

Standard online reader survey



Q: Does it bother you President Trump reportedly had an affair with a porn star?

YES or NO

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Keep repeat DUI offenders from registering a vehicle

Someone with a drinking problem needs the kind of help he won't get behind bars. But when he or she repeatedly drives drunk, society has few options. Such is the case with a Hawkins County man recently charged with his eighth offense of driving under the influence.

Unless such a person is locked up or some other way is found to keep him off the road, it's only a matter of time before he kills himself or others. Some states prohibit ownership of a motor vehicle by someone under the age of 18. Can those with repeated DUI convictions also be banned from owning a vehicle? Could that be enforced?

Current strategies to reduce or prevent drunk driving are working, but too many repeat offenders still get behind the wheel.

The Hawkins offender has a history of DUI convictions dating back to 1985. He was recently spotted driving at a high rate of speed on Carters Valley Road. An officer attempted a stop, but the driver continued into Sullivan County for some distance before pulling over. He did not have a driver's license, and a computer check revealed DUI convictions in Hawkins County in 2016 and in Sullivan County in 2002, 1998, 1994, 1987, 1986 and 1985. He also had three previous convictions for driving on a revoked

Kingsport Times-News

license.

The only way to prevent someone like this from driving drunk is to ensure he has no means to do so, other than perhaps someone loaning a vehicle. And if that happens, that person should be held responsible for whatever results.

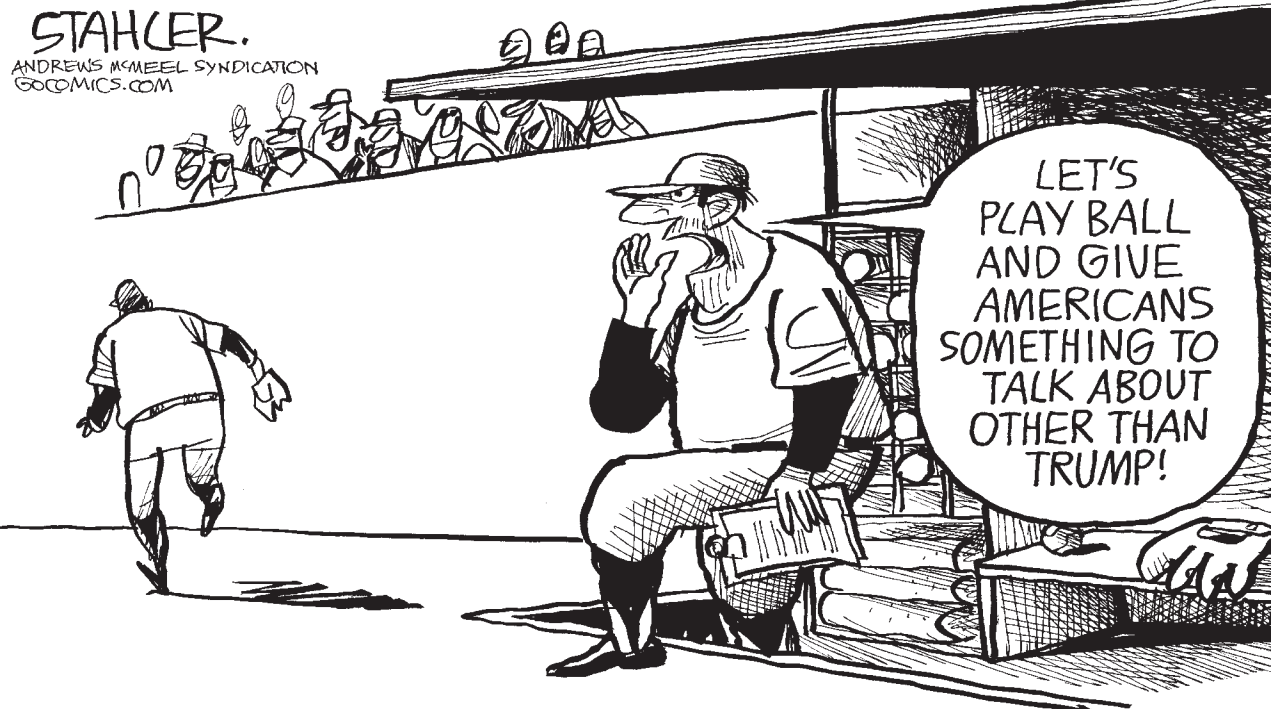
We already have laws that prevent people from owning certain things. For instance, if you're a felon you cannot own a firearm. Society should take the same approach to drunk drivers. In 2016, 10,497 people died in drunk driving crashes — one every 50 minutes. And 290,000 were injured in drunken driving crashes.

According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving, an average drunk driver has driven drunk more than 80 times before their first arrest.

We've got to get repeat drunk drivers off the road. Tennessee could lead the way by being the first state to ban vehicle ownership by anyone convicted of a certain number of drunken driving offenses within a certain period.

They'll drive drunk whether they have a license or insurance. And they'll probably drive drunk if they can purchase a vehicle. But banning them from registering it may help.

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Flunking the decency test

Here's a number that helps explain why Stormy Daniels could have a sizeable impact on the fall elections: 67. That's the percentage of Americans who told the Quinnipiac poll President Trump is "not a good role model for children." His negative rating jumped to 72 percent among women, the voting majority since 1980.

The whole seamy, steamy story of Stormy and The Donald — the reality TV star who sleeps with a porn actress right after his wife gives birth, then pays her hush money to keep quiet just before an election — is so profoundly tawdry, it's a wonder that 33 percent of voters still think the president is a good role model for their kids.

"Americans say President Trump is damaging the country's image globally, flunking the decency test and setting a bad example for kids," concludes Tim Malloy of the Quinnipiac poll. "There's no way to spin or sugarcoat it."

The Stormy story has staying power because it plays into a narrative many Americans already believe. The president's career has been blemished by as many moral bankruptcies as financial ones. Few of the more than 21 million viewers who saw Stormy on "60 Minutes" thought, "Gee, that's not the Donald Trump I know." Her tale was totally believable.

"The Stormy Daniels case is typical of Mr. Trump's pre-presidential behavior in thinking he can, with enough threats and dissembling, get away with anything," writes the *Wall Street Journal*. "He's never understood that a president can't behave that way, and this may be the cause of his downfall."

Trump, of course, will not be on the ballot this fall, but every Republican running will have to answer for the

president. And there are strong signs that his personal flaws are weighing heavily on a critical swing group: well-educated suburban women.

They might have voted for Trump — many are traditionally Republican, plus they were tired of Democratic rule and they despised Hillary Clinton — but they simply cannot accept or excuse his boorish behavior.

This week, Rep. Ryan Costello, a Republican who represents a district outside Philadelphia, joined a rising tide of GOP retirements. A court-ordered change in Congressional districts certainly encouraged Costello to quit, but he admitted the Stormy story, and his growing reluctance to defend the president, contributed to his departure.

"The local Democrats and the left have become more engaged and, candidly, more angry by the week as President Trump says things and does things which many Republicans, myself amongst them, from time to time do disagree with," he told MSNBC.

Trump's favorable ratings have edged upward in recent months, fueled by the tax bill and a healthy economy, and now averages about 42 percent. But the electoral energy clearly favors the anti-Trump side. Democrats have seen an upsurge of enthusiasm with one party organizer telling the Post, "Trump has not done much that's good for (his) party, but he's certainly raised civic engagement."

So has Stormy Daniels. Like Trump, she won't be on the ballot in November, but a lot of moms will think about her — and their children — when they go to vote.

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COLUMNISTS

STEVE & COKIE ROBERTS

Making a superhuman sacrifice

Three years ago, a French police officer traveled to the Basilica of Sainte-Anne d'Auray near the Brittany coast, seeking yet another change in his already eventful life.

Arnaud Beltrame made his pilgrimage to offer prayers he would meet "the woman of his life." Soon afterwards, he met Marielle Vandenberg and they celebrated their engagement in 2016 — at Easter. They were married a few months later.

That was a secular union. Arnaud and Marielle wanted more time to prepare for a truly Catholic marriage, according to Father Jean-Baptiste of the Abbey of St. Mary of Lagrasse in southern France. The wedding was set for June 9, 2018.

Father Jean-Baptiste was at their side all through that process. He was also at their side performing last rites — hours before Palm Sunday and the start of Holy Week — when Lt. Col. Beltrame died shortly after a sacrificial act that caused mourning across France.

French President Emmanuel Macron was blunt, stating that by "giving his life to end the murderous escape of a jihadist terrorist, he died a hero."

Pope Francis sent his condolences to the families of those killed and injured when a self-proclaimed ISIS supporter attacked a supermarket in Trebes. The pope singled out the "generous and heroic" act by Beltrame, who offered himself as a substitute for a female hostage the gunman was using as a human shield.

The 45-year-old officer entered the

standoff alone and placed his cellphone — the line open — on a table, allowing police to listen in. After two hours, officers heard gunfire and rushed inside, killing the gunman. The fatal blow to Beltrame was a knife stab to the neck.

In a lengthy interview with Famille Chretienne (Christian Family), Father Jean-Baptiste went much further than the pope when linking Beltrame's heroism with his pilgrimage to faith.

"It seems to me that only his faith can explain the madness of this sacrifice, which is today the admiration of all," he said. "He understood, as Jesus told us, that there is no greater love than to give one's life for one's friends. ... He knew that if his life belonged to Marielle, it also belonged to God, to France, and to his brothers in danger of death. I believe that only a Christian faith animated by charity could ask for this superhuman sacrifice."

Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia underlined the symbolism of this story.

"God's ways are not human ways. They are other than ours; higher and deeper, more powerful, moving, and redemptive than our own. It isn't logical, it isn't 'normal,' for anyone to place his or her life in harm's way for a friend, much less for a complete stranger as Arnaud Beltrame did. Only a special kind of love can make a person do something so unreasonably beautiful."

Terry Mattingly is the editor of GetReligion.org. He lives in Oak Ridge.

ON RELIGION

TERRY MATTINGLY



LIVIN' LA VIDA LACY

LACY GARRISON



For me, there's no place like home

I could not wait to go to college when I was in high school. For me, I knew bigger and better things were waiting once I put some distance between myself and this county.

It's amazing how much traveling and life experiences will reshape your perspective. Suddenly, Nashville was overcrowded and touristy instead of new and exciting. It began to feel too keeping up with the Joneses.

When songs like Josh Turner's "Hometown Girl" and "The House That Built Me" by Miranda Lambert would play on the radio, I was a sobbing mess in my car. You know that saying in "Sweet Home Alabama" with Reese Witherspoon? The one where Jake tells Melanie, "You can't have roots and wings, Mel," well, that resonated with me and I determined I preferred roots.

Moving to Cookeville after graduation with my husband, Ross, improved things some. We bought a condo, plugged into church and the community, and I started grad school at TTU. Still, we never felt like we truly fit.

Sadly, Ross and I were shook by a series of family deaths in a short time. We lost my sister, Ross' paternal grandfather, his maternal grandparents, and his uncle. We mourned and moved forward the best we could.

Two years later, we decided to buy and renovate his grandparents' home. Why not? After all, we were already making the 45-minute commute to be with family on the regular. So here I am, willingly living in the place I once couldn't wait to leave. I believe my love for McMinnville is best conveyed in a poem I wrote about myself in grad school.

Where I'm From

I am from frequently used coffee mugs, from silvery gray duct tape and fine-tipped Sharpie pens.

I am from the dust that accumulates on the cover of my antique Bible that smells of the dried rose petals concealed between its pages.

I am from the Queen Anne's Lace and Black-eyed Susans blanketing the fields of Northcutt Cove each summer.

I'm from early Christmas mornings and late family reunions at Armstrong Cemetery.

From a father I never knew and grandparents who loved me better.

I'm from praying before each meal and responding "Yes, Ma'am" and "No, Sir."

I'm from "learn from your mistakes" and "don't knock it til you've tried it."

I'm from "streams of mercy never ceasing."

I'm from a tiny Tennessee town boasting nurseries galore and the Barren Fork.

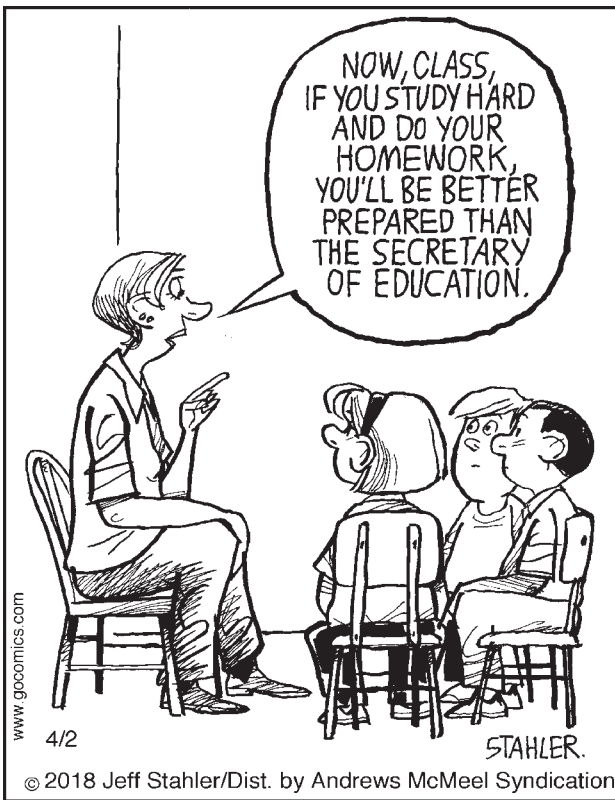
I'm from Grandma's biscuits with molasses and pinto beans with corn bread.

From a young, handsome sailor, who once slept on a park bench and woke up missing one shoe.

I am from a beautiful cathedral quilt pieced together with colorful scraps of fabric by my grandma, great-grandmother, and great-aunts.

Despite its brokenness, I am from many generations of love.

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