

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



We need independent redistricting

I am pleased that the supervisors will be returning to the drawing board to address the court-required set-aside of the Patten map adopted for the county redistricting after the census. I was among those who was disenfranchised and left without a vote or representative on the board. I hope the map they decide on will be fair, legal, not gerrymandered and reflective of communities of interest. The drawing of district lines must not reflect partisanship, but balance. To that end, I encourage the discussion to include moving forward with the creation of an independent, impartial redistricting commission to be the law in our county. We must ensure that future decision-makers will never repeat the illegal and unfair activity the court has just ruled against. Now is the time to put in place the process for future redistricting that complies with state law and the Fair Maps Act. We must never repeat the partisan fiasco we have

just experienced.
*Christine Mulholland,
San Luis Obispo*

More on mapping

The SLO County Citizens for Good Government (SLOCCGG) lawsuit disputing the adoption of the Patten map details the evidence and applicable California laws regarding the county’s contentious 2021 redistricting. The SLO County supervisors recently voted to settle the SLOCCGG lawsuit. As a condition of the settlement, the county is required to discard the Patten map. The Tribune recently devoted considerable print to the disgruntled map creator, Richard Patten, who contends discarding his map is wrongful. According to Patten, the map was independently drawn and created without partisan input. Under California law, the map creator’s state of mind and lack of partisan collusion is not necessary to prove that the gerrymandering effect exists. Gerrymandering is the act of drawing political voting boundaries that favor voters of one political party at the

expense of the opposing party voters. Discarding the Patten map and adopting a new map that complies with California Constitution and the Fair Maps Act is a specific condition of settlement for ending the litigation. The costs of the Patten map litigation are being funded by SLO County and ultimately, the SLO County taxpayers. It is beneficial to all concerned citizens to end this litigation. Beyond disposing of the illegal Patten Map, the Board of Supervisors must come to consensus on a new map that complies with the California Constitution and the Fair Maps Act. I urge the board to bring forth a new map that represents shared community interests and is fair to all.
Steve Gillean, Arroyo Grande

Learn about climate crisis

Earth Day is just around the corner. This year will be a critical one for stabilizing the runaway rise in CO2 emissions. The March 2023 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate

Change report makes it abundantly clear that we’re close to reaching a dangerous climate threshold. We must act to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels within 10 years. Otherwise, subsequent heat waves, food shortages and infectious diseases will claim millions of lives. We can each take effective personal actions to slow the growing fossil fuel pollution causing planetary warming. Information and resources are crucial tools to transitioning to a green economy, primarily through solar and wind, by electrifying everything. We have a wonderful opportunity to educate ourselves about the climate crisis. There will be a special event taking place on April 15, 10:00 a.m. at St. Benedict’s Church, Los Osos. Susan Callery, managing editor of NASA’s Global Climate Change website, will present eye-popping views from space and long-range images showing how climate change is affecting our planet. Please attend and learn what you can do to help sustain a livable

world for future generations. There is no time left for delay. Our children and grandchildren are counting on us to act now.
Sandy Simon, Nipomo

GOP lost its spine

Republicans have become cowards. They see our children get shot, our democracy and institutions get attacked, the planet warming with catastrophic results, a serial criminal and insurrectionist leading their party. And they do nothing. They have admitted they will continue to do nothing, and they will soon sabotage our economy as they force our country to default on debts they helped run up. None of the problems we face will be solved until we vote every last Republican out.
Mary Donnelly, San Luis Obispo

Put students before prisoners

Regarding Gov. Newsom’s announcement to transform San Quentin State Prison into a model of rehabilitation and education: I think Gov. Newsom forgot that the CDCR is the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Most of the prisons in our state are at capacity per state information. Newsom has ordered closure of a few prisons slated for this year. If you look at each prison’s website, they are advertising for teachers and currently have educational and vocational classes in job classifications such as woodworking, welding, etc. I think it is ironic that schools in California are rated among the worst in the country. I would suggest the governor focus on our children. Possibly if he can accomplish success with our kids, then he can focus on further education for prisoners. It appears to me that Gov. Newsom and state legislators lack the

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ability for second-stage thinking. This is apparent in their lack of success in most of their endeavors.
Gloria Zamora, San Luis Obispo

Supermarkets are nice ... noise not so much

Yup, having a local grocery store in the Cypress Ridge neighborhood would be nice; no question about that. But having lived in a community that had a small local grocery store was less than enchanting. Inventory is not replenished magically, but by large refrigerator trucks. These trucks are left to run, often well into the evening as deliveries are made. In a city, it’s just one of the many odious sounds, but in a small community the complaints will start immediately. Add to that the sound of hand trucks clanging down ramps to resupply the store. Again; cue the complaints. Then there’s the detritus of the daily operation. Card-board compactors, stacked wooden pallets and waste that has to be attended to. So having a choice of 35 kinds of mustard would be nice, but a supermarket would bring more problems than can be imagined. Thus a quick jaunt to a local supermarket that already exists is not a big ask.
Laurance Shinderman, Nipomo



Jimmy Paulding on his first on the job. The freshman supervisor is gauging whether there’s interest in unifying Oceano and Grover Beach.

OCEANO

it’s still referred to as Shell Beach, both by locals and in promotional materials for hotels and vacation rentals. Still, we can’t help but think that the annexation ship has sailed for the South County. While it may make sense from a theoretical standpoint — consolidation generally means less duplication of services, which can cut costs — communities are naturally leery of being subsumed by a larger neighbor. **UNIFICATION ‘COMPACT’ IS ONE ALTERNATIVE** Paulding does have other, less tectonic ideas for Oceano. He’s drafted a “community unification compact”

that he’s shared with advisory organizations. It asks local leaders to set aside divisive issues for now — such as the contested ban on off-roading at the Oceano Dunes — to concentrate on projects the entire community can get behind. It lists three goals: ● Improving flood control and drainage, adding pedestrian crossings on Highway 1 and making it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to travel between the downtown and the beach. ● Pressing State Parks to fully reimburse local agencies for all emergency services provided at the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular

Recreation Area. ● Collaborating on community beautification projects, a farmers market and park improvements. Those are worthy goals, and, since grant funding should cover at least some of the projects, the work shouldn’t create a burden for local taxpayers. So what’s next? We don’t mean to put too much of a negative spin on annexation — if there is community interest on the part of both Oceano and Grover, it probably is worth exploring — but that process would take years, and the likelihood of success is low. Oceano needs assistance now, and getting community buy-in on more achievable goals is a smart direction for Paulding to take — with no helmet required.

ALZHEIMER

ceive a diagnosis. Right now, there is no cure for Alzheimer’s, but its progression can be delayed with medication if diagnosed in the early stages, as mine was. **MAUREEN SINNOTT** Sister Sheral Marshall and I both retired from full-time ministries a year and a half ago and moved from the Bay Area to Arroyo Grande. In truth, Franciscan Sisters never really retire because we continue to advocate and pray for those most underserved and disenfranchised until our last breath and then in heaven. We live near Santa Maria, where the population

is 77.7% Hispanic and they are one and a half times more likely to develop Alzheimer’s than Caucasians, according to the Alzheimer’s Association. These are our neighbors and we want to help raise awareness among them of the early symptoms and the need for early diagnosis and treatment to slow the progression of the disease and prolong quality of life. We laugh a lot and sometimes cry, too. Sometimes, when Sheral drops a dish or bumps into something, I feel a deep-down sadness. Sometimes, when she repeats a story I pause, try to listen even more closely and thank

God that she can still tell me a story. Sometimes, when it takes her a long time to cook supper and I am hungry, I pause and thank God that she can still take her turn preparing supper. I want to be with her on this journey all the way and I frequently ask God to please let me live as long as Sheral. Sheral has given her whole life to the service of others and has even donated her brain to Stanford for research when the time comes. But until then, we are trying to live in the present moment, grateful to be living together and for all our blessings of still being independent, mobile, healthy and able to advocate for others with Alzheimer’s, trusting that God will provide.

GERAGHTY

knew exactly where the balloon was going ... We protected civilians, and we gained more intel while protecting our own sensitive information.” On Feb. 16, Biden said, “We were able to protect sensitive sites against collection.” Eh, never mind. The Biden’s administration’s inflated claims keep exploding when pricked by the facts. Consider the White House’s spread-the-blame contention, as criticism of its performance mounted, that the Trump adminis-

tration had been aware of intrusions by Chinese balloons and had done nothing about them. Also bogus. Officials soon clarified that the North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, had not been able to identify balloons as Chinese spy probes during the Trump administration. “Our awareness and understanding of this capability has increased over the last couple of years,” said the Pentagon’s press secretary, Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder, on Feb. 8. He

noted that in some cases, “subsequent analysis, subsequent intelligence analysis did enable us to indicate that these were Chinese balloons.” Every administration spins, omits unpleasant facts and shades the truth. But Biden asked the country to judge him by the toughest standard, pledging in his inaugural address, “Before God and all of you, I give you my word, I will always level with you.” Do the administration’s statements about the spy balloon seem true to you? *Jim Geraghty is National Review’s senior political correspondent.*