

THE SUN

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Letters

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City is wasteful irrigating land near subdivisions

I noticed today as I drove by The Village on Shell Road that there were irrigation (sprinkler) repairs being made in the vast green belt area in front of the subdivision. I ascertained from the contractor doing the repair that this was contracted for by the City of Georgetown.

With the city rationing water and allowing only certain days on which to water, I find it outrageous that the city is paying for repair, providing water and irrigating sev-

eral acres of land in front of private land.

This area is also mowed and edged by a contractor under contract with the city and the city replaces dead and damaged plants in this green belt, as well as constructed a sidewalk which will need to be removed upon the widening of Shell Road.

This disturbs me as a taxpayer that government funds go to the irrigation, maintenance and plant care when we are under no water restrictions. I believe the city is wasting funds and water in this area.

JIMMY COFFMAN
River Walk Trail

Texans need better mental health support

Thank you to Jay Trainor for your valuable words April 19. I agree 100 percent. Unfortunately, I do not feel that Texas Republican politicians care for lower income citizens.

According to Mental Health America, Texas ranked last among the 50 states and DC in access to mental health services. Removing barriers to psychologists prescribing medication is a cost-free way to help improve access to mental health care.

According to the Texas Comptroller, Texas has the highest number and percentage of uninsured. When these patients are treated in Emergency rooms the costs are covered by the hospital and taxpayers. Texas accepts billions of federal dollars for re-imbursing emergency care. Texas has not expanded Medicaid and leaves \$6 billion federal dollars on the table which could be used to insure Texans. It's frustrating that Texans contribute billions in federal Medicaid taxes annually out of their paychecks and nearly all go toward funding Medicaid

programs in states that have expanded Medicaid. Have Texas lawmakers not taken math classes? The cost of this inaction is ludicrous, both morally and financially.

In February of this Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick listed 30 bills that he designated as priorities, but there was no mention of the above concerns. He's been more interested in banning books in schools, "empowering parents" to take their children out of public schools with \$8,000 vouchers for each child to place them in private schools, removal of district attorneys and state judges who do not prosecute certain crimes such as minor theft charges.

In March, Governor Abbott lists expansion of school choice, making schools safer and tightening of bail requirements as some of his emergency items but nothing about my concerns as above.

Does it seem really strange that he wants tighter bail requirements when he's adamant about pardoning a killer convicted by a jury? It seems that maybe juries are not needed because the verdict can be given by Abbott.

RUTH ANNE HICKS
Williams Drive

Recent mass shooter broke existing gun laws

I read with interest the recent opinion from Jay Trainor titled "We must put people before guns." He overlooks several key points in his piece.

The mass murderer in Texas wasn't a "gun obsessed person." He was a multiple-time deported illegal alien who is federally prohibited from possessing any firearm. All illegal aliens are prohibited by federal law from possessing firearms. They are not entitled to the Second Amendment that U.S. citizens are entitled to.

Everything he did that day was illegal:

We can find a way to stop mass shootings

Is it political to ask why we tolerate the senseless mass killings? Both conservatives and progressives have lost loved ones in the killings. This year there have been about 1.5 mass killings every day. Do we really want to live this way?

Some think it made no difference when we previously banned assault weapons. That is not true. The gun deaths immedi-

ately increased when the ban expired.

If we have the will to stop it, we will find a way. We can even find a way for people to enjoy assault weapons at gun ranges and yet remove them from the street where distressed people use them to kill people. Conservatives and progressives will join together to solve this problem when we decide to no longer tolerate these senseless killings.

AARON WHITE
Jan Lane

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MARY GRIFFITH
Dawson Trail

Blame the criminals, not guns and gun laws

Regarding Jay Trainor's letter "We Must Put People Before Guns," Mr. Trainor blamed guns and gun laws, not the criminal who used the gun. Francisco Oropesa, the criminal who committed this horrendous mass shooting, had been deported four times and returned.

He never bought his gun legally and a red flag law Mr. Trainor proposed would have had no effect for a criminal who wasn't even supposed to be in our country. The failure of the U.S. government to fully secure our border and allowing this criminal element in repeatedly is the direct cause of this tragedy.

The sheriff's department said it took them 14 minutes to arrive after the call. When seconds count, the police are just minutes away. Mr. Trainor is welcome to depend on the police for the protection of his family, but he should remember the police have no duty to protect anyone. The U.S. Supreme court has made it clear that law enforcement agencies are not required to

provide protection to the citizens who are forced to pay for their services.

In the cases *Deshaney v. Winnebago and Town of Castle Rock v. Gonzales*, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that police agencies are not obligated to provide protection to citizens, even when a threat is apparent.

Lastly, maybe the Second Amendment is not clear to Mr. Trainor. A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the *people* to keep and bear arms, *shall not be infringed*.

DAVID BOYD
Susana Drive

How to get your letter in

We and our readers value your letters. Letters should not exceed 250 words. **Please include the source of your information.** Letters are edited for length and clarity. Include your name, address and a daytime phone number. Submissions become property of *The Williamson County Sun*.

Email your letter to opinion@wilcosun.com and put your letter in the body of the email in plain email type. We do not open attachments or accept letters written in capital letters.

Learn about Georgetown during National Preservation Month

BIBLIOFILES

Ann Evans

Come to downtown Georgetown during the month of May and you might spot bright orange stickers reading "This Place Matters." These signs draw attention to the fact that May is National Preservation Month. This year's theme is "people saving places."

Throughout the years, many people and organizations have worked to save places in Georgetown.

In 1973, the National Trust for Historic Preservation organized the first preservation week to encourage communities to celebrate their historic spaces. Seven years later, the National Trust started Main Street America with the goal of helping communities revitalize their historic downtowns.

Georgetown became one of the first Texas towns to participate in 1982. Over the past 41 years, the Main Street Program in Georgetown has grown from a grassroots effort and is now a department within the City of Georgetown. The success of the Main Street program and their work to restore downtown is evident. For example, many businesses in the historic districts have received a façade or signage matching grant as part of the program. In 1997, Georgetown became the first city in the state to receive the Great American Main Street Award, the highest honor given by Main Street America. For more information visit mainstreet.georgetown.org.

You can also read more about the Main Street Project's early years in the Texas History Room



COURTESY OF THE MAIN STREET ARCHIVES

Austin Avenue as photographed in the early years of the Main Street Program in the 1980s.

at the Georgetown Public Library in the book *Building the future by renovating the past: the Main Street Project in Georgetown, Texas*.

In 1984, Preservation Georgetown, then the Georgetown Heritage Society, worked with several partners to conduct a historic resource survey. This documented all structures built before 1935 within the city limits and extra-territorial jurisdiction. At that time the survey identified over 900 properties.

Beginning in 2007, the City of Georgetown Planning Department worked to conduct additional surveys that expanded the area and time frame covered. The most recent survey identified 1,677 properties. These surveys, as well as photographs from the 1984 survey, are available for viewing at the library in the Texas History Room. For more information

on these surveys, maps of the historic districts in downtown and information on other Planning Department efforts visit historic.georgetown.org.

Another facet of historic preservation is caring for cemeteries and unearthing the stories they contain. In 2013, the City of Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department worked with the Texas Historical Commission to conduct a survey of Citizens Memorial Garden Cemetery. Founded in 1906, Citizens Memorial Garden Cemetery is the final resting place for many generations of Georgetown's African American families. The 2013 survey recorded 306 marked graves and also located 500 unmarked graves. An interpretive sign was erected that includes a history of Citizens Memorials, lists the known burials and maps the locations of the unmarked graves. For more infor-

mation visit parks.georgetown.org/topics/cemeteries.

These are just a few examples of ways of ongoing preservation in Georgetown. However, there are several more nonprofits, professionals and local historians who work alongside the city to

maintain the charm and history of Georgetown. This place matters, because of the people.

We hope to see you in the Library soon.

Ann Evans is the Adult Services Librarian at the Georgetown Public Library.

What's going on in the library?

April 11-May 14: Jan Paxon-Anderson Light: Interrupted (first floor café gallery)

April 11-May 14: City of Georgetown Staff Art Show (second floor galleries)

May 2-May 31: Happy 175th Birthday Georgetown Card Display (lobby)

May 10, 6:30 p.m.: GPL World Cinema: Lunana: A Yak in the Classroom

May 15: Open call for 2024 art exhibit proposals closes (see library.georgetown.org/art)

For more information about Library events, visit library.georgetown.org/events-calendar or call 512-930-3551.