

2021 ELECTION



Rosapepe



Chang



Diener



Trenary

CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENTS



Pickard



Wilson

Electing candidates who know governing is serious business

Make no mistake: It takes chutzpah and plenty of energy to run for office.

As I've written before on this page, plaudits are due to those who decide to become a candidate for public office. In today's climate of political cynicism and venal discourse, it's a decision not to be taken lightly.

If elected to office, they'd better be blessed with persistence and dedication in order to capably carry out their duties. Governance can be a grueling process. Public meetings often stretch hours beyond their scheduled times. Then there are the hours it takes to read and understand documents in the hundreds of pages that detail complicated, often convoluted issues impacting the communities they serve.

It's critical that candidates-turned-elected officials enter office with an open mind, free of preconceived notions or personal animus. After all, there's plenty of work to be accomplished by people harboring good intentions who can make decisions that are best for their community. Now more than ever, political grandstanding and childish, petty one-upmanship have no place in those deliberations.

It's unfortunate that such tit-for-tat discourse in the chambers of government in Washington, D.C., spurred on by nonsensical, ill-informed verbal sewage from social media, has become something of a primer for how government should operate.

Fortunately, despite the abundant partisan noise and misinformation, good governing is being accomplished, especially at the local level, in places like Port Orchard.

In our community, city government employees —directed by the elected City Council and the mayor — continue to do good work. And our elected officials have effectively worked together over the past several years to accomplish some significant achievements: the completion of the Tremont street-widening project; new wells to provide water sources for a growing community; crafting updated building standards allowing commercial development alongside a mix of new urban residential units; examining the city's parks system and determining how they can be optimized; and working with the Kitsap Public Facilities District and other regional agencies to create and build a once-in-a-generation civic facility — a community events center.

It's critical that City Council members continue to shepherd the transformation of Port Orchard into a dynamic, growing city attractive to new businesses and young families searching for a place to put down roots. In the upcoming municipal election, three City Council incumbents — Fred Chang, Scott Diener and Jay Rosapepe — are deserving of reelection. They are thoughtful public servants who do their homework about important issues in order to ask pertinent questions and arrive at policy solutions.

There's a candidate for the council's at-large position, Mark Trenary, who has a lengthy record as a small business owner and civic volunteer in South Kitsap. He deserves election to that post.

Tempering the SKSD school board drama

The South Kitsap School District's Board of Directors has been beset by squabbles and dysfunction that, if not for the fact the school district is facing critical mass on a number of issues, would be darkly comical and worth some eye-rolling and heavy sighs. But dare we say the obvious? That behavior is stupid, demoralizing and unproductive. But there's no time for the petty arguments and personal attacks that seem to dominate board meetings these days.

Adding to the upheaval was the resignation of board president Eric Gattenby on Sept. 28. He won't be replaced until after candidates for the vacated position are interviewed and the board's choice is formally appointed on Dec. 15.

The school board's paralysis has been a major hindrance in implementing district plans led by Superintendent Tim Winter. He needs the support of the directors not only in guiding the district through the pandemic but in developing a long-range plan addressing the much-needed modernization of its school facilities. The most recent school building constructed in the district was built more than 30 years ago. That's unacceptable and weakens SKSD's mission of educating students in the 21st century.

The new appointee will join two new directors to be chosen by voters in the Nov. 2 election. They will replace Rebecca Diehl and Liz Sebren, who chose not to seek reelection.

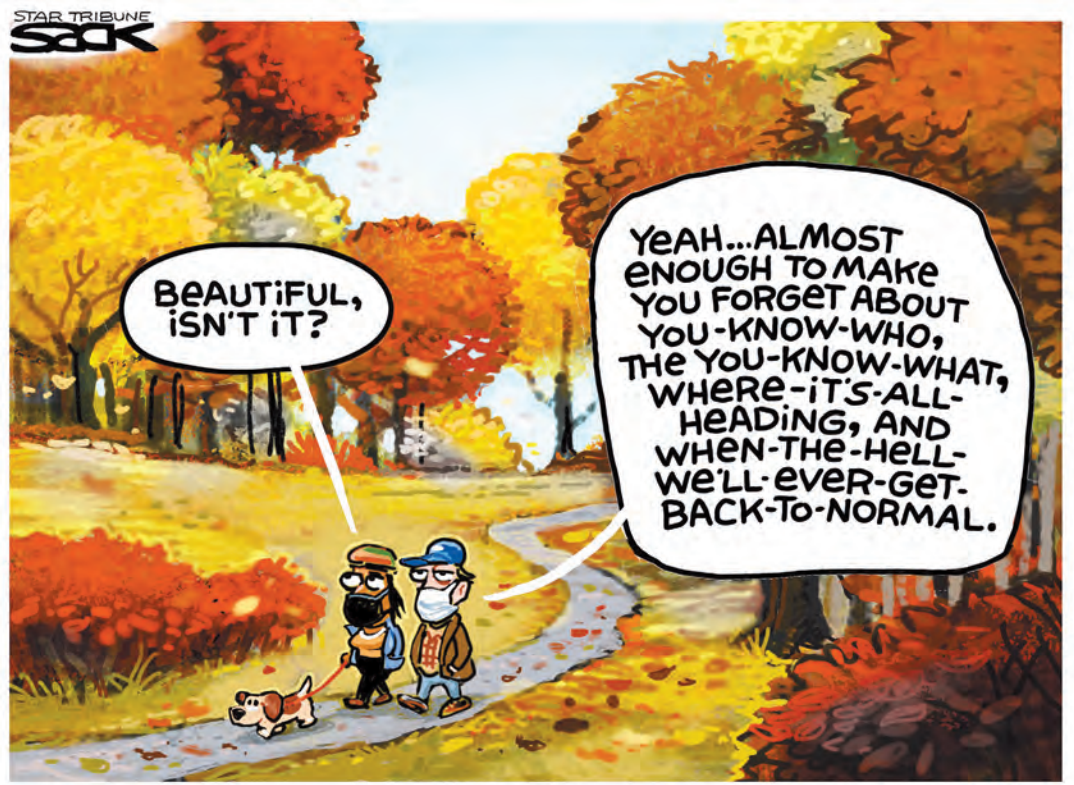
Running for the open District 3 seat are Brian Pickard and Anna Schroeder. The latter is an ICU nurse at St. Joseph in Tacoma. Schroeder is a thoughtful, intelligent candidate, but she would do well to get more seasoning by serving as a community volunteer and activist. Pickard is the better choice for voters. He has an extensive background working in the district as an educator and administrator, and is a proven consensus builder the school district sorely needs.

Jeffrey Wilson and Gregg Anderson are running for the District 4 seat. Both candidates lack a resume of community involvement, but Wilson promises that if elected, he would eschew the drama that's currently on display at board meetings and would earnestly work to provide students with the best education possible. Wilson should get the voters' nod.

Bob Smith is executive editor of Kitsap News Group. He also edits the Port Orchard Independent and can be contacted at rsmith@soundpublishing.com.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

By BOB SMITH



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pickard will provide leadership to board

I'm writing this letter in support of Brian Pickard for South Kitsap school board. I believe Brian will provide the leadership necessary to bring the SK school board back to focusing on students, setting policy and supporting our schools.

Brian is an extremely positive person and is genuinely concerned for the well-being of the students and employees of SKSD. He has spent his career creating a positive, family friendly atmosphere to develop the trust needed by strong leadership.

Brian has the experience and vision of the direction that SKSD should be moving. He has been an administrator, coach, active community member and supportive parent. Brian is well respected throughout the district and the SK community.

I encourage you to vote for Brian Pickard for South Kitsap school board ... I will.

John Callaghan
Retired teacher and coach
Port Orchard

Schroeder is best and only choice

I write today to encourage support for a candidate running for an elected position in our county.

It is beneficial for our citizens to elect the best person possible to act as our representative. The position discussed here is South Kitsap School District 3 school board seat. I am asking all of the SK voters who supported the other five outstanding candidates in the past primary election to once again use your vote in the November election.

If we put all of our votes to the best candidate, they will have a minimum of 55.74% of the vote and secure a win. Please vote for the best for District 3 board seat because we don't want more of the same that we have now.

Vote for the best candidate by giving that candidate the highest 'yes' vote count and that person is Anna Schroeder. Anna is the only and best choice for the SKSD District 3 seat.

Larry Mann
Port Orchard

Republicans are the clowns in the debt ceiling circus

It's way past political cliché, but that old "Popeye" comic strip where J. Wellington Wimpy promises to pay a short-order cook tomorrow for a hamburger he plans to eat today, is still the best way to describe Republican intransigence to extend the nation's debt ceiling.

In case you missed it, Republicans in the narrowly divided U.S. Senate voted to block the approval of new borrowing intended to pay for old debt that they're complicit in racking up. While entirely unsurprising, the GOP's united front on the debt ceiling is the most transparent kind of political cynicism.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and his fellow Republicans are pressing Senate Democrats to use the fast-track process known as reconciliation to raise the debt ceiling without GOP votes. That's the same process the Democrats want to use to bypass the GOP to pass the Democratic Biden administration's sprawling domestic agenda.

With the Senate deadlocked at 50-50, and a midterm election looming, Republicans want to make Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and his fellow Democrats look as bad as possible as they look to recapture control of the 100-member chamber.

"There is no chance, no chance the Republican conference will go out of our way to help Democrats conserve their time and energy, so they can resume ramming through partisan socialism as fast as possible," McConnell said as another attempt to raise the debt ceiling failed.

But, and this is an important but, the inescapable reality here is that McConnell and the GOP are responsible for the spending that's led to the current standoff, and they're working as hard as they can to evade responsibility for it. That's some galactic dissonance for a party that's tried to portray itself as a champion of fiscal responsibility. And even that doesn't hold up under even casual scrutiny.

These are the same Republicans, after all, who voted for the former Trump administration's deficit-exploding tax cut for the wealthy. And they are the same Republicans who voted for a two-year extension of the debt ceiling in 2019, according to Politico. And that monster bill boosted federal spending by hundreds of billions of dollars.

After the failed vote a few weeks back, Schumer correctly blamed Republicans, accusing them of "playing games with the full faith and credit of the United States," Olson reported.

"The Republican Party has solidified itself as the party of default, and it will be the American people who pay the price," Schumer added. Writing in the Washington Post, columnist Greg Sargent noted that Democrats could use the budget reconciliation process to get rid of the debt limit, first imposed during the administration of President



Woodrow Wilson as a way to fund the nation's entrance into World War I. Back then, the debt ceiling was capped at a relatively quaint \$15 billion, according to NPR.

There's a certain beauty to that plan. But it would require Democrats to do something they are supernaturally bad at doing: Actually using the power that comes with controlling the White House and both chambers of the legislative branch, and playing the kind of hardball it takes to get stuff done.

You can say this much for the Republicans: They might not run the White House or the U.S. House, but they routinely roll right over Democrats as if they do.

The Democrats should get rid of both the debt ceiling and the filibuster — thus ending the paralysis in an already broken U.S. Senate — and do the work the voters elected them to do. You can bet Republicans would do the same if they were in charge.

It's time to take the wheels off the GOP's clown car before it runs the nation permanently into the ditch.

An award-winning political journalist, John L. Micek is Editor-in-Chief of *The Pennsylvania Capital-Star* in Harrisburg, Pa. Email him at jmicek@penncapital-star.com and follow him on Twitter @ByJohnLMicek.

PORT ORCHARD INDEPENDENT

Covering the news of Port Orchard and South Kitsap since 1890.

KitsapDailyNews.com
Port Orchard, WA 98366

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Circulation 888-838-3000 **Display Advertising** 360-876-4414

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$70/year in-state mail delivery (not available within carrier or motor route delivery area); \$90/year out-of-state mail delivery. Periodicals postage paid at Seattle, WA.

POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to Port Orchard Independent, 911 Hildebrand Lane, Suite 202, Bainbridge Is., WA 98110.

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