

Letters to Our Community

Our Community News welcomes letters to the editor on topics of general interest. The OCN editorial board has established a policy that we do not knowingly print letters that have appeared in substantially the same form elsewhere.

Please identify your submission as a letter to the editor and include your full name, home address, and day and evening phone numbers.

A limit of 300 words is recommended. Letters may be edited for length, grammar, and accuracy.

Send your letter to editor@ocn.me or mail to Our Community News, P.O. Box 1742, Monument, Colorado 80132-1742. In response to problems receiving e-mail, if you send your letter by e-mail, we will send an e-mail acknowledgement. If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please call Susan Hindman at 481-8511 to confirm that we have received your letter.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in Letters to Our Community should not be interpreted as the view of OCN even when the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.

Thanks for help in tennis courts project

Dear Town of Palmer Lake,
Thank you—especially to Mayor Cressman, Mayor McDonald, Tara Berreth, and Bob Radosevich—so much for helping me with the tennis courts project. I am so glad that you recognized how important this was to citizens of the town and were able to find lottery funds to finish the project. The courts look great and have been in full use every time I went past them on a recent weekend.

These courts are something that Palmer Lake residents of all ages will be able to enjoy. The town gave overwhelming support to this project, and I really appreciate it. On behalf of all the people of Palmer Lake who helped get this done, thanks again!

Morgan Day

Teachers' pay raise lauded

Let's give credit where credit is due. On June 2, Our Community News published Dr. David Cloud's letter, "It's time for a teacher pay raise in D-38." Dr. Cloud outlined, in simple terms, D-38's current budget situation. He gave the district credit for a balanced budget and a substantive budget surplus. He advised a well-deserved increase in salary and benefits for district employees.

On June 21, the school board announced "an important adjustment to staff compensation since the preliminary budget was presented to the Board in May. Certified and classified staff will each receive a 2.2 percent ongoing raise. This is the first wage increase in four years. Additionally, certified teaching staff will receive a bonus prior to the winter break." (This is an excerpt from the June 21 school board meeting highlights.)

Thank you, Dr. Cloud, for supporting our teachers.
Ana C. Konduris

A tale of two school finance forums

Last week I attended two forums about mill levy overrides (MLO; tax increases for residential and business properties). The first forum hosted by Direction 38! included three panelists: El Paso County Tax Assessor Mark Lowderman and two others with expertise on the complicated school finance laws. Each presented information, and throughout the two hours the audience was encouraged to ask questions and make comments. The discussion was lively and informative, with opinions expressed across the political spectrum.

Although invited, unfortunately no D-38 Board of Education (BOE) member or administrator was able to attend.

The second forum was held by the D-38 BOE and superintendent. The participants seemed to be speaking from a script regarding an MLO for the school district. The directors lamented about how ignorant the public is

about all the great decisions they have made over the past four years. Questions and comments from the audience were not allowed.

There was lengthy talk about educating the voters on the need for increased tax revenues for D-38. Board Vice President (Mark) Pfoff argued this education of the public was unnecessary because the truth will always prevail. He stated that the community gave them a mandate by the 60 percent to 40 percent win over their opponents last November. (It was actually 46 percent, not 60 percent per the Gazette.) A mandate to do what? He then implied that the citizens who have questioned or criticized the BOE's leadership are liars.

How does this hostile, accusatory style by an elected official bring our community together to accomplish the mission of providing an excellent education for our students?

Stephen Boyd

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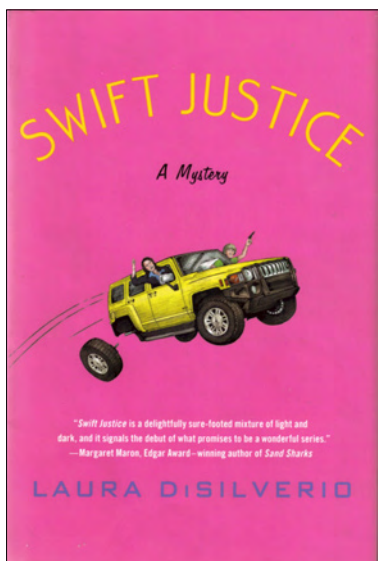


Between The Covers at the Covered Treasures Bookstore

Mysteries, mysteries, and more mysteries

By the staff at Covered Treasures

Do you enjoy an intricate, involved, many-faceted mystery that taxes your brain? Or maybe you prefer a lighter plot with a little humor thrown in. How about a suspenseful page-turner that scares the wits out of you? There are as many different types of mysteries as there are mystery lovers, as you will see in the sampling below.



Swift Justice

By Laura DiSilverio (St. Martin's Publishing) \$24.99

Private investigator Charlotte "Charlie" Swift prefers working alone, but when her silent partner flees the country, his pampered, socialite wife decides to be a not-so-silent partner. Charlie and Gigi make one hilarious odd couple, as they deal with an abandoned baby and a murderer on the loose.

The 13th Tribe

By Robert Liparulo (Thomas Nelson Inc.) \$16.99

When the 12 tribes of Israel were punished for worshipping a golden calf, the 13th Tribe received the worst punishment of all—endless life on earth with no chance to see the face of God. This group of immortals has been trying to earn their way into heaven ever since—by killing sinners. While their logic is twisted, their brilliance is undeniable, and the technology they possess is beyond anything mere humans could imagine. How can one man stop their most ambitious attack ever when millions of lives hang in the balance?

The Wind Through the Keyhole

By Stephen King (Simon & Schuster Inc.) \$27

In this volume, King returns to the rich landscape of Mid-World, the spectacular territory of the Dark Tower fantasy saga. Roland Deschain tells his friends not just one strange story but two, and casts new light on his own troubled past, involving a murderous shape-shifter and a terrified boy. The book will fascinate fans of the Dark Tower epic, but this novel also stands on its own as an enchanting and haunting journey to Roland's world and testimony to the power of King's storytelling magic.

The Limpopo Academy of Private Detection

By Alexander McCall Smith (Random House Inc.) \$24.95

For a lighter mystery, try the latest episode in the beloved No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series. Precious Ramotswe, the kindest and best detective in Botswana, faces a tricky situation when her personal and professional lives become entangled. As wealthy and powerful influences at the orphan farm become allied against her friend, Mma Potokwane, help arrives from an unexpected visitor. The tall stranger from Mma Ramotswe's dreams turns out to be none other than the estimable Clovis Andersen, author of the No. 1 Ladies' prized manual, *The Principles of Private Detection*.

The Coffins of Little Hope

By Timothy Schaffert (Unbridled Books) \$14.95

This novel features a multi-generational family in a small Nebraska town that is obsessed with death and missing children. Told through the voice of 83-year-old Essie Myles, the story describes the work of the town's old "death merchants," those inconspicuous professionals who prepare the bodies, play the organ, and dig the graves. Essie's job is to write the obituaries for her family's local newspaper, seeing past the survivors' grief, breathing life back into their beloveds in heartwarming detail. The tragedy of 11-year-old Lenore, allegedly snatched by her mother's weird boyfriend, attracted subscribers from around the world, and Essie describes how the "legend of Lenore" saved the town from a quaint decline.

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