

Opinion

Remembering John

A letter from:
Rick Melendez

All of us have lost a friend who not only served our country in the United States Marine Corps but our community as well when he was a Town Councilmember.

John Wyman, during the years I served in our Town Council, was very generous with his time by meeting with me on a regular basis.

Fountain Hills at that time was in a severe financial crisis, which caused us to create budget and staff reductions which unfortunately impacted families.

Councilmember Wyman always looked at the positive side of life and through his efforts and financial background, the Council and a great staff unit managed to maintain credibility with outside financial institutions.

We will miss you, John, and I know you are looking forward to being again with Barbara upstairs.

Shameful

A letter from:
Jerry Butler

It's shameful that some residents quickly say "no" to a property tax before looking into facts.

The fact is the Town is digging itself a deep "hole." Specifically, we are failing to properly maintain our investments; investments that previous residents made in our streets, parks and buildings, not to mention our most prized possession, the Fountain.

Very likely these investments were the reason many of us moved to Fountain Hills in the first place. Unfortunately, today's hole is being created by a lack of adequate revenues. So, if a property tax is not the answer, then what is? "No" is not a solution!

Back in 2008 the public sentiment was the Town did not have a revenue problem, but rather it had a spending problem and thus our leadership took the logical steps; they cut costs. In the last four years public safety service expenses increased nearly 23 percent, and cuts were made to street maintenance, community center operations, senior services, recreational programs and building maintenance, to name a few areas.

Those cuts achieved the temporary goal of matching expenses to revenue. But service cuts and deferred maintenance cannot be deferred forever; they only get more expensive. The cuts and other unavoidable increases in public safety expenses have generated a projected shortfall of \$6 million and the "hole" is getting deeper. What more should be cut?

Our Mayor was recently quoted as saying that the Town is at a "crucial point in its life." So, isn't it time that we join her, our Council, and the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission (SPAC) in identifying what needs to be done to make life better? Shouldn't the community's vision be about the future of Fountain Hills, rather than about the short-sightedness of a few individuals?

Every vote

A letter from:
Boe James

The recent Primary and Town Council election demonstrates, once again, that every vote is important.

Talk about close races. Here in Fountain Hills, Art Tolis won the Town Council seat by only eight votes. The Congressional District 5 race was no close in numbers, but percentage wise it was so close it required a recount.

For your vote to count: 1) You must be registered as a voter - deadline: Monday, Oct. 10; 2) You can vote early by mail ballot - if not on the Permanent Early Voter List you can request a ballot until Friday, Oct. 28th;

3) You can vote early in person at Town Hall from Monday, Oct. 17 through Thursday, Nov. 3; 4) You can vote in person on Election Day at your assigned precinct between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. If voting by provisional ballot in person at any other than your correct precinct, your vote will not be counted.

Being an informed voter is a part of your responsibility as a good citizen. As amply demonstrated in the CD 5 race court hearings and recount, ballot integrity is very important. You can play a role in helping ensure safe, efficient and accurate elections by working for the county at the polls on Election Day or by hand-counting and auditing ballots afterward.

Training is provided for these paid positions. Additional volunteers are needed to conduct the General Election on Nov. 8. For more information or to volunteer, contact County Elections at 602-506-1511 or visit the County Recorder's website.

On another subject: Special thanks to Bill Beamish and the exchange students who put on the beautiful and moving display at the Veterans Memorial on Patriots' Day. What a wonderful reminder of that horrific day. Thanks for your time and effort.

Vote Caputi

A letter from:
Carol Comito

A voter in LD23 expressed frustration that the current legislators, Sen. Kavanaugh and Reps. Ugenti-Rita and Lawrence, are not answering her question of how school funds are being restored, four months after the passage of Prop 123.

She says she's in line with the majority of Arizona voters who believe the state is not supporting the schools sufficiently, but her legislators are not addressing her concerns. This is a common complaint in LD23.

We have three far right Republicans who run unopposed every year, and do nothing to reach out to their constituents. Electing all three means having one voice in the government, who only represents a portion of our district. It's time to open things up to a fresh perspective: our problems can be solved by arrogance and blind partisanship.

We have the opportunity this November to elect a candidate who cares about education and about the people in our district who are not being heard. Tammy Caputi is a practical business owner who speaks clearly, understands the issues of our community and knows how to get things done. Let's make sure we have at least one legislator that can give us the honest, caring answers we're looking for!

Legalize?

A letter from:
Dr. Richard Rutkowski

The November ballot will include Proposition 205, an attempt to legalize recreational marijuana in Arizona. This effort is funded largely by out-of-state interests and others who stand to gain a financial windfall if it passes. That's not how they're trying to

sell it, but a little research will reveal this.

The proposal is dozens of pages long, with lots of details, so many voters won't take the time to read it and realize its impact. If we try to learn from others, the legalization of marijuana in Colorado has increased the number of emergency room visits, traffic accidents and child poisonings related to its use. Colorado now has the highest rate of teen marijuana use in the country. Oh, and it hasn't generated the amount of tax revenue which was promised.

In short, it's had news all around and creates legal problems and medical risks. Arizonans for Responsible Drug Policy (ardp.org) is an organization educating voters about Prop 205 and the reasons to vote "No." As with all election issues, it's critical to get objective information before making a decision.

On Tuesday, Sept. 27, Fountain Hills A2 Tea Party will provide another opportunity to get important information on Prop 205 and other issues.

Our special guest will be Maricopa County Attorney Bill Montgomery. Bill is well-versed about Prop 205 and will share reasons why to vote "No" on 205.

We meet at Fountain Hills Unified School District Learning Center, at the corner of Golden Eagle and Palisades, starting at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday evening, Sept. 27. All voters and interested parties are welcome to participate. Admission is free, but donations to cover expenses are gratefully accepted. Come, listen, learn, ask, bring a friend. We hope to see you there!

For more info, visit fhteaparty.us.

Science & Bible

A letter from:
Pastor Don Lawrence FHCCA

The many various Christian churches of the Fountain Hills Christian Ministerial Association are very pleased to unite again for a special program. We invite the community to join us for an insightful seminar titled, "Science and the Bible...What you are not being told."

Our special guest speaker is Dr. Rick Oliver. Dr. Oliver received his Ph.D. in Biology from the University of California.

Of course, there are many opinions, debate and even confusion concerning creation. Dr. Oliver will examine the Biblical creation from a scientific point of view.

The free seminar will be hosted at Christ's Church of Fountain Hills. It will be Saturday, Sept. 24, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Refreshments will be available during the break.

We would be pleased to have members of our Fountain Hills community join us for this stimulating seminar as we examine scientific evidence which supports the Biblical view of creation.

Exchange

A letter from:
Ed Kehle

On Tuesday, Sept. 13, the Fountain Hills Sister Cities organization hosted a social for local high school

students and parents who will be participating this year in 17 through exchanges with Poland and Germany. The site was provided by the Presbyterian Church, and Phil's Piling Station catered some great pizza pies.

Everyone had a pleasant evening, and we thank the church and Phil for their participation in the event.

Kaepernick

A letter from:
Bill Chambers

Mr. Kaepernick: The American flag is a symbol for the ideals that guide this country to greatness. Many of those ideals are contained in the Constitution and are expressed as rights. One is the right to freedom of speech. Another is the right to equal treatment under the law. These and others are represented by the flag.

By disrespecting the flag, you disrespect the very ideals that allow your actions and guide this country to greatness.

Act of kindness

A letter from:
Joel Winterton

Denise Smith, the owner of Quality Consignment in town, (opposite the closed-down restaurant Monroes) has two floors of furniture, lighting, accessories and dishware immediately available for customers at very reasonable prices.

While I was shopping there for furniture for my dad's move into the new MorningStar facility, we struck up a conversation about my needs and purpose for the furniture. It turns out that Denise just lost her father, and was willing to give me her father's bed, medical supplies such as toilet rail, shower seat, etc. She wanted it to go to someone as a gift, to honor her father.

We are blessed by her kindness as we needed a bed, and when the time comes I plan to pass on these items to pass the blessing forward. We have many wonderful people who live in Fountain Hills, and here is one more wonderful local store owner you need to meet!

Sound familiar?

A letter from:
Bill Luzinski

"He's dangerously ignorant about international affairs. The Russian leaders will walk all over him." "He has no filter - doesn't think before he speaks." "He used to be pro choice. Now, suddenly, he's pro life?" "That can't be his real hair!"

"He's a loose cannon. No one wants his finger on the nuclear button."

"His opponent has the experience and political savvy to be president. He does not."

"He's just not presidential." "The military will never accept him as Commander-In-Chief. He's not smart enough."

"The GOP doesn't want him to be the head of the party. He could never reach across the aisle to get anything done."

"Most Republican voters will just stay home rather than go out and vote for

Our viewpoint Drug trends

It sounds like illicit drug use in Fountain Hills is on the decline, but that fantastic news should not be misinterpreted.

According to a report from Maricopa County Sheriff's Office Capt. Dave Letourneau at a recent Town Council meeting, calls pertaining to drug use in Fountain Hills have dropped off in recent years. In 2012, there were 68 calls with drug connections, according to Letourneau. In 2015, that number dropped by exactly half to 34. Even better, at 21 calls so far in 2016, it looks like the downward trend may continue by the time we hit 2017.

That's great to hear, but Fountain Hills didn't get here without a lot of effort, and the positive trends won't continue if that same work does not continue moving forward.

Keeping a community drug-free is a genuine group effort, requiring commitment from all sectors. Over the past half-decade or so, Fountain Hills has redoubled its efforts to drive home the dangers of drug use, and stats like these show that all of that effort is paying off.

The Fountain Hills Coalition and its Safe Homes Network can enjoy some of the credit, with folks coming together from the town, schools, community, law enforcement, Fort McDowell, churches and more to keep drugs and alcohol out of the hands of local youth.

Speaking of Letourneau and the rest of Fountain Hills law enforcement, extra effort on their part - including the permanent prescription drug drop-off box at Town Hall and the implementation of the anonymous Text-A-Tip service - has had a tremendous impact.

At the schools, programs like Teen AA, the Above That Club and more have helped remind local youngsters about the dangers of illegal substances, as well as the fact that there are places to turn if the need for help arises.

The figures reported by Letourneau prove that these efforts, and many others, are actually getting results. But if we want to see those numbers continue to inch downward, the work must continue. This isn't an area where a community should be willing to settle for "good enough."

him."

"He says 'Let's Make America Great Again.' How dare he say we aren't still great."

"He's threatening to upend our treaties and relationships with our allies by demanding that they pay for their own defense!"

"He's racist, xenophobic, and fuels the fires of hatred!"

"The rising turnout of his voters are not loyal Republicans!"

"The fact that he could be deemed a serious candidate for president is a shame and embarrassment for the country."

"He shoots from the hip...He's over his head...What are his solutions?"

"Voters want to follow some authority figure, a leader who can take charge with authority; return a sense of discipline to our government and manifest the willpower needed to get this country back on track. Or at least a leader from outside Washington."

Sound familiar? You've heard this about Donald Trump, right?

Try Again. All this was said of Ronald Reagan in 1976 and 1980. Reagan turned out to be arguably one of the greatest presidents of the 20th Century.

The 'D' word

A letter from:
Gary Zuanetti

Looks like the "D" word, as in Democrat, is an obsession if not an addiction for Obama and his administration. How about deny, delay, deceive, distort, disguise, deflect and two of his favorites, dictate and dependence.

Slippery Hillary has mastered them all, though not as elegantly as Obama, and jumped in with a few of her own, as in delete, destroy, damage distrust, delusional, but

most, of all she's desperate and dangerous.

Her supporters are also addicted to the "D" word but, rather than put them in a basket, let's be humane about it and put them in a huge, gigantic, insulated bubble because that's where they are used to living anyway. That would be a lot more comfortable than a basket and maybe we even have room for Slippery Hillary and Obama and Lynch the ultimate Dem defenders.

Twisted facts

A letter from:
Dorothy Wolowick

Republican Party was founded in 1854, their creed was "slavery is violation of rights of man," and proved it.

First Republican president was Abraham Lincoln, author of Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves to Democrats' horror. Congressional Republicans backed the 13th Amendment banning slavery while 63 percent of Democrat Senators and 78 percent Democrat House voted against.

The 14th Amendment guaranteeing due process of law to blacks and all Americans, all Congressional Democrats voted against it. The 15th amendment guaranteeing blacks to vote, again all Democrats voted no.

President Dwight Eisenhower (R) championed the Civil Rights Act of 1957, supported by Republicans, filibustered by Democrats in Senate.

Under President Woodrow Wilson (D) in 1913, re-segregated by firing blacks who worked for any federal agency and created Ku Klux Klan (KKK) after Confederacy defeat in Civil War.

A total of 3,446 black

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The Times wants to hear from its readers and encourages letters to the editor. All letters must be no more than 300 words. It is preferred that they be typewritten and submitted by email. They must include a name, address and telephone number for verification. All letters are subject to editing. Those that are judged as personal attacks or complaints about neighbors, businesses, or other individuals will not be considered. No person may submit more than two letters or guest cartoons for publication during a calendar month. Two submissions in the same issue will not be published.

Letters deadline noon Monday

All letters must be submitted by noon on Monday to be considered for publication in that week's edition. It is preferred they be emailed to ryan@fhtimes.com. They also can be dropped off at The Times office, 16508 E. Laveen Blvd., Suite 100, P.O. Box 17869, Fountain Hills, AZ 85268-7869 or faxed to 480-837-1951.

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