

ASPEN TIMES

WEEKLY

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Letters to the editor may be published in our newspaper and on our Web site — or by any other electronic means — at the discretion of the editor.

Typed or e-mailed letters are strongly preferred. Faxed or hand-written letters may be accepted or rejected at the editor's sole discretion.

All letters must be signed and must include an address and phone number for the author (for verification, not for publication).

Because space is limited, only letters less than 500 words long will be published.

EDITORIAL

A tip of the hat to hardworking philanthropists

Look out your window, Aspenites.

Chances are it's stunningly beautiful out. Spring is in full swing, the snow's melting, the bushes are budding and the grass is up and green. The change of seasons in the Roaring Fork Valley is a source of joy and wonder.

Every Aspenite knows this. Most of us moved here for the air, the sky, the views, the mountains. But there's a drawback to this Rocky Mountain bliss. We all know at least one Aspenite who lives in a state of arrested development, someone who's been blissed out for too many years skiing powder and worshipping the sun, who's all but forgotten about the world outside.

That's why the people on our cover this week, Susie and Joe Krabacher, are doubly impressive.

A successful Aspen couple, Joe and Susie have almost everything a person could want. How easy it would be for the Krabachers to rest on their laurels, buy a big house and a big car and live the Aspen dream.

To some degree, they do live this way. Most of us do.

It's what the Krabachers do with the

rest of their time that makes them an inspiration. From Aspen, the glitziest of mountain resorts, they run a foundation dedicated to easing the suffering and saving the lives of children in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere — Haiti. Today, there are some 2,000 children in their indirect care, receiving food, shelter, medical care or education in one of the Krabachers' schools or orphanages.

Lest anyone assume that the Krabachers are absentee benefactors, read the story and take a look at the photos.

Susie, especially, is a hands-on angel of mercy who doesn't shy away from the streets, slums and even morgues of that destitute, underdeveloped country.

The Krabachers' dedication is more than admirable. It's heroic — especially coming from a well-insulated Shangri-La like Aspen.

It's all too easy to forget that Aspen is part of a much larger and much harder world. Susie and Joe Krabacher show that we can all be active, caring, committed participants — not just here, but anywhere.

LETTERS

Signs are cheaper

Dear Editor:

(This letter was originally addressed to the Aspen City Council.)

I was not able to attend [Monday] night's council meeting, as I am in a class at CMC in Glenwood Springs. However, I do want you to hear my thoughts on the issue of moving the visitors center to the Main Street location under consideration at this time.

I am well aware of the underutilization of the visitors center through conversations with ACRA board members that have served on my World Cup Press Room committee. The main theme has always been that tourists have a difficult time finding their way to our visitors center.

I am, however, perplexed that the City Council wants to remedy that situation so quickly and at great expense to the public, without first attempting to see if a low-cost fix might just be the solution we need.

I am talking about adding visible signage at both entrances to Aspen, which will better guide tourists to a visitors center that is more than adequate to serve our needs. How much could that cost, perhaps \$1,000?

Even if the cost ends up being 10 times that amount wouldn't we, the public, be better served than by having council rushing to spend \$1 million of taxpayers' money relocating this facility to a potentially troubling location?

I urge you to take some more time and see if additional signs can make the facility that we have become a more useful site to the tourists we are trying to attract. I really don't think the community wants to see RVs clogging up a busy Main Street intersection, while they attempt to run inside for information that can be had at leisure, and with adequate parking, at our current site.

Sue Geist
Aspen

Plenty of guilt to go around

Dear Editor:

Mayor Klanderud and her citizen group will hopefully be thoughtful in their deliberations on our relationship with Bariloche.

A few points to consider:

- The key question is the character of Bariloche today — not more than half a century ago. Is this a democratic city that rejects the appalling and criminal behavior of its own citizens and those of other nations in the past?
- If we are to single out Bariloche for its past behavior, then what about Chamonix? Can we be certain that no members of the Mallise (the French Gestapo in Vichy, France, that rounded up and murdered Jews) were welcomed there?

- Or Garmisch — can we be certain that no Nazis were ever accepted or harbored in this German city?

- Or Davos — are we confident that no Swiss bankers there were ever involved in the expropriation of Jewish assets?
- Or Shimukappu — is it certain that no perpetrators of the Bataan Death March or the Rape of Nanking ever found welcome in this Japanese city?

It seems the best course in the Sister Cities program is to use the relationship to advance and foster our own ideals of democracy and tolerance. That is hardly accomplished by breaking off relationships based on long past behavior — and if we are to use that standard then we will likely find no Sister Cities at all, since there is plenty of historical guilt to go around.

James DeFrancia
Aspen

Thanks, voters

Dear Editor:

At this time I would like to thank the Basalt voters. Thank you to all my family, friends and neighbors who gave me encouragement and support during my campaign. The results of this election

prove that community, neighbors, friends and family are important. Basalt is about people working together for the good of the whole.

In order to represent you, it is important to share your ideas and concerns with me, fellow councilors, or town staff. Communication is essential to the success of any representative in government.

Thank you for the opportunity to build upon improvements and projects which have been started and expand on the successes that make Basalt the best place to live.

Leroy Duroux
Basalt

Support for Dr. Gerson

Dear Editor:

You haven't heard from me in four years, but I must raise my voice and show my support for Dr. and Mrs. Gordon Gerson as so few of my friends did for me and my husband when we were pilloried in the Aspen papers.

Aspen should thank its lucky stars for having such a fine doctor and his family in our community. We credit Dr. Gerson with saving my husband's life. I have had many good conversations with this couple and have entertained them in our home.

I believe there are people at AVH who have been threatened by the Gersons' serious approach to medicine and the concept of holding employees responsible for their actions. It's a new concept for AVH and anyone who has experience out there knows what I am talking about — lost records, lost tests and a lot of excuses.

I am shocked and disappointed that the best this town can do after two days of front-page stories telling of silly charges and nonsense, that only two letters of support in one paper have been printed.

"Evil flourishes when good people do nothing."

Gail Stanger
Aspen