

## Standard online reader survey



**Q: Were you impressed with President Trump's first State of the Union Address?**

- YES
- NO
- DIDN'T SEE IT

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Something must be done to stop school shootings

#### TO THE EDITOR:

After reading an article in your paper regarding a reported student at WCMS saying he was going to bring a gun to school and shoot someone, I want to make a suggestion.

As a previous substitute teacher in Warren County and as a parent and grandparent, I would suggest having your newspaper publish the consequences for such actions or planned actions once validated. I saw a report on the news where, after such a threat was made, police searched this young man's home and found in his bedroom (supposedly unknown to his parents) guns, bomb-making materials, and knives of all makes and designs.

My first response is how does his parents not know? Then I thought back on how now parents are either afraid of upsetting their kids by invading their spaces or living with memories of how they were brought up and think they are doing the right thing.

But then I thought back to my childhood. My mom was always coming into our rooms to sometimes just visit and ask how our day went, never having to knock and we never felt like she was invading our privacy. We knew she loved us and cared about what was going on in our lives.

I know this world has changed and now in most

cases, regardless if it is a one-parent family or two trying to make a living for their family, they become a little overwhelmed but that cannot be an excuse. You had these kids and they are your responsibility. Just look around at the number of kids killing kids.

Twelve through 16-year-old kids are those you see in the papers or nightly news now. This has to stop.

So please do a story on this listing the consequences that can occur if you do something stupid like just threatening to take a gun to school. I would further suggest that perhaps the school superintendent should put together a flyer (citing the consequences) for every student to take home and have their parent sign it and just maybe it will make them spend more time with their kids.

There are some really great kids who attended school in Warren County when I was subbing and I think there still are. But where kids are concerned, parents/guardians have to remember kids, no matter the age, are kids while they are in school and they each need their parents/guardians' undivided attention especially more so with all the iPhones and computers having their attention.

Thanks,  
Nancy Beck  
Shockley Road  
Spencer



1/30  
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### Trump on verge of the wall

Back in 2015, before the presidential primaries began, a voter asked candidate Donald Trump if he believed compromise should be part of politics.

"Compromise is not a bad word to me," Trump answered. "But if you are going to compromise, ask for about three times more than you want. You understand? So when you compromise, you get what you want."

Now, President Trump is engaged in delicate negotiations with Congress over immigration. And he has come up with a deal. On one hand, he's making a big offer to Democrats: legal status for 1.8 million people in the country illegally, which is more than the 800,000 or so covered by President Obama's old Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA – plus a path to citizenship for all of them.

In return, Trump is making a big ask: a fully funded border wall, strong limits on chain migration and an end to the visa lottery.

The questions for Democrats: Is Trump asking for three times more than he wants? Can his position be negotiated down? Or is this the deal they should take?

The president's critics on both right and left are "wrong in viewing this as an opening bid," said a source familiar with White House discussions. "The president views this as a best and final offer."

We'll see if that remains the case. What's stunning about the negotiations is how much Trump has expanded their scope. Originally, some Democrats thought they could win a clean legalization for DACA recipients

– in other words, for the president to just give Democrats what they wanted and be done with it.

But Trump and his Republican allies saw an opportunity to go big, moving beyond even the immigration positions he advocated most frequently in the campaign.

In the presidential race, Trump talked about building a wall along roughly 1,000 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. The wall was the backbone of his pledge to protect Americans from the threats posed by illegal immigration – from crime, drugs, low-wage job competition. And it remains the backbone of his current proposal.

The White House has come up with a demand for \$25 billion for the wall – enough to cover its construction and various support systems. And not some sort of Washington make-believe \$25 billion. Trump wants Congress to put the money in a trust fund that the president could use to pay for building the wall.

It's important to say that everything could still fall apart, but at the moment, Trump's goal is within reach. Democrats acknowledge that they're going to have to give something big to get Trump's equally big offer on DACA legalization.

The president might be on the verge of proving critics wrong about never, ever building a wall. How? It's simple. You just ask for about three times more than you want, so when you compromise, you get what you want.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

#### COLUMNIST

BYRON  
YORK



### Man vs. food challenges

If you've ever been on a canoe trip, a rafting trip or a whitewater adventure, you know the outfitters will never let you drink untreated river water. They're not doing that because river water tastes bad; they're doing it because they know that rivers are nature's toilet.

And worse. I remember floating down the Missouri River in a canoe when the bloated body of dead raccoon floated past me. My dreams of drinking "pure stream water" were not just dashed, they were sat on and squashed.

So you can imagine my surprise to read that some wealthy Silicon Valley types are happily paying \$60 for 2-1/2 gallons of "raw water" – that is, untreated water straight from ... somewhere. It hasn't been fluoridated, it hasn't been filtered, it hasn't been treated with UV light to kill parasites and germs.

Oh sure, tap water may have its problems – Flint, Mich., would be high on that list – but failures like Flint are the exception. In most places in North America, the tap water is as good as the bottled water you find at the grocery store. Rumor is, some bottled water is just tap water.

There is no evidence the tap water in Silicon Valley has any health hazards. Apparently its biggest problem is that it's just commonplace. What wealthy person wants to drink the same water as you and me? And this, more than health, is probably the appeal of "raw water." If it costs \$60 for 2-1/2 gallons, why, it MUST be good! And isn't that the message that's really being sent? That "we're so rich, we can just throw our money away?"

If you've ever lived through some kind of disaster like a hurricane, a tornado or an earthquake, almost the first

piece of advice you'll hear from the experts is to boil your water before you drink it. That's because water from a compromised system is full of germs that can make you ill, and sometimes kill you. That's the kind of risk you take drinking "raw" water. People in developing countries wouldn't fall for this scam; it is only the accidentally wealthy who can afford to be this reckless.

Food fads are not uncommon; they happen all the time. One making the rounds this week is so disgusting it must have been conceived by a publicity-seeking conceptual artist: Instead of chopping up onions and carrots with a knife, the (rumored) new thing is to chew them up and then spit them into whatever you're making. Yummy! I'd give this a 9.5 on the Revolt-o-Meter.

Another fad going around is teenagers taking the "Tide Pod Challenge," in which the brain matter-challenged youth take to eating laundry detergent pods on camera, then posting the video of it on Stupidchat or DumbBook to prove they did it.

Their parents must be so proud. I can hear them now:

"We never thought Junior would amount to anything, but then along came the Tide Pod Challenge. Our little boy ate more of them than anyone! And he had the courage to wash them down with Raw Water. If that doesn't get him a free ride to Harvard or Yale, we just don't know what will."

Eating detergent pods can't really be called a food fad, but it does give me an idea of how to get children to eat foods they don't think they'll like: Dare them to eat their vegetables.

Contact Jim Mullen at [mullen.jim@gmail.com](mailto:mullen.jim@gmail.com).

#### VILLAGE IDIOT

JIM  
MULLEN



#### FAMILY MAN

DUANE  
SHERRILL



### Oldest son now hitting the weights

I have to double my efforts or my oldest son may someday be able to whoop his dear old dad – perish the thought.

Much to my delight, my son Jack joined a gym this past week. He did it on his own, without prompting or teasing from his old man. This comes after I had tried to drag him to the gym with me since he was 16, paying his gym dues despite him only darkening the gym door on rare occasions.

If you know me very well then you know I'm a gym rat and have been since New Year's Eve 1999. I took an oath with friends to continue working out at least three times a week. Two of us are still holding to that oath, the other fell off the wagon the week after the oath.

In the case of Jack, now 20, I know that he has my genes. And, pardon the pun, they are skinny genes. I was as skinny as they come, even after graduating college. I look at some of my old pictures and am stunned about how bony I was back in the day. Before you ask, I was the butt of many a skinny joke back in school.

"Duane has to run around in the shower just to get wet," was the favorite joke folks would make about me, not to mention names like "Bionic Bones" and "Stick Man."

I weighed just 125 pounds when I graduated from Warren County Senior High – standing 6-foot-2 as I do today – and ballooned up to 140 pounds by the end of college. I tipped the scale at a whopping 155 when I started here at the paper in 1990. I weighed in at 200 pounds this past week as reference.

My youngest son Henry is the same way. He is skinny as a rail and won't put on any weight anytime soon given how hyper he is. I'll wait a couple of years before I try to indoctrinate him into weight lifting even though, I have to confess, I have him tag along with me to the gym once in a while just to get used to it.

Anyway, I was excited when Jack announced his membership even as he winced in pain from his soreness.

"You can't do it all in one day," I warned, shooting him a grin as I flexed. "A body like mine takes decades to achieve."

Rolling his eyes at his dad's bragging, Jack started listing off the weight routines he had been doing complete with sets and reps while he stood sipping on a protein shake.

"That's my boy," I proudly smiled. "Start it while you're still young and you'll be glad you did. Don't wait so long like I did."

Will he stick with it? Who knows? But hey, I'm glad that what seemed like futile attempts to get him to work out when he was younger may have planted a seed for later. Maybe he will do one better than dad. Maybe he won't skip leg day like me.

Standard reporter Duane Sherrill can be reached at 473-2191.

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Patricia Zechman, Publisher  
James Clark, Editor

Phyllis Vanatta, Business Manager  
Jeffery Simmons, Advertising Director

Phone: 473-2191  
105 College St., McMinnville, TN 37110  
FAX: 473-6823

Email: [standard@blomand.net](mailto:standard@blomand.net)  
Website: [www.southernstandard.com](http://www.southernstandard.com)

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