

# Guns & Tyson's Retirement

Community Comment

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Sometimes when I sit down to comment on local or national or even international issues or events, the topic is not obvious. Not so this week. Let me start with an international event. We learned this week that a number of young women in Pakistan were targeted and shot by the Taliban for their role in a plot to help chase down Taliban and Al Quida members for the U.S. In fact, these women were engaged in medical work with local children. They were administering the polio vaccine to local children. Pakistan is one of the last four, or maybe two, countries in the world that still has the polio virus.

This topic is important to me because Rotary International took on the task of eradicating polio in the 80's. We partnered with the world health organization and have a great record of staying out of local politics. In the last few years, the Bill and Melissa Gates Foundation has matched whatever we raise for this effort. The outcome is to everyone's advantage; even our enemies. They get to have children without the crippling effect of polio. We get to make an attempt to make friends. The world gets to rid itself of a dreaded disease. Rotary has spent a great deal of money, time and talent to take on this admirable task. To think we are somewhat responsible for the death of these young women is painful. If you and your family reflect on those who serve others during this holiday season, keep these women in your thoughts. I've got to believe we humans are better than this.

On the national stage, we had another shooting involving multiple deaths. You've all heard about this. Six adults committed to the honorable profession of teaching. That's heart breaking and tragic enough, and senseless. But then we get to the incomprehensible part; the other twenty who were killed were six and seven years old. First and second grade. They were babies. They were someone's babies and someone's grandchildren. The shooter got the multiple guns, including an assault rifle, from his mother who was also his first murder victim. My question is simple; can we really not find a way to better regulate access to these weapons without arguing about your precious Second Amendment. All of the Constitution is open to interpretation. We need to find a way to deal with our love of guns. You can't own a rocket propelled grenade or a bomb; why can you own an assault rifle? We need to have this discussion and come up with solutions. This kind of violence is not acceptable. Period!

Finally, on a much lighter note and local as well, the City of Eureka has hired a new City Manager. Welcome aboard. Dave Tyson is retiring and I want to wish him well. I had the pleasure of knowing Dave when he came to work as Finance Manager for the City of Arcata. He brought a measure of knowledge and openness, and professionalism that may have been equaled since but certainly not surpassed. We worked on many budgets together and the city of Arcata was better for his work. I could go on about his professional qualities but even better than that, he is a good and honest man. Arcata and

Eureka have been lucky to have him and I wish he and his family the best in his retirement. Thanks David for your service.

To all of you in our community, Merry Christmas and Happy New year. May this season find you and yours in good health and good cheer.

This has been Sam Pennisi for community comment.