

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

ROLE OF COUNCILORS, COMMUNITY ARE KEY

A city council election does not typically address the duties of a councilor. It may be normal democracy at work but it does not address the wide-ranging responsibilities of a councilor.

Cottage Grove is an outstanding community for those who can enjoy it. Everyone can benefit when it functions as a unified whole.

A key role for a city councilor is to understand its moving parts and attempt to take action when necessary in the interests of constituents in all wards.

A councilor needs to be well informed, a good communicator and able to work collaboratively with other council members and the city administration.

That generalization does not reflect the hard work, intelligence, skill and moral character

needed for a councilor to further the interests of the community.

It demands a special person who is willing to relegate personal interests to serve his or her fellows.

Elections are not single events.

They are a community's judgment about specific people at a particular time. The real test comes over an extended period and depends as much on individual community member's involvement as the actions of an individual councilor.

It is not good sense to select a person or name and then passively experience whatever happens.

That is too often what happens at the national level but it should not be allowed to happen in our neighborhood.

Communication and concern are essential but only participa-

tion demonstrates responsibility.

It is never too late.

—Alan Jackson
 Cottage Grove

CAN DEMS BE COUNTED ON TO PROTECT OUR NATION?

If Democrat leaders will not even defend the nation's cities that have endured the disgraceful violence and destruction perpetrated upon them during the past several months, then on what basis should we believe that Democrats — who may soon gain control of the Executive and Legislative branches in Washington D.C. — will defend our nation from an attack by a foreign adversary should one occur in the next few years?

Think about it.

—Steve Jackson
 Cottage Grove



Cultural threads of domestic violence need unravelling

of communicating with those they love.

Even as a teenager some 40 years ago, I can tell you that appearing tough and "manly" among your peers while still holding on to the part of you that is thought-

erations, repackaged and presented in more ways than ever before.

The fact is, being a real man *does* mean being in control.

But not of *others*; it means being in control of

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

As we observe Domestic Violence Awareness Month through October, whether you are a survivor of domestic abuse or want to show your support for those who are, I hope you will participate — either in area marches, community meetings, by supporting legislation or volunteering to help victims of abuse.

As a culture, each of us must make a commitment to avoid claiming the baggage that perpetuates violence on our families and each other; as a community, we must make a commitment to each other to support — and when necessary speak up for — our friends, family members and neighbors who we suspect may be victims.

Most importantly, to end the cycle of domestic violence, we must be willing to carry on with that commitment well beyond the last, crisp evenings of October.

ful and caring feels contradictory to what we're taught about being a man.

The stereotypical definition of manhood was in movies, advertising and music: Being a man means being in control.

In charge.

In command.

Of life and our relationships.

Seeking true equilibrium is even more difficult today because, unlike 40 years ago, the unhealthy stereotypes that define "manhood" are relentlessly perpetuated through social media and the near-constant presence of advertising that sells body wash, music, movies, clothes and video games by depicting what it looks like, sounds like and feels like to "be a man."

It is baggage our culture has been carrying for gen-

yourself enough to understand, acknowledge and accept your strengths as well as your weaknesses.

It means never using your strength — physically or verbally — to harm the women in our lives, whether it be your wife, girlfriend, co-worker, 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 when you look in the mirror each day?

As wonderful as our communities in Cottage Grove and surrounding areas are, they aren't immune to domestic violence against women, children and men.

From the Editor's Desk

Ned Hickson

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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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