employees such as bus drivers, lunch line, and janitorial. D38 has been listed in the top 6% of districts in the state. There are five elementary schools, one middle school, two high schools, one educational facility and one charter school (Monument Academy) with two buildings.

With 6,700 students and 2.5 students per home, that means there is a total of about 2,680 homes with children in the district. Most of the homeowners in the 15,000 homes in the district are retired and have not been voting for proposed mill levy overrides resulting in a property tax increase of $258.89 per year. The MLO on the November ballot would result in a $5.5 million increase in revenue that would be distributed in an 8%

increase in pay for the D-38 teachers and support staff. Administrators would not be included in the proposal. D38 has one of the lowest mill levies in the state, historically rated 11th among school districts in the county.

Somers said D38 has increased its law enforcement and armed security teams. They are working with the Monument and Palmer Lake Police Departments. They now have secured "single-point" entrances and controlled vestibules. They are scheduling monthly emergency drills to include lockdown and off-site evacuations. They are training the staff and students to actively be engaged in their own survival. They have improved threat assessment procedures to include law enforce-

ment and mental health experts. District Security works with the county Sheriff's School Resource Officers (SROs) that are present in the schools. To contact board members as a group, email schoolboard@lewispalmer. org

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The next NEPCO meeting is scheduled for Nov. 12 at 10 a.m. to noon at the Woodmoor Barn, 1691 Woodmoor Dr. For more information regarding NEPCO, visit www. nepco.org

Marlene Brown can be reached at marlenebrown@ocn.me.

September Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

September can see big swings in weather as we transition from summer to fall. These can occur over just about any timeframe. Just two Septembers ago, we went from record highs in the upper 80s and low 90s to 3-5 inches of snow just a day later! Last year, September was relatively warm and wet. This year, we were again warmer than normal. but this year was drier than normal as well.

Another sign of the change of seasons usually occurs around the third week of September when we see our first mornings with temperatures dipping toward freezing. This year, the cool morning temperatures were a little delayed, with our first morning with temperatures in the 30s not occurring until Sept. 25.

As noted, temperatures were above normal this year and this was helped by a very warm start to the month. Highs reached the mid-80s to low 90s each afternoon from the 1st through the 8th. The only exception was the 3rd, when high temperatures only reached the upper 70s. The hot temperatures produced several daily record highs around the region, with many lower elevation locations reaching above 100 F.

This period of warmth was abruptly ended by a cold front that moved through during the morning of the 9th. Persistent upslope flows built behind the front and produced a thick layer of low clouds and fog. Much-needed rain fell from the afternoon on the 9th through the early morning of the 11th. The rainfall on the 10th was the most needed kind, falling as a steady light rain the entire day. The rain and upslope flow kept temperatures cold as well, with highs only reaching the mid-40s. This was quite a change after record warmth just a few days before.

Another quiet period took hold after this air mass cleared out. Highs were around normal from the 11th through the 17th, with 70s each afternoon and generally dry conditions only interrupted by a few sprinkles and rumbles of thunder on the 15th and 16th. Another quick

warmup returned over the last couple days of summer, with highs reaching the mid-80s on the 19th and 20th. Then, just like earlier in month, this warm weather was again interrupted by a cold front on the 21st and once again deep upslope conditions developed behind the front. Low clouds, fog, and drizzle again developed with visibilities almost down to zero at times later on the 21st and into the 22nd. Temperatures again were cool, with highs only reaching the mid-40s.

The last week of the month ended with generally quiet and mild conditions and lots of sunshine. Higher levels of moisture began to work back into the region over the last few days of the month, producing a few scattered showers. Highs over the last week of the month were generally in the upper 60s to low 70s, right about where they should be for the end of September.

A look ahead

October can be an active weather month for the region with our first snowy conditions often experienced. Most years, we seem to get a good snowfall around Halloween, and after a warm and dry September, we could use a wet and cold storm this year. Snow can be heavy at times during any part of October as when over 20 inches of snow fell from Oct. 9-10th in 2005, and 2006 saw over 24 inches of snowfall in less than 24 hours on Oct. 26th. Of course, the big storm some of us remember occurred during October 1997, when nearly 4 feet of snow and blizzard conditions shut everything down for several days. But we are just as likely to get mild and sunny conditions, so enjoy those sunny days when you can.

September 2022 Weather Statistics

Average High **76.2°** (+5.3)
  100-year return frequency value max **77.5°** min **63.5°**
Average Low **45.2°** (+4.0)
  100-year return frequency value max **46.7°** min **36.1°**
Monthly Precipitation **1.02"** (-0.78")
  100-year return frequency value max **4.34"** min **0.40"**
Monthly Snowfall **0.0"** (-0.4")

Highest Temperature	**90° on the 6th**
Lowest Temperature	**37° on the 25th**
Season to Date Snow	**0.0"**

(-0.4", 100% below normal)
(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)

Season to Date Precip.	**13.01"**

(-6.85", 35% below normal)
(the precip season is from Jan 1 to Dec 31)

Heating Degree Days	**162** (-138)
Cooling Degree Days	**34** (+11)

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at billkappel@ocn.me.
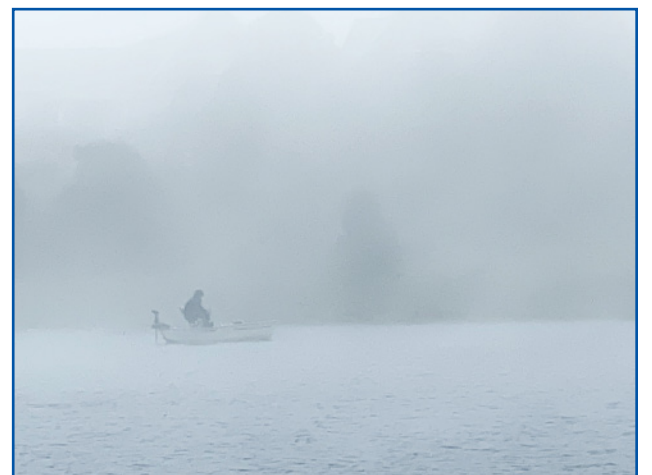
Above: A rainy Wednesday and cold Thursday made for a foggy first day of fall Sept. 22. It rained much of the day on the 21st, and temperatures dipped into the 40s on the 22nd. Most people woke up to low visibility from the fog, making driving hazardous. It didn't seem to bother this fisherman on Monument Lake, though. The fog finally cleared up in the late afternoon. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

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.

D38 has lost 400 students.
Why do they need more money?

With punishing inflation on the horizon, state tax increases coming, and market crashes looming, what does District 38 do? They put a mill levy override on the ballot. Because whatever pain our community is experiencing from exploding housing costs and grocery and gasoline prices is nothing compared to the agony of D38 employees and board members knowing that surrounding districts get more money from their local taxpayers than D38 gets from us!

Yes, like it or not, we are perpetually in a perverse high taxes contest. It's sponsored by D38 officials, who regularly trot out the We Need to Stay Competitive card. We need to make sure D38 gets the most taxes in El Paso County—which they will be closer to if this MLO passes. Apparently, it isn't good enough that the State of Colorado has ranked D38 one of the top five school districts out of 178 for the past 10 years. Now D38 wants to make us one of the top highest-taxed school districts as well. I assure you, this is a contest no one living in D38 wants to win!

What they won't tell you is that they have lost over 400 students in the past few years. That's an entire school's worth of students. Instead of consolidating and reducing staffing levels, administrators are doubling down, insisting they need more money. To educate 400 fewer kids. Who does this?? Lifelong government employees, that's who.

Colorado funds its schools on a per-pupil basis. That drop in students means D38's funding has dropped by $3.7 million, because, let's face it, that's how this is supposed to work. Let's stay out of the high taxes contest.

Don't feel guilty, just vote No.
Derek Araje/#JustAskDerek

Support our D38 school board

Thirty-five years ago, I moved to Monument because of the community, the school district's high standards, the high caliber and commitment of teachers, and the students' achievements. A community's strength draws heavily from the quality and experiences of its schools. Because of that, my daughter and her peers thrived in this school system where residents supported elections to improve facilities and educational instruction.

This community has been fortunate in the past to have had such a dynamic, vibrant, high performing, and successful school district. Lewis-Palmer School District 38 is well known for its pursuit of excellence. Whether we have had children and grandchildren in our schools or have been residents with no student-age children, all have benefitted from such an outstanding school district. Home values have increased or remained high. Certainly, the quality of life is better because of strong schools and a robust community, and our past student success and achievement are unparalleled. We have been blessed with the high quality and longevity of our teachers and staff.

Now, as a community, it is time for us to step up and support our school board decisions that will benefit teachers and staff. Our support will stop the erosion of our best teachers and provide incentive to hire the very best teachers and staff to serve our children in the future. Not only that, whether we have children or grandchildren currently in the schools, it is critical for all voting residents to support District 38 for the benefits we have received over the years. As we have been blessed, it is time for us to bless our future. As we have received, let us now pay it forward and become a blessing for our teachers, staff, and children into the future.
Ted Bauman

Is the D38 MLO a good deal for seniors?

About one-third of D38 households have students in public schools. Of the remaining two-thirds, many are senior citizens whose children are out of school. (Full disclosure: I am in this category.)

These demographics always come into play when a mill levy override, which will increase property taxes, is being discussed. The benefit of increased funding for schools to parents with school-age children is clear. But it's often taken for granted that seniors will pay additional taxes but not get any benefit. Is this really the case?

No.

Seniors are eligible for many benefits that are directly funded by the taxes of younger workers. If you get Social Security payments, those are paid for by younger workers. If you are on Medicare or Medicaid, your portion is augmented by younger workers. If you are a retired veteran, your retirement and your TriCare healthcare are funded in similar ways. If you're 65 and you've lived in your house for 10 years, you qualify for the Senior Homestead Exemption Act, which exempts you from 50% of the property taxes that would otherwise be due on the first $200,000 of the market value of your home. That's paid for by younger workers as well.

So, when an MLO is proposed, seniors are not being asked to pay for something of no immediate benefit to them. They're being asked to make a long-term investment in educating the ones who will in turn support their quality of life in their later years—an investment that will benefit those on both sides of the equation. Seniors are investing in doctors and nurses who will treat them.

With that in mind, seniors who take a long-term view will support D38's proposed MLO.
James W. Howald

Elephant Rock developer chosen

The Sept. 3 edition of *Our Community News* reported that at the Aug. 25 meeting, Palmer Lake Trustees were "ready to have an agreement in principle" and "saw no