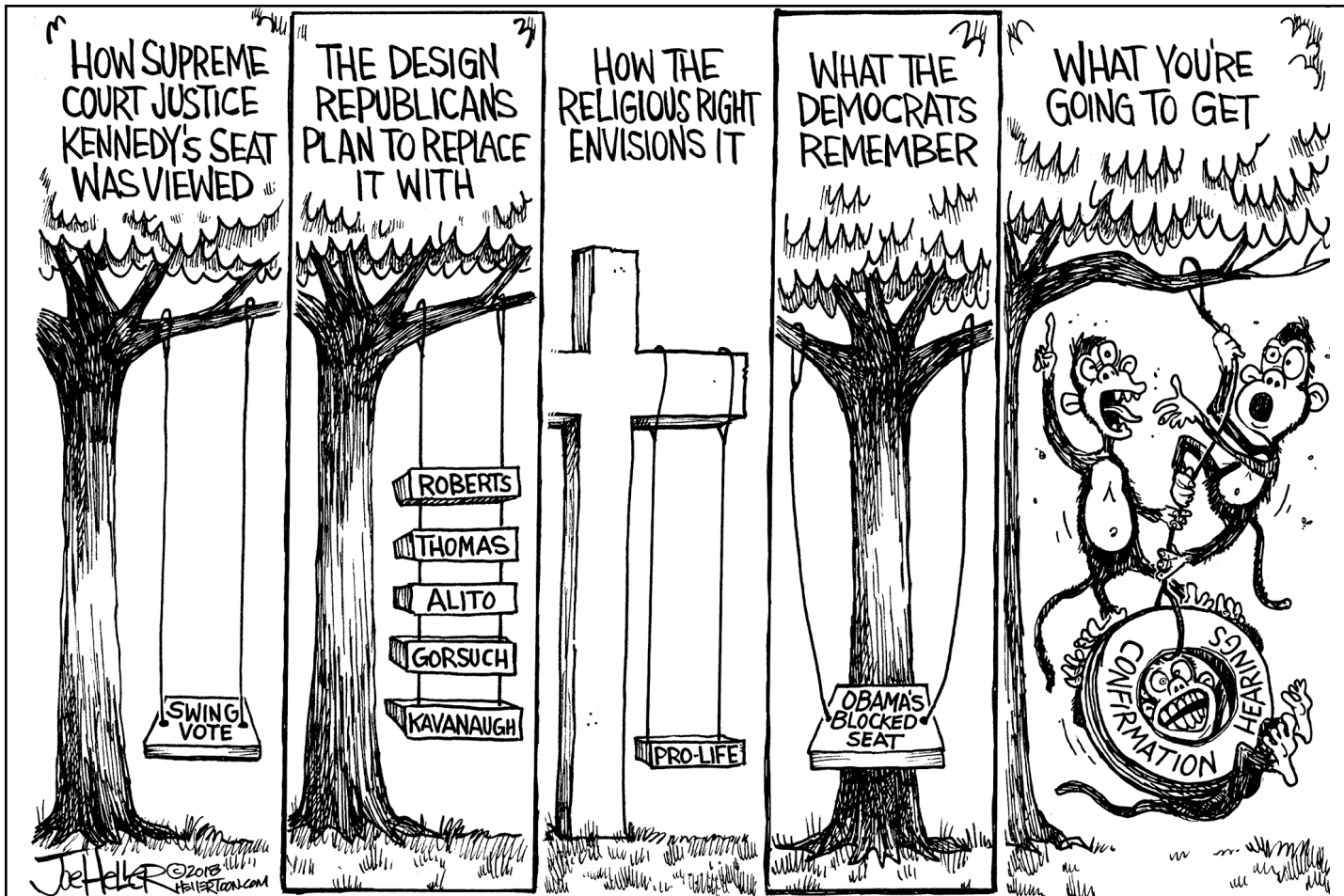


Siuslaw News  
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# Opinion

**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.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)



## LETTERS

### RIGHTS UNDER FIRE

The letter to the Editor from Boomer Wright last Wednesday (July 11, 2018) listed a number of our rights that may be in jeopardy. Although I disagree with Mr. Wright that Second Amendment rights are in danger from corporations or the government, he makes the argument that if the Second Amendment is threatened, then various other rights may be next.

Mr. Wright listed the following rights that could be next on the proverbial chopping block. I couldn't agree more. In fact, this administration is already going after many of our rights. For example:

1. Free speech. Our free speech rights are

already being attacked by this president. For example, his attacks on the media (with the exception of FOX), as well as his verbal assaults on lawful, peaceful protest of NFL players.

2. Women's rights. Women's rights are under direct attack by this administration. Trump has indicated that he wants to take away a woman's right to choose. He wants to see Roe v. Wade overturned and his judicial appointments reflect this. HUD raising rates on public housing residents will affect a large number of single mothers. This president talks about and treats women in degrading ways. This administration is defunding Planned Parenthood, which provides women with cancer screenings and

a multitude of women's medical issues, not just abortions. The WIC program funding has been significantly cut by Trump's budget.

3. Sexual orientation. Trump ordered that all transgender service members be discharged from the armed services. The Trump administration also rescinded federal guidelines that gave equal access to bathroom and other school facilities and programs.

4. Religious affiliation. The Muslim Ban is a prime example of this.

But the right to bear arms? No. He got a \$30 million donation from the NRA.

—Marybeth Marenco  
Florence

## CAMP RYLA: WHERE FUTURE LEADERS ARE MADE

*(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)*

Camp RYLA is a sophomore-only camp that focuses on building the leaders of tomorrow. RYLA stands for Rotary Youth Leadership Academy. It is a six-day long camp in which campers learn skills in order to be good leaders, and then apply those skills in challenge activities that are designed for us to think outside the box.

This was the first of big three events I will take part in this summer. It was also the first time I have ever taken part in a Rotary event.

Here are three stories I have brought back to share with you.

On the first day of camp, we were assigned into small groups of 12, known as Species Groups. Each group had their signature handshake, as well as a counselor and assistant counselor.

I was placed in the Starfish Species Group, as indicated by the sticker behind my badge. Our handshake was a side fist bump, followed by a slurp at the end with our fingers spread out to signify a starfish.

My counselor's name was Michael and the assistant counselor's name was Jenny.

At first, it was a little weird, considering that none of my classmates were in my species group. One of the first things to start our strong bond was by creating a skit for the first RYLA show, a one-hour show featuring RYLA campers showcasing their talents.

We decided to do Dancing With The Starfish, a parody of Dancing With The Stars. Four of us played judges, two played the hosts, while the rest of us played the dancers. We decided to dance to the music "La Macarena," then stop suddenly, and then break out into a flossing dance move sensation.

For added humor, since starfish can regenerate limbs, we decided to have one of us fall out of the starfish formation for the crowd to get an exaggerated reaction.

Before we went on stage, we were given bad news that we could not get music from one of our phones to play the song. Guess who stepped up to sing out the song — me. I didn't know the words to the song, but I did know the notes, beat and rhythm. The

only words I knew were "La Macarena," so I replaced the other words with random words. Despite this, the audience still loved the song and even laughed at the words. The funniest line I can remember from that skit was during our flossing. One of the hosts

### GUEST VIEWPOINT By Ramiro Ramirez Siuslaw High School Student

said, "I thought flossing was for teeth only!"

Overall, it was probably one of the best skits from camp RYLA, if I do say so myself.

RYLA also introduced me to a new game called Gaga Ball, a game with complicated rules and as many as 45 players. The game is crazy fun to play. In fact, I learned it so quick, I became one of the prominent players of the game, even including a five-win streak.

Gaga Ball can be thought of as a game of strategy. You can either take risks to get the ball, or avoid it and be one of the few to make it to the end. Despite being crazy fun, it can be dangerous as the arena surface is gravel and I fell several times.

My favorite moment of this game was making it into the finals by being aggressive with the ball and avoiding it at times. When it finally came down to the final 2, it was me vs a cabin mate of mine. He was a tall guy, and he was as good at the game as I was. When it came to just the two of us, I waited for the right moment for him to mess up.

Another cool thing from this was the amount of support I was getting from the spectators. Many didn't know me at this time, but now I was being known as a great Gaga Ball player. In the end, I got him out and everybody burst into cheers. Never in my life had I ever had that much support from so many people.

The last story I will share is the group project we presented on the last day of camp. This was known as "The Pitch."

Since the first day of camp, every Species Group had to come up with an idea that can help benefit their communities. These projects can be taken back to our communities and be applied.

We narrowed our ideas into something we called The Smile Box, a medium-sized box that can be transferred to homeless and low-income families to give them general needs they may not have. This includes

a toothbrush, toothpaste, candy, sunscreen and a pillow. We planned these boxes to be found in food pantries as an addition to the services those places provide. These boxes can also be tailored to the family's needs by taking a survey when they enter the pantry.

The goal of The Smile Box is to offer homeless people easier ways to access general items they may not have, as well as the fact that we want to improve the sanitation in our communities as well.

When other Species Groups went up, they shared other good ideas. One project focused on fundraising in schools by having students recycle their cans. Since aluminum cans are redeemable for money, just think about how much money the fundraiser can build. It also teaches students to recycle their items instead of littering or throwing it into the garbage. Another idea focused on an after-school program called "The Rise," which focuses on bringing a positive environment to students living a hard life.

All the projects seemed to bring potential to their communities if taken back home.

To summarize my experience, Camp RYLA was a good camp to go to. The schedule was a pretty fair balance of free time and camp time. I would like to point out that there was no cellular service at the camp, which motivated the campers to find some activities to do. All lessons in the camp were well planned, and nicely done.

There were great times, such as the RYLA show, and very low times as with The Line, an event where we were asked questions about negative factors in our life.

My Species Group mates were also a great addition to my life, as I promised to keep in touch with them as much as I can. We worked together great in some activities as climbing over a tall physical wall that represents our struggles in our life, trust falls that encourage us to trust our groupmates and several games.

I would like to dedicate this article to my Species Group. Thank you for making our group one of the strongest bonds at camp.

Camp RYLA has shown me many possibilities that can be achieved when you are a good leader. Now that the camp has finished, I get the honor to do a presentation along with my classmates in front of the Rotary members of Florence to show what I learned at camp.

I have some good things in store for them.

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### 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.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or documented will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside the Siuslaw News 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 partisan-ship 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.

Email letters to:

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