

years and then became principal at Palmer Lake Elementary. She was the first female principal in the district and oversaw the reconstruction and reopening of the school. In 1995 she oversaw the conversion of Lewis-Palmer Middle School to Grace Best Elementary.

#### Victor Garcia

Victor Garcia has always viewed teaching as a calling. He began teaching at Lewis-Palmer High School in 1968. During his time there he developed and taught a number of history classes, including Advanced Placement American History, sponsoring many field trips around the state. He also started Spanish classes and took classes to Mexico during the summer to apply what they had learned.

In addition to traditional classes, Garcia built a dark room so that he could offer photography classes, which led to the creation of the school TV station, and took students to visit TV stations and video companies. He also developed a web writing and design class.

Garcia coached a variety of sports and brought boys soccer to Lewis-Palmer in 1983 and girls soccer in 1984. He received several Coach of the Year awards during his career, including National Coach of the Year in 2001.

He served on the North Central Accreditation Committee, curriculum development, and principal selection committees. He mentored 20 student teachers.

#### Amy J. O'Dair

Amy J. O'Dair served the district as a volunteer at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels for 25 years. She began in 1979 at Lewis-Palmer Elementary where she was active in the PTO and accountability programs. She became a longtime member and chairperson of the Lewis-Palmer District Accountability Committee, which worked to improve education and the well-being of students.

O'Dair organized many programs funded by grants that she wrote. She spear-

headed the At-Risk Transition Committee, which eased the transition between middle and high school. She wrote guidelines for volunteers throughout the district and served as the coordinator for the Tri-Lakes Health Advisory Committee and the Tri-Lakes Center for D-38 Students. She initiated Drug-Free Youth, a program that involved peer counseling about substance abuse prevention.

O'Dair also collaborated with the Air Force Academy, resulting in cadets providing weekly tutoring sessions for secondary students. Equine Assisted Therapy was introduced to the district through her ef-

forts and grant funds were used to partner with law enforcement and firefighters.

#### Dr. Dallas Strawn

Dr. Dallas Strawn came to the district as the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Staff Development in 1984. Using his classroom experience, he was instrumental in teaching training classes and development of curriculum guides for all content areas at all levels. He created a five-year curriculum review guide to ensure that the district remained comprehensive, and a teacher evaluation process that encouraged professional growth. This process became the prototype for many districts

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