



OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Giving thanks

On July 13, we had a major grease fire which led to an unreal catastrophe.

Everyone knows not to leave your stove unattended, but accidents do happen. My husband and I went to tend the garden and chickens in our backyard. Several minutes later we heard smoke alarms and looked at each other with fear in our eyes.

It was our home, and the black smoke was pouring out the partially open kitchen window. We ran to the house and opened the door and the black smoke was so thick it was blinding.

The only thing we could see was the flame on the stove and going up the wall behind. We tried to extinguish it to no avail. My husband called 911 and their arrival was prompt. The fire went up the stove vent and into the attic and electrical.

You don't smell anything worse than electrical smoke and the damage it does to everything. We give great thanks to the Cottage Grove Fire Department for their promptness and for saving our home. We give thanks to PayneWest Insurance for giving us enough money up front to get the items we needed to live for the time being, such as replacing our meds, something to eat, housing, etc. We give thanks to our good dear neighbors, Cindee and Mark, for helping us and being there daily to continue to help us. We give thanks to our daughter, Micki, for sharing her home until we found another. We camped in our driveway, in a trailer furnished by our insurance, for a month. We now live in a rental until our home is

restored.

I give thanks because my grandson was not there. He is always with me, but my daughter was on vacation, so he was with his mom and dad. It would have been devastating for a 5-1/2 year old child to see his grandparents go through this horrible shocking nightmare.

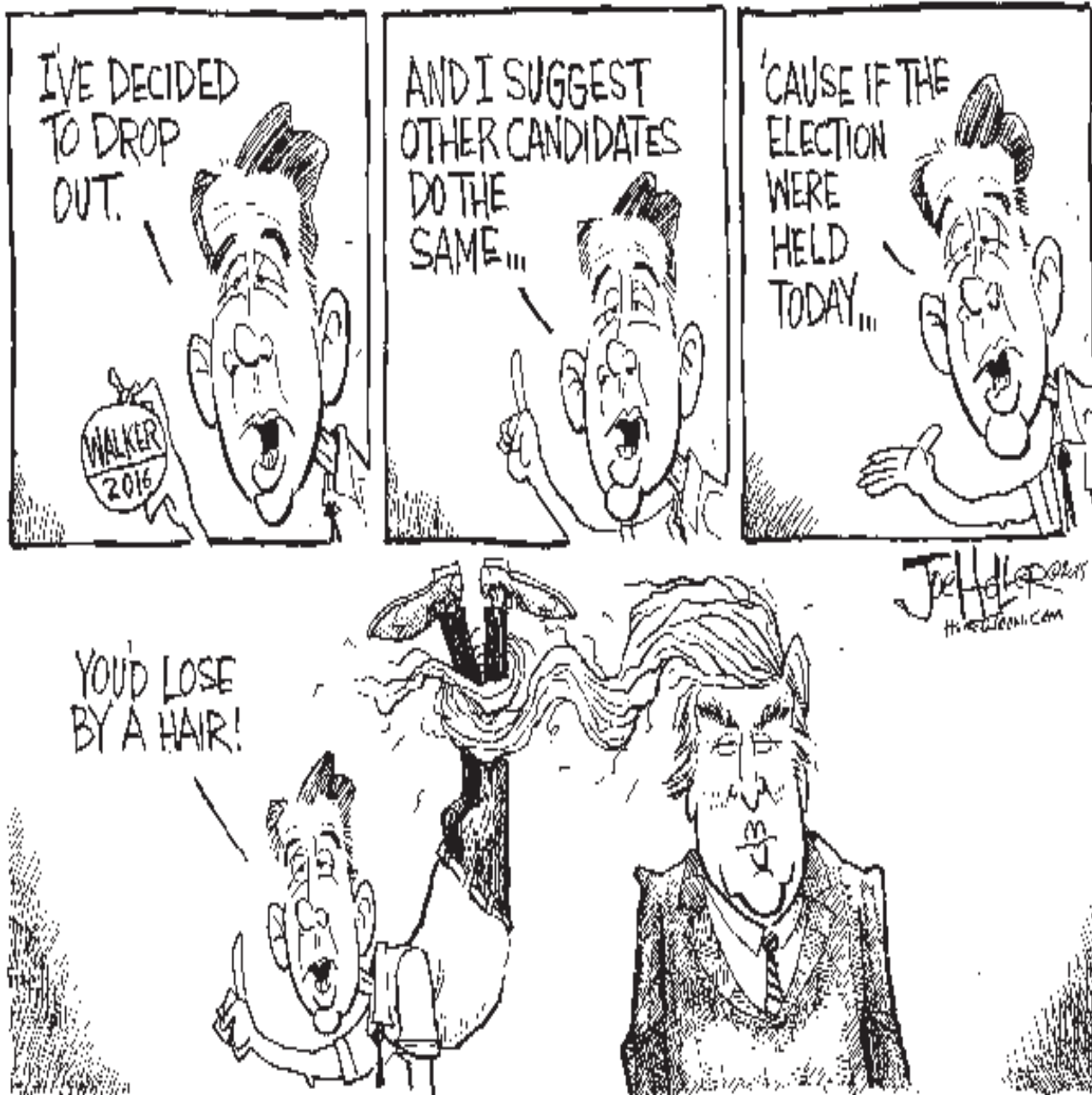
I have one older inside cat who found a good spot to hide. It was protected in this area, low to the floor and partially secluded with a blanket. It was the next morning that I got him out. He was traumatized as I knew he would be. Cottage Grove Veterinary Clinic examined his lungs and they were OK. They also kept him for several days, as I couldn't. Thanks for Janetta — she took him into her home for a few weeks until I was settled to have him back. What would we do if we did not have all of these kind people of Cottage Grove?

It's taken a lot of "guts" on my part to share with you the situation we got into. I'm hoping my sharing will help others to be very alert to help protect themselves from any catastrophe that could happen.

Always check and make sure your fire alarms are in working order, and do not just assume they are. Make sure your homeowners or your rental policies are intact and enough to cover your losses, if that time of need comes.

Progress is coming along on our home, but we don't know when it will be ready for us to return. We do know that we will be ready to go home when that time comes. And we are forever thankful.

Cookie Howe
Cottage Grove



Offbeat Oregon History

Clean-cut murder case turned out to be sordid and complex

The Unwritten Law Files

BY FINN J.D. JOHN
For the Sentinel

This column is one of a series of case studies of the early-20th-century mania for honor killings in Oregon. It was popularly known as "The Unwritten Law," and it was a social convention that permitted and/or obligated a man to murder anyone whom he knew to be working to seduce his wife or sister. Unwritten Law cases arose around the country in the 1890s and were alarmingly common until around the time of the First World War. Today's column discusses one such case, which took place in Portland in 1907, and which may actually be the case that ended what had been widespread public approval of Unwritten Law killings.

For the average Oregon newspaper reader, the first inkling that something about Officer John Gittings' murder was not as it appeared came a few days before Christmas, when it became apparent that he had been having an affair with his murderer's wife's sister.

By itself, that wouldn't seem to change much. The facts, as Portlanders knew them, were still pretty black-and-white: Melville Bradley beat his wife, Kate; Kate's brother, Joseph Sivener, went looking for him to thrash him and brought Gittings along; Bradley came up shooting and Gittings caught a bullet. The fact that Gittings was Sivener's sister's boyfriend, rather than just some random innocent beat cop helping out a citizen, didn't really change much.

But it had a significant effect on Officer Gittings' posthumous

reputation. It soon became clear that not only was Gittings married with three small children (and one more on the way), but that he neglected his family shockingly.

The Oregonian's reporter called the Gittings family manse "a deplorable little shack, cold, forbidding, leaky, un-paid-for."

"The wind whistles uncomfortably through the cracks where the boards fail to meet," he continued. "The shack stands three feet from the ground and by way of a front stoop two earthen jars do service. ... Gittings got \$100 a month from the city, but his family did not get so much from Gittings. There is no evidence that they ever got anything. The widow is miserably clothed, the three little children actually look cold."

Gittings' brother officers now rose gallantly to the occasion and started taking up a collection to take care of the widow and orphans.

"The sentiment seemed to be that whatever discreditable there might have been in the affair ... the widow and the children were innocent of it and eminently deserving of assistance," the Oregonian reported.

Under the cops' leadership, with the full moral support of

the newspaper, and in the spirit of the Christmas season, the community rallied around poor Mrs. Gittings. Soon she and the kids were living in a fully paid-for, upgraded home, with a cow and chickens in the back to supply milk and eggs.

Time passed. There was no word on the murderer — a man for whom public animosity was already starting to die down. Meanwhile, his wife, whose beating had started the whole spectacle, had moved on with her life, as had her brother, Joseph Sivener. Both were back in the headlines just a few months later, both under rather unfortunate circumstances.

First, in March of 1908, Sivener was picked up by police and tossed in the city pokey. It seems he had acquired the habit of swindling small amounts of money by forging checks drawn on the accounts of East Side saloonkeepers and cashing them. In the grand scheme of things, it was a minor offense, but it didn't play well with the public's image of him as the righteous, avenging brother of the poor wronged wife, charging forth to call her wife-beating no-good husband to account.

Speaking of the poor wronged wife — well, perhaps it's best to

just quote from the newspaper directly. This article hit the papers a little over a year later:

"Mrs. Kate Kakarous, the wife of a Greek bartender and formerly the wife of Melville Bradley, the murderer of Policeman Gittings, was arrested last night as a streetwalker by Patrolman Stillwell, at the corner of Third and Everett streets."

Third and Everett, by the way, is right in the middle of the old North End — the rough-and-tumble waterfront district, down by the wharves and sailors' boardinghouses, brothels and shanghai joints.

By this time, the avid newspaper readers of Portland had learned that the party whom Bradley had suspected of being intimate with his wife (the pretext for the beating) was Gittings himself. This suggested a whole new theory of the crime — one in which Bradley, called out of the saloon by Sivener, saw Gittings waiting for him in uniform and wearing his service revolver. Gittings, as he would have known, was a crack shot and owner of a large collection of rifles and pistols. Thinking the whole thing a setup with Gittings the trigger man, he drew and emptied his revolver at Gittings.

This theory, of course, doesn't quite square with the earlier impression that Gittings and Kate Bradley's sister, Aggie Vanders, who had made such a dramatic commotion over his corpse, were lovers. But by then, most Portlanders had concluded that everyone involved in the whole affair was some sort of dangerous looney. And there was such a dramatic flair in Aggie Vanders' grief; could it have been a put-on?

So, if you're keeping track — at this point in the story, every single character in our crime drama had been revealed to be some sort of unlovable freak. The Good Guy — Sivener, who went forth to avenge his sister's beating — turned out to be a petty swindler. The Damsel In Distress — Kate Bradley — turned out to also be a prostitute and bigamist. The Innocent Bystander Policeman turned out to be a serial philanderer, home-wrecker and worst family man in the city, and to also have possibly been intending to murder Bradley.

And for anyone tempted to conclude that Bradley had been right to do as he did — beat his wife and murder her

Please see **OFFBEAT**, Page 9A

Excellent nutrition to prevent and reverse heart disease

BY JOEL FUHRMAN, MD
For the Sentinel

Heart disease is our nation's number one killer. Americans suffer 715,000

heart attacks a year, resulting in 125,000 deaths due to this largely preventable disease. Making significant lifestyle modifications, including regular exercise and dietary changes, allow

people who suffer with coronary heart disease to reduce and eliminate their dependence on medications and avoid major surgeries such as bypass and angioplasty.



Research studies have documented that heart disease is easily and almost completely preventable (and reversible) through a diet rich in plant produce and lower in processed foods and animal products. Here are some dietary guidelines for a healthy heart:

Eat a high nutrient, vegetable-based diet. Green vegetables activate the body's natural detoxification mechanisms and protect blood vessels against inflammation that can lead to atheroscle-

rotic plaque buildup.

Eat berries and pomegranates. The antioxidants in berries and pomegranates, such as anthocyanin and punicalagin, are especially effective in improving LDL cholesterol and blood pressure.

Avoid refined carbohydrates. Refined carbohydrates have been found to be just as damaging to the cardiovascular system as saturated fats.

Eat at least one ounce of raw nuts and seeds daily. Regular consumption of nuts and seeds is associated with a 35 percent reduction in heart disease risk.

Limit your intake of animal protein to at most six ounces per week. Animal protein consumption directly increases heart disease risk.

Eat beans daily. Beans help to lower cholesterol; also a 19-year study found that people who eat beans at least four times a week

have a 21 percent lower risk of heart disease than those who eat them less than once a week.

Have 1 Tbsp. of ground flax seeds or chia seeds each day. These contain cardioprotective omega-3 fats, lignans, flavonoids, sterols and fiber.

Exercise, of course is also essential for a healthy heart:

Regular physical activity reduces the risk of coronary heart disease and diabetes by 30-50 percent.

The heart becomes more efficient through exercise, allowing the resting heart rate to decrease. This is beneficial because a high resting heart rate is a risk factor for cardiac mortality.

The mood-elevating and stress-reducing properties of exercise also contribute to its protective effects against heart disease.

True heart disease protection comes from achieving and

maintaining normal parameters WITHOUT the need for medications. There is no substitute for earning superior health! You can be free of heart disease risk and free of dependency on medication. The high-nutrient (Nutritarian) diet-style that I recommend lowers blood pressure, lowers cholesterol and lowers blood glucose to normal.

Dr. Fuhrman is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Eat to Live* and *Super Immunity*, and a board certified family physician specializing in lifestyle and nutritional medicine.

Visit his informative website at DrFuhrman.com. Submit your questions and comments about this column directly to newsquestions@drfuhrman.com.

Cottage Grove Sentinel

116 N. Sixth Street · P.O. Box 35 · Cottage Grove, OR 97424

ADMINISTRATION:
JOHN BARTLETT, Regional Publisher.....942-3325 Ext. 203
GARY MANLY, General Manager.....942-3325 Ext. 207
publisher@cgsentinel.com

ROBIN REISER, Sales Representative.....942-3325 Ext. 203
robin@cgsentinel.com
E. SCURRY ELLIS, Sales Representative.....942-3325 Ext. 213
esellis@cgsentinel.com

NEWS DEPARTMENT:
JON STINNETT, Editor.....942-3325 Ext. 212
cgnews@cgsentinel.com

SPORTS DEPARTMENT:
SAM WRIGHT, Sports Editor.....942-3325 Ext. 204
sports@cgsentinel.com

CUSTOMER SERVICE
CARLA WILLIAMS, Office Manager.....942-3325 Ext. 201
billing@cgsentinel.com
LEGLAS.....942-3325 Ext. 200
legals@cgsentinel.com

GRAPHICS:
RON ANNIS, Graphics Manager

(USP 133880)

Subscription Mail Rates in Lane and Portions of Douglas Counties:
Ten Weeks.....\$9.10
One year.....\$36.15
e-Edition year.....\$36.00

Rates in all other areas of United States: Ten Weeks \$11.70; one year, \$46.35, e-Edition \$43.00.
In foreign countries, postage extra.

No subscription for less than Ten Weeks. Subscription rates are subject to change upon 30 days' notice. All subscriptions must be paid prior to beginning the subscription and are non-refundable.

Periodicals postage paid at Cottage Grove, Oregon.

Postmaster: Send address changes to P.O. Box 35, Cottage Grove, OR 97424.

Local Mail Service:

If you don't receive your Cottage Grove Sentinel on the Wednesday of publication, please let us know. Call 942-3325 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Advertising ownership:

All advertising copy and illustrations prepared by the Cottage Grove Sentinel become the property of the Cottage Grove Sentinel and may not be reproduced for any other use without explicit written prior approval.

Copyright Notice:

Entire contents ©2015 Cottage Grove Sentinel.

Letters to the Editor policy

The Cottage Grove Sentinel receives many letters to the editor. In order to ensure that your letter will be printed, letters must be under 300 words and submitted by Friday at 5 p.m. Letters must be signed and must include an address, city and phone number or e-mail address for verification purposes. No anonymous letters will be printed. Letters must be of interest to local readers.

Personal attacks and name calling in response to letters are uncalled for and unnecessary.

If you would like to submit an opinion piece, Another View must be no longer than 600 words.

To avoid transcription errors, the Sentinel would prefer editorial and news content be sent electronically via email or electronic media. Hand written submissions will be accepted, but we may need to call to verify spelling, which could delay the publishing of the submission.