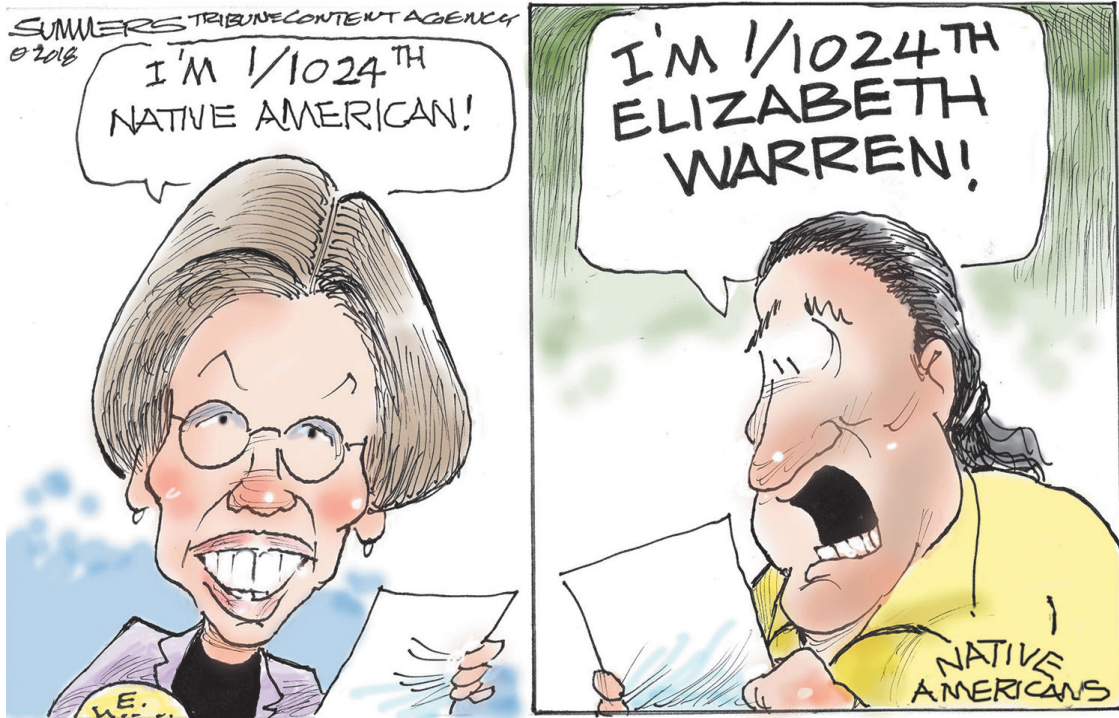


O P I N I O N



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

Some comments from Greg Walden's debate:

Does Walden respond to people in his district who have a problem? Why did he not answer a voter of his in Eastern Oregon who wrote him asking for help with a problem with invasive grass made by Scott Seeds which was harming his crops? (High Country News source)

If a large number of people in his district live near the poverty line why is it that most of the fence signs I see in Central Oregon are on farms? Do they get special consideration in some way?

Walden has a VTV ad portraying him as a veterans champion, but in the debate it was brought out he had voted no on veterans bills for at least a decade.

He is big on any bill for the timber industry, understandable as the industry is good to him with contributions.

Where is Walden on conservation? I don't remember hearing that from him in the debate

or any other time. Maybe it is in his newsletter, which I have asked for four times in the last three years and have never seen an issue. The request seems to have reached the Republican headquarters though as they keep writing asking for money. I am not a registered Republican.

Climate Change: nothing said. One cannot buck the party approach.

By Walden's demeanor as the debate ran along it seemed to me that he was very uncomfortable any time he was asked something which he couldn't respond to with the party line. I guess that is why Walden does not have open town halls.

Was he willing for another debate before November? He wouldn't answer that, even though it was asked three times. Instead he finished with how perfectly Oregonian he is, with a compilation of his background, which I suspect will be in the voters pamphlet. Was that an instance of tribalism to try to convince the

See **LETTERS** on page 22

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Sunny 70/40	Sunny 76/40	Sunny 76/40	Sunny 77/39	Sunny 75/41	Sunny 72/40

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Voting for strength and heart

By T. Lee Brown
Guest Columnist

It's easy to vote in Oregon. We just fill in the little bubbles on our ballots, which show up conveniently in our mailboxes, and send 'em back. But who should we be voting for?

Ideally, I'm looking for a saint with excellent leadership qualities, one who'll cut through red tape and bureaucratic nonsense while standing up for the poor and middle class. A saint who can cure cancer with one hand while roping a steer with the other, then whip up 100,000 family-wage jobs— small-business jobs that make our state more beautiful and self-reliant. A saint who's never made a wrong move or an inappropriate comment.

Failing that, I'd settle for a real human being with integrity, compassion, and honesty. One with a big heart, a good brain, and a pair of ears that really listen. They should listen to everybody in District 2, not just people who happen to be in their party. Nearly a third of Oregon voters aren't Democrats or Republicans, including non-affiliated voters like me.

My candidate would respect Oregon's rural traditions and encourage their supporters to do the same — even their liberal, urban, and college-town voters. Urging citizens to get off their phones, turn off the news, and meet up in real life, they'd hold frequent town halls and public debates. Providing an example of common decency and trying to bridge divides would come naturally to them.

This person ought to have enough government and organizational experience to do their job. On the other hand, they shouldn't be yoked to the political establishment — much less a bunch of mega-corporations and their lobbying lackeys.

You've probably guessed that my fantasy candidate ain't Greg Walden, the current Oregon District 2 Representative to Congress in Washington, DC. I've heard enough from him to

last a lifetime.

He accepts big money from the pharmaceutical industry, for example, then starts making a big show of caring about the opioid crisis. For those of us whose families have been torn up by prescription drug addiction, this is way too little, way too late.

Walden chairs the House committee that's supposed to oversee the healthcare industry. He could've taken action long before this election year. But he had good reason not to.

As John Lamoreau, formerly a Republican Commissioner of Union County, puts it: "No member of Congress received more political action committee money from the pharmaceutical/health products industry than Walden during the current election cycle." The *Mail-Tribune* in Medford wrote up a thorough explanation of funding details in "Since You Asked," June 2018, available online.

Well, that was a depressing digression. Let's get back to my fantasy candidate, the one who might actually stand up for real Oregonians in Washington DC. The one who'd come back often to chat with us. The one with both strength and heart.

I think I've found her. Her name is Jamie McLeod-Skinner, and she's running against Walden on the Democratic ticket.

McLeod-Skinner is a hard worker and a big listener. Experienced but humble, she has the courage to stand up for what's fair. She's not perfect—but, for a refreshing change, she doesn't pretend to be. She's just trying to make things better for everyday people in Oregon.

People who are struggling with rising healthcare and housing costs. People searching for the best in themselves and others, even if we don't all agree on everything. People who are willing to take on the serious work of rebuilding our democracy. People who still believe in America.

I'm one of those people. I'm voting for Jamie McLeod-Skinner.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.