

# Opinions

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FEBRUARY 11, 2018

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Southern Standard

McMINNVILLE, TENNESSEE

## Standard online reader survey



**Q: Do you think the Olympics will take place without incident in South Korea?**

**YES 56 percent**  
**NO 44 percent**

## GUEST EDITORIAL

### Tennessee must protect our clean water supply

While the world has been obsessed with oil as the fluid that lubricates economies, a broader perspective would put that notion to rest. Consider the course of human history, then look ahead to the future. Everywhere, you'll find water at the crux, especially if there is not enough to drink or grow crops.

In 2016, the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence ranked water scarcity as second only to terrorism as the greatest threat to our national security. The aging infrastructure was tapped as the major concern. Worsening droughts was another.

It would be easy for Tennesseans, with our rivers and reservoirs, to presume our state is immune to such circumstance. Bill Haslam doesn't think so, and the governor is right.

In January, to not much acclaim, he appointed a steering committee of leaders from federal, state and local governments, industry, academia, environmental advocacy groups and public utilities to develop a statewide plan for future water availability in Tennessee.

The plan is called TN H2O. The initiative will include an assessment of current water resources and recommendations to help ensure Tennessee has an abundance of water to support future population and economic growth. The

*The Daily Times  
Maryville*

steering committee will submit a draft of TN H2O to the governor and will make it available for public input by October.

You're probably thinking, nothing wrong with that, but what's the point? Maybe not much of one, not unless you think Tennessee's manufacturing, agriculture, energy and tourism efforts can do without an abundant supply of water.

Go ahead, go the kitchen, turn on the tap, fill a glass with crystal clarity that never fails to quench your thirst. Take it for granted.

Haslam notes that abundant, clean water has been a strategic advantage for Tennessee and is critical to our quality of life. It is a natural resource that has to be managed appropriately for the state to continue to grow and prosper. The governor is right.

Tennessee's population is estimated to double in the next 50 years. This growth stresses the need to develop a statewide plan for addressing water availability. It's not a moment too soon to ensure Tennessee is guaranteed an abundant and quality supply of water. You may not see it now, looking through that clear glass, but time is running out. Drip, drip, drip.



### Trump signs behemoth budget

Last Thursday night, members of Congress continued to grapple with a looming government shutdown, the second in less than a month.

Leading to the shutdown, House Minority leader Nancy Pelosi of California rode her high horse in high heels for more than eight hours at the podium on Wednesday. Her rambling rant on the plight of so-called "Dreamers" droned on and on. To me, it seemed to be part junior varsity filibuster and part kabuki theater. Pelosi's purpose at the podium was to delay the House budget vote until House Speaker Paul Ryan guaranteed Democrats a chance to debate and discuss extending Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, aka DACA, beyond its current expiration date next month.

On Thursday, with the clock ticking toward a midnight government shutdown, the Senate was poised to pass a budget bill that would keep the government open and fund military and domestic spending. Then came GOP Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky, who stopped the Senate in its tracks. In a quixotic quest to hold up the Senate vote, Paul rose to protest budget deficits that would soar under the Senate plan.

"I want people to feel uncomfortable," said Paul late Thursday night. "I want them to have to answer people at home who said, 'How come you were against President Obama's deficits and then how come you're for Republican deficits?'" With midnight rapidly approaching, Paul pushed his

point by reminding fellow Republicans they had promised to end fiscal recklessness, but were now about to renege on that promise. "I think the country's worth a debate until 3 in the morning, frankly," he said.

Despite the drama by Pelosi in the House and Paul in the Senate, the Senate finally passed the budget bill, 71 to 28, just before 2 a.m. Friday. The House voted around 5:30 a.m. 240 to 186 for the bill. It was a rare act of bipartisanship in a bitterly partisan political climate in Congress.

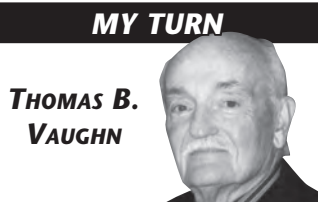
President Trump quickly signed into law the budget deal that will boost spending by hundreds of billions of dollars and allowed the government to reopen after a brief shutdown. He then tweeted, "Just

signed Bill. Our Military will now be stronger than ever before. We love and need our Military and gave them everything – and more. First time this has happened in a long time. Also means JOBS, JOBS, JOBS!"

With the budget bill now enacted into law, about \$300 billion in additional funds will be available for military and non-military programs, plus nearly \$90 billion in disaster relief for areas hit hard by hurricanes and wildfires last year.

My question now for Congress and President Trump is "Whatever happened to your promises of limited federal government and fiscal responsibility?"

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**MY TURN**  
**THOMAS B. VAUGHN**

### What does GOP have to offer?

Earlier this month, two important Republicans – one the president of the United States, the other a onetime Rhodes Scholar who was a high-profile governor – weighed in on the same day on the state of the Republican Party.

In the morning came the assessment of former Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, expressed in an op-ed in *The Wall Street Journal*:

"The GOP will not be a populist conservative party as long as the current congressional leadership remains in place. These leaders would rather lead a shrinking GOP to contain and crush the populist uprising."

A few hours later, President Donald J. Trump, speaking at the Republicans' congressional retreat in West Virginia, made these remarks:

"You know, Paul Ryan called me the other day, and I don't know if I'm supposed to say this, but I will say that he said to me, he has never, ever seen the Republican Party so united, so much in like with each other. But, literally, the word 'united' was the word he used. It's the most united he's ever seen the party, and I see it, too. I have so many friends in this group, and there is a great coming together that I don't think either party has seen for many, many years."

What are we to make of this? My answer: Trump is both right – and wrong. In that order.

He was right – note the past tense – in seeing a future for the Republican Party with new contours. That perception animated his landmark 2016 campaign, when he defeated the most impressive field of potential Republican nominees since 1988.

But Trump is wrong – note the present tense – when he asserts that the Republican Party of which he is

the titular head is united. It's not. Searching for a new identity, wary of an uncertain future, without a coherent vision of its role and deeply skeptical of its leader, the GOP is more distressed than any governing party since the Democrats of the late Lyndon Johnson years.

"On some issues, the (Republican) party is united; taxes is one of them," Judd Gregg, a former senator and governor of New Hampshire who is considered a wise party elder, said in an interview. "But on other issues – immigration, dealing with the deficit – there is a distinct difference of opinion. I'm not sure these differences are debilitating or unusual. There's always been a lot of difference on issues. But

the bigger issue is the president's style. A lot of people find it difficult to take and feel that these tweets in the middle of the night undermine his effectiveness as president and thus are hurting the Republican Party."

Some Republicans believe that Trump merely filled a vacuum – a vacuum, the veteran GOP consultant Alex Castellanos says, created by the Republican Party itself.

Republicans have spent the last half-century saying that various groups – middle-class blacks, working Hispanics or upper-middle-class gays – have Republican minds. In each case, the party leaders never have been able to win their hearts fully.

Though the GOP controls the White House and both houses of Congress, the effort to make the Republicans America's natural party of governance involves more than outreach. It involves keeping the current Republicans in the fold even as the party seeks to invite others in.

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## JUST A THOUGHT

LISA  
HOBBS



### Mystery surrounds Winchester House

I love horror movies. That statement probably isn't newsworthy. I've voiced that stance before. I'd rather watch a horror movie than anything romantic. Once, I checked out a listing of the top 10 horror movies and I had seen about 15 of them.

I recently watched "Winchester." Hopefully, I'm not going to spoil it for those of you who haven't watched it. However, I'm finding it interesting how many people do not know the movie is based on a real house ... the Winchester Mystery House.

With my love for horror movies, it stands to reason the Winchester House holds a fascination for me. It was once the personal residence of Sarah Winchester in California. She was the widow of firearm magnate William Wirt Winchester. After his death in 1881, she inherited more than \$20 million and received half the ownership of Winchester Repeating Arms Company. She was well off. By today's standards, she inherited over \$500 million.

After the death of her husband and child, she contacted a medium. That meeting convinced Sarah that the victims of the Winchester rifle were haunting her and her family, and that she must purchase a home and continuously build upon it to appease the victims of the Winchester rifle. She did just that.

What is now the Winchester mansion in Santa Clara Valley started out as a little farmhouse. She hired workers who unceasingly worked on it until the day she died in 1922. It was seven stories.

The building itself is known for its size, its architectural curiosities, and its lack of master building plan. Sarah did not use an architect and added on to the building in a haphazard way. It features oddities, such as doors and stairs that go nowhere, windows overlooking other rooms, and stairs that go nowhere and some that have odd-sized risers.

Many attribute the oddities of the home to her belief in what the medium said that the house should be constructed for herself and the rifle's victims. The fact she didn't hire an architect suggests that is true. She had money and the house held evidence of that. She had conveniences that were unheard of at that time – steam and forced-air heating, modern indoor toilets and plumbing, push-button gas lights, and a hot shower from indoor plumbing. The house had three elevators. Many of the stained glass windows were created by Tiffany.

An earthquake reduced the house to four stories. However, there are 161 rooms, including 40 bedrooms (it was said Sarah slept in a different bedroom each night to confuse the spirits), 2 ballrooms, 47 fireplaces, over 100,000 panes of glass, 17 chimneys, two basements, and three elevators.

With all the oddities and mystery surrounding the house, I like to watch everything pertaining to it. The movie, to me, was a must-see. If you haven't seen the movie and you like horror or suspense, go. I'd love to see the actual house, but the movie will have to do.

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