OPINION

THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

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OTHER OPINION

Trump Again

Can a second term heal the wounds of the first and the campaign?

Unlike Donald Trump's 2016 victory, which was surprising and shocking (including to him and Hillary Clinton), his sweeping win Tuesday night was there to see when 70% of Americans were telling pollsters that the country was on the wrong track. That's more than enough to derail any train and Kamala Harris was the conductor.

Trump won because he spoke to more people, not in terms of his rally attendance — he said at his late night victory speech that he's held more than 900 rallies since he rode that escalator into the basement of Trump Tower in June 2015— but because he connected more effectively with voter frustration and aspirations. But he spoke with an angry voice, making threats that frightened many. That must end and he should strive to earn some trust from the people he's alienated.

Voter discontent has given Trump a unique opportunity to have another chance. For his sake, and the country's, we hope he avoids the problems he suffered in his first term and uses his prior Oval Office experience to have a successful second term.

Much of that voter angst that Trump rode was that prices went up a lot, the biggest jump in more than 40 years, and everyone suffered from the punishing inflation. And while the high inflation has now been squeezed out by the Fed, the price of staples like a dozen eggs didn't come back to their old level. Neither Harris nor Joe Biden before her were able to counter that dollars and cents reality.

Biden is being blamed for not exiting the race earlier and only having his disastrous debate performance push him out. Had the incumbent president (the only person ever to beat Trump both in the Electoral College and popular vote) bowed out two years ago, the Democrats could have had a competitive nomination contest.

Instead Harris, who flopped badly when she ran for the White House last time around, had to launch this campaign from a standing start in July. Maybe a longer lead up or a different nominee would have changed Tuesday's outcome or maybe not, but it's just a parlor game.

The person who matters now, again, is Trump and he should savor that his second Electoral College win is also his first popular vote win, besting Harris by millions. It is also a healthier outcome to have the outdated Electoral College aligning with the will of the populace. America should still get rid of the Electoral College, but at least the minority president oddity is not being repeated and the word "mandate" is more fitting.

As to Trump's plans, he said a lot of different things, from a new reliance on the old tool of tariffs to some of his harsher political rhetoric. He should not try to arrest his political foes or use the military domestically. Or put vaccine denier Bobby Kennedy Jr. in charge of vaccine policy or allow Vladimir Putin to do whatever he wants. Or attempt mass deportations of millions.

For the past nine years, Trump said a lot of things that weren't true, including that the election results were rigged in 2020 (they weren't).

Trump was a sore loser in 2020 and he refused to congratulate Biden or attend his successor's inauguration. Biden and Harris won't be as petty and will accord Trump the honor and respect he deserves having won.

— New York Daily News

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Why I didn't vote for Harris

These are the reasons that I did not vote for Kamala Harris.

She positioned herself as the reproductive rights candidate, vowing to restore reproductive freedoms and garnering endorsements from organizations like the Planned Parenthood Action Fund & others.

How she declined to reveal how she voted on the California proposition that would toughen criminal penalties.

Several of her interviews with "The View" and some of the talk show hosts did not go well. When asked how her presidency would be different from Joe Biden, she stated that there's not much she'd have done differently than Biden over the last four years. For someone who was going to turn the page, just what page was she going to change? Polling had most folks saying the U.S. was on the wrong track.

At one time, she was supporting a mandatory buy-back program for AR-15s and similar guns.

She had been in favor of banning fracking.

Calling for defunding the police, she was supportive of redirecting funds.

Among those in support of the @MNFreedomFund, during the Minnesota riots, was Kamala Harris, who tweeted "If you're able to, chip in now to help post bail for those protesting on the ground in Minnesota."

Support of Green New Deal.

Wanting to expand the Supreme Court.

Previously, she supported a single-payer medical system.

I believe that it is important to vote for those who fulfill the values that you hold. I had no doubt that she did not hold mine.

Robert Ault, Lufkin

TODAY IN HISTORY

The Associated Press

Today is Saturday, Nov. 9, the 314th day of 2024. There are 52 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Nov. 9, 1989, communist East Germany threw open its borders, allowing citizens to travel freely to the West for the first time in decades.

Also on this date:

In 1976, the U.N. General Assembly approved resolutions condemning apartheid in South Africa, including one characterizing the white-ruled government as "illegitimate."

In 2011, after 46 seasons as Penn State's head football coach and a record 409 victories, Joe Paterno was fired along with the university president, Graham Spanier, over their handling of child sex abuse allegations against former assistant coach Jerry Sandusky.

Kindness, acceptance should still matter after presidential election

"I'm scared"

Those were the words that appeared on my phone Wednesday morning following the presidential election the night before. Those words were from my son, Ethan, who is transitioning to become my daughter, Elise.



GREG WEATHERBEE

I didn't need to ask why she was scared. I knew the night before that the results of the presidential election would likely bring about some angst — frankly, it brought about some angst for us both.

Look, I'm not here to rail against Trump or to bemoan the defeat of a candidate who would have likely made life easier for my kid, and thus, easier for me.

What I'm talking about is the reality of the situation we're in and how it impacts an American family and many more Americans and American families who find themselves facing the same circumstances.

There's been a shift in how the majority of Americans think the United States should be moving forward, and that's perfectly fine. I promise you — I wouldn't have it any other way.

We live in a country where the majority makes the rules. That means there will always be some who are happy and some who are not. The beauty of it is the majority of people will be the happy ones.

In between the happy majority and the sad minority, there are the marginalized, the different people, the people who don't see the world from the same angle as what those of who are considered "normal" see it — and they are almost always the misunderstood.

There are people who support the surge of this new right-wing ideology who call my child "evil." These people will now feel a little easier about displaying their disdain. To borrow a phrase, "I'm scared."

My kid is in that fold of humanity we tend to not think about as much because it makes us uncomfortable. He dressed differently than others when he was Ethan. He liked things a lot of his peers didn't understand. He was also kind, intelligent, loving, a bit of a dork and a lot of fun to be around.

When he told me he was transitioning, it wasn't a total surprise. There were signs, and frankly, I didn't give it much thought. He is who he is, and now she'll be who she is — the kiddo that makes me proud of who they are and how kind they are to the world.

So when I hear someone in power talking about the LGBTQ+ community in terms of perhaps no longer being a protected class of people, it's concerning. It's concerning because the masses are watching what the master allows, and they will certainly act accordingly.

My kid isn't "evil." She doesn't have an agenda beyond wanting to be who she wants to be and not to be persecuted for it. She's not out to change anyone's mind about anything. She just wants to be able to live without the fear of backlash, abuse and mistreatment. Trust me, there's more than enough of that already.

I know this isn't a popular subject. I know my child's decision to transition from one sexual identity to another isn't polite dinner conversation. I know my stance on the matter has already cost me some relationships. I also know Elise is dealing with this on a far grander scale without the benefit of experience.

If you are a supporter of the right-wing movement that seems to have swept across our nation, I congratulate you on a well-fought race and a decisive victory. What Trump was able to accomplish was historic and it should not go without a nod of acknowledgement.

All I ask, as we continue to grow and change as a nation, is that kindness be a priority. We can accept others who are doing nothing to us, but what they're doing is changing everything for them. It doesn't show weakness to approach the unknown with curiosity instead of defaulting to hate.

Remember that the LGBTQ+ person you're not giving a fair shake is someone's kid. They aren't soulless objects. They're people. They have feelings and they want to be happy, just like you.

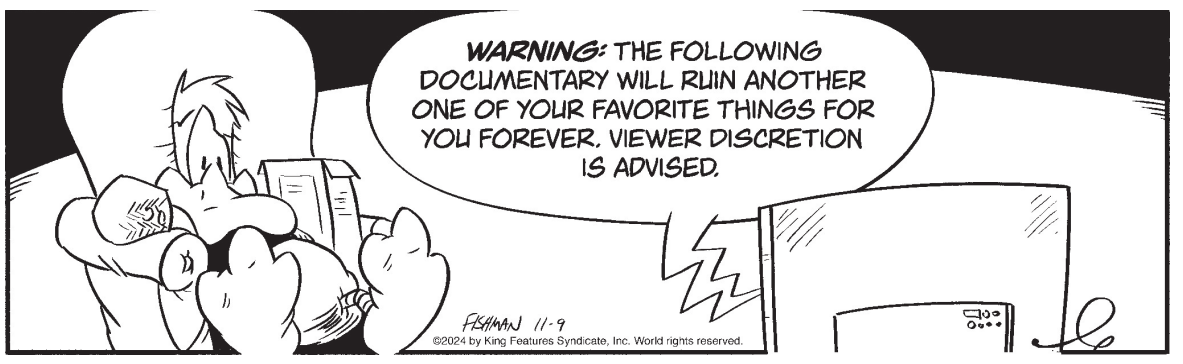
We can't allow political affiliation to continue to bring out the worst in both sides. It's time we quit looking to people who would sell us out for a vote without a second thought and start looking to the people we live and work with every day. Those are the people who are going to make the biggest difference in our lives and in the lives of those we love.

I don't want to read the words "I'm scared," and we don't have to live in a world that evokes them.

Greg Weatherbee is publisher of The Lufkin Daily News. His email address is **greg.weatherbee@lufkindailynews.com.**

MALLARD FILLMORE

By Bruce Tinsley



Texas Hunt & Fish App a handy resource

I want to start this week's column by expressing my sincere gratitude to everyone who exercised their right to vote in our most recent election. The American people have spoken in a historic fashion and provided our elected leaders with their vision and expectations for our country, state and local communities. I am deeply honored to serve as your state representative, and I remain firm in my commitment to promote and protect the interests and values that make our region such a special place to call home.



TRENT ASHBY

With the arrival of November, hunters across the state have finally taken afield and embraced the much-anticipated 2024 hunting season. With whitetail deer and duck season upon us, I want to remind all of my fellow hunters to make sure you've purchased your hunting license and federal duck stamp before heading out to the woods.

I'd also like to encourage you to consider downloading the Texas Outdoor Annual App and the Texas Hunt & Fish App. The Outdoor Annual App allows you to access information about hunting season dates, bag limits and regulations, and public land open for hunting. The Texas Hunt & Fish App allows you to purchase your hunting license through the app, access your license on your device, and even report your take — all from the convenience of your phone. For more information, please visit tpwd.texas.gov.

With that, we'll dive back into our examination of House interim charges.

House Interim Charge: Defense & Veterans' Affairs

The House Committee on Defense & Veterans' Affairs has jurisdiction over all matters related to our military bases in Texas, national defense-related issues, emergency defense preparedness and state-level veterans' programs. The committee also has jurisdiction over the Texas Military Department, the Texas Veterans Commission, the Texas Division of Emergency Management and many other state agencies.

During the interim, the Committee will monitor the implementation of House Bills 90 and 671. House Bill 90 expands the benefits available to members of the Texas Military Department (i.e., the Texas National Guard and the Texas State Guard) and their survivors. Examples of those benefits include compensation for travel to and from a duty station, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a compensable injury while on active duty, and financial assistance to surviving spouses of our state's military forces killed in the line of duty. I was proud to coauthor HB 90, which provided much-needed relief and protection to the men and women who serve our great state, and I was pleased to see it pass through the legislature last year.

House Bill 671 directs the Texas Veterans Commission to conduct a suicide prevention campaign for veterans and establish a website to inform veterans of the state mental health services available to them. If you, or someone you know, are a veteran and need help, please visit veteransmentalhealth.texas.gov or call 988 and press 1.

The committee will also study the federal criteria for initiating military base closures, evaluate the strength of bases operated by the Texas Military Department and make recommendations to prevent base closures in Texas.

Finally, the committee will study compliance in Texas with the Veterans Auto and Education Act, which allows active-duty service members and their spouses to transfer professional licenses from other states should they be stationed in Texas. Recommendations will be made to ensure our military personnel and their spouses can successfully continue to transfer their professional licenses to Texas.

The mobile office is on the road again in November, and our district director looks forward to seeing you on the following dates at the following times: Nov. 13 at the Polk County Commissioners Courtroom in Livingston from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and the Tyler County Commissioner's Courtroom in Woodville from 1:30-3:30 p.m.; and Nov. 20 at the Houston County Courthouse Annex in Crockett from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and the Trinity County Courthouse in Groveton from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact my office if we can help you in any way. My district office may be reached at (936) 634-2762 and my capitol office may be reached at (512) 463-0508. Additionally, I welcome you to follow along on my official Facebook page, where I will be posting regular updates on what's happening in your state Capitol and sharing information that could be useful to you and your family: facebook.com/RepTrentAshby/.

Trent Ashby is the state representative for District 9 that includes Angelina, Houston, Polk, San Augustine, Tyler and Trinity counties. His email address is **trent.ashby@house.state.tx.us.** He and his staff are available during the week at (512) 463-0508 or (936) 634-2762.

Have your say

To submit a letter to the editor, bring it to us at 300 Ellis Ave. in downtown Lufkin, or mail it to P.O. Box 1089, Lufkin, TX 75902-1089. Or you can email your letter to news@lufkindailynews.com.

The Lufkin Daily News welcomes letters of up to 250 words. All letters are subject to editing for length and clarity, and unsigned letters will not be used. Unless you stipulate "print only" on your letter, we reserve the right to publish in print or online. An address and daytime phone number must be included so the author's identity can be verified.

Only one letter per writer will be published during any 30-day period. Letters about politics, political campaigns or candidates will not be published once early voting begins in a primary or general election.