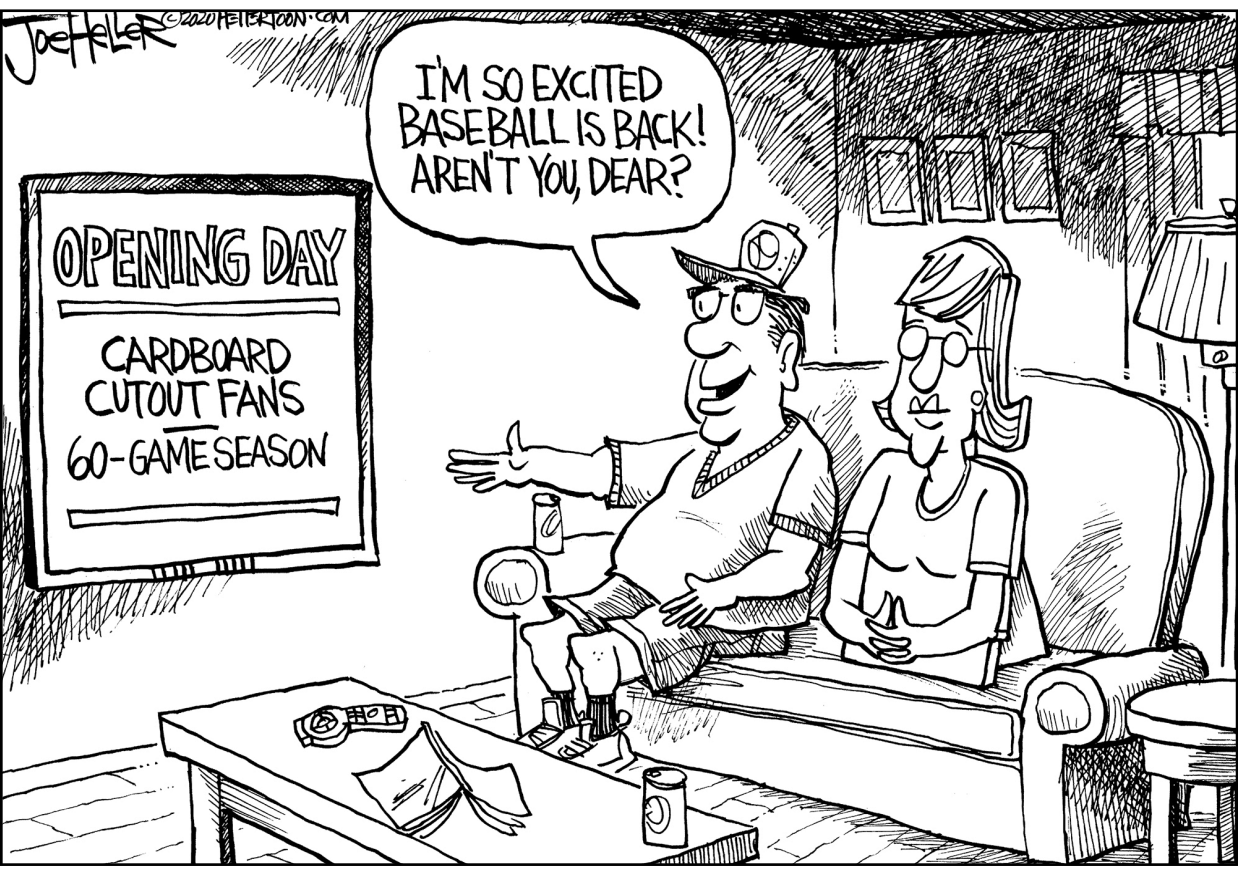


Cottage Grove Sentinel
 116 N. Sixth St.
 Cottage Grove, Ore. 97424

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)



LETTERS

IN SUPPORT OF POLICE

When George Floyd died in police custody, everyone was outraged and hoped for a swift and harsh punishment to the officers involved.

We initially supported the position Black Lives Matter took and the peaceful demonstrations that followed. Unfortunately, it seems the BLM movement was hijacked by radical elements of violent anarchists, looters and overall bad actors with connections to dangerous Antifa groups.

These rioters creating chaos and mayhem, destroying property, vandalizing national monuments, attacking innocent citizens and police officers. They even murdered two black teenagers in Seattle's so-called "autonomous zone."

Some of them are very violent rioters. Unfortunately, in some Democratically-run cities, police officers' hands appear to be tied and ordered not to do their jobs because politically appointed police chiefs were told so by city mayors or state governors.

Our own state's city of Portland has been a prime example of this debacle.

I think President Trump is right when stating that all this is mostly happening in liberal cities and states run by Democratic leaders. Most people want to be safe and not calling for defunding our police departments.

So, next time you see your hometown police officer, take a minute and thank him or her and tell them they are appreciated.

—George and Susan Zajic
 Cottage Grove

ONLY CALL HOSPITAL IF YOU HAVE PATIENCE OF JOB

I recently attempted to call my doctor's office at the Cottage Grove Hospital. When I did so, I was sub-

jected to nearly an hour of robotic announcements and elevator music.

No one responded.

I was not offered an option to leave a message or to speak to a human being. As my blood pressure spiked and my phone battery drained, I opted to act in the best interests of both my physical and mental health and gave up.

Perhaps that's what their phone system is designed to accomplish — or at least it seems so.

In order to get an answer to a simple question, I drove to the hospital, asked for my doctor's receptionist, and out business was transacted in less than a minute. I noticed the receptionist had a telephone right next to her and that it was not ringing.

In fact, I don't recall hearing any phones ringing anywhere while entering or leaving. Perhaps their phone system as it was designed? After all, isn't the corporate definition of "customer service" a telephone system that disdains customers and offers little if any human service?

To my fellow seniors, I offer this advice: Unless you have the patience of Job and don't suffer from hypertension, don't stay on the phone line too long if you call the hospital.

—John Galbreath
 Cottage Grove

SLCFR BOARD NEEDS TO DO THE RIGHT THING FOR ITS CITIZENS

As a resident of Cottage Grove, I just wanted to voice my opinion on Fire Chief Wooten's statements on social media.

I was very shocked and appalled at his recent statement on social media. To post how he would shoot someone is disturbing to say the least. At the very least, it shows

poor judgment, especially when your job is to make critical decisions that could cost lives if the wrong decisions are made.

But to add on top of that that he described in detail how he would shoot another human being with a sniper rifle exceeds just poor judgment; it reveals a character trait that is downright scary.

To have a chief of a fire department who is responsible for saving lives expressing in detail how he would kill someone is unacceptable.

Though he says his social media account was hacked, it seems to be a fabrication made up after realizing what he had said was very wrong.

If so, then we can add dishonesty to the bad decision-making skills of the chief. If Facebook shows proof that his account was actually hacked, then great; I'm hoping that this is the case because I would love to eat my words and see this all go away.

I'm sure we all agree that this is very unfortunate. And sure, Chief Wooten might be a nice guy, which will make this a very hard and personal decision for the board. The thing is, this is a public safety issue — not a personal issue. I hope they will keep that in mind.

When your job is the safety of a city's citizenry, a token disciplinary action is not enough in this case. To have him remain as chief without any ramifications for his actions will tarnish his department, the South Lane County Fire Department board of directors, and our historic, peaceful city of Cottage Grove.

We the citizens of Cottage Grove don't want a fire chief who talked about how he would shoot us, that is unacceptable and we deserve better than that.

—Sam Stouffer
 Cottage Grove

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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.

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2020 VACATION DESTINATIONS

