

# on needs and deeds

## helping the homeless population

Mission Waco also operates the chronic homeless shelter My Brother's Keeper, located at 1217 Mary Ave.

Another resource offered to homeless individuals is Compassion Ministries. According to executive director Jill McCall, they are currently the only transitional housing facility for homeless families in the Central Texas area.

Compassion Ministries provides intensive care management, medical services, dental services, transportation, childcare, counseling and any sort of employment need that an individual has.

While Compassion Ministries lost their federal funding due to the federal government pulling away from transition housing, McCall said they are working diligently to build their endowment and they are hopeful they will not have to decrease or eliminate the range of services they provide.

McCall said the Compassion Ministries program is unbelievable and the services they offer cannot usually be found in many other places.

"I feel that Waco — for the size that it is, does a good job of meeting the needs of homeless individuals," McCall said.

According to Bonds, the requirements to say you have ended homelessness in your community are based on how quickly the community is able to respond to the needs of a homeless person.

"In our community, all of the agency's representatives know each other well enough to pick up the phone when we have a need and respond to that need," Bonds said.

Bonds said she believes Waco has a leg up on other communities in helping homeless individuals and that through coordinated entry, the community will get even better at responding to their needs.

Bonds also said that Waco's organizations understand that homelessness is situational and occurs for many reasons.

"Lack of affordable housing is the biggest reason

— One of the main reasons," Bonds said. "Because the person may be making minimum wage but has a difficult time affording a house, an apartment for a family of four or more."

She believes that because Waco's organizations are so willing to understand circumstances, homeless individuals are much more willing to accept resources from them.



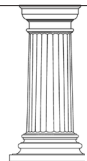
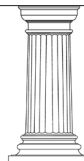
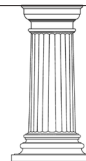
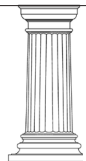
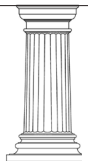
**1:** The Church Under the Bridge congregation gathers before the service to meet and catch up with one another.

**2:** Bertha Kendrick enjoys a pasta meal at the Gospel Cafe in Waco.

**3:** Member of Church Under the bridge hand out the weekly bulletin. The church gathers every Sunday under the 4th and I-35 overpass at 11 a.m.

**4:** Every morning before the service the church provides a meal and offers some groceries for homeless members of the congregation.

Baylee VerSteeg | Multimedia Journalist



# SHELTERING



## Family Abuse Center works against culture of domestic violence

**KRISTINA VALDEZ**  
Arts & Life Editor

**T**o get to the Family Abuse Center, you must follow vague directions that are not available online. After signing a confidentiality agreement, you can then volunteer or speak with a Family Abuse Center representative.

To enter the Family Abuse Center in Waco, you must stand on the opposite side of double doors and speak through the intercom about your business there that day.

Unmarked and protected, the Family Abuse Center has sheltered and supported victims of domestic violence since 1980. A team works tirelessly to help and educate communities and families about the plague of domestic violence.

"It's not just physical," said Katie Matula, development coordinator of Family Abuse Center. "It's kind of like cancer — it can affect anyone ... A victim can experience multiple types of trauma, whether it is emotional or financial or physical."

According to the Texas Council for Family Violence, one in three Texans will experience domestic violence at some point in their lifetime.

The current location in Waco has been the primary shelter for victims from eight surrounding counties since 2006. Family Abuse Center is federally, state and privately funded to provide housing programs, counseling and legal advocacy. Permanent supportive housing,

transitional housing, rapid rehousing and two private housing are offered to family units who need a way out without turning to the streets.

"The leading cause for homelessness among women and children is domestic violence," Matula said.

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Bureau reported that 80 percent of homeless women and children were victims of domestic violence.

"Research has shown that housing programs are highly effective with domestic violence victims in getting them the support they need to stay away from their abuser," Matula said. "It's not just a matter of [victims] choosing to go back, but a matter of not being able to pay or rent or pay for their kids' medication."

Matula has worked for the Family Abuse Center since 2014 after receiving her master's in social work from Baylor in 2013.

"I would love to work myself out of a job," Matula said. "Family Abuse Center's goal is to, yes, end domestic violence, but also create healthy, loving families."

Family Abuse Center offers programs like BOOST, a teen dating violence prevention program, and H.O.P.E.S., a parent support program that helps provide better care for small children. These programs are offered to McLennan County through schools and Family Abuse Center. They are preventative steps in educating children about healthy relationships.

# SURVIVORS

Rewon Shimray | Cartoonist



“I’m hopeful,” Matula said. “Every report I get brings me down a little bit, but I know we are moving in the right direction.”

Matula said a common misconception about domestic violence is believing that once a victim has left, everything should be okay.

“Another thing that people don’t think about as far as domestic violence is concerned is that sometimes abusers will put the victim’s name on the lease and not pay rent,” Matula said. “When it all comes down to it, the victim is left with multiple evictions under their name even though they had nothing to do with it.”

Housing coordinator Melissa Ishio will have worked with the Family Abuse Center for two years in March. Ishio tries to help the most people with what little bit of funding she has.

“The hardest part of my job is not having enough money,” Ishio said. “I have to say no to people. There is always someone else who needs it. [I want] to give without deciding who or who is not worthy.”

Ishio said domestic violence impacts the community in more ways than people realize. For example, of the recent mass shootings, a relationship between domestic violence and mass murders are common. Shooters from

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**Katie Matula |  
Development Coordinator**

the mass shootings in Sutherland Springs, Las Vegas, Orlando, Fla. and San Bernardino, Calif. had a history of violence against women.

According to a study done by Everytown for Gun Safety, in 54 percent of mass shootings, the shooter killed a partner or family member.

“It’s a much more prevalent issue than people even begin to know about or think about,” Ishio said. “It is behind so much of the violence we see in our country.”

For her clients, Ishio has learned what it means to live with trauma.

“It affects everything that you do and your whole perception on things,” Ishio said. “It’s huge how pervasive and debilitating it can be for someone. It’s kind of like living in a war zone — our clients have PTSD, too, from that hyper vigilant, ever-aroused state that they lived in for so long.”

To Ishio and Matula, the definition of a success story is different for every client, but success includes opening up the paper one day and not finding their client’s name listed as deceased.

“[Domestic violence] does not discriminate on the basis of race, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, age and you can go on and on,” Ishio said.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FACTS

- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have been victims of domestic violence by an intimate partner in their life
- Women between the ages of 18-24 are most commonly abused by an intimate partner
- Every year in the U.S., more than 10 million men and women are abused by an intimate partner
- 15% of all violent crime comes from domestic violence.

Learn more at <https://ncadv.org/statistics>





Meredith Wagner | Social Media Editor

**HORSE MINT** The above painting depicts a species of plant that many pollinators are attracted to. "Around here, for nectar, the big thing is something called lemon bee balm, or horse mint," said local beekeeper Daniel Stewart. "It's a beautiful flower people can plant."

# To bee...

## How the U.S. government is protecting our pollinators

**MEREDITH WAGNER**  
Social Media Editor

**H**oneybees are dying by the thousands, and the federal government knows it. Beyond a general concern on the part of beekeepers and environmental activists, members of the U.S. government are aware of the rapid decline in honeybee populations and the potentially detrimental effects these trends could hold, should they continue.

Fortunately for Americans, legislative bodies and administrative agencies are recognizing and gradually working to reverse the problem. But why? According to Michael Schacker, investigative science writer and author of "A Spring without Bees," honeybees are the primary insect responsible for creating the world we live in today. "Without the honeybee, it is likely that advanced agriculture, and thus civilization, would have never developed."

### *Why the Honeybee?*

Known to be one of the hardest working species on the planet, a honeybee's reputable work ethic makes it a successful agent of change and rapid development. This is likely why our agricultural systems rely so heavily on honeybees as pollinators.

According to Daniel Stewart, local beekeeper and Sales and Marketing Manager for World Hunger Relief, Inc., a healthy beehive can host up to 60,000 bees.

"The collective action of that many workers — it would just be impossible to recreate," Stewart said.

Stewart has been keeping bees for nearly two years. He recently took a test to be considered an Apprentice Beekeeper, with the ultimate goal being to hold the title of Master Beekeeper, which typically takes about five years of training. Owning seven hives of his own, Stewart has been keeping up with the alarming decline

in bee populations. As for himself and his own hives he said it's definitely a concern.

Though Stewart mostly tends to native bee species, such as bumble bees and leaf-cutter bees, he said he recognizes the importance of the non-native honeybee.

"We need the honeybees for agricultural purposes," he said.

Stewart said honeybees originated in Europe and Africa and are considered to be better pollinators and producers than native bee species. Without honeybees, some plant species we know today would never have existed. "There would be no almonds whatsoever."

Dr. Julie King, lecturer of environmental law at Baylor University and former attorney, was also aware of the issue as it relates to almond production.

"We're already seeing some of the effects of [declining honeybee populations] in terms of almond production in California," King said.

If the effects of declining honeybee populations have yet to be observed in terms of almond scarcity, the issue is "certainly being passed on to consumer prices," King said.

While other creatures such as butterflies and beetles also help to pollinate plants, honeybees stand out because they are both extremely productive and considered an "indicator species" within an ecosystem. Indicator species are used to "monitor environmental changes ... and provide warning signals for impending ecological shifts," according to a 2015 Harvard publication. This means that the a decline in honeybees can foreshadow the decline in other environmental elements within its ecosystem. King said one cannot look at a decline in bee populations at a surface level, and that the bees are vital to the successful upkeep of an overall system.

"We know that our ecosystems are all interconnected," King said. "You can't just look at a species and say that it's not vital to everything else going on around it ... As it relates to food, it's an issue for every American."

# ...or not to bee

## Theories Explained

The prevailing theory among scientists, researchers and government officials is that the ultimate decline in bee populations in recent decades is because of a combination of multiple stressors, all of which are potentially deadly on their own or in combination with other factors.

Because research in this sector is largely underfunded and could face impending budget cuts, the certainty as to why the bees are declining is wavering. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service estimates that “disease, pesticides, the effects of climate change, habitat loss and the effects of small population dynamics” could all be at play.

### Colony Collapse Disorder

One prevailing theory for the decline in bee populations is Colony Collapse Disorder. This term is used to describe the sudden and unforeseen failure of a colony, often with little to no explanation for the root of the collapse.

Though the term is generally used to account for any unexplained colony collapses, “There’s a general feeling in literature that it’s the result of pesticides being used,” King said.

Many speculate that certain insecticides containing “neonicotinoids” are a primary cause for Colony Collapse Disorder. This chemical was intended to affect the central nervous system of unwanted pests, which, by default, included the honeybee. According to The Bee Cause, an educational group formed in 2013, “Many countries have banned such chemicals harmful to the honeybee, but in the United States, they are still widely used.”

There are two detrimental ways that neonicotinoids are thought to cause Colony Collapse Disorder, the first being that exposure to these harmful chemicals can alter the neurological functioning of worker bees.

Worker bees are the pollinators themselves — one of the many moving parts of the hive. While the queen bee stays back with her colony, the worker bees, all of which are female, leave the hive to consume nectar and eventually return to produce wax and honey. In the process, the bees spread pollen from one plant to

the next, allowing for the reproduction of many of the plants we find on our dinner table.

In order for a worker bee’s foraging mission to pan out successfully, it must be able to travel miles away from the hive and ultimately find their way back home. If the neonicotinoids found in some insecticides alter the brain chemistry of the worker bee along the way, the bee could either die immediately, or be handicapped and unable to find her way back to the hive.

Many of the worker bees will be unaffected and return to the hive; still, if five percent of the bees were to go missing, this could have detrimental consequences on the hive overall.



Meredith Wagner | Social Media Editor

Fewer honeybees producing honey means fewer honey stores altogether, which could cause the colony to die over the winter.

“The direct cause of death for the hive was that they didn’t have enough stores, but really, that was because of this pesticide,” Stewart said.

The second way neonicotinoids are thought to negatively affect the hive is when the worker bees become contaminated and bring residues of the pesticide back to the colony.

Worker bees excrete wax in the shape of tiny cells so that themselves and other bees can use them to raise larva. When the larva matures, and the cell opens up, another bee is able to use that cell for

reproduction. This is problematic if the worker bee that initially created the waxy cell obtained residues of pesticides.

“The pesticides build up inside the wax and eventually will poison the larva,” Stewart said. “This is something that a lot of bee keepers know about now and are responding to.”

Ultimately, Stewart said, the structure of a colony relies upon the health and success of many individual moving parts.

“We think about bees as individual organisms, but really it’s a super organism,” Stewart said. “On its own, a worker [bee] can’t survive. On her own, the queen can’t survive. They make decisions together.”

King said researchers are working to identify which insecticides are toxic to bees, which could help lawmakers establish specific restrictions on the production of certain pesticides.

Despite the complicated nature of the issue, King said, “That’s a development that is encouraging.”

### Commercial Beekeeping

The rapid increase in agricultural production in recent years necessitates the practice of commercial beekeeping. Schacker stated in his book “A Spring Without Bees” that migratory bees are transported all around the country in seasonal cycles to ensure that nearly one-third of all U.S. crops are pollinated.

Unfortunately for bees, the need for hard-working pollinators comes at the expense of their health. Many bee species are easily stressed by the demands of travel, which can lead to an inability to perform essential pollinating duties, or in some instances, death. While commercial beekeeping could ultimately be contributing to a decline in bees, agricultural systems could not produce food at the rates they do without it.

“[Commercial beekeeping] is necessary for agriculture,” Stewart said. “If you have a huge field of something, there’s just no way that it would ever pollinate itself.”

This a problematic cycle for both bees and consumers. “People are importing bees and colonies because of shortages of pollinators,” King said. At the same time, the importation could be contributing to the shortage itself.



## The Power of the Pen: Legislative Action at Play

To reverse the negative trend in populations would be a matter of intensive, costly research, proceedings through a complicated legal structure and a general understanding of the magnitude of the issue. Fortunately for beekeepers and average Americans alike, strides are being made to mitigate what could be detrimental consequences to the loss of pollinator species.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 was passed by Congress in recognition of the ecological consequences of economic growth and development, and the value that threatened species inherently hold within society. Under this act, species can be listed as either “threatened” or “endangered,” and multiple parties must comply with the standards considered necessary for recovery.

In addition to simply claiming that a species is at risk, the federal government is collectively held to certain standards to protect that species, including its habitat. Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act imposes a duty on all federal agencies to consider the health and habitat of each species listed, avoiding action that could jeopardize the existence of said

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“It really does relate to every American at the dinner table.”

**JULIE KING | BAYLOR LECTURER, FORMER ATTORNEY**

species. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is additionally responsible for developing and implementing recovery plans for listed species.

Criminal sanctions are in place for those who “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect” a listed species. The Fish & Wildlife Service takes this

rule one step further by more specifically defining the word “harm” to mean “significant habitat modification or degradation.” Thus, the endangered species as well as its habitat is protected. At the very least, punishments pose as an incentive for the general public to avoid harming the bees.

Just this year, the US Fish & Wildlife Service listed the rusty patched

bumble bee. Being the first bee species recognized as endangered in the continental U.S., this listing was widely considered a turning point for bees.

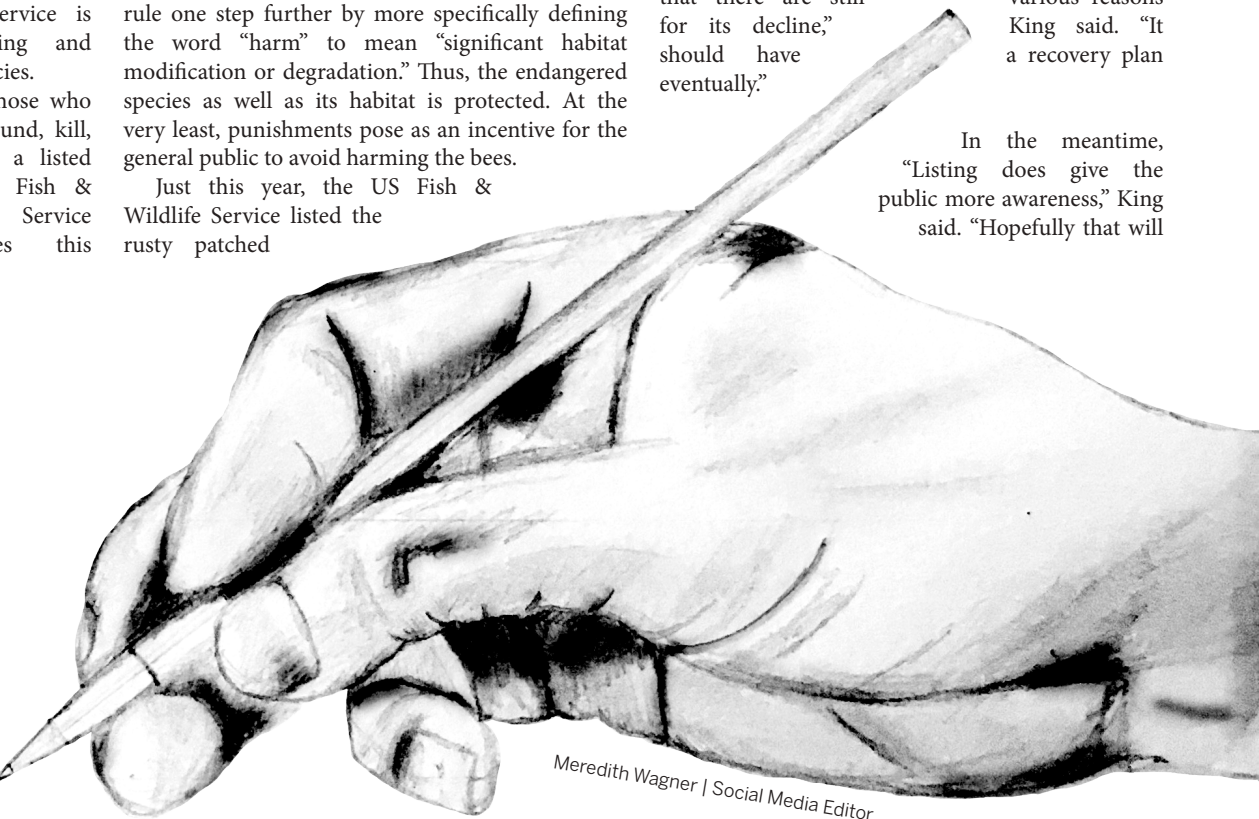
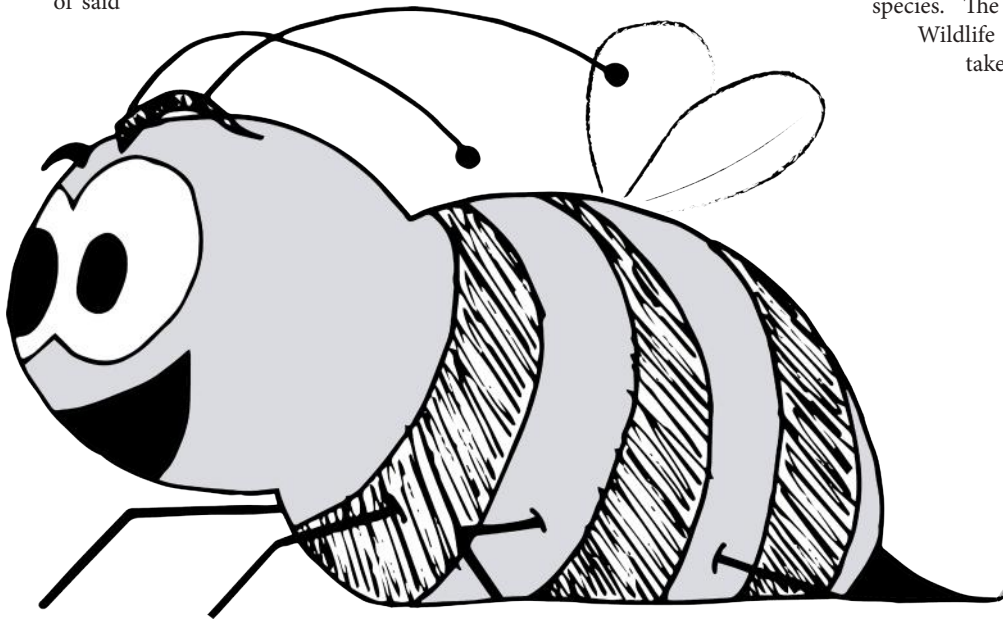
“I think it’s momentous that we had a species of bee listed that’s present in the continental United States — that it’s the first time — and that there has been a big push to have bees listed,” King said. “Having declined ninety percent since the 1990s, and having significant depletion in its population certainly merited a listing.”

King said this is a turning point for pollinators because, “It opens the door to more species potentially being listed. There may be other [endangered] species, and there certainly are some that are seeing significant decline.”

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s website states that they have yet to establish the recovery information, critical habitat rules, or conservation plans for the rusty patched bumble bee required by law, all of which would methodically help combat extinction. The lack of plans is likely because of lack of resources and funding, and the wide disparity among researchers trying to identify a distinct cause of declines.

“I would expect the rusty patched bumble bee will stay on the list for a while, and that there are still various reasons for its decline,” King said. “It should have a recovery plan eventually.”

In the meantime, “Listing does give the public more awareness,” King said. “Hopefully that will



Meredith Wagner | Social Media Editor

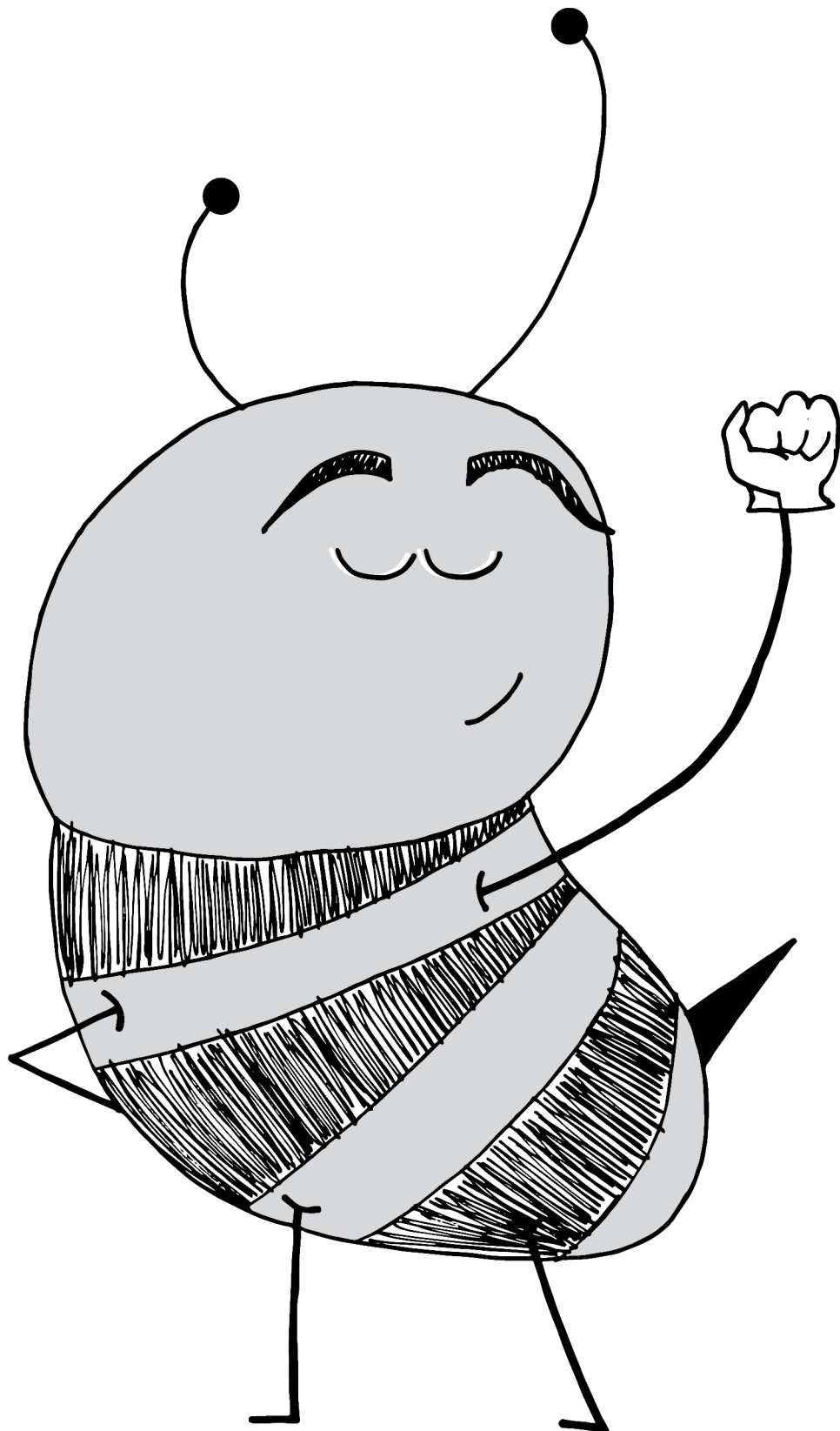


Photo Courtesy of Daniel Stewart

help with some of the other issues we face. Hopefully what we learn will translate well to the other species [of bees].”

If anything is clear to scientists and lawmakers, it’s that protecting bees is essential to maintaining our current levels of food production and consumption. Alternatives to bee pollination have been proposed, but nothing quite has the capacity to replace bees altogether. A 2009 article from PBS wrote, “The problem with other natural pollinators picking up the bees’ slack is that today’s agricultural industry has simply grown too large for them to keep up.”

While federal agencies work out the details of effective legislation in the face of potential budget cuts, bees and humans alike are forced to adapt to the looming population declines.

“There may be ways to help colonies adapt,” King said in reference to changes within the environment. Just as humans can change their survival tactics over time, bees can too.

This adaptation is temporary, though. “Sure,

colonies are collapsing, but we’re able to keep up with it,” Stewart said, referring to commercial beekeeping and humans’ ability to “split hives,” creating more colonies. “But that misses the point that something is wrong. Something is making these hives die. We know this is a huge issue. People want to kind of cover it up right now.”

“From an economic perspective, we’re not in dire straights yet,” Stewart said.

Many are keeping up with the bee declines as best they can, buying time until research can be conducted and change can be implemented.

While on the surface it seems that the consequences of lesser bee populations are only felt by agricultural producers, the average American could see changes within his or her immediate circle, in the immediate future, should trends fail to change for the better.

Ultimately, King said, “It really does relate to every American at the dinner table.”



## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

# We didn't start the **FIRE**, we just write the

**BAILEY BRAMMER**  
Editor-in-Chief

When walking down the street in today's society, it's almost guaranteed you'll overhear claims of "fake news" or blame being placed on the media for inaccurately reporting on a controversial topic.

While there are most certainly news organizations that publish click bait or false articles simply to drive their readership, there are still plenty of publications that employ hardworking, reliable writers that attempt to cover occurrences from all angles. Just because the subject of a story is debatable or calls out a public figure for something questionable does not mean that the entire news organization is to blame for reporting on it and doesn't mean the story is untrue.

Similar to fields such as law or medicine, many journalists hold themselves to moral and ethical standards. The most common of these guidelines is the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics, which lists four principles that act as the rules for a credible journalist: seek truth and report it, minimize harm, act independently and be accountable and transparent.

As a journalist, I see it as my responsibility to report only on what is truthful and accurate to the best of my ability. Although I am well aware that there is corruption in the press, there are also plenty of journalists who are being criticized for simply doing their jobs.

In February of this year, President Donald



Trump called the press the "enemy of the people" on Twitter, and has made his thoughts on multiple news organizations abundantly clear. There are many other politicians and Americans that hold this same belief, viewing journalists as sleazy or liars, when this is inherently inaccurate.

When the press covers a topic that may be offensive or hurtful to some people, this does not mean that it should be labeled as "fake news." For example, a Republican candidate for U.S. Senate, Roy Moore, was recently accused of initiating sexual encounters with young women when he was in his 30's, according to the Washington Post.

Moore claimed that these allegations were fake news and blamed the Washington Post, saying, "These allegations are completely false and are a desperate political attack by the National Democrat Party and the Washington Post on this campaign," and also adding that, "This garbage is the very definition of fake news."

However, Moore's accusations have no basis in fact; the Washington Post interviewed more than 30 people for its article, and has long been considered a reputable and reliable source for news. By placing the blame on the publication, Moore is saying that the newspaper is deliberately trying to sabotage his campaign, which is not the case.

Just because the Washington Post reported on something controversial and potentially harmful to a public figure's reputation does not mean it earns the title of fake news. Because Moore is in the public eye, he is held to different standards than private citizens, and

as a political candidate, he should be even more aware of the press' role as the "fourth branch of government."

News organizations are not responsible for "starting the fire." The Post reporters did not wake up one morning and say to themselves, "How can we make a Republican candidate for Senate from Alabama mad today?" No, the Washington Post either received a tip or discovered that Moore had a questionable past, and pursued it to the fullest extent.

The journalists at the Post took it upon themselves to inform the American people of something that may change their opinions on someone in power; this is the same thing the New York Times does and the same thing multiple local and national news organizations do every single day.

Again, although there are journalists that publish click bait instead of proven facts and give the rest of the press a bad name, the media also contains men and women who have found their passion in pursuing and sharing truth.

As a consumer of news, it is your job to be mindful of which publications can be trusted to provide you with accurate information, as well as which news organizations are only looking out for themselves. If you have trouble deciphering this, do some research on a publication's history and ethics before labeling all journalists as corrupt and all news as fake. After all, we don't start the fire, we just write about it.

*Bailey Brammer is a sophomore journalism and history major from Phoenix.*



Rewon Shimray | Cartoonist

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Editorials express the opinions of the Lariat Editorial Board. Lariat letters and columns are the opinions of an individual and not the Baylor Lariat.

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To submit a Lariat Letter, email Lariat\_Letters@baylor.edu. Letters should be a maximum of 400 words. The letter is not guaranteed to be published.



# Change the news from **bad** to **good**

The news industry has historically been one that always seems to fall into bad light. From sleazy journalists who disobey laws to get stories, to straight-up liars putting out fake news, journalism habitually gets stuck with a bad reputation.

In the 21st century, a time when social justice can be expressed in a mere 280-character tweet, changes are happening in the blink of an eye. Now more than ever, people have the power and the resources to see something, then say something.

Women march for gender equality, people of color march for racial justice and immigrants march for cultural appropriation. Granted, each of these groups is voicing their opinion for something that only affects a small percent of the population respectively. But, in this time of prevalent change, no one is standing for something that affects everybody, something that would benefit 100 percent of the population. Not many are standing for good news.

News brings people together - it is the sole way of sharing and connecting stories from every corner of the world. Earthquake in Japan? That's a headline in New York. Terrorist attack in London? That's a headline in China. Tsunami in Indonesia? That's a headline in Mexico City. Maybe we've never been to some of these places, but the stories told in Rome and Egypt and Sydney are all the same because of the wonderful world of news.

But do you notice something similar with all of these headlines? They're all negative.

In fact, a 2014 article from Psychology Today tells us that people actually prefer negative news. A 2014 Quartz article highlighted a Russian news site



City Reporter that only reported positive headlines for a day and saw a two-thirds decline in readership for that day. Even our own president has headlines that are over 80 percent negative, according to The Washington Times.

A 2014 article from BigThink, an online knowledge forum that shares videos, articles and tips to foster success, by Peter H. Diamandis explained this, saying, "We have a negativity bias,

which is the tendency to give far more information to negative details than positive ones and the confirmation bias, which is our tendency to selectively look at information or see information that confirms our preexisting notions, which is fine except that our preexisting notions are typically negative and therefore, we're reconfirming our negative expectations."

The industry is fighting for readership, fighting for the

spotlight and fighting to keep people engaged in the age that hates journalists more and more each day. Those of us that go home and tell our families during the holidays that we're majoring in journalism receive disapproving smiles and sympathetic pats on the back, so it's no secret the general public has a distaste for journalists.

"If it bleeds, it leads" is an unfortunately true motto that many newsrooms keep in the

back of their minds as they design their front pages in the late hours of the night and create attention-grabbing tweets for online readers. Naturally, when running a business, you stay on top by doing what brings in income. Journalism is meant to serve the people, and psychology explains that the people want the gory, emotional, gut-wrenching and mood-busting stories.

We're just a student newspaper; we don't have the power to change

the natural chemistry of the human brain. We don't have the power to stop natural disasters from tearing apart developing countries and we don't have the power to stop gun violence from shaking families and communities. But we do have the power to tell you that good news exists. Journalism isn't all bad and the world isn't all bad either.

Good news exists - just look at all the headlines and stories that we found in our city, state, country and world that are in this issue. It may not be the front page headline, and it may never be the front page story, but turn a few pages and you'll see the feel-good stories.

Good news is just as necessary as bad news, so make sure to read more of it. Journalists report on what the readers want, so the more good stories that are read, the more good stories that are reported on.

Today more than ever, we can create a change. We have this beautiful resource at our fingertips, yet we hate it so much and don't appreciate its purpose. The news isn't all fake and the journalists behind the stories aren't all dirty liars.

Readers are the ones who crave negativity, but readers are the ones with the ability to change the light the news sits in. Start clicking on the positive headlines, start picking up the paper and turning to the inside and start voicing a need for good news. Who knows? We might go down in history as the generation that not only inspired equality across the board, but that changed the light of worldly communication too.

allies in the region, such as Japan, South Korea and the Philippines and economic interests of the United States.

The United States cannot sit back and do nothing in response to North Korea, Campbell said, because a major source of U.S. power lies in economics. Some of the most important sea lines of communication run through the South China Sea, as well as 30 percent of all maritime trade, he said. Security and Chinese artificial islands are a threat to freedom of navigation in this region, which is essential to U.S. power. Campbell said if the United States were to step back, China's actions would be contrary to the interests of the United States.

"So the bad news is that there don't seem to be a lot of good options and crisis is all about options," Campbell said.

Campbell said the Joint Chiefs of Staff recently said the only way to verify that North Korea's nuclear arsenal was destroyed would be through a full-scale land invasion.

The good news, Campbell said, is that the Chinese government will hopefully put pressure on the North Koreans to tone down their rhetoric and reduce missile tests because they do not want the United States to have a larger military presence in the region.

And as for North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missiles, Campbell is doubtful that they actually possess the capabilities they claim to.

"It's all well and good for Kim Jong Un to stand next to a warhead that he says can be loaded onto an intercontinental ballistic missile, but that doesn't necessarily make it so," he said.

That being considered, Campbell said the threat North Korea poses is greater for countries in the region, like South Korea.

Pyongyang, the capitol of South Korea, is located very close to the border of North Korea and, Campbell said, could feasibly be invaded by North Korean forces.

Campbell added that during President Donald Trump's recent visit to South Korea, Trump seems to have softened his rhetoric towards the issue. He said the pressure on North Korea, from the United States and China may have had positive effects on the situation.

#### ISIS

"The ISIS caliphate is no more," Dr. Mark Long, associate professor in the Baylor Interdisciplinary Core, Director of Middle East Studies and former Soviet analyst and Middle East area specialist in the Air Force, wrote in an email to the Lariat.

Long said this is because its key cities, Mosul and Raqqa, were retaken as a part of the strategy put in place under the Obama administration and continued under the Trump administration. This strategy relied on "the combination of allied air

power, U.S. special forces and indigenous ground troops," Long said.

Long said ISIS's ability to recruit, travel, raise funds and prepare complex operations has been impaired.

"In no sense does ISIS pose an existential threat to the United States," Long said.

There is still a threat of smaller attacks, Long said, similar to the attack in Manhattan on Oct. 31 that killed eight people.

"The attacks will continue for several reasons. The key reason is that the jihadist narrative continues to 'live' online, and self-radicalizing individuals can access it.

Moreover, al-Qaida, ISIS's parent organization, has noted the ease with which lone wolves can obtain automatic weapons in the United States," Long said.

#### Russia

Dr. Sergiy Kudelia, assistant professor of political science, said the United States' relationship with Russia began to deteriorate in 2012, when Vladimir Putin was re-elected as president of the Russian Federation.

Kudelia said the Obama administration was expecting then president Dmitry Medvedev to serve another term, so Putin's election came as a surprise.

During Medvedev's presidency, the United States and Russia cooperated on arms control and anti-terrorism efforts.

But Putin was not satisfied with how Russian leaders were promoting, or rather not promoting, Russian nationalism, Kudelia said.

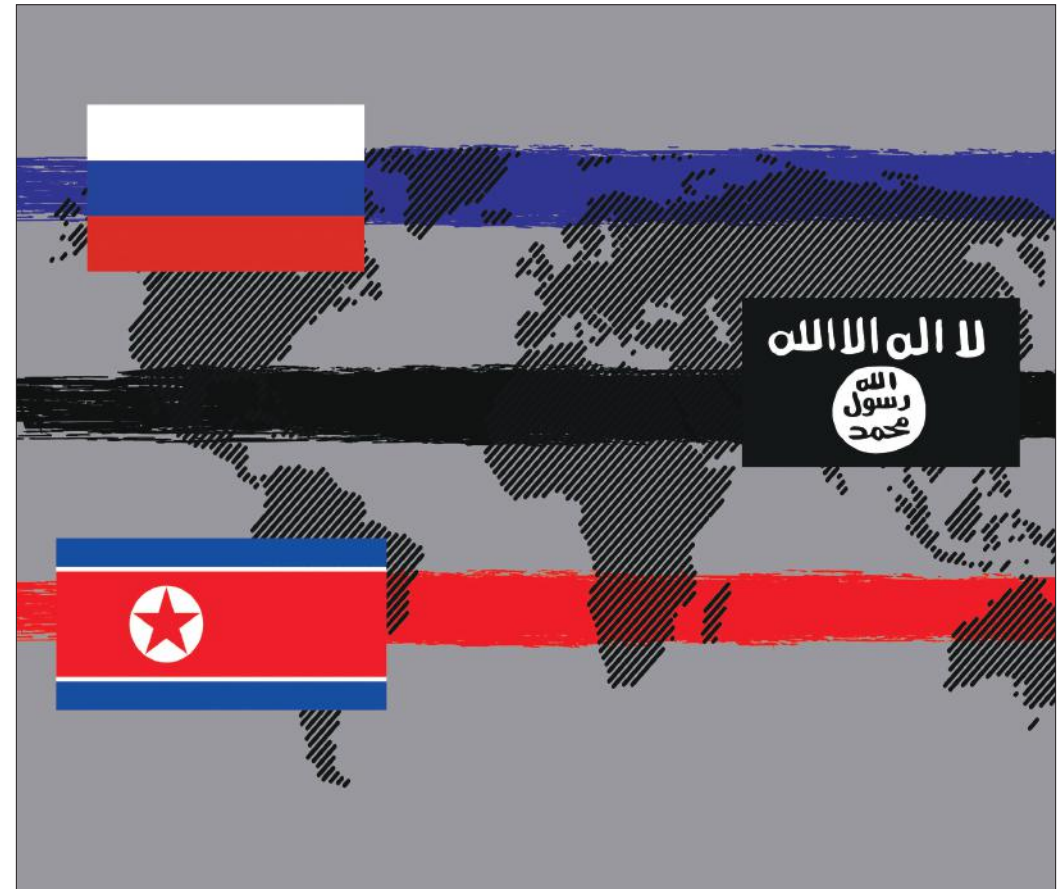
"Putin's vision of the world is more assertive, more continuous attempts to reassert Russian global power and national power, and it really is focused on standing up to the United States. For him, the measure of Russian greatness is the extent to which it can actually successfully compete with America in different parts of the world," Kudelia said.

U.S.-Russian relations began to deteriorate after this point and were further eroded by Russia extending asylum to whistleblower Edward Snowden, sanctions against Russia and the annexation of Crimea, Ukraine, which resulted in the United States forming a coalition to punish Russia and Russia being excluded from the G8 summit, Kudelia said.

Fast forward to the election of President Trump, who, Kudelia said, had a vision of improved relations with Russia.

The Russian efforts to aid President Trump's election was a clear sign from Russia that Putin was also looking forward to improved relations with the United States, Kudelia said.

"The fact that Putin actually had a clear preference in the election campaign, in favor of Trump against Hillary Clinton, shows that he actually is more pragmatic, and much more pragmatic than his Soviet



Didi Martinez | Digital Managing Editor

**FOREIGN FEARS** According to a poll from NBC News and SurveyMonkey, North Korea is the biggest threat to our national security, followed by ISIS and Russia, respectively.

predecessors, and he actually is willing to make business with the United States as long as they are ignoring or overlooking some of the other things that he is doing, internally and externally," Kudelia said.

On a personal level, Kudelia said relations between President Trump and Putin have improved and the two leaders have an admiration for each other. But on the state level, relations between the United States and Russia have continued to deteriorate because President Trump is not the only person setting U.S. policy, Kudelia said.

"There are a number of important actors in U.S. Congress who push for harder line, in the Republican and Democratic party, because there is a bilateral consensus on Russia in U.S. Congress and also in the national security apparatus of the White House," Kudelia said.

In terms of Russia being a physical threat to the United States, Kudelia said this will always be a reality because Russia's nuclear arsenal is comparable to that of the United States. He also said for reasons relating to geopolitics and military capacity, the United States

and Russia will always be competitors and there will always be a national security threat related to that competition.

"The question is whether that national security threat is immediate. Whether it's an immediate danger to the United States or it's something that can only materialize under a very unusual set of circumstances," Kudelia said.

At present, there is nothing pointing to a change in U.S.-Russian relations and Kudelia said each country's ability to fight the other into nonexistence with nuclear weapons will prevent them from doing so.

The danger lies in the United States' tendency to be drawn into international conflict and the potential that Russia could already be present in a region where the United States chose to get involved, he said.

"As far as Trump is concerned, and his advisers, at this point it is not clear whether or not they are willing to abstain from escalating their military presence in these regions where they have conflicting interests with Russia," Kudelia said.



# Are we in

# DANGER?

## Horrorifying headlines lead to American's concerns about the nation's security

**RYLEE SEEVERS**  
Broadcast Reporter

As intimidation from abroad clutters the news, many Americans are increasingly fearful of foreign threats to the United States.

According to a recent NBC News and SurveyMonkey poll, North Korea is the most feared threat to national security among Americans, followed by ISIS and Russia, respectively.

The survey, which comprises responses from 5,047 adults across the nation with a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percent, reveals that 54 percent of respondents said North Korea poses the "greatest immediate threat to the United States."

Nineteen percent of respondents said ISIS poses the greatest threat and 14 percent said Russia.

Experts at Baylor weighed in on each of these threats, providing information on how the country got to where we are and what Americans should be thinking about each of these potential threats to U.S. national security.

### North Korea

Dr. Peter Campbell, assistant professor of political science at Baylor, said there has been a long-term dispute between the United States and North Korea relating to nuclear proliferation and North Korea's nuclear arsenal. Campbell said this was an issue before Kim Jong Un, North Korea's current leader who succeeded his father, came to power in 2012.

"[Kim Jong Un] seems, even more than his father, to be very committed to developing nuclear weapons, but most worrying, committed to developing the ability to deliver nuclear weapons intercontinentally," Campbell said.

Campbell said the United States has long been opposed to North Korea having a nuclear arsenal. This is due to the United States' commitment to provide protection to

**54**  
**percent**

Believe North Korea poses the biggest threat

**19**  
**percent**

Believe ISIS poses the biggest threat

**14**  
**percent**

Believe Russia poses the biggest threat

Results from a recent NBC News and SurveyMonkey poll



# Ash and Despair

## Devastating fires force families to rebuild from ruin in California

MADISON FRASER  
Reporter

It was 10:30 p.m. on a Sunday and residents all over Sonoma County began to turn in for the evening. Dogs were brought in from the yard, candles were blown out, dishes put away and laundry folded. The wind was abnormally high. Furniture blew across the yard and trees looked as if they might snap in half at any moment. Was this unusual? Sure, but not enough to spike alarm. So people turned out their lights and went to bed.

Five hours later, neighborhoods were startled awake by shouts of, "Get out! Get out now!"

They had five minutes at most to grab their most cherished possessions. Most took just their pets. Some left wearing their pajamas, not knowing that would be the only clothing they would have left.

Monday, Oct. 9, was a day residents of Santa Rosa, Calif., will never forget.

"It was like a scene from the apocalypse," said Franchesca Galletti, Sonoma county resident. "It all felt so surreal. It still does, honestly."

The fire, caused by an unknown source, came so quickly over the mountains that nobody had time to prepare. The high winds fueled the flames to spread in every direction over thousands of acres in less than an hour. The fire showed no discretion, consuming the mansions of a university president and beloved local Charles M. Schulz, along with

local businesses, a fire station, schools, hotels and a neighborhood of more than 1,300 structures was burned to ash.

The fires continued to burn through Northern California throughout the next week, destroying structures, land, popular Napa wineries and homes. In just a matter of hours, thousands of people became displaced and lost everything. However, what came next for them would feel like the true tragedy.

Bill and Stacy McKee, residents of the destroyed Coffey Park Neighborhood in Santa Rosa, were out of town the night the fires swept through, but were one of many who lost their home.

"There are no words for spending hours looking through the remains of your home for a few treasured items," Stacy McKee said. "My grandma passed just over a year ago and she had many jewelry pieces that were given to me and although the memories are always there, the sadness that every piece seems to have melted is so hard."

Residents just like the McKees who lost everything have begun the process to rebuild their homes as well as their lives.

"I used to love the smell of soot, as it reminded me of my dad coming home from fighting a fire," Stacy said. "That smell has new meaning to me now."

Temporary replacement homes throughout the town are being filled with victims from the fires. Even though many are grateful for a roof over their heads while their

home is being rebuilt, there is an overwhelming heartache knowing that items that once made their house a home are absent from this new life.

"Yesterday while shopping with Stacy I asked what do you need. She replied, 'Everything!'" said Rita Miller, Stacy's mother. "I guess I was more focused on the personal belongings and furniture, not the basic stuff we all have in our kitchens."

Donation centers have been set up throughout Northern California for fire victim relief. Clothing and household items have all been handed off to those in need. GoFundMe accounts have also been set up for victims by their families in order to start the process of moving forward.

Recently, neighborhoods and highways have reopened, nearly a month after tragedy struck.

"Nothing looks the same," Galletti said. "The beautiful redwood trees, the gorgeous rolling hills with grape vines growing on them and so many historical landmarks well known to our community are all gone. It doesn't even feel like the same place."

With each new step, a fresh wave of heartbreak washes over the community, reminding them of the tragedy thousands of people suffered that night. With hope, however, this community continues to work on restoring and rebuilding their town supporting one another through every step of the way.

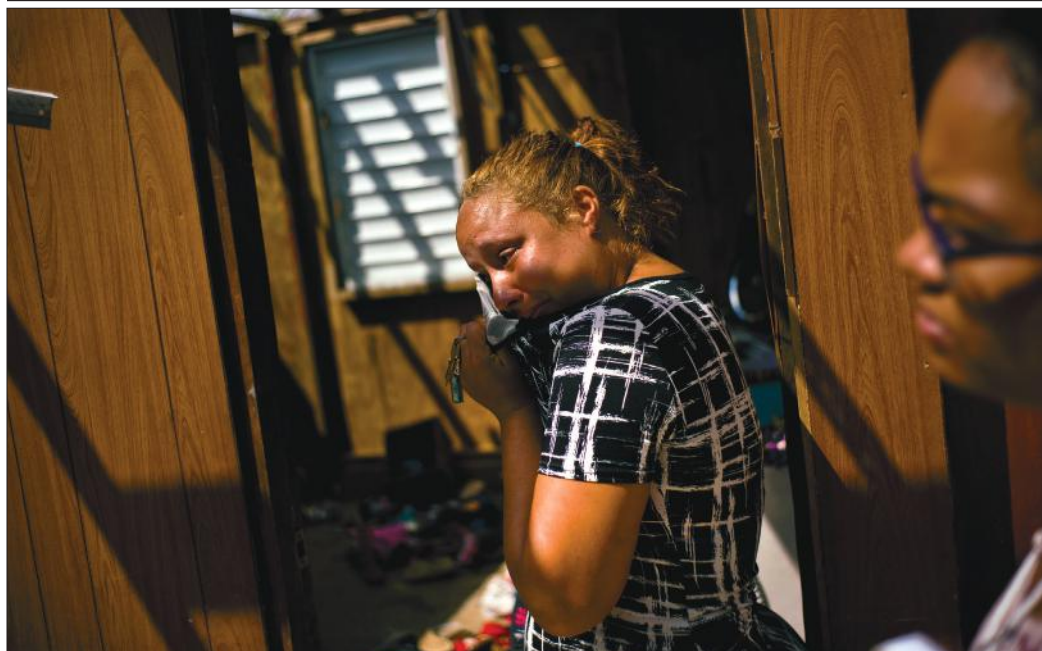
"Bill and I both have this strong gut feeling that everything will be just fine, maybe even better," Stacy said. "We know it's going to be a long road, but this too shall pass."



Associated Press

**IN THE RUBLE** Larry Keyser looks around as he and volunteers from Samaritan's Purse disaster relief sift through remains of his family's home destroyed by fires in the Coffey Park area of Santa Rosa, Calif., on Nov. 8.





Associated Press



Associated Press

**NOTHING BUT REMNANTS (Left)** In this Oct. 12 file photo, Midiam Rivera cries as she and a Housing Ministry official survey her home that was destroyed in the passing of Hurricane Maria, in Toa Baja, Puerto Rico. Rivera, a mother of three, lost all her possessions when the devastating storm hit on Sept. 20.0 **(Right)** In this Oct. 17 file photo, a boy accompanied by his dog watches the repairs of Guajataca Dam, which cracked during the passage of Hurricane Maria, in Quebradillas, Puerto Rico.

# Puerto Rico's dire need for restoration funds remains

**CHRISTINA SOTO**  
Broadcast Reporter

It has been seven weeks since Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico and more than half of the island is still without power. Puerto Rico officials said it could be weeks or months before the power is completely restored throughout the island.

According to the Weather Channel, 867,000 homes and businesses have no electricity. Thousands have left the island and migrated to the mainland because of the storm.

The executive director of the Financial Oversight and Management Board of Puerto Rico, Natalie

Jaresko told Congress that Puerto Rico needs emergency and restoration funds.

"The island now needs help — emergency and restoration funds and assistance on an unprecedented scale," Jaresko said. "Before the hurricanes, the board was determined that Puerto Rico and its instrumentalities could achieve balanced budgets, work its way through its debt problems, and develop a sustainable economy without federal aid. That is simply no longer possible."

Puerto Rican authorities have estimated that the damage to the island can cost anywhere from \$45 billion to \$95 billion. Congress has only approved around 5 billion dollars in aid.

Former U.S. Presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. H. Bush, and Jimmy Carter have established One America Appeal in order to aid in the hurricane recovery encompassing the devastations of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

CEO of the George H. W. Bush Presidential Library Foundation, David Jones said, "With damage estimates from Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria topping \$300 billion and requiring months and years of rebuilding ahead, we hope this strong start to the One America Appeal is just that -- a start."

So far, One American Appeal has raised \$31 million in tax-deductible, private funds from more than 80,000 donors. On Oct. 21, it hosted "Deep From the Heart: The One America Appeal" concert in College Station. All ticket sales went directly to the hurricane relief fund. The organization is continually accepting donations through [OneAmericaAppeal.org](http://OneAmericaAppeal.org).

There are several other organization that are aiding in hurricane relief in Puerto Rico. Habitat for Humanity, according to its website is helping people repair and rebuild their homes. UNICEF is collecting \$28 donations that will provide a kit of the basic essentials. According to their website, "A donation of just \$28 will provide a kit containing basic, essential supplies such as water purification tablets, a water bucket with lid, water containers, soap, toothpaste, detergent and sanitary pads."

Although there are several efforts to help Puerto

Rico, the amount of damage is extensive and will take a significant amount of time to recover.

Ponce Puerto Rico senior Ian Cummings is from a city in the southern part of the island and is one of the largest cities in Puerto Rico. His family endured Hurricane Maria with damage only to their backyard, however, they have been out of power since the storm and have been surviving off the generator.

"My family was lucky enough to be not be affected that terribly compared to others in Puerto Rico," Cummings said. "My house was fine, a couple of trees fell in the backyard. We have water in my house but they are still with no power and are surviving on the generator."

Cummings said it was very hard to be so far from home, especially after the storm. However, he said he is thankful because his family was very fortunate.

"It's hard, especially when you are this far away, right after it happened I didn't talk to my parents for almost two weeks, it was kind of crazy and I was very anxious," Cummings said. "I know they are okay now though and it could have been a lot of worse."

Because of the storm devastation on the island, he will not be returning to Puerto Rico for Thanksgiving. His family said it would be best for him to stay in Texas.

"There are not enough flights in and out of the island right now and my parents told me that being there would not be good for me cause everything is so bad and it doesn't make sense for me to go so I will go to a friends house," Cummings said.



# on GUN REFORM



said he believes the majority of citizens are for stricter gun laws.

According to a national survey by the Pew Research Center, in Aug. 2016, the public was divided over which is more important: to protect American citizens' right to own guns (52 percent) or to control gun ownership (46 percent).

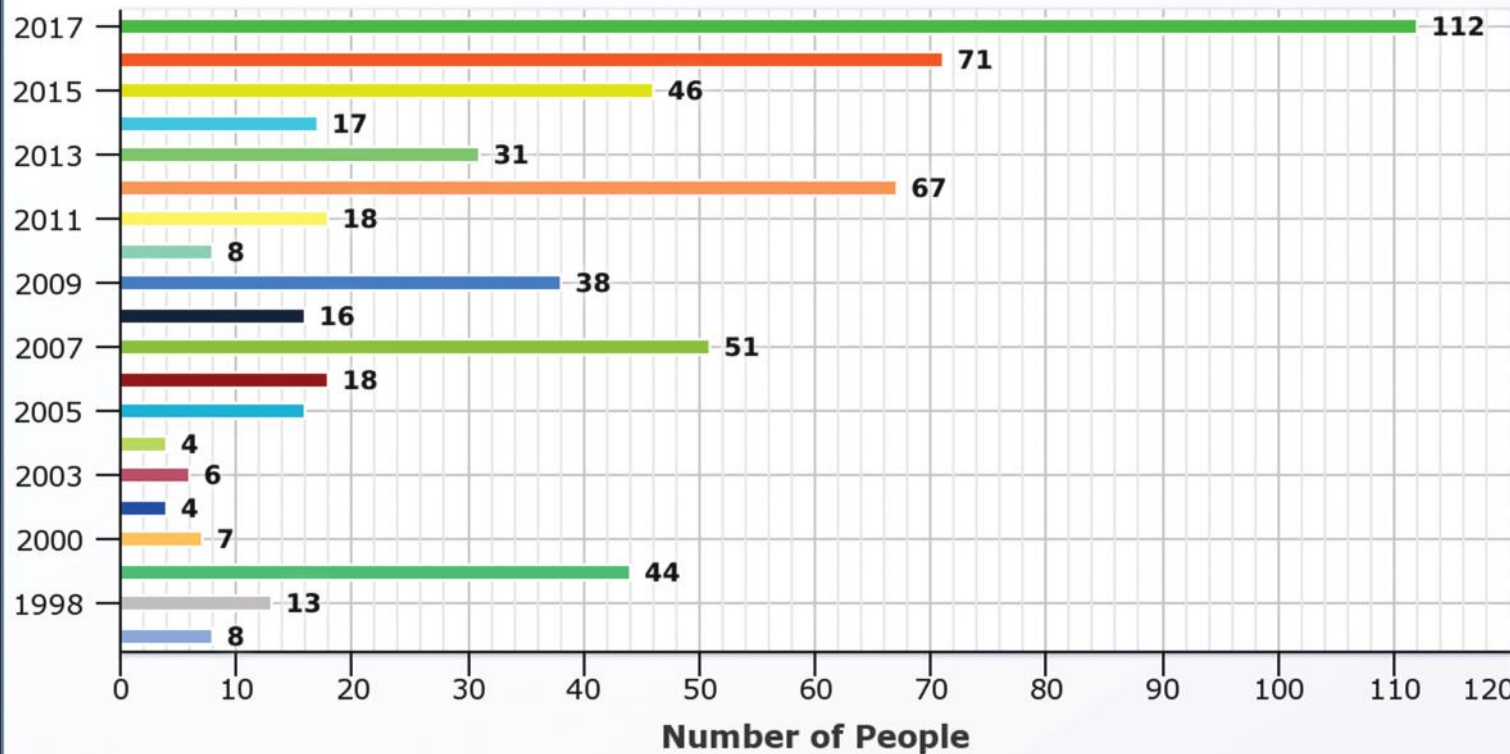
Soo said that it's not that Republicans don't

believe in gun control, it's that there is a "slippery slope" from banning one part to banning another and he does not want the government to incrementally take away citizens' freedom of the Second Amendment.

Bridges said he hopes to see people — especially those on the right — offer a solution that they would support.

"This seems to be people on the left side come up with something and then they will just shoot it down," Bridges said. "So I would like to see Republicans come up with some sort of legislation that they would support to stop tragedies and then it can be worked out in a more bipartisan way."

## Number of People Killed in Mass Shootings in the Past 20 Years



Jessica Hubble | Multimedia Journalist

**GUN SAFETY** The above chart displays statistics from Time Magazine's Oct. 2017 article "35 Years of Mass Shootings in the U.S." Statistics show that 2017 has been put on record as the year with the deadliest mass shootings in history. The photos along the side display several firearms legally attained by Texas citizens with concealed carry license. **(Top)** Rem-ington-Union Blackhawk 357 magnum revolver, with bullets and casings. **(Middle)** 9 mil. Taurus handgun. **(Bottom)** The Remington-Union Blackhawk 357 Magnum displayed in a leather holster with bullet loops.