



Looking Outward

Dan Glode
Columnist

Tighten access to handguns

"We lose eight children and teenagers to gun violence every day. If a mysterious virus suddenly started killing eight of our children every day, America would mobilize teams of doctors and public-health officials. We would move heaven and earth until we found a way to protect our children. But not with gun violence."

— Elizabeth Warren, *A Fighting Chance*

Gun violence has become a sad fact of American life. Even here in Sisters the pain intrudes in its own way, bringing a national crisis to this small town. Noah Jacob Harpham, a Sisters High grad (class of 2000) died after exchanging gunfire with police. He left three dead in Colorado Springs. It seems everyone here who knew him was shocked and surprised at what had happened. The national tragedy of gun violence has hit home like a terrible thunder-clap.

I am old enough to remember two names burned in the collective memory of my generation: Charles Joseph Whitman and Richard Speck. Whitman climbed a tower in Austin and shot and killed 16 people in August of 1966. Just prior to that tragic incident Richard Speck killed eight nurses in Chicago. What a summer. Those two horrible mass killings remained isolated in their own way, and at one time they were

reminders of those rare situations when senseless violence comes to the fore. Sadly, the uniqueness of those horrible, unthinkable events has withered as we have entered another level of Dante's hell in recent years.

Whether you like Elizabeth Warren or not, you have to agree with the above quote. Eight kids a week die in gun violence. Even more tragic is there is one toddler per week involved in a shooting. They pick up a loaded gun and shoot themselves or another. The list of places where mass shootings occur get lost in our memory as the number of locations multiply: Newtown, Roseburg, Columbine, Fort Hood... The list seems sadly geometric in its explosion, and yet the problem persists. We have had 133 mass shootings from 2000 to 2014. This number far exceeds those of any developed country. Community leaders and politicians parade in front of the cameras talking of senseless tragedies and the need for mental-health services. They vaguely talk of some sort of gun control and the need for change. The intensity of the moment fades and we are jolted to the present by another mass shooting. In between incidents, nothing happens.

We now have almost one gun for every man, woman and child in this country, and handguns are replacing hunting firearms as the weapons of choice. Let me be clear: there is only one purpose for a handgun, i.e. to kill another person.

What can we do? Nothing is going to remove the threat completely, but we can reduce the risk. I suggest the following:

- Restrict the availability of handguns so those who should not have them do not. Easier said than done. Guns all around do make a difference. I served as district attorney for Lincoln County for 12 years, and I can say with certainty that a handgun easily converts a dangerous situation into a deadly one.

We need to tighten controls regarding selling and trading and obtaining of handguns. It's too easy to get one. We also need to look with a finer focus on those with mental issues who obtain weapons.

- Enforce existing laws and give authorities the means they need to make sure only those obeying the existing gun laws may have them. For example, there are thousands of felons in California owning handguns but there are not enough parole officers and others needed to enforce existing laws. Fully support enforcement.

- Provide mental-health services to those who need them, and particularly to children. Many kids are identified as having issues which can lead to violence, but there are virtually no services offered to them. Early intervention is the key! The same is true of adults who are acting in ways displaying a propensity to violence or other mental-health issues. Meaningful mental-health services for the entire population are expensive — but not nearly as expensive as not offering these services.

- Begin changing the gun culture in this country. Our founding fathers would roll over in their graves if they saw how the Second Amendment has been bastardized, mostly for profit. They were looking at an armed militia when needed — not semi-automatic weapons, extended magazines, assault rifles and other horribly lethal weapons in the hands of everyone.

When the National Rifle Association (NRA) was founded in 1871 it was an organization primarily focusing on sportsmanship and marksmanship. Up until the 1970s the NRA supported a great deal of gun-control legislation, including the Gun Control Act of 1968. Then things began to change in the 1970s and the organization morphed into the anti-gun-control group it is today, wielding a huge amount of political clout through large

virtually unregulated contributions to elected officials. Forty-seven percent of those in congress have accepted contributions from NRA's PACs. As a result, gun control legislation does not move and no one has the courage to take them on. As soon as someone opposes them they are almost certain to have large contributions go to their opponents. Congress is terrorized. Since no one wants to have the NRA attack-dogs sent their way, any meaningful change

is stymied. Most of the contributions go to Republicans, but the Democrats don't display any backbone in dealing with this organization. Both parties are culpable for this travesty. Come on, Congress! Remember what your parents taught you? Sometimes you just have to have the courage to do the right thing. If not for us, for our children.

Dan Glode is a Sisters resident and served 12 years as Lincoln County District Attorney.

DUCTLESS HEAT PUMP TECHNOLOGY

Recently, Randall Marchington, an expert Mechanical Estimator from Bend Heating, answered questions about the newest high-efficiency ductless heat pump systems on the market.

Q *We have heard there is something new in the world of ductless heat pump technology. Would you mind talking about that?*

A Sure. Carrier Corporation, one of the largest manufacturers in the heating industry, has recently released the Carrier Infinity ductless heat pump, one-head system. The first thing that comes to my mind is that as we live in a high, dry, cold climate and this new Carrier Infinity system will produce heat to -22°F at 80% capacity output. No other system can work this well for our winters.

Q *Well, that is exciting! What else is new?*

A One of the newest innovations that Carrier has brought to this technology is the sleek and slim look of these indoor units that also come in white or silver, which allows them to blend into the interior of your home. Not the big bulky things hanging on your wall anymore.

Q *Are incentives like rebates and tax credits available when you convert to a ductless heat pump?*

A Because we are approaching an energy crisis in the NW, there are incredibly generous incentives available to homeowners that qualify for these systems, totaling as much as \$2,700, which can cut your total investment in half, as well as reducing your utility bill by half, plus they have air conditioning and air filtration to boot!

Q *And, about Bend Heating...?*

A One thing that I like is that Bend Heating was the 1st "Certified Master Installer" of ductless heat pumps in the area and is Carrier's 1st and oldest factory-authorized dealer in Central Oregon. That means every single homeowner gets a 100% satisfaction guarantee or your money back, written contract from Carrier Corporation themselves.

Q *Is the initial investment expensive?*

A Not at all, especially when you consider that the money you save on utility bills pays for the investment in as little as a few years in most homes, and the comfort is incredible.

Q *What sets Bend Heating apart from other well-known heating companies?*

A Bend Heating is the oldest heating company in Central Oregon and has been serving our neighbors heating needs since 1953. We are required to be certified by federal, state and local agencies. We participate in rigorous ongoing training that requires us to perform many different tests to certify the installation is correct. We do all the paperwork for you and make sure it is all in order for the rebates and tax credits.

Q *How can people contact you for more information?*

A You can contact me at 541-382-1231 or email randall@bendheating.com and I'll be happy to discuss how and if this might work for your home.



turn to the experts

541-382-1231 | www.BendHeating.com

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As a trade ally contractor of Energy Trust of Oregon, we can help with cash incentives and state energy tax credits to improve the energy efficiency of your home.



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