

Stage is set for Buehler vs. Brown

K nute Buehler has proposed 10 gubernatorial debates, crisscrossing the state. Gov. Kate Brown should accept his offer.

Oregonians throughout the state deserve the firsthand opportunity to evaluate the ideas, aspirations and leadership skills of their next governor.

Even better would be to include Independent and third-party candidates in some of those debates so as to more fully reflect Oregon's political spectrum.

There is irony in Buehler's debate proposal. Until winning the Republican gubernatorial nomination last week, he largely had been absent from the GOP debates and joint appearances. That strategy worked, enabling the more moderate Buehler to triumph in a GOP field crowded with conservative candidates.

Brown, who faced only token opposition in the Democratic gubernatorial primary, called for Buehler to join her in three debates and at least two joint appearances before newspaper editorial boards.

By nightfall, Buehler had upped the ante to 10 debates, saying Brown's proposal was yet another example of her not being bold enough. Yet one question for voters to ponder is whether Buehler as governor would be the bold, potentially decisive politician who emerged on election night or the reticent, off-stage candidate of the Republican primary.

In any case, Brown and Buehler have much to discuss in front of voters.

This election is an evaluation of what Oregonians could expect from either politician. But it also is a referendum on Brown's leadership since replacing Gov. John Kitzhaber

three years ago.

That makes state management — the governor's role as CEO — a dominant issue. It won't be enough for Buehler to say he will lead where Brown failed. He must specify how he would accomplish his goals, how he would bring the state together and how he would prevent the management missteps of recent years.

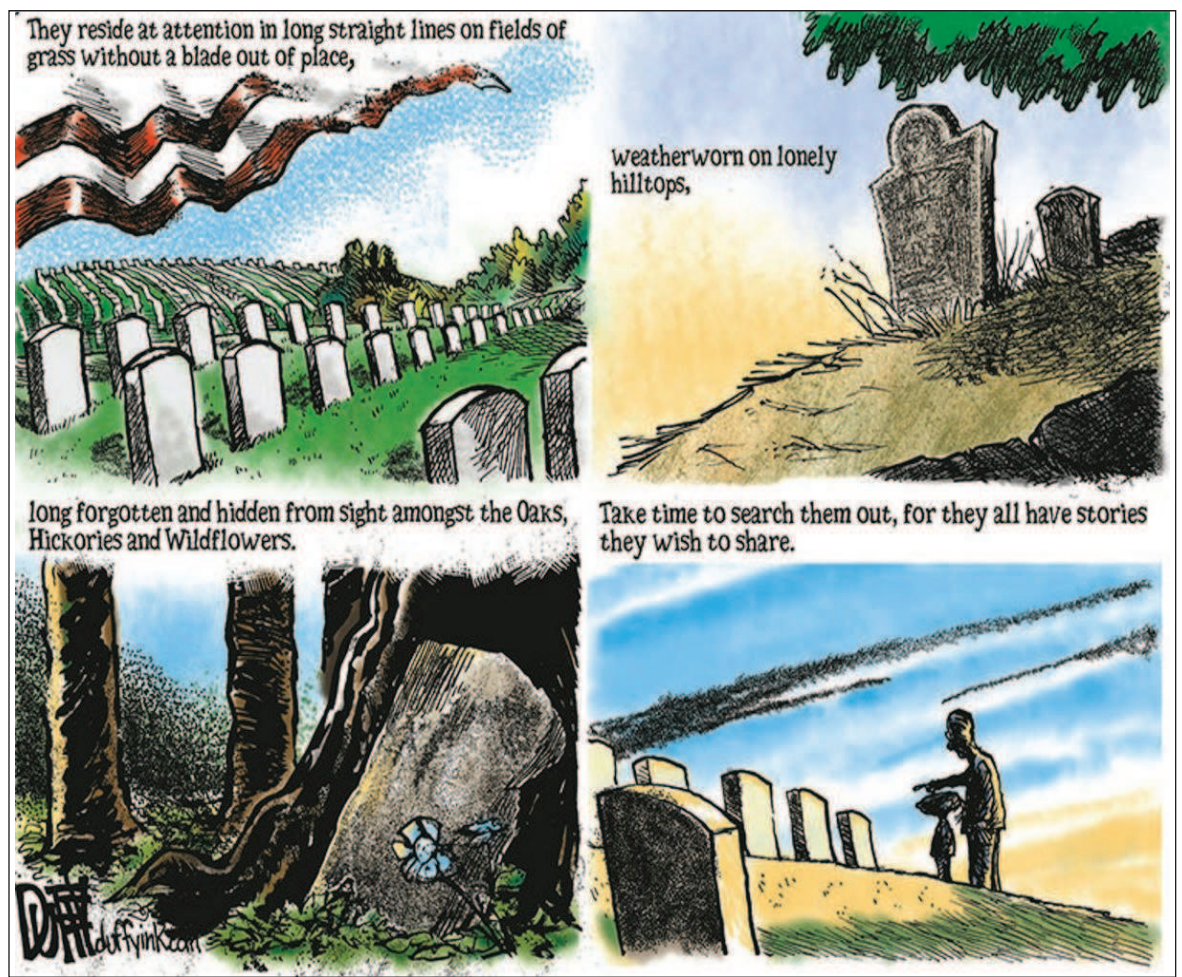
As for Brown, she has to show that she governs for the entire state, not just her Portland political base. She must own the missteps, as well as the triumphs, of her tenure. She must reveal what she has learned on the job and how that would serve Oregonians for four more years.

Voters should hear the specifics for how each candidate would:

- Strengthen Oregon education and help all Oregon students achieve their potential.
- Confront the costs of the Oregon Public Employees Retirement System and public employee health care.
- Overcome Oregon's lack of mental health resources and its high suicide rate.
- Prepare for drought, wildfires and a host of other environmental issues.
- Bridge the economic, technology and transportation gap that separates rural and urban Oregon.

Debates will be a waste if all the candidates do is throw jabs at each other. That is what Buehler did six years ago in running against Secretary of State Brown. He lost the election, but she got caught up in parrying his jabs instead of defining herself.

Oregonians want, need and deserve robust discussions about our state's future.



GUEST COMMENT

'We will never forget you'

By Mitch Sparks
To the Blue Mountain Eagle



Mitch Sparks

One hundred and fifty years ago, no family or community was untouched by the bloodiest conflict in American history — the Civil War. The four-year-long struggle claimed the lives of over 620,000 soldiers — which is more Americans than died in both World Wars, Korea and Vietnam combined.

It was on May 5, 1868, that the Grand Army of the Republic, an early veterans advocacy group comprised of Civil War veterans, first urged Americans to observe a "National Memorial Day" to honor the dead of the Civil War.

The tradition has grown in the 150 years that have followed. Today, Memorial Day is a cherished

and protected national holiday — especially in Oregon. Every year, hundreds of thousands of Oregonians attend ceremonies, town parades and other solemn events to pause and remember those who have given the ultimate sacrifice — from the Civil War to the most current conflicts in the Middle East.

It is estimated that nearly 6,000 Oregon service members' lives have been lost in the line of duty since our state's inception.

However Memorial Day is celebrated in your community, and however different it may appear from the simple ceremonies of a

grieving, post-Civil War America, the sentiment remains the same. It is that of a grateful nation to its fallen soldiers: "Thank you. We will never forget you."

This Memorial Day, as we kick off the start of summer and turn to enjoy Oregon's incredible parks, beaches, rivers and mountains, we invite all citizens to pause and truly honor our fallen and our Gold Star families. We stand on the shoulders of all those who came before us and will never forget the service and sacrifice of all those who gave all.

Thank you all for your support of Oregon veterans, and bless all those still serving, at home and overseas.

Mitch Sparks is a retired Navy veteran and acting director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs.

GUEST COMMENT

What happened to Moral Majority

By Reg LeQuieu
To the Blue Mountain Eagle

A recent letter asks, "What happened to the 'Moral Majority'?" As a sympathizer with the Moral Majority, allow me to suggest some answers.

First, a little history: During my lifetime, four presidents have been philanderers — Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Clinton and Trump. Kennedy, unfaithful to his wife both before and during his short presidency, was protected by his security details in an age the press neither inquired nor disclosed.

President Clinton wasn't so fortunate. He, evidently, was a more predatory violator of his victims while governor of Arkansas, victims who eventually came forward — especially after the Lewinsky scandal in the White House — and made their experiences public. The responses of the parties involved are interesting to review.

First, President Clinton lied about his involvement. Second, Hillary launched all out attacks on the women who made the accusations in an effort to destroy their reputations. That helped me see her true colors, that she was not a supporter of inconvenient truths. Since the press is liberal politically, it generally supported President Clinton, even going so far as to suggest that his sex life was his private business and had no bearing on his role as president of the United States. The Moral Majority was very critical then, so the question is asked, "What happened to the Moral Majority?"

I don't offer this historical per-

spective as an excuse or a rationalization.

We now have a president who reportedly had a one-night stand some 10 years ago. But I do ask: What choices do we have? Certainly not someone with the very questionable ethics of Hillary Clinton and her secular progressive-socialist political leanings — a person who has been lying about why she lost since the day she lost. But even embarrassing personal "practices" are just one aspect of a presidency; the other aspect is a president's policies.

By way of illustration, President Obama's personal practices, at least as husband and father, were exemplary; his policies as a secular progressive-socialist were destructive of our liberties.

It was actually the policies of the Republican Party the Moral Majority supported rather than the policies of the Democratic Party. Many of us favored other Republican candidates during the primaries; when it became apparent that Donald Trump had gained the nomination, the Moral Majority still voted Republican. Allow me to present just two reasons that were at the top of our list.

Abortion: President Trump declared himself to be pro-life. By contrast, Hillary Clinton in particular — and the Democratic Party in general — virulently support abortion, Clinton apparently right up to the ninth month of gestation. Medical science increasingly affirms that life begins at conception — something Christianity has known for thousands of years.

Secular science writer Bill Bryson summed life up succinctly when he wrote of our cells: "And

every one of those cells knows exactly what to do to preserve and nurture you from the moment of conception to your last breath."

The second policy position was the vacancy on the Supreme Court. The Republican Senate took the position that the new president — whoever that turned out to be — would have the privilege of nominating the replacement for the late Justice Scalia.

As a candidate, Trump openly declared that he would nominate a constitutional originalist rather than (by implication) a secular progressive. The basic differences are these: Originalists believe the constitution should be interpreted — and applied — according to what the framers intended its various clauses and amendments to mean.

Secular progressives believe the constitution is a "living" document that should be interpreted according to the "needs" of the time. That would make the unelected Supreme Court another legislative body that could make the Constitution say what they wanted it to say.

Does the Moral Majority wish that President Trump's personal morality in the past was equal to his public policies in the present? Are we pleased that he has abandoned his past and not brought those practices into the White House as Kennedy and Clinton did? Yes, absolutely.

And we are all hoping that he can be as successful in eventually denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula as he has been with the economy and unemployment.

Reg LeQuieu lives in Mt. Vernon.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Road kill and common sense

To the Editor:

Regarding Grant LeQuieu's letter to the editor, May 16, concerning a run-in with an Oregon state wildlife officer. The officer should be aware of the ordinance in Grant County concerning road kills.

In the early '90s, two road kill trials in Grant County Circuit Court

resulted in not guilty verdicts. In the second trial, the judge emphatically stated, "I'm restoring common sense to Grant County. Not guilty!"

A countywide initiative resulted in a 90 percent passage of a road kill ordinance, making it legal to utilize a road-killed game animal. Since then, no one has been cited for taking road kill.

It took the state of Oregon nearly 25 years since then to adopt a road

kill resolution to address the tens of thousands of road-killed animals in Oregon. Grant County has had as many as a thousand deer killed on roads each year.

Referring to the circuit judge's admonition about common sense, it should be used by everyone, especially those in a position of authority.

Dave Traylor
John Day



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