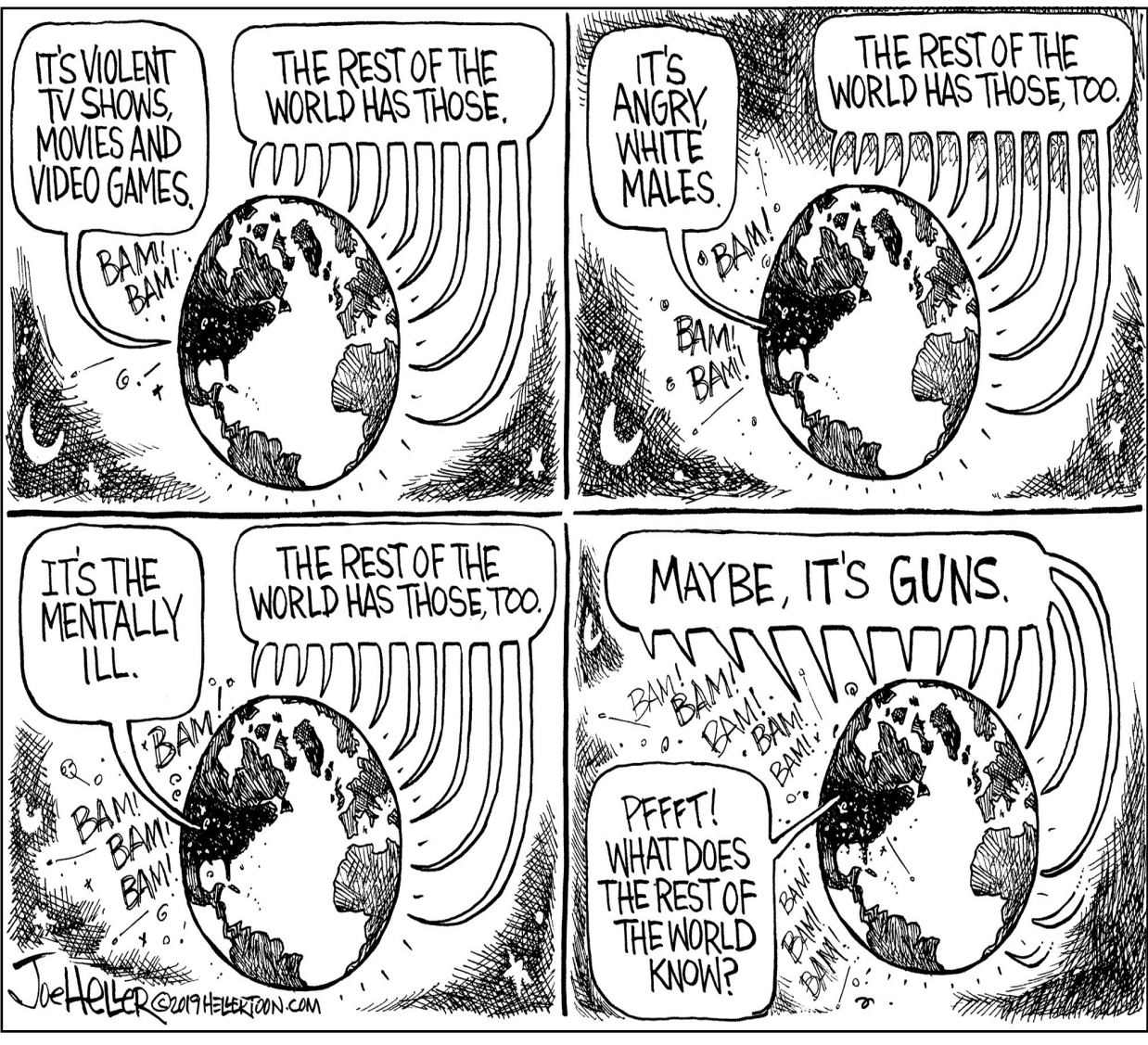


Cottage Grove Sentinel
 116 N. Sixth St.
 Cottage Grove, Ore. 97424

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)



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Letters to the Editor Policy

The Sentinel 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anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside The Sentinel 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@cg sentinel.com



Just another day of flags at half mast

shootings has already outpaced that with 255 incidents since Jan. 1, averaging more than one mass shooting a day. This is according to the Gun Violence Archive

member — should count. If you are a gun owner, you probably assume I say all of this as an argument against gun ownership. However, that would

understand that free speech still doesn't allow me to yell "Fire!" in the middle of a crowded theater.

There are common sense rules that come with all freedoms in order to assure that those freedoms are not misused or manipulated to the detriment of others.

The current number of mass shootings in America — and acts of gun violence in general — has us on a trajectory for the deadliest year since 2016, which was the first time the number of mass shootings in a single year (382) topped the number of days in that same year.

It's time we stop focusing on the division between who does and doesn't — or who should and shouldn't — own guns, and instead recognize that the current laws and rules regarding our Second Amendment right are being misused and manipulated — to the detriment of us all.

From the Editor's Desk
 Ned Hickson

(GVA), a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization that defines mass shootings as "an incident in which at least four people are shot, excluding the shooter."

I realize there is some controversy over this number, which some gun proponents argue is inflated by including those wounded and not killed, as well as shootings that occur in relation to gang and domestic violence.

I would argue that anyone who has been a victim of gun violence — wounded or killed, gang member or family

be hypocritical since I, too, am a gun owner.

I'm also a motorcycle owner and realize that the days of riding helmetless without any formal training or certification are long gone. That's because laws and rules were changed and adopted in order to decrease the number of senseless deaths that occurred each year as a result of not having any real oversight or personal accountability.

While I fully support the Second Amendment, I also support the First Amendment — but un-

LETTERS

PLACING THE CART BEFORE THE HORSE

Life, for all of us, is a matter of priorities. Affordable housing is a definite concern in Cottage Grove, but it appears the city is unaware what is most important for its current citizens.

The Harrison School asset could be leveraged for the City of Cottage Grove's future for generations. Generating revenue with a center for our youth and community is just one idea. Real estate prices are increasing in Oregon, so why take this precious asset and give it to a land developer?

Developers arrive with big ideas, short-sighted goals, make the most money, then leave the community.

Cottage Grove currently has many priorities of concern. Adding more people will only increase current issues of street repair, our children's futures, maintenance of our skate park, police and fire response being stretched, failing sewer systems, water costs, aging treatment plants, addiction

issues, power resource shortages, and the very important lack of good paying jobs for its citizens.

Before we add more people, it's important to plan for the already stressed infrastructure.

I urge the City of Cottage Grove administrators to please reconsider the future of selling off Cottage Grove's land assets to developers.

Get input before we impose development on existing neighborhoods. To increase Cottage Grove's population without consideration of the related impact is a flawed concept.

Cottage Grove administrators might instead focus on creating an environment that will bring companies that bring jobs. Our economic health is critical to the foundation and future of Cottage Grove.

A one-time profit from the sale of a precious asset like Harrison School puts the cart before the horse.

—Linda Yellin
 Cottage Grove

SUPPORT CG CAROUSEL THROUGH FINAL CONCERT

The Friends of the Cottage Grove Carousel encourage you to attend the fourth and final musical program of the four-concert series.

It has been an immense pleasure presenting the Cascade Chorus, Windy Ridge, Calvary Creek and Jackie Jae and Jason Cowsill. And the final attraction: Men from SURF.

Those of you who have followed the series, please remember and note that all these talented people gave their time and talent to bring awareness and promotion to the carousel project and its building fund needs.

Friends of the Cottage Grove Carousel are deeply appreciative of the donated time.

And our sincere thanks to Calvary Chapel and their Board of Directors and Pastor Smith for their generous donation of the use of their chapel to present our concerts.

—Donald Williams
 Friends of The Cottage Grove Carousel

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