



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.

E T C .

From City Park

It is probably just a coincidence that the first two items in these 800 or so words in this week's edition of your favorite weekly newspaper are about City Park, through which I trudged in the rain for Thursday's Veterans Day ceremony.



Steve Prestegard
editor@
theplattevillejournal.com

Woofing: It is not good government to have laws in place that authorities either cannot enforce or are not interested in enforcing. That would be the city's ordinance banning dogs in all but the Platteville Dog Park and the trail portion of Mound View Park.

Despite that, and despite the No Dogs in Park signs, I have seen (and taken photos of) dogs in City Park during several Music in the Park concert, other events or just being walked through City Park, and in Legion Park during baseball and softball games. I do not recall seeing citations listed in The Journal's police or Court News listings for any dog-related citations beyond animals running at large.

So give the Common Council some credit (did I actually type that?) for recognizing reality and opening most city parks to dogs. As was pointed out in last week's council meeting, Platteville's dog population appears to have grown substantially during the pandemic, and it's certainly possible that more residents recognize the virtues of dogs (for instance, they're always happy to see you when you come home from work) vs. people.

That is only qualified credit, though, because of the continued ban of dogs from City Park, which defies logic given parks director Luke Peters' comment that everyone who works in the Municipal Building can see dogs walked through City Park, and so can anyone else who bothers to notice.

The Veterans Honor Roll Committee told the council it is opposed to dogs in City Park specifically as part of its "concern about the lack of respect shown the veterans memorial." No disrespect is intended to the committee when I point out that City Park is owned by the taxpayers of Platteville, not by the committee. Putting the Veterans Honor Roll in such a public place (as opposed to some of Platteville's more obscure parks) means more people will see them, and it also means some people will act less than appropriately around them. (Recall the Madison idiots who vandalized the statues several years ago.) And I am skeptical that constant police patrols in City Park to keep dogs out or stop, for instance, kids from climbing on the statues is a good use of taxpayer resources.

Second verse, same as the first: Those who believe the city Historic Preservation Commission exceeds its authority and impedes productive use of city buildings (many of which are deemed historic merely because someone proclaimed them so) have had their point proven in the HPC's denial of a sign for Speakeasy50 on the City Park side of the building at 130 Market St. on the grounds that the HPC should tell business owners how to run their businesses.

Recall that this is the same building whose owners requested a sign for The Spa Boutique at BarberShop Rock, had it denied by the HPC (after it engaged in its own sign-placement opinion exercise), and then had the council override the HPC and approve the sign where the owners wanted it. I predict the council will repeat its previous action when the vote comes up, and that is the appropriate decision for the council. The objections to the sign's placement are aesthetic, which is nothing more than personal opinion.

Someone needs to teach the HPC a lesson in property rights. And if HPC members can't learn that lesson (and it seems that at least two don't grasp that concept), either they need to be replaced, or the HPC needs to be terminated.

Outside of City Park: Credit is due state Reps. Travis Tranel (R-Cuba City) and Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville) for being sponsors of a bill to create a tax credit for advertising expenses for small (as in fewer than 100 full-time employees) businesses. Other business expenses are not taxed, therefore advertising should not be taxed either.

Novak, a former journalist (or as we call ourselves an "ink-stained wretch"), notes that the pandemic has decimated Main Street businesses (in large part because of government actions) such as retail, hospitality and manufacturing businesses. The pandemic also has caused problems for newspapers and radio stations that exist to cover Wisconsin communities — media outlets whose employees live in the same towns as their readers and listeners and focus not on the clown show in Washington or Madison or the site of the social media kerfuffle du jour, but what is happening in their own communities.

The legislation is supported by both media groups and business groups. The Legislature should pass it, and the governor should sign it into law.



MADISON JOURNAL Safe Haven bill passes

by **Sen. Howard Marklein**
(R-Spring Green)

The non-partisan Legislative Audit Bureau delivered the results of an audit of the November 2020 Election to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee Oct. 22.

As a member of this committee, I initiated and helped to craft the scope of this audit. The full report from the LAB is available for your review: <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/lab>

The LAB provided an overview at a public hearing on Wednesday and you can view this hearing on WisconsinEye: <https://wiseye.org/2021/11/09/joint-legislative-audit-committee-41/>

According to the LAB, it contacted the Wisconsin Election Commission and surveyed all 1,835 municipal clerks and 72 county clerks. They contacted 179 clerks for more information and physically reviewed 14,710 certificates that accompanied absentee ballots returned to clerks in 29 municipalities throughout the state, reviewed the results of 175 statutorily required tests of electronic voting equipment that clerks in 25 municipalities completed before the November 2020 General Election, and reviewed 45 sworn, written complaints related to the election that were filed by May.

Unfortunately, the City of Madison did not provide an opportunity to physically handle their ballots. As a result, the Senate Committee on Elections, Election Process Reform and Ethics has issued subpoenas to gather this important evidence which will be

turned over to the LAB to complete the audit.

Despite the incomplete data, the LAB recommended 30 actions that should be taken by WEC to reform and improve the way election laws are executed in Wisconsin. You will find these recommendations in Appendix 7 of the report. Several of these recommendations tell WEC to take action to follow existing state laws. There were several issues, identified by the audit, in which WEC is not following state laws related to providing training, maintaining voter records, counting ballots, collecting ballots and more.

I am concerned that WEC is not following state laws. Our hard-working, local municipal clerks rely on WEC to provide guidance, training and support so that they may do the very important, difficult and time-consuming job of executing elections in Wisconsin. If WEC is not following state laws, they are not fulfilling their essential duty to our local clerks.

The LAB also provided 18 items for legislative consideration. You will find these recommendations in Appendix 8 of the report. These are 18 ideas that the Legislature could write bills to address. Five of these recommendations have already been addressed with legislation that was vetoed by Gov. Tony Evers.

The Legislature has passed nine of 10 bills related to election reform. The governor has vetoed eight of these bills, including legislation that would stop private money from influencing elections, outlaw ballot harvesting, enforce voter ID for indefinitely confined claims, prevent illegal "curing" of

ballots by municipal clerks and more. This is the Senate's Dashboard of these bills: <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/republicans/election-bills>

The bottom line is the results of this audit tell us that there are issues we must address at the state level to make sure that our local elections officials have the support and tools they need to execute elections efficiently and legally. We have more work to do and the legislature will continue to strive for positive reforms.

As an individual, you can play a role in efficient, legal elections too. Please consider volunteering to work at a polling place in your community for future elections. This will give you the unique opportunity to participate in the electoral process and ensure election integrity. According to WEC, there are two ways to be nominated: either through a nomination from the Democratic or Republican party, or by applying directly to your town, village or city clerk. Our hard-working municipal clerks are always looking for help. Please consider volunteering for these important jobs.

Nominations by political parties are due by Nov. 30 for the 2022 election cycle. Please visit www.wisdem.org/county-parties or www.wisgop.org/county-parties to volunteer for this important nomination right away.

Again, we have the results of the LAB Election Audit, mostly. I look forward to reviewing amended findings once the LAB receives all of the data they need from the City of Madison to complete their audit. I also will continue our work to reform and modernize election laws.

LETTERS

The Platteville Journal, P.O. Box 266, Platteville, WI 53818-0266 • editor@theplattevillejournal.com

'Hope' response

After reading Mr. Skubal's Letter last week I thought I was reading the textbook definition of two techniques of persuasion — glittering generalities and name-calling — used to discredit your opponent. Terms like "socialism," "hatred," "defunding police," "brainwashing of children," "big government control," "stupidity," "evil," "zombies," "bull feces," and the conservatives' favorite go-to term these days, "critical race theory." Mr. Skubal enlightened us by defining the last term. He said the theory "teaches our children that your skin color determines whether you are a good or evil person." Whoa!

Like Mr. Skubal, I taught U.S. history and American government classes for more than three decades. Our country is a great experiment in government of, by and for the people. We have a ways to go to live out those words found in the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights and other documents.

Slavery, Jim Crow laws, lynchings, Japanese internment camps, the Holocaust, the Chinese Exclusion Act, and redlining in the real estate industry are examples of what is referred to as systemic racism. This form of racism is found in all of our institutions. Redlining is still going on the real estate industry. Our judicial system and criminal justice system, our education system and financial system had and still have systemic racism embedded in them. Our young people need to be aware of these truths about our history. History repeats itself if we do not learn from the past.

Students also need to read about the historic struggle for women's rights. Racism is not about individual acts like wearing a T-shirt at a Trump rally with the words "6 million was a good start." The racism that I taught about in my classes was to try to help young people understand where we came from as a society.

If anybody wants to know where Mr. Skubal is coming from just keep in mind what he said at the end of

his Letter about the Jan. 6 riot. He gave himself away. Who was to blame for what happened that day? Not the Proud Boys, the white militias, Q-Anon, neo-Nazis or his beloved Mr. Trump. No. Mr. Skubal said, "it was actually coordinated and instigated by the so-called progressives". That's right, all those people we saw on TV waving their Trump flags and their Confederate flags who had just come from a Trump rally 30 minutes earlier were "progressives". Keep in mind that hundreds of these people have pleaded guilty to violating laws and some are currently in jail. I will let the reader decide who these people really were.

Thomas Osting
Platteville

Climate and ag

The wrong people are being displayed as symbols of climate change aversion. International meetings and speeches by world leaders get lots of media coverage. That has its place. However, the faces we should see are those who are actually doing the work.

In our agricultural community we should see the faces of producers who are planting cover crops, expanding grassy strips near waterways, employing no-till cultivation, practicing rotational grazing, adding forage crops to their rotation, and more. These are the landowners who are investing in their land and moving toward a more sustainable style of farming that will help offset the effects of climate change. Fortunately, there are many producers in our area who are making the change and are seeing the benefits of their actions.

National leaders have to be the spokespeople and signal changes in direction for their citizens. But it is the everyday actions of ordinary people that will make change happen.

Gary Munson
Platteville

turbines proposed in Iowa and Lafayette counties. My husband and I are one of many volunteers opposing industrial wind turbines and do oppose signing a contract with the wind turbines up to 700 feet tall.

Please do not sign a contract that will have a potential to destroy your acres, farmland, your neighbors land, the Driftless Area, and Southwest Wisconsin for a few dollars. That contract will be a contract that is written for the wind companies, not the landowner.

Well, why are we opposing these industrial wind turbines? They cause potential health hazards and will possibly kill Southwest Wisconsin tourism and destroy the Driftless Area — vegetation, animals and species, parts of our good farmland, our aesthetic view, our ground water and air quality. There are also possible disruptions of services like Med Flight, which will not come in an area with wind turbines that are 700 feet tall.

More than 300 industrial wind turbine projects have been cancelled because of the information I am sharing. In Germany they are proposing to tear them down. They are like dinosaurs.

So where is this electricity going? These are like dinosaurs for our community! It seems we have enough electricity in Southern Wisconsin. We could provide money for local solar on the rooftops of residential and business buildings.

Our future of Southwest Wisconsin is in our hands. We are asking for volunteers and have volunteer meetings in November and December. If you would like more information, call 608-553-2544 or email info@no-uplands.com.

Dr. Gloria Belken
Montfort

Editor's note: The developers of the proposed Uplands Wind project say the number or size of the turbines has not been determined yet.

Wind turbines

There are 171 industrial wind

See LETTERS page 6A



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WISCONSIN NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION

Prelim today

► **OWI from page 2A**
 midnight and said he had consumed 14 beers.
 Horner had previous operating while intoxicated convictions in 1989, 2006, two in 2007, 2011 and 2018.
 In June, Horner was convicted of two felony counts of causing a child to view sexual activity. He was placed on two years probation, including nine months in jail, and ordered to report to the jail Friday. He was also placed on probation for two years. Two

other more significant sexually-related felony charges against Horner were dismissed on a motion by the prosecutor.
 Horner now faces seventh-, eighth- or ninth-offense operating while intoxicated. The maximum penalty upon conviction is 12½ years in prison and a \$25,000 fine.
 Horner was also charged with a misdemeanor of resisting an officer. The maximum sentence for resisting an officer is nine months in jail and a fine of \$10,000.
 Horner's preliminary hearing is being held today.

Boscobel man to federal prison

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa — A man who possessed two firearms and admitted to buying more than a pound of methamphetamine was sentenced Nov. 5 to more than seven years in federal prison.
 Todd Fritz Groom, 33, Boscobel, received the prison term after his May 3 guilty plea to possession of firearms by a prohibited person.
 Information from Groom's guilty plea and sentencing hearings showed that on Sept. 24, 2020, deputies from the Fayette County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant for stolen property at a residence in Clermont, Iowa. After discovering

drugs in the house, the deputies obtained and executed a second search warrant for drugs and drug-related items. They found two firearms in a backpack with other items belonging to Groom.
 Groom was previously convicted of four felony offenses and was a methamphetamine user. Groom later admitted to a deputy that, a couple weeks before the search, he had bought 1.5 pounds of methamphetamine for redistribution and that one of the subjects he dealt with was involved with a drug cartel.
 Groom was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge C.J. Williams to 86 months'

imprisonment and a three-year term of supervised release after the prison term. There is no parole in the federal system.
 Groom is being held in the U.S. Marshal's custody until he can be transported to a federal prison.
 This case was brought as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods, the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

LETTERS from page 4A

Crawford CAFO

My family's 600-acre farm is a stone's throw from the proposed Roth Feeder Pig Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation in the Town of Marietta. Years ago we placed our land into Wisconsin's Forest Management Program with the guidance of Department of Natural Resources specialists, to ensure its long-term environmental sustainability. If the DNR approves this CAFO, the value of our farm, and that of our neighbors, will be severely impacted for three reasons:

- CAFOs are profitable because they shift the consequential damages to local taxpayers. The cost of rebuilding and maintaining roads required to transport heavy equipment, feed, manure and pigs will be borne by local taxpayers.
- The resale value of neighboring farms could plummet. A recent study found that the impact of CAFOs on local farms is an immediate loss of 26 percent of their resale value. Another study shows a typical home valued at \$100,000 will lose \$40,000 of its resale value when a CAFO moves in.
- Tourism, retail sales and jobs will be severely impacted. Just ask the Iowa and North Carolina merchants how CAFOs devastated their local economies!

Those of us who would otherwise retire in Wisconsin's pristine forests, rivers and farm communities will pay dearly for the Roth CAFO. Please join me in urging the DNR to deny this travesty from happening!
John Rosenheim
 Steuben

Health care \$

As a student in France, my medical coverage was completely covered through French Social Security. Later when visiting relatives in Australia, our toddler was treated cost-free at a Sydney hospital. When we asked about the cost there, they said, "We know how bad it is in the USA; here it's all covered." In Germany on a Sunday in 2016, my husband's treatment at an emergency clinic only cost \$58.

This leads to the questions: Why is it so different here, and in which other advanced countries, where government does control medical costs, do people lose their homes or go bankrupt because of medical costs? Nowhere!

We've seen many TV ads lately warning us that if our government controls medical costs, we will lose access to treatments and will experience delays "like Canada". If that is so, why do busloads of Americans go north to buy prescription drugs they can't afford here? Other ads lie about government wanting to raise drug prices.

President Biden wants to lower our medical costs, and pass legislation to make expensive drugs like insulin affordable for all who need them. However, legislators who receive campaign donations from the pharmaceutical companies that pay for those ads, refuse to cooperate. Those same companies spend roughly \$10.5 billion annually on such advertising and campaign donations to some of those legislators.

Our laws allow pharmaceutical firms to make obscene profits, supposedly deserved, due to their investment in research. Then they cling to their patents and tax exemptions, avoiding competition from generics for years beyond what is justified. Truth is, much of that

research is covered by work done through grants to universities, and our taxes that support them.

Politicians need to listen to us, their constituents, and not be swayed by pharmaceutical companies! Let your voice be heard: Tell them you want the laws changed, so we can all enjoy what other advanced nations have!

Whom do you believe? Greedy drug companies or our struggling neighbors?

Kay Ziegahn
 Richland Center


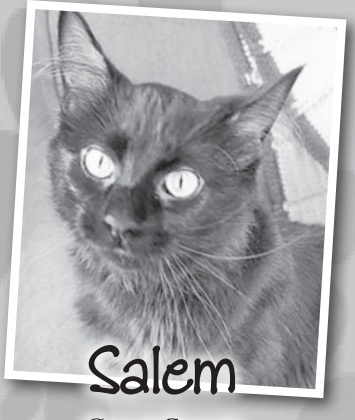
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phone number or email for verification. Some submitted letters may not be published due to space constraints, material that duplicates previous letters, or the fact that the letter-writer has no connections to Southwest Wisconsin, including subscribing to The Journal. Candidate endorsement letters and "thank you" letters will not

be printed. Publishing letters that do not meet The Journal's Letter criteria requires purchasing advertising. The deadline for submission of letters on elections is three weeks before the date of the election. All letters and columns represent the views of the writers and not necessarily the views of The Platteville Journal.

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