

letters

THANKS FOR REMEMBERING MARIA

Rarely do I send letters of gratitude to the editor. Here's an exception: the commentary by Tom Coffin ("Remembering Maria," *EW* 5/6) deserves my warmest thanks to both the *Weekly* and the author. As a former schoolteacher in Los Angeles with thousands of Latino students coming through the classroom over decades, many first generation immigrants, and as an admirer of the cultural wealth of the ancient civilizations south of the border, I was deeply touched by the humanity in Coffin's recollection of Maria's tragic killing.

Having traveled through San Ysidro on multiple occasions, having also been stopped at random border patrol checkpoints near the border in the vicinity of Yuma, Arizona, I know first hand the brutally cold attitude of the officials patrolling this "death zone" where even those wearing the badge and the uniform are a potential threat to safety and well being. The type of assault described in Coffin's eloquent account might be much more than a rare isolated horror story. Case in point, read Jacob Soboroff's *Separated: Inside an American Tragedy* for further insight into the human rights situation at the border.

MaRco Elliott
Eugene

COFFIN NAILED IT

Thank you, Tom Coffin for revealing the insightful and horrific information contained in your Viewpoint essays ("Remembering Maria," 5/6, and "Truth is the Only Currency," 4/29). We need to have this information, since only by knowing can we figure out how to deal with it.

I will remember Maria, and it breaks my heart to know what happened to her. The information on guns and the Constitution was solid and helpful. Please keep sharing your knowledge and experiences. You have precious wisdom that many of us don't have and should have.

Thank you, *Eugene Weekly* for publishing these and so many other horrors we need to fix.

Jean Denis
Eugene

EW WAS RIGHT ON NEWMAN

Eugene Weekly got it right endorsing Judy Newman (4/29) for the Eugene School Board. I served on the board for 18 years, and I know the importance of bringing a calm, balanced voice like Newman's when making decisions. Newman has built strong relationships in our community and is an effective advocate for our students. That's why I support Newman.

The most important responsibility of the board is to make sure that students are front and center, especially those that often get left out. Newman does that. She is a life-long educator. She founded EC Cares, a public education organization in Eugene that has served

over 25,000 children with disabilities since 1991. She has led efforts that have brought millions of dollars in school funding to Eugene.

As the *Weekly* stated, "Newman's careful and independent thinking earned her the ... endorsement." Eugene students need Newman.

Beth Gerot
Eugene

DI LIBERTO HAS BEEN ON THE FRONT LINES

I am writing to express my support for Tom Di Liberto for 4J School Board. I have co-owned a retail business in downtown Eugene since 1975. My daughter attended public schools in south Eugene. I have volunteered in area schools and in community music and theater programs, and I have witnessed first-hand the incremental impact of funding reductions on our public institutions and our local students, teachers and school administrators since 1990.

As a 36-year veteran classroom teacher, Di Liberto has been on the front lines. He understands the issues teachers and students face today and how district policy can improve or disable classroom success. He has met the growing needs of students squeezed into increasingly crowded classrooms, with fewer supplies, reduced support staff and opportunities, and the growing emphasis on standardized testing. I am happy to see that issues brought forth in Di Liberto's campaign have inspired fellow candidates and community leaders to begin new conversations about best practice in education. I also know that Di Liberto is not just talking about these issues. He is passionate about his educational goals and will work with dedication and diligence to enact change and improve the educational experience and outcomes for all of our students.

Linda Ellis
Eugene

VOTE STEVE MITAL FOR LCC BOARD ZONE 5

I served with Steve Mital as an EWEB commissioner for four years and found his approach to be level headed and community minded. He doesn't shy away from hard questions and has created innovative programs and partnerships that have made a major difference in the lives of community members. He values quality, but also recognizes and advocates for affordability. He guided the utility to revamp programs to be more effective with lower cost. I have no doubt that Steve would bring that same passion and vigor to the Lane Community College Board.

He is personable to work with and has a good sense of humor, making the most wonky conversations inviting and engaging. I hope you'll join me in voting for Mital for LCC Board Zone 5

Sonya Carlson
Eugene

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