

Third, the district has tightened its belt in recent years, cutting \$11 million out of its operating budget. LPSD has cut its teaching and administrative support workforce extensively. The question becomes: Can we see any harm done by those cuts?

Our recent testing performance causes me to worry. Our TCAP scores are falling and we are trending toward losing our Accredited with Distinction status. The middle school causes me the greatest concern, as this is where our kids have the highest student-teacher ratio. Their predecessors were educated in better funded elementary and middle schools with smaller class sizes. Until we get back on track with optimal staffing levels, specialists, and appropriate class sizes, our performance may continue to decline.

All this is occurring while China, India, Russia, and Brazil have joined Japan in competing stronger than ever with our domestic manufacturing, service and technology businesses. So I wonder: Are we setting our kids up for the fight for their economic lives by lowering our education performance?

I have seen enough. It's time to reach into our pockets and help our school district get back on track. Lewis-Palmer doesn't need the full \$11 million annually that it cut, but it needs some of it, and very soon. Thank you for considering our future.

Chris Amenson

Burglary mars store's anniversary

"Happy Birthday! We're so glad you're here!"

Variations on that greeting rang through Covered Treasures during the month of July. Customers old and new celebrated our 20th anniversary with us: We partied, we reminisced, we laughed, and we shed a few tears.

Then, this past Sunday, the "happy" was taken from us.

Paula came to the store about 2 to pick up books that had been dropped off for the Black Forest Fire victims. She was greeted with open doors to the Chapala building and the bookstore. She called out to me, thinking that I was in the store, but when she noticed that the lights were not on and saw the scissors lying on the floor, she realized something was not right and quickly called 911, then me.

For the next three hours we talked with the police and other building tenants and owners, gradually coming to terms with what had happened. The cash drawer was taken as well as the business checkbook and our iPad Mini for processing charge sales. Heartbreakingly, the bank envelope containing cash donations intended for books for the Black Forest Fire victims was also taken—over \$700—generously given by members of our caring community for children who had lost their favorite books along with their homes.

We were in shock. But it was not until I glanced over my shoulder to check the time for the police report I was filling out that I noticed that the clock was gone. That did it—the tears began to flow. It wasn't an antique and not particularly valuable, just a 30-day wind-up oak clock that chimed on the half hours and usually ran five minutes fast or slow, but our customers, particularly the children, liked it. And now, as we automatically glance above the cabinets, maybe 50 times a day, we realize how much we depended on it. And each time we are reminded.

As we do our best to return everything to normal, our friends and customers are grieving with us, angry on our behalf. Some are trying to help us to start the healing. Cathy Green brought in a jar and two bags of Hershey's Miniatures to replace the plastic box with the candies that

sat on the counter.

We know we'll heal, that this will gradually fade into memory, even though we will never forget. We will celebrate other birthdays. We just wish our Great Big 20th Happy Birthday Celebration hadn't ended like a popped balloon.

Thank you, all who celebrated, and who now grieve with us,

Tommie Plank

Owner, Covered Treasures Bookstore

Call or Click for a FREE On-Site Estimate!



Tri Lakes Area
559-1910
Commercial & Residential



- Interior & Exterior Glass
- Gutters, Skylights & High Fixtures
- Chandeliers & Ceiling Fans
- 100% Satisfaction Guaranteed
- Fully Insured





www.fishwindowcleaning.com/882

Between The Covers at the Covered Treasures Bookstore

Books that help develop a love of reading

By the staff at Covered Treasures

Put the right book in the hands of a child, and magic happens. With the beginning of school just around the corner, developing a love of reading becomes especially important. Following are suggestions for all ages, from pre-school to teens.

Tea Rex

By Molly Idle (Penguin Putnam) \$16.99

When Cordelia invites a very special guest to tea, she feels it's important to follow the rules—like providing comfortable chairs, good conversation, and yummy food. But that can be a real challenge for special guests when their manners are more Cretaceous than gracious. Introducing Tea Rex, a guest that just about any child would love to have to tea.



ing illustrations, Raschka includes the falls as well as the successes and encourages children to try again and again to master something they'll never forget.

The Dark

By Lemony Snicket (Little Brown and Co.) \$16.99

Laszlo is afraid of the dark. The dark is not afraid of Laszlo. Lazlo lives in a big house with a creaky roof. The dark lives in the basement. One night, the dark comes upstairs to Laszlo's room, and Laszlo goes down to the basement. This story of how Laszlo stops being afraid of the dark will resonate with many children, and they will love the clever black illustrations, the flashlight, and Lazlo's conversations with "the dark."

Escape From Mr. Lemoncello's Library

By Chris Grabenstein (Random House) \$16.99

Among books for middle readers, Grabenstein offers a thrilling puzzler in his latest laugh-filled tale. When Kyle Keeley learns that the world's most famous game maker has designed the town's new library and is having an invitation-only lock-in on the first night, he's determined to be there. What he doesn't realize is that getting in is the easy part. Getting out is going to take more than a good roll of the dice, a lucky card, and some smarts.

The Watcher in the Shadows

By Carlos Ruiz Zafon (Little Brown and Co.) \$18

Fourteen-year-old Irene's family has just moved to the estate of a reclusive toymaker and inventor on the foggy coast of Normandy. Irene is intrigued by the local ghost stories, but when a young girl is murdered, she wonders if there's more to the stories than the townspeople let on. Thus begins the most terrifying summer of Irene's life in this thriller with an eerie atmosphere and heart-stopping suspense.

Navigating Early

By Clare Vanderpool (Random House) \$16.99

When Jack Baker is suddenly uprooted from his home in Kansas and placed in a boarding school in Maine, he is befriended by Early, a boy who questions the truth about the great Appalachian bear and other legends everyone else accepts. When the two of them set out on a quest for the great black bear, they meet some truly strange charac-

123 versus ABC

By Mike Boldt (Harper Collins) \$17.99

Numbers and Letters both want to be the stars of this book. And when one alligator, two bears, and three cars (1, 2, 3! A, B, C!) show up, the havoc that ensues is as joyous a romp as a counting book, or an ABC book, has ever been. With vivid illustrations, this fresh and funny picture book plays with numbers and letters in a most imaginative way.

Everyone Can Learn to Ride a Bicycle

By Chris Raschka (Random House) \$16.99

This simple picture book gives delightful step-by-step directions for mastering an exciting new skill. With touch-



\$3 OFF Oil Change

\$10 OFF \$100 Service

Good through 8/31/13

QUALITY AUTO REPAIR

SUBARU • HONDA • TOYOTA

and other ASIAN imports

Call today: 488-6729

707 County Line Rd., Palmer Lake

Mon-Fri. 7:30 - 5:30







Columbine Gardens



Chinese Restaurant

Locally-owned and operated.

Serving the Tri-Lakes area for 21 years!

481 Hwy 105, #201, Monument

(719) 481-2311 (719) 481-1936

Mon-Thu 11-9, Fri 11-9:30, Sat. 11:30-9

Open Sundays 3:30-8:00

August Special!

FREE cheese wonton

Dine-in or take-out with \$25 purchase. Exp. 8/31/13.