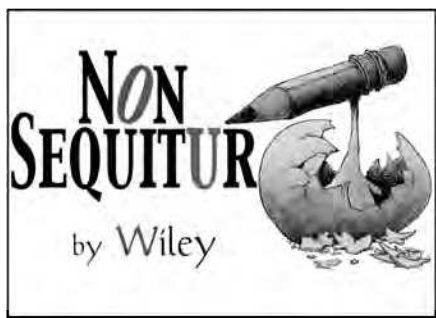




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letters

DON'T BACK DOWN

It has recently come to my attention that there is a “Pro-God, Guns and Trump” rally happening on the same date as the Eugene-Springfield Pride Parade and Pride Festival in Alton Baker Park on Saturday, Aug. 10.

Here are just a few quotes Facebook event’s description:

“We cannot let leftists control our city and tell us to keep silent about our beliefs!”

“This is a 2A friendly event and there will be many guns present including AR-15’s. This event is not for soft-conservatives, but those who are bold.”

This literal call to arms is conveniently timed on the same day as our community’s largest LGBTQIA+ event, the Pride Festival. I cannot help but be reminded of our nation’s worst mass shooting in history at the time, the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida.

This targeted attack against the LG-BTQIA+ community lead to more than 50 dead and even more injured. We just passed the three-year anniversary of that tragic day.

The comments left by the rally organizers make it clear that this is not a rally in support of the First or the Second amendment rights but a thinly veiled threat of violence against the LGBTQIA+ community.

As a gay man, I refuse to be afraid in my own town, and I refuse to back down from knock-off Proud Boys who who seek to intimidate our community. I ask allies and friends to show support for the LGBTQIA+ community and show that Eugene stands up against hatred.

Timothy Morris
Eugene

CALL FOR COMMON DECENCY

Even before the mass shootings this weekend, I had concern about the Aug. 10 God, Guns and Trump rally. The Gilroy Garlic festival sounds a lot like our beloved Saturday Market — and now two more mass murders using the very types of guns organizers encourage people to bring.

They have the right to open carry and assemble at the Wayne Morse Free Speech Plaza, but they shouldn’t do it.

Add to this that the date and time chosen is during the annual Eugene-Spring-

field Pride Festival and you have a recipe for fear. Their mocking words about showing people that guns aren’t scary fool no one.

People carrying weapons of death is always scary. To do so at a time when our LG-BTQ community plans to celebrate seems intended to instill fear, not reduce it.

Common decency would be to cancel or reschedule their event. Doing so would signal that supporters of Donald Trump care about their neighbors. That they are not aligned with the gunmen that carried out the radical terror attacks.

But I doubt they will do that. I doubt their care and concern for others. If they had basic decency they would not have planned this for this day, time and place. It seems intended to provoke, and I pray that it remains peaceful. I pray that no terrorist uses the chaos this will create to take lives.

I pray that at least some God, Guns and Trump supporters will bow out for the common good.

Heather Gardner-Madras
Springfield

DEFAZIO THE DOVE

While I thank the *Eugene Weekly* for helping spotlight Congress’s constitutional war powers (“What’s Happening,” 8/1), the article made an ill-informed conjecture about my record opposing war. Even the least bit of research into my career would clearly show that I have been a consistent opponent of war.

To start, I voted against the Iraq War, which I believe was the worst foreign policy mistake in our nation’s history. I have consistently opposed and criticized Presidents Clinton, Obama, both Bushes and Trump for their unauthorized use of U.S. forces throughout the world.

While I voted for the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) — which was passed days after the horrifying Sept. 11, 2001, attacks — I only did so after I successfully persuaded Democratic leadership to reject President Bush’s original draft, which gave him limitless authorization to use U.S. forces as he pleased.

My efforts ensured that the 2001 AUMF was narrowed to only authorize the president to pursue the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks.

Disturbingly, the 2001 AUMF has been used beyond its original intent to justify the endless wars the United States is still engaged in worldwide, which is why I have consistently supported legislation to repeal it.

I have also repeatedly introduced legislation to strengthen Congress’s war powers, including requiring a sunset clause for any military authorization and forcing the president to seek prior authorization from Congress before sending U.S. troops into harm’s way.

To state that I have not opposed war is a gross misunderstanding of my record.

Rep. Peter DeFazio
4th Congressional District
Springfield

CORRECTING AN ERROR

Last week I sent in a letter arguing that the Oregon Constitution has strong protections for minority perspective speech. I was wrong to use “white supremacy” as the example.

The Aug. 3 shooting in El Paso shows that domestic terrorism is all too real, and perhaps there does need to be restriction on that type of hate speech, perhaps even in the Oregon Constitution.

I was wrong. I knew better but only focused on the original Eugene City Council motion and ignored the reality.

Hugh Massengill
Eugene

SHAME ON SEMPLE, TAYLOR

I feel shocked and saddened by Eugene City Councilors Emily Semple and Betty Taylor, both of whom are registered Democrats and voted against the Eugene City Council resolution against white supremacy July 22.

The Democratic Party is a multicultural coalition committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. In the year 2019, it is incomprehensible that any elected Democrat could vote against a statement opposing white supremacy — even if they serve in a non-partisan office.

The justification that the resolution violated protections for free speech and free thought is bogus. This resolution was a values statement, not an ordinance mandating criminal penalties. Voting in

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