. On this trip, Palmer was again injured and died at Glen Eyrie.

Next month, we start again at 7 p.m. See you there on the third Thursday, Apr. 21.

## Special Events and Notices

By Judy Barnes, Editor Emeritus  
**First Annual In-Line Hockey Clinic**

The clinic will be presented by the players and coaches of the Lewis-Palmer High School In-line Hockey Team on **April 3**, noon to 2 p.m. Check in at 11:30 a.m. at Soc N' Roll, 16240 Old Denver Highway. Drinks, pizza, prizes, and giveaways are part of the fun! The cost is \$25, with proceeds benefiting the Lewis-Palmer In-Line Hockey Club. For more information, call Bobbi Doyle, 331-3003.

### Kids' tennis

The Palmer Lake Tennis Center is helping kids prepare to participate in USTA junior leagues this spring and summer. If your child has an interest in tennis, here is their chance to develop their tennis skills and participate in the social aspect of tennis. The prerequisite for this team is a little tennis experience, either by having taken a PLTC group lesson or knowing how to keep score. The emphasis is on having fun and improving kid's tennis skills. Instruction on playing tactics and techniques will be included during play. For more information, e-mail [info@palmerlaketennis.com](mailto:info@palmerlaketennis.com). Or visit with the coaches at the courts **each Wednesday and Saturday** 3:30-4:30 p.m. See you there! Cost is \$7 per class. More information is available at [www.palmerlaketennis.com](http://www.palmerlaketennis.com) and at 487-9184.

### Tri-Lakes resident John Stansfield wins conservation award

John Stansfield will be the 2005 recipient of the Stuart P. Dodge Award for his contributions to land preservation and conservation. The Palmer Land Trust will present the award as part of the Colorado College State of the Rockies Conference held each spring. Stu Dodge has been a leader in establishing parks and open space in the Pikes Peak Region for over 30 years. John is a longtime and tireless worker for the environment in our community. John's passion and legacy of environmental and conservation leadership will be celebrated at a reception on the CC campus **April 7**.

### Free tax assistance

Free income tax filing assistance is offered by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Trained AARP volunteers will be available **every Monday and Thursday through April 14** from noon until 3 p.m., to answer questions and to assist in completing federal and state income tax returns. On Mondays, they will be at the Monument Town Hall; on Thursdays, they will be at Tri-Lakes Cares' new location near the Presbyterian Church in Monument. Volunteers will assist taxpayers in preparing their Forms 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ, and will assist in claiming any Earned Income Credit, Child Tax Credit, and/or Education Credits to which the taxpayer might be entitled. They will also assist in preparing the following forms: Schedules 1, 2, 3, A, B, C-EZ, EIC, D, R, and SE, as well as forms 2441, 8812, and 8863. Taxpayers with more complicated returns should seek the advice of a paid professional. Filers are asked to bring their W-2s, 1099-INT, 1099-DIV, etc., needed to complete their 2004 return, plus a copy of last year's (2003) tax return. For more information, call Jim Taylor at 488-1317.

### AARP Mature Safe Driving Program

The AARP Mature Safe Driving Program is the nation's first and largest classroom driver refresher course specially designed for motorists age 50 and older. Upon successfully completing the course, graduates may present their course completion certificate to their insurance agents for a discount. Registration for the eight-hour course is \$10 (must attend both days). The course will be **April 14 and 15**, 1-5 p.m., at Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Call 488-2370 to register.

### The 29th Annual Pine Forest Antiques Show and Sale

This much-anticipated event will be **April 16**, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and **April 17**, 1 to 4 p.m. at Lewis-Palmer High School. The show will feature antiques from more than 60 dealers, as well as a delicious Country Café, and homemade bake sale.

The major fund-raising event of the year for the Tri-Lakes Women's Club, the antiques show and sale proceeds benefit local nonprofit groups. In the past 29 years, more than \$415,000 has been awarded to District

38 schools, fire and police departments, senior citizen groups and other nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organizations that provide services to residents within the community. For more information, please visit their Web site at: [www.tlwc.net](http://www.tlwc.net).

### Spring concert

Tri-Lakes Community Handbell Choir presents a Spring Music Fling on **April 17** at 2 p.m. at Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third Street. Come enjoy handbells, vocal choirs, a praise team, and bluegrass group. Fun for all! There's no admission charge and refreshments will follow the concert. For information, e-mail Betty Jenik at [ljenik@adelphia.net](mailto:ljenik@adelphia.net).

### Friday Art Café Series To Inspire All Ages at TLCA

Feed your soul at the upcoming Friday Art Café at the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts. Classes, art discussions, salons and more will be offered **April 22 through May 20** at the center.

The series will include *Art Talk* on Fridays at 6 p.m. and feature a Salon on **April 22** and **May 6** with award-winning artist Claudette Beddingfield for a discussion on how to select work for a competition and a friendly critique of artwork brought by class participants. Sabrina Sculley of Bella Art and Frame in Monument will lead a discussion on **April 29** regarding framing and displaying that best showcases artwork. Gallery owner Linda Pankrantz will offer advice on the business of selling art on **May 20**. A unique session called *Visual Dynamics* will feature Marce Brandt of Pacific Rim Interiors in Monument and will demonstrate the art of merchandising your home or office with art, decorator items and accessories.

Classes will be in 1- to 2-hour sessions between noon and 8 p.m. on Fridays during the Art Café. They will include stained glass, collage, filmmaking, drawing, painting, and much more. There will also be a Studio Sampler with Janet Sellers that will offer a different art technique each week including charcoal, watercolor, calligraphy, pencil, fresco, and illuminated poetry and is for all ages and levels of experience.

For more information, including costs and class times, call the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts at 481-0475, or e-mail to [info@tlcarts.com](mailto:info@tlcarts.com). The TLCA is located at 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake, in the historic Kaiser Frazer Building.

### Film series invites dialogue afterward

A series entitled *The Role of War and Propaganda in Modern Society* mixes film with community dialogue and is hosted by Paul Burke. The first event is Saturday, **April 23**, 1 p.m. at the Palmer Lake Town Hall, with an opening reception at the Palmer Lake Library at 12:30 p.m. The featured film will be *Manufacturing Consent*, a documentary by Noam Chomsky that examines thought-control in a democratic society. Please come and join the dialogue that follows the movie. Both events are free. More films are planned; check *OCN* next month for a complete listing of the upcoming films in the series. For more information, call 481-3086.

### Monumental Red Hatters

A new chapter of the Red Hat Society, a social group for women over 50, is forming in the Tri-Lakes area. The group will meet **April 28** at 11:30 a.m. at La Casa Fiesta, 230 Front Street, Monument. The Red Hat Society, with its goal of simply having fun, has been very popular. Women meet for lunch or to go to movies together. For more information, call 488-3327 or 495-6625.

**Gleneagle Spirit 5k Fun Run/Walk coming in May**  
A Fun Run/Walk through Gleneagle is planned for **May 14**, 8 a.m. to noon, with medals awarded for the top three finishers in many age classes. The race will be followed by a participant pasta feed. The event offers fun for the whole family, with live musical entertainment by the Monument Hill Brass Quintet, numerous interactive vendor booths, and a display of Donald Wescott Fire Department fire trucks. Proceeds will benefit Boy Scout Troop 194. For more information, contact Mark Rudolph at 492-3974.

### Palmer Lake Kids' Fishing Derby

The popular fishing derby at Palmer Lake will be **June 4**, 8 a.m. to noon. Watch for more information in next month's *OCN*, or call the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce at 481-3282.

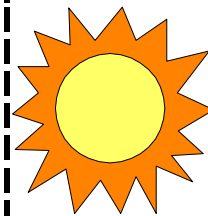


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# Our Community Calendar

*By Judy Barnes, Editor Emeritus*  
*Although we strive for accuracy in these listings, dates or times are often changed after publication. Please 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 Special Meeting**, Mon., Apr. 4, 6:00 p.m., **Regular Meeting**, 6:30 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **El Paso County Water Authority Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 6, 9 a.m., 27 E. Vermijo, 3rd Floor Hearing Room. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 520-6300.
- **Monument Police Station Sub-Committee Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 6, 6 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 6, 7 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 488-2694 or visit [www.woodmoor.org](http://www.woodmoor.org).
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Workshop**, Thu., Apr. 7, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thu. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit [www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us](http://www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us).
- **Monument Board of Trustees Special Meeting**, Mon., Apr. 11, 6:00 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **Tri-Lakes WWTF Joint Use Committee Meeting**, Mon., Apr. 11, 6 p.m., 120 Middle Glenway, across from Palmer Lake Town Hall. Normally meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Mon. each month; location rotates monthly. Info: 481-2732.
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District Meeting**, Tue., Apr. 12, 1 p.m., 1845 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tue. of each month. Info: 488-2525.
- **Monument Parks and Landscape Committee**, Tue., Apr. 12, 5:30 p.m., meet at Dirty Woman Park for a walk-through of the town’s parks; 6:30 p.m., regular meeting at Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. The public is invited to either or both of the meetings. Normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tue. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Workshop**, Wed., Apr. 13, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit [www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us](http://www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us).
- **Forest View Acres Water District Meeting**, Wed., Apr.13, 7 p.m., location has not been announced. Normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 488-2110.
- **Monument Planning Commission Special Meeting**, 5:30 p.m., **Regular Meeting**, 6:30 p.m., Wed., Apr. 13, , Monument Town Hall, 166 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Meeting** , Thu., Apr. 14, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thu. each month. Info: 481-

- 2953 or visit [www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us](http://www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us).
- **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., Apr. 18, 6:30 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017.
  - **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., Apr. 19, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (Off Union Blvd and Printers Parkway). Normally meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tue. and optionally the 4<sup>th</sup> Tue. each month. Info: 520-6300.
  - **Monument Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Tue., Apr. 19, 6:30 p.m., 130 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Normally meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tue. each month. Info: 481-4886.
  - **Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 20, 7 p.m., Station #2, 15000 Sun Hills Drive. Normally meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 488-8680 or 599-4068.
  - **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 20, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit [www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us](http://www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us).
  - **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board Meeting**, Thu., Apr. 21, 7 p.m., Learning Center of the Lewis-Palmer Administration Building, 2nd and Jefferson. Normally meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thu. each month. Info: 488-4700.
  - **Monument Board of Trustees Special Meeting**, Mon., Apr. 25, 6:00 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017.
  - **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., Apr. 26, 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 Apr.19 meeting. Info: 520-6300.
  - **Donala Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 27, 1:30 p.m., 15850 Holbein Dr, Colorado Springs, CO. *Normally meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed.* of each month. Info: 488-4603.
  - **Triview Metropolitan District Board Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 27, 4:30 p.m., district office, 174 N. Washington St. Normally meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 488-6868.
  - **Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 27, 6:30 p.m. at Tri-Lakes Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Normally meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 481-2312.
  - **Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 27, 6:30 p.m., at Tri-Lakes Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Normally meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 488-3303.
  - **Tri-Lakes-Monument Fire Authority Board Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 27, 7:30 p.m. at Tri-Lakes Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Normally meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 481-2312.
  - **Tri-Lakes-Monument Fire Authority Board Meeting**, Wed., Mar. 23, 7:30 p.m. at Tri-Lakes Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Normally meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 481-2312.
    - **Triview Metropolitan District Board Meeting**, Wed., Mar. 23, 4:30 p.m., district office, 174 N. Washington St. Normally meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 488-6868.
    - **Woodmoor/Monument Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., Mar. 23, 6:30 p.m., at Tri-Lakes Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Normally meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 488-3303.
    - **Monument Police Advisory Committee Meeting**, Wed., Mar. 30, 7 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 884-8017.
    - **Monument Police Station Sub-Committee Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 6, 6 p.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 884-8017.
    - **El Paso County Water Authority Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 6, 9 a.m., 27 E. Vermijo, 3rd Floor Hearing Room. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Wed. each month. Info: 520-6300.
    - **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., Apr. 6, 7 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Wed. each

- month. Info: 488-2694 or visit [www.woodmoor.org](http://www.woodmoor.org).
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Workshop Meeting** , Thu., Apr. 7, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thu. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit [www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us](http://www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us).
- 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., 3-4:30p.m. Practice your reading with a Paws to Read dog and its human companion (a reading buddy). No registration is required, just come and read. 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.
  - **Palmer Lake Branch Library: Goats!** Sat., Apr. 9, 11 a.m., Visit with friendly goats at Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
  - **Monument Library: Because of Winn-Dixie**, Sat., Apr. 9, 1:30 p.m. Celebrate the new movie and the award-winning book by Kate DiCamillo with crafts and fun activities. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
  - **Monument Library: Microphone Madness**, Sat., Apr. 9, 3 p.m. An open mike session for local teens who have participated in speech, forensics, or debate teams. Showcase your talent. Register at the library or call 488-2370 by Apr. 6. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
  - **Monument Library: Duck Day**, Sat., Apr. 23, 1: 30-3:30 p.m. Take an educational outdoor duck walk with Ann Shimek; learn to draw ducks with Janet Sellers; enjoy duck crafts, giveaways, refreshments. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
  - **Monument Library: Prizes for Poetry**. Celebrate National Poetry Month by reading or reciting your favorite poem to library staff and receive a prize. One prize per poet, please. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
  - **Monument Library: Summer reading volunteers wanted**. Responsible teens are needed to staff the children’s summer reading program. Volunteers will be scheduled to work 2 hours per week through June and July. Pick up applications at the desk beginning in May. 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.
  - **Monument Library: Local Video**, Sun., Apr. 3, 1: 30 p.m. A showing of “The Life and Times of Gen. William Jackson Palmer” by local historian and filmmaker Jim Sawatzki. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.

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MONUMENT LIBRARY Community Room  
Thursdays, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

- **Monument Library Senior Synergy**, every Wed., 10-noon. Join this group dedicated to empowering individual growth through life-long learning and positive relationships. Senior Synergy socializes, explores issues, debates, and argues, all in a spirit of camaraderie. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
  - **Monument Library: Talk English!**, Mondays, 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.
  - **Monument Library History Buffs**, Wed., Apr. 6, 1-3 p.m. Participants as a group select a period of history and read any book from that time period. They come together for lively discussions in which everyone learns something new and obtains information about good books about the era. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Wed. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
  - **Palmer Lake Library Adult Crafts**, Thu., Apr. 7, 1-3 p.m. Garden tote project; make a pocketed wrap for a 2-gallon bucket. Bring a 2-gallon bucket. Supplies cost: \$5 per class. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
  - **Monument Library: World War II Reflections**, Wed., Apr. 13, 1-3 p.m. A dynamic group interested in sharing information and insights about this unique period of history. Veterans and non-veterans are welcome. Normally meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
  - **Monument Library: AARP Mature Safe Driving Program**, Thu., Apr. 14 & Fri., Apr. 15, 1-5 p.m. Must attend both days. The AARP Mature Safe Driving Program is specially designed for motorists age 50 and older. Refresh your skills and get a discount on insurance! Cost: \$10. Call 488-2370 to register. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
  - **Palmer Lake Library Film Series: "The Role of War and Propaganda in Modern Society,"** Sat., Apr. 23, 1 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Opening reception at the Palmer Lake Library, 66 Lower Glenway, at 12:30 p.m. Featured film is "Manufacturing Consent," a documentary by Noam Chomsky that examines thought-control in a democratic society. Join the dialogue following the movie. Free. Info: 481-3086.
  - **Monument Library: Senior Lunch & Movie**, Fri., May 6, 11:30 a.m. Bring a lunch and enjoy a free film. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Fri. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
  - **Palmer Lake Book Group**, Fri., May 6, 9 a.m. New members welcome! Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Fri. each month at Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
- For other library events, please check <http://ppld.org/communityconnections/calendar>.

OTHER EVENTS

- **Monument Hill Sertoma Club Breakfast Meeting**, Saturdays at 8 a.m., Church of Woodmoor, 18125 Furrow Rd. Info: 488-3189.
- **Al-anon/Alateen Open Parent's Meeting: Carry On**, every Sat., 10:30-11:30 a.m., College Room 2nd floor, NE corner; 1750 Deer Creek Rd, Monument. Info: visit [www.al-anon-co.org](http://www.al-anon-co.org) or [www.al-anon-alateen.org](http://www.al-anon-alateen.org) or call the 24-hour answering service at 719-632-0063 (locally) or 8 a.m.-6 p.m. weekdays at 1-888-425-2666 (nationwide).
- **Weekend bike rides**, Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. for road rides; Sundays, 1 p.m. for mountain bike rides. Balanced Rock Bike Shop, 279 J Beacon Lite at 3<sup>rd</sup> St. Info: 488-9007.
- **Tri-lakes Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner Dance**, Sat., Apr. 2, 6-11 p.m., Pincrest Event Center, 106 Greeley Blvd., Palmer Lake. The theme is the Australian outback, and the festive evening will feature cocktails, a silent auction, dinner (with wine) and dessert buffets, a raffle and live auction with guest auctioneer Senator Tom J. Wiens, awards, and dancing. Cost: \$45 per person. Info: 481-3282.
- **Lewis-Palmer High School In-Line Hockey Clinic**, Sun., Apr. 3, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Soc N'

- Roll, 16240 Old Denver Hwy. The clinic will be presented by the players and coaches of the Lewis-Palmer High School In-line Hockey Team. Drinks, pizza, prizes, and giveaways included. Cost: \$25, with proceeds benefiting the Lewis-Palmer In-Line Hockey Club. Info: Bobbi Doyle, 331-3003.
- **Fibromyalgia Support Group**, Mon., Apr. 4, 7 p.m., 2500 East Hwy 105, Monument (4.3 miles East of I-25). Share concerns and success stories in a small group. Learn how you can become pain-free. Visitors and new participants always welcome. (No charge, no products sold.) Normally meets 1<sup>st</sup> Mon. each month. Info: Lorna Searle, 481-3735.
  - **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](http://www.d26toastmasters.org).
  - **Al-anon/Alateen meeting: Monument Monday Night Literature Study**, Every Mon., 7-8 p.m., Tri-Lakes Chapel, room 207, 1750 Deer Creek Rd, Monument. Info: visit [www.al-anon-co.org](http://www.al-anon-co.org) or [www.al-anon-alateen.org](http://www.al-anon-alateen.org) or call the 24-hour answering service at 719-632-0063 (locally) or 8 a.m.-6 p.m. weekdays at 1-888-425-2666 (nationwide).
  - **Al-anon/Alateen Meeting: Letting Go**, every Thu., 9-10:10 a.m., Tri-Lakes Chapel, room 209, 1750 Deer Creek Rd, Monument. Info: visit [www.al-anon-co.org](http://www.al-anon-co.org) or [www.al-anon-alateen.org](http://www.al-anon-alateen.org) or call the 24-hour answering service at 719-632-0063 (locally) or 8 a.m.-6 p.m. weekdays at 1-888-425-2666 (nationwide).
  - **Chamber of Commerce Toastmaster Club**, Wed., Apr. 6, 8 a.m., Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, 300 Hwy 105. This new chapter is open to all who want to improve their public speaking skills. Normally meets 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. each month. Info: Cindy Tafil, 481-3282.
  - **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers**, Thu., Apr. 7, 7 p.m., Church of Woodmoor, Furrow Rd. Normally meets the 1st Thu. each month. Info: 488-0074.
  - **Monument Homemakers Club Monthly Potluck Lunch**, Thu., Apr. 7, 11:30 a.m., Monument Town Hall. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thu. each month. Info: Kay Reuteler, 488-3263.
  - **Western Museum of Mining and Industry Super Saturday: What's Mined Is Yours**, Sat., Apr. 9, 1 p.m. If we can't grow it, we must mine it! Come on down to learn about the rocks we eat. Learn what rocks are in your Oreo® Cookies and cake frosting—and even in your toothpaste! Reservations requested. Cost: \$3 per person, members free. Info and reservations: 488-0880, or e-mail [specialprograms@wmmi.org](mailto:specialprograms@wmmi.org). Take I-25 to the Gleneagle Exit (156A); the Museum entrance is immediately east of the interstate, just opposite the north entrance to the U. S. Air Force Academy.
  - **La Leche League of Tri-Lakes**, Tue., Apr. 12, 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Tue. each month. Info: 481-2909.
  - **Women's Business Owners and Managers Luncheon**, Tue., Apr. 12, 11:30 a.m., King's Deer Golf Club. RSVP and info: 481-3282.
  - **Black Forest Chapter of AARP Potluck Luncheon**, Wed., Apr. 13, 11:30 a.m., Black Forest Community Church, Shoup and Black Forest Road. Normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. each month. Info: Electa Beckner at 596-6787 or Chuck Eaton at 495-2443.
  - **Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce Monthly Luncheon Seminar**, Wed., Apr. 13, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Kings Deer Golf Club, Royal Troon Way. Special Effects Design & Marketing will present "Marketing 101—What is it? Cost: \$20 members, \$30 nonmembers. Info: 481-3282.
  - **Ben Lomond Gun Club, Tri-Lakes Chapter**, Thu., Apr. 14, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes Fire Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thu. each month. Info: 481-3364.
  - **Tri-Lakes Networking Team Monthly Social & Dinner**, Thu., Apr. 14, 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.
  - **Gleneagle Women's Club Luncheon**, Fri., Apr. 15,

- 11:30 a.m., Liberty Heights, 12105 Ambassador Dr., Colorado Springs. The speaker will be from Simpich Character Dolls, giving a talk and displaying these famous dolls. Cost: \$12. Reservations are required by Sun., Apr. 10. Call Cecelia Neill, 481-1283 or Carol Mc Namara, 487-1049.
- **Pine Forest Antiques Show and Sale**, Sat., Apr. 16, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., & Sun., Apr. 17, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Lewis-Palmer High School, 1300 Higby Road, Monument (I-25, Exit 158 or 161). This charity event sponsored by Tri-Lakes Women's Club will feature more than 60 antique dealers, a Country Café, and a homemade bake sale. Cost: \$5. Info: visit [www.tlwc.net](http://www.tlwc.net).
  - **Tri-Lakes Community Handbell Choir's Spring Music Fling**, Sun., Apr. 17, 2 p.m., Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 3rd Street. Enjoy handbells, vocal choirs, a praise team, a bluegrass group, and refreshments. Free. Info: e-mail Betty Jenik at [ljenik@adelphia.net](mailto:ljenik@adelphia.net).
  - **Chamber of Commerce Toastmaster Club**, Wed., Apr. 20, 8 a.m., Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, 300 Hwy 105. This new chapter is open to all who want to improve their public speaking skills. Normally meets 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. each month. Info: Cindy Tafil, 481-3282.
  - **Palmer Lake Historical Society Monthly Meeting**, Thu., Apr. 21, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Info: 481-4407.
  - **MOMS Club of Monument New Member Social**, Fri., Apr. 22. 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.
  - **Monumental Red Hatters Lunch**, Thu., Apr. 28, 11:30 a.m., La Casa Fiesta, 230 Front Street, Monument. A new chapter of the Red Hat Society, for women over 50, is forming in the Tri-Lakes area. The group's goal is to get together and have fun! Info: 488-3327 or 495-6625.
  - **Bella Art & Frame Gallery Mother's Day Art Show**, Thu., May 5, 5:30-7:30 p.m. The Gallery will be filled with self-portraits by Monument Academy 1st Graders dedicated to Mom with love notes attached. Refreshments will be served. Bella Art & Frame is located in Gallery Center next to Pankratz Gallery at 366 2nd St., Ste. B in Monument. Info: 487-7691.
  - **Monument Homemakers Club Monthly Potluck Lunch**, Thu., May 5, 11:30 a.m., Monument Town Hall. Normally meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thu. each month. Info: Kay Reuteler, 488-3263.
  - **Palmer Divide Quiltmakers**, Thu., May 5, 7 p.m., Church of Woodmoor, Furrow Rd. Normally meets the 1st Thu. each month. Info: 488-0074.

To have your event listed in Our Community Calendar, please contact John Heiser at 488-9031, our [community\\_calendar@hotmail.com](mailto:community_calendar@hotmail.com) or P.O. Box 1742, Monument, Colorado 80132.

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# Fabulous Homes & Acreages


**IMMACULATE RANCHER ON ALMOST 1/2 ACRE IN THE TOWERING PINES OF PLEASANT VIEW ESTATES!** This wonderful home has 4 BDRMS, 2 BATHS, 2 car garage and sizable deck. It offers a lrg. kitchen w/ newer appliances, hardwood floors, spacious dining area & eating bar, a comfortable living room w/ wood burning stove and bay window, and the finished basement has a huge family room! \$279,900




**HEAVENLY HORSE PROPERTY WITH CONTEMPORARY COUNTRY CHARM ON ALMOST 20 ACRES IN BLACK FOREST WITH AWESOME PIKES PEAK VIEWS!** 6 BDRM, 4 BATH home w/ a 2 car garage built in year 2000 w/ over 4000 fin. sq ft. Spacious, bright home w/ 2 fireplaces, great kitchen w/ lrg. eating nook, deck, covered front porch & fin. walk-out Bsmt. Fully fenced, cross fenced w/ new loafing shed! \$489,900




**AWESOME CUSTOM HOME WITH MAIN LEVEL MASTER SUITE AND MOUNTAIN VIEWS!** This beautiful home offers 3 BDRMS, 2.5 baths, large loft office and an oversized 3 car garage. Some of the extras include a spacious kitchen w/ island, soaring ceilings and a wall of windows, ceramic tile, upgraded lighting, romantic master suite with fireplace, walk-in closet, adjoining bath w/ Jacuzzi tub and separate shower, 2 gas fireplaces, Pella windows, 2 large decks, lush landscaping and so much more!!! Located in quiet Gleneagle neighborhood. \$399,900




**MAGNIFICENT VIEWS, FABULOUS LOCATION AND GORGEOUS CUSTOM RANCH STYLE HOME!** Quietly tucked on almost 3/4 of an acre lot with pines and scrub oak, unobstructed city and mountain views on a quiet cul-de-sac street in Mountain Shadows. This home offers 5 BDRMS, office, 4.5 BATHS, and an oversized 3-car garage. Some of the many extras include wood floors, spacious island kitchen, 2 gas fireplaces, large master BDRM with luxurious master bath, huge Trex deck, fin. walk-out Bsmt, central air cond, tile floors, Pella windows throughout, an open floor plan with lots of style, stucco exterior with tile roof & lush landscaping. A SUPERIOR VALUE! \$523,500



**GORGEOUS CUSTOM RANCH STYLE HOME PRIVATELY TUCKED IN THE TOWERING PINES ON 5 ACRES!** This nearly new contemporary home offers 4 BDRMS, 3.5 BATHS, office & an oversized, heated 3 car garage with a work area. This fabulous home has many upgrades and extras! Slab granite counter tops, hickory floors, custom hickory cabinets, 10 ft ceilings, 8' hickory doors, 2 wet bars, lrg. 800 sq ft. covered deck with outside food prep area & sink, media room, fin. walk-out basement, 2 gas fireplaces, top of the line appliances and more! Attractive stucco and stone exterior, beautifully landscaped w/ soft accent lighting and fully paved driveway. Located at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac with a view of Pikes Peak framed by the trees. Great Black Forest area near the Park! \$679,900



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