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



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Issue #106 — Volume 9 Number 12 — Saturday, December 5, 2009

Free

Community summit on D-38 funding, Dec. 8, 10

The state estimates Lewis-Palmer School District 38 will receive a substantial reduction in funding. Suggestions already submitted include closing schools, changing to a four-day school week, and cutting transportation. This is the time for the public to get involved to share opinions on these alternatives. Two public forums to gather input on these issues are set for Dec. 8, 6:30-9 p.m., at the D-38 administration building, 146 Jefferson St., and Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m., at Creekside Middle School, 1330 Creekside Dr. Comments may be sent by e-mail to info@lewispalmer.org. Additionally, a community survey form will be posted on the district Web site, lewispalmer.org. For more information, call 488-4700.

D38 articles appear on page 22-23.

Other upcoming special events

Small Town Christmas, Dec. 5
North Pole Craft Show, Dec. 5-6
Yule Log Events, Dec. 8, 13
TLCA Events, Dec. 10-13, 15, 19
PLHS Pow Wow, Dec. 12
Festival of Lights, Dec. 12
Handbell Concert, Dec. 12
DWFPD Santa Patrol, Dec. 15
Holiday Concert, Dec. 18-19

For details of these and other events, see pages 35-39.



Above (L to R): Palmer Ridge High School Serteens Meghan Wagner, Claire Wilson, Delia Tharnish, and Hannah Wilson enthusiastically helped kick off Monument Hill Sertoma's annual Red Kettle collection campaign for the Salvation Army at the Monument

Safeway on Highway 105. Red Kettles are also available for contributions at the Baptist Road King Soopers and the Monument Marketplace Walmart on Jackson Creek Parkway. Sertoma's volunteer bell ringers appreciate all donations and the opportunity to

serve our community provided by these Safeway, King Soopers, and Walmart stores to make Christmas a little brighter for those in need. *Photo by Mike Wicklund, Sertoma project coordinator.*

Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority, Nov. 18

Tentative \$1 million per year water lease agreement announced

By John Heiser

On Nov. 18, at the monthly meeting of the Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District (Lower Ark), John Schweizer, a Rocky Ford farmer and president of the Super Ditch Co., announced that a tentative agreement had been reached for the members of the Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority (PPRWA) to lease 2,000 acre-feet per year from Super Ditch starting in 2011 at a cost of \$500 per acre-foot per year. An acre-foot is 326,851 gallons.

Details yet to be defined include which farmers will participate in the deal, how the dried-up lands will be accounted for, and how water will be moved to the districts that are purchasing it.

The members of Super Ditch are the Bessemer Ditch, Highline Canal Co., Oxford Ditch, Catlin Canal, Otero Ditch, Holbrook Canal, and Fort Lyon Canal.

Formation of the Super Ditch Co. in 2007 was supported by the Lower Ark as a way for agricultural water rights owners

to temporarily fallow lands on a rotating basis and lease the associated water rights to other users. This is an alternative to the traditional "buy and dry" method under which municipalities and others purchase agricultural land in order to obtain the associated water rights. Under the Super Ditch Co., farmers would continue to own the water rights, which would generate a continuing income from leases, and the lands would only be temporarily dried up.

(Continued on page 2)

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Third street paving completed, Nov. 7

On Nov. 7, Monument's Town Inspector Greg Maggard observed the final lift of asphalt being installed on Third Street by the Santa Fe Trail crossing. Director of Development Services Tom Kassawara and general contractor Pioneer Sand Company, Inc. have worked together to coordinate solutions to numerous difficulties and surprises discovered during excavation to relocate numerous buried utilities in order to make room to bury a new 36-inch to 48-inch diameter stormwater drainage system. Pioneer also installed curb, gutter, and sidewalk for the widened roadway between Beacon Lite Road and Front Street. Final striping began Dec. 1. The project was completed well ahead of schedule and under budget, with sufficient savings in town funding



to provide all the money needed for installing landscaping along the new roadway in the spring. The town received a \$120,000 Community

Development Block Grant from the state's Department of Local Affairs to help pay for the project. *Photo by Mike Wicklund.*



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PPRWA (cont. from page 1)

The members of the PPRWA are the Cherokee Metropolitan District, the City of Fountain, the Donala Water and Sanitation District, the Town of Monument, the Town of Palmer Lake, and the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District.

Gary Barber, manager of the PPRWA, said, "We are in agreement in concept for price and quantity, starting in 2011, with contingencies, such as whether Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) will convey the water and at what cost." He added, "The contingencies are huge.... If we ever do get a deal, it will then be subject to approval by the member entities of the PPRWA."

PPRWA members are pursuing a connection with the CSU infrastructure as a way to transport water to the Tri-Lakes area. The Southern Delivery System (SDS) pipeline being built by a consortium led by Colorado Springs would be an important element in that infrastructure. The SDS pipeline is scheduled to begin operation in seven or eight years.

At its Nov. 18 meeting, the Lower Ark board unanimously voted to direct Peter Nichols, their water attorney, to file a case in water court to change the use of Super Ditch water from agricultural to municipal.

Nichols noted that the amount of water leased to the PPRWA could increase up to 8,000 acre-feet per year over the next 20 years.

PPRWA meeting strikes a more subdued tone regarding deal

At the Nov. 18 regular monthly meeting of the Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority (PPRWA), reporting on a Nov. 17 meeting with the Super Ditch Co. board, Rick Fendel, the PPRWA's attorney said, "We're working slowly through the issues of a contract for the lease of water. We are making some progress."

Barber added, "The most significant thing that happened at the meeting yesterday was that they all showed up ... and we had a pretty substantive conversation."

Dana Duthie, manager of the Donala district, asked, "What will they need to start their process, a signed contract?"

Fendel replied, "No. It doesn't have to go that far. They do have to have a signed contract before it can go to water court."

Duthie added, "So when we're satisfied with their engineering report and the fact that the water is there and we sign a contract, then they're off and running. The contract would be contingent on them changing their bylaws."

Some of the Super Ditch Co. members are governed by bylaws that preclude water from being exported outside the Arkansas Valley.

Barber projected the water court case could be filed in December 2010.


Duthie said, "What gets me about this whole thing—we're doing everybody's work for them. Even Colorado Springs' work. We're signing up for water, even if we don't need it, to get this thing moving. We're going to be doing a lot of work that will benefit those who join in later. We need to recoup those costs. This whole deal with Super Ditch is being presented as if it is dependent on us."

Monument Public Works Director Rich Landreth added, "It's a matter of timing. They want money now. Colorado Springs Utilities won't need the water for years. (Super Ditch) is looking to us to get some money today, tomorrow."

Barber said an additional meeting with the Super Ditch representatives is tentatively planned for some time between Thanksgiving and Christmas. A joint meeting is also being planned with CSU, Super Ditch, and PPRWA representatives to discuss how to move Super Ditch water to PPRWA members.

2010 budget approved

Duthie, who serves as PPRWA treasurer, distributed copies of a budget based on a continuation of the current dues structure under which districts serving or with the potential to serve 1,200 or more single-family equivalents (SFE) would pay \$15,000 per year, and districts with



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fewer than 1,200 SFE actual or potential customers would pay \$5,000 per year. Barber and Dick Brown, the PPRWA's legislative liaison, would be retained at their current rates. At the end of 2010, the proposed budget would completely deplete the PPRWA's remaining funds.

In response to a question from Larry Bishop, manager of the Woodmen Hills Metropolitan District, Duthie said that the dues for new members would be determined during the executive session following the public session. Duthie said that the dues would need to reflect the investment the current members have made so far.

Duthie later reported that following the executive session, the PPRWA decided that Woodmen Hills would be required to pay a first-year surcharge of half of one-seventh of the legal expenses for the year, since most of those legal expenses were related to the Super Ditch negotiations that could potentially benefit Woodmen Hills. The surcharge would be \$3,668. Woodmen Hills PPRWA dues for 2010 would then be \$18,668. If approved by the Woodmen Hills board, the authority will formally vote at its Dec. 16 meeting on accepting Woodmen Hills as a member.

Duthie said that there are some concerns that the \$45,000 budgeted for legal expenses may be inadequate to cover the negotiations with Super Ditch and with CSU. He noted that there is an additional \$5,000 budgeted for contingencies and \$2,000 budgeted for dues,

permits, and office supplies. No expenses were recorded in those categories during 2009. He also suggested that, at some point, the northern conservation plan, budgeted at \$30,000, and the Super Ditch negotiations could be treated as projects with the expenses funded proportionately by the participants.

Landreth said, "We have a crossroads coming up in the next three or four months with a decision by CSU."

He was referring to a review by the CSU Utility Policy Advisory Committee's (UPAC) of CSU's policies regarding providing water service to entities outside the city. Since the 1990s, those policies have greatly restricted CSU's participation in regional projects. The UPAC is

holding a series of meetings with the goal of providing recommendations to the CSU Utilities Board (UB) in January or February regarding possible changes to those policies. The UPAC's recommendations could open the way for regional partners' use of the planned Southern Delivery System (SDS) pipeline and other CSU facilities.

Duthie said that even if CSU revises its policies, rather than the PPRWA having an agreement with CSU, since their needs vary, the individual PPRWA members will probably have separate agreements with CSU. The Cherokee and Donala districts have announced that they are currently in negotiations with CSU regarding access to renewable water. Kip Peterson,

manager of the Cherokee district and president of the PPRWA, and Duthie have said they anticipate that their agreements with CSU will probably not be finalized until after UPAC makes its recommendations to the UB.

Resolutions approving the budget and appropriating the funds were unanimously approved.

Arkansas Basin Roundtable presentation
Barber gave a presentation on the projects and methods report adopted Nov. 11 by the Arkansas Basin Roundtable he chairs.

Sharing water, municipal conservation, and tamarisk tree removal were listed as the best ways to improve water supply. Also highly ranked were rota-



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tional fallowing programs, such as the program planned by Super Ditch, and various water projects including the Arkansas Valley Conduit, a \$300 million project to

improve drinking water supplies for 42 Arkansas Valley communities east of Pueblo.

The roundtable has about 45 active members and numerous interested parties. A major purpose of the roundtable is to address an anticipated Arkansas Basin shortfall of 31,700 to 31,900 acre-feet.

At the completion of the public portion of the meeting, the group went into executive session to discuss negotiations and receive legal advice.

The next regular monthly meeting of the PPRWA will be held Dec. 16 at 8:30 a.m. at the Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Rd. (at Hwy 105). The meetings are normally held on the third Wednesday of each month.

The PPRWA Web site is www.pprwa.com.

There is information on UPAC at www.csu.org/residential/about/upac/item1047.html, on the UB at www.csu.org/residential/about/utilities-board/item1048.html, on SDS at www.sdswater.org.



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Donala phone survey finds strong support for connection to CSU

By John Heiser

In responding to a November phone survey, voters in the Donala Water and Sanitation District expressed strong support for the proposed connection of the Donala district to Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) to obtain water. The voters' support was based on concerns about the future water supply and the depleting groundwater aquifers.

The telephone survey conducted by Floyd Ciruli Associates included responses from 324 registered voters who receive water service from Donala. Ciruli said the results have a statistical range of accuracy of plus or minus 5.4 percentage points.

The water pipeline project to connect Donala Water to CSU was supported by 59 percent of the respondents and opposed by 27 percent. The survey question noted that the project could lead to a long-term relationship to move water Donala owns on the Arkansas River or to purchase water from CSU.



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Support for bond initiative

A majority of voters expressed support for a \$20 million bond initiative for access to renewable water with or without a property tax increase. Fifty-nine percent said they would support the ballot measure without a tax increase, with 25 percent opposed. If a property tax guarantee of up to 5 mills were added to the ballot measure, support dropped to 51 percent, with 44 percent opposed. The survey question stated that a 5-mill increase would add \$10 per month to the property taxes for a \$300,000 house.

Concern about shortage, drought, and the aquifers

When asked why they support the project, 31 percent of respondents said the area needs the water, 29 percent said the project is a good idea, 11 percent said the water supply must be managed, and 9 percent cited water shortage and drought.

Although 60 percent of respondents said they believe the drought is over, 88 percent agreed that there will be another drought and it is "important to find additional supply." By nearly two-to-one (60 percent to 33 percent), the respondents said they believe there will be a short-

age of water in the next 10 years. Forty-five percent said protecting the groundwater and extending the life of the aquifers is a top priority. Forty-eight percent said it is an important priority. Four percent said it is not a priority.

Connection seen to real estate values

Ninety-six percent of the respondents said a dependable water supply is important to protect long-term real estate values.

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Cooperation on water supply
Seventy-six percent of the respondents said the Southern Delivery System being developed by CSU is a good project and will help add to the water supply for El Paso



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County residents. Ninety-one percent strongly endorsed the water providers in northern El Paso County working together to bring renewable water to the area.

Financing renewable water
The survey noted that the Donala district is raising its rates 10 percent to finance projects to replace water from the depleting groundwater aquifers. Sixty-three percent of respondents expressed support for increasing water rates to pay for renewable water. When offered a choice, 69 percent of those surveyed selected "to pay something extra to have a reliable source of water in a drought or as the aquifer declines" whereas 25 percent selected "Water from CSU is too expensive and not worth it."

Summary
Voters within the Donala Water and Sanitation District are aware of the vulnerable water supply and are supportive of acquiring renewable water and connecting to CSU. There is support for financing the CSU connection infrastructure and water. Most voters realize the cost of water is increasing, but there is resistance to additional property taxes.




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Woodmoor Water and Sanitation Board, Nov. 12

Board holds preliminary discussion of 2010 budget

By Harriet Halbig

The Board of Directors of the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District discussed a draft of its 2010 budget at its meeting Nov. 12. Public notice of the meeting had been published, but no members of the public appeared at the meeting to comment.

Manager Jessie Shaffer said that about \$75,000 in construction funds may roll over into the coming year to cover completion of the White Fawn/Deer Creek sewer project. Funds were added to the budget to cover the cost of a possible election in the spring, salary increases for employees of the district (excess funds resulting from a reorganization made this possible), an increase in water rates of 12.5 percent for residential accounts, and deposits to the emergency and reserve funds.

Regarding income, Shaffer said that the generous rainfall during the 2009 irrigation season and the lack of building activity limited the district's income for 2009. With an improving economy, he hoped that construction would pick up in 2010, resulting in increased tap fees for the district.

The budget will be approved at the board's December meeting.

In his report on the Joint Use Committee (JUC) meeting, Director Jim Whitelaw reported that the group's 2010 budget is now available. He said the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility's discharge monitoring report indicates

that all readings are within acceptable limits with the exception of copper in the Monument area.

Whitelaw reported that changes to the organizational document for the group had been agreed upon and stressed that the changes benefit Woodmoor because expenses that had previously been charged on the basis of water use (resulting in Woodmoor paying up to 50 percent) will now be charged equally among the three entities. The JUC board voted to approve the three amendments and the 2010 budget for the wastewater treatment plant.

In his manager's report, Shaffer said



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that Utilities Policy Advisory Committee (UPAC) of Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) continues to consider regionalizing water services but that the decision has now been delayed to January at the earliest. He referred to a letter to UPAC from Kip Peterson, president of the El



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Paso County Water Authority and the Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority (PPRWA).

In the letter, Peterson suggested that provision of water to those outside city limits should no longer be contingent on annexation, but should be based on individual service agreements, should not be tied to electrical service, and should involve fees based on cost of service rather than on a multiplier levied on top of city costs.

Peterson expressed his gratitude to CSU for considering regionalization, acknowledging that the availability of water to residents of the Springs should remain its primary concern but requesting that policies and limitations that govern CSU's ability to negotiate service

agreements be lifted to allow the entire area to continue to evolve.

Shaffer recommended that Woodmoor continue to use the Transit Loss Model that uses gauges to determine water loss due to evaporation and other means for 2010 only until a decision is made to equalize the costs for all northern entities in the model. Forest Lakes Metropolitan District and the Town of Palmer Lake do not use the gauges, resulting in increased costs for Woodmoor and other northern entities. He said the district would be charged a fee to re-enter the system if it temporarily withdrew.

Shaffer said the state may repeal the ban on taxing bottled water and soft drink sales and that research is being done on whether the district may benefit from this

revenue, perhaps to use toward renewable water projects.

In his operations report, Assistant District Manager Randy Gillette reported main breaks on Doewood Drive and Scrub Oak Circle during the previous month, with those on Scrub Oak Circle occurring during a blizzard. He said that the lake is being refilled. He said that snowstorms do not significantly help the level of the reservoir.

The White Fawn/ Deer Creek sewer project continues to proceed slowly. District representatives have repeatedly met with the contractor. The area near the intersection of Woodmoor Drive and White Fawn Drive is particularly complicated, because it involves several layers of fiber optic, power and phone lines in addition to water pipes. Gillette said that the contractor is liable to delay charges now and in the future. He said that the contractor hopes to repave before the end of the calendar year but that funds will be carried over to 2010 if necessary.

The board convened executive session at 2:30 p.m. to discuss water and storage rights, well 22 site acquisition and personnel and legal issues.

The Woodmoor Water and Sanitation Board usually meets at 1 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month at the conference room at 1855 Woodmoor Drive. The next meeting will be on Dec. 10 at 1:30 p.m.

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Report to the Community • December 2009

Dear Lewis-Palmer Patrons:

Lewis-Palmer School District is in the midst of a very difficult process to set the budget for the 2010-11 school year and beyond. In conjunction with this process, a series of public meetings and opportunities for community participation have begun and will continue throughout the month of December.

Over the last two years, the district has experienced a cut in revenue (e.g., specific ownership taxes and declining enrollment) and increased expenditures (e.g., operation of a second high school and increased utility costs) for a combined total of nearly \$5 million. (During this time, there was no increase in salary costs, as all staff salaries were frozen for the 2009-10 school year.)

The economic forecast at the national, state, and local levels provides little hope that Lewis-Palmer School District 38 will receive increased revenue. Already, the Colorado Department of Education has announced that its K-12 budget for Colorado schools will be cut approximately \$350 million for the 2010-11 school year. For our District, this cut equates to a \$1.7 million drop in revenue from the state. To further complicate the problem, our enrollment projections for the 2010-11 school year are expected to drop by approximately 140 students. This loss in revenue is equal to roughly \$900,000. The end result is a net loss of \$2.6 million in revenue, and this does not take into account increased expenditure items such as utility costs, insurance, and PERA contributions. The costs for these additional items are expected to increase by \$400,000, and this results in a grand total of \$3 million in budget reductions.

Throughout this month, meetings will continue to take place (see *Community Summit on School Funding* below) to gather public input regarding the budget situation and the identified priorities for our schools, and your input is important as we continue this process.

As always, thank you for continuing to partner with me, our leadership team, our teachers and support staff, as we plan for the future and support our students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Raymond Blanch, Superintendent of Schools

Community Summit on School Funding

The public is encouraged to attend one of our upcoming public forums on the D-38 school budget. Through these meetings, we hope to gather community opinion about priorities in preK-12 education and suggestions about how to cut spending or increase revenue.

These meetings are set for Tuesday, December 8th from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the D-38 administration building and Thursday, December 10th at 6:30 p.m. at Creekside Middle School.

Community comments about the budget may be made in writing by sending email to info@lewispalmer.org. A community survey form will also be posted on the District web site.

Open Enrollment Coming in January

D-38 is planning to open its Choice Enrollment window in January. Choice Enrollment is the process by which in-district and non-resident families may enroll their students in a school other than their assigned neighborhood school. At this time, all D-38 schools have room for choice-enrolled students from inside or outside the District.

Specific information, forms, and deadlines are posted on our web site under the tab for "parents and students". Some dates and restrictions may change based on upcoming budget decisions, and those details will be posted as they arise.



Parents, Thanks for Your Support!

In this time of difficult financial challenges, our thanks goes out to the many supportive parents who are helping raise funds for important efforts that our schools could not otherwise afford. At the elementary level, our PTO (parent-teacher organization) parents have raised money to support many valuable additions, including:

- new technology for classrooms (Star Boards, document cameras, and more)
- musical instruments
- scholarships to help students in need
- reading books and library materials
- school events that build community, morale, and spirit
- mini-grants to teachers for classroom projects
- teacher appreciation efforts
- funding to offset costs of special activities

Without the help of our PTOs, these items would not be available, given our current budget situation. Kudos are in order for the time, effort, and commitment these volunteers bring to our schools.

Join Us for Some Holiday Music

D-38 students at all grade levels have been rehearsing for upcoming holiday performances. The public is welcome to attend these concerts, and admission is free. Several of our performing groups have achieved state and national recognition. Please visit each individual school's web site for a list of planned performances.

A few highlights of the season are the band and choir performances at both high schools.

Monday, December 7th

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Tuesday, December 8th

Holiday Choir Concert
Lewis-Palmer High School: 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 8th

Holiday Choir Concert
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Thursday, December 10th

Band Concert
Lewis-Palmer High School: 7:00 p.m.

Visit Lewis-Palmer School District #38 on the web at www.lewispalmer.org to find out more!

Monument Sanitation District board, Nov. 19

2010 budget options proposed

By Jim Kendrick

On Nov. 19, Monument Sanitation District Manager Mike Wicklund reported that the Joint Use Committee had approved a clarification of how cost-sharing rules should apply to capital and ownership costs for the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility. Wicklund provided the board three options to raise fees \$1 to \$3 per month in 2010 to cover the district's increasing share of costs that will result from this clarification.

All members of the board were present at the meeting.

A proposed change to the Joint Use Agreement, which governs facility operations and cost-sharing methods, would change "certain administrative and/or managerial expenses which are incurred in the joint operation" of the facility and are "not directly proportional" to plant flow, waste loading, or treatment processes to a category called "pre-determined expenses" that will be equally shared.

This proposed amendment to the agreement would increase the number of cost categories that are equally shared by the three co-owner districts: Monument Sanitation District, Palmer Lake Sanitation District, and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District. There would be no change in the formula or costs for sludge removal.

Currently, operational costs are split among these three special districts each month using a formula based on the measured volumes of wastewater they each deliver to the plant and the relative measured strength or concentration of wastes that have to be treated in each district's

wastewater. Woodmoor's operational costs are roughly three times higher than those of Monument or Palmer Lake, because Woodmoor is a much larger district with much higher wastewater flows.

The proposed amendment calls for changing the cost category for items like building and vehicle insurance and maintenance from "operations" to "ownership" or "capital" and would significantly change the amounts the districts have traditionally paid for these items. Some infrequent costs such as those for recoating submerged clarifier structures every 10 years to prevent corrosion would be reclassified as a capital cost because recoating extends the life of the clarifier rather than being a simple maintenance cost like replacing a seal in a pump.

Capital costs are shared equally by the three districts, while maintenance costs are divided using the flow and treatment formula. Current plans call for the amendment to be enacted on Dec. 8 and take effect at the start of 2010. This policy change would significantly reduce the proportion of operating costs and increase the proportion of ownership and capital costs for each district.

Woodmoor would receive a lower monthly bill in 2010 for each type of Tri-Lakes expense that is changed from the operations category to the ownership or capital category. Woodmoor is charged about 60 percent of operations costs and 33 percent of ownership and capital costs. Each change in cost category will save Woodmoor money—about 27 percent on each of these expenditures.

On the other hand, each expense category that is changed in the amendment would increase the share paid by Monument and Palmer Lake by 13 percent, from about 20 percent to 33 percent.

For example, if the Tri-Lakes facility purchased a \$20,000 replacement truck, which is categorized as an operational expense under the current Joint Use Agreement rules, Woodmoor would pay about \$12,000 (60 percent) and Monument and Palmer Lake would pay about \$4,000 each (20 percent each.) However, use of the truck has nothing to do with treating the varying amounts of wastewater each district delivers to the plant or the varying concentrations of wastes that need to be treated. If the amendment is approved, the \$20,000 cost of the truck would become an ownership expense, which would be shared equally and each district would pay \$6,667.

The Joint Use Committee, based on the consensus of each of the three owner boards, had eliminated these items from the facility's draft 2010 budget at the Nov. 10 meeting:

- \$22,000 for a study on the feasibility of installing a windmill supplemental electric generator
- \$15,000 for a study on how to connect a rented portable generator in the event of an electrical power loss

Monument's direct cost for Tri-Lakes facility operations in the final draft of the 2010 facility budget will be \$160,334.

Fee increase needed

Wicklund advised the board that the district's current monthly fee structure would no longer produce enough money in 2010 to cover increases in the Tri-Lakes facility costs charged to Monument if the cost-sharing amendment noted above is approved. He presented budgets based on the current \$22 monthly fee, which results in a

deficit of over \$11,000, and options with the monthly fee raised to \$23, \$24, or \$25.

As the board had concluded at the Oct. 15 meeting, there was still consensus to raise the monthly fee to \$25, to go in effect on April 1, 2010. The district's monthly fee would still be the lowest in the Tri-Lakes region. For example, Palmer Lake's monthly fee is \$28.

Copper levels stay low

The measured copper level in the wastewater plant's treated discharge water was unusually low, 6.7 parts per billion (ppb) in October. The copper level was undetectable in September, less than 5 ppb.

Wicklund noted that the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department had begun enforcing the Monument ordinance and district resolution prohibiting the use of copper water pipes in new construction beginning on Nov. 1, 2009. The peak copper level measured in the wastewater from south Monument, an area which consists entirely of recently constructed single-family homes, jumped from 116 ppb in September to 167 ppb in October.

This remains a critical issue, since copper levels in the facility's treated wastewater have typically risen as high as 15 ppb in the past few years, though copper remains undetectable in Monument Creek just downstream where it crosses Baptist Road.

A maximum average of 8 ppb has been proposed by the state Health Department for the new facility discharge permit that was supposed to be issued at the end of this year. However, the department's Water Quality Control Division is running about two years behind on issuing permits, so no final limit has been determined.

The capital cost of adding tertiary treatment equipment to the \$6 million Tri-Lakes facility to meet this 8 ppb limit has been estimated to be about \$30 million, or \$10 million for each district. The additional annual operating cost for this new equipment has been estimated to be \$500,000 to \$1 million per year. The wastewater treatment facility's total final draft budget for 2010 is \$694,524: Monument would pay \$154,061, Palmer Lake \$144,642, and Woodmoor \$395,821. Annual operating costs for Monument and Palmer Lake would rise about \$100,000 to \$200,000 and \$300,000 to \$600,000 for Woodmoor if the new equipment were installed.

The board unanimously approved the facility budget for 2010 as proposed. The Joint Use Committee will hold a public hearing for approval of this budget at the regular meeting at 10 a.m. on Dec. 8 at the facility. The three boards will hold their annual facility meeting at 11 a.m.

Wakonda Hills update

Wicklund noted that Brannon Construction, the general contractor for the Wakonda Hills project, has nearly completed installation of new collection lines and manholes in the vacant Zonta parcel to the south of Wakonda Hills. Work was to begin in the residential area of Wakonda Hills by the end of November and continue until winter shuts down the possibility of paving operations for the season.

Engineering design is nearing completion for the two lift stations that are not part of the stimulus grant project. When the designs are completed, the district will initiate the several steps required for a thorough review and approval by the state Health Department. The Wakonda Hills project is still on track to be concluded in 2010.

There was an executive session at the end of the meeting for contract negotiations. No votes were taken after the session. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

The next meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Dec. 17 in the district office, 130 Second St. Meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of the month. Information: 481-4886.

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Monument Board of Trustees, Nov. 2

Officer joins Monument Police Department



Above: Marcy Hudson pins on her husband John's new Monument Police Department Badge in Town Hall on Nov. 2 after he was sworn in by Town Clerk Scott Meszaros. Hudson has served 13 years with the Arcadia Police Department in California and the previous year with the Denver Police Department. *Photo by Jim Kendrick.*

By Jim Kendrick Monument's newest police officer John Hudson was sworn in as at the start of the Nov. 2 Board

of Trustees meeting. Chief Jacob Shirk noted that Hudson served 13 years with the Arcadia Police Department in California and the previous year with the Denver Police Department. Town Clerk Scott Meszaros administered the oath of office to Officer Hudson, and his wife, Marcy, pinned on his new badge.

The board also unanimously approved an amendment to the town zoning code that creates "use by special review" regulations for medical marijuana dispensaries and added a few new restrictions to those previously approved by the Planning Commission in October.

Trustee Stan Gingrich was absent from the meeting.

Medical marijuana dispensary ordinance approved

Tom Kassawara, director of Development Services, gave a brief summary of previous board discussions on medical marijuana dispensaries. He noted that the issue came up when the town staff received a preliminary inquiry in August from an individual regarding opening a medical marijuana dispensary in Monument. The staff told him to provide a letter discussing his operation and what he wanted to do. He had not yet submitted this letter.

In 2000, Colorado voters passed Amendment 20 to the state constitution, which approved the use and dispensing of medical marijuana. This approval is in contradiction to federal law, which prohibits this. Kassawara also noted that the federal government since then has agreed to let the states legitimize and regulate medical marijuana.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environ-

ment has rule-making authority to regulate the use of medical marijuana, including the creation of dispensaries. Dispensaries are only to provide medical marijuana for pain to patients with a prescription from a licensed doctor. To date, the state government has not created any laws for the regulation of medical marijuana.

In recent months, the federal government has indicated that it will no longer enforce federal laws prohibiting marijuana when it is being used for medical purposes.

The town code does not contain any provisions to regulate dispensaries. Without new regulations, the town cannot control where dispensaries could be located within its boundaries.

This amendment regulates only the location and operation of dispensaries. It does not address in any way the growth of marijuana within the town or how the dispensaries would obtain marijuana for sale.

On Sept. 8, the Board of Trustees directed Town Attorney Gary Shupp and the staff to draft an amendment to the zoning code to regulate dispensaries. The proposal requires that dispensaries fall under the "Use by Special Review" portion of the zoning code and some specific regulations regarding dispensaries, to include review and approval by the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees. The proposed draft amendment was based on a similar ordinance in Alamosa.

Kassawara stated that three options were considered by Shupp and the staff before the Board of Trustees asked them to draft the proposed amendment for review by the Planning Commission. The options were: do nothing, prohibit the use and

distribution of medical marijuana, or restrict the location of dispensaries to certain zones.

Kassawara said that doing nothing does not resolve the ambiguity of the town's lack of regulations to restrict, prohibit or allow medical marijuana dispensaries.

Prohibiting medical marijuana and dispensaries would most likely lead to a lawsuit against the town sooner or later. Aurora has chosen to ban medical marijuana and dispensaries, because its home rule charter requires strict compliance to federal law.

Kassawara noted that the other Colorado towns that have taken action on the issue have chosen to restrict.

Kassawara gave an in-depth review of the ordinance. Some of the provisions he noted in the proposed amendment that was approved by the Planning Commission are listed below.

Locations: No medical marijuana dispensary can be located within 1,000 feet of the following:

- The exterior boundary of any residential zone district.
- The exterior boundary of any existing or occupied mobile home.
- The exterior boundary of any lot on which is located a single-family or multifamily residence, whether located within or outside of the town.
- Any church or religious institution.
- Any educational institution or school, either public or private.
- Any licensed child care facility.
- Any public community center, park, fairground,

(Continued on page 14)



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library, or recreation center, or any publicly owned or maintained building open for use to the general public.

- Any other existing medical marijuana business, whether such business is located within or outside of the town.
- Any halfway house or correctional facility.

Ads: Advertisements, signs, displays, or other promotional material depicting medical marijuana uses shall not be shown or exhibited off the premises or in any manner visible to the public, from roadways, pedestrian sidewalks or walkways, or from other public areas.

Indoor use: All business related to, or consumption of, medical marijuana shall be conducted indoors. All building openings, entries, and windows shall be located, covered, or screened in such a manner as to prevent a view into the interior. For new construction, the building shall be constructed so as to prevent any possibility of viewing the interior from the exterior of the structure.

Security: Medical marijuana dispensaries shall provide adequate security on the premises. At a minimum, such security shall include:

- Security surveillance cameras installed to monitor the main entrance and the exterior of the premises to discourage criminal acts as well as nuisance activities as well as to facilitate the reporting of them.
- Security video shall be preserved for at least 72 hours.
- Robbery and burglar alarm systems that are professionally monitored and maintained in good working order.

Kassawara also noted that the staff had received a copy of Frisco's medical marijuana ordinance and had added some additional restrictions to a proposed amendment from Frisco's ordinance:

Security: All dispensaries must be equipped with a secure safe.

Background check: A criminal background check will be conducted and no approval will be granted to any applicant with an ownership interest of 10 percent or more who has a felony conviction.

New limitations:

- The business may only be open for the sale of medical marijuana from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

- No on-site consumption will be allowed.
- No on-site cultivation will be allowed.
- A business license will be required.

There was no public comment on the proposed ordinance.

There was a technical discussion among the trustees, Shupp, and Kassawara on the numerous ambiguities surrounding how federal law and future state laws might apply to dispensaries and several other marijuana issues not germane to the proposed amendment.

The following additional changes to the ordinance were requested by the trustees:

- Delete the 10 percent limit so that everyone with an ownership interest must have a background check.
- The word "trail" will be added to the list of public locations that must be at least 1,000 feet away from a potential medical marijuana dispensary site.
- A sales tax license will be required as well as a business license.
- The sale or consumption of alcohol on the premises of a medical marijuana dispensary is prohibited.
- Any change of dispensary ownership interests must be recorded with the town within 30 days.
- No drug paraphernalia may be sold in a medical marijuana dispensary.
- No mobile structure can be used for a medical marijuana dispensary.

The board unanimously approved the proposed amendments to the town code's zoning ordinance, definitions, and use by special review regulations with all the proposed changes noted above.

Third Street public hearing

The board held a public hearing on the use of the \$125,000 Community Block Development Grant from the state's Department of Local Affairs for storm sewer, paving, sidewalk, curb, and gutter upgrades to Third Street between Front Street and Beacon Lite Road. Kassawara reported that all work except landscaping should be completed early—by the end of November. Some town funding will be left over that can be rolled over to 2010 for future landscaping.

There was no public comment on the Third Street project.

2010 budget discussion

An additional agenda item for next year's budget was requested by Trustee Gail Drumm. He asked Town Treasurer Pamela Smith for sales tax information on three commercial areas: Highway 105, downtown, and Jackson Creek. He also asked her for wage information on all town employees.

Smith said she could not legally provide any trustee with sales tax information for particular locations or individual merchants. She suggested that she could provide information for general types of businesses such as restaurants and grocery stores. She added that Drumm could come to her office to look at payroll reports.

The consensus of the other trustees was that Smith did not have time to collect, organize, and publish this data due to her workload in preparing the 2010 budget for the town and the Triview Metropolitan District.

Drumm then asked the board to hold a meeting where town employees would not be present. Town Attorney Shupp said any board meeting is open to any citizen, including any member of the town staff, though some individual personnel matters with a specifically announced purpose that conforms to state sunshine statutes can be discussed in executive session.

Note: A large number of town employees attended the board's budget workshop on Nov. 9 to observe the discussion on salaries and benefits for the 44 town employees. Attendance by staff other than department heads at town budget meetings is unprecedented.

Licenses approved

The board unanimously approved a Class II home occupation license for a downtown pet grooming business in Cheryl Rogers' garage on Fourth Street. Class II home occupations are those that may affect neighboring homes and must be approved by the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees. Class I home occupations have no such impact and can be administratively approved by the town staff.

Kassawara explained how Rogers' business conforms to the municipal zoning code. All of Rogers' neighbors had provided the required signatures, and there was no public comment during the open portion of the hearing. The board also approved the staff's recommended condition that no more than 12 pets can be groomed in any one day, to which Rogers has agreed. The Planning Commission had unanimously approved Rogers' grooming business with this condition on Oct. 14.

The board unanimously approved a temporary liquor permit for transfer of the former Casa Diego's liquor license to Katheric Inc., owner of the new Eric's Monument Grill restaurant. The temporary permit for continued operation at 1455 Cipriani Loop in the Tuscan Hills shopping center is good for up to 120 days. A formal transfer hearing for Katheric's new liquor license is scheduled

for Dec. 7. Owner Eric Harstad has had a Colorado liquor license for three years and an Alaskan liquor license for 19 years with no violations.

A similar 120-day temporary liquor permit for the transfer of the former Rotelli's liquor license to Borriello Brothers NY Pizza in the Monument Marketplace at 15910 Jackson Creek Parkway was also unanimously approved. Manager Michael Clemente described the instruction and certification program for alcohol servers.

Financial matters

The board unanimously approved a payment of \$39,248 to Henkle Drilling and Supply Co. for the final payment for re-drilling town well 7 between Beacon Lite Road and the Santa Fe Trail.

Smith reported that total sales tax revenues through the end of October were 9.2 percent or \$272,387 higher than for 2008. However, they were \$48,000 less than the amount budgeted for the first 10 months of 2009. Total general fund expenditures have been kept to \$48,000 less than the projected amount as well, offsetting this revenue shortfall and keeping the total budget neutral to date.

Smith also noted that water fund expenditures are 11.4 percent or about \$153,000 higher than budgeted due to the unexpected well 7 redrilling expense of about \$468,000.

Old Denver Highway truck weight limits

Kassawara reported that geotechnical consultant Geocal Inc. had proposed to perform core sample studies of the existing asphalt and subsurface road base on Old Denver Highway by the entrance to R-Rockyard and the Teachout Creek stormwater culvert. The \$5,000 Geocal contract will be managed by engineering consultant Jacobs Engineering Group. The final version of the contract will be reviewed at the Dec. 7 board meeting.

Trustees' comments

Trustee Tommie Plank reported that the Tri-Lakes Views art committee had prepared an ARTSites map to show the numerous sites where art is being displayed within the Tri-Lakes region, with many photos showing the types of art. She also noted that approximately 600 children visited downtown businesses to trick or treat for Halloween.

Mayor Travis Easton stated that he was meeting once a quarter with Lewis-Palmer School District Superintendent Ray Blanch to "leverage our resources." Plans are being made for a school safety program to provide children the opportunity to do homework in a supervised setting. Trustee Plank will be meeting with representatives of D-38 and NEPCO to coordinate their efforts to help students.

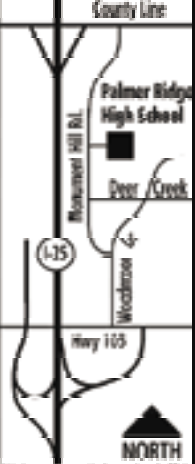
Easton also reported that the state would be adjusting the timing of the traffic lights now that construction on the I-25 Baptist Road interchange is completed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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Monument Board of Trustees, Nov. 16

FBI agents present award



Above (L to R): Monument Police Chief Jacob Shirk and Detective Larry Dyer of the FBI's Rocky Mountain Safe Streets Task Force watch as Monument Detective Steve Blaskowsky is presented an award from FBI Supervisory Special Agent Steve Smith at the Nov. 16 Board of Trustees meeting. Blaskowsky's award from FBI Director Robert Mueller recognized him for his critical investigative role the led to an inter-jurisdictional arrest of Jeff Gaylord, a serial bank robber in Littleton. *Photo by Jim Kendrick.*

By Jim Kendrick

At the Nov. 16 meeting of the Monument Board of Trustees, two FBI agents presented an award to Monument Police Detective Steve Blaskowsky for his pivotal role in the arrest of a formidable serial bank robber in Littleton. Also, Monument Chief Jacob Shirk announced that "Santa on Patrol" will be held on Dec. 19.

The board held a very lengthy technical discussion on the Third Street improvement project and future streetside landscaping options using some town funding. The money would come from construction contract savings that can be rolled over to 2010. The board deferred a final decision until January.

The board also scheduled public hearings for the town's 2010 budget appropriation on Dec. 8 and unanimously approved a resolution that certifies the town's 2010 property tax mill levy at 6.289 mills, unchanged from 2009 in accordance with TABOR and the Gallagher amendment.

All trustees were present for the meeting.

Justice is served, and acknowledged

Monument Police Chief Jacob Shirk opened the Blaskowsky award ceremony by introducing Supervisory Special Agent Steve Smith of the FBI and Detective Larry Dyer of the FBI's Safe Streets Task Force. They recounted the events of the large multi-jurisdictional effort that led to the arrest of a suspected bank robber who is a former All-American defensive tackle, NFL football player, and WWF professional wrestler, and the physical challenges of arresting him in Littleton.

Smith presented Blaskowsky an award from the U.S. Department of Justice and FBI Director Robert S. Mueller recognizing him for his dedication, skills, devotion to duty and contributions to this joint law enforcement operation in cooperation with the FBI.

Suspicious incident

Mayor Travis Easton asked Shirk to comment on a suspicious incident that occurred in Fox Run Park on Nov. 9 in which a 12-year-old girl was approached by a male who asked her if she was alone, if he could walk her home, and if she would walk over the hill to pet his dog, according to reports.

Shirk said he had no additional information on this incident, but that he and the El Paso County Sheriff's Office wanted to advise parents to teach children "the importance of staying in groups, reporting anyone who might approach them, trying to separate them from their group or asking them to leave with them. It is important they do not answer personal questions, such as their name and where they live" from people in person or on the Internet. "Please help us to disseminate this message to the public and help us to keep our community informed and safe."

Public comment

Chuck Roberts, director of the Tri-Lakes Senior Alliance, commented on an OCN article regarding the Sept. 10 Palmer Lake Town Council meeting. He said the article gave the impression that the alliance "doesn't recognize the many contributions made by the Town of Monument to the Tri-Lakes senior community. This is absolutely not true."

Roberts stated, "The alliance and the senior community sincerely appreciate Monument's many contributions, including use of the Town Hall for the Golden Circle meal program—making arrangements for these meals to continue after the town moved to the new Town Hall, donation of land for a senior retirement residence, cash donations to the Senior Alliance in 2008 and 2009, and much more. More recently, Monument is to be complimented for playing a key role in the community partnership with the Senior Alliance, the Town of Palmer Lake, Rosie's Diner, and many other local businesses to provide a free Thanksgiving dinner for Tri-Lakes Senior Citizens on this Thanksgiving Day. The Alliance is proud to have the Town of Monument as one of its partners in the Senior Citizenship Program and looks forward to a long and productive relationship."

Easton presented Roberts a check for \$1,000 from the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department for the Senior Alliance.

Developer Charlie Williams, representing the Housing and Building Association of Colorado Springs, inquired when the town's Web site would be operational again to help homeowners and contractors obtain a copy of the permit application to comply with the new requirement for a fence installation application and fee, as well as provide agendas for each of the town's meetings. Town Manager Cathy Green reviewed the history of the Web site and noted that a "hosting issue" was delaying start-up and that the site would be operational as soon as possible.

Other matters

- The board approved a mission, values,

and goals statement for the board that will be made into a plaque and posted in the board room.

- The town's employee handbook has undergone a major revision emphasizing definitions to clarify policies and procedures covering issues like overtime and holiday pay.
 - The board unanimously approved a 2010 board meeting schedule for the first and third Monday of each month, except for the meetings that will be held on the Tuesdays after the four federal holidays held on Mondays.
 - The board unanimously approved an annual liquor license renewal for Chili's Bar & Grill in Monument Marketplace.
 - Developer Tim Irish discussed some options he is considering to finance construction of the Arbor Mountain Senior Living Facility. Irish has never submitted corrections to the planned development site plan or paid for the water rights the town donated for the project, which the board required as conditions of approval for construction on the land also donated by the town.
- The board unanimously approved payments over \$5,000:
- \$103,419 to Triview Metropolitan District for its share of September sales tax and October motor vehicle tax
 - \$137,845 to Pioneer Sand Co. Inc. for Third Street construction
 - \$6,775 to CapMark Financial Services for a loan payment on the Debt Service Fund for the Capital Water Debt

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

The next meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 7 in Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. Meetings are normally held on the first and third Monday of the month. Information: 884-8017.

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Monument Planning Commission, Nov. 10

Monument Ridge plans approved

By Jim Kendrick

On Nov. 10, the Monument Planning Commission unanimously approved the preliminary planned development (PD) Amendment 2 and Replat No. 3 for Lot 10 of the Monument Ridge center on the southeast corner of Baptist and Struthers Roads. Amendment 2 is a major amendment because the proposed change in land use requires Board of Trustees approval.

These two hearings had been continued from the Oct. 14 Planning Commission meeting because the Monument Ridge developer, Swat 14 LLC of Colorado Springs, had not delivered the required notices to adjacent property owners on time, requiring a postponement of the two hearings.

All commissioners were present.

Monument Ridge PD site plan amendment

The Monument Ridge land owner, Swat 14 LLC of Colorado Springs, applied to have the allowed use on eight-acre Lot 10 changed from medium-density residential to commercial and a clarification that the allowed uses for Lots 6 and 7 include restaurant and commercial. Any proposal to drop the residential use for this parcel had been extremely controversial among town and county residents in the past.

Background

Wal-Mart proposal for this site opposed at county hearings: During a six-hour county Planning Commission hearing on May 11, 2004, and a 14-hour Board of

County Commissioners hearing on July 15, 2004, a proposal by the previous land owners Ken Barber, Uwe Schmidt, and Beverly Miller requested rezoning and preliminary plan approvals to develop this 30-acre parcel as a Wal-Mart site. These requests were defeated at both hearings primarily because of the parcel's county R4 planned development zoning and the associated master plan that was approved by the county in 1976.

Carl Schueler, then the manager of the county planning division, noted that "the plot plan showed medium-density multifamily uses that would not allow a commercial use of this type." Hundreds of citizens also expressed concerns about the proposed intense 24-hour activity at a regional supercenter despite the county's long-established mixed-use zoning for the parcel that restricted the site to smaller-scale community commercial uses. Another major factor was that Baptist Road and the adjacent I-25 interchange could not handle the traffic that would be created.

County homeowners from the adjacent Chaparral Hills subdivision to the south and east successfully argued in both of these hearings that the southeast part of this vacant property should be residential to buffer their rural five-acre residential lots from the community commercial stores that R-4 zoning anticipate would be built along the Baptist Road and Struthers Road frontages on the northwest side of the

parcel. (See www.ourcommunitynews.org/v4n6.htm#wm and www.ourcommunitynews.org/v4n8.htm#wm for details.)

Town annexation for Monument Ridge proposal not opposed: Subsequent proposals from developer AP Baptist Road LLC for town annexation of the Monument Ridge property, rezoning to planned development, and a sketch PD site plan were approved by the Monument Planning Commission on Sept. 28, 2005. There was no citizen opposition to the proposal during the public hearing.

Two different PD sketch plans showed 16.73 acres of commercial space with alternative arrangements of 10 separate buildings including a bank, hotels, restaurants, a drugstore, a small retail strip center, and a gas station on the northeast corner. No details were provided on either sketch plan as to the type of residential housing that might be built on the 9.48 acres next to Chaparral Hills. The annexation and rezoning to town PD were unanimously approved. The sketch plan was approved 3-1, with Commissioner Lowell Morgan opposed due to the inability of the two-lane Baptist Road and interchange to handle any additional traffic. (See www.ourcommunitynews.org/v5n11.htm#monpc for details.)

The Board of Trustees unanimously approved the Monument Ridge annexation and rezoning to planned development on Dec. 5, 2005. There was no citizen opposition to the proposal during the public

hearing.

During the board hearing, Town Manager Cathy Green expressed reservations about the private roads that would be built within the residential housing area. None of the roads in Monument Ridge would have been maintained or serviced by Triview Metropolitan District or the town's Public Works Department. The homeowners associations for the two other developments in Monument had previously petitioned the BOT to have Public Works take over their roads when they began to require maintenance. In each case, the BOT rejected these requests because the private roads are substandard in configuration (width and setbacks) and construction. The Monument Ridge sketch plan and subsequent PD site plan have never specified the sizes and types of roads within the residential filing or whether they would comply with town or Triview standards. (See www.ourcommunitynews.org/v6n1.htm#bot1205.)

Monument Ridge plat and site plan approved: On Dec. 13, 2006, the Monument Planning Commission unanimously approved the Monument Ridge plat and preliminary PD site plan. There was no citizen opposition to the proposal during the public hearing. The original plat depicted 10 commercial lots, one office lot, one large undefined medium-density residential lot, and a separate detention pond lot. The developer had still

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not made any specific plans for the residential area, which was reduced to 8.1 acres. (See www.ourcommunitynews.org/v7n1.htm#monpc.)

The Board of Trustees unanimously approved the Monument Ridge plat and preliminary PD site plan on Jan. 16, 2007. There was no citizen opposition to the proposal during the public hearing. There were still no specific plans for the residential area. (See www.ourcommunitynews.org/v7n2.htm#botjan16.)

Amendment 2 approved

At the Nov. 10 meeting, Principal Planner Karen Griffith presented the staff report on the major site plan amendment that proposes three commercial lots. She noted that the applicant had added a 50-foot landscape buffer between Lot 10 and Chaparral Hills and reviewed the staff's analysis of how the proposal conforms to each of the town's preliminary PD site plan review and approval criteria.

Griffith recommended three conditions of approval:

1. Any necessary technical corrections shall be made by the applicant and approved by staff.
2. All referral agency comments shall be resolved prior to recordation of the site plan.
3. Adequate documentation will be provided by the Triview Metropolitan District that there is an adequate water supply to serve this site.

Chad Kuzbek, owner of Westworks Engineering in Colorado Springs, represented the applicant. He summarized the proposed changes in use for Lots 6, 7, and 10 and the proposed subdivision of Lot 10 into three parts.

A minor change to the uses for Lots 6 and 7 adds retail to restaurants as their allowable uses within the individual plan sheets for these lots. The cover sheets for the original and subsequent approved PD site plans have always listed restaurant/retail as the allowable uses for these two lots. Planning Commission and Board of Trustee approvals of the final PD site plans for these two lots will still be required prior to development.

The proposed use for Lot 10 is being changed from residential to commercial and divided into

three lots.

Lot 10A on the west end is 2.6 acres with proposed uses of sit-down restaurant, retail, office, day care, hotel, and medical/dental.

Lot 10B in the center is 2.0 acres with proposed uses of sit-down restaurant, retail, office, day care, and medical/dental. The site is currently proposed to be a Primrose Daycare facility. Layout, utility, grading, and landscaping information for this lot has been added to the preliminary PD site plan. Once this change is approved by the board, a final PD site plan for this lot can be approved administratively by the town staff.

Lot 10C is the remaining 3.6 acres on the east end with proposed uses of sit-down restaurant, retail, office, day care, and medical/dental.

Commissioner Dave Gwisdalla expressed concern about a future request to use Lot 10 for a carwash or other automotive uses, particularly tire sales or vehicle repairs. Commissioner Becki Tooley expressed a similar concern regarding the potential traffic next to a facility for small children.

During the public portion of the hearing, Chaparral Hills property owner Bernard McKinney, whose property is adjacent to Lot 10, stated that he "was perfectly happy with a daycare" facility on Lot 10B but would not like to see a carwash built on any of these three proposed lots.

Griffith said that a carwash or an automotive repair store could not be built on Lots 10A/B/C under the proposed list of uses. However, an auto parts store is retail and would be permitted on 10 A-C. She suggested the commissioners could consider adding a condition that restricted auto repair, carwashes, or any automobile-related or similar uses from Lot 10 A-C. She added that the commissioners should not "get too carried away listing everything that can't go in there, because you set yourselves up for

failure."

Consultant engineer Virgil Sanchez said he also represented the developer and that the developer does not want a 24-hour use for Lot 10. Sanchez stated that this lot would be a good site for a carwash that is not a 24-hour use. Gwisdalla agreed that there should not be any 24-hour use "where homes were supposed to be" but did not agree that a carwash would be acceptable if its operating hours were restricted. Griffith said that an additional restriction on fast food or drive-through uses might also be appropriate.

Gwisdalla formally proposed an additional condition limiting auto-related uses, carwash, fast food, drive-through, and 24-hour uses. Griffith said that references to 24-hour uses should refer to continuous outside circulation of vehicles in contrast to someone working late in an office. She suggested that specific operating hours could be specified for Lots 10 A-C. Gwisdalla changed the condition to restrict operations on the lots from 9 p.m. to 8 a.m.

Amendment 2 was unanimously approved with these four conditions.

Lot 10 replat approved

Griffith explained how the proposed replat conforms to the purpose statement of the town's subdivision regulations and comprehensive plan. The 0.5-acre pocket park for the originally platted residential area will be eliminated. She proposed three conditions:

1. Monument Ridge Preliminary PD Site Plan Amendment 2 shall be approved and recorded prior to recordation of the replat.
2. Any necessary technical corrections shall be made by the applicant and approved by staff.
3. All referral agency comments shall be resolved prior to recordation of the replat.

There were no comments during

the open portion of the public hearing.

The replat was unanimously approved with the three proposed conditions.

Griffith briefed the commissioners on the discussions and modifications made to the town's zoning regulation on medical marijuana facilities by the staff and Board of Trustees after the

Planning Commission's review and approval with conditions.

The meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.

The next meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 9, at Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road, near Highway 105. Meetings are normally held on the second Wed each month. Info: 884-8017.



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Palmer Lake Town Council, Nov. 12

Vote on water rate increase delayed

By David Futey

On Nov. 12, The Palmer Lake Town Council tabled a decision on a water rate increase until Dec. 3. The council also agreed on changes in their areas of responsibility.

Fire Trustee Gary Coleman was out of town, and his absence from the meeting was excused.

Before a discussion on water rates, Town Clerk Della Gray asked Town Attorney Larry Gaddis how the council "can do the resolution by motion for the water rates." Gaddis said the town's water ordinance was amended and allows the council to raise or lower water rates by resolution for budgetary purposes and that new "water rates can be

adopted by motion at tonight's (Nov. 12) meeting." Gaddis was then excused from the meeting.

Water Trustee Max Stafford provided an overview of the 2010 preliminary water budget. There is a \$2 million loan from the state's revolving fund for improvements to the surface water treatment plant. Three proposals from the town's Water Department were considered to cover the loan payment.

The option selected was a new charge of \$11.51 per tap per month, which will produce \$114,635 per year. A loan payment of \$28,362 will be made in November 2010. After 2010, and until the full amount of the loan has been paid, there will be two yearly payments, in May and November, of \$57,317 for 20 years.

Stafford said, "Rather than pad the amount of money that we are going to be dealing with, to go \$12 or \$13, we went with the real amount" needed to repay the loan, an increase of \$11.51 per tap. Gray added that this increase for the loan will be "100 percent separate from water revenue and capital improvement, housed in its own account and used strictly for repayment of the loan."

There was a lengthy technical discussion about the operating cash reserves the town must maintain as a condition of the construction loans. The state requires the town to keep a three-month operating expenditure, which presently equals \$74,000, in a separate account from the water enterprise operating fund as a condition of the loan. The additional cost required to accumulate that \$74,000 by the end of 2010 is \$6.54 per tap. The basic rate will increase from \$33.53 to \$40.07.

Stafford explained the calculations for the \$6.54 increase, noting that they had to factor in the 15 percent of water users who do not pay their entire water bill. Stafford said budgets cannot include late fees that may be collected during the year. Stafford said, "I really have a problem with the 15 percent who do not pay their bills, then having to penalize everybody else, but the truth is we have to pay the bills." The proposed budget has a realistic expectation that the water enterprise will pay for itself, but the total monthly bill will have to increase by \$18 per tap.

Gray said some users do not pay until "we hunt them down" and "threaten to take their tap." She said a 24-hour shutoff notice is given but the "way the ordinance is written, if they come in and they make a payment, we cannot shut their water off" and that they do not have to pay the whole amount.

Bristol said we "need to do something about people not paying" and that the town's water shut-off ordinance needs to be changed. Gray responded, "We have been trying to do that for the last 15 years." After some additional discussion on how to proceed with unpaid water bills, Bristol suggested that the discussion should be tabled.

Mayor John Cressman suggested a benevolent fund for those who lose their job or have another circumstance that makes it difficult to make payments. He asked how this monthly increase compares with that of the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District. Gray replied, "We are right on with what everyone is doing across the state of Colorado" and still at the lower end of water rates.

Stafford said, "We are not good neighbors" because the town is "using wells up without having a conservation ordinances to limit the impact of the wells" as other communities do. Stafford added that he plans on introducing a conservation plan in the near future.

Palmer Lake Roads Supervisor Bob Radosevich asked if the increase covers much-needed water main repairs. Stafford responded that the capital improvement funding did not change and they "did not create any money that did not exist before." Gray said the existing \$3.05 water capital improvement fee offsets the cost of the preliminary engineering plans for the water surface treatment plant. To date, collections from that fee total \$37,238. Gray noted that the council could raise rates further, but this proposal tries to keep rates as "low and real as we can to help protect the people."

Cressman said that "if we collected that 15 percent (from those do not pay their water bill), we would have a lot more capital improvement." Gray disagreed. "That 15 percent is water revenue" and it goes for "admin and operations," rather than capital improvement. Gray also observed that during the \$2 million loan application process, the state had made it clear that the town had to stop taking money from the capital improvement fund and us-

ing it in the water operations fund. "We have to keep these things totally separate."

Trustee Jan Bristol said she did not feel comfortable voting on this increase without public input at the next council meeting and "we should not surprise people." Bristol added, "I want it said in that meeting that 15 percent of the people are not paying their bill. Give people an opportunity to voice their concern on this increase."

Trustee Nikki McDonald said, "Sanitation does not get public input, nobody else has to get public input." She added, "Everyone has known for two years this was going to happen, but we have to vote on this. It has to be done."

Stafford said this increase "needs to be sent out with the December bills" and that the council has been "working in good conscience on this for two years to get to this point."

Trustee Bryan Jack concurred that "there is not doubt we need to increase the rate" but also agreed with Bristol about not voting on the increase this evening because the agenda called this a 2010 preliminary budget discussion with no reference to a final vote on the water increase. Stafford replied that he had no problem delaying the vote to the next council meeting.

Gray said some time is needed to set up the loan payment in the software module, and there is a voting meeting on Dec. 3. She said, "As long as that portion of it can be voted on Dec. 3" then it can go out in the end of December bill "to be payable in January."

Cressman said the "public discussion on pending water increase" should be advertised. Bristol said the agenda item should be listed as "2010 water rates increase."

Gray noted that once the three-month cash reserve is collected, the \$6.54 could be removed from bills unless operation costs go up for the new treatment plant. Bristol said the public forum would allow the council to explain the background for the increase. Cressman suggested that water bills should clarify the reasons for each increase.

Trustees' responsibilities modified

Cressman stated that the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department "needs some good leadership right now." He requested that Bristol, who shares parks and recreation and economic development responsibilities with McDonald, assume the role of fire trustee. "I know you. I've worked under you before. I know how you lead, and I think they need some leadership, I really do." Cressman told Bristol that Fire Chief Dan Reynolds "is struggling with some issues that I think you can help with through your leadership, your ability to see."

Cressman asked Roads Trustee Jack to take over the role of police trustee from Reynolds to give Reynolds "a break." Cressman asked Reynolds to move to roads trustee and added that Coleman could replace Bristol as a parks and recreation and economic development trustee.

Cressman noted that Jack, who is a battalion chief in the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, could help Bristol take over as fire trustee. Cressman added that making Jack the fire trustee would "be just like pushing water uphill because it's hard, because everybody's going to misconstrue his leadership" within the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department by assuming "Bryan's there to convert everybody over to Tri-Lakes Fire."

Background: A controversial dispute between the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District board and the Palmer Lake Town Council led to dissolution of the interagency agreement between the two fire agencies in 2006. (See www.ourcommunitynews.org/v6n9.htm#pltc and www.ourcommunitynews.org/v6n10.htm#pltc for a summary of this controversy.)

The Palmer Lake Town Council signed an interim ambulance support agreement with the Larkspur Fire Protection District in December 2006. Larkspur asked to terminate the interim agreement at the end of 2008 (See www.ourcommunitynews.org/v9n2.htm#pltc.)

The council then began negotiations with the new Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Board – formed after the merger in January, 2008 – for a new ambulance support agreement with Tri-Lakes which was signed in early April of this year (See www.ourcommunitynews.org/v9n5.htm#pltc409.)

Reynolds stated that he would feel more comfortable being roads trustee than economic development trustee. Bristol said, "I like Parks and Rec a lot" and that she still wants to help with that but agreed to take over as



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fire trustee. "We're pretty flexible. You know I'm going to have to count on Dan and Bryan to help me with the fire but that's the way it goes." Cressman replied, "I don't think it's going to take a ton of work. I think it's going to be a bunch of little work up front with some personnel issues to straighten out."

Coleman will become a parks and recreation and economic development trustee with McDonald.

Jack stated that he would like to continue working with Reynolds on the Roads Committee in order to follow through with multi-year projects that are not yet complete. Bristol stated that members of this particular Town Council have worked across departments a lot.

Reports

Cressman asked Kim Braun, a member of Tri-Lakes Views, to speak about the group's new ARTSites map. She passed out copies of the ARTSites map, which has been developed to help promote public art that is being displayed in the Tri-Lakes and northern El Paso County area. Tri-Lakes Views is sponsoring rotating art in the community. Artists are invited to submit works for 2010. Information about Tri-Lakes Views is at <http://www.trilakesviews.org/>.

Bristol reported that the town's request for a 2010 Community Block Grant would be submitted early next week (Nov. 16). She noted that the City of Fountain received a block grant from HUD for about \$1,000 a house this year. Assuming Palmer Lake's similar request is accepted, mid- to low-income homeowners must provide a plan on how grant monies could be used for insulation, trailer skirting, and other energy efficiency measures. Mid- to low-income homeowners will need to qualify through the town. Also requested within the grant is a code enforcement officer who would come to town one day a week to enforce the town's nuisance ordinance. This would help to clean up sites around town. Bristol feels the town has a good chance to receive the \$45,000 requested.

Bristol said requests for downtown restrooms have been received from members of the community. Presently, business owners bear the brunt for the lack of public restrooms, because people are using their restrooms. Gray said a sewer tap is available if a permanent structure is sought. The sewer tap was donated to the town by the Palmer Lake Sanitation District years ago for Centennial Park. Cressman reported that the county restroom was not being maintained and that it needs to be on the calendar for regular maintenance. Gray said there is a portable toilet presently in use that could be left in place for a cost of \$95 per month.

Bristol has been in conversation with representatives from Salida and the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) about an outdoor art event for Palmer Lake. TLCA Executive Director Susan Adams and Bristol met with representatives from Salida and talked about their summer art event. The general idea is that artists and others would buy tent space at various locations around town, so not a lot of town money would be required. The preferred time frame for a Palmer Lake art event is late summer or early fall and would most likely occur over a weekend.

Bristol and members of the survey committee went house-to-house in various town neighborhoods to encourage the return of the town's survey. Additional survey boxes were placed at the Rock House and The Country Store.

The committee will promote the survey at the Nov. 28 Chili Supper and Star Lighting Ceremony, a fund-raiser for the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department. The deadline for citizens to return the survey was extended to Nov. 30.

Bristol also reported that the Fire Department had 20 calls in October. The department purchased a 2004 Ford Excursion as a replacement rescue vehicle. The vehicle's primary use will be for medical emergencies and transporting patients down from the Palmer Lake Reservoir.

The department has received a number of calls regarding carbon monoxide in homes. Citizens are reminded to have their home furnace professionally checked each year and have fresh batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. If the carbon monoxide detector sounds, call 911 and move everyone outdoors or by an open window.

Jack reminded citizens that there is no parking on town roads when a snow alert is issued. The cul-de-sac on Roosevelt Street was rebuilt to create better drainage and a turnaround.

Stafford said he attended the October board meetings of the Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority and the Fountain Creek Watershed Flood Control and Greenway

District (FCW). Colorado Springs Utilities has placed \$200,000 in the FCW budget for initial district operations. The watershed district will not receive regular funding until the Southern Delivery System is in operation. The \$200,000 will be used for surveys and other needs. Colorado Springs Utilities will be reimbursed in the future.

The FCW executive committee will select an interim manager at its next meeting to oversee grants and watershed operations. Harvey Curtis, the town's water attorney, Cressman, and Stafford will meet on Dec. 15 with Division Engineer Steve Witte of the state Division of Water Resources for the Arkansas River basin.

Reynolds reported that a police chief candidate was chosen after interviews for the position were held on Oct. 26. An official offer will be presented to the candidate once the background verification is completed. Reynolds thanked Monument Police Chief Jake Shirk and Gray for

their assistance in the process.

Gray reported that Tara Berreth and Gray completed the Incident Command System (ICS) 300 training and will be proceeding with the ICS 400 training. Gray attended meetings of the Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority, Monument Community Information Night on behalf of the Fireworks Committee, a Community Development Block Grant meeting with representatives from Housing and Urban Development and the Palmer Divide Public Safety Group. Gray has also been working with the Fire Department on donations for the Chili Supper. Gray said she is moving forward with testing of the chief of police candidate, and the hiring process was on schedule.

Model Traffic Code amendment approved

By unanimous decision, the council approved an ordinance to update the town code with revisions included

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in the latest edition of the Model Traffic Code for Colorado, which included “the repealing of all ordinances in conflict therewith and providing all penalties for violation thereof.”

Surrey Street roadway approved

By unanimous decision, the council approved a road surface for the proposed Surrey Street to be built west of Spring Street, between Prairie Street and South Valley Road. The approved motion stipu-

lates that a 148 linear foot road, which is the entire length of Bryan Scott’s six-lot property, be constructed 22 feet wide, with 3-foot-wide shoulders on each side, a 6-inch-thick compacted road base surface, and proper drainage and culverts as necessary. Scott agreed to rezone his property to R-3 (residential). This road would run along the southern edge of Scott’s property.

During the lengthy technical discus-

sion, Scott stated that he had provided the council with a proposal at the Oct. 8 meeting and asked if it had been reviewed. Jack said that in the Roads Committee meeting, Scott was asked to get bids for a 148-by-22-foot surface, plus rough cutting another 145 linear feet to the centerline of Kent Street for three surface types: four inches of asphalt, six inches of screened asphalt millings, and six inches of class 6 road base. Scott proposed building an improved 75-foot driveway where the current driveway is located. The low bid for building a class 6 road was about \$20,000, and \$6,000 for a Class 6 driveway. (See www.ourcommunitynews.org/v9n10.htm#pltc and www.ourcommunitynews.org/v9n11.htm#pltc for additional background information.)

Jack said he would like to see all 148 feet built to the western boundary of Scott’s property, as this could eliminate revisiting the issue in the future for adjacent property owners and whoever owns Scott’s property at that time. He said that Paul Gilbert, the town’s consultant engineer, did not recommend Scott’s proposal for the existing driveway to be the only access. The adjacent vacant King property is residential and would be affected by this road, as would other Surrey Road property owners who rezone to residential and build on their property. Jack also noted that the town’s standard calls for a road width of 24 feet.

Gray asked how Jack’s recommendation would affect the King property, since Surrey would be a private road maintained by Scott. Town Attorney Larry Gaddis said if the road is built to these town specifications, the town would take over maintenance. The Kings’ present driveway will be a platted road, and their driveway will intersect Surrey Street. Gray also asked, “Do the Kings have to pay for the lineal feet of their property?”

Scott said, “For my purposes, that has to be pretty well understood” because it is unclear given the property layout. Gray said when a road reimbursement agreement is made, “you take the total cost of the project and divide it out by the lineal feet.”

Gray said that Scott will need to create a standard road construction reimbursement agreement with the other property owners with frontages on Surrey Street. Nearby property owners do not have to pay if their property does not

touch Surrey Street. Owners of property contiguous to Surrey Street do not have to reimburse Scott for their fair share of the construction expense until their lots are developed. Cost sharing is directly proportional to the total length of each property owner’s frontage.

During public input, Palmer Lake resident Dan Smith again expressed concern for the Kings. His first concern was, “If the town makes this decision and Mr. Scott goes through with this, you’re saying the Kings have to assume a debt, especially since they are unemployed. I don’t think that’s a good idea.” Smith said he was speaking out of concern as a neighbor and friend of the Kings. Smith said that if Scott builds on his lot, there will be a lot of water running downhill and good drainage will be needed to Spring Street. Smith also expressed concern for drainage running across Surrey to the Kings’ side. Improper drainage could flood down to the Kings’ garage. Smith then expressed a concern for traffic in and out of Spring Street and the line of sight. He concluded that his biggest concern “was putting the Kings in debt.”

Jack said the Kings did express similar concerns in the Roads Committee meeting, but he believes that this compromise is the “best solution for all.” The Kings could have been encumbered with more debt if other options had been adopted. Jack continued that Scott owns a piece of property and he is entitled to put a home on it or sell it, and the town could have requested the road be built of asphalt all the way to Kent Street, which would have increased the cost.

Smith said Scott should be accessing his lots from Prairie Street, but a “mistake” was made in the past. Jack replied that a previous Town Council had made that decision.

Radosevich clarified that the town allowed a Surrey Street easement because the access Smith had referred to was a shared driveway on Prairie Street. However, one owner of the shared driveway refused access to Scott.

Reynolds asked about improving line of sight on Spring Street for this new access. Jack said that line of sight is a problem with about 98 percent of the town roads.

Scott indicated that building on the property is not imminent and asked how this motion would be carried out. Gaddis said that road construction would be required when Scott applies for a building permit. Scott must complete rezoning before a building permit can be issued.

Library roof repairs

Jack noted that the lease agreement for using the town’s building had not changed since 1982, including the annual fee charged to the Pikes Peak Library District. He said the agreement had to be amended to cover the cost of repairing the building’s roof, since the amount paid does not cover the cost of the library’s utilities much less the building’s other operating and capital costs. Gray said she had discussed the matter with the library district, and it was willing to amend the lease to help cover the repair cost.

At the end of the meeting, the council went into executive session on a personnel matter.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m. immediately after the end of the executive session.

The next regular council meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Dec. 10 at Town Hall. Information: www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us/ or call 481-2953.

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Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Nov. 18

District will pursue federal grant for staffing

By Bernard L. Minetti

At the Nov. 18 meeting of the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Battalion Chief Bryan Jack received permission from the board to discuss an item that was not on the agenda. SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) is a federal grant program designed to help local fire agencies achieve optimum staffing and to add “front line firefighters” to the community staffing levels.

The application period for grants opened Nov. 16 and closes Dec. 18, Jack said. The district previously had added seven firefighters through a SAFER grant.

Jack said that the present staffing ratio is at 2:2, while the optimum manning ratio is 4:2. The first number in the ratio indicates the fire truck manning and the second refers to the ambulance complement.

Jack also indicated that he was pursuing other methods of increasing the manning ratio that involved amalgamation of assets and cross coverage of responsibilities with other fire protection service entities. Jack felt that if this could be accomplished, he could raise the manning ratio to 4:2 without any additional costs to the district.

The board gave its permission for Jack to go ahead with the application.

Treasurer John Hildebrandt presented the financial report. He advised the board that the income/expenditure ratio appeared to be on track in the 2009 budget. He also advised the members that the income for 2010 would probably be deficient in revenues from impact fees.

An impact fee is a charge levied on a builder following completion of a new house to defray expenses incurred to the county for providing services and infrastructure. Income from impact fees will be lower because of poor economic conditions. However, Hildebrandt said income from property taxes would be on target.

Fire Chief Robert Denboske reviewed the proposed 2010 budget and indicated that at present the corrected adopted budget for 2009 had projected an annual total ending balance of \$1,650,551, and the projected ending balance for 2010 would be \$1,417,067. This indicates a preliminary budget reduction of \$196,484 for the next year.

Denboske detailed some of the areas where the budget differences occurred. In the building line item under the 2010 Adopted Operating Fund Expenditures, there was an approximate \$12,000 savings simply by adjusting building internal temperatures. Other savings will come in lease payments, which will be reduced by \$117,625 because a fire truck had been paid off.

In the Operations section of the budget, budget expenditures will be reduced by \$87,907. Also, costs for vehicle operations are expected to decline by \$17,290 due to the fuel price reduction over the past year.

Jack presented an overview of the salaries section of the 2010 proposed budget. The firefighters’ salaries line item had been increased by \$260,216 due to the end of the money from the previous SAFER grant and the required assumption of those firefighters into the mainstream battalions.

Jack said that the \$60,000 budgeted for overtime is an increase of \$31,000 from the 2009 budget. He said that

when a part-time firefighter is not able to come to work, for whatever reason, it is necessary to maintain the staffing levels by holding over the individuals in the previous shift until a part-timer can be procured. This generates overtime pay for the person filling in.

Jack said that overall, proposed salaries are projected to decline by \$80,224 in 2010, with firefighter salaries remaining unchanged.

During the discussion of the salaries, Director Roger Lance mentioned that in fairness to the firefighters, it might be well to leave open the ability to increase salaries in 2010. Director Rick Barnes indicated that it was a good suggestion, but it might not look good politically to raise salaries due to the present recession. He felt that it was more important to maintain the district’s overall capabilities as a first priority with available funds.

Denboske discussed the sources of income for the maintenance of the ambulance response capability. The directors indicated that the Medicaid, Medicare, Tricare and commercial insurance rates were fixed and were not a problem. The weak point was the coverage of the expenditures created by a client who was unable to pay. The directors did not have an immediate answer but decided to reflect upon this deficiency and try to come up with some form of compensatory fix. Denboske then indicated that the present and proposed budgets are open to the public should there be an interest in the issue.

The board complimented Jack for his concise presentation of the issues regarding manning, staffing, and salary.

The next Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 9, at 7 p.m. at Tri-Lakes Station 1, 18650 Highway 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. The purpose of the



Above (L to R): Battalion Chief Mike Dooley, Battalion Chief Bryan Jack, and Fire Chief Robert Denboske during Jack’s presentation to the TLMFPD Board of Directors on personnel and salary issues. Photo by Bernard Minetti.

meeting is to review the results of the budget audit and any other relevant issues. Information: 266-3367.

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Lewis-Palmer District 38 Board of Education, Nov. 19

New board member installed; budget process discussed



Above: New board member Jeff Ferguson is sworn in by outgoing President Dee Dee Eaton. **Below:** Board member Mark Pfoff tells of his gratitude to Dee Dee Eaton for her help in introducing him to life as a board member. Incoming President John Mann presented Eaton with flowers for her tenure as president. *Photos by Harriet Halbig.*




By Harriet Halbig

Dr. Jeff Ferguson and returning members of the Board of Education were sworn in at the Nov. 19 meeting of the board. Departing President Dee Dee Eaton administered the oath to all, including re-elected Gail Wilson who was unable to attend and was installed the previous evening. John Mann will serve as president, Robb Pike as vice president, Ferguson as secretary and Mark Pfoff as treasurer. Staff members Cheryl Wangeman (assistant superintendent of Operations) and Vicki Wood (superintendent secretary) will serve as assistant treasurer and assistant secretary.

The 2010 district budget was the primary subject for discussion during the meeting. Superintendent Ray Blanch reported that he had hosted several meetings of district staff and others earlier in the month regarding the

need to cut \$3 million from next year's budget. He said he is in the midst of meeting with the Building Accountability Committees (BACs) in the district. Blanch said that several solutions were repeatedly suggested at the meetings. The preferred sources of revenue were fees, donations, improved marketing, adding programs to make the district more attractive (such as foreign language classes for the elementary level), classes for college credit, and outreach to home-schooled students. Common suggestions for savings included realigning schools, scheduling fewer days of instruction, outsourcing such services as food service and transportation, and re-examining compensation. Blanch said that those attending the meetings seemed to accept the possibility of school closures as a solution and that it was introduced at each meeting as an option. Ferguson commented that it is critical to consider how to deliver the message of a school closing and that those involved must be told what comes next in the process. Pike agreed, adding that the decision to reconfigure or close schools should come early in the process so that those affected will have time to adjust to the idea. Pfoff said that, in discussing reconfiguration, he has a concern that there is a lack of an elementary school in the Jackson Creek area and that this would offer an opportunity to address the problem. He also thought that the public should have an opportunity to respond to such decisions before a final vote is taken. Blanch said that once all meetings have been held, the district's leadership council (administration, principals, and assistant principals), the District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC), and the Operations Advisory Committee (OAC) will offer plans for the board's consideration. He said that last year's research into the cost and impact of closures should expedite cost estimates of those possibilities. He said that DAAC has arranged for two community meetings in December where the general public may express their opinions. The meetings are scheduled for Dec. 8 and 10 at the Learning Center and Creekside Middle School. Wangeman reported on changes in the budget for the Monument Academy. She said there have been some changes in personnel, work has begun on a discipline plan, and enrollment stands at 651, with 15 students added since the beginning of the school year. Wangeman also commented that the Operations Advisory Committee is still seeking new members. Needed are those with expertise in construction management, grounds management, and accounting. She said the committee's focus is on capitalization of technology and prioritization of projects. She said that the committee has recently toured Grace Best Elementary and determined the need for repairs, including new interior doors. Director of Assessment Marie Revak gave a presentation on surveys of parents, staff, and students adminis-

tered over the last year. She said that the surveys will continue to be administered on an annual or biennial basis. Responses have become more positive over time and have involved such issues as accessibility of teachers and other staff, amount of homework, availability of extracurricular activities, technology, and utilization and appreciation of volunteers. Other items brought to Revak's attention through the surveys are the preferred means of communication, with most parents who returned the surveys preferring e-mail for general communication and phone calls for issues specific to their student, and the fact that 90 percent of those parents know how to log on to Infinite Campus for information about the district. On the question of the feeling of safety in the schools, the survey indicated that elementary students felt safest, and those transitioning from elementary to middle school and middle to high school often felt less secure during their first year in a new environment. Blanch commented that with two high school campuses, staff is now able to know each student better and this should improve the feeling of security. Mann commented on the perception of drug and alcohol use in schools, saying that there should be a distinction between use in the schools and use by students during extracurricular activities such as athletic events or band excursions. Pfoff commented that, regardless of location, the problem should be addressed. Revak also said that the state now mandates testing of teachers and media specialists on their technological proficiency and that ninth- and 10th-graders will be evaluated on their workforce readiness. In his superintendent's update, Blanch announced that Assistant Principal Lori Wagner of Lewis-Palmer High School has been named Assistant Principal of the Year for Colorado, of 160 high schools in the state with over 100 students. Pfoff said that, difficult as it is to make cuts, the board should view the process as an opportunity to increase the appeal of the district and demonstrate a strong sense of priorities. He said that the addition of foreign language instruction at the elementary level should be strongly considered. He also said that full-day kindergarten should be a priority. Mann commented that the system works well because of its people, not its buildings, and that there is a great sense of teamwork district-wide for the benefit of the kids. Blanch said that adding before and after school care could help add revenue to the district, and perhaps the language classes could be funded in this way. The board approved routine matters such as the minutes of previous meetings, resignations and appointments of staff, monthly budget summary, and other matters. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m., and the board reconvened in executive session to discuss personnel matters.



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DAAC discusses ways to cut \$5 million

By Harriet Halbig

On Nov. 10, the District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) heard Superintendent of Schools Ray Blanch explain the need to cut \$5 million from the district's budget over the next three years.

Blanch said that due to a decrease in enrollment, increasing utility costs, loss of tax revenue, and cuts on the state level, it would be necessary to cut the district's budget by \$3 million in the 2010-11 school year and an additional \$1 million for the following two years.

He said that, in comparison with District 20, which shares the same level of state funding with District 38, each student in D-20 is funded at an additional \$529 per year due to mill levy override funds. Both districts are among more than 170 districts in the state that are funded at the minimum level.

Blanch offered a presentation explaining the process for determining the specific areas of reduction, saying that he will meet with many groups of people, from community groups (Chamber of Commerce, town government, civic and nonprofit

organizations) to district employees (teachers, support staff, DAAC and others), to specialists such as realtors who predict changing demographics, to the general public.

The first step in determining cuts is to identify the core values of the district. Such values would include retention of small class sizes, safe and convenient transportation, retention of quality teaching staff, availability of electives such as music and art, and availability of gifted/talented training, up-to-date technology, athletic opportunities, affordable fees, and neighborhood schools.

The second step in the process consists of brainstorming possible cuts and adjustments in the budget. After a breakout session, some of the cuts suggested were:

- closing one or more buildings (not necessarily schools)
- eliminating transportation, curtailing it, or charging for it
- privatizing some aspects of the district, such as food service, transportation and custodial services, resulting in savings on employee

benefits

- changing to a four-day week, saving on transportation and utility costs
- changing configuration (for example, reinstituting junior high schools or having one or more schools combine elementary and middle school)
- expanding the availability of distance learning
- recruiting home-schooled students.
- adding a mill levy override to next year's ballot
- offering before and after school care at a charge
- giving PE credit for athletes (this would allow a reduction in staff)
- increasing use of volunteer help

This brainstorming process will be used with all groups consulted during the meetings Blanch has scheduled. He stressed that all groups should understand that no decisions have yet been made.

The next step is to prioritize these ideas with several criteria in mind:

- how many students would be gained or lost if an idea were put in place

- the positive or negative cost of a decision
- positive or negative aspects of each decision
- recommendation of whether or not to put the decision in place

A final decision will be made in January and voted on by the Board of Education.

In closing, Blanch stressed that if state funding changes, it will be toward more cuts and reminded the committee that federal stimulus funds are available for only about 18 months longer. He said that the detailed budget is available on the district Web site.

The committee agreed to host two community summits on school funding in December. The first, on Dec. 8, will be held at the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St. in Monument, beginning at 6:30 p.m., following a brief committee meeting. The second, on Dec. 10, will be held at Creekside Middle School, 1330 Creekside Drive in the Jackson Creek area, at 6:30 p.m. Blanch will preside at both meetings.

Committee Chairman Mirielle Bock said that school

improvement plans had been received from all schools and will be examined in depth beginning at the January meeting.

The District Accountability Advisory Committee usually meets on the second Tuesday of the month. Locations vary. The Dec. 8 meeting will be held at the district Learning Center at 146 Jefferson St. in Monument at 6 p.m.

Lewis-Palmer School District Special Education Advisory Committee, Nov. 11

Fleury seeks improved communication

By Harriet Halbig

The Special Education Advisory Committee met interim Director Mary Ann Fleury at its Nov. 11 meeting. Fleury, who came to the district as a special education facilitator at the beginning of the school year, became interim director in October. She told the committee of her educational background in special education and her work experience in Denver and Douglas County schools.

Fleury said that among her goals in her new position is to improve communications between the district and parents and to encourage more parent participation. She also stressed that cooperation between general education and special education sectors is critical.

Fleury answered questions from the committee. She said that she is examining the extended school year (ESY) option in depth. Through this program, students attend school for part of the summer break, depending upon their individual needs. She said that the decision is partially based on retention of learning from one school year to the next and that no child will miss an entire summer break.

Fleury also explained the concept of positive behavioral support (PBS). She said that an entire school should have a common system specifying desirable behavior and should stress positive reinforcement of these behaviors rather than punishment. The same rules should apply to all students and staff.

Regarding concerns that special education students are insufficiently included in general education classes, Fleury said that special education teachers can be instrumental in training general education teachers in modifying their curriculum to accommodate special ed students. She said that a special ed teacher should be seen as an interventionist, removing the special ed student from mainstream classes only as necessary.

The committee also viewed

a video of Superintendent Ray Blanch regarding the district's budget. Detailed information on this subject can be found in the article on the District Accountability Advisory Committee above. Blanch explained that the main challenges faced in the upcoming year are lower enrollment figures, lower state funding, and increased utility costs. In addition, reduced funding from specific ownership tax (primarily levied on care purchases) and real estate taxes contribute

to the shortage.

The Special Education Advisory Committee meets on the second Wednesday of each month at the Learning Center at 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be held on Dec. 9 at 6:30 p.m.



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Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority, Nov. 13

I-25 Baptist Road interchange completed for this year

By Jim Kendrick

General contractor Lawrence Construction Co. and its subcontractors have concluded Baptist Road interchange expansion operations for this year. Lawrence will return to the site next spring to perform final grading and construction of the storm sewer, right turn lane, curb, and gutter on westbound Baptist Road along the Diamond Shamrock truck stop frontage.

County Commissioners Wayne Williams and Dennis Hisey and Monument Trustee Rafael Dominguez were present for the Nov. 13 meeting of the Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority (BRRTA). County Commissioner Amy Lathen and Monument Mayor Travis Easton were absent and excused from the meeting.

Valero still delaying final interchange completion

Valero Energy Corp. failed to install service lines to connect with the water main and sanitary sewer collection line previously installed between Old Denver Highway and the truck stop by Jacobs Engineering under a separate contract paid for by the Town of Monument. As a result, Valero also failed to disconnect and remove the truck stop's septic tanks and failed leach field system, which the county Health Department condemned in 2008. The septic tanks and failed leach field remain as obstacles to installation of the storm sewer drainage, curb, and gutter, as well as the dedicated right turn lane for

improved access to Valero's truck stop.

A temporary "bituminous curb" along Valero's south property line on Baptist Road has been installed to control drainage on the northwest corner of the interchange. This temporary curb will prevent direct right turns into the Valero station from Baptist Road at the previous Baptist Road access point.

The remaining work on the BRRTA contract with Lawrence cannot be resumed until March due to the high potential of frozen ground and temperatures too low to install paving. There will be additional costs incurred for moving construction equipment back to the Valero site in the spring.

A condition of the BRRTA's \$21.5 million bond sale in 2007 for this project requires that all construction payments from the \$17.7 million facility fund be made by May 1, 2010. On that date, any monies remaining in the facility fund will be transferred to the bond fund and used to redeem outstanding bonds. Jacobs and Lawrence plan to resume construction next to the Valero truck stop in March and complete the remaining work by the May 1 deadline, if Valero installs and connects service lines from its plumbing to the water and wastewater service provided by the town and removes its condemned septic system and leach field in a timely manner.

THF hardware store access still unresolved

There is one other potential remaining

construction item. BRRTA has offered different options to THF Realty, owner of the former Foxworth-Galbraith hardware store property on the northeast corner of the interchange, regarding a new temporary access road to its currently "land-locked" parcel. BRRTA began making these offers before Lawrence Construction was awarded the construction contract in 2008.

The portion of Struthers Road within the now-expanded interchange has been demolished and replaced by the new dual-lane northbound on-ramp, eliminating roadway access from Baptist Road to the only existing entrance to the store's parking lot. Similarly, there is no longer any access to the THF property's entrance from Higby Road along the remaining segment of Struthers Road to the north, which now dead-ends near the Home Depot store in Monument Marketplace.

THF Realty has not accepted BRRTA's offer to have Lawrence build a temporary access to its property. However, BRRTA has installed a curb cut on westbound Baptist Road for emergency access to the THF property. This curb cut is just east of the new northbound on-ramp. THF has not taken down a small section of its white fence next to the new curb cut to allow fire or ambulance vehicles access to the store's parking lot from the Baptist Road curb cut.

BRRTA had also previously offered THF Realty the option of a cash settlement so that THF could build its own temporary access from the vacant property to the east at a time and location of its own choosing.

Now that Lawrence Construction has concluded its work and removed its equipment from the Baptist Road interchange, BRRTA may not be able to build a temporary access road regardless of where THF may finally decide it wants it to be installed. The last BRRTA offer to build an access road for THF has expired. The board members said at the Oct. 9 BRRTA meeting that they have already made all the offers that BRRTA's attorneys feel are necessary to resolve the THF emergency vehicle access issue.

2010 budget approved

The board unanimously approved the 2010 BRRTA budget, the 2010 appropriation of funds, and the certification of 2010 mill levies. There was no public comment prior to any of these three votes. The proposed budget was submitted to the board at the

Oct. 9 BRRTA meeting. Total expenditures will decline from an estimated \$16.1 million in 2009 to about \$2.4 million in 2010.

2009 budget amended

The board also unanimously approved an amendment to the 2009 capital projects fund appropriation increasing the amount that can be spent this year from \$12,696,846 to \$14,851,467 to cover the three-month acceleration in total work completed by Lawrence to date. There was no public comment prior to the vote.

2009 audit scheduled

The board unanimously approved an engagement letter to once again have Schilling and Co. Inc. perform the annual audit for 2009. The letter states that Schilling's fee will not exceed \$3,600.

Checks approved

The board unanimously ratified:

- A check for \$4,024 to Clifton Gunderson LLP for accounting services
- A check for \$6,669 to Grimshaw & Harring PC for legal services
- A check for \$2,856 to R.S. Wells LLC for district management services
- A requisition for \$90,761 for contract management work performed by Jacobs Engineering Group

Another Baptist Road project

Commissioner Williams advised the board that the City of Colorado Springs may not be able to build some projects to be funded by the Pikes Peak Regional Transportation Authority (PPRTA) due to staffing limitations imposed by the city's expected revenue shortfalls. This may allow BRRTA to obtain previously approved PPRTA funding for improvements to Baptist Road west of Old Denver Highway sooner than originally planned.

PPRTA originally ranked widening of Baptist Road to its west end and building a bridge over the railroad tracks and Monument Creek its number 1 priority of all its Category A projects. However, the original estimated cost for the widened roadway and four-lane bridge was about \$13 million, and the project was deferred until 2015, the last year of PPRTA's current 10-year lifespan. A second successful ballot issue would be required to extend PPRTA's time limit.

Some preliminary discussions were held at that time with Rockwell Engineering, the consultant for the Forest Lakes development northwest of the west end of

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Baptist Road. The Forest Lakes developer is currently the only other source of funding besides PPRTA.

There are significant environmental and grade issues that need to be resolved regarding construction of the bridge over Monument Creek in a very confined space in the middle of a substantial amount of floodplain and protected Preble’s mouse habitat. Negotiations for final environmental approvals for widening Baptist Road east of I-25 took about five years.

Another significant issue is the limited space that will require steep slopes on the west side of the bridge to be able to fit between the west end of Baptist and the railroad tracks.

Williams asked County Engineer Andre Brackin to begin work now to provide sufficient lead time for obtaining environmental permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife if PPRTA funding becomes available sooner than expected. Other necessary

work would be planning for the most cost-effective type of bridge structure and geometry. The resulting bridge structure report would then go through an alternatives analysis for these environmental agencies.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

The next meeting will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Dec. 11 in Monument’s Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. Information: 884-8017.

BRRTA ceremony marks interchange milestone

By Jim Kendrick

A ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate Lawrence completing all construction for full access to the I-25 Baptist Road interchange expansion three months early and below cost was held Nov. 23 in Monument Town Hall rather than at the interchange due to cold weather, high winds, and a sub-freezing wind chill. County Commissioner Wayne Williams, who represents all of the Tri-Lakes region, hosted the ceremony, which had been originally scheduled for next May. Williams noted that Lawrence had also finished construction of the I-25 Monument interchange ahead of schedule and below cost. He acknowledged the contributions of all the project participants:

- Lawrence Construction and its numerous subcontractors

- Contract manager Jacobs Engineering Group
 - El Paso County Transportation Department personnel
 - El Paso County Highway Advisory Committee
 - Colorado Department of Transportation
 - Project design engineer PBS&J
 - Town of Monument staff
 - Former Mayor Byron Glenn and County Commissioner Duncan Bremer
 - Regional utility companies who frequently changed their relocation schedules to keep up with Lawrence’s accelerated completion milestones
 - Design Engineer Steve Sandvik of PBS&J
- Monument Mayor Travis Easton noted the projects improvements to address safety, capacity, volume, inadequate

ramps, water and wastewater service, drainage and water quality. He noted that this project was a “perfect example of local governments working together.”

Contract manager Bob Torres of Jacobs Engineering and Williams thanked the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority, BRRTA District Manager Denise Denslow and Meredith Miller of R.S. Wells LLC, and BRRTA attorney Jim Hunsaker of Grimshaw and Harring PC for their assistance and prompt payments of the various contractors. Williams also thanked all the contiguous property owners who donated land for right-of-way of the much larger interchange, which kept the total project cost under budget.

November Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

November was an interesting month around the region, with plenty of sunny, mild days, interspersed with brief shots of cold and snow. Temperatures swung from record highs on the 5th and to our first sub-zero readings of the season on the morning of the 16th. Overall, temperatures averaged a little above normal for the month, quite a change from the record cold during October. Precipitation was above normal for the month, but all of it fell on only three days.

Dry, sunny conditions, with record highs and an extended period of above-freezing temperatures were the story for the first week of November. By the way, this is the reason the term “normal” in weather and climate is really meaningless. Most of the time the weather is far from “normal.” Normal simply becomes the mean between the extremes.

High temperatures quickly jumped from the 50s to the upper 60s between the 3rd and the 6th. Record highs were set at most locations along the Front Range on the 5th, with 70s to low 80s common across the lower elevations. Overnight lows were also warm, as west/southwesterly winds kicked in. In fact, low temperatures were above freezing from the morning of the 4th through the evening of the 8th, an unusually long stretch for this time of the year. These warm temperatures and Chinook winds relegated the extensive snowpack from October to only the shaded locations. Even some plants and insects got a little confused, thinking spring had sprung.

The second week of November continued the trend of warm, dry, and breezy conditions. After a brief dip to average temperatures with highs in the 40s and 50s on the 9th and 10th, warm air moved back in under a ridge of high pressure originating out of the desert Southwest. This allowed highs to jump back into the low 60s on the 11th and 12th and, when combined with breezy conditions, held temperatures above freezing at night.

However, behind this warm air mass, the next storm was developing and moving through the Intermountain West. The initial surge with this storm brought low clouds, fog, and some light snow and graupel early Saturday, and then the main storm system roared through on Sunday. This produced 6-10 inches of fresh snow for most of us, with around an inch of liquid equivalent through the weekend. Also, the cold air, clear skies, and fresh snow cover allowed temperatures to plummet overnight Sunday into Monday morning, with many areas touching below zero for the first time this season.

with 40s and 50s returning. No precipitation fell during the period, but that’s not all that unusual for November, typically one of our driest months.

Another quick-moving cold front raced through the region late on the 22nd and into the morning of the 23rd. This brought our only other measurable precipitation for the month, with a quick shot of snow and cold. Behind this storm, sunshine and quiet weather returned as temperatures jumped back to normal and slightly above normal to end the month. Highs bounced around from the upper 30s to the low 50s through Thanksgiving weekend and to end the month. Overnight lows were chilly under the clear skies and calm winds. Also, because of the weak sun angle and quiet weather, the snow that had accumulated during the middle of the month stuck around nicely through the end of the month.

A look ahead

December can be a cold time around the Tri-Lakes region, with highs often staying below freezing. The month is generally dry, however, with several light, fluffy snowfalls. Gusty winds are also a common nuisance during the month. December 2004 and 2008 had well-timed snowfalls just before Christmas, which left behind clear skies and a beautiful snow-covered landscape for Christmas Day. December 2005 started off cold and snowy, and then ended up mild and dry. 2006 was very exciting, with two blizzards moving through, one right before Christmas and one right after. For a complete look at monthly climate summaries for the Tri-Lakes region, please visit www.thekappels.com/ClimateSummary.htm.

November 2009 Weather Statistics

Average High	49.2° (+0.5°)
100-year return frequency value	max 55.5° min 38.5°
Average Low	22.6° (+2.5)
100-year return frequency value	max 27.5° min 14.1°
Monthly Precipitation	1.10” (+0.42”)
100-year return frequency value	max 3.80” min 0.16”
Monthly Snowfall	10.1” (-1.1”)
Highest Temperature	67° on the 5th
Lowest Temperature	-2° on the 16th
Season to Date Snow	40.8” (+13.3”)
	(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip.	10.95” (+0.25”)
	(the pecip season is from July 1 to June 30)
Heating Degree Days	865 (-49)
Cooling Degree Days	0 (0)

For more detailed weather information and Climatology of the Palmer Divide and Tri-Lakes region, please visit Bill Kappel’s Weather Web page at www.thekappels.com/Weather.htm.

Remember, weather affects all of us everyday and is a very important part of life for us in the Tri-Lakes region, and we want to hear from you. If you see a unique weather event or have a weather question, please contact us at billkappel@ourcommunitynews.org.

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident.




















































































































































































































































































































































































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 editor@ourcommunitynews.org or mail to Our Community News, P.O. Box 1742, Monument, Colorado 80132-1742.

In response to problems receiving e-mail, if you send your letter by e-mail, we will send an e-mail acknowledgement. If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please call 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 or other volunteer for OCN.

Tri-Lakes community bands together

The Tri-Lakes community has more than doubled in size in recent years while maintaining its small-town charm and character. Although we have grown, we still manage to come together in order to help a family in need, and that is exactly what happened in November.

In October, a young mother, Shanna Miller, was 28 when she passed away, leaving behind a daughter, Bela, 5, and a son, Cameron, 3. Shanna was a kind woman who laughed well and smiled often. The loss of Shanna has been difficult for her two children and her mother, Laura Miller, who has only recently lost her husband as well.

Laura has gladly taken on the responsibility of raising her grandchildren, but it will be financially challenging.

Only in a small town were we able to receive unconditional support for the Millers. To date, 32 community businesses have made generous donations to the Millers. We would like to thank, in no particular order, the following businesses for their support: Sundance Studios, Big O Tires, Wesley Owens Coffee, Nick-N-Willy's, Speedtrap Coffeebar, Bayou Barbbq, Bella Panini, Big City Burrito, Texas Roadhouse, The Depot, B & E Filling Station, La Zingara, Papa Murphy's, Rosie's Diner, Chili's, Rock House, Omalley's Pub, Kirkland Photography & Design Inc., Country Critters Uptown, Mr. Biggs, Mountain Air Salon, Laura Clibon Stylist, The Vanity Box, Robert Kelly Spa Salon, Hairplay, Serranos, Rock Mountain Oil Change, Pinz Bowling Alley, Kohls, Palmer Divide Blanket Brigade, The Love Shop, U.S. Taekwondo Center, YMCA, and the parents, teachers, and staff at Palmer Lake Elementary School.

We would like to extend an invitation, to anyone who reads this, to a fund-raiser at the Pinz Bowling Alley in Palmer Lake on Dec. 6 from 2 to 6 p.m. for the Miller family. If you are unable to join us, you may also contact First National Bank of Monument at 481-0008 and make a cash contribution to The Shanna Miller Memorial Fund.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed and prayed for the Millers and for those of you who plan to offer your support. This community is a rare find indeed, to show so much love and generosity.

Courtney O'Neill and Chris Thomas

A speed trap in Palmer Lake?

For the 22 years that I have lived in the Tri-Lakes area, I have always enjoyed visiting picturesque Palmer Lake and having a cone at the Rockyard or a burger at the Depot.

Last week I contributed \$232 to the town budget for allegedly going 53 in a 35 mph zone as I exited to County Line Road. Interesting, because my wife had noticed the officer's parked car and was watching my speedometer. She didn't say anything because I was at 37 mph.

Have you noticed that the limit is 35 mph on County Line into Palmer Lake while 105 is posted at 50 mph on a much busier and more dangerous road? Simple math: Lower speed limits mean bigger ticket revenues. And today's high-priced traffic fines are much more about revenue than safety. Warnings are a thing of the past.

I will never set foot in the beautiful town of Palmer Lake again. I'm sure they will not miss my minor amount of spending, but they should consider the following: A small-town economy lives and dies depending on how the local folks feel about it.

If you continue to balance your budget by enhancing your reputation as the Best Little Speed Trap in the Tri-Lakes region, you will eventually notice a serious downturn in consumer revenues. Being subjected to your random road tax does not encourage locals to return in the future.

Good-bye, B&E. Good-bye, Bella Panini. I'm gonna miss you guys.

Kurt Frisbie



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Between The Covers at the Covered Treasures Bookstore

Gifts for treasuring beyond the holidays



By the staff at Covered Treasures

Many of the gifts opened this year will be put away and soon forgotten. Why not consider a book that might become a well-loved friend or a beloved family holiday favorite? Here are a few suggestions.

Eragon's Guide to Alagaesia

By Christopher Paolini (Alfred A. Knopf), \$24.99

The creators of the bestsellers *Dragonology* and *Egyptology* offer a new book of never-before-seen glimpses into the world of Paolini's Inheritance Cycle. This oversized, full-color volume provides a guide to the most important people, places, and things within Alagaesia through spectacular artwork, engaging novelty elements, and fascinating insights into Eragon's home. For the young adult reader on your list, this may be the perfect present.

Infinite Possibilities: A Haiku Journal

By Laurie Wagner Buyer (Filter Press LLC), \$12.95

This inviting journal is sprinkled with delightful haiku by award-winning poet Laurie Wagner Buyer, who hopes the book will offer insight to readers and inspire them to capture their own memories on its pages. "Make the book yours," she invites. "Use the blank space to explore your own Infinite Possibilities." (A limited number of autographed copies will be available.)

A Peak at the Springs: A Culinary Exploration

By Junior League of Colorado Springs (Favorite Recipes Press), \$26.95

For entertaining over the holidays, peruse this wonderful collection of new classic recipes featuring locally grown Colorado ingredients. This tour of Colorado Springs offers enticing recipes for appetizers and beverages, soups and salads, main courses, vegetables and sides, sweets and treats.

Dinosaur Park

By Mike Davis and Hannah Wilson (Kingfisher), \$17.99

Who's brave enough to enter the lost world of dinosaurs? Most children are, and this unique field guide will help them learn essential facts about the most amazing reptiles ever to walk the earth. Included are nine press-out dinosaurs, four pop-up play scenes and a field guide of basic facts with phonetic pronunciations for the animals in the park. This colorful oversized volume with eye-catching pop-up scenes will appeal to all the dinosaur-lovers on your list.

Waddle!

By Rufus Butler Seder (Workman Publishing Co.), \$12.95

The latest in Seder's series of Scanimation Picture Books features animals that waddle, stomp, hop, leap, flap, prance, scamper, and slither as you turn the pages. Children of all ages will enjoy watching the animals move—with color—as they did in the black and white volumes **Gallop!** and **Swing!** This is one book you have to see to believe.

Guardians of Being

Words by Eckhart Tolle; Art by Patrick McDonnell (New World Library), \$18

This wonderfully unique collaboration brings together two masters of their fields, joining original words by spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle with delightful illustrations by Patrick McDonnell, creator of the acclaimed comic strip *Mutts*. Every heartwarming page provokes thought, insight, and smiling reverence for all beings. The book also reminds us of the wonder and joy to be found in the present moment, amid the beauty we sometimes forget to notice all around us.

On This Special Night

By Claire Freedman and Simon Mendez (Scholastic), \$14.99

On a silent winter's night, one star burns brighter than all the rest. "That must be a special star," Mother Cat whispers. When Little Kitten and Mother Cat join the animals journeying toward the starry light, they discover that it is a special star indeed—shining with peace, love, and joy on this very special night. This beautiful picture book tells the Christmas story through the eyes of the animals in a way that is sure to capture the interest of young children.

The Christmas Magic

By Lauren Thompson with pictures by Jon J. Muth (Scholastic Press), \$16.99

Far, far north, where the nights are longest and the stars shine brightest, the spirit of Christmas fills the air with magic. Santa gathers his reindeer, feeds them parsnips and berries, and polishes his bells and sled. Then, with great care, he chooses toys for every child in the world, whom he dearly loves. This best-selling author and Caldecott Honor artist have created a warm and enchanting book that will touch the heart of the very youngest child.

As you are shopping for family and friends, you may want to remember boys and girls who have a bleak Christmas ahead. If you would like to help put a book in the hands of one of these children, visit the Tri-Lakes Cares Giving Tree at Covered Treasures Bookstore.

Until next month, Merry Christmas and happy reading!

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Combat today's stress with massage

By Cindy Zarges

Stress is something we all feel every day to some degree. The state of the current economy has stress levels higher for many people. We can't avoid all stress, but too much stress can negatively affect our lives and our health.

Stress is a reaction that the body takes when it is threatened causing physical, mental and emotional responses. Stress causes high blood pressure and muscle tension and tightness, sleeplessness, decreased immune system, and digestive problems. Stress is linked to six leading causes of death—heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide. People are ignoring the signs of accumulating stress and tension and finding it hard to relax and get relief from their symptoms.

One of the antidotes to stress is massage. Massage was once thought of as a luxury, but has been medically proven to be effective in reducing stress. Massage elicits the relaxation response in the body. The relaxation response is the opposite of the stress response. It brings the body back into balance causing the body to relax, the breathing to slow and deepen, the heart rate to slow, improves circulation and digestion, and causes stress hormone production to slow. Serotonin levels are raised, allowing you to feel happy, less anxious, less depressed, and to sleep better.

Continued massage sessions can allow people to recognize and release stress more easily. The effort

required to regain lost health is much more costly, time-consuming, and difficult than to maintain your health. Keeping stress at bay with regular massages can help you in your journey to maintain your health.

Ways to enhance the relaxation effects in a massage:

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You can't avoid all stress in life, but you can control its effects by evoking the relaxation response. Life is full of challenges and stressors. Combat them by getting regular massage. Make massage part of your health care regime.

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Bird Watch on the Palmer Divide

Mourning dove



Drawing of Mourning Doves by Elizabeth Hacker. A color version is posted at www.ourcommunitynews.org/v9n12bird.htm.

By Elizabeth Hacker

One holiday tradition I always look forward to is listening to “The Twelve Days of Christmas.” The song references some of my favorite birds, including a partridge, two turtledoves, French hens, geese, and swans. It’s a festive song, and the rhythm and melody always capture my imagination and put me in the holiday spirit.

I’ve always wondered if the turtledove is a mourning dove. Worldwide there are over 300 species of pigeons and doves, and it could be any one of them. Many cultural legends and religious stories include a dove. Universally, the dove has come to symbolize peace. In the Old Testament, a dove brought good tidings to Noah after he had been stranded on a boat with a lot of smelly animals. I’m sure that must have put Noah’s mind at peace.

More recently, poet laureate and anti-war advocate Robert W. Bly uses these gentle birds in his powerful poems to symbolize peace. Bly grew up in southwestern Minnesota in the 1930s and observed flocks of mourning doves foraging for seeds on the prairie landscape. At one time large numbers of doves descended on fields, stripping the croplands of grain. Farmers considered doves to be a scourge on their crops. Hunting and poisoning have brought their numbers down, and today far fewer birds pose the threat to farmers they once did.

Pigeons and doves can be found on every part of the globe with the exception of the Antarctic, the Arctic and the parched sands of the Saharan Desert. When I travel to other countries, I’m always amazed at the variety of sizes and colorful markings of various dove species. Last year while in Mexico, I observed the diminutive Inca dove, about the size of a sparrow, foraging under the trees at the airport where hoards of busy travelers scurried by only a few feet away. It proved to me the adaptability of this bird and how well it co-exists with humans.

Two species that annually migrate to the Palmer Divide are the mourning dove and the Eurasian collard dove. These two could pass for identical twins except for a marking on the neck of the collard dove. The Eurasian collard dove is also more aggressive, which may explain why it has become more common here. Some remain here in the winter, but many migrate south.

The mourning dove is a graceful, slender-tailed, small-headed dove often seen perched on overhead wires or in trees across much of North America. It is a mid-size bird, about 12 inches in length. Male and female are a grayish brown with dark spots on their wings and cheeks. Because I observe this bird many times during the day, I don’t know if it’s the lighting or if I’m actually seeing a pinkish tone to its fawn-colored breast feathers. A blue eye ring accentuates each large round eye, and the dove’s sharp pointed tail makes an otherwise pudgy bird appear streamlined.

The mourning dove is monogamous, and strong pair

bonds form for at least one full season and, given the right conditions, possibly for many years. The male begins courting a female by puffing up his neck and cooing. Often he will fly up in the sky and glide in wide circles on his way down, only to gracefully land next to his lady. How could she resist his romantic overtures?

Once a pair bond is formed, the male will lead the female to potential nesting sites. She chooses the site, and the male will bring her material such as twigs and grasses to build a nest. Still the romantic, he lands on her as he brings her nesting materials.

The female builds a flimsy platform in a tree, on the ground, or on a ledge. Several years ago, a pair nested in a wreath that hung on our front door. One night, a big wind destroyed the nest. The pair then moved to a nearby pine tree to begin a new nest.

In warm climates, the mourning dove is a prolific breeder, producing as many as six broods a year, more than any other native bird. In the West, it may produce two or three broods with two white eggs in each nest. After the female lays the eggs, the male is very attentive and defends the nest. Both parents incubate the eggs for about two weeks or until the squabs (chicks) are hatched.

The squabs are fed “pigeon milk,” a substance rich in fat and protein. Both parents produce milk in their crops, a sac at the base of their esophagus, and feed it to their young for three days or until they are mature enough to digest grains. The squabs fledge the nest in less than two weeks after hatching, but the parents continue to feed them for a few weeks, at which time the young birds join a flock and are able to forage on their own. The parents take a few weeks off to build up their strength before they begin the next nesting cycle.

Christmas trees are often decorated with ornamental white doves that symbolize the peace of the holiday season. As the holiday approaches, I wish my readers good health, happiness, a bit of cheer, and most of all, a peaceful New Year.

Elizabeth Hacker is an artist in the Tri-Lakes area. Her bird prints are available on her Web site, www.ElizabetHackerArt.com, with proceeds benefiting habitat preservation. E-mail her at elizabethhacker66@yahoo.com with your questions and bird stories.

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Art Matters

The art of living in “Try” Lakes

By Janet Sellers

By now you have likely heard of the 3/50 Project. Did you know that if half the employed population would spend \$50 at a locally owned business, it would generate \$42.6 billion? The Project (www.the350project.net) reports, “For every \$100 spent locally, \$68 circulates and enriches the local economy, compared to \$43 from a chain store. Spend it online, and nothing comes home.”

We create our community by living in it and supporting the local existence with our energy, money, appreciation, and our feelings of connectedness. We’ve come together for the many civic and fun events in our area that our fellow humans have created for us to enjoy. Over decades, the incremental steps to make our area more and more fun to live in have required careful thinking through. We have been creating our Tri-Lakes cultural life for many years, and we are ready to grow again. This time, we are making a plan of sorts, with help.

The Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region, (aka COPPeR) met with some of the Tri-Lakes area’s arts leaders on Nov. 17. The focus group included Jim Wilson, Monument Town Manager Cathy Green, Susan Adams and Donna Wagner of the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA), Tommie Plank of Covered Treasures Bookstore, Bettina Swigger, executive director of COPPeR, and yours truly, OCN writer and local artist.

The vision of COPPeR is to unite communities by creativity via connecting residents and visitors with arts and culture to enrich the Pikes Peak region.

With a number of audience development tools, COPPeR seeks to fulfill that goal. Swigger filled us in on COPPeR’s activities, which includes such imaginative development roles as the Pikes Peak poet laureate, Dream City, arts advocacy, and quality of life indicators as

well as its signature marketing/audience development tool, www.Peakradar.com. From local visual artists to musicians, theater, public art venues and cultural events, COPPeR, a nonprofit organization, currently is at work on the first-ever cultural plan for the region. (There is a huge store of information at www.COPPeRcolo.org)

The focus group discussed concerns, issues, dreams and aspirations for the Tri-Lakes area in terms of cultural life access, participation, and civic engagement. The group discussed ideas to integrate the arts into the social, economic, and political fabric of our community. With an eye to the many types of community/cultures in our area (military presence, natural environment, faith centers and sporting centers) the community holds many interest bases for citizens in the locale.

Our area has grown in the arts pretty much due to generous civic volunteer efforts and the sheer hard work of local artists and local merchants.

With mostly just ourselves to make up the effort, we have come very far in providing superb quality arts access here. Swigger applauded the Tri-Lakes community for its hard work and related to us that such a powerful effort in communities is extremely rare. She said that most places have an endowment of some sort or government funding to back up the arts. It seems our endowment is all elbow grease at the moment, and yet we all share a common pride and friendliness in our arts efforts. Art has a way of doing that to people. Here, we like our art so much that we have been willing to plod on in all kinds of weather to make our local arts culture happen.

Surprisingly, the well-endowed institutions have a collapse of sorts when their big-ticket funding sources quit on them. They have to cut programs, cut payrolls, and cut out art and culture to keep their institutions alive.

We have what I like to call the “small ticket” support of each community member who shops, walks, and supports our creative culture with their hard-earned dollars, one brick-and-mortar venue at a time. We have had continued growth in this version of a basic and much-needed human scale arts support.

Citizens of Tri-Lakes, rejoice and remember that each of us supports our creative community with heart and coin, and there are many rewards to each of us for that.

With a vital creative community, our locale is fun to live in, enriched with cultural growth and, as an indicator of quality of life, the economic returns for us just grow. Quality of life is wonderful for us each day, and it reflects on our other assets, such as real estate values, as much or more than any other indicator can. Instead of attempting to be near a good location, we are creating the great location.

Speaking of being in a great place at a good time, take your friends and family out to see our festive winter sites this month. The Palmer Lake star shines bright every night—a beacon to the season.

The Historic Monument area is filled with festive holiday banners hand-painted by our artists and waving brightly for your pleasure. Pick up the brochure from a local merchant and map out your banner art tour; check for the signatures, too. Each artist has put in a lot of energy to make your day merry. Every citizen and visitor can enjoy something here that has been carefully and thoughtfully prepared with you in mind. And, if the spirit moves you, buy some art locally. You know you want to do that!

Two journeys make for one great TLCA show

By David Futey

During November, the galleries of the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) had two journeys on display—one that encompassed a lifetime and the other a trip of fond remembrance. Diane Cornish’s Celebration of a Journey was a collection of cartoons, sculptures, and watercolors that represented a lifetime of artistic expression.

Cornish, pictured with her watercolor work Caribbean Cove, drew inspiration for her works from a variety of life experiences, including being a teacher, clown, and chef; taking trips to Italy and the Caribbean; and pursuing master’s degree in art. The show was a tribute to her

mother, Anita Seitz, who was present at the opening reception on Nov. 7.

Suzanne Jenne, shown with her work Figuier, initially went to France during her sophomore year in college as part of a dance theater troupe. Since that time she has returned to France on a number of occasions, taking photographs during each trip as a remembrance of her travels and French heritage.

Based on those photographs, Jenne’s show, titled *Oh..la..la..la*, was a collection of paintings and photographs representing “the simplicity and beauty of French countryside living, the majesty of cathedrals, the orderli-

ness of French courtyards and the lushness of trees, flowers and gardens.”

Jenne said, “This collection of work is more representational than my usually more abstract modality.”

Indeed, both artists demonstrated the breadth of their talents as we went along for the ride.

For the opening reception, entertainment was provided by The Storys, Bill Duryea, and Nancy Norman. Information on upcoming events at the TLCA is at www.trilakesarts.org/.



(L to R): Diane Cornish, Suzanne Jenne, and The Storys. Photos by David Futey.

Support Our Community. Shop Tri-Lakes.

Snapshots of Our Community

Taste of Lewis-Palmer raises money for charities, Nov. 12

By Bernard Minetti

The 2009 Taste of Lewis-Palmer fundraiser put on by the sixth-graders of Lewis-Palmer Middle School is set up to provide funding for the Heifer Project, which sends animals to impoverished families. The sixth-graders chose to raise money for four goats, two heifer cows, and two water buffaloes to be sent internationally.

The group also will donate to Tri-Lakes Cares and

Lewis-Palmer Middle School Cares. Both local groups provide for those who need temporary assistance. They help by funding emergency and social service needs and programs that help people to regain self-sufficiency.

The sixth-graders also picked a domestic charity to donate to. The children learned about five different domestic charities and voted to support St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

The children also sold cookbooks containing their recipes. They have sold 576 and are ordering 20 more to fill the remaining orders. The second part was fulfilled at the Taste of Lewis-Palmer Middle School. Students volunteered to bring in dishes made from their recipes submitted for the cookbook. Tickets were sold for 50 cents. A ticket bought you a taste of these delicious dishes.



Top left (L to R): David Holthaus, Chef Gregory Wurl, Danielle Wurl, Chef Sy'mone Shivvers, and Lia Shivvers. These two student chefs from Lewis-Palmer Middle School present their recipes. Chef Gregory presents a favorite family recipe for goulash. Chef Sy'mone offers her chili with pork. This recipe was passed down from her grandmother. **Top right** (L to R): The Lewis-Palmer Middle School teachers who championed the Taste of LP project are (top row) Rob Schultz, Alexi Seabourne, and Carrie Locke; (middle row) Laura Meyer, Susan Voyzey, and Deb Vincent; (bottom row) Carrie Block, who is the coordinator, with Karen Orazen, and Kristin Boyd. **Bottom left** (L to R): Taylor Burford, Mary Burford and Chef McKenna Burford present their offering of bon bons for the project. **Bottom right** (L to R): Lorie Beck with daughter Chef Amanda Beck. Amanda presents her recipe for mud pie. Chef Bryce Montel, standing in front of his mother, Tammy, offers his recipe for dump cake. Angela Howard stands behind her son, Chef Dakota Howard, as he shows his recipe for crème de menthe cake. *Photos by Bernard Minetti.*



VFU Post 7829 Patriot's Pen Awards, Nov. 16



The VFW Post 7829 Patriot's Pen Award dinner was held Nov. 16 at the Monument Academy. The VFW sponsors a national essay contest with the theme "When Is The Right Time To Honor Our Military Heroes?" Vice Commander Joe Martin presided over the awards dinner to recognize the local 7th and 8th grade winners of this national writing contest. The 7th and 8th grade winners, Kathryn Homoki and Quinn Stevenson, each won a \$100 Savings Bond. The VFW Post winner, Brianna Ott, won a \$200 Savings Bond. Brianna's essay will be forwarded to the district level competition. One winner from each district will then advance to the VFW Department competition and then one winner to the National competition. The first place National Youth Patriot's Pen winner will receive a \$10,000 Savings Bond and a trip to Washington, D.C.

Pictured (L to R): Patricia Rossi, Carolyn Barrett, Brianna, Ott, Tony Wolusky, Kathryn Homoki, Joe Martin, and Quinn Stevenson. *Photo by Frank Maiolo.*

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Palmer Divide thanks fans at TLCA concert, Nov. 21

Palmer Divide band members, from left, Mickey Stinnett (dobro), Verolen Kersey (bass) sitting in for Dustin Reed, Jody Adams (mandolin), and Greg Reed (guitar), brought their original style of bluegrass to the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) stage on Nov. 21. The performance was the last of their 2009 touring season, and they used it as an opportunity to thank their fans. With several thousand members on their newsletter list, Palmer Divide has received national recognition and radio play. To show its appreciation, the band was sending a CD with a live recording of this evening's concert to everyone in attendance.

The band has been gathering increasing support since it merged together from different groups in 2004. Adams started playing in this area for the Air Force Academy Band in 1988. He said that over time, "All of us played in groups and played covers of bluegrass pioneers like Flatt and Scruggs and the Stanley Brothers." But once they got together, the songs seemed to "roll right out of our head," Adams said, with original compositions shaping their entire song list from the beginning.

Information about Palmer Divide can be found at www.palmerdivide.com, and the upcoming events calendar for the TLCA is at www.trilakesarts.org.

Photo and caption by David Futey.



Chili and star lighting draws record crowd, Nov. 28

By David Futey

A record crowd of 493 attended the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department's (PLVFD) Chili Supper and Star Lighting on Nov. 28. Held at the Palmer Lake Town Hall, this annual event raises money for maintenance of the star, which has been lighting Sundance Mountain in Palmer Lake since 1936.

For the price of admission, attendees had their choice of turkey, spicy or mild chili, potato soup, and cinnamon rolls along with a variety of beverages. A raffle was conducted with services and donated items from a number of local businesses as the prizes. A special donation was received from Modern Woodmen of America, which offered a \$2,500 matching donation. Jack Frank, represent-

ing Modern Woodmen, said this not-for-profit financial services company donates close to \$24 million each year nationally. Frank thought this event was a very worthy cause, as did many from the community who shared some time together to start off this holiday season.



Top left: Part of the record crowd enters the Palmer Lake Town Hall during the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department's Chili Supper and Star Lighting on Nov. 28. **Top center:** Kara Bopp, an 8-year-old from Monument, had her raffle ticket drawn and was rewarded with the opportunity to press the remote button used to light the star on Sundance Mountain. Kara and her family rode in a Palmer Lake fire engine to the site of the star. **Top right:** Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department firefighter Lori Forman, left, uses a spatula to take fresh-from-the-oven cinnamon rolls and place them on plates to be served. Forman and the other firefighters prepared and served the food. **Left:** The Palmer Lake Star as seen from the Little Log Church after the lighting for the 2009 holiday season. *Photos by David Futey.*

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Tri-Lakes Women’s Club presents grant to Boy Scouts



Tri-Lakes Women’s Club (TLWC) Granting Committee Chair Candyce Sylling and Past President Sharron Steffey present a grant check to Boy Scout Troop 6 Scout Master Eric Weatherby and Senior Patrol Leader Riley Burkart at a recent Court of Honor. Grant funds enabled the troop to purchase a cargo trailer to transport camping equipment.

The Tri-Lakes Women’s Club is a non-profit organization, set up exclusively for charitable and educational purposes in our community. The TLWC has proudly granted over \$550,000 to schools, fire and police departments, and other non-profit organizations that provide services to residents within the boundaries of Lewis-Palmer School District 38.

Photo and information provided by the TLWC.

“Polar Express” at the Mining Museum



Palmer Lake Town Council member Gary Coleman looks over the setup of his Polar Express model train display, which this year is located at the Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI).

For the fourth year in row, Coleman and his display will help many Tri-Lakes community members determine if they can hear the sleigh bell and raise money for a worthy cause. As in past years, Coleman is accepting donations for the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department from those who enjoy seeing the train display that depicts certain scenes from the movie *Polar Express*. Coeman will have a firefighter’s boot by the display as a donation receptacle.

The museum is offering \$1 off its customary admission charge if you mention wanting to see the train exhibit, which will be at the museum through the end of December.

Check the museum’s Web site (www.wmmi.org) for the days and times it is open during the holiday season, or call (719) 488-0880.

Photo by David Futey.

Group donates knitted items to Urban Peak



On Nov. 10, at the Table Top Llamas Studio in Black Forest, John McIlwee (center), Executive Director of Urban Peak, and the “Bitch ‘n Knit” (BnK) group enjoy a laugh following the presentation of more than 150 handcrafted scarves, caps, baby items, mittens, toys, and many other items for the children of Urban Peak. Urban Peak provides a refuge and support for abused and neglected children who would otherwise live on the street. The knitters contributed their time and bought the yarn for the project. Table Rock Llamas provided the workspace and the yarn at a discount.

Urban Peak welcomes community support especially during the upcoming holiday season. For information about Urban Peak, call 630-3223.

For information about the BnK bunch, call Table Rock Llama Fiber Arts at 495-7747.

Photo by Richard Bridges.

November and December library events

By Harriet Halbig

As the year winds down, we look forward to some special seasonal events at the library.

November's visit with Rowen Monks and her tarantulas and the New Moon kickoff party went well, despite the wintry weather.

In December, Monument's Paws to Read program continues on Mondays from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. in addition to Wednesdays from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Regularly scheduled events such as Toddler Time, Book Break, and Story Time will continue as usual. Adult discus-

sion groups will also continue to meet.

Special events include Colossal Cookies and Mrs. Claus on Dec. 12 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Enjoy the pleasure of combining cookies with icing and sprinkles. Patrons may taste their treats or carry them home. Goodies are provided by the Tri-Lakes Friends of the Library. Mrs. Claus and her puppet friends will share songs and stories with youngsters of all ages.

The following afternoon, Sunday, Dec. 13, enjoy lovely live harp music by teenage musicians for a relaxing afternoon respite from holiday stress.

The Monumental Readers will dis-

cuss *Life & Times of the Thunderbolt Kid* by Bill Bryson on Dec. 18 at 10 a.m.

Please note that there will no storytime on Dec. 22.

On the walls in December will be "How I Think in Paint," watercolors by Susan Crowther featuring flowers, fruits, vegetables, and textiles. In the display case will be a display of Lenox holiday pattern items from 1985 to the present.

Palmer Lake Library events

For our Palmer Lake patrons, children are invited to practice reading and build fluency by reading to the branch's Paws to Read dogs. On Saturday, Dec. 5, read to Atticus, a shiny black Newfoundland

from 11 a.m. until noon, and on Thursday, Dec. 17, read with Misty, a fluffy sheltie.

Palmer Lake's Family Fun event in December is Colossal Cookies on Dec. 19 at 10:30 a.m., when young patrons can decorate giant cookies to eat or use as ornaments.

The Palmer Lake Book Group will discuss *Savannah Blues* by Mary Kay Andrews on Friday, Jan. 8 at 9 a.m. (The library will be closed on Jan. 1.) New members are always welcome.

Please note that both branches will be closed all day on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Happy holidays, and we hope to see you at the library!



Above: Callie Trautner attended the New Moon party dressed as Alice Cullen.

Below: Rowen Monks, left, shares her tarantula, Fang, with Libby Ashworth.

Photos by Harriet Halbig.



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Dine In or Take Out

Palmer Lake Historical Society, Nov. 19

Historian reveals history of USAFA grounds

By Bernard L. Minetti

At the November monthly meeting of the Palmer Lake Historical Society, retired Air Force Col. Jack Anthony talked to a rapt audience as he revealed some of the historical facts surrounding the acquisition of the Air Force Academy property. He is a researcher and soon to be teacher at the academy.

U.S. Air Force acquired the site through eminent domain in 1954. Some of the names involved in the history of the site were the Burgess, Capp, Bishop, Spurlock, Flegell, Wilson, Robinson, Lehman, Husted and Lennox families. All these families were living on the site at the time of the acquisition. Some of the homes are still standing on the academy land, though most are not available to sightseers.

One of the most vivid railroad events of the time occurred in the summer of 1909 just north of the town of West Husted, located on the academy site just south of the Northgate Road bridge. In the days of the Denver & Rio Grande narrow gauge railroad, the tracks ran north and south through the town of West Husted. The approximate site was just west of the present standard gauge tracks of the Burlington Northern.

At this point there was a siding that allowed trains to pass one another. On Aug. 14, two trains were approaching each other. The northbound train was chugging along at full power as it was going uphill toward Palmer Divide after leaving the siding. The southbound train was barreling south toward West Husted at 40 miles an hour. The engineers had received incorrect orders. The northbound train pulled out directly into the path of the southbound train.

The subsequent crash left 11 dead and 42 injured. This crash occurred just north of the bridge on Northgate Road. Photographs of this wreck can be viewed at the Lucetia Vaile Museum in Palmer Lake.

See www.pprun.org/newsletters/HistoryTrailRun/Article07-HustedTrainWreck.pdf for the story of how one of the survivors was later memorialized in Acacia Park in downtown Colorado Springs.



Above: Retired Air Force Col. Jack Anthony at Palmer Lake Town Hall during the Nov. 19 presentation to the Historical Society. Anthony is assigned to the Air Force Academy Astronautics Department where he is a researcher and soon to be a teacher. He presented a summary of the historical events surrounding the Academy's acquisition of the property. **Left:** Hans Post, a retired Dutch naval officer and member of the Historical Society board, asked for volunteers to run for positions on the board. He is the nominating committee chairman and may be reached at 487-7405. *Photos by Bernard Minetti.*



Another site that became a part of the academy is Cathedral Rock, which can be seen for miles as a prominent landmark. Cathedral Rock was a "sign in" site for many early settlers. They would literally etch their names and sometimes the date of inscription in the face of this limestone pinnacle as they passed by. The earliest name appears to have been inscribed in 1810. Carbon dating of biological material at the rock indicates that humans had passed by or inhabited the area as early as 1000 A.D.

Anthony has written 10 articles that make up his History Trail Run Series. These articles can be viewed online at "History Trail Run Jack Anthony."

Hans Post, a director on the Palmer Lake Historical

Society board, has asked for volunteers to fill vacant positions on the new board. He is the chairman of the nominating committee and may be reached at 719-487-7405 if you are interested in being nominated for the position of board member.

There will be no meeting in December. The next meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 21 in the Palmer Lake Town Hall. Everyone is invited to participate. Look for details in the events listings of the January issue of *OCN*.

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Special Events and Notices

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.

Historic Monument

Small Town Christmas, Dec. 5

This day full of holiday activities includes a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, holiday crafts for the kids, reindeer, miniature donkeys, carolers, hayrides, hand-painted holiday banners, a Christmas tree lighting, merchant special events and refreshments throughout Historic Downtown Monument, Sat., **Dec. 5**, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Pick up a location and event flier from a participating merchant or call Vicki Mynhier, 884-8016, for more information.

MOMS Club Holiday

Extravaganza and Coat Drive, Dec. 5

The MOMS Club Colorado Springs North Chapter will host its Holiday Extravaganza and coat drive **Dec. 5**, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Sundance Mountain Lodge, 1865 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Local crafters and artisans will exhibit and sell their hand-made goods. Holiday baked goods will be available and favorite local home-based businesses will participate. Profits will be donated to Tri-Lakes Cares and the Mike King Family Fund. Admission is \$2 for ages 10 and older; children under 10 are free. Admission is free if you bring a new or gently worn coat (with working closures and no stains or rips) for the One Warm Coat drive.

If you have a coat to donate but can't stay for the craft sale, you may drop off the coat at Sundance Mountain Lodge between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. The donated coats will be distributed to those in need in our community. For more information, call Tamara Baxter, 510-9814, or e-mail momsclubnevents@yahoo.com.

MOMS Club (Moms Offering Moms Support) is an international nonprofit organization and a 501(c)(3) publicly-supported charity. The club is a support group for mothers who stay at home with their children, including those who work part-time but are home with their children during the day. For more information about the MOMS Club Colorado Springs North Chapter, visit the Web site at www.cosnorthmomsclub.com.

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332-0810 and ask for Karey.

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North Pole at Tri-Lakes

Craft Show, Dec. 5 and 6

Monument Hill Sertoma will hold their annual holiday craft show **Dec. 5**, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and **Dec. 6**, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Lewis-Palmer Middle School, 1776 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Lots of crafters will have many unique hand-crafted items for sale. Punch and cookies will be served both days at 2 p.m. Admission is nonperishable food items for Tri-Lakes Cares. For more information call Bob, 278-8393, or Bonnie, 651-1946.

Community Summit

on School Funding, Dec. 8 and 10

The state estimates that D-38 will receive a substantial reduction in funding. Suggestions already submitted include closing schools, changing to a four-day school week, and cutting transportation. This is the time for the public to get involved to share opinions on these alternatives. Two public forums to gather input on these issues are set for **Dec. 8**, 6:30-9 p.m., at the D-38 administration building, 146 Jefferson St., and **Dec. 10**, 6:30 p.m., at

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Creekside Middle School, 1330 Creekside Dr. Comments may be sent by e-mail to info@lewispalmer.org. Additionally, a community survey form will be posted on the district Web site, lewispalmer.org. For more information, call 488-4700.

The Best Christmas

Pageant Ever, Dec. 10-13

Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) and the Castle Rock Players have joined together for a fun-filled show at Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake **Dec. 10 and 11**, 7 p.m.; **Dec. 12**, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and **Dec. 13**, 2 p.m. Bring the whole family to enjoy this



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comedy about six unruly siblings who discover the true meaning of Christmas. Refreshments will be available for a suggested donation and Dec. 12-13 Santa will be there for photos at 1 p.m. Purchase a 5-by-7 of your children with Santa for only \$10. Tickets for the play are \$11 for adults or \$9 for seniors and students and can only be purchased online at www.trilakesarts.org or www.crplayers.org. For more information, please call Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 481-0475, or Castle Rock Players, 303-814-7740.

Project Lighthouse 6th Annual Christmas Pow Wow, Dec. 12

Join the Palmer Lake Historical Society **Dec. 12**, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., at the Palmer Ridge High School gymnasium, 19255 Monument Hill Rd., Monument, for a day of Native American culture, history, exhibits, songs, and dance. Pow Wows are social gatherings of Native Americans and involve feasting, drum music, and dance. This day of celebration is a wonderful opportunity to experience Native American culture and traditions. The all-day event includes Native American drummers and dancers, as well as art and artists. This program is free; however, donations of new unwrapped toys or gently used winter coats would be greatly appreciated. For more information, visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us/plhs/.

Gleneagle Festival of Lights, Dec. 12

Gleneagle Golf Club and the Gleneagle Civic Association will present the first Holiday Festival of Lights celebration **Dec. 12**, 5-8 p.m., at the Gleneagle Golf Club, 345 Mission Hill Way. Bring the whole family for a guided tour by golf cart to view homes on the golf course decorated for the holidays and vote on your favorites. Come see the giant decorated tree by the clubhouse and enjoy Christmas carols and music. Refreshments and a cash bar will be available at the clubhouse. Activities are subject to cancellation due to weather. Call 488-0653 for more information.

Christmas handbell concert, Dec. 12

Everyone is invited to a free community concert and sing-along **Dec. 12**, 7 p.m., at Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 Third St., Monument. Come and enjoy the sounds of the season featuring multiple handbell choirs, brass, organ, flute, vocals, and sing-along. For more information, phone Betty Jenik, 488-3853.

Palmer Lake Yule Log Hunt, Dec. 13

This popular event is one of Palmer Lake's best traditions. Join the trek up the mountain in search of the Yule Log **Dec. 13**, 1 p.m. Hunt participants should arrive at Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent, between 11 a.m. and noon. The winner will ride the Yule Log back to town and get the first cup of wassail. Those not participating in the hunt can stay warm indoors and enjoy Christmas carols and stories told by storyteller John Stansfield at 1 p.m. For more information, phone the town office, 481-2953.

Combined Donald Wescott Fire Protection District and PAETEC Christmas Food Drive, Dec. 15

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District is again partnering with its information technology consultant, PAETEC of Colorado Springs (www.paetec.com) in a holiday food collection drive at Wescott's Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Drive, on Tuesday, **Dec. 15**. Please help Wescott and PAETEC provide Christmas dinner turkeys and non-perishable food items, as well as clothing to Colorado Springs Care and Share (www.careandshare.org) from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be a radio show broadcasting from Station 1 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. to highlight this festive event, but you can start dropping off food and clothing before that if you prefer. For more information call 488-8680.

A Colorado Evening featuring John Fielder and Chuck Pyle, Dec. 15

Join the Palmer Lake Historical Society (PLHS) and the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) in an evening featuring two of Colorado's premier artists **Dec. 15**, 7 p.m. (doors open at 6:30 p.m.). Celebrated photographer John Fielder and singer/songwriter Chuck Pyle will showcase the best of Colorado landscape and song. Rarely do these talented artists appear together. However, both are joining in this fundraising effort to support the programs of the PLHS and TLCA. TLCA is located at 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake. All tickets are \$15 and are available at Covered Treasures Bookstore (481-2665) in Monument and The Wine Seller (481-3019) and TLCA (481-0475) in Palmer Lake. For more information, visit www.trilakesarts.org or phone 481-0475.

Combined Police and Fire Departments' Holiday Toy Drive ends Dec. 16

The Monument Police Department and the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Department need toys for the fourth annual Tri-Lakes area Santa on Patrol. Please drop off toys by **Dec. 16** at the Monument Police Station, 645 Beacon Lite Rd., or the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Department, 18650 Highway 105. Please mention that the toys are for "Santa on Patrol." Monument Police Chief Jacob Shirk and the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Department will deliver toys to children in the Tri-Lakes area Dec. 19. Chief Shirk will drive a police car with red lights and sirens, followed by fire engines driven by the Fire Department "Elves." For more information, call Chief Shirk, Santa Assistant, 884-8032.

"The Wonder of Christmas" Holiday Concert, Dec. 18-19

Tri-Lakes Music Association (TLMA) presents its annual free Christmas concert **Dec. 18-19**, 7 p.m., at Palmer Ridge High School, 19255 Monument Hill Rd., Monument. The two-hour concert will feature the TLMA orchestra, choir, and a children's choir. Money collected during a free-will offering will go to scholarships for two D-38 high school seniors involved in music and to Tri-Lakes Cares, a local nonprofit organization. For information visit trilakesmusic.org, or call Bob Manning, 481-3883, or e-mail rwgmanning@comcast.net.

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Santa Patrol

Santa will get his annual ride through the district on a Wescott pumper on Saturday, **Dec. 19**. His tour of the district will start at about 10 a.m. from Station 1 at 15415 Gleneagle Drive. Santa will patrol Gleneagle, Pleasant View, and Sun Hills distributing candy canes. While the time of arrival on each street on Dec. 19 is not firm, there will be no doubt when Santa is moments away from your neighborhood, with sirens and lots of flashing lights! For more information on Santa's route check www.wescottfire.org/santa.htm or call 488-8680.

Acoustic Eidolon Concert, Dec. 19

Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) presents the unique sounds of Acoustic Eidolon **Dec. 19**. Doors open at 7 p.m. for the 7:30 show. Joe Scott plays an instrument he invented: the double-neck guitjo, a custom acoustic guitar with two necks. This one-of-a-kind instrument sounds at times like a piano, dulcimer, or harp. Hannah Alkire is a classically trained cellist. Together, they have enchanted audiences around the world with their signature acoustic music that blends Celtic, folk, and classical genres. TLCA is located at 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake. Advance tickets are \$12 for TLCA members and \$15 for non-members (\$15 and \$18 at the door) and are available at Covered Treasures Bookstore (481-2665) in Monument and The Wine Seller (481-3019) and TLCA (481-0475) in Palmer Lake. For more information, visit www.trilakesarts.org or phone 481-0475.

The Tri-Lakes Women's Club Colorado Classic Collection 2009

Ornaments for the Tri-Lakes Women's Club (TLWC) annual Colorado Classic Collection are on sale now in select local stores: in Monument at Bella Casa (155 Second St.), Covered Treasures Bookstore (105 Second St.), and Second Street Art Gallery (366 Second St.); in Palmer Lake at Finders Keepers (91 S. Highway 105) and Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (304 Highway 105). This year's featured artist is nationally recognized watercolorist and Tri-Lakes resident Jo Gaston. For this year's TLWC's ornament, she has chosen to do a drawing of beautiful Colorado columbines.

The proceeds received from these ornament sales will benefit the Tri-Lakes Community through the TLWC's granting program. In the past 34 years, the TLWC, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, has raised over half a million dollars for the Tri-Lakes Community. For more information, call Barbara Dienes, 487-7392.

Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority seeks volunteer

The Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) Board of Directors seeks a volunteer to serve as an at-large representative on its Citizen Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations to the PPRTA board concerning budgets, contracts, and project implementation. Committee members must live in one of the PPRTA member communities: City of Colorado Springs, unincorporated El Paso County, City of Manitou Springs, Town of Green Mountain Falls, or Town of Ramah, and must be able to attend monthly meetings at 1:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month at PPACG's offices at

15 S. Seventh St. in Colorado Springs. To apply, send a letter of application with a brief resume of experience by Jan. 5, 2010, to: Pikes Peak RTA Citizen Advisory Committee, PPACG, 15 S. Seventh St., Colorado Springs, CO 80905. ATTN: Rick Sonnenburg.

Clear snow and ice around mailboxes for letter carriers

Residential and business customers are asked to clear their mailbox area including nearby sidewalks, steps, and porches of snow, sleet, slush, ice, and debris. Letter carriers are instructed to not deliver to mailboxes and locations that are too hazardous or difficult to access. Support your letter carrier in providing safe and timely delivery of your mail. Following snowstorms and bad weather conditions, please clear a safe path to your mailbox.

Free firearm safety kits to be distributed locally

The Monument Police Department will provide free firearm safety kits to local residents through a partnership with Project ChildSafe, the nationwide firearms safety education program. Each kit contains gun safety information and a cable-style gun lock that fits most types of handguns, rifles, and shotguns. The Monument Police Department administrative offices at 645 Beacon Lite Rd. are open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Drop by during those times to pick up a free gun-lock kit. For more information, phone 481-3253.

Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP)

LEAP helps residents struggling to pay their home heating bills. LEAP benefits provide assistance to help families with their heating bills but are not intended to pay the entire bill. The eligibility period for LEAP runs Nov. 1 to April 30. Applications are accepted each year during the eligibility period. Application packets will automatically be mailed to residents who received LEAP assistance last year at the address where they were living at that time. For more information about LEAP benefits, call 1-866 HEAT-HELP (1-866-432-8435).

County Prescription Discount Program now online

Significant savings on medications are just a click away. El Paso County's Prescription Discount program is growing in size, scope, and ease of access. There are more than 80 participating local pharmacies and dozens of discount card distribution locations and agency partners that are offering the card to their employees and constituents. Now people can download their own personalized prescription discount card on the county Web site at www.elpasoco.com/.

Any county resident without prescription coverage can use this program. Even if you have insurance for prescription medications, you may still benefit from the discount card, since it might save you money on prescription medications your existing plan does not cover. For more information about the County Prescription Discount Program, log onto www.elpasoco.com/ or call 520-6337 (MEDS).

New thrift shop opens in Monument

Hangers—Your Thrift Shop is now open Wednesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., at 341 Front St., Monument. Shop for gently-used clothing, books, and household items. Proceeds from Hangers will be used to promote the ongoing mission of Tri-Lakes Cares, a community based nonprofit. For more information, call 488-2300 or visit the Tri-Lakes Cares Web site, www.trilakescares.org.

Tri-Lakes Senior Alliance Thrift Store in Palmer Lake

The new store is located at 755 Highway 105, in Unit 9 behind the West End Center in Palmer Lake. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The thrift store is a project of the Senior Alliance in cooperation with the entire Tri-Lakes Community. The project's mission is to raise funds and resources for Tri-Lakes Senior Citizen Program activities, provide volunteer opportunities for Tri-Lakes residents, and offer affordable merchandise to all Tri-Lakes residents. For volunteer information call Diane, 481-4640. To donate items call Chaz, 229-5946.

Senior Safety Program

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Authority and Tri-Lakes Health Advocacy Partnership, Senior Alliance, have developed a Senior Safety Program. The free service includes installing and maintaining smoke detectors, a fire department evaluation of seniors' homes to identify and correct safety hazards and address seniors' safety needs, and Vial of Life for in-home storage of medical information in case of emergency. For information, call Lisa Frasca, 488-3304.

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 Meeting**, Mon., Dec. 7, 6:30 p.m., New Monument Town Hall & Police Department Building, 645 Beacon Lite Rd. (at Hwy 105). Normally meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **Tri-Lakes Wastewater Facility Joint Use Regular Committee and Annual Board Meeting**, Tue., Dec. 8, 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. respectively, 16510 Mitchell Ave. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Bill Burks, 481-4053.
- **Community Summit on School Funding & D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) Meeting**, Tue., Dec. 8, 6-9 p.m., District Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The Community Summit will follow the 30-minute meeting. Find out about the funding challenges the district will face and voice your opinion about priorities in public education in D-38. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: 488-4700, or visit lewispalmer.org.
- **Palmer Lake Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Tue., Dec. 8, 7 p.m., 120 Middle Glenway. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: 481-2732.
- **Triview Metropolitan District Board Meeting**, Wed., Dec. 9, 5 p.m., New Monument Town Hall & Police Department Building, 645 Beacon Lite Rd. (at Hwy 105). *This is the last meeting of the year.* Normally meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: 488-6868.
- **Monument Planning Commission Meeting**, Wed., Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m., New Monument Town Hall & Police Department Building, 645 Beacon Lite Rd. (at Hwy 105). Normally meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 884-8017.
- **D-38 Special Education Advisory Committee**, Wed., Dec. 9, 6-7:30 p.m., District Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 488-4700.
- **Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., Dec. 9, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105. Normally meets 4th Wed. each month. Info: 266-3367.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Workshop**, Wed., Dec. 9, 7 p.m. Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.
- **Woodmoor Water & Sanitation District Meeting**, Thu., Dec. 10, 1 p.m., 1845 Woodmoor Dr. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 488-2525.
- **Community Summit on School Funding**, Thu., Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m., Creekside Middle School, 1330 Creekside Dr. Find out about the funding challenges the district will face and voice your opinion about priorities in public education in D-38. Info: 488-4700, or visit lewispalmer.org.
- **Palmer Lake Town Council Meeting**, Thu., Dec. 10, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.
- **Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority Meeting**, Wed., Dec. 16, 8:30 a.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Meets 3rd Wed. each month, location varies. Info: 884-8017.
- **Donala Water & Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., Dec. 16, *CANCELED*. 15850 Holbein Dr., Colorado Springs. Normally meets 3rd Wed. each month at 1:30 p.m. Info: 488-3603.
- **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., Dec. 17, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (off Union Blvd & Printers Pkwy). Meets 1st & 3rd Tue. (if required) each month. Info: 520-6300 or <http://adm2.elpasoco.com/planning/agendas/pc/pc-agn.asp>.
- **Palmer Lake Planning Commission Meeting**, Wed., Dec. 16, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets 3rd Wed. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us.
- **Woodmoor Improvement Association Board Meeting**, Wed., Dec. 16, 7 p.m., Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. Meets 4th Wed. each month. Info:

- 488-2693 or visit www.woodmoor.org.
- **Lewis-Palmer School District 38 Board Meeting**, Thu., Dec. 17, 5:30 p.m., District Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 488-4700.
 - **Monument Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Thu., Dec. 17, 7 p.m., 130 2nd St. Meets 3rd Thu. each month. Info: 481-4886.
 - **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., Dec. 21, 6:30 p.m., New Monument Town Hall & Police Department Building, 645 Beacon Lite Rd. (at Hwy 105). Meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017.
 - **Forest View Acres Water District Board Meeting**, Wed., Dec. 23, *CANCELED*. Monument Sanitation District boardroom, 130 Second St. Normally meets 4th Thu., 6 p.m., each month. Info: 488-2110 or visit www.fvawd.com.
 - **Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Board Meeting**, Wed., Dec. 23, *CANCELED*. Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Normally meets 4th Wed., 7 p.m., each month. Info: 488-8680.
 - **Monument Board of Trustees Meeting**, Mon., Jan. 4, 6:30 p.m., New Monument Town Hall & Police Department Building, 645 Beacon Lite Rd. (at Hwy 105). Meets 1st and 3rd Mon. each month. Info: 884-8017.
 - **El Paso County Planning Commission Meeting**, Tue., Jan. 5, 9 a.m., 2880 International Circle (off Union Blvd & Printers Pkwy). Meets 1st & 3rd Tue. (if required) each month. Info: 520-6300 or <http://adm2.elpasoco.com/planning/agendas/pc/pc-agn.asp>.
 - **D-38 District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) Meeting**, Tue., Jan. 5, 6:30 p.m., Palmer Lake Elementary School, 115 Upper Glenway. Meeting date was changed for discussion of information for the Board of Education's next meeting. Normally meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: 488-4700.
 - **Academy Water and Sanitation District Board Meeting**, Wed., Jan. 6, 7 p.m., Donald Wescott Station 2, 15000 Sun Hill Dr. Meets 1st Wed. each month. Info: 481-0711.
 - **Palmer Lake Town Council Workshop**, Thu., Jan. 7, 7 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Normally meets 1st Thu. each month. Info: 481-2953 or visit 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 for preschoolers. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monuments Library: Storytime**, every Tue., 10-10:30 a.m. Stories and more for children age 3 and older. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Palmer Lake Library: Storytime**, every Wed., 10:30-11 a.m. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
- **Monument Library: Paws to Read**, every Wed., 3:30-4:30 p.m. Let your child practice reading to a Paws to Read dog. No registration required. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library: Toddler Time**, every Thu., 10 and 10:30 a.m. Rhymes & rhythms for kids up to 24 months. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library: Snuggle-Up Storytime**, every Thu., 7:30 p.m. Evening stories; PJs and blankies welcome. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library: American Girls Club**, Wed., Dec. 9, 4:15-5:15 p.m. Girls ages 7-11 are invited to the American Girls club for a book discussion, crafts, and more. Registration is required; call, drop by, or register online. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library: Colossal Cookies**, Sat., Dec.

- 12, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Decorate a cookie to take home. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library: Family Fun—Mrs. Claus Tells Stories**, Sat., Dec. 12, 1:30 p.m. Storyteller Cathy Kelsay brings Mrs. Claus to life to tell holiday stories, sing holiday songs, and share puppets to celebrate the season. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
 - **Monument Library: Heavenly Harps**, Sun., Dec. 13, 2-3:30 p.m. Enjoy a lovely harp recital given by students ages 10-17. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
 - **Palmer Lake Library: Paws to Read**, Thu., Dec. 17, 10:30 a.m. Let your child practice reading to Jingle, a young golden doodle dog. No registration required. Meets 1st Sat. each month. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
 - **Palmer Lake Library: Holiday Cookies and More**, Sat., Dec. 19, 10:30 a.m. Decorate your own cookies to take home and have fun with games (Cookie Bingo!), activities, and crafts. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
 - **Palmer Lake Library: Paws to Read**, Sat., Jan. 2, 10:30 a.m. Let your child practice reading to Jingle, a young golden doodle dog. No registration required. Meets 1st Sat. each month. Palmer Lake Branch Library, 66 Lower Glenway. Info: 481-2587.
 - **Pikes Peak Library District's Kids Web**: Kids Web at www.pppld.org features resources for school reports and homework and links to local historical information, Tumblebooks—free online read-along books, and a Fun & Games link with free online games, learning activities, coloring book pages, and more. A “grown-ups” link has information about local school districts, home-schooling, and more.

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: Talk English!** every Mon. through Dec. 7, 7-8:30 p.m. Practice informal social conversation in English with friendly and supportive people. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library Socrates Café**, every Tue.,

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ALİYAH CONGREGATION

Sabbath Services: Saturdays 10am



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www.aliyahcongregation.com
303-931-4047 / 719-481-8551

Calvary Fellowship Monument
238 Third St.—Downtown Monument
Pastor Tony Magar (719) 290-1748
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- 1-3 p.m. This group focuses on a deeper look into philosophy, religions, spirituality, and the common threads among humanity. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
- **Monument Library Senior Synergy**, every Wed., 10 a.m.-noon. Join this group of friends dedicated to empowering individual growth through life-long learning and positive relationships. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
 - **Life Circles**, Mon., **Dec. 7**, 10:30 a.m. This supportive writing group provides discipline, inspiration, and structure during the process of writing one's memories or history. Meets 1st & 3rd Mondays each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
 - **Monument Library: Heavenly Harps**, Sun., **Dec. 13**, 2-3:30 p.m. Enjoy a lovely harp recital given by students ages 10-17. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
 - **Monument Library's Monumental Readers Book Club**, Fri., **Dec. 18**, 10-11:30 a.m. All are welcome to this spirited group. Meets 3rd Fri. each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
 - **Monument Library: Tri-Lakes Crafters**, Fri., **Dec. 18**, 3:30-5:30 p.m., Monument Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Drop in to share ideas, get help. Meets 1st and 3rd Fri. each month. Info: Clare Wissinger, 481-8442.
 - **Monument Library: History Buffs**, Fri., **Dec. 18**, 1-3 p.m. Each month this group picks a period of history and members read any book from that time period. Expect a lively discussion about the era. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
 - **Life Circles**, Mon., **Dec. 21**, 10:30 a.m. This supportive writing group provides discipline, inspiration, and structure during the process of writing one's memories or history. Meets 1st & 3rd Mondays each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
 - **Life Circles**, Mon., **Jan. 4**, 10:30 a.m. This supportive writing group provides discipline, inspiration, and structure during the process of writing one's memories or history. Meets 1st & 3rd Mondays each month. Monument Branch Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Info: 488-2370.
 - **Monument Library: Tri-Lakes Crafters**, Fri., **Dec. 18**, 3:30-5:30 p.m., Monument Library, 1706 Lake Woodmoor Dr. Drop in to share ideas, get help. Meets 1st and 3rd Fri. each month. Info: Clare Wissinger, 481-8442.
 - **The Library Channel (Comcast 17)** broadcasts 24/7. See live simulcasts of programs, recorded presentations, a schedule of Library events, children's story times, an adult literacy program, El Paso County Commissioners meetings, and much more. Find the schedule online at ppld.org, then click on the link "Happenings @ Your Library," then click on the "Comcast 17" link to search the schedule.

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

- WEEKLY & MONTHLY EVENTS**
- **Monument Hill Sertoma Club Breakfast Meeting**, every Sat., 8 a.m., The Inn at Palmer Divide, 443 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Info: Jan Heinlein, 306-6975.
 - **Talk and Tannies Walking Group**. Join with others to get fit. For more information contact Thea at Theapeutic Massage Therapy, 488-2250.
 - **Senior Lunches at Monument Town Hall**, normally every Mon. & Thu., except the 1st Thu. each month and holidays, 166 Second St., Monument. Arrive 11:30 a.m., dine at noon. Stay for free bingo the 2nd Thu. each month. Cost: \$2. Info: Dorothy Myers, 481-4189; Maggie Nealon, 488-3037.
 - **Artfully Speaking Toastmasters Club**, every Mon., 5:30-6:30 p.m., DeVry University, 1175 Kelly Johnson Blvd., Room 15, Colorado Springs. Improve your public speaking, leadership, and meeting planning skills with Toastmasters. New members and visitors welcome. Info: Debbie Bonomo, 593-9882, or visit <http://artfullyspeaking.freetoasthost.us>.
 - **Tri-Lakes Business Accelerators Leads Group**, every Tue., 8-9:15 a.m., Shani's Café, 140 Second St. Monument. New businesses are invited to join the group and share leads and tips. Info: Glenn, 492-0551.
 - **YMCA Senior Fitness Classes**, every Tue. &

- Thu., SilverSneakers Cardio Circuit, 8:30 a.m.; SilverSneakers Muscular Strength & Range of Movement, 9:30 a.m., Tri-Lakes Family YMCA, 17250 Jackson Creek Pkwy. Participants must be YMCA or SilverSneakers members. Info: 481-8728.
- **Tri-Lakes Chapter of Business Networking International**, every Wed., 8-9:30 a.m., Inn at Palmer Divide, 443 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Come visit our group and see why it is one of the most successful networking groups in the Tri-lakes! Info: Micah, 352-2292, or e-mail Micah@vistacustomcolors.com.
 - **Senior Citizen Luncheons**, every Wed., 11 a.m.-1 p.m., D-38 Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. Area seniors are invited for lunch & activities hosted by Tri-Lakes Senior Alliance. \$3 donation requested. Info: 488-3855.
 - **Gleneagle Sertoma**, every Wed., 11:30 a.m., The Academy Hotel, 8110 N. Academy. Interesting speakers and programs; all are welcome. Info: **Larry Oliver 488-9625 or Kay Petersen 481-4403**.
 - **Al-anon 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 or 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).
 - **FACCMasters Club**, every Thu., noon, Lockheed Martin, 9975 Federal Dr. Improve your public speaking, leadership, and meeting planning skills with Toastmasters. New members and visitors welcome. Info: visit <http://faccmasters.freetoasthost.us> or call Kirby, 481-3738.
 - **Alateen meeting**, every Thu., 7 p.m., Family of Christ Church, 675 Baptist Rd., southwest corner room, door will be ajar. Info: Jean, 487-8781.
 - **Myasthenia Gravis Association of Colorado Support Group Meetings**. Location varies. For information, call Carolyn, 488-3620, or contact the MGA: visit www.4-mga.org, phone 303-360-7080, or e-mail 4mga@4-mga.org.
 - **Tri-Lakes Non-Profit Council Meeting**, Tue., **Dec. 8**, 2-3:45 p.m., Western Museum of Mining & Industry, 225 North Gate Blvd. "Teaming Up To Support Non-profits" tells how to increase your chances of receiving grant funds through collaboration, including sharing of human and physical resources, joint promotion of programs, and expanding services in your area. Also, an overview of the annual summit meeting of the Fundraising Professionals of Southern Colorado Debbie Swanson, Executive Director of Tri-Lakes Cares. The program is free. RSVP to the chamber, 481-3282.
 - **Friends Like Me: A 45-and-under Support Group for Breast Cancer**, Tue., **Dec. 8**, 6-7 p.m., location to be decided. Join other young women who are battling or have already battled breast cancer. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: 351-5079.
 - **Tri-Lakes Networking Team Monthly Dinner Meeting**, Tue., **Dec. 8**, 6:30-9 p.m., Inn at Palmer Divide, 443 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Businesswomen building relationships in a social setting. Meets 2nd Tue. each month. Info: Janine Robertson, 266-0246 or visit www.trilakesnetworkingteam.com.
 - **Black Forest Chapter of AARP Potluck Luncheon**, Wed., **Dec. 9**, 11:30 a.m., Black Forest Lutheran Church, Shoup and Black Forest Road. Meets 2nd Wed. each month. Info: Electa Beckner at 596-6787 or Chuck Eaton at 495-2443.
 - **Senior Bingo at Monument Town Hall**, Thu., **Dec. 10**, 166 Second St., Monument, after the noontime senior lunch. Come for lunch at 11:30 a.m., then stay and play. Free! Win prizes! Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: Maggie Nealon, 488-3037.
 - **Ben Lomond Gun Club, Tri-Lakes Chapter**, Thu., **Dec. 10**, 7 p.m., Tri-Lakes Fire Station 1, 18650 Hwy 105 west of Monument near the bowling alley. Meets 2nd Thu. each month. Info: 481-3364.
 - **Tri-Lakes Women's Club (TLWC) Luncheon**, Fri., **Dec. 11**, 10:45 a.m., The Pinery, 12375 *Black Forest* Rd. The Ballet Society of Colorado Springs presents "The Nutcracker." RSVP: Billy Healy, 278-8393, or e-mail famhealy@comcast.net. Tri-Lakes Women's Club membership is open to all women living in School District 38 and the luncheons are open to all current TLWC members and their guests. The club sponsors the Wine and Roses event in October and the Pine Forest Antiques Show and Sale in April. Proceeds from these events benefit local nonprofit groups. Visit www.tlwc.net or contact Judy Crusius, crusii@aol.com, 481-1994; or Barb Dienes,

- bdienes@msn.com, 487-7392.
- **El Paso County Hazardous Materials Collection Facility**, Sat., **Dec. 12**, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 3255 Akers Dr., Colorado Springs. The facility is open the 2nd Saturday each month as well as Mon.-Thu., 7 a.m.-5 p.m. The facility accepts paint and related products, lawn and garden chemicals, household cleaners, old batteries, fire extinguishers, fireworks, flares, ammunition, automotive products, (no tires), various electronics, and TVs up to 19" diagonal. Bring a nonperishable food item for Care and Share. Akers Drive runs north off Constitution Avenue just west of Marksheffel Road. Info: 520-7878 or visit http://adm.elpasoco.com/Environmental_Services/Solid_Waste_Management.
 - **Tri-Lakes Church of Christ Community Closet**, Sat., **Dec. 12**, 1-3 p.m., 20450 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument (SW corner of Beacon Lite and County Line Roads west of I-25). All are welcome to shop for free gently-used clothing items. Donations of clean clothing and shoes in good condition are appreciated. Open 2nd Sat. each month until further notice. Info: 495-4137; or the church, 488-9613.
 - **Fibromyalgia Support Group**, Mon., **Dec. 14**, 5 p.m., College Pharmacy, 3505 Austin Bluffs Pkwy (downstairs), Colorado Springs. A DVD on the disease and treatments will play 5-6 p.m.; the meeting starts at 6 p.m. Share concerns and success stories in a small group and address your questions to a D.O. Learn how you can become pain-free. Visitors and new participants always welcome. No charge, no products sold. Meets 2nd Mon. each month. Info: Lorna Searle, 481-3735.
 - **Tri-Lakes Home Educators' Support Group**, Mon., **Dec. 14**. Meets 2nd Mon. each month for support, information, field trips, and special events. Info: e-mail Tracy Mills, Millspartyof6@msn.com.
 - **Cancer Support Group for Women**, Tue., **Dec. 15**, 7 p.m., St. Matthias Episcopal Church, 18320 Furrow Rd., Woodmoor. Meets 3rd Tue. each month. Info: Lindsay, 487-9362.
 - **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7829**, Tue., **Dec. 15**, 7 p.m., The Depot Restaurant, 11 Primrose St., Palmer Lake. New members welcome. Meets 3rd Tue. each month Info: Tony Wolusky, Post Commander, 481-4419, or twolusky@aol.com.
 - **Macular Degeneration Support Group for the Visually Impaired**, Thu., **Dec. 17**, 1-2 p.m. Meets 3rd Thu. Location varies. Info: Tri-Lakes Cares, 481-4864 x23.
 - **Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition Meeting**, Thu., **Dec. 17**, potluck supper, 6 p.m., meeting 6:30-8:30 p.m., Beidleman Environmental Center, 740 W. Caramillo St., Colorado Springs. Meets 3rd Thu. Info: John Stansfield, 303-660-5849 or e-mail jorstan@juno.com.
 - **Gleneagle Women's Club Luncheon**, Fri., **Dec. 18**, 11:30 a.m., Liberty Heights, 12105 Ambassador Drive (off Voyager). This luncheon, with complimentary wine and punch, is hosted by the book clubs. Please bring a book, holiday wrapped or in a gift bag, to exchange. Chan Bergen, a charming Liberty Heights resident will tell a beautiful "Love Story." Cost: \$15. RSVP by **Dec. 11** to Phyllis Petersen, 481-4403 or e-mail kayandpjpeterston@aol.com; Susan Colt, 232-8424 or e-mail colts89@gmail.com; or Rosalie Pounder, 481-0405 or e-mail jrpounder@comcast.net. If you cancel your reservation after 12/11, you are still obligated to pay for the meal.
 - **Juvenile Diabetes Support Group**, Sat., **Dec. 19**, 9 a.m., It's a Grind Coffee House, 15954D Jackson Creek Pkwy, Monument. Meets 3rd Sat. each month. Info: Chris, 884-0832 or e-mail cabernathy@woodmoor.com.
 - **Tri-Lakes Parents of Multiples**, Mon., **Dec. 21**, 6:30-8 p.m., Little Log Church, 133 High St., Palmer Lake. Come meet other parents of twins, triplets, and more. Meets 3rd Mon. each month. Childcare available. RSVP to tlpoms@yahoo.com. Info: 488-4221.
 - **American Legion Tri-Lakes Post 9-11**, Tue., **Jan. 5**, 6:30 p.m., Depot Restaurant, Hwy 105 & Primrose St., Palmer Lake. New members welcome. Meets 1st Tue. each month. Info: Mike Christensen, 484-0467.
 - **Monument Homemakers Club Monthly Potluck Lunch**, Thu., **Jan. 7**, 11:30 a.m., Monument Town Hall, 166 2nd St. Meets 1st Thu. each month except Jan. and unless D-38 is delayed or closed due to bad weather. Newcomers are welcome. Info: Bev Wells, 488-3327.

- **Palmer Divide Quilt Guild**, Thu., **Jan. 7**, 7 p.m., Church at Woodmoor, 18125 Furrow Rd. Meets 1st Thu. each month. Info: Teresa Kovacic, 559-0083, or e-mail teresa.kovacic@biofunctionusa.com.
- **MOMS Club of Monument and Colorado Springs North**. Come meet other stay-at-home moms and kids in your area. Weekly activities and playgroups scheduled throughout the month for ages birth and up. Moms in Monument and Palmer Lake contact Laura S., 434-8356, lmstarnr@yahoo.com. Moms in ZIP 80921 and parts of Black Forest contact Debbie, 646-5939, debdidovic@gmail.com. Visit www.momsclub.org for more information.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Historic Monument Small Town Christmas**, Sat., **Dec. 5**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Downtown Monument. This day full of holiday activities includes a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, holiday crafts for the kids, reindeer, miniature donkeys, carolers, hayrides, handpainted holiday banners, a Christmas tree lighting, merchant special events, and refreshments throughout Historic Downtown Monument. Pick up a location and events flyer from a participating merchant. Info: Vicki Mynhier, 884-8016.
- **MOMS Club Holiday Extravaganza and Coat Drive**, Sat., **Dec. 5**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Sundance Mountain Lodge, 1865 Woodmoor Dr., Monument. Local crafters and artisans will sell hand-made goods, holiday baked goods will be available, and favorite local home-based businesses will participate. Profits go to Tri-Lakes Cares and the Mike King Family Fund. Cost: \$2 for ages 10 and up, kids under age 10 are free. Free admission if you bring a new or gently worn coat (with working closures and no stains or rips) for the One Warm Coat drive. Info: Tamara Baxter, 510-9814, or e-mail momsclubnevents@yahoo.com.
- **North Pole at Tri-Lakes Craft Show by Monument Hill Sertoma**, Sat., **Dec. 5**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., & Sun., **Dec. 6**, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Lewis-Palmer Middle School, 1776 Woodmoor Dr. Lots of crafters with many unique items. Punch and cookies at 2 p.m. Admission: nonperishable food items for Tri-Lakes Cares. Info: Bob, 278-8393; Bonnie, 651-1946.
- **Yule Log Pot Luck Dinner** Tue., **Dec. 8**, 6 p.m., Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Please bring a potluck dish to share and place settings for your family. Info: 481-2953.
- **Community Summit on School Funding**, Tue., **Dec. 8**, 6:30-9 p.m., D-38 administration building, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The state estimates that D-38 will receive a substantial reduction in funding. Closing schools, changing to a 4-day school week, and cutting transportation are some suggested solutions. Two public forums to gather input on these issues are scheduled; the second meeting is Dec. 10, 6:30 p.m., at Creekside Middle School. Comments may be sent by e-mail to info@lewispalmer.org. Additionally, a community survey form will be posted on the district Web site, lewispalmer.org. For more information, call 488-4700.
- **Community Summit on School Funding**, Tue., **Dec. 10**, Creekside Middle School, 1330 Creekside Dr. The state estimates that D-38 will receive a substantial reduction in funding. Closing schools, changing to a 4-day school week, and cutting transportation are possible solutions. This is the second public forum to gather input on these issues. Comments may be sent by e-mail to info@lewispalmer.org. Additionally, a community survey form will be posted on the district Web site, lewispalmer.org. For more information, call 488-4700.
- **The Best Christmas Pageant Ever**, Thu., **Dec. 10** & Fri., **Dec. 11**, 7 p.m.; Sat., **Dec. 12**, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m.; Sun., **Dec. 13**, 2 p.m., Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA), 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Bring the whole family to enjoy this comedy about 6 unruly siblings who discover the true meaning of Christmas. Tickets are \$11 for adults or \$9 for seniors and students and can only be purchased on line at www.trilakesarts.org or www.crplayers.org. For more information, please call Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts, 481-0475, or Castle Rock Players, 303-814-7740.
- **Black Rose Acoustic Society Annual Thanks To The Members Concert with The Grant Gordy Quartet**, Fri., **Dec. 11**, 7 p.m., Black Forest Community Center, 12530 Black Forest Road at Shoup Road, Black Forest. Hear a rare blend of flat-

- picking virtuosity, jazz exploration, and classical sensibility in a new acoustic/Jazz element/folk music approach. Cost: \$15 general public, \$7 members. Info: www.blackroseacoustic.org.
- **Peak Ranch Alpacas Christmas Open House**, Thu., **Dec. 12** & Fri., **Dec. 13**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 19850 Beacon Lite Rd., Monument. Munch cookies, sip hot cider, and browse the ranch store for warm and luxurious alpaca garments. Mention this ad and get a free bar of goat milk soap. Info: 481-6129 or visit peakranchalpacas.com.
 - **Project Lighthouse 6th Annual Christmas Pow Wow**, Sat., **Dec. 12**, 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Palmer Ridge High School gymnasium, 19255 Monument Hill Rd, Monument. Join the Palmer Lake Historical Society for a day of Native American culture, history, exhibits, songs, drums, and dance. Vendors include silversmiths, pueblo potters, basket makers, flute makers, bead workers, artwork, and food. Free to the public; donations of new, unwrapped toys or gently used winter coats are welcome. Info: visit www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us/plhs/.
 - **Gleneagle Festival of Lights**, Sat., **Dec. 12**, 5-8 p.m., Gleneagle Golf Club, 345 Mission Hill Way, Colorado Springs. Bring the whole family for a guided tour by golf cart to view decorated homes on the golf course and vote for your favorites. See the giant decorated tree by the clubhouse and enjoy Christmas music. Refreshments and a cash bar will be available at the clubhouse. Subject to cancellation due to weather. Info: 488-0653.
 - **Christmas Handbell Concert**, Sat., **Dec. 12**, 7 p.m., Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 3rd St., Monument. Everyone is invited to enjoy the sounds of the season at a free community concert featuring multiple handbell choirs, brass, organ, flute, vocals, and sing-along. Info: Betty Jenik, 488-3853.
 - **Annual Yule Log Hunt**, Sun., **Dec. 13**, Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent. Trek up the mountain in search of the Yule Log. Hunt participants should arrive 11 a.m.-noon. The winner will ride the Yule Log back to town and get the first cup of wassail. Non-hunters can stay warm indoors with Christmas carols and stories told by John Stansfield at 1 p.m. Info: 481-2953.
 - **Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Food Collection Drive**, Tue., **Dec. 15**, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Please help Wescott and PAETEC provide Christmas dinner turkeys and non-perishable food items, as well as clothing to Colorado Springs Care and Share (www.careandshare.org). Info: 488-8680.
 - **Mountain View Electric Association Falcon Operations Center Open House**, Tue., **Dec. 15**, 4-6 p.m., 11140 E. Woodmen Rd. Members and guests are invited to tour the new facility and see all the energy-saving features. Info: 719-495-2283.
 - **A Colorado Evening with John Fielder and Chuck Pyle**, Tue., **Dec. 15**, 7 p.m. Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA), 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. Celebrated photographer John Fielder and singer/songwriter Chuck Pyle will showcase the best of Colorado landscape and song at this joint fundraiser for TLCA and the Palmer Lake Historical Society. Cost: \$15. Tickets available at Covered Treasures Bookstore (481-2665) in Monument and The Wine Seller (481-3019) and TLCA (481-0475) in Palmer Lake. Info: visit www.trilakesarts.org or phone 481-0475.
 - **Monumental Styles & Co. Holiday Open House**, Fri., **Dec. 18**, 5-9 p.m., 1445 Cipriani Loop (Hwy 105 & Knollwood). Stop by for some holiday cheer! Info: 487-8660.
 - **"The Wonder of Christmas"** Holiday Concert, Fri. & Sat., **Dec. 18-19**, 7 p.m., Palmer Ridge High School, 19255 Monument Hill Rd, Monument. Tri-Lakes Music Association (TLMA) presents its annual free Christmas concert to benefit Tri-Lakes Cares and for scholarships for two D-38 high school seniors involved in music. Info: visit trilakesmusic.org, or phone Bob Manning, 481-3883, or e-mail rwgmanning@comcast.net.
 - **Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Santa Patrol**, Sat., **Dec. 19**, 10 a.m. Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Info: for Santa's route check www.wescottfire.org/santa.htm or call 488-8680.
 - **Acoustic Eidolon Concert**, Sat., **Dec. 19**, doors open at 7 p.m. for the 7:30 show, Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA), 304 Hwy 105, Palmer Lake. These two musicians have enchanted audiences around the world with their signature acoustic music that blends Celtic,

- folk, and classical genres. Advance tickets \$12 for TLCA members, \$15 for non-members (\$15 and \$18 at the door) and are available at Covered Treasures Bookstore (481-2665) in Monument and The Wine Seller (481-3019) and TLCA (481-0475) in Palmer Lake. Info: 481-0475, or visit www.trilakesarts.org.
- **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI) Special Exhibit: Full Steam Ahead!** Mon.-Sat., 9 a.m.-4 p.m., ongoing through **Dec. 31**. Explore the multiple roles of photography in the late 1800s with an exhibit featuring reproductions from the William Henry Jackson collection. Cost: \$8 adults, \$7 military/AAA, \$6 seniors & students, \$4 children 3-12, free to children under 3 & museum members. RSVP and info: phone 488-0880 or e-mail RSVP@wmmi.org. WMMI is located at 225 North Gate Blvd (I-25 Exit 156 A). Info: www.wmmi.org.
 - **Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI): Polar Express Train Display**. Mon.-Sat., 9 a.m.-4 p.m., ongoing through **Dec. 31**. See a Lionel model train display featuring scenes from the movie *The Polar Express*, courtesy of Palmer Lake Fire Trustee Gary Coleman. Mention you have come to see the train display to receive \$1 off per admission, which you may place in the boot for donations to the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department. Open Cost: \$8 adults, \$7 military/AAA, \$6 seniors, \$4 children. WMMI is located at 225 North Gate Blvd., east of I-25 at exit 156A. Info: 488-0880 or visit www.wmmi.org.

Our community calendar carries listings on a space-available basis for Tri-Lakes events that are sponsored by local governmental entities and not-for-profit organizations. We include events that are open to the general public and are not religious or self-promotional in nature. If space is available, complimentary calendar listings are included, when requested, for events advertised in the current issue.

To have your event listed at no charge in Our Community Calendar, please call 488-3455, or send the information to our_community_calendar@hotmail.com or P.O. Box 1742, Monument, Colorado 80132.

**Look for our next issue
Saturday, Jan. 9***
Ad Reservations: Fri., Dec. 25
**Finished ads in electronic format
are due by Fri., Jan. 1**
Letter Due Date: Fri., Jan. 1
Visit our web site to read, download,
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www.OurCommunityNews.org
***Delayed one week due to the holidays.**

Our Community News

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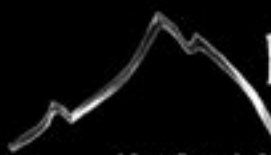


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