

THE OPEN FORUM



Here 4 the Kids, a group of mostly moms, staged a sit-in asking for an executive order to ban guns in Colorado on June 5 in Denver. Over a thousand people took part in the rally outside the Colorado State Capitol. RJ SANGOSTI — THE DENVER POST

Nothing wrong to dream of a world without guns

Re: “Capitol protest was feckless and bizarrely racialized,” June 11 commentary

Krista Kafer’s essay on the recent capitol protest was not helpful.

While promoting the argument that “guns don’t kill people, people kill people,” she doesn’t acknowledge that gun enthusiasts have opposed red flag laws, proposals to close background check loopholes and safe gun storage laws that would help keep guns away from those people whose possession of guns places the public in danger: criminals, the mentally ill and youth.

She criticizes the three-day waiting period to purchase guns — which provides a cooling-off period and an opportunity to allow background checks to be completed. She thinks raising the minimum age for obtaining a firearm — which would ensure that mature individuals are

making decisions on the proper and safe use of deadly weapons — is bad. She gives a thumbs-down to stopping the proliferation of “build-your-own” gun kits that allow dangerous people to evade firearms restrictions, and she thinks it wrong to allow victims to sue gun manufacturers and dealers when they recklessly allow guns to illegally flow to dangerous people through straw purchases or knowingly produce guns that are unnecessarily dangerous.

The fact that the protesters were white, when it is people of color who are disproportionately responsible for and victims of violent assaults with firearms, does not make the protest racist.

Finally, while it obviously would be unconstitutional to ban all firearms, there is nothing wrong with people peacefully advocating for a new world without guns to keep our children safe.

— *Charles Silverman, Denver*

Krista Kafer hit the nail on the head. Politicians want to show they are doing something about perceived gun violence, but they choose not to legislate against those who commit such violence. So, they legislate against the criminals’ weapons. Then they scratch their collective rear ends when their anti-weapons legislation changes nothing. Consider the contradiction of the change in age for gun purchase:

One can work for the government at age 17 by joining the army. The government sends one to camp to sharpen one’s skills. The government issues an automatic weapon and teaches one how to use it to kill people. The government sends one somewhere in the world and orders one to kill people in the name of the government. The more one kills, the more rewards one gets, including medals to pin on one’s clothes.

One fulfills their two-year commitment to the government and returns home to find the crime rate has risen significantly. For protection, one believes purchasing a firearm is appropriate. At the gun store, one is told they cannot legally purchase a firearm for protection because they are too young. Under age 21, killing for the government is acceptable, but protecting oneself is not.

— *Llewellyn Haden, Denver*

People with guns kill people. People without guns have a lot harder time killing people. Voters in Colorado have been taking their thoughts and prayers to the ballot box and will continue to do so because common-sense gun control laws save lives.

— *Cindy Robertson, Denver*

The problem is the person. Krista Kafer’s rant against the Here 4 the Kids gun reform protest is an unconscionable defense of guns and exemplifies her ideology. She conflates guns and their inherent dangers with vehicles, food, furniture, etc. This view lacks discernment and attempts to create a false equivalency as though guns are as harmless as French fries. This is not funny.

To call a firearm an inanimate object is an over-simplification and willfully ignores its deadly potential, lethal portability and real-world agency. The post-Heller view of the Second Amendment is a grave problem for society. Since the Heller opinion was handed down by the Supreme Court in 2008, guns and gun deaths have surged in tandem. The Heller opinion ignores the original intent of the preservation of the Militia, while the phrase “to bear arms” is an antiquated military reference to military involvement or action, not the right to self-protection.

The labeling of gun owners as “law-abiding” is somehow an attempt to sanctify them and confer upon them a special status. We are all law-abiding. Legislation enacted this year by Colorado is also there to protect “law-abiding” gun owners from gun violence and making poor, deadly decisions. Noticeably absent is a lack of ideas for gun safety unless you consider returning fire as a gun safety tactic. Looking for the root causes of gun violence and focusing on the family has its merits but somehow implies we need to fix people to make it safer for guns. So please do something meaningful to decrease the homicide rate, stop protecting guns, protect people and support gun reform.

— *Leonard Juliano, Arvada*

LGBTQ+ community needs support of allies

Re: “We’re going back in time on LGBTQ+ equality,” June 11 commentary

Thanks again, Denver Post, for publishing Danny Westneat’s piece on the repeat of the attacks on LGBTQ+ persons, just like in the 1980s and ’90s. Those of us who lived through that era recall hate taking the forefront of Colorado’s politics with the passage of Amendment 2. Such a dark time allowed the politics of fear to control the narrative. Colorado was blacklisted by many organizations for years, even after Amendment 2 was overturned.

The hate described in Sammamish, Wash., is happening around the country. Why? Fear. Fear of the unknown, fear of change, fear of loss of control. Even those who espouse doctrines that teach love and tolerance engage in the vilest of remarks, even acts of violence toward easy targets. All now directed, again, at LGBTQ+ persons.

We are easy to attack. We are a small minority that is insufficient to form a majority voting block. Without enough power to effect change, we rely on the kindness, tolerance and respect of others, our allies. Yet we face vitriol daily, such as in the small Washington community — just for existing. Equal rights for everyone does not mean taking away rights from anyone. No person should have to fight for the right to merely exist. But fear drives folks to listen to false narratives. Fear drives normally kind people to abandon decency in order to dominate minorities. This illusion of control salves their angst over their fear of the unknown. Yes, we have a ton of work to do. “We” means everyone. To tolerate, to respect, to show our children that we practice what we preach. Then, we will have built a world for everyone to live within.

— *Jamie Buechler, Westminster*

What all is on the Trump docket?

Donald Trump uses the tired old refrain

“witch hunt” when whining about all of the investigations into his many alleged crimes.

Instead of “witch hunt,” the phrase should be “which” hunt. As in, which hunt (into his alleged wrongdoings) will eventually hold him accountable?

— *JM Jesse, Glenwood Springs*

It’s not Donald Trump on trial. It’s democracy on trial.

— *David L Stevenson*

Bring back the SROs to Denver schools

Re: “Denver school safety: Board could revisit police ban,” June 3 news story

I am a Denver native and a product of the city’s K-12 schools. I taught middle school science at an alternative high school for a total of 35 years. This school board is not listening ... not listening ... not listening to anything or anybody other than their own egos. All schools need at least one School Resource Officer (SRO) per building unless we are talking about Denver East and then the logical thing is to have two of them.

Auon’tai Anderson has a personal problem with SROs; it was his one shining moment when he wrongly convinced intelligent people to remove the officers from the buildings in the first place.

Who wants SROs? Just students, parents, teachers, staff, and the DPD — that’s all. The DPS Board is not listening! Young people who are a danger to themselves and others should attend school virtually and they can have mental health support at the Emily Griffith Center. All students attended virtually during COVID so that is an easy fix.

Who wants students who are a danger to themselves and others to stay off school campuses? Just students, parents, teachers, staff, and the DPD — that’s all. The DPS Board is not listening.

I don’t live in Denver but have two grandchildren who attend school in Denver. I will donate \$1,000 to the cause to recall this school board before any more of our students or staff are injured or killed.

— *Christina Kauffman, Greeley*

Parking violators should pay

Re: “Lawmakers say firms flout new law,” June 4 news story

Oops, you didn’t get away with it; now you have to pay. Next time save yourself from tow fees by not violating ordinances or someone else’s property. Not parking in someone else’s assigned spot. Not parking in spaces reserved for the disabled.

You know, follow rules like everyone else in the city who doesn't park illegally and force someone to call the tow company to remove your darn vehicle from where it doesn't belong.

— *Ruthann Fischer, Boulder*