

The Capital Opinion

A9
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JEN RYNDA/CAPITAL GAZETTE

Lynne Griffin, a former student of victim John McNamara, grieves at a memorial set up at the entrance of 888 Bestgate Road Friday. A gunman blasted his way into the Capital Gazette newsroom in Annapolis with a shotgun Thursday, killing five. Two others were injured.

More than thoughts and prayers

It was not a bad dream. Sleep was only a brief escape from the reality of what our community faced Thursday and must confront today.

We must grieve, and we must support those closest to the five victims of yesterday's shooting: Rob Hiaasen, Gerald Fischman, Wendi Winters, John McNamara and Rebecca Smith. This is our community. These are our people.

Reporter Chase Cook tweeted hours after Thursday's shootings, "I can tell you this. We are putting out a damn paper tomorrow."

The lead story Friday morning was authored by all of the surviving reporters, together. They did not allow a hateful man with a gun to shut down their newspaper, our newspaper. That is courage.

So please read every word that they wrote. You will cry, as I did, but then you will find courage from their courage.

Please also take a moment to thank every first responder you see for his or her service today and every day. They fearlessly ran into that building and apprehended the shooter. That's what they do. For us.

There is one more thing that I hope you will join me in doing.

Capital reporters Phil Davis and Seline San Felice told Anderson Cooper on CNN yesterday that it's time for more than just thoughts and prayers. We all know what they meant. We must figure out how to keep guns out of the hands of murderers. Every day journalists listen and they communicate carefully. All of us can do that, and we must.

Gun lovers and gun haters must hear from each other. Both sides have fears. Both are grieving. Both live in Anne Arundel County. And both want to end these shootings.

I can assure you that I and County Executive Schuh will discuss these issues in a civil and thoughtful manner in the coming weeks and months, and I promise that I will listen to every perspective as we make a plan to move forward.

Steuart Pittman, Davidsonville
The writer is the Democratic candidate for

Anne Arundel County executive.

A masterful editor

For columnists at The Capital, Gerald Fischman was our editor, a diligent, thoughtful, professional editor. He corrected our convoluted grammar and our illogical arguments — and did so without changing either the meaning or the intent of our commentaries. His loss is a great one not only to the newspaper and the colleagues he loved, but also to the readers he served.

Nick Berry, Annapolis
The writer is a former Capital columnist.

We mourn the Capital Gazette staffers like they were family

Thank you for the profiles of the five people murdered Thursday at the Capital Gazette ("I don't know what else to do: Grieving Capital Gazette journalists cover the massacre of their own newsroom," June 29). I was moved to tears. You humanized each of them. They weren't simply five more victims of senseless gun violence, they were moms, dads, friends, brothers and pet lovers. You made them feel like family to all of us. We mourn as if they were.

Herb Cromwell, Catonsville

Don't drag President Trump into the Annapolis Capital shootings

The morning after five people were killed at the Annapolis Capital, a reporter on a local news station speaking to the mayor of Annapolis interjected the "fake news" claims of our president into the cause/influence upon the killer of the innocent people who worked for paper. With only a little surprise at the question, the mayor jumped in on the political opportunity. This was horrific on so many

levels I hardly know where to start.

First, this is an insult to those who are mourning. Mayor Gavin Buckley owes them an apology. Second, there is no evidence whatsoever that has come to light that this selfish taker of innocent life had any other reason or influence other than his perceived sense of being wronged by the paper and his sick idea that he had a right to take lives to get even. There were no proper facts to support this reporter's going there. She needs to apologize to the president, he played no part in the killings, and the public who were watching.

In fact, trying to connect the killing to "fake news" claims, she made fake news.

Rev. Michael T. Buttner, Bel Air

We all share the blame in the Capital shootings

We all should assume some burden of guilt in this mass shooting at The Capital Gazette in Annapolis! When we remain silent and don't shout at the top of our voices to President Donald Trump to stop the incendiary, violent and dangerous rhetoric against the press and the media that he uses every day, we are complicit. By remaining silent against his attacks on the rights of our free press which are guaranteed in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, we give President Trump the go ahead to continue. We have become the silent majority when we don't speak out and condemn the hateful, immoral, and hurtful language that President Trump uses in Twitter, speeches, executive orders and White House policies.

Bonnie and Elden Schneider, Baltimore

What does the NRA say now?

In light of the shootings at the Capital Gazette, I'm waiting to hear whether the NRA thinks that reporters, as well as teachers, should arm themselves.

David Boesel, Severna Park

We are all The Capital

BY JOHN W. VAN DE KAMP

During the afternoon of Thursday, June 28th, a man in his late 30s walked into 888 Bestgate Road, took smoke grenades out of his backpack, set them off and shot out the heavy glass door of the Annapolis Capital-Gazette and spread carnage in every direction.

Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Police responded rapidly, with the first units arriving within 60 seconds, and trapped the coward under a desk where he was hiding.

This may have been the deadliest attack on a newsroom in the United States.

This was a targeted attack against the Capital. The Capital had received threats on social media, according to police, as recently as that afternoon.

Last week French President Emmanuel Macron laid a wreath at the former offices of Charlie Hebdo, a satirical newspaper whose editors, cartoonists and staff, 12 in all, were gunned down by two Muslim brothers during an editorial meeting after the paper published cartoons unfavorable to the Prophet Mohammed.

"I am Charlie Hebdo" became a worldwide slogan to protest these senseless killings targeting a newspaper.

Now we have our own "Charlie Hebdo," and it is shameful. And we need to react with an "I am Annapolis" and "I am the Capital" campaign.

Nobody walks over Annapolis. This is our home, our community, and these people are our brothers, sisters and friends.

I have lost friends in this attack based on hate.

The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said that hate begets hate, and violence begets violence.

Hold out a hand, work through differences if there are any. Sit down together.

Stand up for a strong Annapolis and for our community newspaper. Grieve for the dead and hold up their families.

John W. Van de Kamp is a former member of the Capital editorial board and an opinion columnist for the paper.

The day would be remembered

BY TEMPLE CONE

The phones screamed all afternoon,
family calling family,
each lover their beloved one.
The blue sky was empty,

save a few clouds that held
no promise of cleansing rain.
For an hour, each heart swelled
with grief for a stranger's pain,

then sank into silence,
lacking words to shield
a fragile innocence.
When crows at last had wheeled

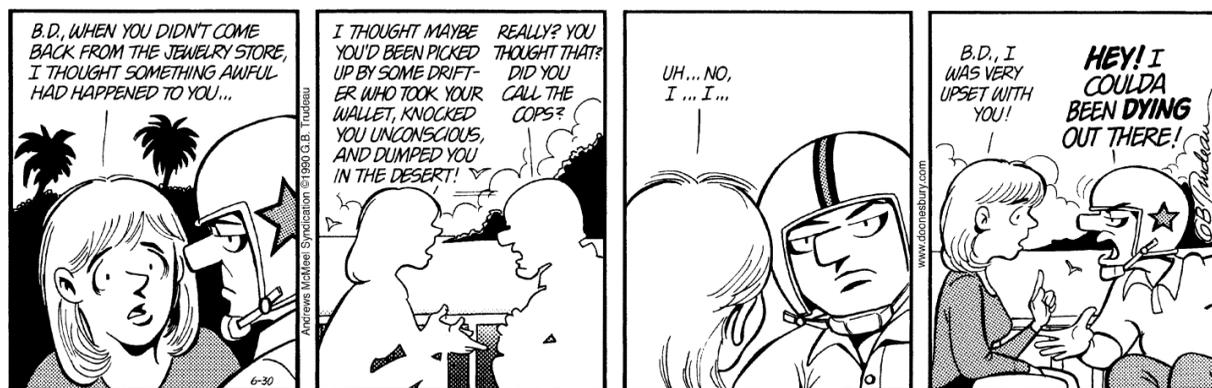
home to the full-leaved trees,
life crept back in. Children
played baseball, the wheels
of a fallen bike spun

in the breeze, and those who lived
greeted others warmly.
The day would be remembered
as one when family

called family, each lover
their beloved one.
But none would forget, ever,
how the phones screamed all afternoon.

Tyler Cone is Annapolis' poet laureate.

DOONESBURY BY GARRY TRUDEAU



Capital Gazette Families Fund

We have received an overwhelming number of requests from people across the country who want to support the families, victims and the survivors. To facilitate this process, we have created The Capital Gazette Families Fund, managed through The Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County (CFAAC). The Anne Arundel Foundation is a long-established community foundation based in Annapolis. The Michael and Jacky Ferro Family Foundation will match up to \$1 million of amounts raised. To donate, please visit www.capitalgazette.com/fund