

Standard online reader survey



As recreational marijuana becomes legal in more states, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions says he'd like the government to enforce federal laws which prohibit marijuana.

Q: Do you think marijuana should be legal?

YES 52%
NO 48%

GUEST EDITORIAL

Perhaps Olympics can help to reduce conflict

Great sporting events are political. Much as athletes, footballers, swimmers and the rest would like to think that international tournaments are merely an opportunity for them to demonstrate their prowess, they can also be used for purposes of diplomacy or realpolitik.

The 1936 Berlin Olympics were a shop-window for Nazi Germany. The 1980 Moscow Olympics were boycotted by the Americans in protest at the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The Soviets duly kept their team and those of their eastern European satellites away from Los Angeles in 1984.

Such events can also build bridges. Late last year, the stand-off between the two Koreas over Kim Jong-un's nuclear program seemed to bring the peninsula close to war, and the tensions have not disappeared.

The U.S. ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, warned last night that Pyongyang could be preparing for another missile test and reiterat-

The Telegraph of London

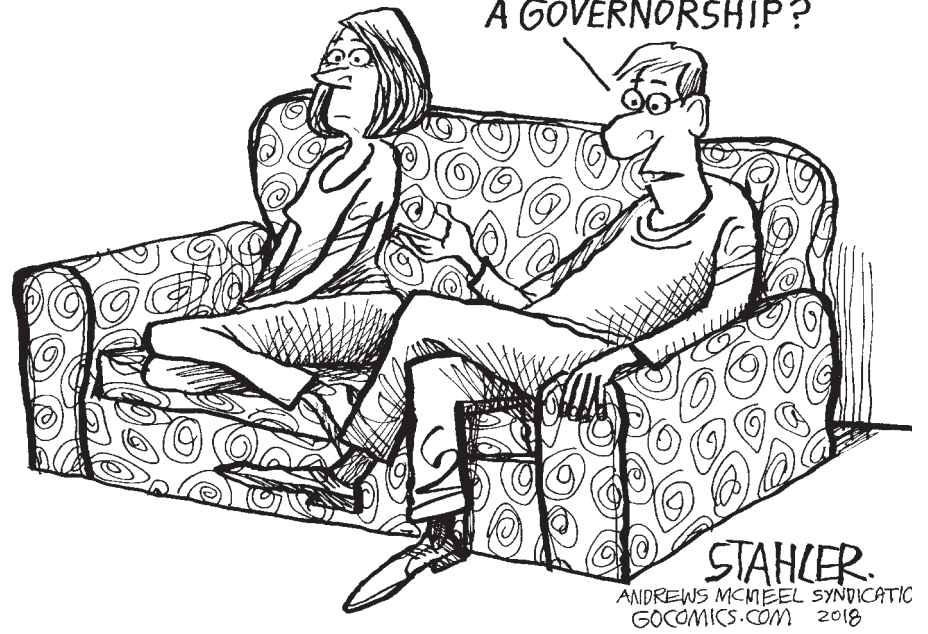
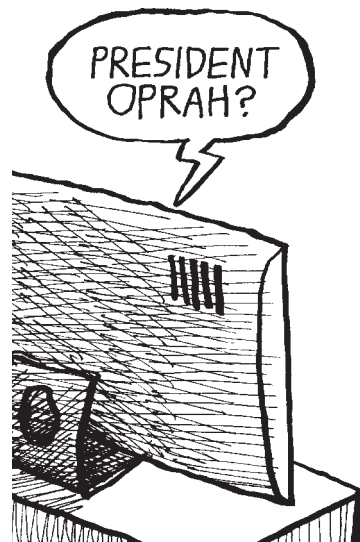
ed that the United States would not accept a nuclear North. Yet the fact that the Winter Olympics is taking place in South Korea next month has opened a window to a possible rapprochement. Kim's regime said it is willing to hold talks with officials in Seoul about participating in the Games.

Talks are due to be held next week, both to discuss the North sending a delegation and a general de-escalation of tension. South Korea's president sees the Pyeongchang Games as a "ground-breaking chance to improve South-North relations and establish peace."

His optimism may be misplaced, with the North attaching unacceptable conditions or continuing with its provocations regardless.

Yet if the Games can help to reduce the risk of a conflict, then the investment in new ski slopes will have been worth it.

REMEMBER WHEN THE ROUTE TO A PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN WAS THROUGH THE MILITARY, SENATE OR A GOVERNORSHIP?



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Immigration debate continues

While Washington obsesses over a new book on White House intrigue, the Trump administration is reaching a critical point on the issue of immigration, one of the president's top priorities and the subject of his most often-repeated campaign promises.

There are multiple moving parts: The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, a border wall, chain migration, the visa lottery and -- hanging over it all -- funding the government. But everything hinges on DACA, unilaterally imposed by Barack Obama to temporarily legalize nearly 800,000 people who were brought to the U.S. illegally when they were young.

When President Trump rescinded DACA last Sept. 5, he delayed implementation for six months to give Congress time to come up with some sort of solution for the so-called Dreamers. That means lawmakers need to act by March 5 or face an uncertain future.

Nearly everyone on Capitol Hill wants a fix that results in legalization for the Dreamers. Democrats want to legalize right away, straight up, no strings attached. But Trump and most Republicans want a deal: immigration reforms in exchange for legalization.

That's where funding the government comes in. A temporary funding resolution passed last month expires Jan. 19. Congress can pass a "clean" bill to avoid a partial shutdown, or it can have a fight if one party tries to attach unrelated policy preferences to the must-pass spending bill.

Trump, who in the past has threatened a government shutdown over the wall, is now proposing trading his

policy preferences -- the wall, etc. -- in exchange for DACA legalization. "The wall is going to happen, or we're not going to have DACA," he said recently. He hasn't demanded they be passed in order to keep the government running.

Assuming the government is funded, with either a long-term or kick-the-can, short-term measure, the DACA negotiations will start in earnest ahead of that March 5 deadline.

Can Trump get what he wants, or part of what he wants? At the moment, Democrats seem determined to throw their bodies in front of any plan to build a wall. The president has asked Congress to put aside \$18 billion over the next 10 years for the job.

That seems doomed. But what about some other idea? What about passing a down payment -- the House has already approved \$1.6 billion -- as part of another plan?

The president also wants a measure to stop chain migration, and perhaps a provision to end the visa lottery, too. It seems highly unlikely he would get it all. But he might get something.

Right now, it's fair to say nearly no one in the Washington press corps is paying much attention -- they would much rather discuss Steve Bannon, or the 25th Amendment or whether the president watches too much TV. But the coming weeks will be crucial for the agenda that won Donald Trump the White House.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

COLUMNIST

BYRON YORK



FAMILY MAN

DUANE SHERRILL



Henry ready for school after break

It comes time for all good things to end. Thus was the case of Christmas break which came to an end Tuesday after several days of bonus vacation for the kids thanks to Mother Nature.

Hey, I have to admit, I'm kind of a fan of school vacations myself since I take Henry to school one or two mornings during the week. Vacation means I don't have to get up at 6 a.m. and step out into the cold to make that trek down Manchester Highway. Call it lazy. Call it what you will, but that sleep you get when you're allowed to crawl back under the covers after your alarm wakes you before dawn is the best sleep of all.

"Woohoo, no school," I muttered each morning I awoke to my alarm and then recalled it was Christmas vacation.

Henry was the same way. He was counting down the days until Christmas break, marking them out on our calendar like an inmate marking out the days left in the stir. Granted, some of that anticipation likely had to do with Santa coming but there was also a lot of relief that he wouldn't have to suffer through homework and tests for a while. In case I haven't mentioned it, Henry looks forward to homework the same way you and I would look forward to a slow, painful root canal -- without the laughing gas.

Just as I thought, Christmas break came and Henry was ecstatic, running about the house, playing games and having a big ole time. That enthusiasm went on through Christmas as he played with the stuff from Santa. And, anytime someone would ask if he was looking forward to going back to school, he would respond with a growl.

However, somewhere around the first of the year that angst toward a return to class melted away. It became especially apparent when the planned return day was canceled due to the extreme cold and the damage at his school caused by frozen water pipes.

"Guess what, Henry," I awoke him. "There's no school today. You get another day off!"

Instead of giving me a smile, happy to have another free day, Henry shot me a frown. "But I wanted to go to school," he said, throwing the covers back over his head.

Wow. What a change. From a kid looking to escape from the lockup to one who is melancholy about not getting to go to school. The next day was even worse when school was canceled again Friday.

"I miss my teacher so bad," he said almost in tears. "I want to see my friends."

I guess it is true that not only does absence make the heart grow fonder, but it also helps you forget how bad you hate homework.

As you can guess, Monday was even worse. Henry was ready for school, his lunch and backpack waiting to go when class was canceled. I kept my jubilation over getting to sleep in that morning to myself. I guess we will see how long he keeps his affinity for school intact. My guess until it's time for Spring Break.

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I just wrote another check to my contractor. What do I care? It's Bitcoin money. Better spend it now before it all disappears.

Still, I do wonder what he does with it all. His guys have been working on my house for a month, and the only thing that seems to have changed is my bank account.

Of course, when I say they've been working on my house for a month, I don't mean they've been there every day. I mean they were here one day, a month ago. That first day, Bob and Rob arrived, tool belts full and raring to go. They ripped apart the kitchen and the bathroom, and moved all my appliances to the middle of the living room. The pace was amazing. They did that all before lunch.

It was while they were at lunch I realized I would be needing that bathroom much sooner than I thought.

It slowly dawned on me there was no way they were going to be able to put in the new shower, sink, toilet, tile and all the other improvements I'd asked for in 10 minutes. Howard, my next-door neighbor, let me in before I'd finished knocking on his door.

"I see you're having some work done," he said. Why do we say that? The work is not "done," it's hardly begun. Shouldn't he have said, "I see you're having some work started"? But then, I didn't really want to stand on Howard's porch having that conversation.

"Yes, I am. Do you think I could borrow your bathroom?"

"Sure, as long as you get it back to me by 4:30."

"Ha, ha, ha. I meant, can I USE your bathroom."

Howard's bathroom could really use an update. It was old and seedy,

not like the modern wonder I was going to end up with: six shower-heads at different heights, surrounded by built-in speakers and lights. A sink made from hammered copper. Glass tiles; modern light fixtures. There would be a fog-free shaving mirror, a towel warmer, a face mister and a soaking tub.

Still, for all its faults, Howard's bath was clean and functional.

"If you ever want to update that bathroom, my contractor can probably do it for you," I told him.

"My contractor just left yesterday to go work on your house," he replied. "I had him pull out all that frou-frou stuff that was in there when I bought the place -- a big soaking tub, a towel warmer, a hammered copper sink, a bunch of shower-heads. All kinds of

stuff. What do I need a fog-free shaving mirror for? It just got to the point where I decided I wanted to spend less time in the bathroom, not more. I can't tell you how much it cost to get that 'retro' look I have now.

I thanked Howard and ran back to my house, hoping to find Bob and Rob busily putting my bathroom back together. That was a month ago. I haven't seen Bob or Bob since, but their boss, Big Bob, has asked me for checks "to meet payroll" twice so far. He assures me that all the work will be finished by the date on the contract.

I said nothing, but handed Big Bob the petition my neighbors had signed and sent to City Hall about removing the Porta-Potty that's been on my front lawn for a month.

"Don't worry about it," he comforted me. "The zoning law says it can be there for two months."

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VILLAGE IDIOT

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