

The Top 10 most annoying stories of 2016



BY MATTHEW HOY

The time around Christmas and New Year's Day is notorious for its dearth of local news. With newspaper space and broadcast airtime that needs filling, this is how we got the original "Top 10" list. Never let it be said that I didn't make an effort to do my part. The Top 10 state and local events that most annoyed me in 2016:

10. Police Double Standards

If you lie to the police, they charge you with a crime. If the police lie to you, as Santa Maria police Chief Ralph Martin did earlier this year when he sent out a fake news release, well, that's different.

In Grover Beach for more than a week, police Chief John Peters withheld the name of the officer who owned the dog responsible for the death of David Fear. You can be sure that you wouldn't be accorded the same consideration had your dog behaved similarly.

The famous line in the movie "Blade Runner" that "You're not cop, you're little people!" may be how the world works, but the public shouldn't accept it.



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9. Top Two Primary System

Hillary Clinton's popular vote-winning margin was provided by her landslide victory in California. Remove California completely from the equation, and Donald Trump comes out on top by more than a million votes. I'll leave it to statisticians and political scientists to figure out, but I suspect the state's top-two primary system that left voters with a choice of liberal Democrat Kamala Harris or liberal Democrat Loretta Sanchez to represent the state in the U.S. Senate caused a lot of Republican voters to stay home.

If you know you can't affect the presidential race nor the Senate race and gerrymandered House races make your vote there immaterial, why bother showing up?

8. "Hate Speech"

Hate speech nowadays seems to be loosely defined as "speech I hate," and that which I hate must be silenced. Google Milo Yiannopoulos.

7. Regulating cow farts

Gov. Jerry "Moonbeam" Brown signed a bill passed by our betters in Sacramento designed to regulate cow flatulence in the name of saving the planet from catastrophic global warming. On the plus side, methane is a more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, so they got that right. On the downside, the legislation will not lower the global temperature by a detectable amount. The new regulations are likely to raise prices on meat and milk — something the coastal elites who haven't yet embraced veganism can easily afford, but acts as yet another hidden tax that hurts the poor and middle class the most.

6. Tolerant Progressives

I can't really use the term "liberal" anymore to describe much of the political left. They aren't liberal in the classic sense: pro-free speech and all of that. Since Trump's victory in November, the bile from the left has grown increasingly toxic. My theory is that the left could tolerate dissent when President Barack Obama occupied the White House and could veto legislation from the GOP-controlled House and Senate. Progressives also took solace in Obama's "phone and pen" executive actions. That status quo will change in a couple weeks, and the panic has started.

5. Plastic Bag Ban

By a 4-point margin, California voters decided to ban plastic bags. The ban was largely promoted as an environmental effort built on lies like the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Now the rest of the state can be annoyed at having to buy paper bags at 10 cents a pop (another regressive tax that hurts the poor the most) or purchase reusable bags that can be carriers of viruses and bacteria.

4. Every Single Gun Law Passed By The State Legislature

Supposedly a response to the terrorist attack in San Bernardino, Democrats used the tragedy to pass a slew of new laws that all had one thing in common: None of them would've done anything to stop the San Bernardino terrorist attack. Instead, the new laws just annoy and make it more expensive for law-abiding gun owners to exercise their Second Amendment rights.

3. SLO Housing Costs

When your local school superintendent who makes \$215,000 a year can't get a bank loan to purchase a house and needs the school district to step in, you have a problem. Tiny houses, a solution championed by new Mayor Heidi Harmon, is not necessarily a good solution for a family of five. While good administrators may be tough to find, San Luis Coastal trustees might earn some goodwill if they extended their low-interest housing loan program to teachers as well. That so few teachers, and those in similar, middle-class professions, are unable to afford San Luis Obispo's high housing costs is a travesty.

2. Anti-Nuclear Power

PG&E announced that it would close its Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant in 2025. This move was praised by green activists who fear Catastrophic Anthropogenic Global Warming and believe the only energy we should be using is wind and solar. Making the perfect the enemy of the (perceived) good, these environmental activists will have added the equivalent of 2 million more cars on the road annually and prompted the creation of more fossil fuel-burning power plants out of state. Wind and solar are inherently fickle power sources because the sun doesn't shine at night and the wind doesn't always blow, but hipsters want to be able to use their MacBook Airs 24 hours a day.

1. Rental Inspection Program

San Luis Obispo voters replaced Mayor Jan Marx with Heidi Harmon and elected Aaron Gomez and Andy Pease to the City Council in November. All of them had expressed a desire to take another look at the city's intrusive and constitutionally suspect rental inspection program. Here's hoping the council comes to its senses and repeals it, but I suspect the petition drive is the only thing short of a lawsuit that will end the program.

Politicians and their promises ...

Conservative columnist Matthew Hoy is a former reporter, editor and page designer. His column appears in The Tribune every other Sunday, in rotation with liberal columnist Tom Fulks. Read Hoy's blog at Hoystory.com. Follow him on Twitter @Hoystory.

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Russell Hodin · San Luis Obispo, California
The most annoying story of 2016, as I'm sure Mr. Hoy would concur, is the fact that Republicans lost control over their presidential primary, ceding it to a lunatic. I can hardly wait for the "Most Annoying Stories of 2017"
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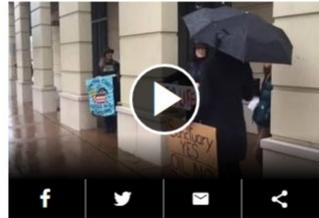
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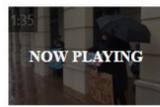
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Thanks, Mr Hoy, for showing us how conservatives turn real news into fake news. Every statement you made about the real news stories is twisted self-serving political opinion.
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ABOUT MATTHEW HOY



Matthew Hoy, a conservative, is a San Diego-area native and 1994 graduate of Cal Poly's journalism program. He spent 15 years at various newspapers along the West Coast, including The Lompoc Record, The Daily World in Aberdeen, Wash., The North County Times in Escondido and The San Diego Union-Tribune. For 15 years, Hoy has written a blog on politics and the media, Hoystory.com. Hoy's column will be published in The Tribune every other week, in rotation with liberal columnist Tom Fulks.

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