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OUR VIEW

Tragedy strikes small town police

Habitual felon with gun begs questions

No matter where they occur, police deaths in the line of duty are horrifically tragic. In a small town like Seaside, such a crime shakes a community to its core.

Last Friday's murder of Sgt. Jason Goodding during the course of an ordinary arrest will be long remembered as one of the worst events in Seaside history.

We grieve at the thought of a wife turned into a widow by a few moments of inexplicable violence, of two daughters who will be left without their father.

We think with pride of Goodding's colleagues, who continue doing their jobs with professionalism and courtesy in the aftermath of their friend's death. It is astonishing that police officers manage to maintain equilibrium in the face of such horror. Few individuals and their loved ones have what it takes to endure such strain, far less do so with the cheerfulness and good grace that Sgt. Goodding is said to have shown.

We imagine the trauma faced by the other responding officer, who will live out his days with the memory of witnessing the attack on Goodding and of killing Goodding's assailant. This is the sort of vivid pain that haunts a person long afterward.

We shake our heads in confusion



Officer Jason Goodding

We think with pride on Goodding's colleagues, who continue doing their jobs with professionalism and courtesy in the aftermath of a friend's death.

and wonder at the volatility of Phillip Ferry, whose life culminated in bloodshed on the main street of a picturesque resort town. Could this have been avoided?

Many will ask why Ferry had not already earned a long-term bed in prison. How is it that a longtime felon possessed a concealed firearm? Where did he get it? Did anyone else violate the law by helping him obtain it? Commonplace and predictable arguments will occur between those who want further restrictions on firearms and those who reject all such suggestions as a violation of fundamental American rights. This is a case where existing law clearly failed. But would

any law truly keep America's vast profusion of guns out of the hands of a determined criminal? It is fatiguing to witness another life lost while knowing nothing is likely to change in a nation where guns and violence are part of our fabric and history.

Friday's memorial for Sgt. Goodding will be a paroxysm of grief but will offer his family evidence of how much he was valued and how we all regret his loss. In the months and years that follow, the best tribute to him would be substantive change in protecting police and all of society from the fear of deadly violence.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

LETTERS POLICY

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Unsigned letters will not be published. Send letters to 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.

Al Plute has done nothing to justify recall

I want to join many others in the community who believe Al Plute should not be subject to a recall attempt.

Al Plute often takes 45 minutes to say something that should take five minutes, and he does have expansive ideas that don't always translate into doable objectives. Those traits, however, do not constitute justifiable reasons for recall.

Under the current system, someone could be recalled if their hair was silver and 50 pounds overweight. That's nonsense!

Recall should be utilized only when there is suspected malfeasance in office or for some grave act. Al Plute has done nothing like that. Voting for an issue he believes in — that is his duty as a council person.

Please don't sign any recall petitions and let's start moving in a positive direction. Pendleton has many challenges in the next few years. And please, citizens, step forward and run for mayor or city council.

John Brenne
Ward I councilor, Pendleton

Satanist posts were jokes, shouldn't matter

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution states that no law will be allowed that respects an establishment of,

or impedes the practice of, any religion.

Never has there been a list made that specifically includes nor excludes any religion in the United States. I am not a Satanist, but I hardly think the choice of religion of any person seeking public appointment should be brought up. Period. It doesn't matter if you are a Satanist, a Muslim, or even a Fundamentalist Christian: if you do a good job, you'll stay. If you do a bad job, you'll go.

The "HAIL SATAN ANYWAY" quote was from June 2015.

I posted: "Ave Satana! Ave Satana! Ave Satani! These are examples of things REAL Satanists say; YOLO, LOL, and whatever else the ---- some crackpot preacher alleges is simply not true. If I felt like blaspheming right now, that would be another example. ... Of course, I know that Satan, or 'the devil,' is simply a scapegoat to justify sin in the world, and does not actually exist. ... SATAN ISN'T REAL! HAIL SATAN ANYWAY! Satan is symbolic, but not real in a literal sense. ... Do some ----- study before you pollute the world with your narrow religious views. ..."

This was posted in response to a meme I saw making the rounds where some preachers were warning that "YOLO" stood for "Youth Obeying Lucifer's Orders" and "LOL" stood for "Lucifer Our Lord." I study the esoteric, so obviously Satanism has crossed my reading list a time or

two. I detected that it might have been said by people who were not enlightened on the subject, so I sought to enlighten. I know it won't be good for your story, but I'm not a Satanist.

While I'm flattered that I'm the biggest news in this current event, I am disturbed that you would single out religious reasons to disqualify me. My past actions are public record, but what makes you think that it's allowable in these progressive times to pick on a religious affiliation? Let alone one that I don't have.

James Tibbets
Pendleton

Important decision on west-end fire district

The residents of the Stanfield and Hermiston Fire Districts are facing a very important decision this May. Do we want to strengthen our fire service and ambulance coverage or do they wish to have these services decrease? Holding services at the present level is just simply not possible.

Yes, the consolidation will cost some property owners more money. People who presently live in the Hermiston Fire District but outside the city limits will see a property tax increase. Those living in the city of Hermiston will not see a property tax increase. However, more of their property tax revenue will go to the fire district and less to other taxing agencies. This is due to the tax code in Oregon.

OTHER VIEWS



How Rubio undid debate damage, one voter at a time

NASHUA, New Hampshire — Rick Santorum didn't do Marco Rubio any favors when, in his first appearance as a Rubio endorser, he couldn't name his former rival's Senate accomplishments. But if Santorum lost Rubio any votes with that awkward TV appearance, he may be repaying Rubio, in a quiet way, by bringing former Santorum supporters, specifically those deeply motivated by the issue of life, into the Rubio camp.

Like Jim and Valerie Somers, who came to Rubio's election-eve rally Monday at Nashua Community College. For Valerie especially, life is the most important issue, and both she and her husband supported Santorum in 2012 and earlier in this campaign. "I started moving away from Santorum right after Iowa," Valerie told me before the Rubio rally. "I saw his numbers dwindling and thought we don't want to waste our vote." When Santorum threw his support to Rubio, it helped confirm Jim and Valerie's inclination to support the Florida senator.

For voters like the Somers, the media discussion of Rubio's debate performance didn't really affect their views of him on the big issues. Yes, they thought Rubio messed up with the repetitive answers, but far more important was his set piece on life — his reaffirmation of a no-exceptions abortion policy and his critique of the media and Democrats on the other side of the issue.

"He held his own, and he stayed principled," Valerie told me. "He definitely came off well for me, and Jeb attacking him on the exceptions really hurt Jeb with me."

And so Marco Rubio had two more voters. Talks with Rubio supporters — or near-supporters, since many said they were only 98 percent sure, leaving themselves just a little room to change their minds — showed again how the concerns of media commentators are sometimes far from the minds of actual voters. Is Rubio a robot? Did his debate flub show he is not ready for the nation's highest office? It's not that supporters ignored the questions; they considered them and decided that other things, like his position on abortion, were more important.

A walk around the rally also showed that personal touches matter, especially when a candidate has a spate of negative media coverage to overcome. Rubio often tells audiences that after his remarks he'll be happy to stay around as long as anyone wants to talk to him. The importance of doing that became clear in Nashua Monday night with John and



BYRON YORK
Comment

Margie Sengstaken, of Hollis, who came in with a favorable attitude toward Rubio but had not yet fully decided.

"I went into the debate leaning towards Rubio, and honestly I came out of the debate feeling ummmm, I don't know," Margie told me.

Then she came to the rally and stayed afterward to meet Rubio. I noticed that they chatted with him for quite a while, and I approached them afterward. As it turned out, any

apprehensive feelings from the debate were erased by face-to-face time with the candidate.

"The Chris Christie exchange, that troubled me," Margie said as we stood near where Rubio was still shaking hands and meeting voters, half an hour after ending his speech. "I was undecided until just now. But after this —

look at him right now with all these people. He's taking the time, the care. It makes a difference when you come and meet them and shake their hand. I mean, he shook my hand three times."

John agreed. "I like Chris Christie, but right now I'm leaning toward Rubio, probably because of tonight."

As it happened, the Sengstakens went to Donald Trump's townhall in Londonderry earlier in the day. It was a small, uncharacteristically intimate Trump event, and afterward the Sengstakens stayed to

meet the candidate. "It was a very different experience," Margie told me. Trump did a quick handshake, photo, but didn't stop to talk. "He was nice, but he just had this bit of arrogance," Margie said.

I didn't get the impression that the Sengstakens were ever seriously considering voting for Trump. But they did take the trouble to go see him, they did want to give him a look, and some personal attention might have made their decision more difficult. That's how politics is done in a small state where one-on-one interactions are still quite common.

Jim and Valerie and John and Margie are just four voters. But they have friends, and their friends have friends. If a candidate does enough of that kind of campaigning, he can reach a lot of people.

It's often been noted in the past that Rubio has relied too much on television interviews, rather than day-to-day retail politics, to reach voters. But in the last days of the New Hampshire contest, as in Iowa, Rubio showed that taking the time to meet people can pay off.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

For some voters, the media discussion of Rubio's debate performance didn't really affect their views of him on the big issues.

YOUR VIEWS

distinguished military career coupled with his long list of successes at the helm of Blue Mountain Community College. He has been involved with the Round-Up City Development Corporation and the Port of Umatilla, which further broadens his base of experiences.

Perhaps most important are the human relations skills he brings to the table. Pendleton hasn't gone through a major leadership change for many years and it is comforting to know that when Phil Houk steps down, there will be someone like John Turner standing by to take the city to a new level.

George Murdock
Pendleton

Pendleton councilor supports Turner

I applaud John Turner on his decision to stand for election as our next mayor.

Having served on city council for the last three years, and working with John in Rotary, church and other community activities, I know firsthand many of the challenges the city and council face, and cannot think of a more suitable candidate.

John possesses and has shown the leadership skill, temperament, and proven record needed at this time. Please join me in supporting and voting for John Turner as our next mayor.

Chuck Wood
Pendleton

Residents who live in the Stanfield will pay a lower rate. Stanfield residents are, at the present time, paying a higher tax rate than Hermiston. In the end everyone will pay the same rate in the new district no matter where they live.

None of us like taxes. But to receive goods and services from government, we have to pay for them. The basic question is whether citizens wish to continue receiving timely, high quality fire protection and ambulance service.

How long are any of us willing to wait for fire engines to arrive when our house is burning or how long should we wait for paramedics when our spouse is having a heart attack or stroke?

This is the decision the voters of Hermiston and Stanfield will be making this spring.

Ric Sherman, president
Hermiston Fire Board

Murdock supports Turner for mayor

I was extremely happy to learn that John Turner is running for mayor of Pendleton. While conventional wisdom suggests it is unwise for elected officials to offer endorsements for other elective offices, I am first and foremost a resident of Pendleton and care deeply about the community in which I have chosen to spend the rest of my life.

John Turner brings a wealth of leadership experience to the equation based upon his