program to coordinate multiple first responder agencies in the event of a blizzard.

The county needs members of the general public to support this exercise by volunteering to be among 131 vol-
unteers needed to run the blizzard scenario, which is de-
signed to provide realistic training for the system. The volunteer "stranded motorists" will be given scripts and instructions to follow on Jan. 9 so first responders can "rescue" them. Volunteer-
ning would be great way to earn community service hours. Anyone who is interested should write to Andre at epg@pucc.org or call Lisa at 719-339-7831 as soon as possible so that organizers know they have enough volunteers.

Santa on Patrol!

By Larry Oliver, NEPCO President

Darryl Glenn, El Paso County commissioner, spoke to at-
tendees on the subject of economics and transportation at the Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community As-
sociations (NEPCO) general membership meeting, held at the Monument City Hall on Nov. 14.

Glenn introduced El Paso County Engineer Andre Bracken, whom the commissioner asked to accompany him to talk about transportation and road issues. Glenn used charts to accompany his presentation, and provided copies to all attendees. Copies of the charts will be placed on the NEPCO website (www.NEPCO.org).

Topics included:

• Regional Economic Forecast
• 2016 County Budget Overview
• Northern El Paso County Transportation Projects for 2016
• Air Force Academy Santa Fe Trail Update
• Military Update

According to Commissioner Glenn’s charts, the regional unemployment rates comparison of seven cities and 10 counties showed Colorado Springs and El Paso County ranging from 9.3 percent in 2010 to 4.5 percent in 2015. This was higher than statewide unemployment rates dur-
ing that period. Also, 2015 home sales increased over 2014 in the Pike’s Peak Region in each of the first six months as indicated on a chart.

Statistics on the regional economy show that the health care and social assistance, educational services, arts and entertainment, and recreation industries were the areas showing the most growth. Industry jobs leaving the region included manufacturing, information, and wholesale trade.

The top economic driver in the state is the military. Glenn showed that locally, the total defense impact, in-
cluding all industry, indirect and induced impacts exceeds $13 billion. This is roughly 45 percent of the local econ-
omy.

Statewide, the total defense impact is $27 billion, making it the third-largest industry sector in Colorado. The military accounts for jobs in almost every single county in the state. The total economic impact of just the military facilities is as follows:

FY 2011 $5.929 billion
FY 2012 $5.307 billion
FY 2013 $5.307 billion
FY 2014 $5.852 billion

Glenn presented key dates regarding the 2016 county bud-
get as follows:

• Month of November—series of budget hearings and department reports.
• Nov. 17—citizen comments, board direction.
• Dec. 8—possible adoption of 2016 original adopted budget.

Glenn also stated that El Paso County is the lowest of the 10 comparable counties for 2015 property tax per citizen, local tax cost per citizen, and for 2014 vs. 2015 sales and use tax collections.

Bracken briefed the audience on the following ongo-
ing county transportation and improvement projects:

• County Line Road
• Lake Woodmoor Drive
• Baptist Road (West)
• Gleneagle Transportation Enhancement Project
• Black Forest Culverts
• Highway 105-125 to SH 83
• Monument Hill Road
• Beacon Lite Road
• Northgate/Struthers Drainage Improvements

November Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Despite a warm start to the month, including some daily record highs on the 1st and 2nd, cold and unsettled weath-
er was the main story from about the 10th onward. This resulted in the monthly average temperatures to come in about 2°F cooler than normal. The active and snowy pattern that set up during the second week of the month and continued off and on until the end of the month resulted in snowfall more than three times the normal amount, making up for the dry September and October.

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Meeting elves will deliver the gifts on Dec. 19. For more in-
formation, contact Chief Shirk, 481-325.

The meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.

NEPCO’s mission is to promote communication and inter-
action among homeowners associations (HOAs) of north-
ern El Paso County in order to exchange ideas on topics of common interest and to develop collective responses to the county on issues affecting the quality of life of NEPCO member associations.

All formal and informal HOAs in northern El Paso County are invited to join NEPCO and should call Bob Swedenberg at 481-2723 or see www.neuco.org.

Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO), Nov. 14

County commissioner discusses local economics

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