

## Standard online reader survey



**Q: Do you think the framers of the U.S. Constitution intended citizens to own assault rifles when writing the Second Amendment?**

**YES or NO**

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Get pets fixed to stop overpopulation surge

#### TO THE EDITOR:

Once again, we are dealing with an animal overpopulation at the Warren County Animal Control and Adoption Center. This time it is puppies – over 30 of them at one point.

Not only are there too many of them, they come in with worms, disease and parasites. Several have come down with Parvo, putting all the dogs in the shelter in danger of contracting this highly contagious and deadly disease.

The picture I have conveyed is a picture of neglect and abuse. There is simply no excuse for people being allowed to breed their dogs and then dumping them at the shelter, or even worse, just plain dumping them. It is time to change the mindset of the people in this county by enforcing existing laws restricting

free-roaming pets and implementing common-sense laws that will reduce the number of unwanted, abandoned and feral animals running in our county and overpopulating our shelter.

Feb. 27 is the 24th annual World Spay Day, part of the annual February Spay/Neuter Awareness campaign of the HSUS, Humane Society International and the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association.

Please help us stop this madness of pet population explosion – get your pet spayed or neutered. If cost is an issue, Helping Animals of Warren County (HAWC) will provide financial assistance to low-income families.

Sincerely,  
Jan Saylor  
Saylor Lane  
Rock Island

## WRITE A LETTER

Members of the community are encouraged to write letters to the editor for publication in the newspaper

[EDITOR@SOUTHERNSTANDARD.COM](mailto:EDITOR@SOUTHERNSTANDARD.COM)



### Faint praise for Presidents Day

For many Americans, tomorrow's holiday is known as "Presidents Day."

As for me, I prefer to call it "Washington's Birthday." How it morphed from honoring the "Father of our Country," who was lauded as "First in War, First in Peace, and First in the Hearts of his Country Men," is a tawdry tale. Washington's Birthday was first established in 1885 to recognize President George Washington, hero of our American Revolution and first President of the United States of America.

Washington's Birthday was

observed unofficially for most of the 1800s. It became a federal holiday in the late 1870s, thanks to Sen. Steven Dorsey of Arkansas, who first proposed it. In 1879, President Rutherford B. Hayes signed the bill into law.

While recognition of Washington's Birthday initially pertained only to the District of Columbia, in 1885, the holiday was expanded to our entire nation. Washington's Birthday became the fifth nationally recognized federal bank holiday, along with Christmas Day, New Year's Day, the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving. It was also the first to celebrate the life of an individual American. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, which was signed into law in 1983, became the second to do so.

The shift from Washington's Birthday to Presidents Day started in the late 1960s with a Senate bill to be called the "Uniform Monday Holiday Act." The intent of the bill was to combine the celebration of several federal holidays from specific dates into a

series of predetermined Mondays. It would mean another three-day weekend for our nation's workers and a boon for big business and labor unions.

The Uniform Monday Holiday Act was controversial then, and rightly so. Still, the essence of it took effect officially in 1971, with an executive order from President Richard Nixon. Thus, Washington's Birthday was shifted from the fixed date of Feb. 22 to the third Monday of February.

Although Nixon's executive order clearly called the newly positioned

holiday "Washington's Birthday," marketers nation-wide were quick to pounce upon the opportunity to exploit the three-day weekend with sales

aplenty. Presidents Day bargains were hawked at stores around America. And the crass commercialism continues unabated in 2018.

Meanwhile, the legacy of President George Washington continues to fade into the mists of the past. Despite the fact he was Founding Father, Commander in Chief of the Continental Army during our American Revolution and the first President of the United States, he is now generically relegated to the dustbin of history, alongside lesser men and more than few scoundrels.

By the way, Washington's Birthday is still officially honored and recognized by the federal government. And that's good enough for me.

Retired Army Col. Thomas B. Vaughn can be reached at [tbvaughn@blomand.net](mailto:tbvaughn@blomand.net).

#### MY TURN

THOMAS B. VAUGHN



### GOP and the prudence thing

Gather round, gentle reader, and I will tell you a tale of yesteryear. It involves the Republican Party, and you will not recognize the institution I am about to describe.

Their presidents said little, and that's not only Calvin Coolidge, who once was challenged by a woman who bet she could prompt him to say three words, only to hear the 30th president say, "You lose." Dwight Eisenhower was no talk-a-holic, and the few remarks he made that were not deliberately convoluted were freighted with great common sense. "Extremes to the right and to the left of any political dispute are always wrong." If anything, Herbert Hoover said too little during the Great Depression.

These Republicans of the old school seldom hectored their opponents the way Harry Truman did when he said, "Suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a Republican. But I repeat myself."

By now you've ascertained this column is about the eclipse of the old GOP, for whom attention to the deficit was not a disorder, and the rise of a Republican Party led by a president who tweets more in a morning than Coolidge spoke in a month. Coolidge's wisdom included this thought that might be shared with his modern-day successor: "I have never been hurt by anything I didn't say."

The Republicans of the old school were wary of spending, a character flaw when the economy was in swift retreat and when basic human needs were not being satisfied by the hidden hand they admired so much in business and commerce. But their penny-pinching was an effective and

often useful check on government extravagance, sometimes to the annoyance of Democrats.

Well, that was yesterday, and yesteryear. This strain of Republican is all but extinct, but not thoroughly so. The other day Steve Bell, who was staff director for the Senate Budget Committee for five years in the Ronald Reagan era, was complaining to me about how the Republicans no longer worry about a balanced budget, a phrase that was conspicuous in its omission from Donald J. Trump's budget proposal released this past week.

"He's for massive tax cuts, a large military, but will not touch Social Security or Medicare," said Bell, who spent a large portion of his career working for GOP Sen. Pete V. Domenici of New Mexico, a fabled deficit hawk. "Most Republican incumbents now believe nobody cares about

the deficit."

So here is the conundrum. If you're worried about long-term deficit spending, the main antidotes are cutting entitlements and raising taxes. The Democrats won't do the first; the Republicans won't do the second. That was a problem when there were conservative Democrats and liberal Republicans. But it is a calamity now.

It once was common for typists of my breed to write about a Democratic Party loose from its moorings and suffering from an identity crisis. That was yesterday, and yesteryear. The Republicans have the White House and the Congress -- and an identity crisis of their own.

David M. Shribman is executive editor of the Post-Gazette ([dshribman@post-gazette.com](mailto:dshribman@post-gazette.com)).

#### NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

DAVID M. SHRIBMAN



#### JUST A THOUGHT

LISA HOBBS



### Job shadowing fun for me too

I don't know about other professionals, but I really enjoy the annual job shadow event sponsored by Warren County Schools for its eighth-graders.

This year, I provided Abigail Hodge and Michaela Hallum from Centertown School with a behind-the-scenes look at what it means to be a newspaper reporter. In essence, what it means to be me and my day-to-day activities.

Job shadowing is a career exploration activity that offers students an opportunity to spend time with a professional currently working in the career field of interest. Job shadowing offers a chance to see what it's actually like working in a specific job. Not only do job shadowers get to observe the day-to-day activities of someone already employed in the industry you're interested in, job shadowers get a chance to have their questions answered.

Abigail, as her card stated, really seemed to have an interest in journalism, while Michaela enjoyed photography. Together, those girls would make one awesome reporter.

They did have some good questions. I answered those the best I could. My favorite question is always about hours. No newspaper reporter has set hours. There's no such thing. It's not banker's hours. Once, I had to get up at 11 p.m., get dressed and go down the street to cover a wreck by my house.

Also, I cover both city and county government – the first reporter to cover both. I'm somewhat proud of that. Plus, it comes in handy when the two overlap. Covering both keeps me pretty busy some evenings. If they meet, I'm there. Meetings vary almost weekly, so my hours vary almost weekly.

After questions were answered, I took these shadowers with me to Warren County Animal Control and Adoption Center. I go there every Friday and take a picture of the Southern Standard Pet of the Week. Each week, I feature an animal that needs a good home. It's one of my favorite responsibilities. I'm allergic to each and every animal, but they all deserve good homes. I like the thought that I could help in finding one.

From animals, to government. We then made our way to McMinnville City Hall to obtain information about a meeting that I could not attend. Because there is only one me and meetings overlap on occasion, I have to rely on others to help me out. While there, we were told that part of a façade of a historic building on Main Street had come loose and fell to the sidewalk. Off we went to cover that piece of news. That was an unexpected, exciting detour.

Abigail sent me a thank you card after the visit that stated:

"Thank you very much for letting me have the opportunity to job shadow you. I take a great interest in the journalist field."

That was my first job shadow thank you card. I enjoyed their visit, and the card was an unexpected delight. I can't wait until next year's job shadow day. Thank you, Warren County Schools.

Standard reporter Lisa Hobbs 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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