

Palmer Ridge High School

Monument CO

Bear Truth

Volume 11 October 2019

Meet our foreign exchange students!
pgs. 24-25

**Hyping
Up for
Halloween**

pgs. 4 & 10

**When you're too hurt
to play...**

pgs. 16-17



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The Editorial Policy:
The Bear Truth is the student voice of Palmer Ridge High School. Our staff is dedicated to maintaining journalistic integrity, serving Palmer Ridge High School as a public forum, and presenting up-to-date information and coverage on issues affecting the school and the surrounding community. Expression made by students in the exercise of freedom of speech or freedom of the press is not an expression of The Lewis-Palmer School District or District 38 Board Policy.

Letters to the Editor:
The Bear Truth staff views the inclusion of letters to the editor as essential to the journalistic process. The staff feels that these letters provide a means by which readers can voice their opinions or views. However, given the limited amount of space in the school news magazine, the staff reserves the right to set standards for the length and number of letters to be included. Letters should be no longer than 250 words and be signed so the staff can verify authorship. Under no circumstances will anonymous letters be accepted or printed. The staff of the Bear Truth wants to hear from the community we serve. please email letters to tpatrick@lewispalmer.org

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Bearly the Truth

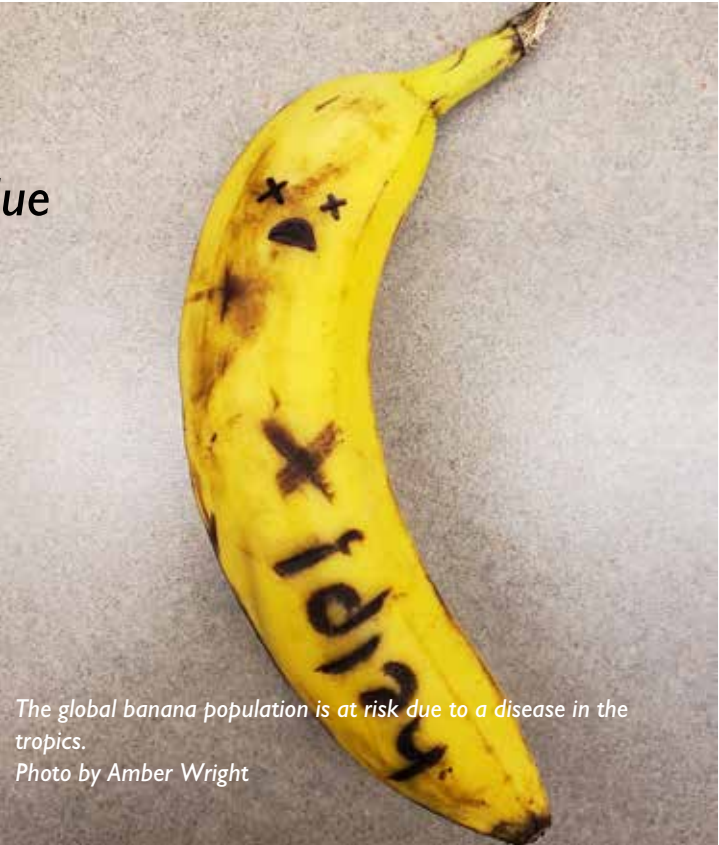
Quotes heard in the hallways, fact-checked

“There’s a disease killing all the bananas!” **True!**

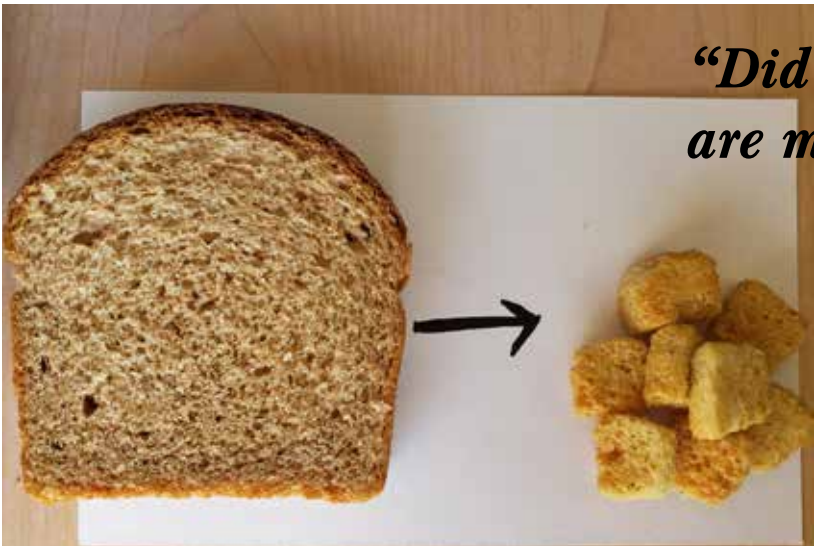
Bananas are at risk of extinction due to a deadly fungus in the tropics.

“Coconuts are mammals because they have hair and produce milk.” **False!**

Coconuts are classified as seeds of the coconut tree, not as a mammal, despite their shaggy appearance.



The global banana population is at risk due to a disease in the tropics.
Photo by Amber Wright



Croutons are made of bread that has been rebaked. Photo by Amber Wright

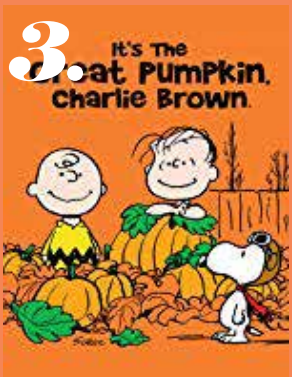
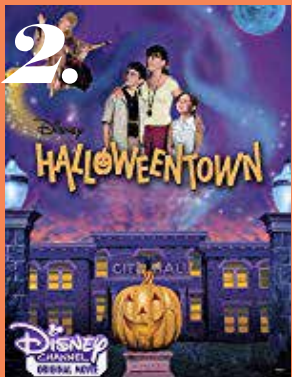
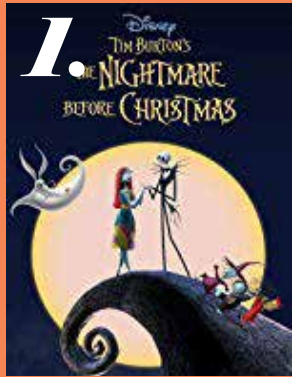
“Did you know that croutons are made of bread?” **True!**

Croutons ARE made of rebaked bread! After being rebaked, they are often seasoned to taste for salads.

kids these days...

The Bear Truth’s Top 6 Halloween Movie Picks

by Kaitlyn Ketchell and Amber Wright



1. We love this classic movie because of its positive outlook on the life of Charlie Brown and his friends. From Linus in the pumpkin patch to Snoopy’s fantasies, this movie is a heartwarming must-see. The peanuts gang always leaves us with a smile on our faces.

2. “Hocus Pocus” is a treasured movie among the staff because of its hilarious plot. Between the witches, a magical cat, and a creepy old book of spells, “Hocus Pocus” has all the elements of a classic spooky movie. It will never grow tiresome, and is a must-watch this Halloween.

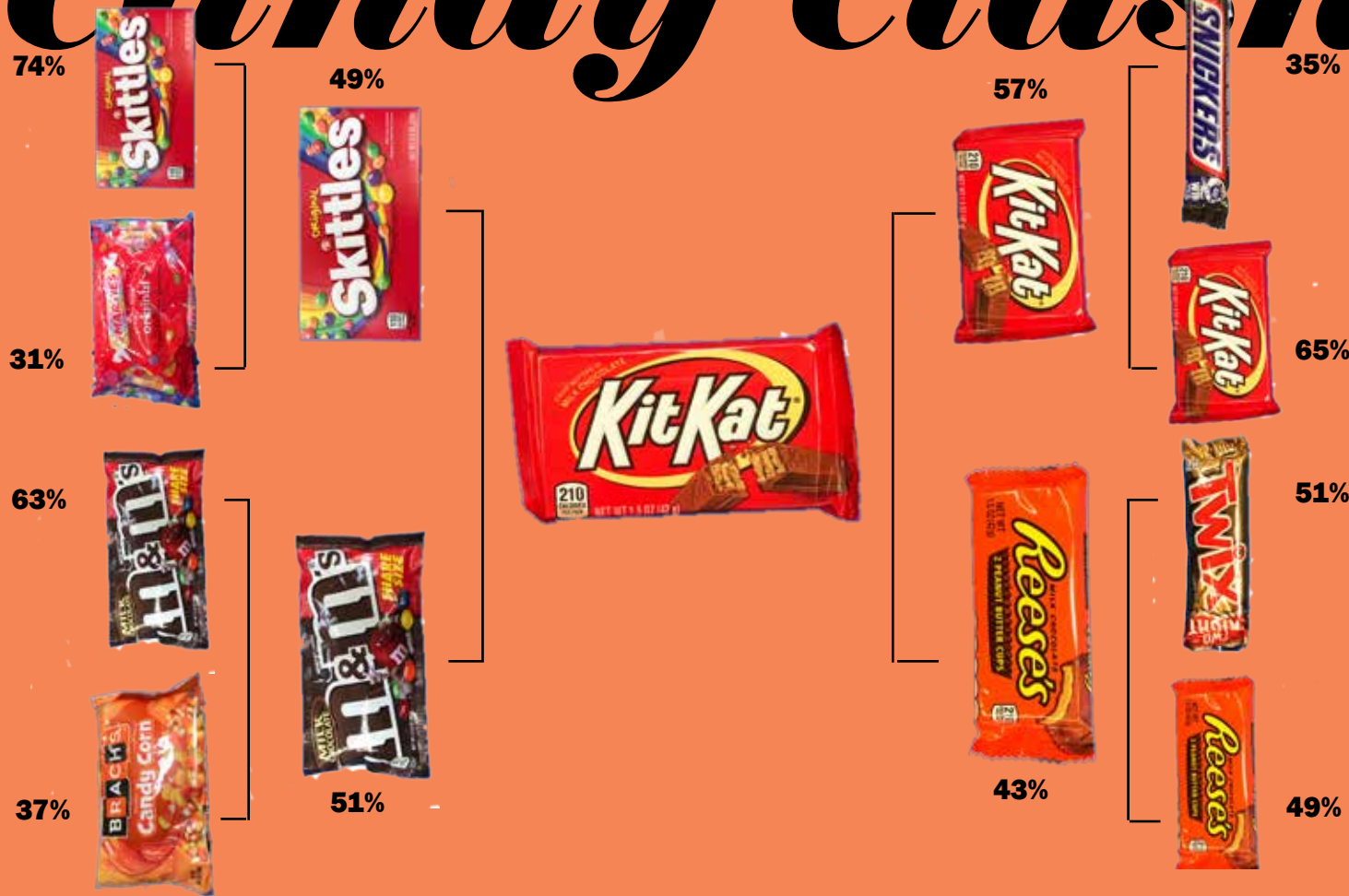
3. Do you think your family is weird? The family members in this movie are ghoulish and slightly terrifying in the best possible way. “The Addams Family” is definitely beloved by the staff due to its wacky plot, weird humor, and wonderfully morbid characters.

4. One of the best supernatural films made, “Ghostbusters” is a Halloween essential. With an unbeatable soundtrack, this movie is the perfectly balances comedy and drama. “Ghostbusters” is sure to give you goosebumps no matter how many times you watch it.

5. Touching, yet also imaginative and humorous, one can’t help but love this movie. “The Nightmare Before Christmas” has beautiful animation and an incredible soundtrack. And of course, Zero, Jack Skellington’s ghost dog, is a favorite among the staff.

6. “Halloweentown” focuses on supernatural beings in Halloweentown. With witches, skeletal taxi-drivers, and a fight against evil, this movie is perfect for the spooky season. “Halloweentown” is a wholesome classic that we’ll forever enjoy.

candy clash



What is PR’s favorite candy?

In each bracket, 100 students were asked about their candy preference. Some clashes were a close call, but Kit Kats are the ultimate winner!

Candy photos by Kaitlyn Ketchell

terrifying trivia: fun facts about your favorite candy



The “Taste the Rainbow” slogan originated in 1994, making it one of the longest-running advertising campaigns.



M&M’s were originally packaged in cardboard tubes.



Kit Kats were originally marketed to go with tea.



World War II led to a boom in Reese’s cups, as filled chocolates were cheaper to produce.



Abi Drennan (11), who is on the gymnastics team, said “My team mates are like family to me, they always motivate me and cheer me on.”



Kyle Wade (10) is on the golf team. He likes to bond with the team, go to the tournaments, and miss school.



Juliana Strickling (10), who is on the field hockey team, said “I really like the people that I do [field hockey] with, it’s a really tight knit community.”

Ask an Athlete

The Bear Truth asked five athletes, “What’s your favorite part of your sport?”

by Ella Bolko, Renna Lage, and Katrina Weiskircher



Deuce Roberson (12) is on the football team. He said, “We are really close... it’s more of a brotherhood than just a football team.”



Brooklyn Horsely (10) is on the softball team. She said, “My favorite thing about being on the softball team is the new coaches and being able to play with my friends.”

Photos by: Lily Dozier



Photo by Elijah Montano. Colby Larson (12) is the top runner on the boy’s varsity cross country team. Larson is running at the Polson Ranch Invitational in the photo. Larson has been on the cross country team since his freshman year.

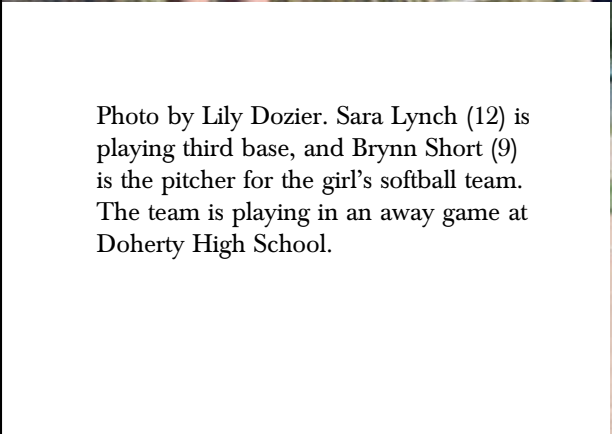


Photo by Lily Dozier. Sara Lynch (12) is playing third base, and Brynn Short (9) is the pitcher for the girl’s softball team. The team is playing in an away game at Doherty High School.



Photo by Lily Dozier. The cheer team cheers on the football team during a home game. The cheer team works hard before and after school to prepare for games.

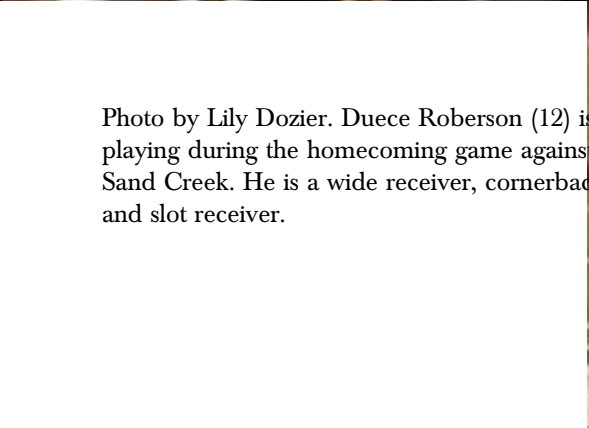


Photo by Lily Dozier. Deuce Roberson (12) is playing during the homecoming game against Sand Creek. He is a wide receiver, cornerback, and slot receiver.



Catching up with the cast of “Into the Woods”

by Kyle Ketchell and Mason Huddleston
photos by Mason Huddleston

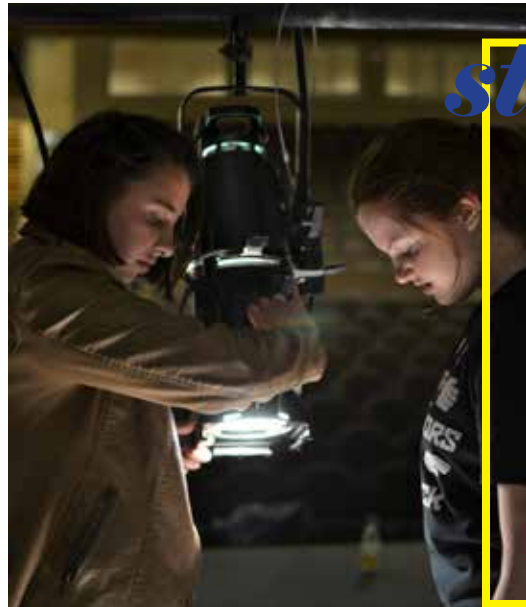
Every year, the Bear Necessity Theatre Company brushes off the dust, pulls the curtains, and puts on the first show of the year. This year’s musical will be “Into the Woods,” a thrilling tale of love, magic, and fairy tales. The two-act musical features classic fairy tale stories such as Cinderella, Jack and the Beanstalk, and little Red Riding Hood.

The cast will be working hard in the next few weeks to make sure that the show runs smoothly. Cast members will be rehearsing their lines, and actions. The tech crew will be working to build the set pieces, arrange for all the actors to have microphones, and make sure that everyone can see the actors on the otherwise dark stage.

In addition to the many performers that you may see on the stage, the show’s pit orchestra will also be rehearsing over the next few weeks to ensure that the singers on stage have a well-rehearsed orchestra to back them up. The pit orchestra will be rehearsing the hours of music in small chunks over the next few Saturdays, and then the actors will have an opportunity to work with the orchestra to ensure that the show appears effortless.

If you are interested in seeing the talent of many PRHS students put to work, be sure to check out “Into the Woods.” Tickets will be available online or at the door. The show will run in the evenings on Thursday November 14th, Friday November 15th, and twice on Saturday, November 16th at 1pm and at 7pm.

Actors Trevor Martin, Doc Camarco, and Mary Dunston during rehearsal



student leadership

The show’s Assistant Technical Director, Kelbi O’Connor, is teaching Lighting Designer Sammy Neptune how to focus a light. The PRHS Theatre program, Bear Necessity Theatre Company models itself after professional theater companies, in which older members of the company are responsible for instructing younger members in the responsibilities of their role.

O’Connor has been with BNTC since her freshman year, working with

lights crew, set construction crew, special projects crew, and acting. For “Into the Woods,” O’Connor is responsible for managing and leading the technical crew, as well as ensuring that the technical crew is staying safe with the equipment they are given. In addition to leading the technical crew, O’Connor will be designing several of the set pieces in the show.



Director Josh Belk

is speaking to students about theatre dues and expenses. Although Mr. Belk is just one of the several directors in charge of the show, his job is one of the most crucial. Mr. Belk works with actors and singers on lines and choreography every day after school. Mr. Belk works with the technical crew to ensure safe and effective technical practices, and he works with the other directors of the show to coordinate the rehearsal schedule.

Mr. Belk works hard every show to make sure that every student has an opportunity to succeed in BNTC. Mr. Belk believes that every student has a place in theatre, and that anyone can succeed in BNTC. Mr. Belk is proud to work with the students of Bear Necessity Theatre Company year after year, and he plans to continue BNTC’s tradition of excellence for years to come.

Actors Doc Camarco and Trevor Martin

during rehearsal. Trevor Martin will be playing Jack, and Doc Camarco will be playing Milky White. Every day during rehearsal, the actors practice both their spoken lines, and the lines that they will be singing. In addition to running

lines, the actors take time to learn choreography for the dances, as well as stage directions for the spoken sections of the show.



Every day before rehearsal, the show’s company takes time to make sure that everyone is fed. Snacks range from chips to snack bars that will be available for the entire rehearsal.

A healthy diet is just as important for singers and dancers as it is for athletes.



Lighting Designer Sammy Neptune and crew member Brady Wible

are focusing lights on the catwalk. The lighting crew is responsible for ensuring that the actors are well lit for every scene. Lighting designer Sammy Neptune is also responsible for designing the lighting system for the show, as well as leading the crew in hanging

and focusing lights for the show. During the show, the lighting crew will work in the lighting booth to run the lighting board to control the lights for the show.

what’s your sign?

Aries

Mar 21-Apr 19

With Mars in retrograde, you may find your energy draining more than usual. Don’t fear, dear Aries! In the month of November, your work should take priority. With Venus supporting you, hard work will pay off. Take advantage of opportunities to show off your skills and outshine the competition. Though you may want to take charge, respecting the chain of command and being agreeable will work in your favor this month. Being cooperative and working with others will benefit you.

Mercury, the planet of communication and intellect, moves through Scorpio this month, lending strong intuition. Listen to your gut. Be wary though, communication may become intense through Scorpio’s influence. Check your temper and give thought before speaking. Be careful not to get too caught up in the moment, as you may say or do something you will regret.

Taurus

Apr 20-May 20

This month you may find communication more difficult than usual; however, it also becomes more vital to your success and happiness. Rely on those around you for support. You may find yourself at odds with someone whose opinion means a lot to you. Compromise and communication is vital to relationships, but do not surrender your sense of self for the sake of peace. Rely on yourself. This November you will be drawn towards serious relationships, so now is the time to deepen friendships and build relationships built on trust and communication. Check to be sure that you are not holding any grudges, as these will only hinder you.

Be wary of unnecessary risk at the end of the month and evaluate your motives for wanting to pursue it. The purity of intention will drive results. The successful completion of a long-term endeavor is a rewarding feeling, so be sure to share it with those around you.

Gemini

May 21-Jun 20

Gemini excel at adjusting to people and situations. Let your social butterfly take flight in November! This month, step outside yourself and focus on those around you. Great things can be achieved through cooperation with others. Much happiness originates in positive relationships with those close to you. Consult those you trust on important decisions. You do not need to make tough choices by yourself.

The sun in Scorpio energizes your motivation and work! With your mind running at full speed, do not pass up any opportunities to get ahead. The question of what you are doing is secondary to the question of whether or not you care about what you are doing.

Horoscopes by
Kennedy Schuh

Cancer

Jun 21-Jul 22

November brings a shift in perspective for you, dear Cancer. Emotional pursuits will bring themselves to the forefront of your mind. While you should not let them run wild, your emotions are a valuable asset in guiding your life. Now is the time to mend scarred relationships. Try to put yourself into the shoes of others in order to better understand their perspective. Things are rarely so black and white as they may seem. Mercury in Scorpio encourages you to make a conscious decision about what you want. Rather than avoiding the question, take the time to assess your stance on it. Now is not the time for passive avoidance. Do not hesitate to consult an outside perspective to bring clarity to a hazy situation.

Leo

Jul 23-Aug 22

Your humanitarianism will show itself in force this month, Leo. The best way to change the world is by doing it with the help of others! Use your outgoing personality to rally those around you to your cause. Venus aligns in your favor this month, Leo, enhancing your ability to genuinely connect with those around you. Your relationships with those you care about can be strengthened. You may be surprised to find yourself getting through to someone you thought was a stone wall. Do not give up! Your authenticity and passion may sway a few non-believers to your side. Try approaching your difficulties from a new angle.

Do not be afraid to try new things this November! Step outside of your comfort zone and bring new experiences into your life. Their value is insurmountable. Obstacles may frustrate you in your work this month, but these will only help you grow. Bite the bullet, get through it, and maybe learn something along the way. Remember that your life is bigger than your work, and do not let it pass you by. Be spontaneous and live your life to its fullest.

Virgo

Aug 23-Sept 22

Inspire others this month! By living your best life, you motivate others to follow suit. Be open to letting go of bad habits or traits. Take time to figure out what you want, then go for it! Do not be afraid to ask your friends for help. Make sure to keep track of yourself and keep organized. Do not shoot down new ideas before fully considering them!

It may be time for a change in routine. Do something fun you have not done in a while. Make sure to enjoy yourself! It is good to indulge yourself once in a while. Mars is with you this month, which could move things along, but may also bring stress. Be sure to take care of yourself. A relationship challenge may present itself, and with Saturn moving towards the Sun, now is the time to make decisions. You will need to either learn to compromise or learn to move on. Do not let conflict distract your focus from what is important.

Libra

Sept 23-Oct 22

November is the month to let your hair down, dear Libra! Enjoy the time you spend with others. Live in the moment and don’t let your plans for the future stop you from being present in the now. Find beauty in the little things in life. Do not wallow in uncertainty, be sure to ask questions to figure out where you stand in order to be able to act accordingly. Communication and understanding will be key to your happiness this month, and your happiness will be the key to your success!

Try not to get caught up in the frivolities of conflicts, but address them at their root. Recognize the emotions of others in tough situations and do not get so caught up in your decision you forget their humanity. Emotional responses are not a weakness, but be sure to balance them with clear thinking. Do not rush into decisions or force others to respond immediately. Meditation is the key to thinking logically.

Scorpio

Oct 23-Nov 21

Follow your passions—they will lead you where you need to go. Dive head-first into whatever project you have been dreaming of. Share your happiness with others! With Mars leaving Libra, tensions may feel high, and attitudes may be intense and confusing. Try not to get too caught up in the stresses of others. Make sure you are taking time for yourself and coping in a healthy way. Your emotions and logic may seem to be at odds with each other, but remind yourself that the best decisions come out of a balanced consideration of both.

Do not forget that every relationship is a two-way street. Having a heart-to-heart is the best way to make sure no one feels like the relationship is unbalanced. Do not let resentful feelings simmer. The only way to be able to address a problem is to know about it, and the only way for anyone to know about it is to talk about it. Mars demands action, so now is the time to make those hard decisions you have been delaying.

Sagittarius

Nov 22-Dec 21

Start talking to someone new this November. Each person you meet has fascinating story and perspective on life, and you just cannot wait to hear about it, dear Sagittarius! It can feel like there is so much going on all the time, so be sure to save some time to take care of yourself. How can you be expected to have a good time if you are too tired?

You will need to come to terms with the fact that people will not always agree with you, and that is okay! Sometimes you just need to do your own thing, or try doing something someone else’s way. Pluto’s return from retrograde in October means that you will be able to make clearer decisions come November. Be sure to remember that every conflict has two sides, and neither one can be completely free from blame.

Capricorn

Dec 22-Jan 19

Your hard work will pay off this November, dear Capricorn. Be sure not to lose focus on the important things in life. While it is prudent to concern yourself with colder matters, your emotional life ought to be your main concern. Prioritizing your feelings and treating yourself like a human (rather than a robot) will only aid in your successes this month. Check in with yourself often to make sure you are happy with what you are doing. We are not on this earth for a long time, so enjoy yourself while you are here. Do not take things too personally if they are not meant to be. Sometimes it is not really that deep. Do not forget to nurture your creative side! Put that brilliant mind to creating, and you may just discover something new and wonderful. Sometimes planning too much hinders you. There is nothing wrong with preparation, but if you are using it as an excuse to procrastinate the actual task, then it is doing you no favors. Just jump in! Have faith in yourself and your abilities. And be a little spontaneous.

Aquarius

Jan 20-Feb 18

Your intense energy this month will drive you to great places and achievements. Be sure to ground yourself and do not get swept away in a tide of emotion. Take the time to process your feelings and do not make any rash decisions. Sometimes it is okay not to know. Let your heart guide you in times when your brain cannot. You may find yourself upon a new revelation from this thinking. Shift your perspective, and the world will shift with you. Do not be afraid to do a little exploring off the beaten path. You never know what you might find if you let yourself wander, both figuratively AND literally. But be careful not to stray so far into the weeds that you lose yourself. Something you perceive as a setback may not always be so. Find the benefit in every occurrence and make the most of every situation. Pluto’s interference with the moon may herald conflict for you, dear Aquarius. Remember: the only person you can control is yourself. Be prepared to move on despite the pain of severing ties. You may find the ramifications of a conflict to be more damaging than the conflict itself. Just keep one foot in front of the other.

Pisces

Feb 19-Mar 20

Let yourself daydream this month. Let yourself dwell in the realm of the abstract for a while. The concrete world will still be here when you get back. Your dreams do not necessarily have to stay fictional. Do what you can to make them reality! Take action! This world is yours to mold, dear Pisces, and you have the vision to make it great. Embrace changes and new developments, Pisces! They are here to guide you, not to hurt you. Mercury is retrograding into Scorpio this month, so be wary of your words. As the planet of communication moves backwards through the house of intensity, you may be prone to misunderstanding.

quiz:

Which Pumpkin Treat Are You?

by Luxe Palmer

1. What do you like to do on a rainy day?

- a. Make an Insta-worthy hot chocolate
- b. Read a book by the fireplace
- c. Finish up your homework so you can relax
- d. Curl up in a blanket and watch a classic

2. Choose an autumn color:



3. What is your typical Starbucks order?

- a. Chai Latte
- b. Soy Mocha
- c. Vanilla Bean Frappuccino
- d. Cappuccino

4. Choose a classic autumn movie:

- a. “Hocus Pocus” (1993)
- b. “It’s The Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown!” (1966)
- c. “The Nightmare Before Christmas” (1993)
- d. “The Addams Family” (1991)

5. It’s Halloween! What costume are you wearing?

- a. A group costume with your friends
- b. Lady Jane Grey or William Shakespeare
- c. A character from “Harry Potter”
- d. Something scary

Mostly A: Pumpkin-Spiced Latte
Mostly B: Pumpkin Scone

Mostly C: Pumpkin Pie
Mostly D: Pumpkin Pancakes

I Can’t Hear You!

From love songs to spooky bops, the Bear Truth has your autumn playlist covered.

by Kennedy Schuh and Luxe Palmer

“Spooky”
By Classic IV



“Rhiannon”
By Stevie Nicks



“Season of the Witch”
By Donovan



“There She Goes”
By The La’s



“Dead Man’s Party”
By Oingo Boingo



“Love Potion No. 9”
By The Clovers



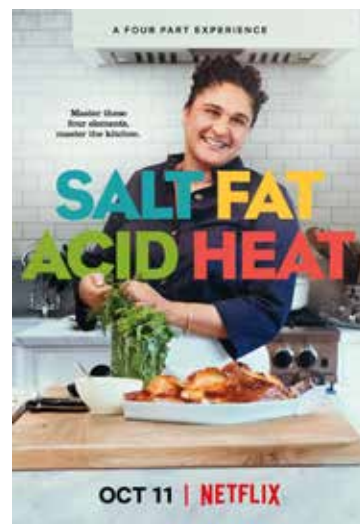
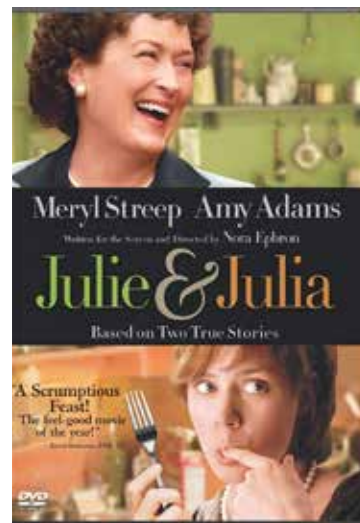
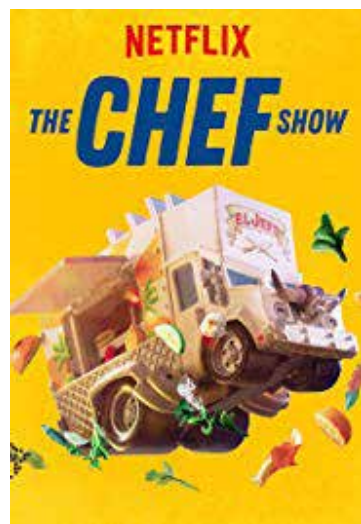
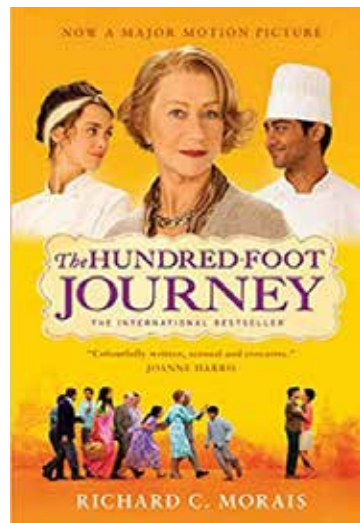
“Two Ghosts”
By Harry Styles



“Howlin’ For You”
By The Black Keys



Photos by Genius, Wikipedia, inherownwords.com, Billboard, Napster, and Youtube.



The Hundred-Foot Journey

A family migrates from India when their village is burned down, traveling to a small town in France. The son, Hassan, befriends Marguerite, the chef at a Michelin-star restaurant 100 feet away from Hassan's family's Indian restaurant. Competition and love mix in this beautifully told international story.

The Great British Baking Show

With quirky hosts, lovable contestants, and the ever-famous Hollywood Handshake, "The Great British Baking Show" is a baking competition that spans all cultures and is perfect for the whole family. Contestants compete in a variety of tasks set by the hosts, Prue and Paul.

This Is Not What I Expected

With exciting and original filmography and the most unconventional characters, you will not expect anything in this beautiful and hilarious Japanese film. Gu Shengnan, a flamboyant chef at an expensive hotel, falls into a series of mischievous antics to win over the handsome hotel acquisitioner, Lu Jin.

The Chef Show

Starring Jon Favreau, who played Happy Hogan in the Marvel movies, and chef Roy Choi of Kogi taco truck fame, "The Chef Show" travels across the country to explore the world of cooking from two very different points of view. The two also partnered on the movie *Chef*.

Julie and Julia

Based on a true story, Amy Adams and Meryl Streep star in a multi-generational narrative of a blogger trying to work her way through Julia Child's famous cookbook, "Mastering The Art of French Cooking." It tells the story of Julia Child and Julie Powell as they journey to discover the art of French cooking.

Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat

A thoughtfully filmed 4-part documentary on the four elements of cooking, "Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat" is hosted by Samin Nosrat, author of the cookbook of the same name. This is an experience for the ages, filled with breathtaking footage and mouthwatering recipes.

the lowdown: kombucha

by Luxe Palmer and Kaitlyn Ketchell

Kombucha is a fermented tea that dates back to China in the 200s BC. With a misnomer of "mushroom tea," kombucha is made by fermenting tea with a bacteria solid called a SCOBY (Symbiotic Culture of Bacteria and Yeast), which gives the carbonated drink its probiotic health benefits.

Photos by
Luxe Palmer

How To Make Kombucha:

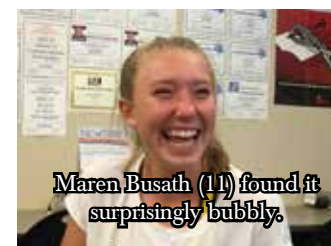
1. Procure a SCOBY from your local natural grocery store or kombucha-making friend.
2. Mix together 70 grams sugar, 7g black or green tea and 1 quart water, adding the SCOBY on top.
3. Let it sit (ferment) in a dark cabinet for 1-4 weeks.
4. Strain kombucha from the SCOBY and add in any flavoring elements such as herbs or berries, and let ferment for another week or so.
5. Strain once more and store in an airtight bottle in the refrigerator!

Some say that kombucha can do everything from improving mental health to preventing cancer, but there is no scientific proof to back it up. It is a good source of probiotics and has the potential to improve digestion and weight loss. According to Jenilyn Grebe, nutritional coach at Natural Grocers, "... this is where the controversy comes in, because is there enough health benefits for some people? Yes. For others, no. [If you are someone] with an overly sensitive digestive tract, kombucha... could actually aggravate."

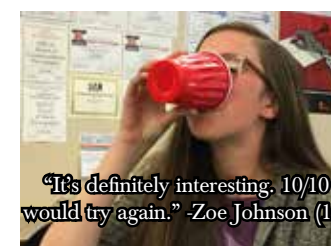
"It tastes like vinegar gone off!" -Matt Campbell (12)



Matt Campbell (12) generally... despised kombucha.

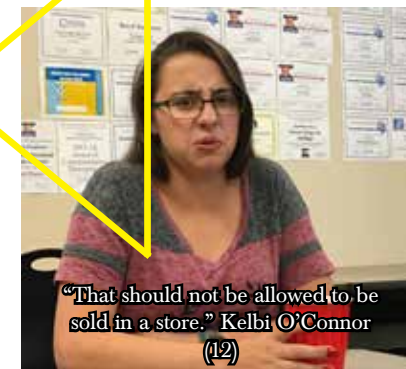


Maren Busath (11) found it surprisingly bubbly.



"It's definitely interesting. 10/10 would try again." -Zoe Johnson (10)

We took a poll on Instagram (@prhs_bear_truth), and it turns out that about 65% of y'all love kombucha! We also performed a blind taste test, with three different brands of lemon-ginger kombucha- the overall winner being Humm. "It is unusual. It is unique..." -Anthony Marsico (11)



"That should not be allowed to be sold in a store." Kelbi O'Connor (12)



Photo by
Luxe Palmer



Miela Tenace (9) was simply appalled. You can just see it.

Mountain Chat

By Colby Schultz

Colorado is famous for great skiing and snowboarding, but every year snowpack becomes more and more of a gamble. Last year, snowfall was plentiful, leaving some resorts such as A-Basin open into July.

However, this raises some concerns on whether this year the snow will dwindle off. With the Northern Rockies in Montana and some of the Cascades in the Pacific Northwest already getting hit by early-season dumping, it shouldn't be long before Colorado gets her share as well.

According to the Old Farmer's Almanac, the Intermountain region of the United States, which includes areas from Spokane all the way down to Flagstaff and Colorado Springs, will be slightly below average in winter characteristics this year. The temperature and precipitation for the winter months are both predicted to be slightly below average, and even more so in the south. The coldest part of the winter is predicted to be mid-December through early February, with the most precipitation coming in waves throughout December, January, February and March.

With Winter Park expecting to open mid-November, and A-Basin and Loveland both shooting for mid- October, it shouldn't be long before you can strap on your board click into your skis again.

Spillin' the Tea About History: HALLOWEEN

By Kaitlyn Ketchell

The story of Halloween starts with the Celts, a group of people originating in current-day Ireland. The Celts celebrated a pagan festival called Samhain every year on October 31, believing it to be the day that spirits, faeries, and ghosts crossed over from the 'spirit realm' to haunt the Earth. Celtic folks would disguise themselves and have bonfires in an attempt to ward the spirits off.

When the Romans conquered the Celts around 43 AD the festival of Samhain combined with the Roman celebration of Parentalia, a festival to commemorate the dead. The Roman festival was nine days long and on the last day gifts were placed on graves of family members.

The holiday underwent another change in 1000 AD at the hands of the Catholic church. The church sought to maintain the celebratory spirit, but changed the name to All-Hallowmas, meaning "mass of the hallowed," to honor saints rather than pagan superstition. The name evolved into All-Hallows and All-Hallows Eve, and finally into Halloween.

Halloween was popular in Ireland due to its Celtic roots, and spread to America along with Irish immigrants during the Irish Potato Famine. While the modern celebration of Halloween has changed far from its roots, it's a fun and popular celebration for people of all ages.

4A-absolutely!

The Bear Truth officially voices our support for the passage of bond 4A. When the construction of obtrusive portable classrooms outside Lewis-Palmer Middle School began, members of the Monument/Palmer Lake community were shocked that such a drastic measure had been taken to house the overflowing student body of LPMS.

Not only was the landscape of LPMS changed, but the campuses of Kilmer and Bear Creek Elementary were also graced with brand new modulars. Exponential growth is becoming an increasingly important issue facing the community that houses these schools, and the community has a variety of solutions they feel would be sufficient to address the ever-growing number of students in District 38.

As November approaches, the community is gearing up to vote on a solution: Bond 4A. Voters will be approving or rejecting a bond asking for \$28.985 million with the purpose of building a new elementary school. By building a new elementary school, LPMSD would be able to open up Bear Creek for 6th-8th-grade students as a second middle school.

Opponents of the bond cite several arguments against it, the primary one being about occupation capacity. "The capacity of Lewis-Palmer Middle School is 850; they currently have 875. They added the modulars, which adds 100-130 seats," said Derek Araje, leader of the 4A opposition. If one looks at the growth and schooling situation purely as a game of numbers, both in seats and dollars, it is easy to discount the necessity for a new school, however one must evaluate the situation on a deeper level than numbers: How does the addition of a new school impact the people of the community?

"Today, there is not an LPMS space large enough to hold the entire school population for assemblies, guest speakers, and continuation ceremonies. The large gym barely holds a single grade level," said Dr. Somers, the superintendent of Lewis-Palmer School District 38.

The Editorial Board of The Bear Truth supports the 4A Bond on November's ballot.



Some members of the community have taken to decorating their vehicles with pro-4A messages to promote the bond. Photo credit: Kyle Ketchell

While portable classrooms offer a temporary Band-Aid for the overcrowding at LPMS, they will never solve the problem at large.

According to a study by Metrostudy, Lewis-Palmer School District 38 will be enrolling around 693 additional students within the next five years. These students don't have anywhere to go, but by building a new elementary school and converting Bear Creek back into a middle school, current crowding problems would be alleviated along with adding space for the community to grow into.

Opponents of the bond say that too many seats in the new middle school would be a disaster: "When they added 900 seats, creating a total number of seats of 1,750, Lewis-Palmer Middle School had 1,055 kids . . . The largest both middle schools combined ever got was 1,340 kids. So, even when it was most full, they were 400 kids under capacity," said Araje. Should the students be evenly dispersed through both schools, each would have room to expand and in one of the fastest-growing areas in Colorado. According to KOAA, room for growth is

imperative. Beyond the numbers for growth, a crucial aspect of the discussion gets abandoned by the opposition. Operating at or over capacity is negative for students and teachers. "We had trailers at Lewis-Palmer High School; I taught there before I taught here at Palmer Ridge, and we had mods. You felt very disconnected from the school being out there," said Ms. Troy, English department head, regarding the impact of overcrowding and the topic of the bond.

Studies disagree on whether class size does or does not impact the quality of education; however, there is more to consider. According to LPMSD, "LPMS staff no longer have a staff lounge or private bathroom, as they have re-purposed their lounge and the principal's office into usable classrooms, conference rooms, etc., in order to accommodate students' needs." When teachers can no longer use facilities meant for them due to overcrowding, the situation is obviously dire. A vote "yes" on Bond 4A is a vote for the students and teachers in LPMSD 38.

Photo by Colby Schultz

Photo by Kaitlyn Ketchell

Taken Out!

How do Sports Injuries Affect PRHS Students?

by Isabella Bolko, Camron Gall, and Katrina Weiskircher

For many students, going to sports practice is a daily routine. This comes with its advantages and disadvantages. Sports can be a good way to have fun and relieve stress, but they can also result in injury. Sports can be physically and mentally overbearing. Sports related injuries are an all too common experience. These injuries significantly affect the student’s everyday life and make it hard for kids to go through their routines, both at school and at home.

When you break both feet...

Jayden Akers (11), a student at Palmer Ridge High School has been injured many times. These injuries not only affect her as an athlete, but also as a student. Akers has done dive since her sophomore year and has been a gymnast for 15 years. Since Akers was nine years old, she has broken twenty-two bones, all from gymnastics. When Akers was a freshman, she broke both of her feet at the same time at a gymnastics meet. She was out of school for a month and a half. “That was the first time I had a B, because it was so much work that I couldn’t keep up with from being out,” Akers said. “Sports are really time consuming, so it’s really hard to figure out how you’re going to fit everything in. You’re at school all day long and then trying to figure out when you’re going to eat, and sleep, and shower, and then do homework,” Akers said. Sports make it hard to juggle when you are going to do homework and things that are needed to get done at home when you have two to four hour practices after school. Sports are a big part of Akers life, and she loves gymnastics and dive. “I think it’s worth it. Gymnastics is where I found my closest friends, and it’s an outlet for me to get my stress out,” Akers says. She has found many close friends through her sports. Akers



Photo By Becky Arkers. Jayden Arkers (11) laying in a hosptial bed with two broken legs.

had been doing gymnastics for her whole life and has been around a lot of the same people her whole life. She has a family at the gym as well as at home. “I wouldn’t say it makes school easier, but it makes the social aspect of school easier, because coming into high school sometimes you don’t think you know that many people or I don’t have classes with my friends, and it definitely engages you with more people,” said Akers.

Hands on...

Daniel Bashy (9), a freshman on the Palmer Ridge football team, discusses his injuries from playing the sport. “Currently I have a concussion. I’ve gotten bruised ribs in the past, different broken body parts. Some of them were quite severe,” said Bashy. These injuries interfere with his school life. “It can make everything quite a bit harder, missing school, I guess. After practice it’s just hard to get all of your homework done, but you just got to figure out how to do it,” said Bashy. He trains for three hours after school Monday through Saturday. For the first three weeks of school, Bashy had a concussion and not only was he unable to play in football games, but this has slowed down his progress with school work. This is commonplace for high school athletes.



Riley Coby (12) and Pam Smith
Pam Smith treating Riley Coby’s leg injury.

Pam Smith is an athletic trainer for Palmer ridge High School. She works with students athletes that are injured from their sport. The Bear Truth ask Ms. Pam Smith about the scope of the injuries that she sees. “It’s a very broad field. It can be simple as a sprain to like ankle or wrist. It can be something deviating as a A.C.L or a neck injury.” We later asked what sports she saw the most injuries in, and she said Football as of the fall season.



Daniel Bashy (9)
Daniel Bashy with Student Council, painting the glass bridge.

Two Shirts,

By: Kennedy Schuh

Senior shirts at PRHS have historically been a symbol of the senior class. “Senior shirts represent a physical reminder we can keep with us [...] to think back to times that shaped a huge part of our lives.” said Ryan Eells (12), Student Body President.

When Student Council unveiled their official design for the senior t-shirts in August, there was an immediate backlash from some of the student body. This is to be expected. There is no way one design is going to please everyone, and every year there are people that do not like the shirts. The difference this year is that those students decided to do something about it.

The 2020 senior t-shirt was designed by a volunteer committee within Student Council spearheaded by Jane

Handrick (12). The largest sources of controversy are the yellow color of the shirt and its slogan: “Motown Made.” “We wanted to be unique to our culture and to our school,” Eells said. “[The Motown slogan] is meant to be calling us back to where we came from.” “Motown” is referring to the Town of Monument, although for those that are not from Monument, the name Motown is a reference to Motor City, which is a nickname for Detroit, Michigan. This disparity in the meaning of the slogan was a source of frustration for many. As for the color, the inspiration, again, came from the desire to make this senior t-shirt stand out from the rest. “every shirt in the past has been navy blue. We

haven’t had a gold shirt, and so we were hoping to be special in that.” said Eells. Not everything went according to plan for the official shirts. The original design was made on CustomInk, a popular site for t-shirt design, but when it came time to order, issues with CustomInk led Student Council to order the t-shirts through a different third-party merchant. This last-second switch led to issues with the color swatch and the gold t-shirt color was lightened to a yellow and the font was changed without Student Council’s explicit knowledge.

“I just had this feeling, like we could do better.”
-Griffin Stevenson

With many students expressing strong feelings about the design of the t-shirt, senior Griffin Stevenson (12) saw an opportunity. As a joke, Olivia Ward (12) had created an alternate t-shirt on custom ink and posted it on her social media accounts. “I reposted [Ward’s] design on both my snapchat and my instagram [...] and enough people hit me up saying we should actually do this that I thought... why not?” Stevenson said. Stevenson created a remind class to get an idea of actual interest in a second t-shirt. About a third of the senior class had joined the remind when he decided to begin assessing cost and taking concrete steps towards getting new senior t-shirts. From there, the project only grew. These students spearheading the endeavor overcame many logistical challenges in order to achieve what they have. “The biggest challenge was coordinating with people,” said Stevenson. It is one thing to agree and say that something is a good idea, but it can be a struggle to get people to



The unofficial class of 2020 t-shirt, designed by Olivia Ward (12).

take it seriously and take real action about it. One common reason students did not buy an unofficial shirt, even if they supported the ideal and liked the shirt, was because it came out after the official shirt, and many students did not want to pay again for a second shirt when they had already bought the first. “I wish we would’ve made it before the yellow t-shirt came out,” Ward said, “because people are upset that they already bought one.”

Through their hard work and perseverance, these students have shown that our students at Palmer Ridge can take leadership and do something to change what they care about. In this generation, student leaders have been at the forefront of media coverage, dismantling the narrative that kids will complain but will not take action. The students involved in the unofficial t-shirt campaign are no different. These students went beyond complaining

about what they didn’t like, they took action and created the change they wanted to see. “These shirts are entirely student made,” Stevenson said, “ten years from now, looking at this shirt, we did this ourselves, we didn’t have any admin involved.” This t-shirt brought together seniors to create something significant and special entirely independently. When students put their

minds to something, there is very little they can’t accomplish.

“It’s Palmer Ridge spirited- and I’m all about it”
-Ryan Eells

While the two t-shirts are very different, they have one very important thing in common: Palmer Ridge. These shirts both give members of the senior class the chance to express their school spirit and show they care about Palmer Ridge and this community. While the shirts themselves may split the class, they bring us together under one banner. Senior shirts represent the senior class as a whole, but no one group of people this large can accurately represented by one thing.



The original class of 2020 senior shirt, designed by Jane Handrick



Ryan Eells smiles as he talks about the school spirit at Palmer Ridge. Photo by Elijah Montano

One Class

Election season is upon us again, and it is time to brush up on the ol’ democracy skills. You know, that stuff you learned way back in freshman civics? That’s right, voting. One of the most important aspects of a democracy, the time when the people have their voice heard by our government.

But before you go filling out a ballot... you need to be registered to vote. You can register to vote at any time, before election day, and you can even register to vote on election day! Polling centers will be open from 7am to 7pm on November 5th, and you can register to vote, and then vote, all in the same day! State wide election day is Tuesday, November 5th, 2019. For 12 hours on that day, from 7am to 7pm, voter service and polling centers will be open to allow people to vote on state election issues. If you have further questions on voting in El Paso County, check with the county voting office at 1675 West Garden of the Gods Road, Suite 2201.

November 5th is the official election day in Colorado. From 7am to 7pm, voting centers will be open for Colorado citizens over the age of 18 to vote on the important issues our government wants our input on. Many people choose not to vote, and while there is no obligation to vote, it is a basic right of US Citizens to vote. The purpose of voting is simple: tell the government how we the people want to be governed. So is it important to vote? YES! The founding fathers of the United States saw the dangers of power in other countries in 1789, and when they formed the US Government, they wanted to make sure that nobody had too much power. The constitution is designed to make sure that the government only has the power that the people give to it.

But how does the government know what the people want? Every year, and sometimes twice a year, the governments of the Nation, the States, and Local Towns ask people, ‘what do the people want from the government?’ The government does this by putting ballot measures forward. The people then have the opportunity to tell the government exactly what they want. You can vote Yes, No, or abstain, on any ballot measure available to you. Your vote counts!



By Kyle Ketchell and Kennedy Schuh

The Tri Lakes Fire Department is asking voters “Should the Tri-Lakes Fire Department Mill Levy be adjusted every year so as to maintain revenue neutral property tax revenue, so that the actual tax revenues collected by the fire department will not increase or decrease as a result of changing property values?”

In addition to teachers and the woodmoor water and waste department, Fire Fighters are one of Monuments under-recognized services. The Tri-Lakes Fire Department works day in and day out to keep members of the community safe. In addition to providing Fire Protection services, the Fire Department is also responsible for EMT services, which are ever more needed in a community with a growing population of people over the age of 60.

Ballot Measure 6A is intended to stabilize the revenue generated by the Tri-Lakes Fire Department. Every year, home values in Colorado change, and because of this, taxes are constantly changing. This means that the money available for local services is always changing. In order to stabilize the amount of money available for fire crews and EMT’s, the Fire Department is asking for the power to adjust the Mill Levy every year in order to keep their revenue constant. The funds raised by the fire department will be used to pay for continued funding to maintain reliable emergency equipment, the purchase of emergency vehicles, maintaining healthy and safe work environments in fire stations, competitive wages and benefits for firefighters, and to maintain quick response times.

A Vote YES on ballot measure 6A is a vote in favor of allowing the Tri Lakes Fire Department to adjust the Mill Levy up or down every year in order to stabilize the revenue available for the Fire Department.

A Vote NO on ballot measure 6A is a vote against allowing the Tri Lakes Fire Department to adjust the Mill Levy on a year-by-year basis.

Proposition

CC

Proposition

DD

Proposition CC asks ‘Should Colorado be allowed to keep any extra money at the end of the year, and use it to support public schools, higher education, and transportation projects?’ Currently, any extra money that the state does not spend according to its budget must be refunded to taxpayers. At the end of this year, the state is estimated to have an extra 300 Million dollars of unspent money. While this may seem like a lot, the total refund to taxpayers would only be between 26 and 90 dollars per taxpayer.

If proposition CC Passes, the extra \$300 million will be used to pay for Public Schools and state Public Higher Education, as well as state and local highway projects. The money will be distributed roughly in thirds, with \$100 million going to support Public Schools, \$100 million for Public Higher Education, and the remaining \$100 million being used to support state infrastructure projects.

If you currently have your taxes withheld, don’t worry. If you pay too much on your taxes, the state will still refund anything that you don’t owe. Proposition CC will only change what happens to left over money after the money has been allocated according to the budget. Proposition CC will not change how taxes are collected, and Proposition CC will not raise or lower taxes in the state.

A vote YES on proposition CC shows your support for the state keeping the extra money it collects from taxes, and to use that money to support public education and roads.

A vote NO on proposition CC shows your support for the state refunding any extra money to the taxpayers.

For additional resources and information on Proposition CC, or Proposition DD, check out the State Ballot Information Guide, or find more information from the Colorado Secretary of State at sos.state.co.us.

Proposition DD asks ‘Should Colorado legalize sports betting, create a state tax on casinos’ sports betting profits, and use those funds to pay for the regulation of sports betting, gambling addiction sources, and water projects.’

Currently, betting on sports and sports results is illegal in the state of Colorado. If proposition DD is passed, sports betting will become legal in the state, as long as the bets are placed through a casino located in Colorado. Proposition DD will allow people to place bets on Professional, International, and Olympic sporting events. Proposition DD will not allow betting on individual performance or statistics in college events, and will not allow betting on high school events.

Proposition DD will allow the state to collect taxes on sports betting winnings, with the state collecting no more than 29 million dollars per tax year. Of the 29 million collected, \$130,000 will be used to fund a gambling addiction service for Colorado residents. An additional 1.7 million will be used for a ‘Hold Harmless’ fund, which would allow casinos and the State Historical Fund to receive additional funding if they can prove that they lost money on traditional gambling due to the legalization of sports betting. Any remaining revenue (27 million dollars) that the state collects from the legalization and taxation of sports betting will then be used to fund public water projects, to include projects funded under the colorado water plan.

A vote YES on proposition DD shows your support for the legalization of sports betting and the taxation of those revenues, and that you want the money to be spent on Gambling addiction services, a Hold Harmless fund, and the support of Water Projects in the state.

A vote NO on proposition DD shows your support for keeping sports betting illegal in the state of Colorado, and there will be no taxes collected on revenues from sports betting.

VOTE!

District 5



“Excellent teachers make excellent students, and we want to do our best to retain excellent teachers.”

“I support every student in District 38, Monument Academy, or home schooled. I believe that every student should receive a top notch education.”



Adam Cupp is interested in serving on the school board because “I want to help provide an opportunity and an environment where [students] can strive and succeed.” Mr. Cupp believes that real world successes can be achieved through effective education, and that “I can effectively manage a school district.” Mr. Cupp hopes to bring trust back to the district using transparency, engagement, accountability, and good management.

Mr. Cupp has lived in the Monument community for 10 years, and has been interested in local politics for the past 5 years. Mr. Cupp has served as a Big Brother/Big Sister in the Colorado Springs Area for several years, after previous service on the Aurora Water Board. Mr. Cupp currently works for Lockheed Martin protecting the cyber security of US missile defense systems. Mr. Cupp and his wife currently have one child in District 38.

Matthew Clawson is running because “I believe that every student should receive a top notch education.” Mr. Clawson supports the freedom of parents to choose which school will provide the best education for their children, and the right of the community to decide what is in the best interests of the students. In addition to community rights, Mr. Clawson has been keeping teacher salaries at the “top of the agenda” for the school board.

Mr. Clawson is running as an incumbent member of the board, having served since 2015, with his most recent term as the School Board President. Mr. Clawson is actively involved in the Boy Scouts of America, as well as United Way, and Habitat for Humanity. Mr. Clawson and his wife have three children currently in District 38, at Palmer Ridge High School, Lewis Palmer Middle School, and Prairie Winds Elementary School, as well as a daughter who has graduated from Lewis Palmer High School.



“I will do whatever it takes in my capacity, in my ability, to bring this community back together.”

Ryan Graham is running because he wants to “protect our kids, is ultimately engaging in this arena,” and “our rights as parents to be able to choose and make the decisions that best suit the needs of our children.” Mr. Graham would also like to protect local control within District 38, as well as the taxpayers in the community. Mr. Graham encourages the community “to step up and vote.”

Prior to his injury, which ultimately led to his retirement in 2015, Mr. Graham served in the community as a firefighter, and is interested in serving in the community in a new capacity as a school board member. Mr. Graham and his wife have two young children that will be entering the District 38 school system as soon as they are old enough.

“If I could help 500, 600, 700 kids across a 4 year term, then I’d be a pretty happy guy.”

Ron Schwarz is running because “some members of the community asked me if I would consider it.” Mr. Schwarz has met with District 38 and Monument Academy students, teachers, and local business leaders, and former D-38 Superintendents. “If I could help 500, 600, 700 kids across a 4 year term, then I’d be a pretty happy guy.” Mr. Schwarz is interested in providing students a strong foundation from which to compete in whichever field they choose.

Mr. Schwarz’s background in the community includes his sponsorship of US Air Force Academy cadets, his families sponsorship of Foreign exchange students, and he belongs to an organization that feeds the homeless every night. Besides his involvement in the community, Mr. Schwarz and his wife have two children that have been educated in the District 38 system, and have since graduated.



4A: To build... or not to build?

By Kyle Ketchell and Kennedy Schuh

Last year’s 4A and 4B Bond and Mill Levy Override failed to pass. Many voters cited reasons such as a lack of transparency from the district, and the tension between District 38 and the Monument Academy Charter School.

This year, District 38 will be requesting a single bond, for the sole purpose of building a new elementary school on the site of Bear Creek Elementary School. Bear Creek will then be turned back into a middle school as it was intended. The school will be almost entirely staffed by existing teachers, with only a few new hires to fill vacant administrator positions. Lewis-Palmer Middle School and the new middle school will share the burden of 6th graders, and the elementary schools will have extra room for growing populations.

Currently District 38 is anticipating an additional 700 students in the next 5 years, and another 1500 students in the

next 10 years. District 38’s current school capacity will not be able to handle these pressures.

One of the strongest arguments against the bond is that the district should reopen Grace Best Elementary School. Unfortunately, this option is simply not practical. The high cost of bringing the building up to the strict codes of elementary schools will not be effective, as the school will only open up a maximum of 350 student seats. Right now, District 38 needs a building for 650 students, and Grace Best will not be able to meet that requirement. Additionally, Grace Best currently houses other necessary district functions, such as a pre-school, the Homeschool Enrichment Academy, AP Testing, and the elementary school science storage. If the district were to turn that back into a school, all of those services would need to be relocated, which may turn out to be much more costly than simply building a new school.

The possibility of a new school

many families in the district wondering ‘where will my child go to school in the next few years?’ ‘who will his/her teachers be?’ ‘will the district have enough money to fund the new school after it opens, or will we face another situation like when Palmer Ridge opened?’ In addition to the confusion that parents face, many 6th grade and middle school teachers are wondering the same thing: Where will I teach once the new school opens? Will I be teaching the same subject? What are my classes going to look like? The District 38 school board has not yet invested time or resources into the subject of the new school, as they don’t want to ‘put the cart before the horse,’ or make too many plans before the bond even gets voted on, in case it gets turned down.

A VOTE YES A VOTE NO

on issue 4A shows your support for the funding of a new elementary school in the Jackson Creek Neighborhood, on the same property as current Bear Creek Elementary School. Bear Creek will be converted back into a middle school, and staff members and students will be rearranged to alleviate the pressures of overcrowded classrooms. Average residential taxes in the town of Monument will NOT increase.

on issue 4a shows your support for keeping up with the status quo. There will be no additional school built in District 38, and property taxes in the town of Monument will continue to decline at their current rate. Bear Creek Elementary School will remain a middle school, Students will remain in their current schools, and teachers and students will continue learning in the same buildings.



From Across the Sea

Meet the Exchange Students for the 2019-2020 School year by Mason Huddleston and Colby Schultz, photos by Elijah Montano



Victor Moratalla

Victor Moratalla Alonso traveled to the U.S. from Spain and is excited for the 2019-20 school year. “In Spain, I live in the city, so it’s so crowded, we’re busy all the time, and here it’s much more peaceful, more silent... I like it.” When asked what the biggest differences between the U.S. and Spain are, Alonso said, “In Spain, it’s like everything is for yourself, I prefer the [American] way of doing things.” Food and bread are very different

here according to Alonso, his favorite food from home is a Spanish omelet with chips and onion. After this year, he plans on traveling back and studying physical therapy for fun, “and then I want to be a firefighter in Spain.” When commenting on American Stereotypes Alonso said, “I thought that.... everyone was fat, the typical American stereotype, but then nothing is like I thought it was going to be.... that surprised me.”

Sebastian Tornow

For Sebastian Tornow, there were many differences between the United States and Germany, such as size, and especially the bread. “The bread here is a lot fluffier, [I like the bread] in Germany better.” In Germany, students are taught English from the third grade. “After high school, I want to come back

to Germany and study at a University.” Though he doesn’t know exactly what he wants to study, the future is definitely bright for Tornow.



Felix Freytag

Felix Freytag is a sixteen year old, spending his time at Palmer Ridge with us this year from Germany. You can find Felix playing soccer for Palmer Ridge this fall, however, his main sport in Germany is field hockey. “Probably just the language,” was the biggest difference between here and Germany in Freytag’s eyes,

“We are not that different than you.” Transportation here is also very different, being much more car reliant. In Germany, catching a bus or simply walking and biking is much easier. If you see Freytag around then be sure to say hello.



Aidana Iskenderova

Back in Kyrgyzstan, high school is already over for 17-year-old Aidana Iskenderova, “we have no seniors... because we just have until 11th grade and I’ve finished school.” According to Iskenderova, almost everything about the U.S. is the same in

Kyrgyzstan, except for food, language, and homework, “in my country, homework is more difficult... especially math.” Though she enjoys Math and Psychology, Iskenderova plans on going to college and pursuing international relations.

Binevs Demir

Bineves “Dilarian” Demir is another one of our exchange students, joining us from Turkey. One of her favorite foods from home are the Kebabs, sticks of different meat and veggies. Coming to America, Demir thought, “It’s larger,” and, “much more free than my country.” She began learning English when she was six years old,

and knows Turkish, English, some German, and a little bit of Japanese. Demir has also enjoyed learning American history this year. When she is done being an exchange student, she wants to either go to law school, or study philosophy.



Emilie Viset

“Everything is bigger here!” Says Emilie Viset, the junior from Norway. “When I first arrived I went to New York, so everything was overwhelming.” Viset arrived in Colorado and entered the school year with a pleasant surprise, “it’s pretty similar to Norway actually.” There are many differences in the school system, Viset says, “[I miss] not having homework, it’s the same hours... you can choose to pay attention or

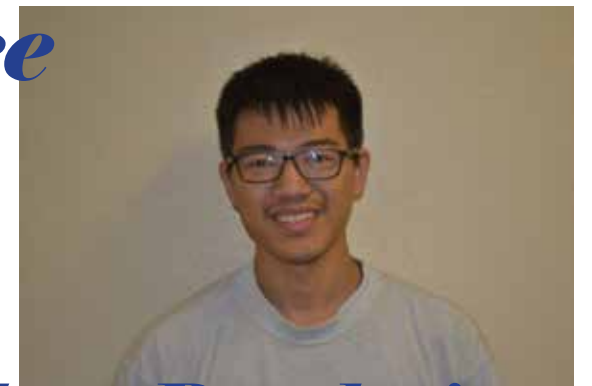
not and that will affect your grade, I do like this school system better though, it’s easier.” There are even some differences in school events, “We don’t have homecoming, but we have a sophomore prom which is kind of similar.” Along with English and Norwegian, Viset is also able to speak French, Swedish and Danish, and would like to study law back in Norway after her time in the U.S.



Shih Ping Lee

Lee Shih Ping is another exchange student you may see walking the halls this year. He is from Taiwan, and 18 years old. His first impressions of the United States were, “[it is] more free, and everybody is very kind.” Lee has already finished high school in Taiwan,

and will be attending college to become an accountant when he gets back. Taiwan looks too have some very tasty food, including two of Lee’s favorites, pineapple cake, and boba milk tea. Be sure to say hi if you see him around!



Iana Napoleao Banderia

Iana Napoleao Banderia is a student at Palmer Ridge this year from Brazil. Banderia is eighteen years old, and learned English in just six months. Come spring, she will be playing soccer for Palmer Ridge. As with many of the others, the food here has been a big adjustment. “In Brazil

we eat barbecue, rice, and beans every day,” she said in comparison to Palmer ridges lunch options of a sandwich, pizza, or various other meal options. Her favorite classes this year are ceramics, business, and algebra.

The LPSD Pay Gap

District 38 Teachers Make Significantly Less Money Compared with Neighboring Districts

by Amber Wright and Emma Gustavsson

As the wave of students swelled into the building at Palmer Ridge High School on August 21st, 20 new staff members were preparing for the day and subsequent year ahead. Along with the departure of Mr. Gabel and other administrators, PRHS said farewell to numerous teachers and counselors. While staff members left for many different reasons, one reason became prominent; the disproportionately low pay of teachers in District 38.

A teacher having recently graduated from college with a bachelor’s degree can expect to earn an annual salary of \$35,471.00 in the Lewis-Palmer School District. A mere 20 minute drive south of Monument is District 20 territory. A teacher with the same qualifications as stated above would begin their career in District 20 making \$38,200.00 per year. What begins as a \$3,000 pay difference will evolve into a significant gap as each teacher progresses in their career. When the teachers as described above near retirement, the teacher working in D38 would be making \$79,295.00 annually, compared with the \$87,950.00 salary of the D20 teacher. The salaries of District 38 employees increase in smaller increments as they accomplish the same

“Again, it was my choice, I didn’t have to move here, but I took a 23% reduction to come here,”- Mr. Klopfenstein

educational and annual progress as teachers in other districts, ultimately leading D38 staff members to feel as though their community does not value their time or achievements as other school districts would.

Mr. Gabel, the former principal of Palmer Ridge High School, is concerned with the gap in pay that increases as a teacher progresses in their career. “With salaries across the board, not only for the teachers but also for the classified staff, we’ve been falling behind each and every year. At first, there was just a few thousand dollars gap but the gap has started to get bigger. As the district gives raises of an about 3%, the districts to the south and north of us, Air Academy and Douglas County, are giving their staff and classified workers raises of 5%. The gap just keeps getting bigger each year,” said Mr. Gabel. The startling pay gap ultimately leads to staff members reconsidering their work situation, as they may earn a substantially higher salary by working at another nearby district.

To compare the salaries of teachers in different districts in a broader sense, the average salaries must be considered. The average salary of a teacher in District 38 is \$45,480.00, which does not appear to be significantly low until compared with the average salaries of teachers in competing districts. The average annual salary of a District 20 teacher is \$49,995.00 and Cherry Creek teachers average \$63,771.00 per year. The extreme difference in pay is evident. “Teachers who come to this district have to take a huge pay decrease, often, from where they are coming from,” said Ms. Troy, the English Department Chair at PRHS .

**“Our area is too expensive for a teacher just starting out.”
-Mr. Gabel**

A point that must be considered when analyzing the low pay of teachers in the Lewis-Palmer School District is the cost of living in Monument. The cost of living in Monument is particularly high compared to the national average, primarily due to housing costs. “In 2018, the cost of living in Colorado Springs went up by 18%, and a 3% raise is not touching that,” said Mr. Klopfenstein, PRHS History Department Chair. With a lower salary, teachers are often faced with the dilemma of living elsewhere in order to save money on housing. As a result, the majority of the staff live in Colorado Springs or Castle Rock, and they commute to District 38 to work. However, later on, staff members may choose to work where they live rather than face the long commute to District 38, where they are paid substantially less. Mr. Gabel explained that teachers in their first few years of teaching generally cannot afford to live in Monument. When the teachers commute to D38, they are often driving by multiple other districts, and at some point they may ask themselves why they are not working in one of those districts. Reasonably, it makes sense for teachers to work elsewhere, where they would receive more benefits, pay, and resources, along with affordable housing near their place of work. Ms.



Ms. Troy, English department chair at PRHS, discusses the implications of low teacher salaries within Lewis-Palmer School District 38. Photo by Amber Wright

Troy explained the reasons why three of the teachers in her department left this year: “We lost three out of our eight; one was to go pursue some more academic work, which is awesome. The other two left due to staff pay, and also they both lived up in Castle Rock, so they wanted a shorter commute and again more money.”

“I feel our district is starting to be like a farm club, if you will, for teachers. Like in baseball, you know, where as you get better you move up. In the first five to six years of teaching, your teachers are really learning their craft and getting better all the time. What I think is happening is they’ll come here and put in three, four, or five years and get to be where they are really good and they know their craft and curriculum, and then they start looking elsewhere because they have a family and they’re trying to survive,” Mr. Gabel said. Teachers are beginning at D38 as almost a starter school, to get job experience; they will then begin working in a different district,

generally for a higher salary. Unfortunately, many teachers and staff simply cannot afford to work at the Lewis-Palmer School District long-term. Ms. Troy said, “If we do get starting teachers they’re going to try to get out of this district as soon as they possibly can. And this does affect me because looking down the road, I’m going to eventually want to retire, and you want to know that there are going to be people coming up after you that have made an investment in the district and want to stay in the district. I don’t necessarily see that happening.”

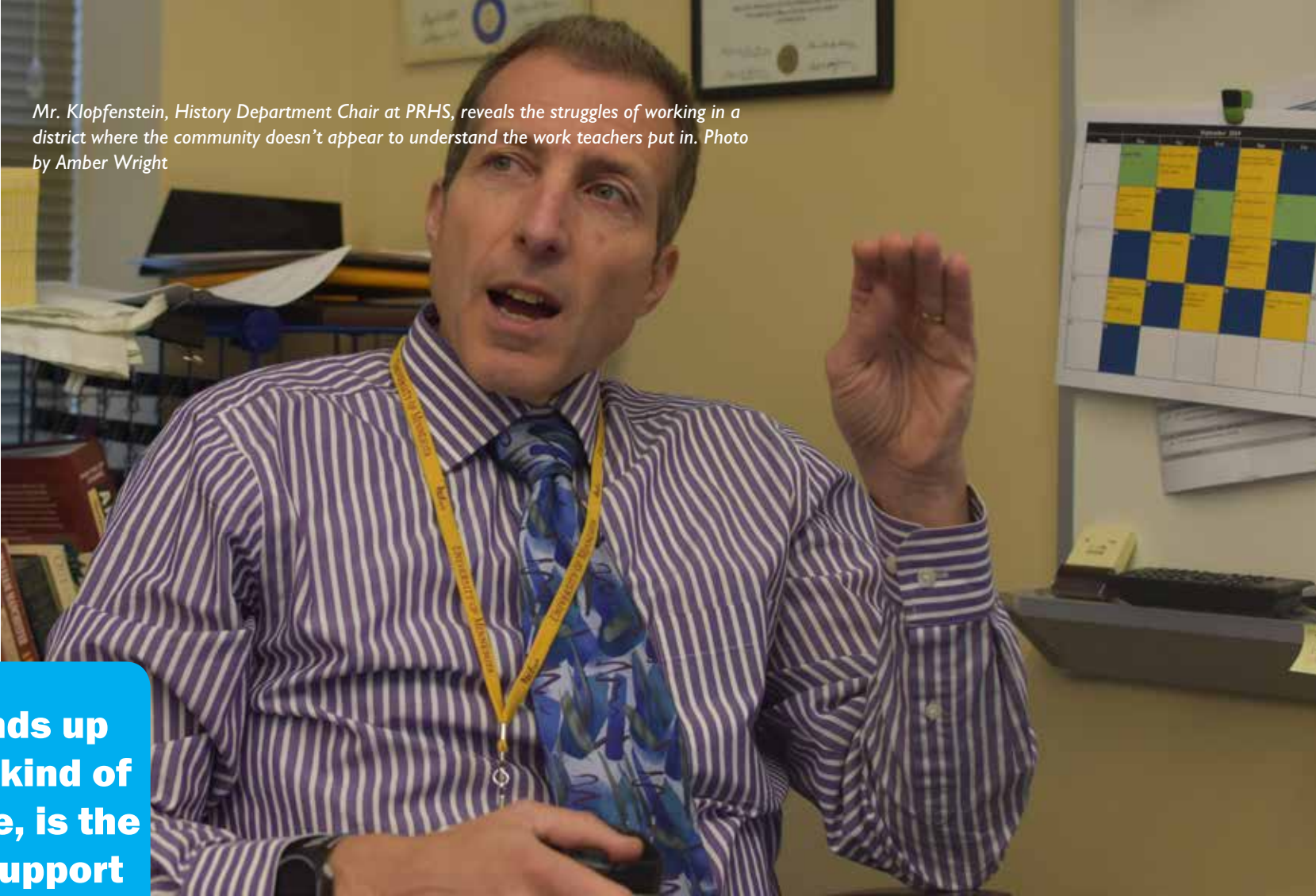
Teachers in District 38 are suffering from a lack of morale, due to a low amount of support from the community in terms of funding and perpetually increasing class sizes. Ms. Troy explained that while the upcoming bond will not alleviate the struggle with teachers’ salary, it will allow for a decreased class size, ultimately leading to an improvement in morale. However, should the bond be rejected, Ms. Troy feels as though the morale among staff will be affected negatively. “I’ve been through those day-after election days several times now, and they’re the worst. I think morale will be devastated,” said Ms. Troy. The lack of support from the community is a commonly mentioned point among the staff, and it must be addressed. “At the risk of making generalizations, because I know (continued on page 28)

“I would love to educate the public and tell them what is really going on. I would love for them to come into the classroom, at any point of the day, and see what’s happening. I would love the misinformation to be taken care of.” -Ms. Troy

people in the community who don't feel any direct ties to the district. Many of them are retirees, for example, who don't and may have never had kids in the district, and they don't see, or don't understand that maintaining a high-performing school district is in their interest, and so they're not willing to pay more money," said Mr. Klopfenstein. Klopfenstein explained that many people in the community feel no responsibility towards the district or the education of the next generation because they have no personal ties to the district. It is extremely unfortunate that these beliefs, which are not uncommon in the community, will ultimately hinder the quality of education of the generation which is to become our future. The

“The thing that ends up bothering me, and kind of eating at my morale, is the apparent lack of support from the community and, to some extent, the school board” -Mr. Klopfenstein

importance of education is immeasurable, yet some do not feel a moral responsibility to support it simply because they believe they are not directly impacted. Many people in the community share the belief that additional support to the Lewis-Palmer School District is unnecessary due to our high test scores, which indicate a successful school. “It seems that there is, for whatever reason, a disconnect. Some patrons don't understand, or are unwilling to accept that there's a need. They see that we are a high-performing school district, which we are, we have good test scores, and so they may feel that there is not a need



Mr. Klopfenstein, History Department Chair at PRHS, reveals the struggles of working in a district where the community doesn't appear to understand the work teachers put in. Photo by Amber Wright

to do anything else,” said Mr. Klopfenstein. While the test scores in D38 are high as of now, some of the staff expect the scores to drop due to increasing class sizes and lack of resources. The success of an under-funded district cannot be expected to be maintained without increased support from the community.

When asked what needs to be done to begin working towards a solution, many of the staff responded that increased education in the community about the necessity of a decent salary would be the first step in a positive direction. The lack of satisfactory pay among the staff ultimately leads to some teachers choosing to change districts in hopes of more support. Multiple staff

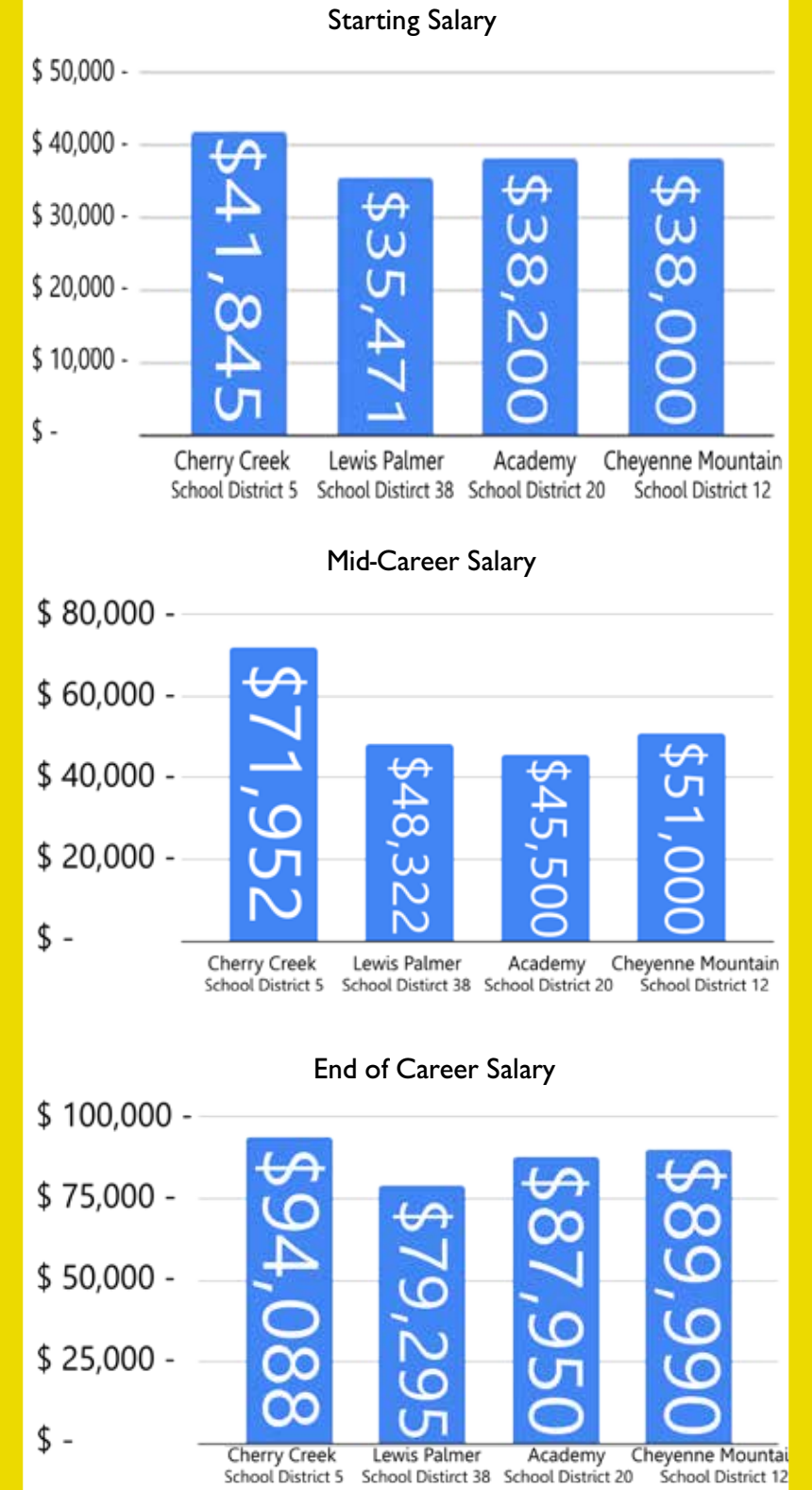
members explained that informing the community on what actually happens at school, and what requirements teachers must meet for their jobs, is necessary in improving the state of our school district. Ms. Troy wished to address the fact that many people in the community do not understand what teachers are expected to do. “All of us work well outside of our contracted time . . . I added up the number of hours I graded essays one year, and it turned out that just in grading essays, not doing anything else that my job requires, that it turned out to be 20.6 eight hour working days of just grading the essays,” said Ms. Troy. By simply performing one aspect of her job, Ms. Troy worked one month's worth of eight hour long work days, and she was not paid for this time dedicated to her job. Teachers must meet so many expectations, despite being underpaid and not having adequate resources.

Ms. Troy wished to address the fact that teachers are highly trained and are doing their absolute best to

provide a quality education for the children of the community. “I think sometimes school is regarded almost as a babysitting service,” said Ms. Troy. Some members of the community do not respect the amount of effort teachers must put into the jobs, instead seeing school as a place to watch their children all day.

Though the teachers of Palmer Ridge are working extremely hard, an increased workload that their pay does not reflect is ultimately taking its toll. “If things don't change, what we're going to see is a falling off in the performance of our schools, and as time goes on, that's going to accelerate. It's going to be a lot harder and more expensive to fix it later, than it would be to maintain it now,” said Mr. Klopfenstein.

Difference of Salary in CO Districts



Bear Truth October 2019

Our Students' Success

by Luxe Palmer
photos by Kyle Ketchell

The senior class receiving their high-achieving awards.

Palmer Ridge is known for its excellence in both academia and athletics. On Thursday, October 10, we celebrated the school's scholastic success with an awards assembly to mark the year. Giving out awards for 3.75+ GPA, 4.0+ GPA, SAT scores, and more, over three quarters of the school won an award! The Chamber Choir performed "Star-Spangled Banner" with massive success, and Vice-Principal Numedahl gave out certificates and letters to all the high-achieving students. Living up to its expectations, Palmer Ridge High School is ranked #30 of the best public high schools in Colorado, according to Niche.com. The assembly was a great break from the everyday routine, and we celebrated the achievements of our fellow students with enthusiasm and aplomb.



Kaleb Barber (12)
getting recognized
at the assembly.



Students receiving their
awards.



The Chamber
Choir performing
"Star-Spangled
Banner."



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