

# Columnist was wrong to blame NRA

The Main Street column in the Feb. 21 edition seemed to push the narrative that the gun is at fault in the Florida school shooting, especially AR15 type rifles and high capacity magazines and the bad folks in the NRA.

The debate seems to suggest two ways to stop these shootings. One is to outlaw certain types of firearms and magazines. The second is to prevent the homicidal maniacs from getting any weapons and having access to our schools. This includes armed personnel in the schools.

Banning a specific type of firearm won't do anything to solve the problem. Weapons can be modified, illegal guns acquired or other weapons substituted by any maniac who is determined to kill.

In the '30s, Marsh (Carbine) Williams, designed and built a semi-auto carbine in a prison workshop, while a prisoner. After being pardoned, he sold his rifle designs to Winchester and to the U.S. government.

Most shooters know the AR as a great firearm for target shooting and a really superior system for

## GUEST COLUMN

Douglas Wickre

shooting varmints, like coyotes. Even the Department of Homeland Security (in their requisitions) ordered AR15 style rifles because they are necessary for "personal defense use in close quarters ..." and they specify 30-round magazines.

Dean Weingarten of Houston was attacked by three thugs as he sat on his porch May 6, 2017. They started shooting at him, he returned fire with his AR15.

More than 40 rounds were fired, and resulted in two dead attackers, one wounded, Dean was unharmed. If he had been limited to a six-shot revolver or a few rounds in a shotgun, the result probably would have been very different.

This country is beset by street gangs, drug gangs and home invasions. Are our elderly abused

women and easily victimized populations not allowed to own a tool that will allow them to protect themselves from the victimizers?

The only effective solution to this problem is to identify and disarm the dangerous mental cases and violent criminals. The NRA has worked for decades to first institute a background check system and then to force the government to input the name of dangerous individuals to make that system work.

There are still 38 states that have not input a large percentage of offenders and adjudicated violent mental cases into the NICS system. We would not have the system if the NRA had not pushed politicians to approve it.

We have a political system that, in many cases, thinks it is more important to hide dangerous and insane people behind HIPPA laws than it is to protect public safety.

We have politicians who provide sanctuary to violent felons and gang members in our country illegally. President Obama pardoned hundreds convicted of violent drug and gun crimes.

The NRA has developed and funded a program called School Shield, which provides teams of law enforcement personnel to do a week-long assessment of a particular school, looking at facility, grounds, access, monitoring, training and policies.

They provide the school with detailed methods and ways to protect against school violence. This is free to the schools, paid for by those evil NRA members.

Please ask MSNBC, CNN, the New York Times and the other outlets demonizing the law-abiding gun owners in this country, "what have you done to help schools protect the staff and students?"

In addition, the NRA has long assisted law enforcement with training programs and ranges to conduct training (like the Eagle Cap Shooters Association Range in Enterprise.)

The Parkland, Fla., shooting absolutely showed us how to prevent this type of shooting. We are told that there were 39 times that the Broward County Sheriff was warned that Nikolas Cruz was a danger and likely to kill people.

We are told that the school was so worried about him that they took several steps to control Cruz, not letting him carry a backpack to school and other precautions.

The FBI was warned at least twice that he was a potential school shooter and had made comments to that effect on social media. Why was he not on the "prohibited" list for firearms purchase? Why was he not involuntarily committed?

Once again, it is the person pulling the trigger, not whatever type of weapon he has in his hands. I hold the FBI, the county sheriff, the school and the mental health community at fault here. There is not one iota of evidence that any of the five million NRA members had any complicity.

The NRA should be thanked for attempting to put procedures in place to prevent this kind of tragedy. I have not even mentioned the Broward County School resource officer and deputies who apparently took cover outside the school while this homicidal maniac pursued his massacre.

Douglas Wickre resides in Joseph.

## OK Theatre will be back in business soon

My column got pulled last week because of space constraints. I'm a bit worried that not one person called to ask if it was going to continue to appear.

I'm beginning to wonder if anyone reads this column or perhaps our readers thought leaving it out was an oversight on our part.

This week, I spent several days at a regional training with Rotary International in Seattle. That left my time for column-writing a bit truncated.



### WAHL TO WALL

Paul Wahl

It was nice to wake up to sun Monday morning after living in Seattle's clouds, rain and snow for a spell.

I'm not sure that's something I could adjust to.

**YOUR FIRST** opportunity to see the newly remodeled OK Theatre will be March 4 when the Infamous Stringdusters take the stage. Darrell Brann and his crew have been working like beavers on steroids to complete the work.

If you've ever remodeled anything, you know the pitfalls that can crop up. And with a building as old as the OK, there were probably more than a few.

Stringdusters are a terrific group, so it should be a great night of fun and music. See you there.

**PREPARING AND** editing content for the 2018 Wallowa County Visitor's Guide has reminded me of the busy spring, summer and fall ahead.

We expanded the calendar portion a bit this year to provide better descriptions about the events. In previous years, we've only published an event name, assuming that everyone knows what each event is all about.

We also have some absolutely amazing and stunning photography going into this year's edition. It will be a work of art, I promise.

## LETTERS to the EDITOR

### NRA is not going away

The Main Street column, "Children, Moms, and the NRA," nicely points out the fact that people affected by terrible incidents such as drunk driving accidents, school shootings and wildlife poaching take notice and become proactive.

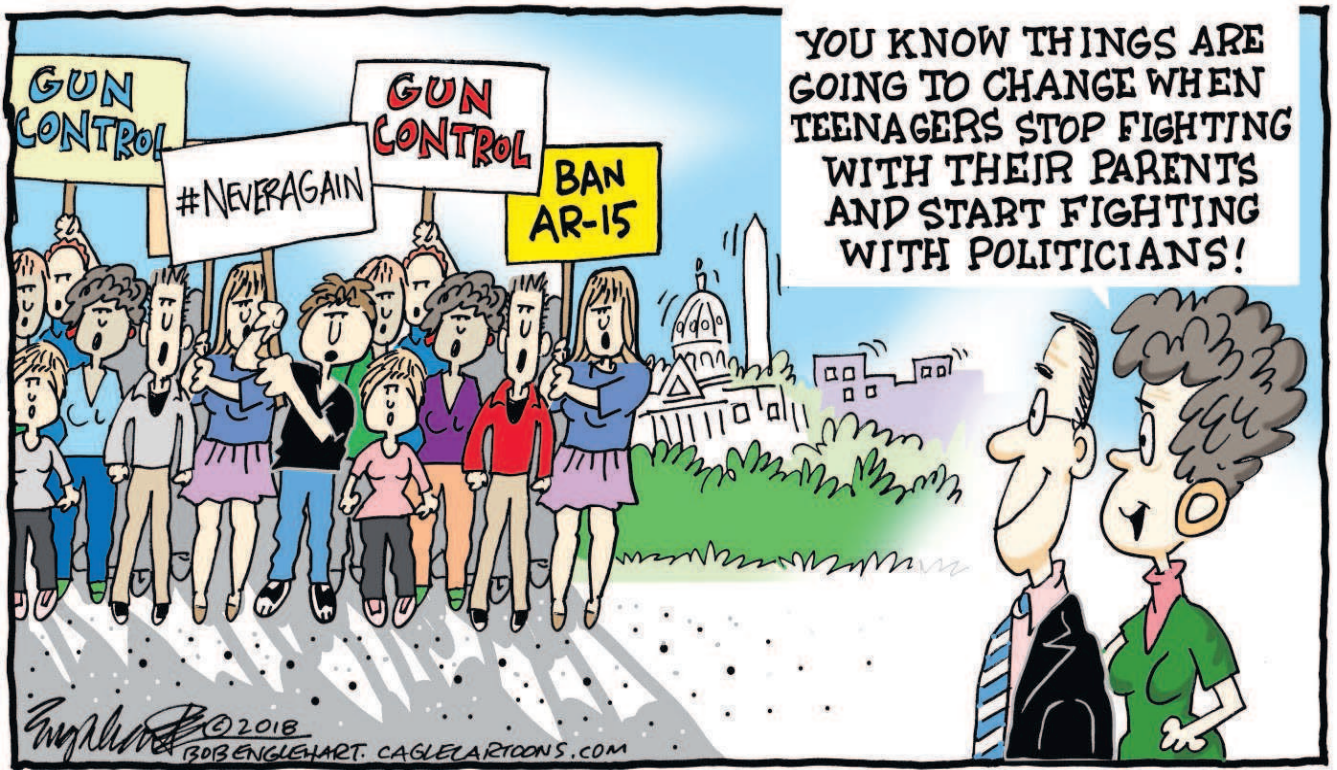
That's all well and good; however, the school shooting issues of proper background investigations, mental health and gun ownership aren't mentioned.

These issues are being discussed at the highest levels; in fact, our President (yes, the one in the White House) has been discussing these and others for the past two days with representatives of the NRA.

So, contrary to the writer's desire that the NRA go away, that's more than likely not going to happen.

Maury Bunn  
Enterprise

See LETTERS, Page A5



## Why Trump dalliances really do matter

As I embark on this column, I am all too conscious that I am writing for an audience of readers that might include children. Although the subject matter is for adults, I will make an effort to be discreet and occasionally cryptic in my references.

Donald Trump married his third and current wife, model Melania Knavs in 2005. By even the most lax of social standards, he has not proven to be a model husband.

Trump and Billy Bush, cohost of the show Access Hollywood, were recorded in a conversation that proved to be a disgrace to both of them when it was unearthed October 2016.

On tape, Trump spoke crudely about attempts he had made to seduce one of Bush's cohosts, Nancy O'Dell, who was married at the time. Trump also remarked that he had better take Tic Tacs as he prepared to meet another of Bush's on air co-workers, explaining, "You know, I'm automatically attracted to beautiful (women) — I just start kissing them. It's like a magnet. Just kiss. I don't even wait. And when you're a star, they let you do it. You can do anything."

Shortly after the release of the tape, 19 women came forward publicly making various allegations against Trump. The ages of the accusers and allegations spanned decades. Trump brazenly denied them all.

One of the accusers was Rachel Crooks, who claims to have been a somewhat starstruck receptionist at Trump Towers when she introduced herself to the famous man outside an elevator in 2006.

According to Crooks' account, as he initially shook her hand, Trump continued to hold it and then began kissing her on the cheeks and ultimately on the mouth.

Crooks claims the whole kissing incident went on for what seemed like two minutes, and that day, she sent emails



### POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

John McColgan

to her mother and sister back in Ohio describing how shaken she felt.

Her story has resurfaced recently because Crooks is now running for a seat in the Ohio state legislature. Trump has gone on Twitter to blast the Washington Post for this story, tweeting, "Never happened! Who would do this in a public space with live security cameras running?"

But, according to Trump's own boasts to Billy Bush, Trump would, actually.

And it also appears from recently resurrected accounts that Mr. Trump was very active sexually with other women besides his new wife Melania in 2006, including adult film star Stormy Daniels.

In October 2016, Daniels was prepared to dish dirt about her brief affair with Trump, but Trump's attorney Michael Cohen got wind of the scheduled interviews and set up a special LLC for the purpose of securing a confidentiality agreement with Ms. Daniels in exchange for her denial and silence.

After the Wall Street Journal recently unearthed details of Cohen's \$130,000 payment to Daniels and the New York Times continued to press Cohen further, Trump's former attorney eventually admitted the arrangement, while still maintaining that the affair never happened and that the confidentiality agreement was not authorized or funded by Trump or his campaign and that the money came from Cohen's own pocket.

Gee, what a pal!

Another episode of journalistic suffocation (or altruism) also occurred in October 2016 when the publisher of the

National Enquirer, David Pecker, who is another long-term friend of Trump, bought the exclusive rights to the story told by Karen McDougal, a centerfold model whom Trump met at a pool party at the Playboy Mansion, again in the summer of 2006.

Pecker chose to engage in what is known as a "catch-and-kill" strategy, by purchasing the story precisely so that no one else could tell it and he could snuff it out. But recently, Ronan Farrow of the New Yorker dug up and divulged the same story in considerable detail.

Some readers might wonder why Trump's alleged womanizing, especially in consensual relationships or in one-night-stands, should even matter to us as citizens. But consider that in addition to the sheer immorality of cheating on his wife or lying about it, or of paying or authorizing people to buy silence via confidentiality agreements, there remains the specter of one of the most salacious allegations in the notorious Steele dossier.

Allegations included an incident that at the Miss Universe Pageant in Moscow in 2013, Trump was offered five Russian women for an evening at his hotel. No one knows what happened in Trump's hotel room that evening.

Vladimir Putin, whom Trump referred to in a 2013 tweet as "his new best friend," has dismissed all allegations of a sexual romp by Trump at the pageant as ridiculous. But, Putin added coyly, "We do have the best "female proletariat" — my translation.

Given Mr. Trump's well-established personal history before and since 2013, is it possible, and perhaps even likely, in light of all these recent revelations, that Putin might have discovered Trump's Achilles heel? And if he did, what price might we all be paying for Putin's coup?

John McColgan writes from his home in Joseph.

# WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN

VOLUME 134 USPS No. 665-100

P.O. Box 338 • Enterprise, OR 97828  
Office: 209 NW First St., Enterprise, Ore.  
Phone: 541-426-4567 • Fax: 541-426-3921

Contents copyright © 2018. All rights reserved.  
Reproduction without permission is prohibited.

Wallowa County's Newspaper Since 1884

MEMBER OREGON NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Published every Wednesday by: EO Media Group

**Publisher** Marissa Williams, marissa@eomediagroup.com  
**Editor** Paul Wahl, editor@wallowa.com  
**Reporter** Stephen Tool, stool@wallowa.com  
**Reporter** Kathleen Elynn, kellyn@wallowa.com  
**Newsroom assistant** editor@wallowa.com  
**Ad sales consultant** Jennifer Powell, jpowell@wallowa.com  
**Office manager** Cheryl Jenkins, cjenkins@wallowa.com

Periodical Postage Paid at Enterprise and additional mailing offices

Subscription rates (includes online access)	1 Year
Wallowa County	\$40.00
Out-of-County	\$57.00

Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

See the Wallowa County Chieftain on the Internet  
**Wallowa.com**  
facebook.com/Wallowa  
twitter.com/wcchieftain

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Wallowa County Chieftain P.O. Box 338 Enterprise, OR 97828