

SOUTHERN NEWSPAPER
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Carmage Walls
Commentary Prize

2018 Entry Form

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What is the subject/title of the entry? The sexual assault tragedy at Baylor University

Date(s) of publication? May 18, May 26, July 5, Aug 24, Dec 12 and Dec 26, 2017

Is your newspaper under 50,000 or above 50,000 circulation? Above 50,000

Please give a brief explanation of issues discussed and the results achieved.

Letter of explanation and attachments included w/email

To the Judges:

A precursor to the #MeToo movement, Baylor University continues to fail survivors of its sexual assault tragedy.

These six pieces of commentary by editorial writer Sharon Grigsby reflect *The Dallas Morning News'* ongoing campaign to try and change a stubborn culture of denial and obfuscation on a searingly painful topic.

Long before the ever-broadening #MeToo movement launched, instances of sexual abuse and harassment in the halls of academia were often reported, but just as often ignored, underplayed or not believed by the institutions that received them.

Further tainting the cause of the accusers, the highly publicized 2006 case of the Duke lacrosse team that was exonerated of rape made it even less likely that universities, in particular, would be held accountable for sexual abuse allegations against their sports teams -- or that victims would even report incidents.

Baylor apparently thought it enjoyed that pass. The world's largest Baptist university -- itself an emerging sports powerhouse -- was ignoring accusations of sexual assault by members of its football team - *- real* accusations that, according to one lawsuit filed against the university, involved 31 football players and 52 incidents of rape between 2011 and 2014.

Grigsby, a Baylor graduate, has devoted consistent commentary to the sexual-assault story since it broke in August 2015. While so many were satisfied by the school's 2016 decision to fire its football coach, demote its president and put its athletic director on probation, she was not.

Grigsby has employed all of the tools of a talented editorialist: dogged reporting, crystal-clear presentation of the facts, eloquent appeals for transparency and admission of fault for the wrongdoer, praise for the efforts of the aggrieved, and, when all else fails, blistering criticism and appeals to both the public and lawmakers for help

In turn, the [Texas Legislature began asking hard questions](#) of the university and [passed legislation](#) that included granting amnesty to students who report a sexual assault and allowing students and employees to anonymously report incidents.

More significant is that *The Dallas Morning News* editorial voice prevented Baylor from just closing the book on this tragedy. There is no way to know whether the changes that occurred at the school last year -- for instance, [the demotions of key university leaders](#) -- were the result of Grigsby's continued scrutiny. But no doubt the school knew our editorial page would not go silent on this story.

Mike Wilson
Editor, The Dallas Morning News

The Dallas Morning News

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Managing Editor

Keven Ann Willey
Vice President, Editorial Page Editor

Thursday, May 18, 2017

EDITORIALS

Baylor, Come Clean

New gang-rape accusation demands action

In sickening detail, Baylor University's former Title IX coordinator explained to us late last year the extent of the school's sexual assault tragedy.

While Patty Crawford noted that violence against women occurred campus-wide — not just among athletes — she said that survivors' stories regarding football players were the most horrific. Among them were accounts of a team hazing ritual that involved gang rapes.

Now a new lawsuit, filed Tuesday night on behalf of a former Baylor volleyball player, will allow those allegations their day in court.

This case, the seventh Title IX lawsuit against Baylor — bringing the total number of women involved to 15 — alleges that as many as eight football players drugged the student-athlete and took turns raping her in 2012. The filing echoes what Crawford said previously in an interview: Members of the team required new players to bring freshman women to parties to be drugged and gang-raped.

It's difficult to single out a most-chilling detail from these allegations, all of which defy sufficiently heinous adjectives.


Among the plaintiff's account is hearing the players yell: "Grab her phone. Delete my numbers and texts" after the rape in an off-campus apartment. The suit also alleges that the assaults were photographed and videotaped, with at least one 21-second videotape circulating of football players gang-raping two students.

Baylor University's Board of Regents had no response to Crawford's interview with us last November, but ignoring legal filings will not be an option.

With each Title IX lawsuit, the odds improve that the regents will finally be forced to provide a full accounting of the university's held-secret sexual assault investigation by the Pepper Hamilton law firm.

Remember that while the Tuesday lawsuit describes only one student's experiences, Crawford told us she had heard the gang rape/hazing narrative from *multiple* women.

She described it as younger players delivering the women to their older teammates for



356

DAYS

Still no written report released in sexual assault scandal

What you can do

Contact the office of the president at Baylor University at 254-710-3555 and ask that the Board of Regents secure a written report from Pepper Hamilton.

"the most disgusting, sickening, violent" assaults. One of the women who told Crawford that video was taken of the rapes said she realized what had happened to her only when a football player showed her the recording.

In response to the latest lawsuit, Baylor noted that it "has been in conversations with the victim's legal counsel for many months in an attempt to reach an amicable resolution."

It's also worth noting that the account of this gang rape is the one regents previously alleged former head football coach Art Briles and athletics director Ian McCaw knew about but did not report to judicial affairs.

While Briles has remained unemployed since he was fired last May, McCaw has a new job in football: Liberty University hired him after he resigned from Baylor. Additionally, Florida Atlantic, Arizona State and the University of Texas have signed up key former Baylor football staffers.

As these new, horrific details emerge in legal proceedings, you have to wonder how any of these employers could feel confident in those hires.

Only when all the facts are known will there be any certainty that all culpable individuals, both in Baylor athletics and administration, have been held accountable. That must include the regents releasing a full written report of the Pepper Hamilton investigation.

Jobs for Young People

On-the-spot offers to be extended at Dallas event

Do you know someone between the ages of 16 and 24 who is neither working nor attending school?

Even if you don't, folks on your Facebook feed, neighborhood email list or church roster probably do. With nearly 13 percent of local 16- to 24-year-olds neither in school nor in a job — an estimated 109,000 young men and women — Dallas has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in the nation.

Now, a massive employer-led campaign is responding to those grim numbers. Think of the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative as a jobs fair on steroids, an effort to be sustained for at least several years in Dallas.

Starting Friday with a gigantic Dallas Opportunity Fair at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, this partnership of major companies and organizations will send a powerful message to the 16-to-24 demographic: *We value you. We need you. We want not only to offer you a job but a career path, too.*

About 2,000 young adults will get the chance to meet with dozens of local hiring managers for big-name brands. Already, more than 1,000 youths have registered, and organizers hope that number doubles before the event.

Anyone who fits the "opportunity youth" definition is guaranteed at least one interview as long as he or she registers at 100kopportunities.org/dallas. Also on hand will be coaches and nonprofits to help with résumé writing, interview skills and college financial aid applications.

Based on 100,000 Opportunities' past events in Chicago, Los Angeles, Phoenix and Seattle, the coalition expects to extend hundreds of on-the-spot job offers Friday.

That's just the start. The initiative will team up with local jobs-and-training operations to sustain its efforts in Dallas, engaging and hiring young people who face barriers to education and employment that become only more foreboding as they grow older.

Dallas Opportunity Fair

Who is eligible: People between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not working or attending school.
When: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday.

Where: Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, 650 S. Griffin St., Dallas, 75202.

How to register: Go to 100kopportunities.org/dallas

Transportation: Youths who register will get transportation through DART; attendees will be provided passes home.

Who will be hiring: Among the companies: Starbucks, FedEx, J.C. Penney, Pizza Hut, Chipotle, Delaware North, Republic Services, Domino's, Sprinkles, Five Guys, Target, Hilton Worldwide, Teavana, HMSHost, T-Mobile, Ulta Beauty, Macy's, Villa, Papa John's, Walgreens and Wal-Mart.

Executives from some of the nation's largest companies launched the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative in July 2015. Spearheaded by Starbucks' then-CEO, Howard Schultz, the group initially vowed to hire 100,000 young Americans shut out of the job market.

After meeting that goal in less than a year, 100,000 Opportunities has since pledged to hire 1 million young adults by 2021.

Schultz, now Starbucks' executive chairman, will be one of the heavy hitters at the convention center Friday.

He and fellow top bosses are passionate about fixing the badly out-of-whack hiring maze: Young people often don't know of available opportunities and too often run into systemic barriers; employers don't have clear strategies on how to effectively recruit and train them.

That's why the prospective employers who make up 100,000 Opportunities want to shout it out: *Young people, we not only want you to succeed — we can't succeed without you.*

So, loyal reader, even if you know where your next paycheck is coming from, remember that many of your fellow Dallas residents don't. Do our young people a favor and pass the word on this new opportunity.

The cyberattack prevented me from watching cat videos, updating Facebook and sharing recipes...



Jimmy Margulies/The Record (N.J.)

LETTERS

We can all get along

Re: "My conservative husband made paper better," by Jacquielynn Floyd, Sunday Metro column.

Floyd's column regarding the resignation of her husband, Mike Hashimoto, had an incredibly important message. She told us that, yes, we can all get along if we try. So why can't Americans try harder? Is it because that when it comes to politics, the lunatic fringe on each side receives the most publicity? The constant hate and vitriol demonizing those with different political opinions is not helping anything. It is only throwing fuel on the fire.

Over the last couple of years, *The Dallas Morning News* has gone off the rails, in my opinion. It may be hard for liberals to believe, but no one wants to starve children, steal from the poor, throw the elderly under the bus or destroy the planet.

But every day, those of us who oppose the liberal agenda are told we are mean and evil monsters. Hashimoto was one of the few at *The News* who tried to tell people we are not. Outside of the sports page, he wrote the only words I could read and not have my blood pressure rise. He will be missed.

Steve Doud, Plano

No girls in Boy Scouts

Re: "Discrimination is futile; just ask the Scouts," by Jacquielynn Floyd, Tuesday Metro column.

It must be wonderful to have a woman on *The Dallas Morning News* staff who seems to know what's best for everyone. As a former Scout, camp-outs with a girl present would have not enhanced the "scout experience." It was a time of boys learning and bonding. Both would have been hampered by the presence of a girl — especially a girl that is gender perplexed.

Incidentally, Jacquielynn, there were no "den mothers" in Boy Scouts. That was in Cub Scouts. Many readers discounted your column after reading that sentence. Of course, many of us discounted the column as we considered your negative bias toward the Boy Scouts of America.

Frank Wright, Dallas

An easy choice

Re: "Governor Abbott is a hero," by Travis Krah, Monday Letters.

Gov. Greg Abbott, with his stand against sanctuary cities, may be a "hero" to Travis Krah, but to this native-born Texan (and, I suspect, a good many other Texas "squeaky wheels"), Abbott is just a two-bit politician who panders to the prejudices and fears of his voting base.

"Illegal immigrants" are human beings, who struggle through unimaginable dangers and difficulties to cross the Rio Grande, only to face the daily risk of arrest and deportation. And why? Because what they flee is even greater violence and death in their home countries.

If the U.S. really wanted to reduce the number of illegal border-crossers, it would reform the bureaucratic swamp that prospective residents must struggle through for a decade or more to gain a green card.

They face two choices. One, they can wait for years until legal entry papers are finally issued, all the while sitting amidst the killing fields of their native lands. The other choice is slipping across the U.S. border into relative safety.

For many, it's not a choice at all.

Holmes Brannon, Plano

Making dissent illegal?

Our tea party governor, lieutenant governor and the rest are intent on making our dissent illegal. Their ban of sanctuary cities is just the latest example where they make it unlawful for residents to follow their

compassionate, more liberal, hearts and minds.

On his Facebook page, Gov. Greg Abbott is calling for locking up and removing law enforcement agents who don't follow this new law. He calls them and, by implication, all of us who vote for them "lawless liberals." Such rhetoric makes clear the intention of Abbott and his constituents to ban dissent by making its practice illegal and imprisoning those daring to dissent. Isn't that the definition of tyranny?

Tyranny is here now. The tea party is intent on oppressing our liberty, our right to dissent, our right to freedom from political persecution. When they pass laws deliberately to outlaw political dissent and their rivals, they have become tyrants.

Brian Baldwin, Dallas/Oak Lawn

Continue the programs

Re: "We must fight poverty," by Jeanette Essl, Sunday Letters.

Thanks to Jeanette Essl for reminding us to help mothers around the world by maintaining our development assistance programs that have helped cut by half the deaths of children and mothers since 1990.

We can end these unnecessary deaths by 2035 if America continues the commitment. This will be more likely to happen if all of us call, write or visit our representatives and senators and ask them not to cut any of our successful State Department programs.

The Congressional Management Foundation recently reported the results of a 12-year study showing that constituent voices are the most powerful influence on our elected representatives' decisions. So in honor of mothers everywhere, pick up a phone or a pen and take action.

Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, Wash.

Looking the other way

I cannot believe what is happening in our government. We have a sitting president who has reportedly given classified information to Russian diplomats (the same people who probably interfered in the 2016 election), is in violation of the emoluments clause, etc., — and the people around this man just look the other way and defend him.

How is it that impeachment was initiated against Bill Clinton for perjury and obstruction of justice (participating in a sexual liaison with a consenting adult and denying it), and Donald Trump still has a job?

Jennifer Jones, Dallas/Oak Cliff

Don't ignore east Prosper

Re: "The race for housing — Supply low, prices high as automaker, other companies move in," Monday news story.

Here is a housing myth-buster your reporters seem to be missing. *The Dallas Morning News* keeps saying there are no homes to buy. There are a lot of homes in east Whitley Place in Prosper.

Why don't you write about the homes less than 6 years old that are every bit as easy to get to, if not easier, as Celina's or west Prosper's?

I'm tired of your excluding east Prosper in your news articles. And especially on your front page. Oh, and by the way, I'm an owner who is selling, not a Realtor.

Katharine Oehmann, Prosper

Give back the leg

Re: "Them's Fightin' Words, Chicago — Don't mess with our River Walk; and return that wooden leg," Monday Editorials.

Terrific editorial. Santa Anna would be shocked over the beauty of the River Walk in San Antonio.

One small correction — Santa Anna's leg was not wooden. It was made of cork.

Rose-Mary Rumbley, Dallas/M Streets

LETTERS & VIEWPOINTS POLICY

We value reader submissions. We receive far more than we can print and publish a representative sample. Letters should not exceed 200 words. Viewpoints columns, which may be submitted through viewpoints@dallasnews.com, should not exceed 600 words. Letters and columns are edited for length and clarity. Include your name, address with ZIP code and daytime phone number. Submissions become property of *The News*.

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We cannot accept letters via email or postal service

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Friday, May 26, 2017

EDITORIALS

Baylor Still Fails Survivors

A year after sex assault report, strategy is ‘duck and cover’

On this first anniversary of Baylor kind-a-sorta confessing to its fundamental failure to protect young women from sexual violence, please pause and think of those who have paid the highest price: the still-unknown number of assault survivors.

Listen to the words of one of those Jane Does, whom we spoke to just this week: *“Everyone at Baylor wants to move on. They expect it to get better, but for the survivors, it doesn’t get better. Baylor thinks we will forget, but we won’t. We can’t.”*

It’s on behalf of this survivor and all the others like her that this newspaper has consistently called for Baylor to provide written details of the investigation into its handling of sexual assault reports.

A year ago today, the school’s board of regents released a 13-page *Baylor-produced* document of conclusions and 10 pages of suggested improvements from the Pepper Hamilton law firm.

In addition to the university’s failure to implement Title IX protections for women, the investigation found that student-conduct processes were “wholly inadequate”; complainants were “directly discouraged” from reporting incidents; and university administrators “contributed to or accommodated a hostile environment.”

An increasingly insular football program and athletic department failed to identify or respond to patterns of sexual violence by athletes.

These conclusions were damning, which is why it’s all the more outrageous that the school has refused to make public its fact-based evidence.

The regents were right to fire top leaders in administration and athletics, putting new bosses in charge and ensuring that the school implemented Pepper Hamilton’s 105 recommendations.

But while other schools similarly investigated — Occidental College in Los Angeles and the University of Colorado at Boulder — released their reports, the full



365

DAYS

Still no written report released in sexual assault scandal

What you can do

Contact the office of the president at Baylor University at 254-710-3555 and ask that the Board of Regents secure a written report from Pepper Hamilton.

story at Baylor has been available only to a select few. So how can anyone trust that all is well on the Waco campus?

For the survivors, both those who have filed lawsuits and those who haven’t, releasing a complete report is the only way to know for sure that all culpable individuals have been held accountable. Only then can true healing begin.

Survivors point out, for example, that the regents want the public to take on faith that none of the administrators now leading anti-violence initiatives were among those who behaved callously toward survivors in the past.

Baylor remains unmoved by these pleas. But the sands are running out on its “duck and cover” strategy as courtrooms reveal what regents won’t.

Hideous details have emerged in just the first legal filings. It’s likely to get even worse as more women come forward with more stories and more lawsuits.

If only Baylor University had listened with full compassion to each woman’s story. If only it had lived up to its laudable moral and ethical standards. If only it had chosen the path of unassailable transparency.

Instead, for the survivors, it’s “been a bad day” for a few years now. And that won’t change until the full truth of Baylor’s indifference is exposed.

We Recommend

Wilson in Dallas City Council District 8

District 8 voters, don’t miss this message: Your council representative, the calm, cool and steady Erik Wilson, is the real deal.

While your former City Council member, Tennell Atkins, has spent most of this election season trying to sell you on a different story, there’s no need to send Atkins back to City Hall. Especially given that he already served four back-to-back stints before term limits forced him off the council just two years ago.

Atkins, a 60-year-old consultant, had hardly left the building before he was back in 24-7 campaign mode to try to win another shot at his old job.

So what has the 44-year-old Wilson been doing during that time?

He’s been fighting the loose dog crisis and the illegal dumping of both unwanted pets and trash, all of which create public safety and blight problems for his constituents.

He’s succeeded where others didn’t in getting overdue water and sewer infrastructure in place in the Education Corridor and securing commitments for long-needed exits around Southwest Center Mall.

He’s shown courage on tough decisions ranging from charter schools to the city’s police and fire pension fund. And he’s proved adept at balancing the interests of longtime District 8 residents with prickly issues of neighborhood progress.

As younger residents lead the way in trying to restore a middle class to southern Dallas, they see a contemporary in Wilson, a former classroom teacher who makes a strong



case about why they should make their home in District 8.

Wilson not only is relevant on the streets of southern Dallas, but his no-drama style at City Hall illustrates that his constituents, not his ego, are priority one.

That was not always the case for Atkins, who inexplicably is trying to position himself as the outsider in the runoff.

You’ll recall Atkins’ misdemeanor assault conviction in 2015 after he was accused of grabbing a staffer by the shoulders and yelling at her when she would not let him in City Hall without his ID. His “Do you know who I am?” is not a constructive attitude.

This “big shot” incident is particularly concerning given that Atkins has struggled to come up with a good answer for why he’s in this race. No doubt he very much wants to settle back into his comfortable seat at City Hall, but where he differs from Wilson on the issues — or how he would do a better job — remains mostly a mystery.

Wilson is leading District 8 to better days. He deserves a second term on that path.



Staff Graphic



Jimmy Margulies/The Record (N.J.)

LETTERS

Apply critical thinking

Re: “Sheriff: Political correctness leaves the U.S. vulnerable — ‘This is what happens when you disarm your citizens,’ he writes after bombing in England,” Wednesday Metro & State story.

I had to laugh when I read about this guy’s list of Facebook posts. He threatens any man who might use the same restroom as his daughter. Does he realize that if he ever saw someone who looked like a man go in, it would be because he was required to do so by the new law because he was born as a woman?

The same lack of critical thinking applies to his post about the bomb attack in Manchester. None of the remedies he suggests would have stopped that attack. Armed citizens would have no time to shoot the attacker before he blew himself up.

He was born in Britain, so immigration vetting would not have helped keep him out. And it wouldn’t have made sense to keep his parents out on the basis of a yet-to-be-born child. The repressive ideology that he rails against is over there, not here.

Someone who cannot think clearly about issues has no business being in any position of power, let alone a county sheriff!

Sam Banerjee, McKinney

Enough with the replays

Re: “At least 19 killed, 50 injured in suspected attack at concert — Initial evidence suggests blast was a suicide bombing, officials say,” Tuesday news story.

The bombing in Manchester, England, was horrific and the work of, what Donald Trump calls, losers. I couldn’t agree more. This is just another wake-up call to peace lovers that there are other people out there who are peace breakers.

But as long as the media continues to replay the post-bombing mayhem and chaos videos of the screaming and crying victims, terrorists will continue to clap and hoot and holler for the success of their demonic handiwork. Report on the facts, report on the continuing investigation — but the videos will forever be branded into our memories, so we really don’t need to see them every day.

Steve Marsden, Dallas/Crest View Park

Muslims condemn attack

It’s been reported that ISIS takes responsibility for the attack in Manchester. This continues to support the fact that this group is atrocious and inhumane. Therefore, its association with a religion will be considered offensive.

As Ahmadi Muslims, we condemn extremism and terrorism entirely and stand with the British people in mourning the loss of innocent lives taken away during this attack.

ISIS proudly called the attacker “a soldier of the caliphate” who was able to “plant explosive devices.” On the contrary, the caliph of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, His Holiness Mirza Masroor Ahmad, has stated that “those who seek to justify their hateful acts in the name of Islam are serving only to defame it in the worst possible way.”

With Ramadan right around the corner, Muslims will be focusing on remembering and praying for those affected in this tragedy and will continue to strive toward establishing peace in all communities.

Touba Khurshid, Pflugerville

Democrats shift blame

Re: “The president’s budget proposal has no heart,” by Michelle Singletary, Wednesday Business column.

Singletary’s spurious claims that the Trump budget is heartless displays typical Democrat shift-the-blame strategy. Republicans have in the past and continue now to struggle with bloated budget numbers caused by Democrats giving away our hard-earned, fixed/retirement income tax dollars for votes, votes and more votes.

The budget must be balanced. The Republicans can do it. Conversely, the Democrats prefer power to continue to buy votes. Their position is grand theft. Unconscionable.

Edward A. Ross Jr., Lantana

Keep foreign aid

Re: “Border wall funding shrinks — Scaled-back request seeks \$1B less than total outlined in March,” Tuesday news story.

In addition to the border wall discussed in this article, President Donald Trump’s budget proposal also calls for dramatic cuts in the State Department’s foreign aid budget. Foreign aid accounts for less than 1 percent of the federal budget, but it saves millions of lives — preventing starvation, treating disease and rescuing people from slavery.

I stand with Americans across the political spectrum and from all 50 states in my determination to see the end of slavery in my lifetime. I also stand with 300 faith leaders who asked Congress to oppose Trump’s deep cuts to the foreign aid budget. The ball now is in Congress’ court. I hope our congressmen and Sens. Ted Cruz and John Cornyn will choose to stand on the right side of history.

Jenna Winn, Carrollton

Don’t cut global funds

Re: “Freed Chibok girls see families after 3 years of captivity — Tears flow, dancing breaks out during emotional reunions,” Sunday news story.

After reading this article, I made the connection between the captors of those schoolgirls and the importance of education. While at a conference, I received the following statistics from Patrick Makokoro, a dedicated child rights activist from Zimbabwe, where he’s worked with community development and relief projects. He noted the following:

Every year of schooling decreases the chance of youth engaging in violent conflict by 20 percent. Youth without an education can be nine times more likely to be recruited by rebel groups.

The importance of educating impoverished children in regard to national security is clear. The U.S. government has made annual investments in the Global Partnership for Education along with partnering countries. If our government cuts funding for global development assistance by 30 percent as proposed, we’ll be losing ground in giving these susceptible youth an opportunity to have a hopeful future promoting peace.

Please petition your senators and representative to vote against these cuts.

Jeanette Essl, Dallas

No impeachment

Re: “Looking the other way,” by Jennifer Jones, May 20 Letters.

Some are wondering why Donald Trump has not been impeached, despite all the allegations against him. I can think of two reasons.

One is legal. A president can be impeached only for committing a crime. He cannot be removed for upsetting Hillary Clinton, praising Vladimir Putin, appointing Michael Flynn, firing James Comey, tweeting insults or mocking CNN.

The other is political. His Democratic opponents are outnumbered in Congress. That won’t change as long as the Democrats stand for higher taxes, socialized medicine, monopolized schools and too much regulation.

Ken Ashby, Dallas

RISD campaign woes

Re: “Candidate stands up to establishment,” by Dave Lieber, May 19 Metro column.

It is disheartening and downright appalling that a decent, well-informed Richardson ISD citizen and parent, Lynn Davenport, can’t run for a seat on the RISD school board without being sabotaged and harassed. Even with all this, she still received 46 percent of the votes.

Well done, Lynn. You ran an honest campaign, and your integrity is very much intact.

To the Dallas political consultant hired by Davenport’s incumbent opponent: Where is your integrity? It appears that you are lacking in this area.

Julie Holland, Dallas

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We value reader submissions. We receive far more than we can print and publish a representative sample. Letters should not exceed 200 words. Viewpoints columns, which may be submitted through viewpoints@dallasnews.com, should not exceed 600 words. Letters and columns are edited for length and clarity. Include your name, address with ZIP code and daytime phone number. Submissions become property of *The News*.

ONLINE FORM

Please send us your letters via this online form

dallasnews.com/sendletters

We cannot accept letters via email or postal service

One in a series of *Dallas Morning News* recommendations for the June 10 runoff election.

Read candidates’ answers to our questionnaires in the Q&A Guide. dallasnews.com/voterguide

Early voting begins: May 30

For more information:

| | | |
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| Dallas County | 214-819-6300 | dallascountyvotes.org |
| Denton County | 940-349-3200 | votedenton.com |
| Kaufman County | 972-932-0298 | kaufmancounty.net/elc.html |
| Rockwall County | 972-204-6200 | rockwallvotes.com |
| Tarrant County | 817-831-8683 | tarrantcounty.com/en/elections.html |

For more help, including how to check your registration status, contact the Texas secretary of state at 1-800-252-8683 or visit votetexas.gov.

Election day: June 10

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Wednesday, July 5, 2017

EDITORIALS

A Gold Star for STAAR

New report card makes deciphering test results easier

Parents, don't miss this valuable document tucked within your snail mail: your child's STAAR report card.

This year you will actually be able to make sense of it.

Unlike the incomprehensible assessments that the state has sent in previous years, the revamped version can be deciphered without the help of an education expert. Not only is the information clear and understandable, it's also useful.

Yes, the document is coming in the middle of summer vacation, and who wants to think about tests right now? But they are a fact of academic life, and time spent with the STAAR report card in July will pay off come September.

Beginning in third grade, schoolchildren take the STAAR, learning their overall scores soon after test day. But the details — what's called the confidential student report — don't arrive until after the school year ends.

Among Mike Morath's goals when he became Texas education commissioner was to overhaul the brain-numbing report card, which oozed education-speak and impenetrable numbers.

He didn't stop there: He wanted a document that not only told adults how their children are doing but that provided them with tools to help their students succeed.

The new STAAR report card isn't light beach reading — there's a lot of information to digest. But those four pages provide fascinating details.

For example, you'll find information about how your student compared, subject by subject, to others across the state.

Here's what you won't find: the old confusing performance labels. (We're still trying to figure out the difference between a Final Level II and a Phase-In Level II.) The accompanying box provides the new language.

The STAAR is not a random punitive measure, but rather an assessment of how well students learned the state-mandated curriculum that instructors taught them all year long. The report card tries to drive its

Family-friendly report

■ More resources, including tools to help students become better readers and writers, are available at texasassessment.com.

■ The STAAR report card includes a **student-specific access code** that allows you to view test questions, the correct answers and your child's responses on the website.

Performance scores

Masters grade level: Mastery of the course knowledge and skills is shown; student is on track for college and career readiness.

Meets grade level: Strong knowledge of course content; student is prepared to progress to next grade.

Approaches grade level: Some knowledge of course content but may be missing critical elements; student needs additional support in the coming year.

Did not meet grade level: No basic understanding of course expectations is shown; student may need significant support in the coming year.

"progress counts" message with a substantial section devoted to academic growth from the previous school year.

With the report card's rollout, Morath and his team are working to not just spread the message that parents are critical partners in their children's success, but to provide specific skills and tools to help the adults do that job.

Put another way, they want to answer, "This is all great information, now what?"

For starters, the Texas Education Agency has created an interactive website to provide additional student-specific resources. Included is the opportunity for parents of students in grades three through eight to view the STAAR tests, question by question, and see how their child answered.

The report card itself provides books recommended for a child's particular reading level, games and problem-solving exercises, even tips for the most-useful questions to ask at a parent-teacher conference.

A report that demystifies the STAAR test and empowers parents — that's a summer assignment worth completing.

Blamed and Shamed

Jones' words show pattern of bias against Baylor women

Email correspondence from then-regent Neal "Buddy" Jones leaves no doubt about his attitude toward Baylor women who dared to take a drink in 2009: "Perverved little tarts." "The vilest and most despicable girls." "A group of very bad apples." "Insidious and inbred."

That's the assessment of Jones, the prominent Austin lobbyist who served on the Baylor Board of Regents from 2003 to 2013, including heading the group from 2011 to 2012.

His emails from eight years ago, aimed at a group of women he alleged were illegally drinking alcohol at a sorority event, are a shocking example of unprofessional overreaction and micromanagement.

Considered alongside what the Baylor sexual assault tragedy has revealed about attitudes and actions toward women at the school, Jones' heavy-handed remarks are downright chilling.

The emails were filed Friday by the lawyer for 10 women suing Baylor for failing to comply with Title IX, the federal law that bans campus discrimination. The lawsuit is just one of many continuing investigations and legal proceedings against the school.

While no straight line has been drawn between the women referenced in the Jones correspondence and current plaintiffs, their lawyer contends this is an example of Baylor's tendency to use its strict code of conduct "as a tool to discriminate against female students, not just those involving sexual assault victims."

Remember that among the ugly truths revealed in the investigation into Baylor's handling of sexual assault reports was that some of the victims were blamed and shamed when they came forward with their stories.

Jones' comments certainly won't help win any PR battle at a school swamped in scandal for almost two years.

The regent sent his scathing emails, first reported by the *Waco Tribune-Herald's* Phillip Ericksen, to Tommye Lou Davis, who at the time was associate dean of the

What Jones emailed to Davis

Then-regent Neal "Buddy" Jones' correspondence with Baylor administrator Tommye Lou Davis occurred as the two also were exchanging emails critical of the Baylor Alumni Association, which was in a legal battle with the school. Among Jones' emails to Davis:

"I can't believe that [referring to Davis] my main ally, my main conspirator, my main compadre, my main cohort, my partner in all our efforts **has become such an apologist** for the vilest and most despicable of girls."

"I am just sick. **Those perverted little tarts** had better be thanking their lucky stars that my guns are all aimed at a worse group of insidious scoundrels [the alumni group] than themselves for the time being."

"It is not you I am disgusted with. It is the system. And (if I have any energy left in me after this BAA issue is settled) **we will change it, too.**"

classics department and honors college as well as faculty adviser to the sorority Jones seemed obsessed with setting straight.

Jones attached photos to his email, not included in the legal filing, and singled out one woman whom he suggested be expelled.

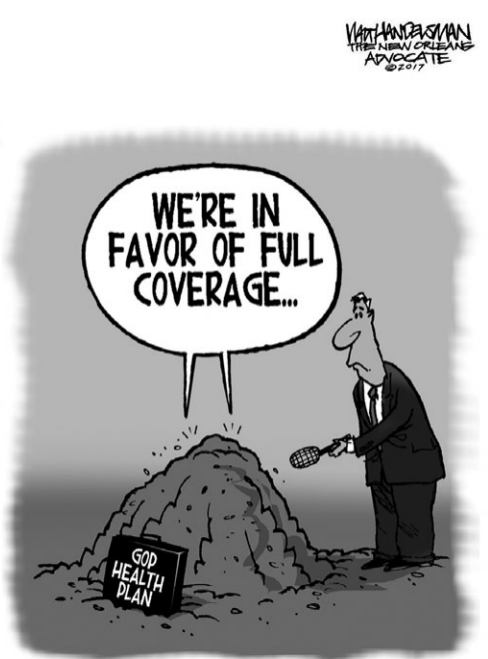
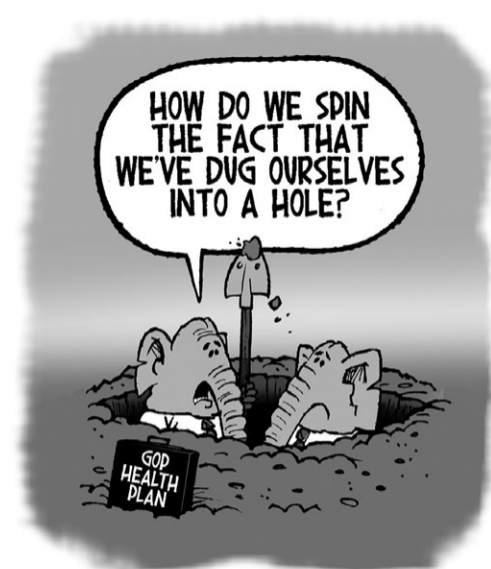
Davis responded that the photos were actually from a private engagement party that did not include minors.

Jones now says he regrets the emails, noting he is "the father of four girls." We are more than weary of this overused excuse; as if having daughters inoculates you from being held accountable.

In a statement to the Texas Tribune, Jones said, "My comments, made almost a decade ago, were hyperbolic and too harsh. They reflected an emotional, angry moment long ago."

Whatever led to this vilifying of young women, his comments reflect the very attitude that Baylor's new president, Linda Livingstone, must expel from the school's DNA.

A particularly difficult assignment if any of Livingstone's *current* regent bosses are part of the problem.



Walt Handelsman / The New Orleans Advocate

LETTERS

Trump is keeping us safe

Re: "For rhetoric, don't follow the leader's tweets — Joshua J. Whitfield shares an ancient warning about foolish words," Monday Viewpoints.

It is obvious liberals, including Whitfield, can't understand why President Donald Trump speaks out about those who attack him with hateful bias.

President Trump is a true leader. No issues matter if we are in harm's way, and he is proving to keep us safe, which is our government's first duty.

Thank you, Founding Fathers, for the First Amendment right of free speech for all of us.

Deborah Crenshaw, Tyler

Simply unpresidential

I am dismayed, repelled and embarrassed by much of President Donald Trump's behavior — coarse, vulgar, duplicitous, vainglorious, demeaning of women and minorities, simply unpresidential.

As a career educator of more than 40 years, I deplore the example that our current president sets for young people (adults, too). I prize that we have the freedom to believe what we wish and to express our views freely, short of hate and sedition. A dear friend says that while he disagrees with me on many issues, he would give his life to protect my right to free speech as long as I express myself respectfully and intelligently. The president seems to test even these limits with his undisciplined, ad hominem rants. He does not like criticism. Welcome to leadership in a democracy.

What would Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Lincoln think if they were alive today? While not requiring agreement, the republic demands selflessness, moral courage and integrity. Where is today's Cincinnatus?

I remain hopeful.

Arnold E. Holtberg, Dallas

Citizens should be priority

Re: "Richer suburbs should get bill for Parkland care," by James Ragland, Monday Metro & State column.

I almost agree with you that if residents of outlying counties send their people to Parkland, they should help pay.

I do have one stipulation to sharing the cost: Citizens of the United States should be our priority and concern. Legal, taxpaying citizens and legal residents, the working poor need help.

If you get sick in Mexico, they will hold you hostage until your family in the U.S. pays the hospital bill. Since no one wants to stay in Mexico, they pay. Here we have illegal people taking advantage of social services at taxpayer expense. That has got to stop. We simply cannot afford giving away our hard-earned dollars to support those who have broken the law to get here.

Bob Johnson, McKinney

More kindness for creatures

Re: "18 weeks: A broiler chick's life," Sunday news story.

A while back, I clipped out the comic strip *Mutts* from the Sunday paper. It depicted the old woman petting her cat, and looking into its eyes. As she looked, the cat's face morphed into a chicken, then a pig, then a cow. The old woman then declares, "I'm going vegan!"

The article about the broiler chick's life was like a punch in the gut. Why is my sweet puppy's life so protected from harm? Doesn't a chicken feel pain in the same way, or fear or panic? Most factory-farmed animals live their lives penned, prodded, branded and then killed.

I know no one is going to give up their extra-crispy chicken, their burgers, their bacon on everything. But sentient creatures should not be a crop. There must be more kindness. Look at your beloved pet and imagine its life in a factory farm.

Camille Webb, Plano

Indictment of American intellect

Trump has a long affiliation with the wrestling world and promoter Vince McMahon in

particular. Trump plays the bad boy who insults his opponents and threatens them with bodily harm. There are numerous examples of this, not the least of which is calling his rivals evil, corrupt, ugly, low energy, stupid, et cetera.

He has called for demonstrators at his rallies to be punched in the face. He has endorsed a GOP candidate who body-slammed a reporter. More recently he has starred in a video showing his takedown of his long-term nemesis, CNN. He has called the media in general an enemy of the American people. His preferred media outlets include a magazine that has declared that Bigfoot has been found and cited Adam and Eve as astronauts.

The elevation of Trump to the highest elective office in the U.S. is more an indictment of the intellectual level of the American public than anything else.

In the post-truth era, Trump fails to realize the difference between the pretend world of wrestling and the presidency. However, as long as his base finds him useful in implementing his agenda, he will remain at the helm.

James E. Wells, Irving

Follow England's example

I am at a loss to understand the logic of those who advocate everyone carrying guns so that "all of us can be safe." Daily, we read of shootings in schoolhouses and coffeehouses, in hospitals and offices, while driving a car or attending a gathering, and there is seemingly no end in sight. The Second Amendment declares that Congress shall not infringe on the right of the people to keep and bear arms in order to have a militia to safeguard our country.

Notice to the NRA: We have a standing army; there is no need for a militia. Our Founding Fathers realized that a militia was necessary to act as an army in the event of invasion by a foreign power. However, since we now have a standing army, the right to keep and bear arms is no longer applicable regardless of what the NRA tells us.

Others maintain that we must have guns to avoid a police state. The only way that we are going to have a police state is if we elect egomaniacs that lead us in that direction, in which case, we go to the polls in large numbers to cast our ballots for sober, logical and peaceful individuals who will represent us rather than dictate to us.

The people of England removed all handguns from their country many years ago, and there is no danger of a police state there because the people continue to elect sober-minded individuals who represent them, not the NRA. We need to follow their example and restore sanity to our country.

Ron Thrift, Richardson

Tipping point for tolerance

Re: "Trouble by the sack — How many screw-ups are too many? David Irving tests the limit," by Kevin Sherrington, Saturday SportsDay column.

I enjoyed Sherrington's article on the Dallas Cowboys and their troubled-player syndrome. Dallas players in legal trouble happens so often we have become inoculated to it. Ownership and the coach offer us that they have players with "high character" and "are the right kind of guys." Yet Jason Garrett admits his players "are not infallible."

The goal in sports is winning. From pee-wee to the pros, it is all about the W. Pressure is brought from inside and outside of an organization to produce on the field of play. That includes talent and teamwork. The more talent a player has, the more tolerance is given for transgression. But there is a tipping point. Sherrington asks of a player, "How many screw-ups are too many?"

Often talent overrides character if it is perceived to contribute to winning. Leadership will not admit this because it is bad PR and can harm team chemistry. As a defense, the company line is created about giving second and third chances. But once leadership deems that a player moves from the asset side to the deficit side of the ledger, the player reaches a tipping point and is no longer worthy of chances.

Jerry W. Halpin, Lucas

LETTERS & VIEWPOINTS POLICY

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The Dallas Morning News

Established October 1, 1885

Publishers

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Joe M. Dealey 1960-1980

James M. Moroney Jr. 1980-1985

John A. Rector Jr. 1985-1986

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Thursday, August 24, 2017

EDITORIALS

Baylor Sex Assault Scandal

Key vice president reassigned in welcome shake-up

A welcome shake-up at the top of Baylor University continued Wednesday with the announcement that Reagan Ramsower, senior vice president and chief operating officer, will leave his job next May.

While both Ramsower and new Baylor President Linda Livingstone carefully painted his return to teaching as an opportunity for new leadership, anyone who has followed the sexual assault scandal knows that's just part of the story.

Ramsower, one of the most controversial figures still remaining in a powerful spot at Baylor, oversaw many aspects of the school during a period in which questions have been raised about its handling of sexual assault reports.

For example, Ramsower's portfolio includes campus safety. Yet while the Baylor Police Department has been harshly criticized as details of the sexual assault tragedy emerged, Ramsower has steadfastly claimed complete ignorance of questionable decision-making by officers.

Baylor also confirmed Wednesday that vice president Brian Nicholson, who reports up to Ramsower in the public safety chain of command, is leaving his post at year's end.

Beyond the campus police controversy, Patty Crawford, the school's Title IX coordinator who resigned last year, accused Ramsower of denying her the resources and independence to do her job correctly.

Crawford's contention that the university set her office up to fail "from the beginning" prompted the U.S. Education Department's Office of Civil Rights to open an investigation into whether Baylor violated Title IX regulations.

Ramsower has categorically denied the allegations made by Crawford, as well as similar ones by Gabrielle Lyons, another former member of the school's Title IX office.

When we first talked to Crawford last year, she presented a compelling argument. Days later, during an editorial board meeting with Baylor regents Ron Murff, James Gray, David Harper and Dennis Wiles, the four adamantly sided with Ramsower.

In response, we asked for the release of all communication between Ramsower and Crawford in order to compare that material to the scores of documents that the former Title IX coordinator provided. We noted that only by having the full set could we objectively weigh the claims of both sides.

What they said

"I appreciate Dr. Ramsower's leadership and deep calling for the university, particularly over the past two years."

*Baylor President **Linda Livingstone***

"With the hiring of President Livingstone, the door has opened for a new Baylor administration, and she has my full support and help as she leads the university into the future and rebuilds a fresh leadership team."

*Baylor Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer **Reagan Ramsower***

"It is easy for those of us that know the facts to see that this would not be happening if there wasn't strong evidence that Ramsower was fully aware of the violent culture as a leader at the University for many years."

*Former Baylor Title IX coordinator **Patty Crawford***



Although the regents vowed to continue to answer our questions — and in fact provided damning information related to one alleged gang rape involving football players — they never provided the Ramsower material.

Among her many accusations against Ramsower, Crawford says he responded to her report of multiple sexual assaults with: "Those women had mental illness. We have to stick with the facts and there are none." Ramsower vigorously denied that statement.

Wednesday's announcement comes less than a week after Livingstone told staff that longtime Baylor administrator Tommy Lou Davis would leave the executive council and return to the classroom.

Davis made headlines this summer when emails became public between her and then-regent Neal "Buddy" Jones in which he called Baylor students he suspected of drinking "perverted little tarts," "very bad apples," "insidious and inbred," and "the vilest and most despicable of girls."

Also last week, just as classes began for the new school year, Baylor was popped with another Title IX lawsuit, this one by "Jane Doe 11" who alleges she was assaulted by a fellow student in April and then faced questions from school officials that tilted blame away from her perpetrator.

Livingstone no doubt has much work to do. Ramsower's new assignment is a solid step in the right direction.

Dirt 'Bandit' Crosses Line

New Mexico says Texas is stealing its very soil

There's a battle brewing between the neighboring states of Texas and New Mexico. There are natural resources at stake.

New Mexico's state land commissioner, Aubrey Dunn, is going after what he calls a "bandit" and apparently will stop at nothing to apprehend this dastardly thief. Is this modern-day burglar swiping petroleum? Natural gas? Coal? Water? No.

He is the dirt bandit.

Dunn says road crews in Texas are crossing the border into New Mexico, grabbing up dirt, sand and gravel, and bringing it back across the state line for a road project in Texas.

And you thought border battles between North and South Korea were intense.

"It's the Wild West, what can I say?" Dunn said.

Despite the possible financial and legal ramifications, the circumstances surrounding this fracas bring about unintentional laughs.

The area in question lies just north of the New Mexico state line in Otero County. Dunn says the crews are taking the dirt four miles south to Dell City in Hudspeth County, Texas, a town of 425.

"We have a dirt bandit on our hands, and he is stealing from New Mexico school kids," Dunn said.

School kids? Dunn's referring to the profits New Mexico receives from minerals found in the soil. The state uses that money to fund hospitals, infrastructure spending and public schools. According to New Mexico State Land Commission data, the state took in \$545 million in revenue for fiscal 2017 from selling minerals, oil and gas on 13 million acres. Dunn says the



The Associated Press

This image provided by New Mexico State Land Office shows the scene of the alleged dirt theft in Otero County, N.M.

state is owed thousands of dollars for the dirt taken by Texas road crews.

Texas, naturally, is not just going to accept New Mexico's word. First, Hudspeth County Judge Mike Doyal says, for 20 years, Texas has handled road maintenance on the county line, which New Mexico has enjoyed cost-free. He also says the area of uninhabited land does not have a clear border. "There's no line drawn in the dirt," he said. "You'll find signs, but there are times it gets a little vague on that state line road."

Dunn thinks differently. He sent a letter to three Hudspeth County commissioners saying the operations should cease and desist while they assess the total cost New Mexico is owed for "mining activity."

Dunn says he is willing to let things go if Texas is ready to cut a check; otherwise, he is prepared to go to court. Doyal still thinks both sides can resolve the issue amicably, in "the old country way of things."

A duel? No, he means an amicable settlement.

That would be the best resolution for all involved in this dust-up.



David Horsey/Los Angeles Times

LETTERS

Trump's plan lacks specifics

Re: "Trump details Afghan policy — He renews commitment of U.S. troops but warns there will be no 'blank check,'" Tuesday news story.

Basically, it is Afghanistan Strategy 4.0, furthering the two policies from the Bush administration and the one from the Obama administration, and aimed at winning the nation's longest overseas war. No specifics, no conditions and a number of uncertainties. It does include an extension of the battlespace into Pakistan.

The strategy moves from time-based to one that is condition-based; but the conditions that are to be obtained that define success were missing. Overall, not enough specifics on how this strategy will be implemented and the integration of all of the instruments of power. Plus, cutting State Department funding has damaged U.S. credibility.

What is the integration that will lead to an end state of deterring, defeating and destroying insurgents, terrorists and their supporting network not only in Afghanistan but across the arc of instability that extends from Eurasia into the Western Hemisphere for decades to come?

At the end of the day, the American people deserve to know more on this event-based strategy and how we will get there.

Mark Olinger, Mount Vernon

A flawed strategy

President Donald Trump's promise to handily defeat the Taliban and stabilize Afghanistan's borders on the absurd. That he will prevail where two Americans presidents, Russia and the British Empire (twice) have been humbled is incredulous.

When 100,000 U.S. troops could not pacify that country, can we reasonably expect 13,000 (after the Trump surge) to accomplish that goal? At one time 8,000 Marines were based in Afghanistan, now there are 300. Like his predecessor's policies, the Trump Afghanistan strategy is tragically flawed and destined to fail.

Frankly, those opposed to the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan were pleasantly surprised when Trump boldly questioned the 16-year-old war and criticized what little there was to show for the loss of American life and treasure: more than 2,000 American casualties and \$700 billion.

We disagreed with the president on many issues but on this subject we thought he was clear-sighted. Our hopes were dashed when voices seeking unlimited war in Afghanistan prevailed. Now this president owns the debacle.

Ironically, America's enemies stand to win whether the U.S. cuts and runs or stays and bleeds. That's a quagmire.

Hadi Jawad, Old East Dallas

Pay up, Collin County

Re: "Court voids payment — It rules that judges exceeded authority when setting fees for AG's prosecutors," Tuesday Metro & State story.

In 2015, Collin County's Republican state delegation, including Sen. Van Taylor and Reps. Jeff Leach and Matt Shaheen, all supported Senate Bill 10/House Bill 1690, which shifted responsibility for prosecuting Texas elected officials from the Public Integrity Unit in Travis County to the elected official's home county.

Now that Collin County is on the hook for prosecuting one of its own, these same legislators condemn the process. They can't have it both ways.

What is it with Collin County paying what it owes? It's one of the richest counties in the state yet, from Paxton to Parkland, it refuse to pony up. Sad.

John Keiser, Richardson

Legislature, do your part

Re: "Trustees fail to find tax plan to send to voters — Superintendent 'disappointed' after options rejected," Sunday Metro & State story.

In 2006, the Texas Legislature passed a property tax cut in the ISD operational tax

rate, down to \$1.04. Many districts have since voted to increase the management and operations tax rate up to the \$1.17 maximum. The Legislature and Gov. Rick Perry told us that the state would make up the difference.

Well, we know what happened. The ultra-conservatives who have run state government for far too long never ponied up and while property owners got tax relief, school districts around the state got shortchanged.

Each year, Dallas Central Appraisal District (DCAD) increases the taxable value of my property by the maximum allowed. Protests are heard by an appraisal board that consistently votes 3-0 to approve the DCAD increase, so property owners have seen "tax relief" disappear over the past decade. The fault lies not with property owners who, according to *The Dallas Morning News* editorial board, need to pay more. Look to the draconian state funding formula and the state budget writers.

I applaud the Dallas ISD board members who voted against a tax increase. The pressure should be placed where it belongs — on our Republican-controlled Legislature. Taxpayers pay their fair share through annual property tax increases. It's time the Legislature did its part for Texas schoolchildren.

John Godge, Dallas

Use donations wisely

Re: "Komen drops Trump's Mar-a-Lago for gala fundraiser — Perfect Pink Party's move applauded by founder of Dallas-based foundation," Saturday news story.

It was terrific to see the American Cancer Society, Salvation Army, Red Cross and the Susan G. Komen Foundation, cancel their planned fundraisers and meetings at Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort. However, the deeper question needs to be why in the world are these charities holding their events at such a five-star resort? I do hope they would not try to tell me a five-star venue is needed to raise funds.

Seems a simple ballroom at a Marriott would suffice. I would ask each charity, "If this were a vacation for you, would you spend your own money staying at such a resort?"

As leaders of these very important organizations, they need to be, and should be, aware of the perception of exclusivity they create by holding these events at such first-class accommodations. They are not business organizations. They are charities and should not be using unwisely any and all donations they receive.

Ed Miller, Frisco

Don't be surprised

Every day, each of us makes decisions about what we do, what we say, how we behave towards others. We decide, every single day as we make our choices, if we are going to follow our own ethical compass. We may forgive people who are cruel or hurtful, physically, emotionally or verbally. That is up to each of us and our own conscience.

What I am having real trouble swallowing is the Donald Trump supporters and professional politicians who are selective about what they are willing to accept regarding Trump's bizarre behavior and skewed perception of the world.

If a man had beaten his wife and children and they had to be hospitalized, would we say, "Yeah, but that guy is good to me, so I don't care what he does to others?"

I may have questioned the paths taken by former administrations, but I never thought we would have to revisit or rehash or even disagree about our disdain for bigotry, hatred and violence because our president could justify them. I scoffed when I heard pundits put forth the idea that Trump wanted to undermine world peace and create chaos in our country.

How can any rational person say they support this president and act surprised when we question their humanity?

Diane Ramsey, University Park

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Established October 1, 1885

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John A. Rector Jr. 1985-1986

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Tuesday, December 12, 2017

EDITORIALS

Baylor's Brave Women

Their courage portended #MeToo movement

Men long entrenched in power are now ensnared in an astonishing moment of U.S. history that is calling out perpetrators of sexual assault and harassment.

As the #MeToo movement forces establishments everywhere to look hard at themselves and rigorously clean house, it's worth remembering that one Texas institution, Baylor University, got a humiliating head start on grappling with the reality of sexual violence and its cover-up.

Baylor's reckoning came about only because many courageous women united to demand accountability as they revealed their stories of sexual assault on the campus of the world's biggest Baptist university. These Baylor survivors weren't featured in *Time* magazine's "Silence Breakers," its just-released 2017 Person of the Year issue that recognized those who helped force consequences with their accounts of sexual harassment and assault.

Yet the women from Waco, honored by this newspaper last year as one of our Texan of the Year finalists, were a compelling harbinger of *Time's* 2017 designation. In our opinion, the Baylor survivors rank high among, in the magazine's words, "the voices that launched a movement."

This year's Person of the Year cover included well-known faces such as Ashley Judd and Taylor Swift, but you have to look carefully at the lower right-hand portion of the photo to see the most significant honoree.

The carefully cropped image is of a hospital worker from Texas who told her story to *Time* on the condition that she remains anonymous.

Like so many of the Baylor women whose cases are pending at the courthouse, this young woman represents those who can't publicly identify themselves because they fear the problems it might cause for them personally and their families.

These Jane Does are proof that it doesn't require a high-profile name to be a powerful catalyst for change.

In response to the survivors' solidarity and perseverance, Baylor has done a lot of things right over the past 18 months, starting



Agence France-Presse

Who is your Texan of the Year? This week is your last chance to nominate a Texan of the Year. Tell us who had uncommon impact, good or bad, in 2017. dallasnews.com/nominateTOY

with firing its president and football coach.

While the tragedy was hardly confined to the school's then-mighty football program, Baylor took a stand too many schools stumble over: College sports are not as important as student safety and school integrity.

Under new President Linda Livingston, the school removed additional administration figures whose behavior was sketchy at best. The school's accrediting agency just lifted sanctions after verifying more than 100 improvements Baylor made to its institutional response to sexual assault.

But questions — and lawsuits — linger. Baylor's Board of Regents never agreed to release a written version of the Pepper Hamilton law firm's investigative report. Just Thursday, the school's latest Title IX coordinator, who has been on the job a little more than a year, resigned. Baylor so far has offered no details, citing the situation as a personnel matter.

Despite Baylor's promises that the days of deception are over, the school is hardly in the clear. The improvements that have occurred should be credited to Baylor's brave survivors, who refused to remain shamed.

Long before this year's recognition of "The Silence Breakers," the Baylor women challenged their school to make things right and have persevered beyond the trauma to try to protect their peers.

Restore the Lifeline

Cuts cost DISD an alarming number of counselors

Does anyone think that an elementary school campus with one counselor per 900 students is a place you'd be eager to send your children? How about 1 per 500 at middle schools and high schools?

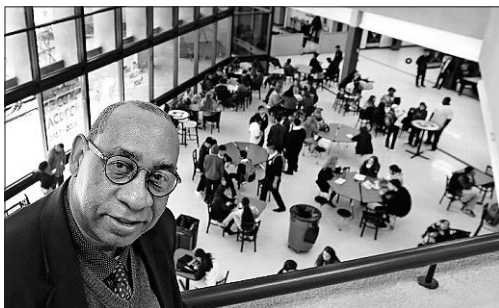
That's exactly the situation some Dallas ISD schools are in after organizational changes and budget cuts slashed the counseling staff to alarmingly sparse levels. One counselor at each high school was cut this spring.

This is particularly troubling for an urban district where some students come to school with less support at home and all sorts of social and emotional needs. Counselors are pivotal for student achievement; many times they are lifelines for students dealing with everything from abuse to homelessness.

We know there's only so much money to go around. Still, we urge district leaders to find the dollars to restore some of these critical positions — at least at the high schools, where a counselor's guidance could be the difference between students staying in school and going to college, or dropping out.

Here's how the district got to this disappointing spot: Last spring, Superintendent Michael Hinojosa cut \$60 million from the budget in order to expand important programs such as pre-K. The high school counselors were cut right along with school librarians.

The district was further hamstrung when trustees refused to put a tax increase on the ballot for the second year in a row.



Louis DeLuca/Staff Photographer

Leon Kilpatrick was reassigned to Seagoville High School when Dallas ISD dissolved its counseling services department and cut counselors at high schools.

And that prompted the new counselor-to-student ratio formulas. What's more, though counselors are graded on a system similar to the teacher evaluation system, that hasn't come with a raise.

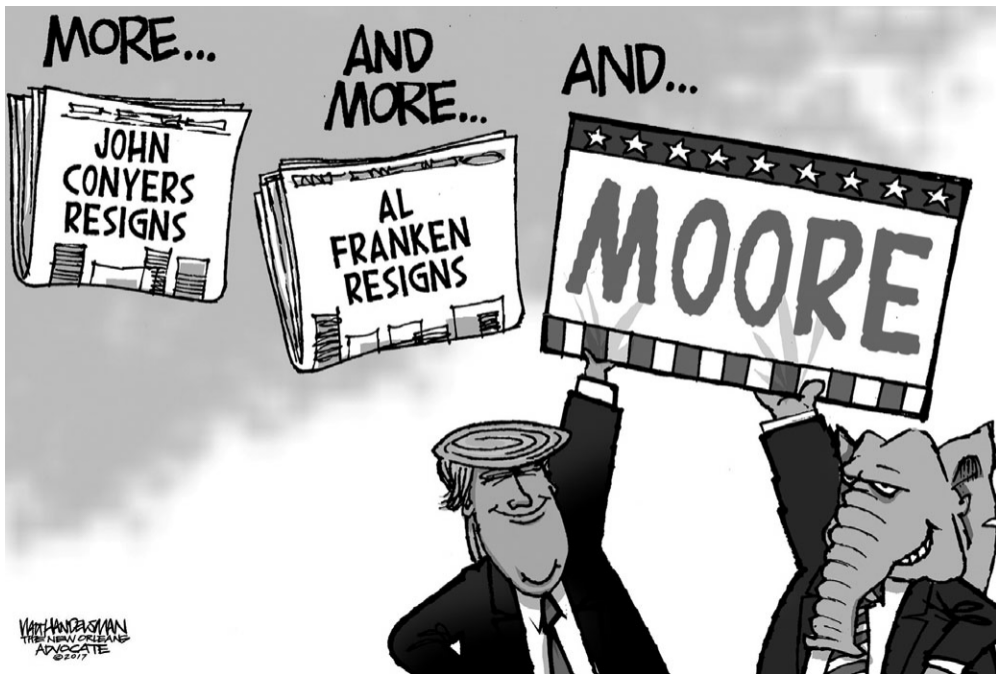
How long does the district think it'll keep the counselors it has under those conditions?

Ivonne Durant, the district's chief academic officer, knows the situation is not ideal but points out that neither are budget restraints. But she says the district is further scrubbing budgets and looking for other funding sources to give students the social and emotional support they need.

"It's not that we don't value the work that counselors do; quite the contrary."

For the sake of these kids, we hope there are positive results soon.

Running the counseling department into the ground, even to address other shortfalls, doesn't make sense.



Walt Handelsman/New Orleans Advocate

LETTERS

Down in the swamp

Re: "Trump is all in for Roy Moore — Sex allegations aside, he says GOP can't afford to lose seat to Dems," Saturday news story.

In case there were those who still believed our president might harbor at least a thread of moral integrity, I'm sure his actions regarding Roy Moore will eliminate any uncertainty. How could anyone say that party affiliation is more important than character? At least he leads by example. Let's just hope that a majority of those citizens in Alabama who will be casting votes can crawl out of the swamp and seek some higher ground.

Paul G. Hill, Garland

No smoking gun for Moore

Smoking gun: a canceled check, Democratic senator from Detroit. Smoking gun: a photo, ex-comedian-turned-Democratic senator.

Since there is no smoking gun, canceled checks or photos, Roy Moore should take his shot!

S. T. Russell, Dallas/Oak Cliff

FCC threatens opportunity

I had the pleasure of attending the Pete Sessions Leadership and Growth Program this summer in Washington, D.C., where I had the opportunity to learn about our country and make lifelong friendships. One takeaway I got from the trip was that opportunity is important and should be created to its highest extent.

With the recent threatening of net neutrality by the Federal Communications Commission, opportunity is being threatened. Information that has been available to millions and integral to our education system will be put behind a paywall that many students will not be able to get past if net neutrality is voted away on Thursday. I hope that you, Rep. Sessions, will advocate for net neutrality as I see you as a man looking to create opportunities for others so that our great country can thrive.

Will Roberts, Dallas

Shameful GOP actions

Albeit reluctantly, I admit it was a Republican, Spiro Agnew, nearly a half-century ago, who broadened my vocabulary with an adjective perfectly descriptive of many of that same party today: pusillanimous. Indeed, the word fittingly describes both Republicans in public office and the voters who, without compunction, elect them.

Witness the appalling GOP's emperor's-new-clothes attitude in electing President Donald Trump despite the disgusting *Access Hollywood* tape and the numerous credible accusations against the the candidate it spawned.

Current proof is the virtually certain outcome in the impending Alabama race for U.S. Senate, in which a predator of adolescent girls is favored over a candidate who, at the very least, is not (a pedophile). Look away, look away, Dixieland.

Well, shut my mouth. I'll never accuse Roy Moore of being a "vicar of vacillation" — he's always known what he wanted.

Kelly Adkins, Dallas/Preston Hollow

Keep Moore out

No Moses shenanigans in the promised land. No David building the temple. No Roy Moore in the U.S. Senate. Amen? Amen!

Renita Boykin, North Dallas

New nickname for GOP?

Voters in the deep South were for many years labeled "Yellow Dog Democrats." People who would vote for a yellow dog before they'd vote for a Republican. On Tuesday, Alabama voters may give us a new term to describe voters. Pedophile Republicans. Voters who would rather vote for a child molester than see a Democrat win the election.

John A. Bianchi, Wylie

Don't mistake Dems for puritans

Re: "Franken and Moore: a tale of two parties," by Todd J. Gillman, Sunday news column.

Todd Gillman writes Republicans tainted their image due to the Roy Moore campaign in Alabama. He says Democrats appear as puritans and the Republicans as libertines (sexually unrestrained). From the actions of some in one state, Gillman takes his journalistic brush and paints a wide swath over the Republican Party as reprobates.

Mr. Gillman, Hillary Clinton has already beat you to this condemnation of a people who do not buy the liberal direction of the country. She labeled them deplorable. I suggest a harder look at the history of liberals before awarding them a puritan label. Politicians, Hollywood types, executives and many others have utilized their power to enslave others and make sexual harassment a new sport. And we thought baseball was the national pastime.

The moral decay has been here. The infection is on both sides. The righteous Democrats you speak of certainly had no problem with Bill Clinton in the Oval Office or Sen. Ted Kennedy. Saying Democrats have become puritans is a little lame. It appears that people are being encouraged to look at a sliver of the problem rather than the whole problem. Think we have another sport.

Jerry W. Halpin, Lucas

Break cycle of child abuse

Re: "She fights tirelessly to help children — Madeline McClure has brought real hope to abused kids, says Cecilia Boone," Saturday Viewpoints.

The face of abuse is the more powerful parent, usually the dad, who controls and rages behind closed doors but shows a charming facade to the public with a partner who's too weak to stand up and turns a blind eye. The powerful control freak breaks the heart and spirit of a young child and the entire family.

Let's break the cycle of child abuse. No child deserves to lose their childhood. This is not just a problem in poor neighborhoods but also in upscale neighborhoods. God bless the kids who have lost their childhood and Christmas to the dark side of control and abuse. May they one day find peace.

It's very hard for family members to step in to protect the kids, even when the abuse is obvious, because the law says kids are owned by their parents until they come of age. The laws are against the kids. No one wants to throw kids into child services when loving grandparents or aunts and uncles could step in.

Using power to destroy the heart and soul of a child is a new low. So this Christmas, pray for the innocent kids who live in the shadows of child abuse with nowhere to turn.

Meg Hillert, University Park

Deep Ellum can do better

Re: "Call it eater-tainment — Denver-based restaurateur bringing Punch Bowl Social to Dallas," Sunday Business story.

I've been walking past and admiring 2600 Main St. in Deep Ellum for 18 months now. But when I read that it will be turned into an eatery-entertainment center, disappointment sank into my gut like a rock.

If all Deep Ellum wants is to be a great eating and entertainment center, then it's on its way to becoming just that. If, however, it also wants to become a community that outlasts future economic upturns and downturns, then it needs a grocery store and permanent housing options. More apartments, restaurants and entertainment centers is not better!

Gary Looper, Dallas

Commiserating about AT&T

Re: "Painful labor of an AT&T customer," by Dave Lieber, Sunday Metro & State column.

My husband often asks me to call AT&T to resolve an issue we are experiencing. I roll my eyes and grimace before explaining that I don't have all day to deal with AT&T.

Lieber's article confirms that I'm not speaking figuratively.

Jan Margrave, Richardson

LETTERS & VIEWPOINTS POLICY

We value reader submissions. We receive far more than we can print and publish a representative sample. Letters should not exceed 200 words. Viewpoints columns, which may be submitted through viewpoints@dallasnews.com, should not exceed 600 words. Letters and columns are edited for length and clarity. Include your name, address with ZIP code and daytime phone number. Submissions become property of *The News*.

ONLINE FORM

Please send us your letters via this online form

dallasnews.com/sendletters

We cannot accept letters via email or postal service

Correction: In an editorial Monday, the year of Ruth Altschuler's death was incorrect in the photo caption. She died in 2017.

VIEWPOINTS

Baylor still hurting itself

Latest filings in sex assault scandal underscore why the school should offer a full accounting, says **Sharon Grigsby**

Once again, the courthouse is providing the details that Baylor University refused to reveal regarding its sexual assault tragedy.

For months and months, this newspaper called on the school's Board of Regents to acquire and release a written version of the Pepper Hamilton investigation into the school's failures in handling sexual violence reports.

We didn't argue for the report's release for voyeuristic motives, nor did we subscribe to the conspiracy theories that the leadership changes — both at the top of the university and in the athletic program — were the wrong ones.

No, we said Baylor would be mired for years in the drip-drip-drip of ugly details if it didn't present the full narrative behind the sweeping — yet vague — statements of systemic failure. Continued secrecy, broken only by headline-grabbing courthouse filings, would only reinforce suspicions and unease.

Better to rip off the Band-Aid and get the full truth out there.

But as everyone who's followed this story knows, the regents did nothing of the sort. Instead, Baylor students, alumni, faculty and all of Waco have been regularly slapped in the face throughout 2017 with one nasty set of specifics after another, courtesy of legal filings in Title IX cases.

With each revelation come more damning coast-to-coast headlines, more mistrust from still-skeptical alumni and more bloodying of the school's reputation. Evidence of past injustices understandably garners way more attention than anything Baylor is doing right in 2017.

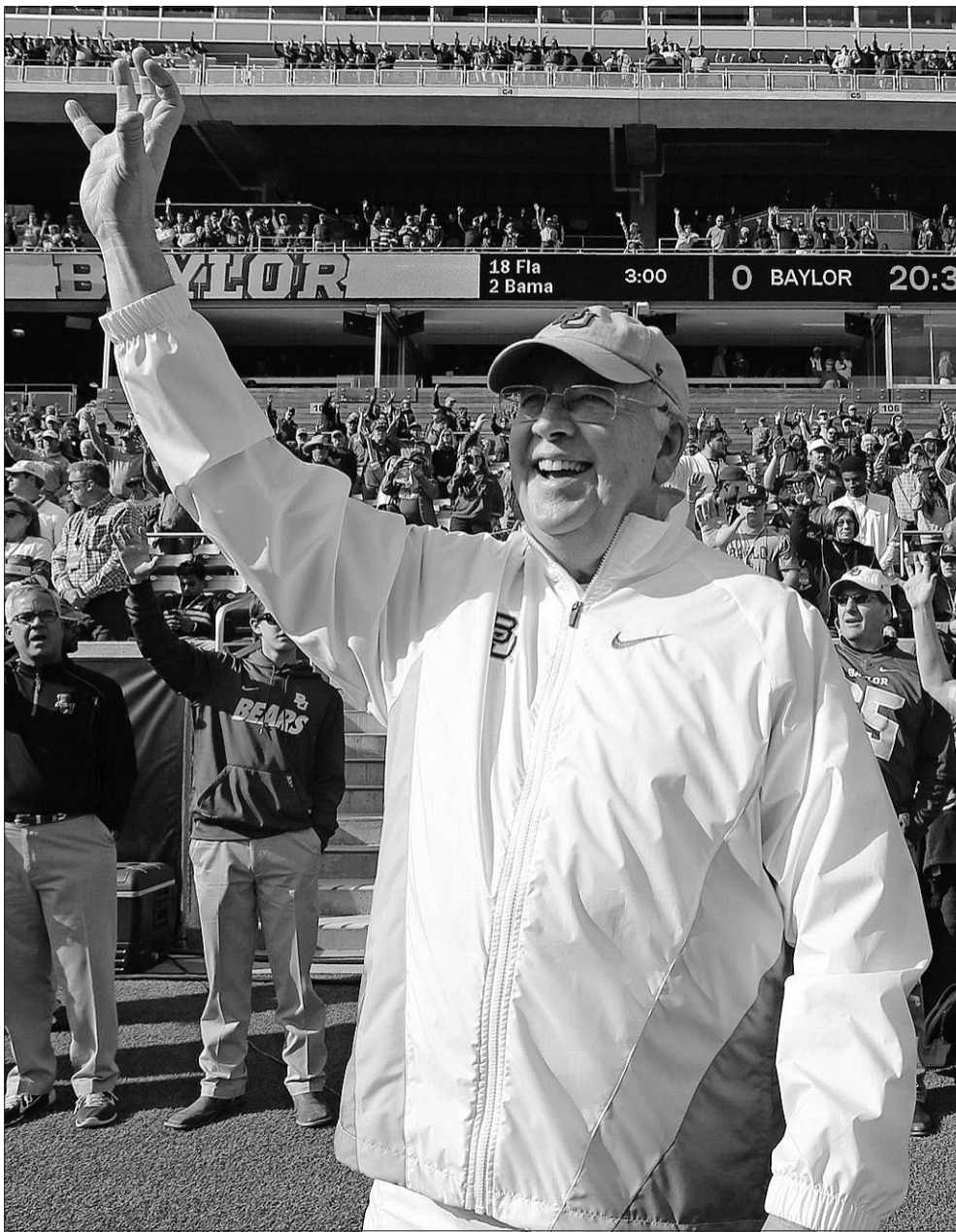
The latest Bad News Bears headline, first reported by the *Waco Tribune-Herald's* Phillip Ericksen, reads: "Motion alleges ties to top Baylor administrators helped man under Title IX investigation."

The details Ericksen pulled from the court filings are potentially far more damning than the headline conveyed.

A motion filed last week in a Title IX lawsuit on behalf of 10 Jane Does against the school alleges that a student accused of sexual misbehavior had a close relationship with then-President Ken Starr and other Baylor leaders and was, wait for it, overseeing female students and working on Title IX initiatives.

This man also seems to have been cleared of a sexual-violence complaint after he personally lobbied Bethany McCraw, a Baylor student discipline officer, the same day his accuser reported him. According to the motion, he wrote: "I've gotten myself into what may be a lot of trouble, and I would really appreciate your counsel on the matter. Do you have any openings today?" The case was closed the next day, according to the motion.

McCraw's name has come up consistently — in contexts that would give no reasonable person confidence in her performance — in cases dating all the way back to the sexual



Jerry Larson/Waco Herald Tribune

A motion filed last week in a Title IX lawsuit against Baylor alleges that a student accused of sexual misbehavior had a close relationship with then-President Ken Starr.

assault trial of former Baylor football player Sam Ukwuachu. With so many firings, demotions and transfers involving key figures in this scandal, it's stunning that McCraw still shows up on the Baylor Judicial Affairs page as chief judicial officer.

Last week's motion references documents and emails that the team led by Waco attorney Jim Dunnham has examined as part of the legal proceedings.

Baylor spokesman Jason Cook said in a statement that the school "will decline to comment in the media until legal counsel has an opportunity to thoroughly review the filing. Any response will be provided to the court in the appropriate legal forum."

The male student at the heart of last week's revelations is referred to in the motion as Assailant 3, which as the Texas Tribune notes in its extensive report on the motion, signals that he has not just been accused of sexual harassment but of sexually assaulting one of the women who is a plaintiff in the lawsuit.

According to the filing, in one document

the women's legal team reviewed, Assailant 3 refers to Starr as "Uncle Ken." In another, he says he got a job in Starr's office because he was "already bros" with Starr.

Even for those of us who have taken the time to read this motion and others, it's difficult to know what to make of all these dribs and drabs, how significant they are and how they fit together — or not. Ditto for motions filed by Baylor that attempt to raise questions about the motivations and stories of the Jane Does.

With the trial date still far away, tentatively set for October, expect the filings — and reminders of Baylor's past transgressions — to continue.

This newspaper has long said that Baylor was only hurting itself by refusing to offer a full accounting of its sexual violence tragedy. Pretrial discovery is proving out that point.



Sharon Grigsby is a member of the Dallas Morning News editorial board. Email: sgrigsby@dallasnews.com

Railroad Commission takes seismicity seriously

Wayne Christian: We base our decisions to protect public, environment on sound science

Seemingly every six months, *The Dallas Morning News* publishes an editorial criticizing the job performance of the Railroad Commission of Texas in protecting the environment for the citizens of Texas. The latest fake-news piece accuses the Railroad Commission of turning a "blind eye to science" by not doing enough to protect the public from earthquakes.

The fact is, the commission is a government agency full of scientists who take the issue of induced seismicity very seriously. As a result, the commission has in place some of the most stringent rules on disposal wells — the type of wells some link to earthquakes — in the country. Like all issues before the commission, our scientists take immense pride in ensuring all our decisions to protect the public and the environment are based on sound science, not irresponsible, politically driven narratives.

Texas is quickly becoming

a leader in seismicity research. In 2015, the Texas Legislature appropriated more than \$4 million to fund an enhanced seismic network managed by the Bureau of Economic Geology called TextNet. As part of the TextNet program, seismometers have been placed across Texas. Scientists from the Bureau of Economic Geology, the University of Texas, Southern Methodist University, Texas A&M, the Railroad Commission and industry are collaborating on research projects to gain a better understanding of seismicity in Texas. Fortunately, the TextNet program and the commission's rules are working. In fact, in October the Environmental Protection Agency released a report that "highly commends the RRC for its actions to address" seismicity in Texas, "including implementation of changes in permitting and operation requirements."

This is not the first time the commission has been applauded by the EPA for

how Texas handles issues of seismicity. In August 2016, the EPA stated in a report that the "RRC is also commended for establishing new regulations specific to seismicity, including solidifying RRC authority to take appropriate action related to injection well operations."

Additionally, the Railroad Commission is a leader in protecting Texas' underground sources of drinking water. Our agency just completed an exhaustive review of nearly 63,000 injection-well applications since 1982. The findings of the review confirm Railroad Commission-permitted injection wells are not polluting any sources of underground drinking water or potential sources of underground drinking water in our state.

As it did with regard to seismicity, the EPA commended the commission's Underground Injection Control program in its fiscal year 2016 end-of-year evaluation, stating the commission had "more than adequate inspection and monitoring" of Class II injection wells (wells used in oil and gas activities) and that our testing and surveillance

program "exceeds the minimum performance measure."

While the Railroad Commission is clearly doing its job of protecting the public, environmental extremists have engaged in fake news campaigns to twist these facts as part of their proxy war against fossil fuels. The Railroad Commission has been diligent about distributing information regarding these issues, but for the most part studies with good news, such as the recent EPA reports, have been largely ignored by the mainstream media.

If you would like more information, our agency did an in-depth breakdown on the reports and reviews mentioned in this editorial at the commission's last open meeting. You can watch that here: adminmonitor.com/tx/rcc/open_meeting/20171205.



Wayne Christian is a commissioner of the Railroad Commission of Texas. He wrote this column for The Dallas Morning News. Email: wayne.christian@rrc.texas.gov

U.S. must act to deter Russian cyberattacks

Disinformation campaign continues to cause damage, say **Michael Morell** and **Mike Rogers**

Every first-year international-relations student learns about the importance of deterrence: It prevented a Soviet invasion of Western Europe during the height of the Cold War. It prevented North Korea from invading South Korea in the same time frame. Today, it keeps Iran from starting a hot war in the Middle East or other nations from initiating cyberattacks against our infrastructure.

And yet, the U.S. has failed to establish deterrence in the aftermath of Russia's interference in the 2016 election. We know we failed because Russia continues to aggressively employ the most significant aspect of its 2016 tool kit: the use of social media as a platform to disseminate propaganda designed to weaken our nation.

There is a perception among the media and general public that Russia ended its social-media operations following last year's election and that we need worry only about future elections. But that perception is wrong. Russia's information operations in the U.S. continued after the election, and they continue to this day.

This should alarm everyone — Republicans, Democrats and independents alike. Foreign governments, overtly or covertly, should not be allowed to play with our democracy.

Russia's information operations tactics since the election are more numerous than can be listed here. But to get a sense of the breadth of Russian activity, consider the messaging spread by Kremlin-oriented accounts on Twitter, which cybersecurity and disinformation experts have tracked as part of the German Marshall Fund's Alliance for Securing Democracy.

In a single week this month, Moscow used these accounts to discredit the FBI after it was revealed that an agent had been demoted for sending anti-Donald Trump texts; to attack ABC News for an erroneous report involving Trump and Michael Flynn, the former national security adviser; to critique the Obama administration for allegedly "green lighting" the communication between Flynn and then-Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak; and to warn about violence by immigrants after a jury acquitted an unauthorized Mexican immigrant accused of murdering a San Francisco woman.

This continues a pattern of similar activity over the past year. Russian operatives have frequently targeted Republican politicians who have been critical of Trump, including Sen. Jeff Flake of Arizona, Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Sen. Bob Corker of Tennessee. In September, they also attacked Arizona Sen. John McCain after his decisive "no" vote against the Republican health care bill.

And in mid-November, after Keurig pulled its advertising from Sean Hannity's Fox News show for comments the host made defending Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore, the Russians used their social media accounts to urge a boycott of the company. For two days, #boycottkeurig was the most used hashtag among Kremlin-influenced Twitter accounts. This was a Russian attack on a U.S. company and on our economy.

More troubling, other countries are beginning to follow Russia's lead on social media, according to research provided by the Alliance for Securing Democracy. The Chinese are doing so in Taiwan, where 75 percent of the population consumes media from a Japanese instant messaging app called LINE — a hotbed for fake news, much of it from China. Some of the messages pushed by Beijing, including one incorrectly saying that the Taiwan government was planning to regulate Buddhist and Taoist temples, have resulted in large protests in Taipei. And Turkey is starting to use social media to try to influence European policy debates, specifically by targeting the large Turkish diaspora in Europe.

While those information operations have not yet reached the U.S., they most certainly will. Russia's use of social media as a political weapon will continue, and more countries will follow suit until deterrence is established.

The sanctions that the Obama administration and Congress put in place in the aftermath of the 2016 election are steps in the right direction, but they were not significant enough to check Russian President Vladimir Putin. True deterrence requires policies that prevent adversaries from achieving their objectives while imposing significant costs on their regimes. So far, we have done neither.



Michael Morell is a former deputy director and twice acting director of the CIA from 2010 to 2013. Twitter: @MichaelJMorell



Mike Rogers, a Republican from Michigan, served in the House from 2001 to 2015 and was chairman of the Intelligence Committee from 2010 to 2015. Twitter: @RepMikeRogers

This column first appeared in The Washington Post.