

Sad, scared, and stunned

I am sad, scared, and stunned by the proclamation from the board of Monument Academy. I know that no amount of facts will persuade you, so I'm writing from a place of feeling and hope to show you how much your words hurt.

I am an elementary teacher, a school librarian, and a yoga teacher, but the identity that moves me to write this is that I am also the mother of a transgender child. I wish you could understand the struggle my family has been through. The nights crying because I don't know what's wrong with my 6-year-old who is so angry. Calling the police to talk some sense into my 8-year-old who has run away—again. Taking away all the belts and long-sleeve shirts so I don't find the body of my 10-year-old. Appointments with doctors, counselors, psychiatrists, neurologists to find an answer. Books, books, so many books.

This is not a path any parent chooses. It is hard and messy and filled with worry at a much grander scale because of hurtful words like yours.

You sent a message that my child is not welcome.

I simply ask that you educate yourself about transgender kids. I ask that you talk to families who are raising gender nonconforming kids. I ask that when you talk of innocence, well-being, privacy, and safety of all students, when you talk of undue harm, confusion, and dysphoria, that you please think of my child who has been through so much to be her authentic self. I ask that you think of my daughter, who is now happy and healthy, and others like her who would very much appreciate your protection.

Colleen Scarpella

The Constitutional COVID Conundrum

It seems obvious, to me at least, that many Americans do not understand the most basic meaning of our Constitution. If the Constitution were boiled down to a single statement, it would read something like this: The Constitution was designed by our forefathers to protect all Americans' right to do basically whatever they want, as long as those actions do not impede any other American's right to do the same.

It couldn't be a much simpler concept, and I have received no disagreement to this statement regardless of political affiliation. People who believe politicians over scientists and gather in large groups without taking any precautions have forgotten the all-important second part of the statement italicized above: When they then travel the country possibly spreading a dangerous disease, people start getting sick and maybe die. How is that not impeding another's, possibly many others', constitutional rights?

This action is analogous to making the choice to get drunk and drive at high speeds through town. Maybe no one dies, but does the Constitution give anyone the right to take that chance? And these protesters are mostly sober! I agree with the right to protest, and that the Constitution doesn't empower the government to force us to comply to simple cautions, but it would say that someone making that choice should have no contact with anyone else. It's notable that the people making this choice on constitutional grounds are predominantly Republican, a party that condemns large government. The ignorance of the unselfish nature of the Constitution is exactly what causes laws and big government. My mask protects you, and your mask protects me.

My wife has suffered a lifetime of pain, surgeries,

and limited mobility because she just missed Salk's polio vaccine by a few months. Does anyone really believe that vaccine science hasn't progressed in 70 years?

James Wagner

Monument Academy School Board has poor values

On Feb. 10, the Monument Academy School Board issued a proclamation in which they essentially said that although the law mandates that a transgender student can use the bathroom that conforms to their gender identity, that that law violates natural law and moral truth and that the parents of the students in their school should lobby their legislators to get the law changed. What arrogance. Who made the Monument Academy School Board the experts on natural law and moral truth?

Just last year, the U.S. Supreme Court allowed a U.S. Court of Appeals ruling to stand in which the Court of Appeals said that under federal law a transgender student is entitled to use the bathroom that corresponds to their gender identity. The Monument Academy School Board believes that federal courts are wrong.

The board's proclamation would not be so troubling if it was the policy of a radical fundamentalist religious cult located in a compound in rural Montana. However, it is the policy of a public school in our very own community.

The board's proclamation is hateful and has no place in our community. It should immediately be rescinded. Anyone who supports it should be shunned.

Steve Waldmann

Between the Covers at Covered Treasures Bookstore**March mystery madness**

By the staff at Covered Treasures

"Good books don't give up all their secrets at once."—Stephen King

March is a month of basketball and spring break. It's also a great time to hunker down with some good mysteries, whether you are staying at home or traveling.

A Perfect Eye

By Stephanie Kane (Cold Hard Press) \$14.95

Stephanie Kane is a Denver attorney and award-winning author of four crime novels. She owned and ran a karate studio and is a second-degree black belt. She has lectured on money laundering and white-collar crime in Eastern Europe. In *A Perfect Eye*, the setting is the Denver Art Museum and an unflinching look at what goes on behind closed doors. As conservator of paintings, Lily Sparks uses her keen visual powers to restore masterpieces and detect what's authentic and what is not. When the museum's billionaire benefactor is brutally murdered, Lily confronts where art ends and fraud begins.

**The Devotion of Suspect X (Detective Galileo 1)**

By Keigo Higashino (Minotaur Books), \$17.99

Yasuko thought she had finally escaped her abusive ex-husband, but when he shows up one day, the situation escalates and he ends up dead. Yasuko's next-door neighbor, Ishigami, offers help. Dr. Manabu Yukawa, aka Detective Galileo, a physicist who also went to college with Ishigami, is brought into the

case. What ensues is a high-level battle of wits. One surprising twist follows another in this first in a series featuring Detective Galileo. Higashino won Japan's Naoki Prize for Best Novel with this stunning thriller about miscarried human devotion.

Summit

By Harry Farthing (Blackstone) \$19.99

Everest guide Neil Quinn is confident he can handle anything the mountain throws his way. But then disaster strikes, leaving him with a lot of questions and a very old swastika-embellished ice ax. He uncovers the story of Josef Becker, a Nazi climber who sought the top of the world 70 years before when Europe teetered on the brink of World War II. Quinn's innocent queries into Becker's expedition have neo-Nazis, assassins, and history buffs vying to take possession of the ax.

The Replacement Wife

By Darby Kane (William Morrow) \$16.99

Elisa Wright is a mom and wife, living a nice, quiet life in a nice, quiet town. She's also convinced her brother-in-law is a murderer. Josh has one dead wife, one missing fiancée, and he starts dating someone new. Searching for clues means investigating her own family, she doesn't like what she finds. The race is on to get to the truth before another disappearance because there's a killer in the family—or is there?

Find Me

By Alafair Burke (Harper) \$26.99

Hope Miller has no idea who she is. Fifteen years ago, she was found in a New Jersey town thrown from an overturned vehicle, no clue to her identity, and she never regained her memory. When Hope vanishes,

the only lead is a drop of blood. More ominously, the blood matches a sample connected to a notorious Kansas murderer. The search for the truth beneath long-buried secrets will upend everything defense attorney Lindsay Kelly and homicide detective Ellie Hatcher have ever known.

A Narrow Door

By Joanne Harris (Pegasus) \$26.95

For the first time in history at St. Oswald's school, a headmistress is in power, opening the gates to girls. Rebecca Buckfast has spilled blood to reach this position. As the new regime takes on the old guard, the ground shifts, and with it, the remains of a body are discovered. But Rebecca is here to make her mark. She'll bury the past so deep it will evade even her own memory, just like she has done before. After all, you can't keep a good woman down.

Box 88

By Charles Cumming (Mysterious Press) \$27.95

This pulse-pounding mystery straddles two eras, 1989 and 2020. Lachlan Kite is a member of Box 88, a covert, elite transatlantic black ops outfit. He falls into a trap, and his pregnant wife is held as collateral. Thirty years earlier, Lachlan cut his teeth on a special assignment involving one of Iran's most dangerous men. Today, Lachlan's nostalgia for the trip is corrupted by recollection of the deceit that accompanied it, but to save his family, he'll be forced to revisit those painful memories.

Until next month, happy reading.

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

March Library Events**Palmer Lake branch reopens; spring break activities announced**

By Harriet Halbig

Good news in library land! The Palmer Lake Library reopened on March 3 and will be open Wednesdays through Fridays from 10 to 6.

District 38's spring break will be from March 21 to 25. There will be no math tutoring offered on the 21st, but there will be a special Cool Science program for ages 4 to 12 involving using liquid nitrogen to make your own ice cream. This program, from 10:30 to 11:30 on the 22nd, will be at the Monument Library.

Free math tutoring will be offered each Monday from 3:30 to 6:30 with the exception of March 21, dur-

ing spring break. All ages are welcome to take advantage of this offering. No appointment required.

Thursday, March 24 there will be an off-site story time at the Reynolds Ranch House on the site of the Western Museum of Mining and Industry on North Gate Road. The program begins at 10:30. Registration is recommended.

The Winter Adult Reading Program continues through the end of March. Register at the library or online and receive prizes for time spent reading! All reading after Feb. 1 counts toward your total. We look forward to seeing you at the library.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at harriethalbig@ocn.me.

Right: The Reynolds Ranch House on the site of the Western Museum of Mining and Industry hosts off-site story times on Thursdays at 10:30. *Photo by Athena Cazier.*

