

Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters to the editor are on page 31.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in Letters to Our Community should not be interpreted as the views of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.

Monument Hill Foundation thanks Chamber for award

On behalf of the Monument Hill Foundation, I would like to thank the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce for the honor of receiving the 2016 Non-Profit of the Year Award at the Chamber Dinner on Saturday, April 8. The Monument Hill Foundation is the charitable-giving arm of the Monument Hill Kiwanis Club, and our sole mission is to provide grants to support the youth and community of the Tri-Lakes area. Grants have assisted individual students, youth, and community organizations. Ours is a totally volunteer foundation, and in the six years we have been in existence, we have distributed over \$275,000 to our youth and community.

For example, 360 children have participated in the Children's Literacy Program at the Monument Library; over 100 students at Palmer Ridge and Lewis-Palmer High Schools have participated in the Rocky Mountain Youth Leadership Conferences; through The Resource Exchange program, grants have supported 280 families in the Tri-Lakes area; 50 students have participated in the Griffith Centers for Youth programs; 20 students have been assisted in the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program; and over 20 Lewis-Palmer High School and Palmer Ridge High School students have received Career Starter Scholarships to help in post-graduate vocations.

I would also compliment Terri Hayes (executive director of the Tri-Lakes Chamber), her board, and staff for a wonderful evening of entertainment, silent and live auctions, and all-around great social engagement with members of the community. I know it took hours of planning and organization to make this a highlight event of the year.

To find out more about the Monument Hill Foundation, please go to our website at monumenthillfoundation.org. There one will find information about who we are, what we do, and how to apply for grants in the 2017-18 granting cycle.

Ted Bauman,

Executive Director, Monument Hill Foundation

Awake Palmer Lake defended

I have served on the Awake Palmer Lake (APL) board for the last eight years. In the April 1 issue of *OCN*, it was suggested by a couple of Town Council members that the committee is not consulting with the council before taking actions. I want to assure your readers that this is not the case. Paul Banta had been our liaison to the council and stopped coming to meetings. Also, Kathy Green, the town manager, has attended our meetings and has reported back to the town regarding those meetings. In addition, the APL committee chair spent many hours of his own time putting together the grant application for GOCO without any help from the town. He was also able to lead us through the legal maze with the state of Colorado, which eventually led to the refilling of the lake.

The design of the pedestrian bridge was also called into question. The use of railroad shipping containers is meant to pay homage to Palmer Lake's history. As you know, the lake was used by the railroad for the purposes of taking on water for their steam engines. The railroad theme seemed to be a natural path to take, and the town has never objected.

Lastly, I would like to make everyone aware that the APL committee meets the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the Palmer Lake Museum. The community is invited to attend, and we welcome your input. Also, we are on Facebook, and our website is Awakepalmerlake.org.

I hope this gives everyone a clearer picture of our work and our intentions. We have worked hard to make Palmer Lake a place people want to come to by restoring its natural beauty that we all have come to love.

Bonnie Tinker

LPHS After Prom appreciation

Thanks to our great community of parents, LP staff, and students, After Prom was a huge success! We had approximately 400 students attend the event.

Many school districts do not offer an After Prom event, as the planning and coordination involved take a substantial amount of time and money. Both District 38 high schools have such a dedicated group of staff, parents, and community patrons that we have been able to make After Prom a yearly tradition.

Much of the financial support comes from donations from local businesses and families, who all understand the importance of keeping the students safe on that night. We would like to specifically recognize the following: Avery Asphalt, Back East Bar and Grill, Chick-fil-A, Coca-Cola Refreshments, Columbine Gardens Restaurant, Costco, Danelle's Boutique & Bridal/Tuxedo Junction, Deuces Wild Casino Rentals, Dion's Pizza, Gravity Play, Hamula Orthodontics, Home Depot, Hyland Hills Park & Rec (Water

World), Jackson Creek Chinese Restaurant, Jimmie John's, King Soopers, P.F. Chang's, Papa John's Pizza, Peoples Bank, Qdoba Mexican Grill, Safeway, Target, Tri-Lakes Printing, and Wal-Mart, as well as the Barry, Hudson, Kadlubowski, Oliver, Purdham, Sampson, Shuman, and Witt families.

Also, thanks to all the parents, LP staff, LP Art Club, and students who contributed in so many ways. We had over 100 volunteers who helped with everything from mailing invitations to building props, artwork for invitations, posters, and tickets, selling tickets, decorating, working on the night of the event, and cleaning up the day after.

A final and very special thank you goes to the After Prom committee of Lynne Asman, Christi Barry, Laura Bar-kocy, Julie Cook, Melanie Davis, Gretchen Donisi, Diane MacPherson, Audrey Meredith, Melanie Oliver, Lauralyn Purdham, Chele Randell, Karen Tucker, and Joanna Witt.

Karen Shuman, LPHS After Prom Chair

D38's eight-year crystal ball should inspire skepticism

School District 38 leaders have hosted three community presentations about long-term planning. The apparent purpose of the meetings was to have expensive consultants inform us that we need two new schools and structural additions to existing schools because of what they say will happen in our area—in eight years.

While it's true that current trends in construction point to a student population increase, District 38 still has plenty of unused space. One of our high schools currently has room for 400 more students. And there's an empty elementary school building in the middle of Monument which can hold 575 students. Its funding and complete renovation would cost a fraction of what it would cost to build a new building and could be finished within one year.

Not content to manage such a humble, cost-effective solution, D-38 has asked its experts to project a full eight years out to reach numbers that would justify an obnoxious, expensive construction binge. It's telling that the consultants didn't factor in the cyclical downturn that's approaching, or expected tax reforms that will inhibit housing growth. All they did was look at local developers' long-term plans and assume there will be a family with 0.6 kids living on every one of their lots by 2024.

Developers' plans are not a reliable predictor of the future. King's Deer is 20 years old and, as of today, 90 of its 530 lots still sit empty. Hilltop Pines, a development with 30 beautiful parcels, has been here 10 years and has only one home built. One home!

The point is that the further out they predict, the less you can rely on their predictions. If you think anyone can predict what's going to happen in eight years, D-38 has a \$50 million construction binge to sell you.

Derek Araje

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Mom would love a book!

By the staff at Covered Treasures

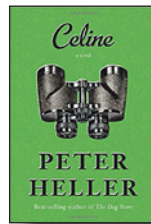
"All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."—Abraham Lincoln

Don't give Mom another scarf for Mother's Day on May 14. Give her some quiet time and a cup of tea to relax and enjoy a great book! Here are some new titles to consider:

Celine

By Peter Heller (Alfred A. Knopf) \$25.95

From the best-selling author of *The Dog Stars* and *The Painter* comes a luminous, masterly novel of suspense, inspired by Heller's own mother. This is the story of Celine, an elegant, aristocratic private eye who specializes in reuniting families while trying to make amends for a loss in her own past.



The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane

By Lisa See (Scribner), \$27

This is a powerful story about two women separated by circumstance, culture, and distance, and the enduring connection between mothers and daughters. In their remote Chinese mountain village, Li-yan and her family align their lives around the seasons and the farming of tea. Life goes on as it has for generations until a stranger arrives and marks the entrance of the modern world in the lives of the Akha people. Lisa See has crafted an unforgettable portrait of a little-known region and its people and a celebration of the bonds of family.

Hidden Figures

By Margot Lee Shetterly (William Morrow) \$15.99

Before John Glenn orbited Earth, or Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of dedicated female math-

Civil behavior needed

Civility: the act of showing regard for others; courteous behavior, politeness; a courteous act or utterance. A civil society requires civil behavior and civil discourse.

Respect, trust, and courteous behavior are hallmarks of a healthy organization. Unfortunately, recent D38 school board meetings have been disrupted by the discourteous, disrespectful behavior of a vocal minority who sees only agendas and ulterior motives, and who treat public meetings as a field of battle.

The important public work of our elected D38 representatives depends on and benefits from constructive, courteous comments and respectful inputs from community members. I urge all community members to embrace and follow these essential principles in school board meetings and discussions: "Civility requires that we listen to others with the knowledge of the possibility that they are right and we are wrong. It requires that we express ourselves in ways that demonstrate our respect for others. And it creates not merely a negative duty not to do harm, but an affirmative duty to do good."—From *Civility* by Dr. Stephen L. Carter, Yale law professor, writer, and novelist.

David Betzler

D-38 should stop accepting nonresident students before it asks for new buildings

If you manage a growing organization and realize that you are running out of space for your members, the solution is obvious: Stop allowing guests to use your facilities. If you run a school district and realize that your local population is going to increase so much that you need to build new school buildings, the solution is just as obvious: Stop allowing nonresident students to opt into schools that have run out of room.

Colorado's system of statewide open enrollment is specifically designed to ensure that local taxpayers are not forced to pay for new buildings to make room for nonresident students. Administrators can simply advise nonresident applicants they need the room for students who live in their districts. For some reason, however, stopping the flow of nonresident students into our district is never mentioned in the detailed solutions presented at D38's Community Open Houses. Instead, they offer construction-only solutions that leave taxpayers paying for two new schools and additions to existing schools.

Increasing our community's tax burden should be a last resort, not a reflex. Please consider helping us petition D38 leaders to rethink their solutions. Visit us at trilakesconservatives.org to find out more.

Mike Burnett

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emicians known as "human computers" used pencils, slide rules, and adding machines to calculate the numbers that would launch rockets, and astronauts, into space. Starting in World War II and moving through to the Cold War, the Civil Rights movement, and the space race, *Hidden Figures* follows the interwoven true accounts of four African-American women who participated in some of NASA's greatest successes. It chronicles their careers over nearly three decades as they faced challenges, forged alliances, and used their intellect to change their own lives and their country's future.

Hallelujah Anyway: Rediscovering Mercy

By Anne Lamott (Riverhead Books) \$20

With sensitivity, wisdom, and humor, Anne Lamott explains the importance of mercy in our lives, the extraordinary power it can have if we welcome it, and the unexpected value of sharing it with others and with ourselves.

Girl in Disguise

By Greer Macallister (Sourcebooks Landmark) \$25.99

For America's first female detective, respect is hard to come by. Danger is not. Set in 1856 Chicago and inspired by the real story of Kate Warne, this spirited novel follows the detective's rise during a time of crisis in the nation, bringing to life a fiercely independent woman whose triumphs helped sway the fate of the country.

The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper

By Phaedra Patrick (Mira Books) \$15.99

Sixty-nine-year-old Arthur Pepper lives a simple life, just as he did when his wife was alive. But on the one-year anniversary of Miriam's death, while sorting through her possessions, Arthur finds an exquisite gold charm brace-