

EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

The Bulletin
AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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Help pick next Bend roundabout art

We love Bend’s roundabout art. Some pieces, perhaps, get more love.

You can help choose what roundabout art should be next. And time is running out to give your input.

What art should be put in place at the Brookswood/Powers roundabout? And what art should go into the Empire/Butler Market/27th roundabout?

You can go to the Art in Public Places website, see the art choices, and say what you think. Models of the art are also on display at the Downtown Bend Public Library through Tuesday.

The art is donated. Art in Public Places is a nonprofit organization that brings permanent art installations to Bend. Its money comes from the Bend Foundation, the Be Part of Art Campaign and private donations. You could donate, too.

We know not everybody likes all the roundabout art. Too abstract, too whatever. The interior of roundabouts could just be some native plants or rocks. Less potential for controversy. Simpler. Cheaper. Easier for the city to maintain if somebody drives into it.

Also, though, that would be boring.

Having public art in roundabouts says something about Bend. Even



our traffic devices have ambition to be something more.

So go to artinpublicplaces.org and give them your input. The Bulletin’s David Jasper wrote an article about this recently, which has more information.



Submitted photos

Several artists have submitted proposals for pieces to be placed in roundabouts in Bend. Among them are Fallbrook, California, artist Michael Stutz (top), for the Empire Avenue roundabout; Jessica Bodner (middle) of Emigrant, Montana, for the future installation at Powers Road and Brookswood Boulevard; Jodie Bliss (above, left), of Colorado, for the Empire roundabout; and San Francisco artist Michael Szabo (above, right), for the Powers Road roundabout.

Editorials reflect the views of The Bulletin’s editorial board, Publisher Heidi Wright, Editor Gerry O’Brien and Editorial Page Editor Richard Coe. They are written by Richard Coe.



Defeat in November would help Democrats

BY CLIVE CROOK
Bloomberg

If you dread the possibility of a second Trump administration, you should ask whether the Democrats’ improving prospects in the midterm elections are an entirely good thing. The party is much less popular than it should be, given the quality of its opponents — and it needs to ask why. A brutal beating this November would force the conversation. Anything that can be spun as a qualified success will allow the question to be shelved.

Three main factors are currently helping the party: the overturning of Roe v. Wade, the flow of new information about the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, and renewed hope of a productive budget-reconciliation package. But Democrats seem determined to misread these developments — bending them to fit the ill-conceived theory of unbridled ambition and transformative change that’s guided them since the outset of Joe Biden’s presidency.

The Supreme Court’s decision overturning Roe v. Wade is unpopular, with 57% of Americans disapproving. Even better for electoral purposes, moderate Democrats oppose the ruling by a very wide margin (74% to 25%), whereas moderate Republicans are about evenly split (50% support it, 49% oppose).

To underline the point, in a referendum this week, voters in Kansas rejected an amendment to the state’s constitution that would have erased the right to abortion affirmed by its highest court in 2019. In effect, the Supreme Court’s decision in Dobbs was on the ballot; voters in a conservative state rejected it by a margin of 59% to 41%.

Yet this doesn’t show that most voters favor completely unrestricted access to abortion. It shows they

don’t trust Republican legislatures to stop at the kind of limited regulation most voters actually support. A plurality of Americans favor a Roe-like guarantee of access to abortion up to 15 weeks’ gestation — the middle way that Chief Justice John Roberts proposed in Dobbs. But on this issue, as on every other, committed Democrats and Republicans are reflexively opposed to compromise. Democrats could have owned the moderate middle. Instead, they greeted the backlash against Dobbs as vindicating their recently adopted fundamentalism.

The House of Representatives’ Jan. 6 Committee has supplied a steady flow of information showing former President Donald Trump’s unfitness for office. Nobody should have needed the committee’s work to realize this. But the torrent of defamatory details surely makes that conclusion harder to evade. Trump’s strongest supporters can’t admit it, but even many of them must be embarrassed. It’s another boost for Democrats.

Here was an opportunity to open the minds of wavering Republicans to Trump’s pathologies. Some of that happened, no doubt — but the impact on the median voter was likely diminished by the committee’s theatrically partisan spin. The tendency to refer to the events of that day not as a riot, for example, but as an insurrection — that is, a conspiracy to violently overthrow the government — implies that anybody who fails to oppose Trump now is a putative traitor. Such overkill repels the moderate voter.

Lately, the idea that Democrats in Congress are incapable of getting anything done has abruptly given way to a new and more encouraging narrative. The Senate’s radically scaled-down Build Back Better plan, now called the Inflation Reduction

Act, has been widely — and rightly — applauded for its measures to promote clean energy, curb prescription drug costs and trim the 10-year budget deficit.

The deal still isn’t done and, at it stands, some of the details are questionable. It’s a shame, as well, that the Inflation Reduction Act won’t reduce inflation, though by now voters are surely inured to the absurd names that Congress attaches to its legislation. The measure is a good one on balance, representing the kind of sensible compromise that centrists like to advocate, combining smart public investments and incentives with fiscal discipline.

Yet it is important to remember that this agreement happened despite Biden’s protracted efforts to advance a far more ambitious agenda. His defenders will say that if he’d pushed from the outset for compromise, he’d have achieved much less. That’s doubtful, in my view. Even if it’s true, something like the budget agreement is best described not as a “historic achievement” — assuming that something is actually achieved — but simply as government working as it should.

If Trump does run in 2024, the alternative that the middle of the electorate will want is not wholesale reinvention of a fundamentally broken nation but the prospect of calm, deliberate, incremental improvement by minimally competent elected officials. You might call it “normal politics,” except that in the U.S. it would be anything but normal. Republicans under Trump’s sway cannot hope to make any such offer. Democrats — once they ask themselves why they’re failing to persuade half the country — could.

■ Clive Crook is a Bloomberg columnist and member of the editorial board covering economics.

Letters policy

We welcome your letters. Letters should be limited to one issue, contain no more than 250 words and include the writer’s phone number and address for verification. We edit letters for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject poetry, personal attacks, form letters, letters submitted elsewhere and those appropriate for other sections of The Bulletin. Writers are limited to one letter or guest column every 30 days.

Guest columns

Your submissions should be between 550 and 650 words and must include the writer’s phone number and address for verification. We edit submissions for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject those submitted elsewhere. Locally submitted columns alternate with national columnists and commentaries. Writers are limited to one letter or guest column every 30 days.

How to submit

Please address your submission to either My Nickel’s Worth or Guest Column and mail, fax or email it to The Bulletin. Email submissions are preferred.

Email: letters@bendbulletin.com

Write: My Nickel’s Worth/Guest Column
P.O. Box 6020
Bend, OR 97708

Fax: 541-385-5804

Leaving my party hat behind to vote for Chris Piper

BY NICOLE MOORE PERULLO

The Bend City Council is supposed to represent all of our community members; after all, it says on the city website: “As stewards of the city, we are accountable to the people of Bend and are responsible for delivering excellent city services. We are committed to serving everyone equitably, creating a more connected community, and preserving Bend’s spirit as we grow. We will strive to achieve equity and justice for everyone in Bend.”

These days, I am certainly not feeling like the Bend City Council is aligning with this statement. It seems as though councilors have their own agenda and are not listening to their constituents and/or the community members of Bend. This was proven when they passed the “Shelter Code Amendments” despite a majority of

Bend residents’ disapproval provided through a survey as well as numerous public comments at City Council meetings and letters written by residents and neighborhood association boards on behalf of the neighborhood association members.

Back in April, I met with Chris Piper for the first time. He had recently announced his candidacy for the Bend mayor position. Upon meeting him, I found him to be very down to earth, surprisingly like-minded, and I got the sense that he really loved his family and was proud to be a Bend resident.

He was a great listener and genuinely appeared to care about my thoughts. And to be honest, I was quite surprised and taken aback about this as I actually voted for his opponent in the last election, as he has an (R) next to his name. I was up

GUEST COLUMN

front with him that I didn’t vote for him and he demonstrated grace by saying, “That is OK Nicole, how can I help you?” still wanting to hear what I had to say.

In retrospect, I think my votes were based on being so traumatized by the Trump presidency and how the Republican Party of late does not look like the Republican Party that I grew up knowing and that my family aligned with. And perhaps many independents and Democrats like myself may have voted for a slate of Democrats not really vetting them, although they ran on platforms that I/we resonated with.

Affordable housing ... sounds great, diversity, equity and inclusion ... sound great, but as a chair of

the Southwest Bend Neighborhood Association and resident of Bend, I don’t see the work being done on the platforms they ran on.

I feel the trajectory and direction the City Council and city manager are taking our city in is not positive for Bend, including creating a lot of division with the decisions they are making in regards to the houseless issue, affordability with continuing to issue short-term rentals despite local workers in Bend not being able to find housing, not holding developers accountable in regards to middle income housing and not adopting an extensive tree preservation code provided to them by a local attorney — and clear cuts are continuing to happen all over Bend. It’s disappointing to say the least.

Surprisingly I felt Chris Piper actually represented a lot of the same

values, beliefs and ideas on current issues that I hold, and I will support him as mayor for the city of Bend, even with an (R) behind his name!

The one thing that stuck with me from our conversation is that he stressed how important it is to leave your party hat and agenda at the door and represent the community at large as serving as mayor or as a city councilor.

He stated that you are advocating for and representing your community and that one must be a good listener and not have a personal agenda when dealing with community issues. It certainly gave me food for thought for the next time I vote. It is really important to vet the candidates running and not just vote party line. I will certainly leave my party hat at the mailbox when I cast my vote.

■ Nicole Moore Perullo lives in Bend.