

and the amount of snow. With this storm, almost all the snow accumulated in areas above 6,500 feet, with mainly rain below those elevations.

The storm quickly departed, with quiet conditions returning before the end of the day. We were in between systems on the 25th, but the next storm was quickly moving toward the region. Skies turned cloudy by late on the 25th, and scattered showers returned by the morning of the 26th. However, this system was much smaller in size and did not wind up over southern Colorado like the previous one. This meant a short time of unsettled weather as it moved through the region.

Quiet conditions returned later on the 26th through the 27th before another storm affected the region through the end of the month. This one had a little more moisture to work with and moved through more slowly. This led to wet weather again, first starting as rain and rain/snow mixed showers on the 28th and changing to snow on the 29th. Another 6-12 inches of wet snow accumulated for most areas

above 7,000 feet. This storm cleared out by late on the 29th, with mostly sunny skies returning on the 30th. Yet another storm began to affect the region on the 31st, with rain and snow developing, but most of the fun with this last storm held off until the 1st of April, so more on that next month.

### A look ahead

April is known for a wide range of weather conditions in the region and is on average our snowiest month of the year. We can see 70° temperatures one afternoon and blizzard conditions the next. Several recent years have seen over 50 inches of snow accumulate during the month. Of course, it also melts very quickly, often adding very beneficial moisture to the soil and helping the vegetation, which is just getting started. We can hope this year will bring abundant moisture and hopefully make up for some of the dry conditions we've experienced over the last year.

### March 2017 Weather Statistics

Average High 57.2° (+7.0°)

100-year return frequency value max 57.9° min 38.0°  
Average Low 26.7° (+5.6°)  
100-year return frequency value max 27.0° min 12.0°  
Highest Temperature 74° on the 18th  
Lowest Temperature 1° on the 1st  
Monthly Precipitation 2.39"  
(+0.76", 25% above normal)  
100-year return frequency value max 4.29" min 0.22"  
Monthly Snowfall 20.5"  
(-0.6", 35% above normal)  
Season to Date Snow 57.2"  
(-32.8", 43% below normal)  
(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)  
Season to Date Precip. 10.10" (-4.23", 30% abynormal)  
(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)  
Heating Degree Days 715 (-198)  
Cooling Degree Days 0

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at [billkappel@ocn.me](mailto:billkappel@ocn.me).

## 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.

### After soliciting opt-ins, D38 laments it's running out of room for students

Be warned: District 38 has begun holding "Community Meetings" with its \$81,850 consultant to convince us we need to build a new school. The meetings featured a presentation focused on a projected student population surge they claim will happen in the next 10 years, based on projected new home construction. Having attended these meetings, district observers familiar with local history report:

- D38's consultant never discusses rising interest rates or Trump's plan to eliminate the mortgage interest deduction; both will inhibit housing market demand and new construction.
- D38's consultant doesn't discuss Grace Best: a viable school building in a prime location, whose complete renovation would cost a fraction of a new building and whose asbestos cleanup could be funded by federal grants instead of local taxpayers.
- D38 has every legal right to refuse non-resident student opt-ins if it lacks space or personnel.
- D38 has spent years manufacturing this crisis by aggressively recruiting non-resident student opt-ins by running costly television, radio, and newspaper ads in neighboring areas.
- D38's last 10-year construction boom yielded a net gain of only 233 students (only 23 students a year).

Further, D38 appears to be misrepresenting individual school-building capacity numbers. Compared to capacity D38 reported to the state just last summer, space has mysteriously decreased: D38 now claims

their school buildings hold 437 fewer students than they did eight months ago!

Worse still is Superintendent Brofft's dissembling about non-resident opt-ins at February's board meeting. She emphasized, "there is a statute" and "there are very limited conditions under which we can deny [opt-ins]," never quite admitting that being short on space or teachers allows districts to refuse opt-in requests.

There's no law requiring our community to build buildings for students who don't live here, but if D38 leaders have their way, that's exactly what taxpayers will be tricked into buying.

Traci Burnett

### Don't put ideology ahead of education

My husband and I moved to this area last year, and although retired and no longer having children of school age, we feel it's important to locate in a good school district where education, understanding the world we live in, and moral integrity are values the district fosters.

The Lewis-Palmer School District appears to support and reflect these values in the teachers and students. We are shocked and dismayed to read the current articles in this paper concerning individuals who put political ideology ahead of the education of the future citizens of the country and the world.

How can any intelligent person in the present time not understand that we all live in a global society and to attempt to isolate this country, this city, let alone this school district is an absurd and extremely backward jingoistic attempt to limit development and progress in our nation and society.

We applaud the district's mission statement and hope it continues to strive for excellence in education and maintain focus on good judgement and decision-making for all students and staff.

Patricia Mitchell

### Same old story for D38

As Yogi Berra would say, it's déjà vu all over again.

Almost 10 years ago, D38 opened its second high school, Palmer Ridge. They opened it without the necessary voter-approved funds to support the school's operations—a really bad decision. Ever since, the D38 school board has tried many times to pass a property tax hike, and they have failed. Now D38 is on a mission to build a new elementary school. They will need the voters' approval. Are the school board's past mistakes hindering their ability to convince the taxpayer they need a new school? Or is it just a public relations problem?

Recently, I viewed a Facebook post written by a D38 mom. The mom challenged a father whose children had already graduated from D38 schools. She suggested that those of us who no longer have kids in school are not "current and informed." Therefore, our opinions do not matter. By the way: The older father responded with kindness.

Some of my senior citizen friends will never ever vote for a tax increase—period—end of story! But some might consider one if they could trust that their taxpayer dollars were spent prudently. We have a new leadership team, yet the same old story: Inexperienced superintendent awarded a three-year 22 percent salary hike, a proposed salary hike of \$10,000 for six-figure central administrators, over \$100,000 spent on consultants and advisors to sell a tax hike, and the list goes on. Bottom line: The D38 community does not trust today's school board, and they resent the board's arrogance.

This is a great school district—we all agree. But endless streams of money and shiny new schools are not the answer. We already have the formula: caring parents, quality teachers, and motivated students. One final thought: 70 percent of D38's voters are senior citizens.

Sharon Schafer ■

### Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

## National Poetry Month

By the staff at Covered Treasures

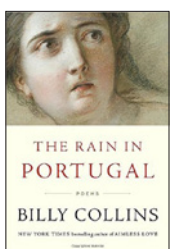
"Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words."—Robert Frost

April is National Poetry Month, inaugurated by the Academy of American Poets in 1996. Most of us seldom think to pick up a book of poetry to read as adults, but many of the favorite picture books you read to your children when they were small were probably written in a rhyming, rhythmic form. If that format hooked you, or a child of yours, on reading, maybe it's time to revisit the poem? Here are some collections for your consideration:

### The Rain in Portugal

By Billy Collins (Penguin Random House) \$26

Billy Collins sheds his ironic light on such subjects as travel and art, cats and dogs, loneliness and love, beauty and death. Often whimsical, his imaginative fabrications have Shakespeare flying comfortably in first class and Keith Richards supporting the globe on his head. Entertaining, engaging, enlightening poems from one of the most respected and familiar voices in American poetry.



### Journey On: Beauty and Grit along the Way

By Anna Blake Godbout, (Mountain Tapestry Press) \$12.95  
Lives head toward all manner of destinations: the physical, mental, emotional, soulful, and symbolic. Yet it is this journey's path of to and fro that life itself means to observe and commemorate. These poems are landmarks from a woman's life as a daughter, granddaughter, wife, mother, teacher, and writer.

### Water, Rocks and Trees

By James Scott Smith (Homebound Publications) \$16.95

"Walk in the day as/ if all things must be/ touched and felt as real." Poet, psychotherapist, and wilderness guide James Scott Smith's first collection of poems explores our relationship to the natural world. *Water, Rocks and Trees* was awarded Honorable Mention in the 2015 Homebound Publications Poetry Prize.

### The Jubilee

By John Blase (Bright Coppers Press) \$9.99

John Blase is a pastor's son, writer, poet, collaborator, and editor. His writing is intensely personal, filtered through a brass-knuckled optimism, the perspective of a first-born, and the gratefulness of a strange thing called grace. *The Jubilee* is his newest book and debut book of poetry.

### Milk and Honey

By Rupi Kaur (Andrews McMeel Publishing) \$14.99

*Milk and Honey* is a collection of poetry and prose about survival. It is about the experience of violence, abuse, love, loss, and femininity. Split into four chapters, each chapter serves a different purpose, deals with a different pain, heals a different heartache.

### One Minute Till Bedtime: 60-Second Poems to Send You off to Sleep

Selected by Kenn Nesbitt (Hachette Book Group) \$19.99

Former Children's Poet Laureate Kenn Nesbitt presents a blockbuster collection of all-new poetry penned by some of the most beloved and celebrated poets of our time, including Jack Prelutsky, Jon Scieszka, Mary Ann Hoberman, Nikki Grimes, Lemony Snicket, Jane Yolen, and many more. Illuminated with dreamlike wit and whimsy by New

York Times illustrator and award winning artist Christoph Niemann, this will be your new bedtime favorite.

### A Child's Garden of Verses

By Robert Louis Stevenson (Penguin Random House) \$15.99

Robert Louis Stevenson's rhymes have charmed children and adults alike since 1885. Stevenson's joyful exploration of the world speaks directly from a child's point of view and celebrates the child's imagination.

### The Crossover

By Kwame Alexander (Houghton Mifflin) \$7.99 (May)

2015 Newberry Medal Winner and Coretta Scott King Award Honor Book, *The Crossover* is a middle-grade novel in verse that's Love That Dog meets Slam. Twelve-year-old twin basketball stars Josh and Jordan wrestle with highs and lows on and off the court as their father ignores his declining health. The poetic rap and rhythm is simultaneously razor-sharp and tender. (Recommended for ages 10-14.)

April 27 is Poem in Your Pocket Day, which originated in 2002 in New York City. People celebrate by selecting a poem, carrying it with them, and sharing it with others throughout the day at schools, bookstores, libraries, parks, workplaces, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. In 2008 the Academy of American Poets took the initiative to all 50 states, and it extended to Canada in 2016. You can find more than 30 ways to celebrate National Poetry Month at the Academy of American Poets website: [www.poets.org/national-poetry-month/home](http://www.poets.org/national-poetry-month/home). Until next month, happy reading.

The staff at Covered Treasures can be reached at [books@ocn.me](mailto:books@ocn.me).