

## Candidate

Scott Kelley is a public information officer for the Nevada Department of Corrections and the incumbent candidate for Washoe County School Board District A, running against 18-year-old Jack Heinemann. (See "New school," A&C, Nov. 28.)

### District A is not your first. You were District E, too, for years.

I was the representative for District E from 2009 to 2012. And, at that time, the school board was very effective and very efficient. In fact, we won national awards for helping steer the school district through the recession—and avoiding teacher layoffs and school closures, while still seeing increases in our graduation rates and student test scores. ... I was not on the school board when the board fired and rehired Pedro Martinez, which really hurt the school board's relationship with the community. It was partly for that reason that I decided I wanted to run for reelection.

### You returned due to the turmoil?

Yes, yep.

### What's your interest in continuing to serve District A?

Let's consider school overcrowding. That was a big issue when I took office in 2017. And since then, I've pushed for the expansion of Damonte Ranch High School, the 2019 opening of Poulakidas Elementary School and the 2020 opening of Herz Middle School, all of which is relieving



and will continue to relieve overcrowding. And I also made sure all of my district schools received revitalization and safety upgrades. ... I'm seeking reelection because I want to make sure southern Reno receives another elementary school. ... Something that's district-wide is the budget. So, in 2019, the school board passed a structurally balanced budget—the first time that WCSD had done that since the Great Recession in 2008. This year's budget—it included a three percent raise for teachers and staff. It increased funding for special education. It covered the operating costs of all of our new schools, and it did not increase classroom sizes. I want to run for reelection because I have really extensive budgeting experience that's conservative and fiscally responsible.

### What do you make of having such a young opponent?

Well, you know, I understand his desire

to serve the public. I joined the U.S. Army right out of high school, and I served as a paratrooper, a Nevada Guardsman for almost 11 years. And most of my missions were public service. They were humanitarian missions in Haiti, peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and Kosovo.

... When I returned to Reno after my honorable discharge, I started serving on citizen advisory boards for the Regional Transportation Commission, the City of Reno and Washoe County. So, like him, I understand. He loves public service, and I love public service and helping others.

### Anything else you'd like to say?

It's true that Nevada ranks last in a lot of academic metrics, but I want the citizens to know that Washoe places in the top 20 or 25 percentile compared to other similarly sized districts. And our staff works really hard to educate all of our students. Many of our students come from a background of poverty or English as a second language, but our staff finds ways to help them overcome those barriers and get a good education. ... I'm also proud of Washoe County's parents for advocating for their students at board meetings, ... at the legislature. ... And then, I think, for reelection, it's important ... to talk about some of the things I'd want to do in the future. ... I want to make sure that our next superintendent really knows and really understands the challenges facing WCSD. And I want to empower him or her to expand on what's working and to really look critically at what isn't working. □

## NOTES FROM THE NEON BABYLON

BY BRUCE VAN DYKE

## Remember when?

One of the many ironies that has bloomed here in the Age of Orange is that those of us who used to be casually slandered by Republicans in the '70s and '80s as "commie pinko fags" and totally degenerate flagburners and so forth have now seen our position on the political spectrum undergo a most unexpected 180. Now, it's us CPFs who are—lo and behold—Defenders of The Red White And Blue! I mean ... whaaaaaa? That's exactly what has transpired. It's us CPFs who are the friggin' patriots now standing up for American Democracy (of all things!) in the face of relentless pressure placed upon various quasi-sacred institutions by Big Boss Vlad and his raving rabble of Dondonian lickspittles. I mean, Jesus, what would St. Ronnie Raygun say at the spectacle of all these ReTrumplicans in Washington blowing every Russian they can unzip?

What about gnarly old John McCain, T-Rex of the Senate? Would he approve of all this salacious Soviet schlong schlurping?

Oh, yes, you betcha I snatched up a copy of *A Warning*, the latest yummy blast of Trump Porn for us twitching members of the TDSWH club (Trump Derangement Syndrome—Woo Hoo!). After reading the first half of the book, it appears this Trump fellow is a bit of a poopstain. And not much of a reader!

I was watching a flick recently that touched upon that whole thing in the '60s where we were gonna Love Everybody. Ah, yes, in the Age of Aquarius, we would just go ahead, get it over with, and Love Everybody (OK, maybe not that scruffy dude snorfling around in the dumpster). Well, 50 years later, it's obvious—we shot

too high on that one—way too high. If we had just toned it down a little, to where the plan would have been to *Like* everybody? Might've helped. You know, let's get real here. Liking Everybody would have been, in retrospect, just fine. Much more do-able. And a real good start! Hell, just *tolerating* everybody. Nothing wrong with that. Hindsight!

One of the truly great rock American rock bands was Little Feat. Their records from the '70s, often overlooked, often unremembered, remain extremely terrific. Paul Barrere, the second guitarist in the band, recently passed away at age 71, due to liver cancer. Yes, I'm sure he gave his liver some serious exercise! So in October, he put on his Sailin' Shoes ... and moseyed on outta here. Adios, amigo. □



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