

control noxious weeds and that the declining bee population is a worldwide problem, not caused by three sanitation districts doing weed control. "It's this type of narrow ignorant thinking that is driving the decline of honeybees and other pollinators! There are other effective things that can be done!"

The Town of Monument has found one of those ways and I applaud them! Shame on Monument Sanitation for joining ranks with those that have such a narrow perspective on the future!

**Claudia Swenson**

*Beekeeper*

**Editor's note:** The quotation is from [www.ocn.me/v19n8.htm#tlwtf](http://www.ocn.me/v19n8.htm#tlwtf).

### **D38's bond sabotages taxpayers. Here is why**

So often, sensible people in this community are ignored by D38. D38 makes plans and pretends to seek out lots of input. But their "community committees" always come up with the same solution: wasteful, high-cost construction projects.

After extensive research into their bond plan this November 2019 (which is the exact same plan as last year's), it's clear to anyone willing to study D38's own numbers that it's terrible. Instead of fully renovating and reopening Grace Best for \$7 million, they want to turn Bear Creek Elementary (a 900-seat school) back into a middle school and build a new \$29 million, 650-seat elementary school, while moving the sixth grade back to the middle schools. What would this accomplish? It would add 500 seats for grades 6-8, and only 100 seats for grades K-5.

How is this sabotage? Well, according to Templeton Demographics' last report, which was presented at D38's April school board meeting, the expected growth in the next five years for grades 6-8 is 20 (twenty) students. They want to build 500 seats for 20 more kids. Now, the expected growth in grades K-5 is 350 students. This bond creates only 100 seats for them! Why would D38 create 500 MS seats for 20 more middle school kids, and only 100 seats for 350 more elementary kids?

D38 loves expensive construction projects. They want not just one, but two. Renovating Grace Best would deprive them of that. Make no mistake, two years after this project is done, they and their sanctimonious Facebook foot-soldiers will insist we need another elementary school—costing us another \$30 million or \$40 million. Sabotage.

**Sources of documentation:** Templeton Demographics' report presented at the April 1, 2019 board meeting <https://bit.ly/2ZeSfJa>. Student enrollment at the end of 2019 school year <https://bit.ly/2L2yVda>.

**Derek Araje**

### **How about those portables?**

If you've recently driven by Lewis-Palmer Middle School, Bear Creek Elementary, or Kilmer Elementary, you've probably noticed the new portables that were installed over the summer. Administration's original facilities plan, presented to the board in December 2018, listed a total one-time cost of \$708,800 for all modular units (two at LPMS, two at BCES, one at KES, and one at LPES). The board approved the expense, but to its dismay was later informed that the total price tag had increased over several months to a whopping \$1.168 million.

Worse yet, this price was for five portables instead of six. A total of \$459,580 over budget, with one less modular.

The now-former superintendent explained that the increase was due to the cost of ramps and other items (April 8, 2019 meeting). She did not explain, however, why the district's large and optional pre-school program, which numerous portables were ordered to house, wasn't moved to the existing eight-plex modular building that was already sitting empty near the administration building.

But the wasteful spending doesn't end there. Administrators then tore up the entrance to LPMS so that its two \$234,000 portables could be placed front and center, rather than at the school's south side where they were installed last time. District observers believe that placement was an attempt to both punish voters (who defeated the district's new-construction bond last fall) and give the mobiles a supporting role in D38's Urgent Need stagecraft. Sadly, starring roles in this campaign have been given to our teachers, who continue to be egregiously underpaid because they work for people who think it's acceptable to spend \$1.2 million on five portables.

**Sources:** <https://bit.ly/2PcTKaV>, <https://bit.ly/2ZrSvEj>, and <https://bit.ly/327WoR3>

**Bruce Clark**

### **Running for re-election**

As the proverb states: "It takes a village to raise a child." In Monument, we have a great village! Thank you!

My name is Matthew Clawson. I am running for re-election to the Lewis-Palmer District 38 Board of

Education.

Several years ago, while serving as president, Pikes Peak Council, Boy Scouts of America working with 11,000 youths and 4,000 adult volunteers, I had the privilege of attending Scout and service functions in Monument. While spending time in Monument, I fell in love with the people and community! I was so impressed, I moved my wife, Melinda, and our family to Monument in 2010 after having been a Colorado Springs native. I have three children currently attending school in D-38.

Now the secret is out! Yahoo Finance rated Monument as one of the best suburbs in Colorado. In a survey, the top reason people move to Monument is because of our schools. D-38 is rated third best performing in Colorado. We are also fortunate to have an award-winning charter school. The student successes in Monument are tied to our community support, parents, and the dedicated, hard-working teachers and staff. We are also fortunate to have the support of our Monument mayor and Board of Trustees.

I believe every student deserves a top-rate education. Parents should be permitted to choose the school that best fits their child. Decisions regarding education of our children should be made at the local level.

I am passionate about our youth—so it's with great satisfaction I can give back to our community by serving! Over the past 20 years, I have served as Boy Scouts Executive Board member, leader and merit badge counselor, and in 2015, I started serving on the D-38 school board in various positions and most recently as board president.

Thanks for your support.

**Matt Clawson**

### **Adam Cupp for D38 school board**

I'm Adam Cupp and I am running for election to the School District 38 Board of Education.

I grew up in small-town Iowa and moved to Colorado after college 15 years ago to pursue a career in engineering. What I love about the Tri-Lakes area is that you'll run into someone you know almost anywhere you go, much like the town where I was raised. I have a growing family with three spirited children. Since moving to Monument, I took an interest in school district matters. As my children become school-aged, that interest has grown into zeal to take action for the benefit of my children and my neighbors.

I believe the primary purpose of the school and its board is to provide children the opportunity for quality education in a safe environment. Through delivery of education, we build future citizens, leaders, and our community. It takes dedicated staff—from teachers to transportation to maintenance staff—partnered with effective administration and families to make the education journey possible.

In my leadership role as an engineer, I'm experienced at deriving solutions to complex problems. Skills and strategies learned from my Master of Business Administration degree allow me the ability to bring projects from paper to life by leveraging tangible assets with the most valuable resource of all: people. The ability to foster ideas from theory to real-life solutions through collaboration makes it possible to achieve remarkable things.

The future holds great promise. As our community grows, I believe that there are elegant solutions to intricate problems. These solutions require renewed perspective, innovative ideas, and a commitment to serve the community with a holistic approach: students, parents, teachers, and taxpayers.

It's a future we can build with a balanced approach on a solid foundation—and I believe we can do it together.

**Adam Cupp**

### **Penny-wise but pound-foolish**

So now we start our first school year after our failure to pass a school bond, and what are the consequences for this decision?

Operational money went for modulars instead of buses, so now we have fewer, older buses, longer bus rides, and more car pickups. That means more waiting, more dangerous parking lots, and more traffic.

Modulars create classroom space but not common space, so the middle school lunch periods now start at 10:40 a.m. How are kids supposed to learn in class five hours after lunch? Participate in sports on a long empty stomach? Ultimately, you pay sooner, or you pay later. Our school kids are now paying in numerous ways.

Meanwhile, the main alternative school we're supposed to accept is paying \$90,000/year of taxpayer dollars in "consulting fees" to a guy whose contract was not renewed, and who now has a full-time job running a different charter school? An absolute non-starter for my family. We need to be frugal, not waste our D38 dollars where they are subject to nepotism and insider dealing.

The only way to get the education our kids deserve is to invest in the great local public schools that we moved to D38 for. With our growing population, now is the time to invest and keep them great.

**Chris D'Lauro**

*D38 parent*

### **Building upon the legacy of Monument Academy**

I am privileged to be an active part of the vibrant education community here in Lewis-Palmer School District 38! This academic year at Monument Academy is filled with excitement. Recent administrative changes have provided the opportunity to carefully review our founding principles and ensure we continue to stay the course set before us 24 years ago. Our mission statement says it best:

The mission of Monument Academy is to provide a challenging, content rich, academic program offered within an engaging, caring, and positive learning environment. Established on a solid foundation of knowledge, Monument Academy emphasizes academic excellence, respect, responsibility, character and exemplary citizenship.

The current board at Monument Academy shares my commitment, dedication, and passion to serve our students, their families, faculty, staff, and our community without compromise.

Providing excellence in education and exemplary character instruction through a rich and solid Classical Education curriculum is our absolute focus. Our staff will inspire our children to be leaders of the next generation—that commitment will never change.

We are excited to announce that one year from now we will expand our commitment to excellence by opening a new campus—Monument Academy Secondary School. The new campus initially will serve grades 6-10 and will expand to grade 12 over time, while keeping grades PreK-5 at our current campus. Across both campuses, available seats for grades K-12 ultimately will allow for 826 new students in D38.

We will make announcements in the coming months with respect to our: vision, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, performing arts, and much more! I encourage those of you who are interested in finding out more about Monument Academy to call our office at 719-481-1950 and visit our website at [www.monumentacademy.net](http://www.monumentacademy.net).

**Mark McWilliams**

*President, Monument Academy School Board*

### **D38—What is the truth?**

Each year, D38 manages a budget of millions and earns financial awards above the CDE approved audits. Eighty-three percent of the D38 General Fund is spent on salaries and benefits (including bus drivers, custodians, aides, secretaries, occupational therapists, physical therapists, school security officers, nurses, counselors, special education programs, Gifted and Talented programs, and other support staff, teachers, and administrators).

Then there are the many other costs the district is responsible for paying: transportation costs (buses, gas, and maintenance); technology costs (computers, routers, etc.); curriculum costs (just because some curriculum is online now doesn't mean textbook companies charge less); student supplies (the state requires a certain amount of the budget be spent directly on student supplies each year); special education costs (with the passage of the Anti-Discrimination Act in 1975, the federal government was supposed to reimburse special education costs at 100%, but has only reimbursed between 12% and 16% of the costs in any one year); maintenance costs (the district has 12 facilities counting the transportation and maintenance buildings, and some facilities are as old as Palmer Lake Elementary School, Grace Best, and Big Red), which include everything from carpet replacement to boilers, painting, plumbing repairs, classroom tile replacement, roof repair, re-waxing gym floors, maintenance of grounds and fields; costs for state-mandated testing; and costs for utilities, water, phones, trash removal, etc. It is an extensive list and I haven't covered them all.

The truth is that D38 manages your money very well.

**Terry Miller**

### **LPSD 38—middle school overcrowding**

D38 has two educational facilities designed to support the grades 6-8 middle school educational model. Lewis-Palmer Middle School (LPMS), built in 1994, is located at 1776 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. Creekside Middle School (CMS), built in 2001, is located at 1330 Creekside Drive, Monument. In 2011, LPMS was repurposed to serve as a middle school for grades 7-8, and CMS was repurposed to serve as the Bear Creek Elementary School (BCES).

Monument Academy (MA), located at 1150 Vil-