

Living in the present ... and the future

Living in the present matters. Now we must also live in the future — to respond to where trends are taking our economy and our culture. Unless we grasp where the world is headed, we waste time quibbling over things that no longer matter.

Gerald Seib of *The Wall Street Journal* captured that phenomenon when he said the immigration debate is caught in a time warp." Seib's May 5 column described what Republican presidential candidates are saying.

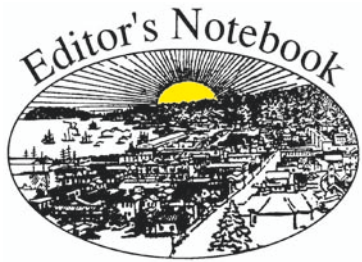
Wrote Seib: "...the premise of this immigration debate — that waves of Hispanic immigrants are sweeping across our southern border, swelling the nation's population of undocumented immigrants and transforming the culture and economy — is caught in a kind of time warp dominated by trends of decades past and largely missing the immigration issues that really matter today."

Seib pointed out that in 2013, "China replaced Mexico as the top country sending immigrants to the U.S." And this year apprehension of immigrants coming up from Mexico had fallen by 28 percent. Also Seib noted that the number of young and unaccompanied minors crossing the southern border "has plummeted."

Politics is not the only arena that dwells in the past. Some industries miss opportunities, because they are fighting old battles. Smart companies accept the obvious and fashion new initiatives.

The most refreshing voice I've heard lately was Jake Madison, a young farmer in the Eastern Oregon town of Echo. Madison spoke last Friday to our Capital Press Board of Directors. At the age of 30, Madison is one-half the median age of Oregon farmers. For three generations, the Madisons have been prominent fixtures in Eastern Oregon agriculture. Now Jake has taken ownership of 8,100 acres. And he is looking squarely into the future.

Water was Madison's topic — specifically about a proposal to pump Columbia River water into an aquifer and withdraw it for crops. Madison talked about the importance of working with the environmental group Water



Steve Forrester

important for agriculture to take its perspective into urban areas. And he is looking at growing organics on his farm.

As Madison described his plans and where he believes Eastern Oregon agriculture must go, he exhibited no sense of regret or retribution. In other

words, he does not carry baggage that might have inhibited many farmers in prior generations.

In fairness, I would add that farmers are among the most practical people I have known. They also tend to be well informed.

Politicians are stuck in the past, largely because there is a high percentage payoff in beating a dead horse. The Republican base wants to hear

about the wave of Mexican immigrants because they've been sold that image for years, and they earnestly believe that's what's going on. Don't count on any of the presidential

candidates to acknowledge that the Mexican immigration wave has been supplanted by what Gerald Seib said is the current and future reality — the Asian wave.

For most of the 20th century, American politics were subservient to a region that was stuck in false Civil War imagery, fed by a work of fiction — *Gone With The Wind*. That nostalgic and violent era ended with passage of a Civil Rights Act in 1964 and a Voting Rights Act. Now we have a black president, whom Republican leaders demonize. What those GOP leaders fail to realize is that Obama is only the first of the nonwhite presidents whom we'll see in this century.

—S.A.F.



Submitted photo

Echo farmer Jake Madison poses with rows of onions at his farm.

Politicians are stuck in the past, because it works for them.

Open forum

Friends are great

Friendship is a good thing to have in any school you go to. It's nice to have friends around who care for you, people to talk to is really nice to have, too, and when you have friends you create amazing memories together and bond together. It's a good thing to have loyal friends whom you can trust. Friends who will have your back no matter what happens. To have friends who love you through thick and thin.

In school it's nice to have someone who understands you. It's a good thing to have a friend who doesn't judge you for either mistakes you made, or things you have done. To find a friend who doesn't judge you will be the long-lasting friend for you.

A friend who understands you still can judge you. It just means they will be nice to you about it, but to have both is really nice to have. Friends who like you for who you are and not because you're rich, or have something they want, is a loyal friend — someone who has fun hanging out with you,

and enjoys your presence.

In friendship you have someone to talk to. Friends will help you. When you want someone to talk to, they will be there. When you have friends you can talk about anything the both of you want to talk about. You can talk about boys or girls that you like or have a crush on. Or, you guys could talk about plans in the future you guys are going to do together like camp, sleepovers, parties and going to fun parks.

Some types of friends like to gossip with one another, either about boys they like, boys they don't really like, girls they like, girls they don't like, celebrities they like or movies coming out. Some cool friends like to talk about new clothes or shopping.

When you have friends you create memories together that you can never forget in your life. They can be good or they can be bad. It is better if they are good ones, but you never know. You can have good memories by going on double dates with friends. Or going to the movies and having a really

fun time. You can have good memories of camping with friends, too.

In this summary, I wrote about how friendship is a good thing to have in school, and really anywhere else. Friends are nice to have around. Having friends, you have people to talk to about. With friends you create memories together. Friends help friends out.

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Disappointed with Boone

I was very disappointed to see that state Rep. Deb Boone voted to pass Senate Bill 941, requiring gun checks for private transfers of guns. She had emailed me prior to the vote to say she would be voting no on the bill. Instead, she voted against allowing any amendments to the bill, against sending it back to the committee to correct problems, and for the bill.

I wish Rep. Boone would explain how she could vote for this bill. The bill requires the following: If you want to leave your gun with someone for safe keeping, or loan it to someone for hunting, you will have to do a background check to leave the gun with the other person, and another one to get your gun back.

Background checks do two things: They check to see the person getting the gun can own one; and they transfer the legal ownership of the gun to the other person. So what do you do if the person you loaned or left your gun with refuses to do the background check to give it back? They now own the gun.

What if the gun is lost or stolen when in the other person's possession? Do you honestly think your insurance company will pay you because a gun belonging to someone else is stolen?

So much for not infringing on the rights of legal gun owners.

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