

ing of the 29th, with snow quickly developing again. Another 2-4 inches of snow accumulated from the 29th through the 30th. The air mass associated with the final push of cold air for the month was some of the coldest air to arrive in Colorado in October. New monthly record lows were set, with many locations reaching below-zero levels Wednesday and cold temperatures continuing into Thursday morning. Finally, sunshine returned by Halloween afternoon, but temperatures remained cold for the trick-or-treaters.

A look ahead

November is generally dry and cool around the region. We usually get several light snowfalls inter-

persed with sunny skies. Gusty winds commonly develop on a couple of days as the jet stream becomes more active and more directly affects Colorado. Our first sub-zero morning low temperatures often occur during the month as well. High temperatures average in the upper 40s early in the month to low 40s by the end with overnight lows often dipping into the teens and single digits.

October 2019 Weather Statistics

Average High **53.3°** (-6.2°)
100-year return frequency value max **67.7°** min **50.7°**
Average Low **23.6°** (-5.7°)
100-year return frequency value max **36.8°** min **26.4°**

Monthly Precipitation **1.64"** (-0.09")
100-year return frequency value max **4.63"** min **0.18"**
Monthly Snowfall **26.6"** (+15.6")
Highest Temperature **75° on the 8th**
Lowest Temperature **-4° on the 30th**
Season to Date Snow **26.6"** (+15.6")
(the snow season, October 1 to September 30)
Season to Date Precip. **1.65"** (-0.08")
(the precip season, October 1 to September 30)
Heating Degree Days **827** (+299)
Cooling Degree Days **0** (0)
Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me.

Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters are on page 31.

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

The letters this month are arranged in alphabetical order by the submitter's last name.

Why I support Matthew Clawson

As 20-year educator at Lewis-Palmer High School, I would like to voice my support for the election of Matthew Clawson to the Lewis-Palmer District 38 School Board.

I have seen many significant changes throughout my tenure in D-38: the opening of a new middle school, the opening of a new high school, a very painful recession which froze teacher salaries for more than five years, and the closing of Creekside Middle School. Through it all, educators have continued to care for and put the needs of students first, even when the budget and staffing did not allow us to do so easily.

There have been times in District 38 that teachers have not felt like a priority or have endured teaching conditions that were less than optimal for both teacher and student achievement; however, teachers have continued to be warriors for our students in the classroom.

I can honestly say that Matthew Clawson's quiet leadership and integrity have been among the primary reasons that our esteemed school district has experienced a positive change in priorities and culture. Under Matt's leadership and direction, teachers have been fairly compensated by returning those of us who were frozen on the pay scale to our correct years of service, and the Salary Schedule has been updated to make teacher pay more competitive and livable. Most importantly, however, students continue to be the number one priority for all district staff.

There is still much work to be done in our school district. Kids still need to be priority. Teachers need resources and pay to continue to do what we love. School buildings need attention and to be less crowded. Matthew Clawson is the leadership our district needs to keep moving forward. Please help Matt continue to make kids a priority

Kendra Boone

Adam Cupp—candidate's 4A "no" position

Since last year, the bond demonstrates improvement on ballot language and cost. I believe a more fiscally responsible financing plan is possible to minimize waste. The board has opted for an easier "sell" to voters than to manage each taxpayer dollar efficiently. The current plan does not provide a new elementary school as described by proponents; rather, it moves a current elementary (900 seats) to a much smaller building (650 seats) and converts Bear Creek to a middle school. The outcome is the addition of one middle school and no elementary school, where the greatest capacity issues reside. Enrollment numbers this year and the next several years render adding an additional 900-seat middle school premature. Excessive middle school vacancy over the next several years will place significant financial strain on the district.

The largest portion of the district budget, derived from "per pupil revenue" based on enrollment, is the primary resource for teacher pay. While the bond provides funds to build, it does not furnish monies to operate two middle schools with empty seats. This leaves the district with two options: 1) Boost enrollment with out-of-district recruitment 2) Return to taxpayers for another MLO tax.

In last month's OCN, teacher Mr. Bergmann suggested taxpayers dismiss concerns about operational

funding since an MLO "is not in front of us right now." He stated that lacking funds to pay teachers is not a problem because, we are assured, "we're (teachers) not demanding more compensation at this time." Build now and pay later? Calm and reasoned people know this is not a responsible, balanced plan for district growth. We need plans that consider building and operating schools and that compensate teachers competitively as a basic standard. We have time—let's develop a comprehensive plan.

Adam Cupp

D38 School Board candidate

A good way to control speech

Wanted to hurry to get this letter in, to be one of the first 12, and get printed, in the November 2019 issue. When I read that you are considering limiting "letters to the editor" (to the first 12 received each month), I thought, wow that is a good way to control speech.

For example, when the D38 School Board bond issue comes up for vote again next year (hopefully it will be defeated again this year) you can just say that 12 pro-bond letters came in first (how can we prove you wrong), and those are the only letters printed, giving the impression that this is the consensus of the voters.

Many of us in the community think that your paper is biased and that you try to tilt the news in certain ways. This new policy on "letters to the editor" will just help to confirm that. Please reconsider.

Paul J. Lambert

Editor's note: *The focus of Our Community News is to inform the public regarding the deliberations of the area's governmental bodies. Each month, OCN volunteers are challenged to fit print material and graphics within a 32-page limit. On the rare occasions that OCN may receive letters to the editor that equal or exceed the 30-plus letters published in the Oct. 5, 2019 issue, OCN layout volunteers must strike a balance without diminishing the newspaper's focus. OCN's editorial policy to possibly limit the number of letters published to the first 12 received provides guidelines for future extenuating circumstances.*

Misleading "con" statements published in voter guide by Strong D38 pro-bond issue committee

Many refer to their El Paso County Voter Guide to read the reasons to vote for and against issues. This year, the comments against LPSD 38'S 4A bond measure are meant to confuse voters and look like reasons to vote for it. How could this happen? D38's "Yes on 4A" Strong D38 Community only turned in statements against the bond in order to water down and belittle legitimate statements from reaching the community.

Actual con statements were also submitted and documented by another community member, but most of his legitimate reasons to say no were excluded from the Voter Guide due to the total allowable word count. An open-records request to D38 (10/4/2019) showed that most of these legitimate reasons to vote no on 4A were forced out by the misleading comments submitted by two prominent Strong D38 Community members. One person is listed as the designated filing agent for Strong D38 on TRACER with the secretary of state. Both individuals have been promoting the bond since last year, even setting up pro-bond tables inside of school buildings during back-to-school events.

Misleading voters through the Voter Guide is unethical and tears down our country's fair electoral process many have put their lives on the line defending. The community deserves to know the truth. Demand ethics in D38. Just say no on 4A!

Amy McKenzie

Why we favor Mathew Clawson for District 38 School Board

We have known the Clawson family for a number of years, and during that time have interacted in a variety of events and functions. Mathew and his beautiful wife Melinda are model parents who pose a real passion for raising children to take responsibility for their actions, and to be respectful and kind to everyone they meet; qualities that are missing in much of today's youth. The entire family is refreshing to watch interact and to see how they celebrate their family unit. Raising kids to take individual responsibility and to treat others kindly requires strong parental leadership that is dedicated and willing to consistently invest into each child's life; the Clawsons are remarkable in this area. Having that same type of leadership on the District 38 School Board is vitally needed as our students are on a short path to adult hood. The board is responsible for ensuring quality instruction, opportunities for success within the classroom or on a sporting field, and a safe school environment that promotes and respects student differences. As our young people prepare to launch into their future scholastic pursuits, careers, and eventually their own family units, they need to have a solid educational foundation and an understanding of how they can influence the world they live in.

Being able to provide focused oversight and a quality learning environment requires a person with strong personal values, understanding of the law, full understanding of budget development and implementation, and the willingness to stand strong when opposition surfaces. Matt Clawson has shown over the past two years that he possesses those skills and many others and is prepared to lead District 38 now and into the future.

Please cast your vote for Mathew Clawson.

Steven and Debbie Sowles

Real estate and schools

From a real estate professional's perspective, data supports the correlation between school district success and its associated area property values. From the National Association of Realtors to various organizations with interest in real estate investment, much time and money have been spent researching this relationship.

Buyers know they're buying into a community, not just a home. Per a Realtor.com survey completed in 2016, 75% factor school district as a primary concern for purchase with student/teacher ratios on top. Many syndicated property searches have a search option by school district for this reason. As a realtor in the area, I and my associates can attest to the attention by consumers to school performance and opportunities for their children.

The National Association of Realtors has found that those under 36 years form the largest home buying group, of which 49% have at least one under 18 living under their roof. This demographic tends to buy in suburbs such as ours. This affects Tri-Lakes in two ways. One, we can reasonably assume that our school-age child population is growing at a similar rate to our county, which is the fastest-growing in the state. Many of our area buyers are coming from our northern neighboring cities for lower-cost homes and great schools. Secondly, even if you're someone who does not have a school-age child, if you have current or future plans of selling your home, it would be beneficial to market it to those with kids.

D38 has done a good job communicating the capacity shortfall and continues to engage the community in solutions. No one solution is perfect, but I believe a "yes" vote on 4A is the best way to give schools and community what's needed. To invest in schools is to invest in community, and likewise, our own homes.

Erin Vineyard ■