

Focus on the Issues

It's difficult to know when to respond to accusations and when not to. Not responding can be interpreted as being guilty. Responding can be like throwing gas onto an already flaming fire.



Patti Stokes
Publisher/Editor

At the risk of taking the bait, I feel the need to very briefly respond to comments that Mr. Robert Flowers made at the Summerfield Town Council meeting on Oct. 9. During the period allocated for public comments, Mr. Flowers used his time to berate me personally and this newspaper. Too bad that his time in the spotlight, and in the presence of reporters recording his comments, couldn't have been spent sharing visions of what his wife, a candidate for town council, hopes to accomplish if elected, and how she hopes to accomplish these goals.

Instead, Mr. Flowers used his speaking time at the last public meeting before the Nov. 6 election to recount his version

of a conversation he and I had almost two years ago in which he told me about an anonymous phone call he had received. According to his account, the anonymous caller was angry and hateful; for reasons I don't understand, it's been insinuated that I am somehow connected, and perhaps even responsible for this caller. For the record, I am neither.

I do not condone, encourage or associate with anyone who would make a phone call of the sort that Mr. Flowers described. Mr. Flowers has absolutely no evidence of any connection between the caller and myself – for good reason – because there isn't any. To privately make this connection is uncalled for; to publicly do so is unacceptable. The public will wisely question his version of the conversation he and I had almost two years ago, as well as why he used his speaking time at a public council meeting to bring this up one month before the election.

Regardless of your opinion about Mr. Flowers' version of this long-ago conversation between us, with Election Day approaching, the focus of Summerfield citizens should not be on me, or on the Northwest Observer. We do

not govern, we do not establish policy and we are not the ones who ask to make decisions on your behalf.

If any candidate, or spouse of a candidate, chooses to publicly attack an individual, or group of individuals in the weeks before the election, I would question their motives, their vision and their ability to conduct themselves professionally, diplomatically and democratically. There are many issues to be addressed in our local towns; the candidate who doesn't focus on the critical issues is not only showing poor judgment, but missing an opportunity to educate us on what they want for their town and how they plan to represent us.

Vision? Goals? Detailed plan of action? I'm all ears. Tell me what you're about, put some meat to it and you may get my vote. Accusations, finger pointing, misplaced anger? We've had enough of that to last a lifetime.