

## Standard online reader survey



Q: Do you ever text and drive?

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## GUEST EDITORIAL

# School walk-outs will make impact

In every one of the 50 states and on overseas military bases, they walked out. The kids walked out. They did it for the dead of Columbine, and Newtown, and Parkland — for all the towns and schools branded by tragedy — and they did it for themselves and their classmates.

The Monitor's editorial board and many columnists and letter writers have demanded the leaders of this state and nation do something meaningful to reduce gun violence, and so we won't rehash the various arguments here. All we will say is that something fundamental is broken, and the people with the power to fix it are unwilling to do so because they lack courage or insist on misinterpreting the Second Amendment. Others simply seem to care more about easy access to guns than they do human lives. But today we would rather talk about the kids, because collectively they will be the game-changer. Just wait.

In the days leading up to the walkout, it was refreshing to see that the kids had the support of a lot of school teachers and administrators around the country. But there were some school districts that sus-

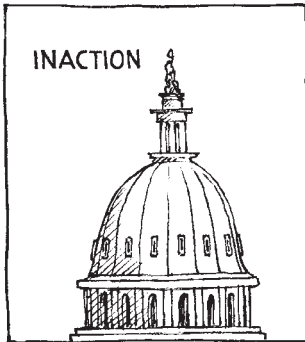
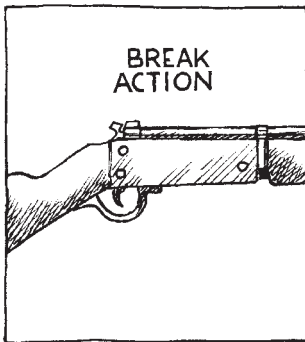
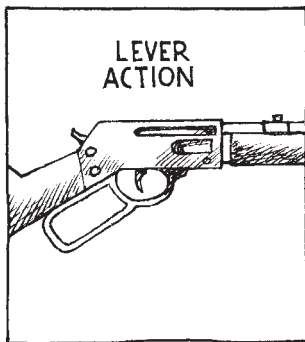
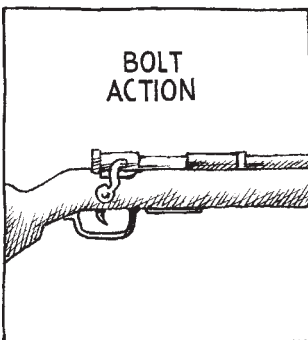
### Concord Monitor New Hampshire

pending kids who participated, and conspiracy-prone critics suggested they were mere pawns in the gun-control debate. Other adults and students, even those sympathetic to the students' cause, dismissed the whole thing as a big waste of time. On that matter, Audrey Carlson, a junior at Concord High School, said to the Monitor's Leah Willingham: "There's been a lot of debate that things aren't going to change just by walking out of school. It's got to be a bigger social change — like by talking to people that you wouldn't normally talk to — and just try to create a bigger sense of community, and make sure no one feels alone."

We agree the walkout alone will not change policy. The game-changers will vote.

There will come a time when the NRA's money won't be enough to reserve a politician's seat, when the cries of "Enough" finally drown out the cries of the "Guns for Teachers" crowd.

The clock started ticking on Wednesday.



THE STATE *APRIL 10/2018*

# This Madness I can enjoy

It would be an exaggeration to say I've been an NCAA basketball junkie all my life. My addiction got serious in junior high, when my friends and I played pickup games every afternoon and followed the West Virginia Mountaineers on the radio from WWVA in Wheeling at night.

In college, I had a nodding acquaintance with the late Jim Valvano, and drove down to Princeton and over to Madison Square Garden to watch Bill Bradley play. Meanwhile, I worked on my game, becoming a better player at 25 than 18.

But what really sealed the deal was marrying an Arkansas coach's daughter. At the University of Virginia, where we met, Diane and I never missed a home basketball game.

Having followed Diane the long way home from school, I resisted the Razorback obsession. Football had never been my thing; an equal-opportunity sport for clumsy people, we Jersey boys thought.

Then came Sidney Moncrief, Marvin Delph and Ron Brewer, three black kids from Little Rock, Conway and Fort Smith who changed the face of Arkansas athletics during the late 1970s. Literally, I mean. "The Triplets," as they were called, played with a flair and intensity that turned Arkansas into a basketball-obsessed state almost overnight. They did more to better the state's racial climate than all the preachers and politicians combined.

Reaching the Final Four will do that for you.

For a while there, Moncrief was probably the most popular man in the state. He could probably have run for governor, but he chose to become an NBA All-Star instead. I once wrote a

magazine profile of Sidney, and he was kind enough to remember my sons' names.

Having become a strong local patriot, I wrote another magazine profile some years later about Nolan Richardson during his second season in Fayetteville, when anonymous experts on radio call-in shows insisted that Arkansas' first black head coach was too undisciplined to succeed. I attended practices and did some interviews. Nolan's players clearly loved and feared him in exactly the right proportion.

He'd won everywhere else, I wrote; he'd surely win at Arkansas. And win he did, including Arkansas' only NCAA National Championship in 1994.

To me, fans of TV teams filled with "one-and-done" players from around the world are missing something important. Given Kentucky's proud basketball tradition, for example, I'd pull for Western Kentucky and Northern Kentucky if I lived there.

To the question of whether all those kids we've cheered on over the years have been exploited, I'd say no. They've been given an opportunity, not a guarantee. But sure, I'd give players a decent (and equal) stipend. I'd fix the one-and-done problem by making athletic scholarships a two-year commitment. A player could leave after one season, but the school couldn't fill the vacancy.

You'd see more hometown heroes fast — what the NCAA tournament is all about.

Arkansas Times columnist Gene Lyons can be reached at eugenelyons2@yahoo.com.

### COLUMNIST

GENE  
LYONS



# Disruption is all around

The conventional wisdom is that last week -- with a much-watched congressional special election, a shakeup in the diplomatic profile of the country, and internal White House debates about how and against whom to impose steel and aluminum tariffs -- answered several vital questions. In truth, the opposite may be the case.

Indeed, there may be more open questions about the course of American politics and the character of the Trump era today than even a week ago. These questions address the very nature of the administration, the prospects for the midterm congressional elections and the outlook for the nuclear crisis in the Korean peninsula. Here are two of the questions that remain open in this critical time:

-- Did the Democratic triumph in the special congressional election in southwestern Pennsylvania tell us anything about the political prospects for the midterm congressional elections or about the sustainability of the Trump phenomenon?

Almost certainly not. Lost in the contest between Conor Lamb and his Republican rival, state Rep. Rick Saccone, is the notion that the significance of special elections is almost always exaggerated. By their nature these races -- there have been 86 of them since the beginning of the 21st century, all of them forgettable -- are idiosyncratic, conducted in regions with peculiar economic and cultural circumstances and contested by local candidates with assets and defects that have little resemblance to presidential

nominees.

-- Is Trump's embrace of tariffs on steel and aluminum a harbinger of a fundamental change in the profile of Republican and Democratic partisan doctrines, or is it merely the redemption of a campaign pledge?

This is one of the big questions of the age, for while protectionism was but one of the issues that Trump rode into the White House, it is an important element of the American partisan divide.

In recent years, it has been the Republicans who were free-traders and the Democrats who leaned toward protectionism.

The Democrats remain skeptical of NAFTA, citing job losses in manufacturing and elsewhere, even though the trade agreement,

backed by 27 Democrats in the Senate, was signed by a Democratic president, Bill Clinton. The lead NAFTA opponent in America today is Trump himself ("worst trade deal in the history of the world"), and though Democrats generally deplore much of the Trump portfolio, union leaders support his trade policies while business groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, traditionally aligned with Republicans, oppose the president's trade initiatives.

The president operates at 78 rpm in a 33-1/3 rpm world. And because hardly anyone knows what that means anymore that may be the new style of presidential leadership. We won't know until Trump has a successor, or two.

Shribman is executive editor of the Post-Gazette (dshribman@post-gazette.com).

### NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

DAVID M.  
SHRIBMAN



### JUST A THOUGHT

LISA  
HOBBS



# Baby names can be wild and crazy

Some people get carried away with their children's names, in my humble opinion. There almost seems to be a competition on who can come up with the most creative name.

Leading the famous -- or infamous, depending on how you look at their lifestyle -- pack could be Kanye and Kim West with their choice of baby names: North West (girl), Saint West (boy) and Chicago West (girl). I'm sure the couple had valid reasons for naming their children, but I can imagine those creative selections could cause difficulty for the children later.

For me, unique spellings can create a real problem. I ask everyone to spell their name for me. It doesn't matter how generic your name sounds, John Smith, I'm going to ask you to spell it. My request has raised an eyebrow or two over the years and at least one snide comment, but those people have no idea what's going on in the child-naming world today.

I've jokingly thought there should be some approval process for child naming. It would prevent parents from going too far and dooming their children to a lifetime of possible torment. Then, recently, I was scanning the world news and saw that a couple in France is being taken to court because they named their daughter Liam, a name traditionally reserved for boys.

By the report, a public prosecutor wants to ban the family from using this name because it "would be likely to create a risk of gender confusion" for the child down the road and naming a girl Liam is "contrary to the interest of the child and could harm her in her social relations."

Are they serious? Yes, France takes baby naming very seriously. So much so, that a law there states a court can ban baby names if they decide it is against the child's best interest. I had no idea.

With a few online searches, I found several instances where France courts have intervened in names parents selected for their children:

- Courts were amused when a couple wanted to name their child Happy or "Joyeux" in French. The name was rejected due to "fantastical, almost ridiculous nature, that could create difficulties and actual embarrassment for the child."
- Babord and Tribord were also rejected by a court. Those names are translated to "port" and "starboard" sides of a boat.
- Michael Jackson fans wanted to name their child MJ in 2010. Little MJ wasn't allowed to keep his name.
- Nutella and Strawberry were banned. The judge through both girls would be mocked as they grew up.

This list of court interventions could go on and on and on, but my column cannot. Space is limited.

My joke aside, I'm against those types of name restrictions. I do have one request of parents: If you go unique with the spelling of your child's name or invent a completely new name, be understanding when others spell it wrong or say it wrong. You, literally, created that issue.

Standard reporter Lisa Hobbs can be reached at 473-2191.



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Patricia Zechman, Publisher  
James Clark, Editor

Phyllis Vanatta, Business Manager  
Dale Stubblefield, Circulation Director

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

Email: standard@blomand.net  
Website: www.southernstandard.com

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