

# OPINION

The opinions expressed in the letters below are “your voice,” and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the *Columbia Gorge News*, its staff, publisher or advertisers.

## YOUR VOICE

### Port Vote for Litwer

Lach Litwer is doing his home work to become an excellent port commissioner.

He has congressional affairs experience that can support the bridge replacement and ideas for labor and housing solutions. Mr. Litwer has relevant business skills to guide the port's future, a strong sense of community and a supportive family. Please vote for Lach Litwer.

**Brian Shortt, Past Port Commissioner**  
Hood River

### No NORCOR

I'd like to suggest that the *Columbia Gorge News* stop publishing the list of people placed in NORCOR.

Those people have not been convicted of anything, and I'm certain the paper won't publish a notice if they've been cleared of the charges.

This has the possibility of damaging reputations in an unjust manner. Just because it's public information doesn't mean you need to publish it.

**Dave Case**  
Hood River

### Act on climate

I care deeply about our unfolding climate disaster, and about the fact that my generation has not taken the needed action to remedy it. Future generations are going to have to deal with the results of our negligence for many years to come. It's time for us to insist that our lawmakers put time, money and energy into avoiding further damage.

I'm asking Senators Wyden and Merkley to vote in favor of Senate Joint Resolution 14, and Rep. Cliff Bentz to vote in favor of its companion in the House, HJ Res 34.

These resolutions will adopt critically-needed limits on methane emissions. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas and accounts for 25 percent of climate change effects today. Support for reducing oil and gas methane emissions is widespread and bipartisan — including the likes of Shell, BP, and the American Petroleum Institute.

We had sensible methane regulation that worked before Trump tried to wipe it all away. SJR 14 and HJR 34 invoke the Congressional Review Act and rescind the harmful methane policies adopted by the Trump administration. Trump broke it; we must fix it.

We are fully into a severe climate crisis. It can not be ignored, and

all points of leverage in reversing it need to be activated.

Reducing methane pollution from the oil and gas industry is the single fastest, most cost-effective way to slow the rate of warming.

Our senators and representatives in Congress have to act now, boldly and quickly, to do all that can be done to fix climate change.

If they don't, we need to find ones who will.

**Beth Flake**  
Hood River

### Vote for Swift

As a small business owner in downtown The Dalles, I'm supporting Marcus Swift for Port of the Dalles Commission. Marcus is a local small business founder and owner who spends his free time giving back to our local community.

I'm voting for Marcus Swift because he is passionate about revitalizing downtown The Dalles to create a vibrant area for families, shoppers, and tourists. Like me, Marcus Swift knows The Dalles' best days are still ahead of it. He loves this community and is invested in its success. He is committed to supporting and expanding local small businesses and attracting good paying new jobs.

Marcus knows what it takes to balance a budget and watch your bottom line. He will be fiscally responsible and he values transparency for taxpayers. He also knows what it takes to navigate complex land use issues, so he will be a vital asset on the port commission. Please join me — and over a dozen other Wasco County small businesses — in supporting Marcus Swift for Port of The Dalles in this May 2021 election.

**Matthew Ryan Thompson**  
The Dalles

### By the numbers

First some numbers\* As of April 20, 2021:

- 12,889 total number of gun associated deaths
- 156 mass shootings (4 or more people injured or killed)
- 11 mass murders (4 or more people killed)

\*per “Gun Violence Archive”  
And now some questions that are by now clichéd: Anyone else outraged? Embarrassed? Numbed? How many more must die before legislators offer more than “thoughts and prayers” and begin to make gun ownership a right for which you must prove competence?

If the weapons used in this carnage were hair clippers, toasters, or

## Family Outing



A goose sets off on an outing with its goslings.

Photo courtesy Gary Elkinton

butter knives I suspect our elected officials would be climbing over each other in their rush to regulate manufacture and distribution of these implements. Put another way, if the perpetrators of gun violence don't have easy access to an instrument that can be so efficiently lethal (and from a distance), suicide and homicide, would inevitably decrease. Given the numbers above, how is this *not* an ongoing public health catastrophe?

It seems to me that the second amendment and its subsequent interpretations by the Supreme Court assure my right to own a gun, not the right to shoot it. Given that use of a firearm implies capability to do so wisely, shouldn't I be mandated to pass a test proving I know how use it safely, and then carry proof of the same? You know, like my car, that thing I use more often than my gun.

Owning a gun doesn't make me anything other than a gun owner, not a Second Amendment supporter. How this became an expression of liberty or individualism is lost on me.

Oh, and I should mention that I have no desire to come and take your gun. That trope and all the drama surrounding it plays into a convenient conspiracy narrative but is absurd at its core.

Good guy with a gun stops a bad

guy with a gun? Nope, again a convenient trope but if it has made any difference, it has been minimal.

So, what now? Perhaps some national legislative spine. Politically expensive? Maybe, but aren't we out of options?

**Mike Pendleton**  
Underwood

### Improve bike path

Safe walk and bike paths are a great goal in Hood River. Post Canyon Drive from Frankton to Country Club has become a beautiful parade during the pandemic: Walkers with dogs, parents with strollers, parents with young kids learning to bike behind their parent!

When traffic picks up post pandemic this will no longer be a safe haven, But I have always dreamed of culverts on the south side of Post Canyon, in the ditch. Now water dribbles on and off, the grasses and blackberries grow rampant: a waste of space, not friendly at all. So use our new infrastructure monies to finally build a path on top of the culverts, maybe even with a divider from the traffic that can speed down this Post Canyon corridor.

We live on this corridor, lost a young dog to a speeding car. I fear for the safety of our young kids riding bikes, and as always the parents with babies in strollers. Let's build a

proper walk and bike path!

**Alison McDonald**  
Hood River

### Support for Swift

I'm writing to share my strong support for Marcus Swift for Port of The Dalles in the May 2021 election. As a third generation Wasco County farmer, I support Marcus because he was born and raised in farm country and understands the challenges facing producers today. As port commissioner, he will work to support local agriculture by exploring opportunities for value-added ag production and continue to support the development of sustainable agriculture.

I've also had the opportunity to work directly alongside Marcus Swift on the Wasco County Planning Commission. In that role, I've seen firsthand the skills and dedication Marcus brings to understanding complex land use issues. He is a natural problem solver who values collaboration and transparency for taxpayers.

Last, but not least, as a fellow owner of a small business in the area, Marcus Swift knows what it takes to start and grow a small business from scratch. He knows the importance of fiscal responsibility and balanced budgets. He is

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# Rotary recommends vaccinations worldwide, recognizes immunization week

■ **By Bob Sharkey and John Weting**  
Hood River Rotary Club

THE ROTARY CLUB OF HOOD River, a part of Rotary International, would like to recognize the important work that is being provided by health care workers. Worldwide, these workers are addressing a multitude of diseases such as malaria, polio, AIDS, and COVID-19. Health Care Providers will be honored during the week of April 24-30. This week has been designated as World Immunization Week. Rotary International is a service organization of 1.2 million members, designed to strengthen both local and international communities. There are over 30,000 Rotary Clubs, like the one in Hood River, that can be found in 200 countries worldwide.

The work of Rotary International is a great example of how immunizations can reduce, control and eventually eliminate diseases like Polio. Polio, or poliomyelitis, is a paralyzing and potentially dangerous infectious disease that most commonly affects children under the age of 5. The virus spreads from person to person, typically through

contaminated water; it can then attack the nervous system. Rotary has been working to eradicate polio of more than 30 years. Since 1979, we have vaccinated more than 2.5 billion children. But we haven't done it alone. Here is a timeline of our partnerships.

1979-early 80's: Rotary undertakes a series of polio immunization campaigns throughout Southeast Asia and Latin America, beginning with one in 1979 in the Philippines and followed by similar activities in Cambodia, Haiti, Morocco, Paraguay, and Sierra Leone.

1985-1988: Rotary introduces PolioPlus - the first effort to immunize every child in the world with polio vaccine - and aims to raise \$120 million. During its 1988 convention in Philadelphia, Rotary announces it has raised \$247 million, more than double the target amount. Rotary pushed forward the global resolution to eradicate polio at the 1988 World Health Assembly in Geneva. It also spearheads the launch of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative with the World Health Organization, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and UNICEF.

2002-2003: Rotary launches

the Polio Eradication Fundraising Campaign with a fundraising target of \$80 million. The campaign, netting \$135 million, eclipses Rotary's goal. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation contributes \$1 million when it honors Rotary with its Gates Award for Global Health, its first gift to Rotary's efforts to end polio.

2007: The Gates Foundation announces its first major grant to polio eradication — a \$100 million challenge to Rotary, promising to match funds raised by Rotarians.

2009: Bill Gates pledges an additional \$255 million at Rotary's International Assembly, and Rotary increases its fundraising goal to \$200 million.

2011-2012: Bill Gates speaks at the Rotary International Convention in New Orleans and in 2012 Rotary raises \$228.7 million, surpassing the original goal of \$200 million. In the same year, Jeff Raikes, then CEO of the Gates Foundation, announces an additional \$50 million contribution to polio eradication efforts at Rotary's International Assembly.

2013-2021: An announcement at the Rotary International Convention in Lisbon sets the stage for a new extension of the

partnership between Rotary and the Gates Foundation. The Gates Foundation agrees to match 2-to-1 every dollar committed by Rotary, up to \$35 million per year, through 2018. Throughout the campaign, Rotary exceeds its annual fundraising goal. On the heels of the success of the 2-to-1 matching grant, Rotary and the Gates Foundation announce an increase of up to \$450 million at the Rotary International Convention in Atlanta. Rotary's new goal is to contribute \$50 million per year over three years. With the 2-to-1 match, the Gates Foundation's contribution will increase to \$300 million when Rotary reaches its fundraising target.

Rotary has been working to eradicate polio for more than 35 years. Our goal of ridding the world of this disease is closer than ever. As a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, we've reduced polio cases by 99.9 percent since our first project to vaccinate children in the Philippines in 1979. Rotary members have contributed \$2.1 billion and countless volunteer hours to protect nearly 3 billion children in 122 countries from this paralyzing disease. Rotary's advocacy efforts have played a role

in decisions by governments to contribute more than \$10 billion to the effort. Today, polio remains endemic only in Afghanistan and Pakistan. But it is crucial to continue working to keep other countries polio-free. If all eradication efforts stopped today, within 10 years, polio could paralyze as many as 200,000 children each year. Thanks to Rotary International and their partners, in 2020 there were only 41 cases of Polio in the world. Polio is on the cusp of becoming the second disease to be eradicated, Smallpox being the only other disease to be eradicated by vaccine.

During this critical time, it is important that we take advantage of the opportunity to receive COVID vaccination. Through effective vaccinations, we can gain control over the COVID pandemic and return to a more normal pre-COVID lifestyle.

The Rotary Club of Hood River supports and encourages all adults to attend one of the many vaccination clinics in the area and receive the COVID vaccination. Together we can gain control over the COVID pandemic but to achieve this goal we need to receive our COVID vaccination. Please do your part by getting vaccinated.

## Regional news for the Gorge

# Columbia Gorge News

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