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## IN OUR OPINION

# Shopping locally makes for better gifts, stronger communities

Christmas is a week away, but there's still plenty of time for residents to find the perfect gifts for everyone on their lists. Even teenagers.

Small businesses across Whidbey Island offer an assortment of unique gifts in a wide range of price ranges. A reporter in search of one-of-a-kind presents in local shops found gems and crystals, vintage dolls that look like historical figures, felt puppets, owl decorations and candy canes that taste like mac 'n cheese.

Those who like giving the gift of food will find plenty of locally made products, from spice mixes to smoked fish to loganberry pie.

The ultimate unique gift is a work of art and, luckily, the island is home to talented artists who sell original works at galleries, stores and

studios. There are even artists who do work on commission, such as a South Whidbey woman who draws caricatures of people's pets.

You won't find that on Amazon.

Shopping at small, independent businesses is also a way to support the community and keep downtown areas buzzing with activity. Money spent locally supports local jobs and public services.

Studies show that money spent at local, small businesses ends up circulating and supporting the economy far more than spending at big-box stores. The Institute for Local Self-Reliance reports that, for every \$100 spent at an independent retailer, \$45 is returned to the community in support of other businesses, compared to \$14 from chain stores. For online retail, the

return to the local community is just around \$1.

The nation runs on small business. About 99.9 percent of U.S. businesses are classified as small. They employ nearly half of the total workforce nationwide and in Washington state.

Buying items produced locally is better for the environment. And getting out and meeting people is how communities are made.

Shopping Whidbey is also enjoyable.

Consider making a day of it. Head to downtown Oak Harbor or Langley, perhaps, and peruse the shops and the holiday decorations. Stop at a coffee shop or a restaurant for a bite to eat. Then head to Coupeville and check out the stores along historic Front Street. Relax with a glass of wine or a beer. Then, end the day with dinner at one of the many restaurants.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Editorial

# Whidbey's roads are not designed for high speeds

### Editor,

The "In Our Opinion" piece from the Dec. 7 edition of your paper contained an editorial titled "You're not alone in your irritation with slow drivers." My own experience here on the island has involved far more speeding drivers than slow drivers, and I fear your piece comes across as somewhat of a defense for those speeders.

I do not consider myself a "slow driver." However, in my desire to stay within the posted speed limits I have been passed many times by drivers who wish to go much faster. I think it is important to keep in mind that on our island there is no place you can legally drive faster than 55 mph. I also wish to point out that the posted speed limit reflects the maximum legally allowed speed and not the minimum suggested speed. The two main roads on the island - Highway 20, and Highway 525 - have numerous stretches where the maximum allowable speed is reduced below 55 mph.

Basically, Whidbey Island roads are not designed for high speed travel. Keep in mind that distances are relatively short on our island. I would venture to guess that most car trips made on the island are under 10 miles. Therefore, if you are indeed stuck behind a "slow driver," odds are good the resulting delay will only amount to a minute or two. Is that extra minute or two really going to cause your "blood to boil"?

George Sinclair  
Greenbank

### Guns

# In response to letter, writer was misrepresented, vilified

### Editor,

If Ms. Deseck-Piazzon was shocked, then I'm aghast and outraged - not really!

I'm more amused by the transparency of your forum to promote dissension, controversy and liberal agenda, as attested by the bi-weekly liberal jabs in your cartoons, hyping of pet liberal issues, like labeling her letter as shocked, as if this were a revelation of patent falsehoods.

But to the point, Ms Deseck-Piazzon makes many errors in putting words in my mouth that were never said.

First off, I never said guns didn't kill people. I never said video games and poor parenting did kill people.

I never mentioned white supremacy, but while we're here, check the facts on crimes and shootings.

Have you heard of MS-13 "Mara Salvatrucha?"

I never defended the NRA except to say that a previous letter to the editor claimed the NRA was the exclusive reason for school shootings. I said, "not so," and, in fact, my last sentence concluded with the statement that it was a more complex problem, and that I didn't have the answers.

As for easy access to guns, I never said it wasn't a problem.



Parents who don't know or don't care what their kids listen to, watch or associate with are part of the problem. I would summarize my statement as having said: Where do kids get the ideas to plan and do these things?

You nicely skirted that while vilifying me with words you put in my mouth.

Byron Dieckman  
Oak Harbor

### Trump

# Larsen will lose votes if he supports impeachment

### Editor,

I had met Congressman Rick Larsen a few times over the years at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island as well as with his staff in Washington, D.C. upon my return from Afghanistan in 2015.

I have voted for him each time he was on the ballot even though I am registered as a Republican.

SEE LETTER, A5

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# OBITUARIES



Hendricson

## Mildred Marietta Hendricson

Nov. 16, 1919 -  
Dec. 4, 2019

Mildred Marietta Hendricson (Dennis), died peacefully on Dec. 4, 2019 at her home on Whidbey Island, Wash., with family holding her close. Mildred lived, by her own account, a happy, productive, interesting and healthy life. She was a wonderful daughter, sister, aunt, wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, teacher and friend. Her dignity, patience, kindness, insight, dry humor and sly grin will be greatly missed.

Born in Walla Walla, Wash., to Maude Odessa Dennis (Goodman) and Archie Howard Dennis, Mildred graduated from Touchet High School and Washington State University — the first in her family to earn a college degree. After graduation from college, she began a high school teaching career. When the Women's Army Corps (WAC) was created in 1942, Mildred enlisted and served during WWII in Connecticut and Texas.

After discharge from the service, she returned to Walla Walla, and in 1946 married Harold (Hank) Maris Hendricson, also from Walla Walla and a WWII combat veteran. Mildred and Harold's children, William (Bill) and Shirley were born in Walla Walla in 1948 and 1950.

At the start of the Korean War, Hank resumed his military career, which took Mildred and her family to more than 10 bases in the U.S. and Europe over 25 years. Mildred took full advantage of living in Europe, travel-

ing extensively with her children and husband as often as possible. Mildred would write "please excuse" notes to her children's teachers so they could accompany her on trips. Hank's last posting was at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.; at this time Mildred returned to teaching high school in Fairfax, Va., working with special needs students until Hank retired in 1972. Mildred and Hank then took off in their motorhome heading back to Washington state where, in 1973, they found a home on lovely Whidbey Island. Hank fished and Mildred gardened, creating two acres of flowers, vegetables, fruit and walnut trees, raspberries and loganberries. The kids and grandkids came to visit and life was good. After Hank died in 1992, Mildred spent part of each year in San Antonio, Texas to be close to her son and his family. In 1996, Mildred's daughter Shirley arrived on Whidbey Island and moved in with her mother, sharing a home along with their dogs Augustus, Whidbey, Murphy and Nadee. Years of fun, practical and impractical projects, and much traveling ensued.

Mildred was a woman of many talents and interests. At age 72, she joined the English as a Second Language (ESL) Service for a San Antonio, Texas Adult Education program, coordinating ESL tutoring for hundreds of clients and was recognized as a volunteer of the year. She was an accomplished quilter, creating dozens of exquisite quilts, stitched by hand as her grandmothers taught her. Mildred and family enjoyed trips together into her 80s and 90s to Hawaii, Alaska, Germany and Holland, Italy, Cozumel, Catalina Island, Las Vegas, New Orleans, Atlanta, Yosemite, the Grand Canyon and South Padre Island.

Mildred was preceded in death by parents, Maude and Archie Dennis, brother Lloyd Neal Dennis, husband Harold, son-in-law David Putnam Osborne and great-granddaughter Sloan Dennis Hendricson.

She is survived by son William Dennis Hendricson and daughter-in-law Susan Lienau Hendricson, daughter Shirley Hendricson, grandson Adam William Hendricson and wife

Courtney Walker Hendricson, grandson Aaron Charles Hendricson and wife Stara Roemer Hendricson, great-granddaughters Finley Lienau Hendricson and Merritt Walker Hendricson, and several nephews and nieces.

The family is grateful to Nikki and Colleen who helped care for Mildred with compassion, understanding, professionalism and a gentle sense of humor. As per Mildred's request, no memorial is planned. Mildred was, for the last 25 years, a liberal Democrat and environmentalist and her hope is that in her memory, you will actively support either or both of these causes — or contribute to your local food bank.

Mildred will be buried with Hank at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. Arrangements by the Whidbey Memorial Funeral and Cremation Service, 746 N.E. Midway Blvd., Oak Harbor, WA. 98277, 360-675-5777.



Bur

## Judith Anne O'Brien Bur

Jan. 22, 1948 -  
Nov. 13, 2019

Born Jan. 22, 1948 in Salem, Mass., Judith Anne O'Brien Bur, a longtime resident of Coupeville Wash., passed away on Nov. 13, 2019 at Providence Hospital in Everett, Wash., after a brief struggle with cancer. Judy is survived by

her husband, Gerald E. Bur; three daughters, Terrie, Cindy and Jenny; 11 grandchildren, Victoria, Rebecca, Jessica, Makayla, Brian, Caity, Kristen, Kendal, and Kelsie, Raistlin, and Bethany; four great grandchildren, Damien, Javen, Connor and Rylee; and her sister, Carol O'Brien.

Judith loved her family, visiting with friends around the world on Facebook — her friends there knew her as Kin O'Brien — traveling, listening to music and feeding the birds and animals in her backyard.



Farmer

## Danette Sydney Farmer

Dec. 1, 1977 -  
Dec. 5, 2019

Mrs. Danette Sydney Farmer (McKee), of Oak Harbor, Wash., passed away on Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019 at the age of 42.

Danette was born to parents Allen, LTC, U.S. Army (Ret.), and Sherri McKee, on Dec. 1, 1977 in Ft. Ord, Calif. She grew up as the second of three children.

As a military family, they traveled the globe including Germany, Australia, Panama, England and several locations within the U.S.

In 2008, she met the love of her life, David Patrick Farmer, PO1 USN (Ret), in Oak Harbor, and they married July 4,

2011. In April 2012, they welcomed into the world their only child, Garrett Allen James Farmer.

Danette was a passionate advocate of equal opportunity and rights.

Her work experience reflected this as she worked as a banker, employment recruiter, hospitality clerk and multiple roles within a behavioral therapy clinic and community focused on providing critical skills to advance autistic children's quality of life.

Danette is survived by her husband, David; son, Garrett; parents, Allen and Sherri; brother, Neal; sister-in-law, Sandra; nephew, Finlay; sister in law, Jill; niece, Ella; best friends, Erica and Tiffany. She was preceded in death by her older brother, Scott, and was the center of an immeasurable circle of friends and acquaintances that she, and they, found joyous pleasure and love.

There was a memorial service held 1 p.m. Dec. 16 and hosted by The Living Word Four Square Church

All who wanted to join in remembrance of her were invited to attend.

In lieu of flowers the family is asking that donations be made to American Heart Association, as Danette did in memory of her brother, Scott.

Family and friends are encouraged to share memories and condolences at [www.whidbeymemorial.com](http://www.whidbeymemorial.com)

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# LETTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A4

My concern now is the impeachment of President Trump.

Here at NAS Whidbey and in other circles I frequent in Oak Harbor and Anacortes, I can say with absolute certainty that, with the exception of a very small yet extremely loud minority, that the people in general think this impeachment, as well as continuous attacks by the Democrats, is a waste of the peoples' time, if not a complete travesty.

The average person can see the ridiculousness of the Dems' claims and smears.

What we the people see is "the boy (Democrats) who cried wolf."

The Dems have been trying to impeach him since the day he was sworn in and trying to smear him even longer. Look what the country has done since he was elected.

All this progress was made under continuous duress and mostly biased attacks.

I hope Mr. Larsen realizes that a lot of his votes come from military-affiliated people and we are growing weary of this.

If he continues to support this impeachment he will lose not only my vote but, I can say with confidence, many others.

**Timothy S. Hazelo**  
Oak Harbor

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