

## Standard online reader survey



**Q: Have you already decided who you are going to vote for in this year's elections for Warren County government?**

- **YES, for all offices**
- **For some offices, but not all**
- **NO, I am undecided**

[www.southernstandard.com](http://www.southernstandard.com)

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Immediate help needed for opioids

### TO THE EDITOR:

In the February, 2018 issue of the medical journal *Addiction* there was a report that there were over 50,000 opioid overdose deaths in 2016 in the U.S.

The number of deaths is increasing each year that passes. There are about 2 million addicts in the U.S. and only 10 percent have access to drug rehabilitation. There must be better education for the public and those who prescribe opioids for pain relief.

All barriers to obtaining comprehensive care for addiction must be promptly removed. The number of quality treatment centers must be

increased. Immediate and massive efforts are required to reduce this epidemic problem.

Cities, counties, state and federal governmental bodies must join together to fund prevention and treatment. Congress must be encouraged to expand Medicaid to include comprehensive addiction treatment now.

Help is needed at local levels now. To delay means more people addicted, more families devastated, and more lives lost.

Wallace Bigbee Sr., M.D  
Oak Hill Drive  
McMinnville

## WRITE A LETTER

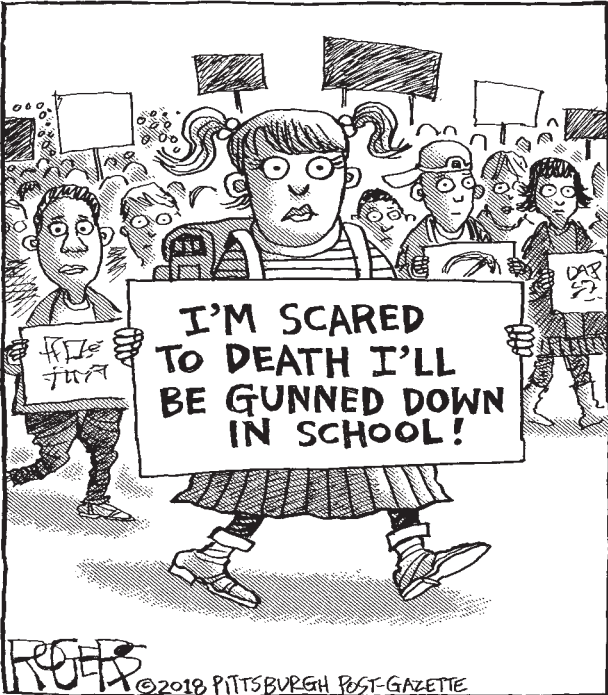
Members of the community are encouraged to write letters to the editor for publication in the newspaper

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

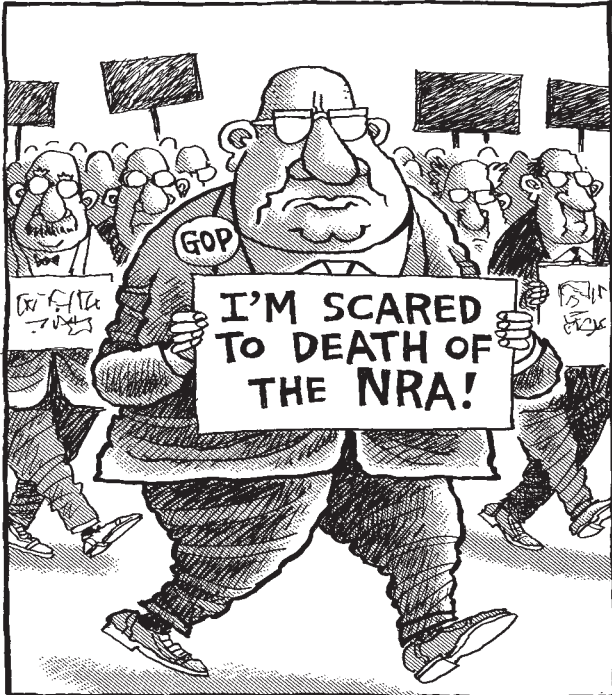


© 2018 Jeff Stahler/Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication

### MARCH FOR OUR LIVES...



### MARCH FOR OUR POLITICAL LIVES...



# The problem with primaries

Kudos to the *Southern Standard* and WCPI for holding the March 26 political forum at the Warren County Administration Building.

The forum starts at 6 p.m. in the Magnolia Room. The public is invited and encouraged to attend this event and meet the candidates for various local offices. Candidates running in the Democratic Primary have been invited to speak to their potential constituents during the forum.

Contested countywide primary races include those for circuit court clerk, register of deeds, and sheriff.

All candidates in the sheriff's race, including independents, will be encouraged to participate in the *Southern Standard* forum. As I understand it, this provision has caused some controversy and the primary (no pun intended) discontent is from the local Democratic Party.

Still, I think it's a great idea to have all the candidates for the most contested local race face their rivals and the public tomorrow night.

The larger problem with the primary system in state and local politics is most folks don't know much about it. And their lack of knowledge is compounded by their lack of interest. Even among the attentive public, the details of the primary system can be confusing.

For starters, there are two kinds

of party primaries, closed and open. In a closed primary, only voters registered in a party may vote in that party's primary. Makes sense to me. However, in an open primary, any voter can participate in any party's primary. This loophole provides the motive, means and opportunity for so-called "crossover voting," whereby voters from outside the party may help determine the party's nominee.

By the way, Tennessee has an open primary system. Therefore, it allows Democrats and Republicans

to vote in each other's primaries for reasons noble and ignoble. For example, if you're a Democrat, you might be tempted to vote in the Republican

Primary for the weakest candidate, hoping that candidate will win the GOP Primary, but lose to the Democratic nominee in the general elections. If you're a Republican, you could resort to the same mischievous

That said, regardless of how you view open primaries in Tennessee, I hope you'll attend the political forum tomorrow night and become an informed voter for the candidates of your choice in the primary and general elections coming up in 2018 and beyond.

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

# Unchanging Trump brings change

What are we to make of precise poll data that reflects nothing short of confusion and contention? Are the polls confused, or is it simply that the interpreters of those public-sentiment gauges are confused?

Whatever the answers, the curious fact remains the latest *Wall Street Journal*/NBC News poll shows two seemingly contradictory upticks -- one for the Democrats' prospects in November's midterm congressional elections, and one for President Donald J. Trump's approval.

The most profound change may be among the Republicans. Not so long ago, Sen. Sherrod Brown, the Democrat from Ohio, was quoted as saying "the Republican establishment has captured the government." He added, "When it comes to what they're really trying to do every day, it's the bidding of the billionaire Republican establishment -- of Wall Street, of the drug companies, of the gun lobby."

Not so fast. Maybe the drug companies, maybe the gun lobby, but surely not the Republican establishment. It is agast at what the Trump administration is doing, especially on trade.

The one lesson of American history is that the past is always changing, the settled is always being revised and the reviled are sometimes being rehabilitated. In "The Hidden-Hand Presidency," the Princeton scholar Fred I. Greenstein wrote this consensus-shattering passage about the Constitution, so often regarded with hushed reverence:

"One of the most profound sources of discontent with the performance of presidents was built into the job of chief executive in 1787 by the framers of the Constitution. The American president is asked to perform two roles that in most democracies are assigned to separate individuals. He

must serve both as chief of state and as the nation's highest political executive. The roles seem almost designed to collide."

Greenstein argued that as the head of the executive branch, the president, like a British prime minister, has "intrinsically divisive responsibilities," with the attendant risk of forfeiting "his broad acceptance as leader of the entire nation." But as chief of state, the president, like constitutional monarchs, "is a symbol of unity," a figure "expected by Americans to represent the entire nation."

It is in that latter role that Trump is least comfortable; and as a "symbol of unity," he provides the least comfort

to the nation, even to many Republicans whose loyalty to party and the presidency has been, until now, unquestioned.

This is enough to make us rethink the conventional view of the office -- at a time when Trump is in (conscious and deliberate) violation of many of the customs of the presidency. He does not, for example, measure his words; they spill into Twitter at all hours. He has no respect for the conventions of the office.

"We like to think there's an act of magic that occurs when someone puts his hand on the Bible for that oath of office," said presidential historian Richard Norton Smith. "We think that at that moment he grows."

Not always. Where John F. Kennedy, George W. Bush and Barack Obama were works in progress in the White House, Eisenhower, Lyndon Johnson, George H.W. Bush and Trump entered the White House as finished products. The current president is unchanging even as he is changing American politics.

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

### JUST A THOUGHT

LISA  
HOBBS



# Search continues for intelligent life

I was saddened to hear about the passing of Stephen Hawking.

The last I heard about Hawking was his intention to advance space travel. He was working on spacecraft that could reach a "second earth" in 20 years. Apparently, the craft could have moved at one-fifth the speed of light, meaning it could reach the nearest star and send back images of a suspected second earth within 25 years.

He claimed humanity was in danger and humans must colonize another planet if they are to survive.

Hawking said one explanation for why Earth has not been contacted by an advanced civilizations from another part of the universe is that every time intelligent life evolves it annihilates itself with war, disease and weapons of mass destruction.

I wasn't a Hawking enthusiast, but I did think he had some interesting assertions. He was probably accurate. Time will tell.

He said, "I believe alien life is quite common in the universe, although intelligent life is less so. Some say it has yet to appear on planet Earth."

Oh snap! I've felt that way on quite a few occasions.

"Look up at the stars and not down at your feet," he said. "Try to make sense of what you see, and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious."

While his focus toward the end seemed to be space travel and saving humanity from ourselves, it wasn't always his entire focus.

"I have noticed even people who claim everything is predestined, and that we can do nothing to change it, look before they cross the road," Hawking said.

I found that to be very profound. He, also, made me feel bad about every time I've doubted myself.

"However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at," said Hawking.

My favorite quote is probably this one: "Life would be tragic if it weren't funny."

Hawking was our Albert Einstein. What will we do now? Hang on tight. Apparently a 12-year-old girl has tested to have a higher IQ than either of those men. The genius benchmark is set at 140. Rajgauri Pawar scored 162, which is two points higher than Einstein and Hawking.

Pawar took the British Mensa IQ test. She is among the 1 percent of people who take the test and gain a maximum mark. She scored the highest possible IQ for someone who is younger than 18. She has joined the British Mensa IQ Society at the age of 12.

The society is for people who score in the top 2 percent and was founded in 1946 in Oxford by Lancelot Lionel Ware and Roland Berrill with a mission to identify and foster human intelligence for the benefit of humanity.

At this time, Pawar is the most intelligent person in the world. Well, girls rule and boys drool. That saying isn't as profound as those by Hawking, but it fits.

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

Established 1879

# Southern Standard

Publication No. 506-840

Patricia Zechman, Publisher  
James Clark, Editor

Phyllis Vanatta, Business Manager  
Dale Stubbsfield, Circulation 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)

Copyright Standard Publishing Company,  
All Rights Reserved

2018 PRESS MEMBER

A PRIDE-WINNING NEWSPAPER

UT-TPA Press Awards

2016