

SPOKESMAN Opinion

OUR VIEW

Come visit us at the Spokesman

The Spokesman is excited to show off our new digs. In partnership with the Redmond Chamber of Commerce, we're hosting a morning soiree from 8:30-9:30 a.m. on Sept. 16 at our new office.

We're now located at 361 SW Sixth Street — at the intersection of Sixth and Deschutes right next door to the Odem Theater.

Come down for gallons of coffee — the real engine of every newsroom — and some sweet treats made by Christie's Cafe. Our news crew will be there, as well as company staff who can set you up with a subscription or give you some ideas on advertising, if you're in the market.

But mostly we'll be there to chat, answer questions, socialize and get to know you. A ribbon might even get cut with a pair of oversized scissors. Who knows! We hope to see you there and share a cup of joe with you.

To reach our newsroom, stop by from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, or give us a call anytime at 541-548-3203 or email news@redmondspokesman.com.

Editorials reflect the views of the Spokesman's editorial board, Publisher Heidi Wright and Editor Tim Trainor.



YOUR VIEWS

It is better to understand firearms than it is to fear them

I have read both columns in the Sept. 6 issue regarding firearms in the local schools.

While I am 80 years old and do not have children or grandchildren currently attending Redmond District schools, I would like to address the current uproar over them in schools.

I have taught Oregon Hunter Education for about 28 years. With 99% of those courses having been taught in various rooms in various Redmond schools.

During that time the Redmond cadre of hunter's education instructors have taught quite literally thousands of Redmond students and many of their parents, with no accidents or accidental discharges in any of our classes. I would hate to see the use of Redmond school facilities removed from the instructor cadre and/or students who attend the classes.

If a change is needed, let's look into training classes for our students to teach them how to handle firearms in a safe manner, as well as what to do if they encounter a firearm that isn't theirs or their parent's or is located in a space where it should not be.

I understand parental concern for their students about firearm accidents or improper use. But the solution is not, in my mind at least, raising our kids to fear firearms in all situations.

I have been a firearms instructor for better than 60 years and I can tell you it is better for kids to know what they are and how they work instead of trying to hide them so the first contact they have is inappropriate and/or dangerous. Have you ever tried to hide Christmas presents? The kids always find them.

*William A. Layton
Redmond*

GUEST COLUMN

Opening doors to middle-grade fiction

BY ERICKA BRUNSON-ROCHETTE
Community librarian

One of the things I love the most about books for youth is the myriad of avenues any one story can take.

It can be a modern telling of a well-loved fairytale, or a coming of age science fiction novel set in a distant future — any one book can unlock an endless possibility of doors. These three middle-grade books are just a few doors readers can choose to walk through, each leading to a series of subjects that open minds, broaden imagination and build empathy.

"The Stars Did Wander Darkling" by Colin Meloy

This hot off the press middle grade horror book is a perfect mix of "Stranger Things," "Stand by Me" and "The Goonies." In other words, perfect for fans of both thrilling coming of age tales and 1980s nostalgia.

Set in a fictional coastal Oregon town in the 1980s, Archie Coomes and his three best friends are trying to get the most out of their summer in their relatively boring town. But, after a penny shows up on Archie's doorstep,



Ericka Brunson-Rochette

strange things start happening in his town. There is the peculiar, persistent sound of an ax chopping away at something through the night. The adults start acting very unlike themselves, and there is a strange new man in a brown suit in town that no one else really seems to notice. Then of course, there are the other pennies.

Before long, Archie and his friends start tying the unusual behavior to a cliff that his Dad's construction company recently opened up for a contract job. The more they find out about the cliff, the more bizarre things, and

people, become in Seaham. The four friends know that it's up to them to get to the bottom of whatever sinister thing that is happening in their town before there is nothing left to save.

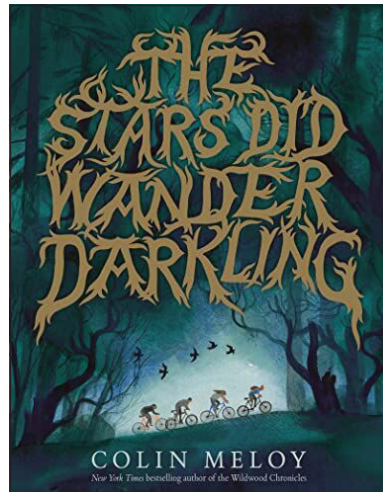
Opening doors to: Horror, suspense, adventure, 1980s nostalgia, adolescence, friendship

"Dream, Annie, Dream" by Waka T. Brown

The one thing twelve-year-old Annie does not have trouble with is dreaming. She has so many interests, like theatre, basketball, and her favorite book, "Alice in Wonderland."

In her first year of middle school, Annie is presented with so many opportunities to pursue her dreams, like auditioning for her school's production of The King and I, or trying out for the basketball team. While she is never quite the star of the show, she is satisfied with her accomplishments and continues to aim higher every time.

But when her classmates and the adults in her life start questioning her dreams, Annie begins to question her worth. Conflicted with her immigrant parent's idea of "The American Dream,"



The Stars Did Wander Darkling

and the

barriers that she runs into as a Japanese American girl trying to find her place in 1980s Kansas, Annie starts to wonder if some dreams are just not meant for her.

Opening doors to: Realistic fiction, identity, racism, deams, adolescence, family, friendship, bullying

"The Last Mapmaker" by Christina

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Twelve-year-old Sai doesn't come from wealth or riches. In fact, she has only gotten her job as an apprentice to Paiyoon Wongyai, Mangkon's greatest and most celebrated mapmaker, through deceit.

No one would hire her if they knew she was the daughter of a conman and that she came from a line of ancestors with no respectable social standing. When the opportunity to join Paiyoon on a voyage to chart the southern seas, she doesn't have to think twice about it.

Not soon after they set sail, Sai learns that she might not be the only person on board with secrets.

When the plan is unveiled that they are actually sailing towards the Sunderlands, a fabled place of dragons, great riches and even greater danger, Sai is faced with a choice. Does she listen to Paiyoon and leave the ship before the expedition costs her life, or does she voyage on in hopes of charting her own destiny?

Opening doors to: Fantasy, adventure, self-growth, adolescence, family, mentorship

GUEST COLUMN

Regulating guns a key issue in November election

Well, lucky us. We now have people in Central Oregon with AR-15s who are insane enough to walk into a grocery store and shoot people. Yes, insane. People in their right minds don't go around killing strangers who are shopping for cornflakes and milk.

They do not embark on a killing spree planned out in their minds, or posted on social media, to take out teachers and children the day after murdering strangers at Safeway. But crazy or sane, we all have easy access to purchasing any kind of gun and ammo because ... why?

It's because this is the home of the brave and the land of the free. Brave and free? There is nothing brave about loading up an AR-15 and going where local seniors shop to pop off a few. What a coward. Free to what? Kill anybody anywhere? Free to tote a gun or rifle publicly downtown even though it naturally intimidates and scares people? Nothing brave nor freedom loving about that at all.

Oh, it's to protect our right to bear arms, Amendment II. An interpretation that intentionally ignores the first four words of that amendment; "A well regulated Militia." The protection

of the Second Amendment, no matter what, ignores why it was written.

It was a time of war, and we did not have an army. This amendment allowed the newly formed U.S. government to create an army out of the young male farmers, hunters, and explorers. That is why that amendment was written. The British were coming!

Today, we have an Army, Navy, an Air Force, a National Guard, a Coast Guard and a Space Force.

Yet just recently in Central Oregon, within the city of Bend, many people lost a loved one — a father, husband, brother, uncle, son, grandfather,

friend or neighbor — to a senseless death because we do not regulate the purchasing of civilian held arms. We definitely should regulate these sales and the vast majority of U.S. citizens agree we should, regardless party affiliation. So why haven't we?

Without going into a 40-year history, regulation of civilian gun sales has not happened because a well-financed gun lobby stops the legislations from moving forward, because we have legislators who care more about campaign finances than saving lives, and because of leaders who wish to keep the public in a state of

fear and division in order to remain in office.

Let's stop this. Do not vote for candidates who refuse to pass legislation with reasonable gun regulation policies. I know that as a rural Oregonian, Jamie McCleod-Skinner supports common sense gun legislation and she is here for us. I am voting for her. I am voting for any candidate who is following the lead of the people to do what is necessary to stop these mass murders in our towns, cities, counties, and states.

■ Susan Cobb lives in Sisters and is a running for a seat on city council.

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Oregon Legislature: Legislative documents and information are available online at www.leg.state.or.us.