

NEXT KCDW MEETING JAN. 27TH: Yacht Club Broiler – No host lunch – 11:30 am; Meeting – 12:30 pm. The Speaker will be Myra Battin who is the Coordinator of the Bremerton Backpack Brigade Program. NO RSVP required.

As I was writing this article, I kept thinking about Lucy Johnson, who passed away shortly before Christmas. She was my main editor. Previously, I always felt a degree of confidence in what I wrote, because I knew that if I went too far afield of my topic, or wasn't making any sense, she would catch it. She was my safety net and at times like this I miss her even more.

WE ARE BETTER THAN TRUMP MAKES US LOOK

by Jo Fox Burr

Because I didn't know what else to do on 9/11, I went to work, only to be sent home shortly after arriving. As I returned to the parking lot, I passed someone sitting sideways in a car with the door open, who upon hearing me ducked. Of course this only made me look. What I saw was a very frightened woman wearing a hijab. Of all the awful things that happened that day, the memory of this woman still resonates strongly with me. What she made me realize was that as bad a day as it was for me, it was a much worse day for her. I'm glad to remember that my immediate instinct was to smile at her.

I worked for the UW, Jackson School of International Studies then. Our Director, an Egyptian historian, decided to offer a public forum series entitled "Why do they hate us?" The response was so great the venue kept having to be changed to allow for larger and larger audiences. While some exhibited knee-jerk hatred of Muslims as a result of 9/11, it always made me feel good to know that in Seattle there were so many others who just wanted to understand why this happened. Recently, in Seattle there was a 16-year-old Muslim boy who fell off a roof and died. The speculation is that this death was the result of a hate crime. As heinous a crime as this may have been, it was good to read that his family has been inundated with sympathetic and supporting messages.

Trump may be inciting hatred towards Muslims, but it pleases me to know that many have taken it upon themselves to demonstrate opposition to this pandering. Before Christmas, about 80 people rallied in Seattle to show support for the Muslim-American community. While Trump draws crowds to hear him ramble like a lunatic, he is also drawing crowds outside his events protesting the hatred he spews. Should he come to Seattle, I hope many of us would join such a crowd. Recently I asked a Republican friend who he supported for President. He was quick to say he could never vote for Trump. He also said there was no one in the GOP field he could support. I think part of his disgust with the field is that not one of them is able to handle Trump effectively.

Meanwhile our Democratic Candidates for President are demonstrating real class on this issue. Martin O'Malley attended a mosque to show his support of the Muslim-American community. Hillary Clinton was an hour late for a rally because she extended a discussion she had with a group of Muslim-Americans. As far as I know, no major publicity was made of this. Sometimes it is just good to know a candidate is taking time to listen. Then there is Bernie Sanders who embraced a young Muslim woman at the podium while acknowledging that as a Jew he was well aware of the dangers of racism.

As for the Muslim-American community itself, one of the reasons I've heard we are less susceptible to terror attacks such as the massive ones happening in France and England is that we have generally done a better job of assimilating Muslims into our society. Aside from the inhumanity of it, allowing Trump to change this dynamic clearly only endangers us. There is a study done by Duke University which has found that more terrorism plots were brought to the attention of authorities by members of the Muslim-American community than through any other means. After all, this is their homeland as well. This is where they live and they don't want to see harm come to it. On top of that, they fully understand

that should any more Islamic inspired terrorist attacks happen, they will suffer two fold compared to what the rest of the non-Muslim community will suffer.

The whole problem with the 'eye for an eye' philosophy is that it perpetuates unending conflict. We cannot let Trump drag us into this kind of eternal chaos. It seems clear to me that the most effective antidote to Trump engendered hatred of Muslims, is to embrace them, to take time to listen to them, and to let the world know that we Americans do not all hate them.

OTHER UPCOMING DEMOCRATIC MEETINGS AND EVENTS: (*GM designates a general membership meeting)

Kitsap Co. Dem. Central Com: GM* Jan 19th (Tuesday); 6:30 pm Desserts; 7 pm meeting; Eagles Nest

23rd Leg. District Democrats: GM* Jan 26th (Tuesday); 6:30 pm social time; 7 pm meeting; Poulsbo Library

26th Leg. District Democrats: GM* Feb 4th (Thursday); 7-9 pm; Kitsap Rm, Givens Ctr 1026 Sidney Rd, Port Orchard

35th Leg. District Democrats: GM* TBA. Check <http://35thdemocrats.org/calendar/> [1] for more information on this.

"When politicians insult Muslims, when a mosque is vandalized, or a kid bullied, that doesn't make us safer...It diminishes us in the eyes of the world. It makes it harder to achieve our goals. And it betrays who we are as a country." - President Barack Obama, State of the Union - 2016

DON'T FORGET, THAT IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE BAKELESS BAKE SALE!!!

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Links

[1] <http://35thdemocrats.org/calendar/>