

## 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 written is an OCN volunteer.*

### Comments on Common Core

The Tri-Lakes area just celebrated our country and her freedoms. Looking forward to a new school year, I present the following thoughts concerning freedom of education.

Wisely, our Founding Fathers left education in the hands of local states, school boards, parents and teachers.

With the understanding of the tradition of local control, why is an insidious curriculum, known as Common Core, being imposed by "Race to the Top" and the National Governors Association, into our local schools? Federal stimulus money of \$4.35 billion and the Bill Gates Foundation are proponents as well.

Watchdog organization Accountability Works notes that Common Core has never been analyzed for cost or effectiveness and is estimated to cost \$15 billion to implement.

New computer, software, and books on online-only testing materials, with a "glitchy" website that lead some children to sexually explicit content areas, make it almost impossible for parents to see their child's curriculum.

Common Core can be traced back to Bill Ayers and Chicago Annenberg Challenge Schools, with emphasis on "community activism" over academic achievement.

Government manuals are reading materials for students,

with an emphasis on politically correct thinking. Math word problems promote racial tension and fail at teaching math skills.

Assigned novels for middle and high schools students have been reported as "pornographic" by some parents.

Data mining is embedded into Common Core. Children are observed for facial and emotional responses through biometrics.

The purpose of education, that of learning to think and find truth, is missing in Common Core. Instead, children are taught what to think. The history of our country is "revised" or absent.

America has a great story. Let us pass this story of heroism to our children and grandchildren!

**Mary Senour**

**Common Core Missing History**

### Questioning U.S. history textbooks

The Advanced Placement (AP) courses high school students complete for college credit will be aligned with Common Core standards. Textbooks associated with AP U.S. history, which have been widely adopted, have questionable revisions and missing information.

*"How bad is the new AP U.S. History Framework?"*

Ken Mercer, Texas State Board of Education: A few key items verified with Larry Krieger (retired teacher and author recognized by the College Board (CB) as a top AP teacher 2004 and 2005) and Jane Robbins (Senior Fellow American Principles Project)

American Revolution through 1787 Constitutional Convention, almost every Founding Father is omit-

ted—no Jefferson, Adams, Madison, Franklin. The framework excludes Lexington, Concord, Bunker Hill, Valley Forge, Saratoga, Yorktown. The commanders and heroes of these pivotal battles are all omitted.

Civil War lessons omit Lincoln-Douglas debates, Gettysburg Address, assassination of President Lincoln. The framework again omits crucial battles, key commanders, and valor of common soldiers.

World War II lessons omit "The Greatest Generation," Truman, Hitler, D-Day, Midway, Battle of the Bulge, and every military commander including Eisenhower. Inexplicably, Nazi atrocities against Jews and other groups are not required. The CB concludes its treatment of WWII with this blunt statement: "The decision to drop the atomic bomb raised questions about American values."

Read the full article: <http://www.voicesempower.com/college-board-rewrites-united-states-history-revolution-2014/>

A search of the District 38 website yielded no results for a 2014-15 textbook syllabus for any grade level. The board approved three new courses without parental textbook review this summer. We as parents have a right to expect the board to review the text materials it approves prior to implementation with parental input so we can ensure our students are getting a well-rounded U.S. history education, balanced with her exceptionalism as well as her darkest moments. More info: Facebook LPParents.Ag ainstCommonCore or Twitter@LP38ParentsCC.

**Traci Burnett**

### Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

## Taking the scary out of school

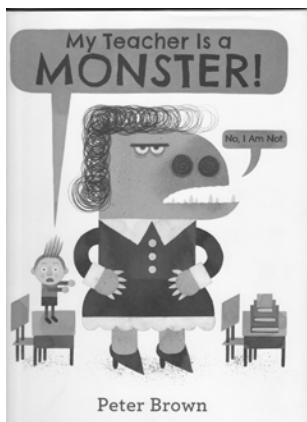
*By the staff at Covered Treasures*

Back-to-school time can be exciting for young children, or it can be downright scary. If your child is beginning preschool or kindergarten, or moving to a new school, here are some delightful books to help ease the way.

### **My Teacher Is a Monster**

By Peter Brown (Little Brown & Co.) \$18.99

Bobby has a problem. You see, his teacher is a monster. But when Bobby runs into his teacher outside of school, he learns that there is more to her than meets the eye. Monsters are not always what they seem. As the illustrations change from a monster-type to a friendly lady, it becomes obvious that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder."



### **Pete the Cat Rocking in My School Shoes and Pete the Cat Too Cool For School**

By Eric Litwin (Harper Collins) \$16.99 and \$3.99

Pete the Cat is back—and this time he's rocking in his school shoes. Pete discovers the library, the lunchroom, the playground, and lots of other cool places at school. And no song ... because it's all good. This delightful, rhyming book comes with a free download of the author performing the story. In the paperback, Pete can't decide

what to wear to look cool at school. Pete learns it's not what you wear, but how you wear it that makes you cool.

### **Charlie Goes to School**

By Ree Drummond (Harper Collins) \$17.99

Charlie is a genius napper, an expert cattle wrangler, and the best bacon eater around. His skills are tops, and he's ready to share what he knows with his ranch friends. While Mama and the kids are busy with their lessons, Charlie helps out by creating a school of his own. Class is in session, but Charlie's students, Suzie, Kitty, and Walter, are acting like a bunch of animals. Will Charlie be able to teach his friends anything?

### **The Night Before Kindergarten**

By Natasha Wing (Penguin Putnam) \$12.99

"'Twas the night before kindergarten, and as they prepared, the kids were excited and a little bit scared. They tossed and they turned about in their beds, while visions of school supplies danced in their heads." Anticipation and excitement are in the air as the children head off to school where they discover just how much fun kindergarten can be.

### **Pinkalicious and the New Teacher**

By Victoria Kann (Harper Collins) \$6.99

Pinkalicious usually likes new experiences, but when she gets a new teacher, she's not so sure how she feels. This story of adapting to change will resonate with many children. A colorful fold-out poster, bookmarks, and a page of stickers are included.

### **The Kissing Hand**

By Audrey Penn (Tanglewood Press) \$12.95

This touching story for any child starting school or facing separation is now brought to life in audio form. The packet includes a paperback copy of the book and a CD with the story. On a track by itself, is the new, original Chester's Song. Like many true children's classics, the story leaves adults and children with a warm, wonderful feeling.

### **Super Silly School Poems**

By David Greenberg (Scholastic) \$6.99

With titles like "Snakes on the Loose!", "My Teacher is a Mind Reader," and "The Worst Smell of All," how can any child resist the allure of these super silly poems? Delightful illustrations by Liza Woodruff add to the fun.

### **Preschool Time**

By Mij Kelly (Barron's Educational) \$14.99

When Suzy Sue goes to preschool, the farm animals miss her so much that they come up with a plan to bring her home. But they just may change their minds when they see how much fun Suzy Sue is having.

### **Richard Scarry's School Bus Box Set**

By Richard Scarry (Barron's Educational) \$10.99

This attractive set of four little board books, Huckle's Opposites, All about Us!, Huckle's Good Manners, and Let's Count to Ten comes in a colorful, illustrated school bus-shaped case for easy portability.

Enjoying an appropriate, inviting picture book with Mom, Dad, or another loving adult could help turn a worried child into one who's looking forward to that first day of school with happy anticipation. Until next month, happy

## High altitude natural gardens near harvest



*By Janet Sellers*

By now, most high altitude natural gardens (HANGS) are in full swing, and some, like mine, are just blossoming. Many HANG gardeners are getting ready to harvest their summer crops and are planning for fall. Seeds planted now that will thrive in the cool evenings as fall approaches include lettuces, kale, chard, green onions, beets and beet greens, and most cool weather crops.

A HANG tip many use for keeping the veggies going and not bolting to flower and seed status in the heat is to pick off the top (if a plant tries to sprout flowers), and harvest only the outside leaves of each plant, leaving the inner ones to grow larger for harvesting the next week. In my garden, I've been able to get the greens to last for months of harvesting this way instead of taking out a whole plant at once.

I also had a great discovery this year. In my raised bed

at Monument Community Garden, I let the mint plants to grow tall to protect my lettuces from seasonal hail damage, air drift of pesticides, and heat bolting. What I got was not only protection, but also an unexpected treat: The lettuces grew larger than ever before and stayed sweeter than ever, even though they had bolted and were producing flowers for seed. The lettuces in the adjacent bed were at the same stage of bolting, but were bitter and inedible. Many people shade their greens from hot sun to