

OPINION

LETTERS

Continued from page 4

again face economic hardship. Make no mistake, the town of Maupin faces an existential threat to its identity as the gateway town to a healthy river that many people love.

Now we can enlist an accomplished elected official who is ready to fight for our river. Arlene Burns has the experience and passion to make a difference in Salem. She knows Maupin's fate is locked to the Deschutes and she's a bona-fide river person who has committed to helping us with the fight for cleaner colder water. She is the correct choice for voters who want a healthy 100 mile stretch of river. Maupin residents and river lovers need to set aside political differences and unite to send Arlene Burns to Salem.

Steve Mounts
Tygh Valley

Campaign money

Well, its that time of the election year where we need to pay attention to the money that is funding the campaigns of people on the ballot who want our vote in November. Lets take a look at Anna Williams, running to be re-elected as state representative. When she first ran for office two years ago, her biggest single donor was the Oregon Trial Lawyers Association, who shelled out over \$43,000 to help her get elected. Recently, Anna pocketed another \$17,000 from them.

Now that we know who her high-dollar friends are, lets see how the money may be influencing her votes in Salem. Virtually every business association in Oregon has been asking the legislature to pass liability protections that would shield them from frivolous lawsuits they may encounter due to being open for business during the COVID-19 economy. School districts have also asked for similar protections if they bring students back to the classroom.

The legislature has had two special sessions in recent months to make budget adjustments and distribute federal support awarded to the state. But they have refused to take up the issue of liability protections. Why not? Well, maybe its because Anna's friends the Trial Lawyers are strongly opposed to Covid-related liability protections? They are on record saying they are just fine with current situation. More lawsuits mean paydays for their members. OTLA is one of the major donors to the Democrat super majority that runs Salem. They and Anna love the big checks that fund their campaigns.

I don't know about you but I've had enough. I'll be voting for Jeff Helfrich for state representative. I know he will stand with us and not sell out to the Salem high rollers who just want to line their pockets.

Christina Dowden
Hood River

Fagan for Secretary

In Oregon we've been voting by mail successfully for more than 20 years. As State Senator Shemia Fagan continues to strengthen, expand and defend our vote-by-mail system. Vote-by-mail is the way of the future and many

states are following our lead.

Fagan's legislative record also shows her support for workers and families voting for paid sick leave, investing in our public schools and healthcare system, and advocating for small businesses. She also supports the U.S. Postal Service and recognizes the vital role the post office plays in our communities, especially in rural communities, and in our elections now and in the future.

Oregon's nurses, firefighters, and teachers support Shemia Fagan in the Oregon Secretary of State race. Fagan also received endorsements from the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, and The Oregonian.

Fagan's opponent in this race, State Senator Kim Thatcher is endorsed by the Timber Unity Political Action Committee (PAC) and the Oregon Coalition of Police and Sheriffs (ORCOPS).

Corporate and timber interest and law enforcement — the status quo — are Thatcher's primary endorsers. This tells me a lot since Timber Unity opposes climate change legislation and represents corporate and timber interests. In addition, Thatcher's record has not supported making it easier for Oregonians to vote by mail.

From my point of view Fagan has worked hard and earned her way to running for Secretary of State. A native Oregonian raised in rural Oregon Fagan had her own struggles growing up in an unstable family situation. She worked her way through college and law school, and served on her local school board before serving in the Oregon legislature.

Fagan's history of service and record are clear and transparent in favor of workers, families, strengthening voting rights and our public institutions and infrastructure.

There's a clear choice in this election between the status quo fanned by corporate interests, and someone who has a longstanding record support ordinary Oregonians and the public good. Shemia Fagan has earned my vote for Oregon Secretary of State in the Nov. 3 election.

Pam Starling
Mosier

Where to start?

Where do I even start? Perhaps I should start with the fact that our duly impeached president's history-making, precedent-shattering, non-response to the novel coronavirus has come back to bite him in the derriere. As a result, he is going to die sooner than he would have otherwise, and he has only himself to blame. Thoughts and prayers, etc.

Or I could talk about how Trump's obsession with optics has put his security detail at risk to the point where members of the secret service have spoken out anonymously.

Or maybe I should write about how right wing terror groups were thwarted by the FBI in their efforts to kidnap and potentially murder Michigan governor Gretchen Whitmer in a vain and misguided attempt to overthrow the state government. I would hypothetically follow that up by writing about how "Cheeto Mussolini" attacked and placed blame on Gov. Whitmer in the aftermath of the thwarted terrorist effort;

Or maybe I should write a letter about The Bunker

Inspector's proposed "patriotic education," which amounts to no less than modern day book burning.

Or maybe I should write about how Trump's tax returns reveal a man who has mismanaged everything on every level, and deserves to see the inside of a jail cell for the rest of his mercifully short life.

Or perhaps I could spend some words talking about the abysmal debates, and how a fly landed on Pence's head, because flies are attracted to rotting garbage.

I haven't scratched the surface of the horror show that has been this year. Get out and vote. Vote blue, vote Biden, and vote as if you could stop the Holocaust by doing so. Get out and protest, write letters, make art, and spread compassion, for compassion is the enemy of fascists like the Republican Party under Trump.

Benjamin Sheppard
Hood River

Benjamin Sheppard is employed as a social worker.

For Beutler

Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler stepped up and helped her constituents in times of crisis. She has worked in Congress to expand access to healthcare, advocated for better service for residents trying to receive unemployment in Washington and Oregon, and now she is trying to force Congress to get to work and reauthorize the Paycheck Protection Program to save millions of small businesses and jobs. Attacks against her are partisan garbage that puts the party over effectiveness. I am proud to cast my vote for Jaime Herrera Beutler, a member of Congress that works by and for the people of southwest Washington.

Dion Hess
Ridgefield

Williams for House

Politicians say all sorts of things. What they actually do, how they actually vote, can tell you more about whether they deserve your continued support.

Consider Republican Jeff Helfrich, running to unseat Anna Williams as a state representative from District 52.

As a self-professed family man (and former law enforcement officer) Helfrich voted against HB 4145 in 2018.

HB 4145 prohibits "convicted stalkers" from possessing a firearm if they are under a restraining order to protect a family member or domestic partner. The legislation passed.

Two years later, Helfrich's successor, Williams, co-sponsored HB 2013, which establishes statewide protocols for firearm removal from domestic abusers.

So, who is doing more to protect Dist. 52 residents? Williams is. Vote for Anna Williams for state representative from District 52.

Cindy Allen
Hood River

Retain Beutler

Our Congresswoman, Jaime Herrera Beutler, has worked across the aisle to cut the cost of prescription drugs.

Meanwhile, Carolyn Long has run around promising to do like Jaime. However, it's unclear how Long's going to accomplish this when she appears to be bought and sold by big Pharma. It's been recently reported that her family has hundreds of thousands of dollars in retirement from big pharmaceutical companies.

If you think she's going to go toe-to-toe with the big pharmaceutical companies who are paying for her cushy retirement, think again. Don't let Carolyn Long pull the wool over your eyes.

Kathleen Hartson
Vancouver

Moving along?

Recently I saw a Hood River Police Department officer trespass a houseless man from a business. The officer mentioned that this was the third time he had been called to different businesses to trespass this same young man. The young man, for his part, explained that he needed to use the bathroom. The interaction was professional and calm and I'm sure an everyday occurrence in our community.

I also recently listened to a Hood River City Council meeting in which the council voted to move forward with planning for a new police station to be built on the Columbia lot in downtown. This plan includes a 20-year, \$14 million levy, on top of the Hood River County public safety levy. During the same meeting, the City Council heard about the difficulty of finding a space for 15 mini-shelters to keep folks warm and safe for just a few months over the winter.

I can envision in 20 years' time, a Hood River PD officer leaving a spacious and high-tech new police station, to respond to yet another call to move along a man who lacks housing or even a safe place to use the bathroom because Hood River has no shelter.

If police are the only thing we will invest in today, police are the only tool we have in the future. What future do you want to envision?

MariRuth Petzing
Hood River

Whose 'Unity'?

I'm seeing "Timber Unity" (TU) on yard signs and on donor lists of a lot of conservative candidates in Oregon, including Jeff Helfrich here in House District 52. Supporters claim TU is nonpartisan, but it's the number one listed "affinity organization" on the OR-GOP website. Other TU features are deceptive as well. TU presents itself as "regular folks," but allies with militias and QAnon. It presents itself as "rural" but its leadership is Portland-based. It presents itself as "grassroots" and for the benefit of "working families," but is in reality a PAC and two corporate entities controlled by conservative wealth. Why the deception?

Back in 2019, some log truck drivers started a small group called TU, opposing climate legislation because of concerns about fuel prices increasing. That didn't last long. The group was taken over by corporate interests headed by Andrew Miller (CEO of Portland-based Stimson Lumber) and Julie Parrish, formerly a GOP

state representative. They appropriated the TU name and threatened the original loggers with legal action if they tried to continue to use the name. The PAC's major donors include log trucking companies, agricultural and mining companies, right-wing militias, and Rob Freres, owner of Freres Lumber and the link between TU and Trump.

It's election season, and we need to know not only who is running, but who is paying and why. TU is funding candidates who will do its bidding for its corporate financial benefit. That includes undercutting measures to address climate change, and continuing to push the false choice of jobs vs. reducing carbon emissions. This comes at a time when the entire West is being incinerated by megafires due in part to the effects of climate change.

Recognize Timber Unity for what it is, a self-serving corporate PAC. Do not sacrifice our children's future to climate change. TU is not grassroots, rural, nonpartisan, or interested in supporting working families. If Timber Unity had our interests at heart, there'd be no need for its deception. Be wary of the candidates TU supports. Climate change should be front and center for every voter.

Samuel Taylor
Hood River

Broadband for all

We have come to rely on the internet as a critical part of our personal and professional lives. Many now work from home, our kids are doing distance-learning, and we are increasingly aware that internet services that were maybe "good enough" before the pandemic are falling short.

We need broadband internet for all. Two roadblocks to this are affordability and availability.

In terms of affordability, grant programs exist to pay for the internet for low income families who don't already have it. This safety net doesn't go far enough. It doesn't cover enough people, and it doesn't address accessibility. Grants fund the cheapest option and also do not cover improving the speed or bandwidth of current coverage. We can't take advantage of grant funding unless providers run fiber optic cable all the way out to more rural areas for the offered amount. The quality of internet access in many homes, due to accessibility, affordability, or both, cannot keep up with the demands of working and learning from

home.

As restrictions ease, our dependence on reliable high speed internet won't fade. Let's use current funding opportunities to work toward bringing fiber optic cable to all.

Megan Sheffels
White Salmon

Vote Richardson

I wholeheartedly support Dan Richardson for City Council of The Dalles. His work with landowners and natural resource management issues exemplifies his ability to deal with complex issues similar to the problems that come to city council. He is an open-minded listener with a good sense of fairness and discernment. When it comes to being a council member, it's not the person who says they have the best idea at the start of the meeting, it's the person who supports the best idea at the end of the meeting, no matter who proposed it, who makes government work for everyone.

Philip Brady
The Dalles

Propaganda explained

Few progressive modernists can imagine a future scenario which they do not control, and propaganda has proven an ever reliable feature of the socialist state. The purpose is to alter thinking from one based on reliable evidence and reason to one based on anticipated power.

Propaganda purposely creates a thinking vacuum which is then filled with uncertainty and even fear. A safe, secure, and equitable society is promised, of this sort or that, but only high-risk has historically been delivered. The left, despite historic disasters, never recognizes the mistakes and dangers inherent in social planning. This blind-spot is common to big-government Republicans. A prime example is found in North Korea, a "mature" socialist state whose citizens suffer under an organization formally named the "Propaganda and Agitation Department."

Propaganda is seductive and drives people into competing camps and keeps them there, at least while they remain useful to those who define the cause. Its aim is to establish a double-standard which demolishes competing opinion and worldviews. This process lets the propagandist off the hook for having to defend their ideas. Some years back,

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TRASH TALK



Q. Are used paper plates, constructed of uncoated recycled paper, and wiped or rinsed to remove gross food waste, recyclable in the blue bins for pick-up? John, Odell

A. John, once paper is 'soiled' with food, it's 'contaminated'. Yet uncoated paper would do well in backyard composting. Most kitchen compost tends to be rich in nitrogen. So that paper (along with paper towels, napkins, tea bags and coffee filters) provides that balance of carbon nourishment.

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