

## First Amendment protects all speech, even when it's offensive

The Supreme Court may rule sooner than expected on whether the Washington Redskins are entitled to trademark protection for their controversial name. The outcome, we hope, will be a holding by the court that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not withhold trademark protection from a business or product just because its name is offensive.

"Redskins" certainly is offensive to Native Americans and demeaning to the team and its fans. We have urged the owners to find a new name. But the legal issue is whether the First Amendment was violated in 2014 when the patent office canceled the Redskins' trademark registration, citing a law that prohibits trademark protection for names that "may disparage ... persons, living or dead, institutions, beliefs, or national symbols, or bring them into contempt or disrepute."

A federal district judge upheld the patent office's ruling in the Redskins case. But a federal appeals court in Washington came to the opposite conclusion in December when it ruled that the patent office wrongly denied trademark registration to The Slants, whose name is intended to comment ironically on a slur against Asian Americans.

Now the football team is asking the justices to fast-track its appeal if they also take up the federal government's appeal of the decision in favor of The Slants. The court should resolve both cases in favor of the trademark applicants.

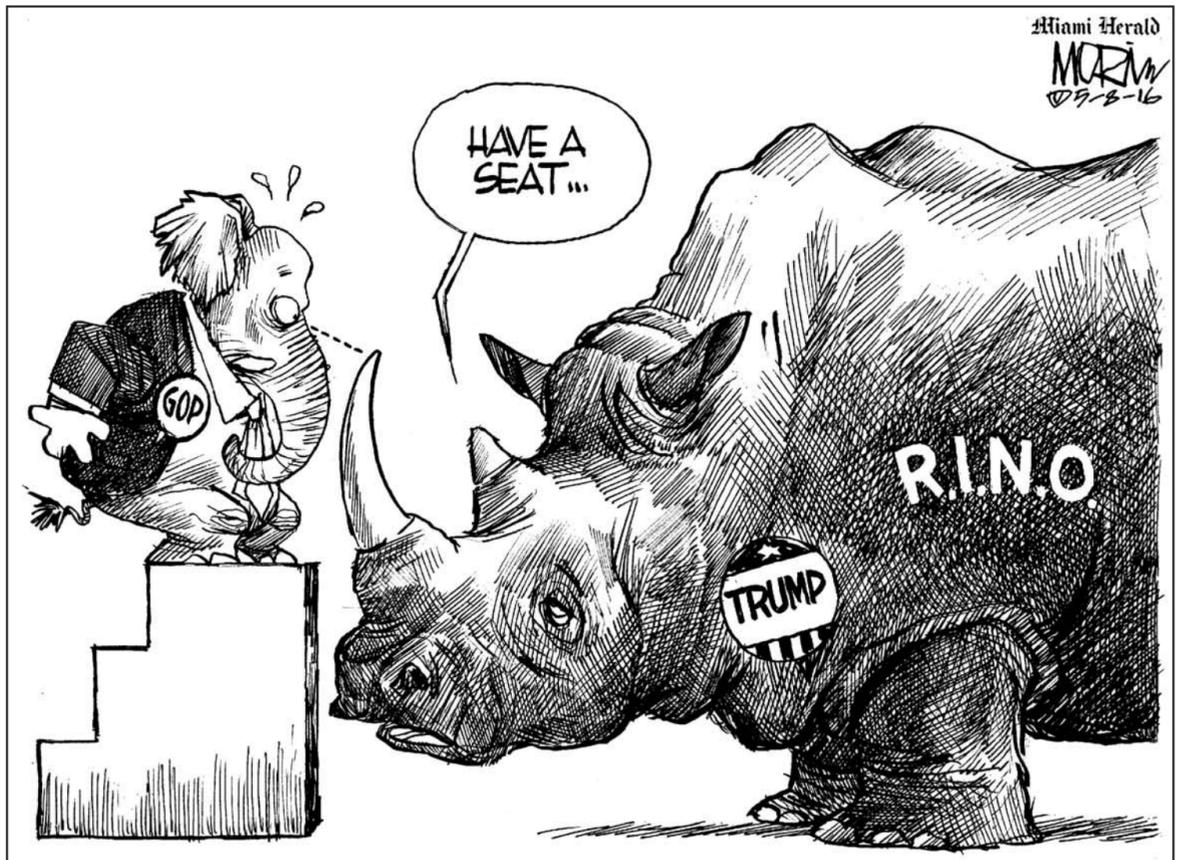
In defending the constitutionality of the so-called disparagement clause, the Justice Department notes that a denial of trademark registration does not actually prohibit any speech or bar the team from calling itself the Redskins.

But that's not the point. Trademark registration provides certain benefits to the holder that shouldn't be dependent on whether or not the government likes the message a particular name conveys. As the appeals court concluded in the case of The Slants' trademark, withholding registration for that reason amounts to "viewpoint discrimination" in violation of the First Amendment.

By making that clear, the Supreme Court would be true to its free-speech precedents. And such a decision would be a welcome rebuttal of the view — especially popular on college campuses — that speech that is wounding to minorities or others isn't protected by the Constitution. A 2015 survey of U.S. undergraduates found that 35 percent of respondents thought — wrongly — that "hate speech" wasn't protected by the First Amendment.

No doubt some people regard names like "Redskins" and "The Slants" as not just offensive but hateful. But under the First Amendment, government may neither outlaw their use nor punish businesses that use such language. The purpose of the trademark system is to protect property rights, not to establish an index of forbidden words.

The Los Angeles Times



## CASA a good investment for community

Oregon's child welfare agency, the Department of Human Services (DHS), has been in the news too often lately for all the wrong reasons — closures of foster care programs, lawsuits alleging neglect and abuse of children, firing of upper management, and failed federal reviews. These problems highlight the need for the state and its citizens to understand the importance of CASA programs as an independent voice that provides oversight for vulnerable children in foster care.

CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates. CASA volunteers are intensively trained community members who become legal parties in dependency court cases. CASAs advocate solely in the best interests of children in foster care. They are committed to ensuring that each child finds a safe, permanent home as quickly and effectively as possible. Created by a family court judge in Washington State in the mid-1970s, Josephine County was chosen to be the pilot program for Oregon's CASA program during the mid-1980s. There are now 23 CASA programs in 35 of 36 counties in Oregon, the vast majority of which are nonprofit organizations, as is CASA of Josephine County.

Volunteers are typically assigned a child — or siblings in a family — whom they visit at least once a month. CASAs have statutory



### Guest Opinion

Sanne Specht

authority to access the child's records, investigate all relevant information about the case, participate in court hearings and ensure that other legal parties (including DHS) are fulfilling their obligations to the child. For example, CASAs often attend meetings at school, go to doctor appointments, work closely with the child's attorney and negotiate with DHS caseworkers. As a result, CASAs provide accountability and have a comprehensive and first-hand understanding of the child's life.

According to DHS, more than 11,400 children were in foster care in 2015. Currently, there are about 320 children in foster care in Josephine County. But fewer than half of these children received the services of our 35 CASA volunteers. While CASA is proud of our work, we are falling short. To achieve

our goal to serve every foster child in Josephine County, we need more CASAs and we need stable funding.

CASA has been proven to be cost-effective: CASA leverages \$5 for each \$1 of state general funds. If CASA programs were fully funded by the state, CASA volunteers could be assigned to every child in foster care to ensure they are as safe as possible, have the services they need, and have their voices heard in court.

CASA regularly provides input to the government about child welfare issues, and contributed to House Bill 4080, which established the Governor's Child Foster Care Advisory Commission. As a vital resource to both children and their families, CASA hopes to be involved in future conversations about how to improve the dependency system, including having a seat on the new Child Foster Care Advisory Commission.

Investing in CASA means investing in and protecting Oregon's children who are victims of neglect and abuse.

Anyone interested in information on volunteering locally can visit [www.casaofjosephinecounty](http://www.casaofjosephinecounty) or call 541-474-5437

Sanne Specht is the program director for Josephine County CASA.

## Letters

### RCC's trained students help the area to grow

The Rogue Valley can take justifiable pride in our growing manufacturing and business sector. But growth will be limited unless we have skilled and trained students ready for the future workforce.

RCC can supply the training for students to fill these good paying jobs, but there is a need to upgrade facilities and equipment. Along with other projects, the RCC Bond Measure 17-69 will support technical training in mechatronics, advanced manufacturing, welding, and other highly skilled professions.

With trained student graduates coming out of these programs our economy can continue to grow. Your "yes" vote for RCC Bond Measure 17-69 will support this prosperity and our kids!

DARLENE DART  
Grants Pass

### Ron Smith is the best choice for commissioner

Ronald A. Smith is ready to be your commissioner.

Ron Smith is a real man of action, a leader with a truly outstanding track record and our best choice for county commissioner. Ron was born in Grants Pass and is fourth generation Josephine County.

He was also vice president Pacific Region People for the USA and organized and led the grassroots effort to defeat the proposed 1.2 million-acre Siskiyou Wild Rivers National Monument.

Ron helped organize Medford's no more monuments rally. Over 1,500 people attended, and 24 different organizations participated.

Smith worked to cancel the ill-conceived and unnecessary 1.2 million-acre mineral withdrawal of the whole Siskiyou National Forest.

Ron was invited to a conference with former Interior Secretary

### Election letter policy

Letters regarding the May 17 election will be accepted until May 10 at 5 p.m. No election-related letters will be printed after May 13.

The Daily Courier will strive to print as many letters as possible, but due to the potential volume of letters, not all of them will necessarily be published.

Election letters must adhere to the Daily Courier's standard letters policy: They may not exceed 250 words and are subject to editing. They must include the author's name, address and phone number (addresses and phone numbers are not printed in the paper, but are required for verification purposes).

tary Bruce Babbitt in Medford to debate the need or want for more monuments or mineral withdrawals.

Smith went to Washington, D.C., to educate our congressmen about the Klamath Falls farm crisis and participated in the bucket brigade in Klamath Falls.

Ron has held many community meetings through the years informing and educating people about forest and land-use issues that affect our local economy, county funding for law enforcement, and issues that can have a negative impact on our property rights.

Today Ron serves our community through the Granges and other local groups. Smith is the vice-chair of the Fruitdale Grange in Grants Pass and a member of the executive board Josephine County Pomona Granges.

Now that's a commissioner!  
DEE DEE LOVELADY  
Grants Pass

### Local shares his research about Easter

We just finished with Easter and what it means to the world, to humanity, and the Christian belief. I did question what and how the bunny, colored eggs, chickens, egg hunts, and egg rolls related to Resurrection Day?

Easter is not a Biblical celebration or festival. Resurrection Day is Biblical and a time to celebrate. Some people don't celebrate Resurrection Day or Easter. Easter has connections to pagan times and churches used parts of the pagan usage of the spring equinox to bring the pagans into the faith.

Resurrection Day is the last week of Jesus' before the next event which is the 40 days of Him meeting earthly people, before He ascends.

I did a study of that week and

call it "Passion Week" after reading about the Passion play in Germany. Jesus rode on a peace symbol, the donkey. He cleaned the temple for a second time. He preached in the temple and did healings. After Maundy Thursday, the foot washing event, came Good Friday and the Last Supper. At one point, in the book of Luke, Jesus told his followers to go buy a sword and that was the modern weapon of that day. Jesus stayed in the grave for three Jewish days and not modern days, 72 hours.

I just wanted to share my research with the public. God is good.

BILL TURRELL  
Grants Pass

### Trump needs to offer more than generalities

It looks like Donald Trump will be the Republican nominee for president, and that scares me more than just a little.

Hillary's had a chance in public office, and after her poor decisions and their consequences, I don't see how anyone could trust her as commander in chief, but that leaves Trump!

## Vote online

### Current poll

How do you plan to vote on Measure 17-72, the nonbinding advisory vote on extending Wild and Scenic protection to an additional 63 miles of the Rogue River?

Yes  No  Undecided

Readers can register their opinions on a wide range of topics by going to the Daily Courier's website, [www.thedaily-courier.com](http://www.thedaily-courier.com).

### Previous poll

When asked if they thought more mining should take place on federal land in Josephine County, 61 percent of respondents said yes, 36 percent said no, and 3 percent said they were not sure.

I agree with many of his general proposals, but where are the details?

His recent foreign policy speech made more sense than most of what he thoughtlessly blurts out, but that speech was written by someone else, and Trump read it from a teleprompter. America doesn't need another teleprompter President.

Donald seems to have a limited vocabulary. He says the same things over and over, but gives no details. He has lofty goals but never tells us how they will be achieved.

My daughter owned a Mattel toy back in the 1960s. It was a doll with a ring on the back of its neck. When you pulled the ring, the doll spoke a cute phrase, and when you pulled the ring again, the doll spoke another one. But it had been programmed with only so many different phrases, nearly as few as Donald's sparse vocabulary.

Before election time, I hope Trump can flesh out his generalities with details, or maybe he could work with Mattel to program him with more informative

slogans. Otherwise, America will likely be afflicted with a president who has already proven herself to be a more determined liar than her husband.

MUNROE CRUTCHLEY  
Grants Pass

### Home & Garden, fair inserts are great to have

Thank you to the Daily Courier. The recent Home and Garden magazine was wonderful and so useful.

And now, the Daily Courier has created the Josephine County Fair magazine insert with all of the needed information for entering projects or animals into the fair, plus a complete list of activities that will be happening from Aug. 17 to 20. This is such an incredible magazine insert that I am really looking forward to going to the fair this year.

Thank you for putting all of this important information together in one publication. I think it will be a lot of fun to enter something myself!

EVONNE TRUMBLE  
Grants Pass

## Grants Pass Daily Courier

"The theory of a free press is that truth will emerge from free discussion, not that it will be presented perfectly and instantly in any one account."  
— Walter Lippmann

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