

COMMENTARY

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Wednesday, April 6, 2016 | The Daily News | B7

Could you survive on \$7.25 an hour?

Over the last couple of weeks, we have watched the political efforts of the working poor succeed as they have obtained a minimum wage of \$15 an hour in New York and California, the 15th and ninth largest economies in the world.

The wage increase was spread over time and has different restrictions and exceptions in each state.

Not long ago, San Marcos, adopted its own limited version of a \$15-an-hour law and elected officials in other cities and counties in Texas are doing what they can to assist low-wage workers to survive in our economy.

It is difficult for locally elected public officials to address inadequate and stagnant wages in Texas since the legislature in its wisdom in 2003 decided to suddenly eliminate the right created in the federal Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938 for any

Guest Column



Steve McIntyre lives in Galveston.

county or city in America to raise the wages of its local workers.

In Galveston, there has been recent discussion reported in The Galveston County Daily News about the lack of low wage workers on the island ("Nobody wants to work," The Daily News, March 10), workers not wanting to work at certain jobs, importing foreign J-1 workers, and training future workers at Ball High School — but very little discussion about wage inequality, stagnant wages, and surviving on less than a living wage.

The Fair Labor Standards Act adopted in 1938 declared the national minimum wage should be in an amount to maintain the mini-

mum standard of living necessary for the health, efficiency, and general well-being of workers.

What would you, or your family do, if you were suddenly dependent upon \$7.25 an hour? Forget about seeing family and friends ... forget about sleeping ... how many additional hours a day would you have to work so that your family could simply survive? I guess that may help explain the long waiting list for public housing and vouchers and families at food banks and households doubling up as people turn to different tactics to survive as they pray for a wage in an amount to maintain the minimum standard of living necessary for the health, efficiency, and general well-being of workers.

Put politics, put religion, put simple humanity aside, put the language of the Fair Labor Standards Act aside ... could you do it on \$7.25 an hour?



Today in History

Today is **Wednesday, April 6**, the 97th day of 2016. There are 269 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 6, 1896, the first modern Olympic Games formally opened in Athens, Greece.

On this date:

» In **1830**, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized by Joseph Smith in Fayette, N.Y.

» In **1886**, the Canadian city of Vancouver, British Columbia, was incorporated.

» In **1909**, American explorers Robert E. Peary and Matthew A. Henson and four Inuits became the first men to reach the North Pole.

» In **1917**, Congress approved a declaration of war against Germany.

» In **1945**, during World War II, the Japanese warship Yamato and nine other vessels sailed on a suicide mission to attack the U.S. fleet off Okinawa; the fleet was intercepted the next day.

» In **1954**, a month after being criticized by newsman Edward R. Murrow on CBS' "See It Now," Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., was given the chance to respond on the program; in his pre-filmed remarks, McCarthy charged that Murrow had, in the past, "engaged in propaganda for Communist causes."

» In **1965**, the United States launched Intelsat I, also known as the "Early Bird" communications satellite, into geosynchronous orbit.

» In **1971**, Russian-born composer Igor Stravinsky, 88, died in New York City.

» In **1980**, 3M introduced its "Post-it Notes," a re-branding of a product formerly known as "Press'n Peel."

» In **1998**, country singer Tammy Wynette died at her Nashville home at age 55.

» In **2014**, actor Mickey Rooney, 93, died in North Hollywood.

Ten years ago: At the death penalty trial of al-Qaida conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui, former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani

described his own harrowing experiences in lower Manhattan on Sept. 11, 2001.

U.S. Rep. Cynthia McKinney, D-Ga., apologized for an altercation in which she'd entered a Capitol building unrecognized, refused to stop when asked by a police officer and then struck him.

Five years ago: Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi appealed directly to President Barack Obama in a letter to end what Gadhafi called "an unjust war"; he also wished Obama good luck in his bid for re-election. Portugal became the third debt-stressed European country to need a bailout as the prime minister announced his country would request international assistance.

One year ago: The Phi Kappa Psi fraternity at the University of Virginia announced it would "pursue all available legal action" against Rolling Stone, saying

a Columbia Journalism School review showed the magazine acted recklessly and defamed its members by publishing a discredited article that accused them of gang rape.

Kenyan warplanes bombed militant camps in Somalia after a vow by President Uhuru Kenyatta to respond "in the fiercest way possible" to the massacre of Kenyan college students by al-Shabab militants.

Kentucky coach John Calipari and Spencer Haywood were among 11 new inductees named to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. Duke scored a 68-63 victory over Wisconsin for the program's fifth NCAA national title.

Character James Best, 88, best known for his role as Sheriff Rosco P. Coltrane on "The Dukes of Hazzard" comedy show, died in Hickory, North Carolina.

Letters to the editor

Now what kind of sense does that make?

In response to the brief "Downtown paid parking program begins today" (The Daily News, April 4): After reading that the city will begin enforcing downtown paid parking and that annual passes are not available — how dumb can this be?

Residents of Galveston should be able to purchase an annual pass for both the seawall and downtown either separate or combined. It doesn't take a brilliant scientist to understand this. But again we are dealing with the people in city government.

**David Dumas
Galveston**

I'd suggest voting 'no' on propositions on May 7

There were two interesting articles on the May propositions in The Daily News recently. The first was by Doug McLeod encouraging voters to vote no on all propositions ("Vote no on all Galveston council propositions May 7," April 1). The other was by Michael A. Smith asking for a yes vote on Proposition 1 stating his opinion there was "more potential for good than bad" ("On Proposition 1, we say vote yes," April 3).

I guess I disagree with Smith. Voting yes on Proposition 1 is addressing the symptom while exacerbating the problem. Extending to three-year terms means at least three years (and probably more) before we get rid of the terribly dysfunctional 6-1

Letters policy

The Daily News welcomes letters of up to 200 words and guest columns of up to 500 words on any issue. Guest columns must include a photograph of the writer. Any letter exceeding the word limit or not including a photograph will not be considered for publication.

An address and daytime phone number must be included for author identification. No contributions will be published until authorship is confirmed.

Letter writers are asked to limit submissions to one every 30 days. The Daily News may edit or decline publication to any submission.

Send letters to: Letters to the editor, P.O. Box 628, Galveston, 77553 or email to letters@galvnews.com

(the problem) and have a council that will put a 4-2-1 on the charter ballot. As McLeod puts it, the six districts that have been created have "resulted in the disenfranchisement of minorities as well as the voting population as a whole."

Until we have a city council that will put 4-2-1 on the ballot I encourage these "disenfranchised" voters to go to the polls and vote no on all propositions (especially the self-serving 1 and 20). Also, in the contested races, I encourage you to vote no for all incumbents.

**Marty Fluke
Galveston**

SCOTUS should be void of political influences

America's politician's are setting a very dangerous precedent by politicizing the nation's highest court. The United States Supreme Court should be "void" of political party politics, influences, etc. Justices should not rule on Supreme Court issues based upon

politics or because of any political affiliation.

Their jobs as justices are to fairly interpret and enforce the Constitution of the United States as outlined by the framers of same. Politics should have no sway upon the Supreme Court. Yet apparently, presidential appointments, whether by a Democrat or Republican, Supreme Court justices have been labeled as either liberal or conservative.

No court within this nation should be politicized; and no political party should control any court whether local, state, federal, etc. When any judge's job is politicized, he cannot enforce the laws of our land fairly. Again, a judge's only job is making rulings without any political influences.

Judges have a lifetime job that politics should again have no influence in. Interpretation and enforcement of our Constitution without influences from any partisan political party affiliation is what they should be doing.

**Kenneth Douglas
Dickinson**

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