

Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
Florence, OR 97439

Opinion

The First Amendment
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

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Siuslaw News

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James Rand
Jenna Bartlett
Ned Hickson
Erik Chalhouh

Oregon Group Publisher 541-265 8571
Publisher, ext. 318
Editor, ext. 313
Consulting Editor 831-761-7353
Email: echalhouh@register-pajaronian.com
Marketing Director, ext. 326
Office Supervisor, ext. 312
Production Supervisor
Press Manager

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Cultural threads of domestic violence need to be unraveled

Those who read my syndicated humor column know I try to keep life in perspective through humor. But for many years humor was also part of a coping mechanism from a childhood witnessing both verbal and physical abuse by the men in my family — specifically, my father and older brothers.

It wasn't until I became a father that I realized the impact that a childhood witnessing abuse had on me, and how some of those wounds — as both a witness and recipient — had never truly healed.

I know this because I occasionally saw reflections of my father and brothers in myself as I fought to avoid making the same mistakes with my own children; I also know this because I came to realize that as much as we want to tell ourselves we can choose not to take any baggage with us on our journey through life, ultimately it's always somewhere waiting to be claimed.

There is no getting rid of it completely, only a conscious

decision to leave it circling on the carousel.

This is especially true for young men in their teens and early 20s, when they are defining themselves and establishing their place in what is still a mostly male-dominated world while, at the same time, also trying to understand the intricacies of communicating with those they love.

How do I know this?

petuated particularly through media and advertising because it sells body wash, music, movie tickets, clothes and video games.

It's baggage our culture has been carrying for generations.

It is true that being a real man means being in control.

But not of others.

It means being in control of yourself enough to understand, acknowledge and

when you look in the mirror each day?

Every year, our local Siuslaw Outreach Services (SOS) assists more than 150 victims of domestic abuse, including providing shelter for victims more than 500 times in 2016. As wonderful as our community is, it isn't immune to domestic violence against women, men and children.

There's no denying that the cultural threads of domestic violence are woven into the fabric of our society.

Though we have certainly made strides in some areas by recognizing and discussing matters of physical and verbal abuse, that baggage is still out there circling on the carousel.

During this month of Domestic Violence Awareness, as a culture each of us must make a commitment to avoid claiming the baggage that perpetuates violence on our families and each other — and we must be willing to carry that commitment well beyond the final, crisp evening of October.

Victims of domestic abuse can call the SOS hotline at 541-997-4444; abusers seeking help can call SOS at 541-997-2816.

From the Editor's Desk

NED HICKSON

Because, statistically speaking, I was a young man once. Trying to appear tough among your peers while still holding on to the part of you that is thoughtful and caring feels contradictory to what we're taught about being a man. We see it in movies and advertising; we hear it in music: Being a man means being in control.

In charge.

In command.

Of life and our relationships.

It's a social stereotype per-

accept your strengths as well as your weaknesses.

It also means never using your strength — physically or verbally — to overpower others. Especially the women in your life, whether it be your wife, girlfriend, mother, daughter or neighbor.

A real man provides protection, safety and acceptance; a weak man dishes out pain, insecurity and denial.

In either case, they are reflections of our inner self. The question is: What kind of reflection do you want to see

LETTERS

CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR OWN DOG IN PARK

We have been going to the local dog park for six months and the dogs have a great time.

Our first visit, we picked up 19 piles of dog waste, in addition to our own dog's. Last week, we picked up 29 piles.

There are free bags and the garbage can is located right at the exit. It is a park rule to pick up after your dog, so why don't some people do so and keep the park waste-free for dogs and people?

Who wants to step in that stuff?

Please be responsible, people.

— Kim Greenwood
Florence

GUN ISSUE DEEPER THAN WHERE WE BUY THEM

In response to the Letter to the Editor from Mark and Cynthia Chandler (Oct. 4): Being that Fred Meyer has sold guns for at least the four years my husband and I have resided here — and by the way, Bi-Mart also sells guns along with milk — not shopping somewhere where guns are sold would limit you to Grocery Outlet, Safeway or trips to the valley.

I'm curious as to whether the Chandlers have addressed their concerns regarding gun sales and their location next to the toy department with Kroger or Fred Meyer, as opposed to submitting a Letter to the Editor for what appears to be dramatic effect?

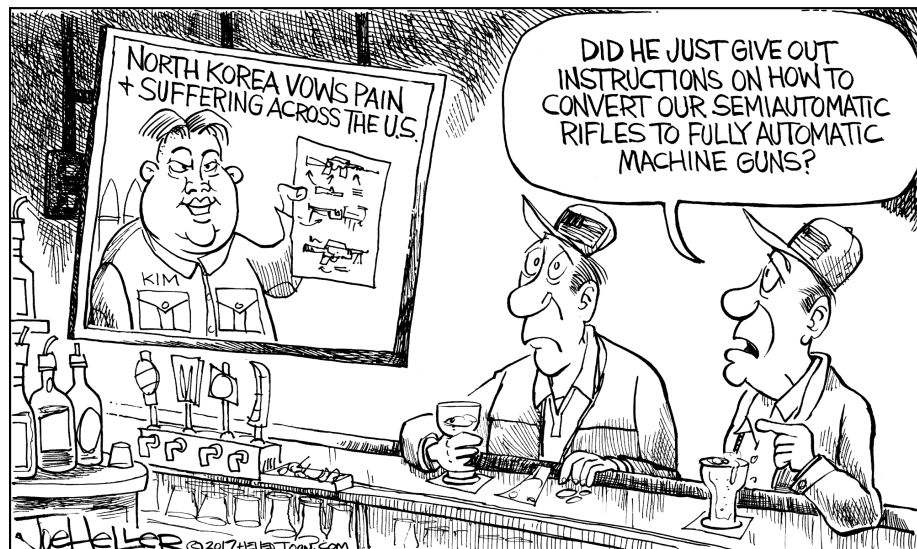
What is disturbing is the underlying implication that anyone who sells guns or participates in the gun culture is somehow complicit with the Las Vegas mass killings.

So what constitutes a lethal weapon?

I looked up in Wikipedia "Items that are considered lethal weapons," and their definition was: firearms, knives, switchblades, slingshots (Dave & Goliath?), Stiletto, javelin, sword, dagger, brass knuckles, etc. Baseball bats also make excellent weapons, along with the frying pan.

On a bigger scale, there are bombs (Boston marathon bombing), grenades ... I could go on. Take a good look at items in the kitchen: butcher knives, metal skewers, scissors, or how about the garage, where there are hammers, screwdrivers, etc.

The thing about gun control or boycotting grocery stores selling guns is that, even if there becomes a law where every citizen (and does this include illegal immigrants?) that has a gun in their possession is ordered to turn in their gun, only the law-abiding citizens will do so.



Meanwhile, citizens like the recent Las Vegas shooter will not be turning in their guns.

If you remove firearms completely from society, all that will happen is that the people with murder or hatred in their hearts will continue to use their now illegal-to-own guns — and unarmed citizens will more easily become victims.

Is boycotting grocery shopping at Fred Meyer going to solve the problem of criminal misuse of guns in this country?

No.

But trying to fix what ails the human heart might.

—Virginia Reynolds
Florence

YOU CAN'T LEGISLATE WHAT'S IN THE HEART

All this talk of gun control...

I seem to be missing something here...

I don't own a gun and am not fond of them, but I really don't think the guns are the problem.

Years ago, gun laws were far less restrictive than they are now, yet kids went to school without fear of assault. People did not rampage through shopping malls shooting total strangers. Snipers did not hang out on rooftops ready to demolish their neighborhoods. And suicide by gun shot was not among the most common modes of death.

On the contrary, folks kept gun cabinets in their rec rooms for hunting season; in rural areas, kids drove pick-ups to school with loaded gun racks in the rear window.

We honestly did not think anything creepy was going on.

So what's really changed?

Laws have changed, but that hasn't solved anything.

That's because you can't legislate the heart. And folks, that is what has changed for the worse; the human heart has

changed.

Don't give me any godless rationale. If you cannot see truth plainly written in the news of the day, you are blind.

The human heart has changed. Evil is tolerated, even called "good."

God has been evicted from the public square and we are living with the consequences.

No, guns are not the problem. Murdering fingers on the triggers are the problem.

And no man-made law will fix that.

—Ellen Traylor
Florence and Gardiner

HUMANS MAKE WEAPONS LETHAL

In regard to the Chandlers' Letter to the Editor, "Groceries and Guns..." (Sept. 30), such pointless grandstanding is misguided.

Boycotts are seldom effective and often follow the Law of Unintended Consequences. A successful boycott here would have next to zero effect on Kroger, Inc., but an enormous effect locally — particularly on our friends and neighbors who work at Fred Meyer.

Our community as a whole would suffer any diminution of the terrific Fred Meyer staff.

We all feel anguish and grief for the victims and survivors, but I think society is better served by directing our efforts to those who exploit mass killing for entertainment: movie studios, television and video game manufacturers for a start.

The mainstream media revel in tragedy: If it bleeds, it leads.

Firearms per se are not lethal.

But humans definitely are.

—Ian Eales
Florence

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Libelous, argumentative and anonymous letters or poetry, or letters from outside our readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

POLITICAL/ELECTION LETTERS:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

Send letters to:
nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com

WHERE TO WRITE

Pres. Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
FAX: 202-456-2461
TTY/TDD Comments:
202-456-6213
www.whitehouse.gov

Gov. Kate Brown
160 State Capitol
900 Court St.
Salem, Ore. 97301-4047
Governor's Citizens' Rep.
Message Line:
503-378-4582
www.oregon.gov/gov

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden
221 Dirksen Senate Office
Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-5244
541-431-0229
www.wyden.senate.gov

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley
313 Hart Senate Office
Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-3753/FAX: 202-228-3997
541-465-6750
www.merkley.senate.gov

U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio
(4th Dist.)
2134 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6416
541-269-2609
541-465-6732
www.defazio.house.gov

State Sen. Arnie Roblan
(Dist. 5)
900 Court St. NE - S-417
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705
FAX: 503-986-1080
Email: Sen.ArnieRoblan@state.or.us

State Rep. Caddy McKeown
(Dist. 9)
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1409
Email: rep.caddymckeown@state.or.us

West Lane County Commissioner Jay Bozievich
125 E. Eighth St.
Eugene, OR 97401
541-682-4203
FAX: 541-682-4616
Email:
Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us