

ule, and as they are paid our education tax rate has decreased annually. This is different from comparable districts that have kept rates constant (example: D20 at 60.216 for the past five years) or voted large increases (last year D14 Manitou Springs increased by 9.9 mills to 61.9 and D2 Harrison increased its rate by 15.215 to 48.333).

The Tri-Lakes region is growing rapidly; another school is needed. I'm thankful residents previously voted to fund and build schools my kids attended. It's time to support the district now and for the future.

Resources

El Paso County Mill Levies (2014-18): <https://treasurer.elpasoco.com/mill-levies/>

Hilltop Securities Bond Estimates: [https://go.boarddocs.com/co/lewispalmer/Board.nsf/Public#:search 2019 Bond LPSD - \\$28.985 Million - EPC AV Estimate 5.15.2019.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/co/lewispalmer/Board.nsf/Public#:search%202019%20Bond%20LPSD%20-%20$28.985%20Million%20-%20EPC%20AV%20Estimate%205.15.2019.pdf)

D38 Bond Pay Off: <https://www.lewispalmer.org/site/default.aspx>, 2018 Bond Info, Let's Talk Facts and Figures

Paul Howe

Welcome, Dr. KC Somers

Dr. KC Somers, thank you for your time to meet with community constituents at several locations. I appreciated your desire to facilitate a healing process of unity within our community. The key is for all individuals to hold the utmost integrity.

Acknowledging the desires of the majority of the community must be reflected within the actions of our district and administrators. Mirroring community desires through action can build up that which has been broken. We have a wonderful school district because of the dedication of caring parents, teachers, and responsible students.

I appreciated your acknowledgment of parents and teachers within our community. I'm looking forward to more open discussions.

Tammy John

Transparency?

At the June D38 school board meeting, three board members voted to publish all CORA requests and their responses on D38's website for all to see. Director Pfoff championed this idea, saying the purpose is to show the community they are being "completely transparent." Considering the fact that administrators recently started defacing every requested page with the requestor's name in large-sized font, is this transparency or intimidation? Was it also under the guise of transparency when administration stood in unison as community members' names were called out publicly in February of 2017?

Since we're being completely transparent, the community should also know:

1. D38 spent nearly \$9,000 of our tax dollars on those eight-page full color, fancy mailers they sent at the end of May. The former superintendent claimed these mailers didn't violate Fair Campaign Law because a factual summary is allowed, and they haven't made any formal decision yet (May 2019 BOE meeting). But they signed a resolution regarding the intent to pursue a bond in the upcoming election in February 2019.
2. D38 spent \$36,000 to put last year's initiatives on the ballot, and they're spending it again this year.
3. In an email dated 4/22/2019, the former superintendent said Grace Best houses the transition program, homeschoolers, and the robotics club, all of which can be housed at another school or off-site location. The board was CC'd on this email. Why can't Grace Best be a school again?

Complete transparency would encourage a full manpower assessment and a forensic audit. This will help build trust and start the new leadership on a new path letting the community know everything is in proper order.

Amy McKenzie

LPSD 38: property tax effect of 2019 bond

During my career, I have never seen any estimate realized exactly as projected. However, every plan requires the use of estimates. For example, the estimated tax effect on a taxpayer living within the LPSD 38 area (property) is based upon historical trends, hypothetical assumptions, and a decision to be fiscally conservative. The assumptions used in the 2019 bond plan to estimate the tax effect calculation were identified and formulated with input provided by El Paso County (EPC) historical records and third-party professionals.

The LPSD 38 Board of Education believes that the evidence to support the assumptions used to estimate the construction and bond costs for the 2019 bond plan are reasonable. We invite discussion about the reasonableness, sufficiency, and validity of the assumptions used to estimate the tax effect on a local taxpayer upon passage of the 2019 bond.

Some assumptions the board relied on to estimate the tax effect on a local taxpayer are:

- \$592 million—property assessed value (AV) provided by EPC
- 7.15%—residential assessment rate provided by EPC
- \$29 million—construction cost for new elementary school provided by architects and general contractor
- 3.687%—interest rate provided by Hilltop Securities
- 2%—future growth rate in AV bi-annual reassessment chosen by the board
- 15 years—bond term to settle all interest and principal chosen by the board

The board used the above assumptions to structure the 2019 bond to minimize the incremental annual tax impact on \$400,000 of AV for a local taxpayer while retiring the 2019 bond in 15 years.

The board provides construction and bond cost estimates on the LPSD 38 website. Please view it from a critical thinking perspective as you determine your support for the 2019 bond. Thanks!

Chris Taylor

Treasurer, D38 Board of Education

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore

Try to solve the newest mysteries

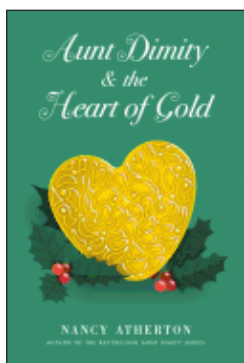
By the staff at Covered Treasures

"Reading ... a vacation for the mind."—Dave Barry
Here are some "chilling" mysteries to enjoy during the last hot days of summer:

Aunt Dimity and the Heart of Gold

By Nancy Atherton (Viking) \$26

Years ago, local author Nancy Atherton awoke with the first lines for *Aunt Dimity's Death*, her first book. It was voted "One of the Century's 100 Favorite Mysteries" by the Independent Mystery Booksellers Association. She has just released the 24th book in the series, *Aunt Dimity and the Heart of Gold*. What starts as a Christmas party turns into a mystery involving a secret room, a hidden compartment, and a heart of gold. With Aunt Dimity's otherworldly help, Lori and friends set out to unravel the mystery behind the heart of gold and along the way discover new friendships.



Ambush

By Barbara Nickless (Thomas & Mercer) \$15.95

Local author Barbara Nickless brings the third installment in her gripping Sydney Rose Parnell series. Railway cop and former Marine Sydney Parnell and her K9 partner, Clyde, work to chase down a ruthless killer, Alpha, before he finds Malik, an 11-year-old Iraqi boy with secrets to guard. But when their paths collide, Sydney realizes just how far-reaching and sinister Alpha's past is.

Big Sky

By Kate Atkinson (Little, Brown and Co.) \$28

Jackson Brodie has relocated to a quiet seaside village in the occasional company of his recalcitrant teenage son and an aging Labrador. Jackson's current job, gathering proof of an unfaithful husband for his suspicious wife, is fairly standard issue, but a chance

encounter with a desperate man on a crumbling cliff leads him into a sinister network and back across the path of his old friend Reggie. Old secrets and new lies intersect.

The Sentence is Death

By Anthony Horowitz (Harper) \$27.99

Death, deception, and a detective with a lot to hide stalk the pages of Anthony Horowitz's second book in his bestselling series starring private investigator Daniel Hawthorne. A successful celebrity-divorce lawyer is found dead in his home with baffling evidence. As Hawthorne takes on the case, it becomes clear that he, too, has secrets to hide. As our narrator becomes ever more embroiled in the case, he realizes that these secrets must be exposed—even at the risk of death.

The Outsider

By Stephen King (Gallery Books) \$18.99

An 11-year-old boy's body is discovered in a town park. Eyewitnesses and fingerprints point unmistakably to one of Flint City's most popular citizens, Terry Maitland. As the investigation expands and horrifying details begin to emerge, King's story kicks into high gear, generating strong tension and almost unbearable suspense. Maitland seems like a nice guy, but is he wearing another face? When the answer comes, it will shock you as only Stephen King can. Soon to be an HBO limited series starring Ben Mendelsohn.

Before She Was Found

By Heather Gudenkauf (Park Row Books) \$16.99

For 12-year-old Cora Landry and her friends Violet and Jordyn, it was supposed to be an ordinary sleepover. But when they decide to sneak out to the abandoned rail yard on the outskirts of town, their innocent games will have dangerous consequences. Cora is discovered on the tracks, clinging to life, her friends nowhere to be found. This is a timely thriller about friendship and betrayal, about the power of social pressure and the price of needing to fit in. It is about the great lengths a parent will go to protect their child.

The Long Call

By Ann Cleeves (Minotaur Books) \$26.99

Bestselling author Ann Cleeves' first book in her new Twin Rivers Series introduces readers to Detective Matthew Venn. Taking place in North Devon, a body is found on a beach nearby where Venn grew up and now lives. The case calls Matthew back to the people and places of his past, as deadly hidden secrets are revealed, and his new life is forced into a collision course with the world he thought he'd left behind. (To be released in September.)

"You know you've read a good book when you turn the last page and feel a little as if you have lost a friend."—Paul Sweeney

Until next month, happy reading.

The Covered Treasures staff can be reached at books@ocn.me.

August Library Events

Regular schedule resumes

By Harriet Halbig

The 2019 Summer Adventure program ended on July 31, celebrated with a gala party on the Village Green in Palmer Lake featuring face painting, games, mascots, snacks, and more. The library thanks the many teen volunteers who helped everything run smoothly by registering young patrons and awarding prizes for

their achievements.

Following the party, on Aug. 3, is the annual Ice Cream Social sponsored by the Tri-Lakes Friends of the Library and the Palmer Lake Historical Society's Chautauqua celebration featuring ice cream from Palmer Lake's Rock House, music by the Velcro Barbershop quartet, and a visit from the Pikes Peak Li-