

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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## OUR VIEW

Each week we recognize those people and organizations in the community deserving of public praise for the good things they do to make the North Coast a better place to live, and also those who should be called out for their actions.



## SHOUTOUTS



The Daily Astorian

Dave Pearson, the deputy director of the Columbia River Maritime Museum, has been hired as executive director of the motor sports museum World of Speed in Wilsonville.

• **Columbia River Maritime Museum Deputy Director Dave Pearson**, who is leaving the museum later this month to become executive director at World of Speed, a motor sports museum in Wilsonville. Pearson has been with the maritime museum for 22 years and also serves as president of the city's Planning Commission. Museum Executive Director Sam Johnson called Pearson a "mainstay of this institution" and said the museum will miss him "extraordinarily." The museum will conduct a going-away party for Pearson on Oct. 18 that is open to the public.

• **Kerry Strickland**, a Knappa mother who founded the non-profit Jordan's Hope for Recovery after her son died from a heroin overdose two years ago. Strickland recently attended Gov. Kate Brown's ceremonial signing of a new law that improves access to anti-overdose drugs and is becoming a visible face in helping state and local leaders develop drug addiction policy. After the bill signing in Salem in September, Strickland attended the first meeting of Brown's opioid task force. She said the signing and the meeting sent a good signal that the state is committed to fighting the opioid epidemic that has led to thousands of deaths.

• **NW Natural**, which last month partnered with the kick-off campaign for the **Clatsop County United Way**, social service agencies and emergency service groups to conduct a family-friendly emergency preparedness event at the Astoria Armory. While children stayed busy with an assortment of games, gymnastics and face painting, parents were able to learn about how to keep children safe during emergencies. About 250 people turned out for the event.

• Four **Seaside Police** officers, who were recognized last week by Police Chief Dave Ham for their handling of a dramatic mental health crisis situation in August. **Police Sgt. Johannes Korpela** and officers **Matthew Brown, Elise Parkman** and **Nathan Tapper** were recognized for responding and calming a mentally disturbed person who was in crisis with a firearm on Aug. 23, Ham said. "Those officers handled that very professionally and with respect and dignity," he said. Ham added that after calming the person, the officers were able to peacefully disarm him and take him into custody to get the mental health treatment he needed.

• The **Astor Elementary Parent Teacher Organization**, which recently raised \$2,650 in a rummage sale and raffle to buy new books for the school's library.



## CALLOUTS

• The **Oregon Department of Human Services**, which according to a state audit needs to take immediate action to improve safety and the well-being for about 13,000 elderly low-income people and those with disabilities in its **Consumer-Employed Provider** program. According to Oregon Secretary of State's Office auditors, the program gives seniors and those with disabilities the opportunity to safely remain in their homes to receive the care they need from caregivers of their choice. The choice comes with requirements. Clients are responsible for hiring, training, supervising and dismissing their home-care workers, who are often relatives. But the auditors found shortcomings. Some clients, like those with Alzheimer's, may not be able to successfully manage their home-care workers, and the program does not ensure home-care workers are properly trained. Additionally, auditors said excessive workloads and lack of good data inhibit case managers' monitoring abilities. Without addressing these issues, those in the program may be at greater risk of fraud, neglect or abuse, auditors said.

### Suggestions?

Do you have a Shoutout or Callout you think we should know about? Let us know at [news@dailyastorian.com](mailto:news@dailyastorian.com) and we'll make sure to take a look.



## Repeal the Second Amendment

By **BRET STEPHENS**  
*The New York Times*

I have never understood the conservative fetish for the Second Amendment.



From a law-and-order standpoint, more guns means more murder. "States with higher rates of gun ownership had disproportionately large numbers of deaths from firearm-related homicides," noted one exhaustive 2013 study in the *American Journal of Public Health*.

From a personal-safety standpoint, more guns means less safety. The FBI counted a total of 268 "justifiable homicides" by private citizens involving firearms in 2015; that is, felons killed in the course of committing a felony. Yet that same year, there were 489 "unintentional firearms deaths" in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Between 77 and 141 of those killed were children.

From a national-security standpoint, the amendment's suggestion that a "well-regulated militia" is "necessary to the security of a free State," is quaint. The Minutemen that will deter Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong Un are based in missile silos in Minot, North Dakota, not farmhouses in Lexington, Massachusetts.

From a personal liberty standpoint, the idea that an armed citizenry is the ultimate check on the ambitions and encroachments of government power is curious. The Whiskey Rebellion of the 1790s, the New York draft riots of 1863, the coal miners' rebellion of 1921, the Brink's robbery of 1981 — does any serious conservative think of these as great moments in Second Amendment activism?

And now we have the relatively new and now ubiquitous "active shooter" phenomenon, something that remains extremely rare in the rest of the world. Conservatives often say that the right response to these horrors is to do more on the mental-health front. Yet by all accounts Stephen Paddock would not have raised an eyebrow with a mental-health professional before he murdered 58 people in Las Vegas last week.

What might have raised a red flag? I'm not the first pundit to point out that if a "Mohammad Paddock" had purchased dozens of firearms and thousands of rounds of ammunition and then checked himself into a suite at the Mandalay Bay with direct views to a nearby music festival, somebody at the local FBI field office would have noticed.

Given all of this, why do liberals keep losing the gun control debate? Maybe it's because they argue



AP Photo/Rick Bowmer

A device called a 'bump stock' is attached to a semi-automatic rifle at the Gun Vault store and shooting range in South Jordan, Utah. The National Rifle Association announced its support for regulating the devices that can effectively convert semi-automatic rifles into fully automated weapons and that were apparently used in the Las Vegas massacre to lethal effect.

their case badly and — let's face it — in bad faith. Democratic politicians routinely profess their fidelity to the Second Amendment — or rather, "a nuanced reading" of it — with all the conviction of Barack Obama's support for traditional marriage, circa 2008. People recognize lip service for what it is.

Then there are the endless liberal errors of fact. There is no "gun-show loophole" per se; it's a private-sale loophole, in other words the right to sell your own stuff. The civilian AR-15 is not a true "assault rifle," and banning such rifles would have little effect on the overall murder rate, since most homicides are committed with handguns. It's not true that 40 percent of gun owners buy without a background check; the real number is closer to one-fifth.

The National Rifle Association does not have Republican "balls in a money clip," as Jimmy Kimmel put it the other night. The NRA has donated a paltry \$3,533,294 to all current members of Congress since 1998, according to The Washington Post, equivalent to about three months of Kimmel's salary. The NRA doesn't need to buy influence: It's powerful because it's popular.

Nor will it do to follow the "Australian model" of a gun buy-back program, which has shown poor results in the United States and makes little sense in a country awash with hundreds of millions of weapons. Keeping guns out of the hands of mentally ill people is a sensible goal, but due process is still owed to the potentially insane. Background checks for private gun sales are another fine idea, though its effects on homicides will be negligible: Guns recovered by police are rarely in the hands of their legal owners, a 2016 study found.

In fact, the more closely one looks at what passes for "common sense" gun laws, the more feckless they appear. Americans who claim to be outraged by gun crimes should want to do something more

than tinker at the margins of a legal regime that most of the developed world rightly considers nuts. They should want to change it fundamentally and permanently.

There is only one way to do this: Repeal the Second Amendment.

Repealing the amendment may seem like political "Mission: Impossible" today, but in the era of same-sex marriage it's worth recalling that most great causes begin as improbable ones. Gun ownership should never be outlawed, just as it isn't outlawed in Britain or Australia. But it doesn't need a blanket Constitutional protection, either. The 46,445 murder victims killed by gunfire in the United States between 2012 and 2016 didn't need to perish so that gun enthusiasts can go on fantasizing that "Red Dawn" is the fate that soon awaits us.

Donald Trump will likely get one more Supreme Court nomination, or two or three, before he leaves office, guaranteeing a pro-gun court for another generation. Expansive interpretations of the right to bear arms will be the law of the land — until the "right" itself ceases to be.

Some conservatives will insist that the Second Amendment is fundamental to the structure of American liberty. They will cite James Madison, who noted in the *Federalist Papers* that in Europe "the governments are afraid to trust the people with arms." America was supposed to be different, and better.

I wonder what Madison would have to say about that today, when more than twice as many Americans perished last year at the hands of their fellows as died in battle during the entire Revolutionary War. My guess: Take the guns — or at least the presumptive right to them — away. The true foundation of American exceptionalism should be our capacity for moral and constitutional renewal, not our instinct for self-destruction.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### A simple protest

I don't get it. Some people can't comprehend the simplest of ideas. I'm talking about the NFL protest. The flag itself is a piece of cloth, an abstract thing, with no meaning in and of itself. It's importance comes from what it represents, the meaning behind it.

Most people would say it represents the freedom we enjoy in America, but as soon as people express that freedom in a peaceful, nonviolent way, a lot of people

get their panties in a twist, instead of thinking that's why I'm glad I live in America, instead of another place where people get thrown in jail or killed for controversial ideas.

You don't have to agree with the protest itself, but you should support their right to do it. Now some people might say, why don't they do it someplace else, on their own time. In any protest, the whole idea is to get your message across to the largest audience possible. What better way than

at a football game?

They are not stopping the game from being played. The national anthem will happen whether there's a protest or not. Now if they refused to play a game they were paid to play, that would be a whole other story. I would understand why people would be upset.

The First Amendment was not written to support widely accepted ideas. Widely accepted ideas need no protection.

LAURA RUSSELL  
Astoria