

Never forget Newtown

Remember Columbine? Of course you don't, and neither do I.

I was four at the time and only learned about it when our middle school took the opportunity to learn about the life of Rachel Scott, the first victim of the tragedy.

Twelve students and a teacher were killed that day when a duo of students opened fire on their classmates.

Well, arguably the most tragic shooting spree at a school in American history has just been one-upped. Twenty children and six adults were shot to death on Friday, Dec. 14, 2012. Newtown will soon be synonymous with Columbine, Aurora and Virginia Tech University.

This feels too soon.

Didn't we just get over the Aurora theater shooting?

Shouldn't there have been a year or two after that until the inevitability of another tragedy?

Weren't the gun control talks starting to cool after the Chiefs linebacker Javon Belcher murder-suicide?

Well they are not going away anytime soon. And those suggesting we should avoid talking about the issue of gun control in wake of a tragedy are ignorant.

Let me say it again: they are ignorant.

This is an issue that needs, begs and deserves to be talked about, and one that needs to be resolved.

This won't be popular at Blue Valley.

People are hilariously conservative at Blue Valley.

People hunt at Blue Valley.

People think that "guns don't kill people — people kill people" at Blue Valley.

On a related note, if you use that argument in any manner that isn't joking, I'll equate your intelligence to that of a bumper sticker.

So, I understand I'm going against the grain here.

We need a massive regulation of firearms in America. I said it, crucify me.

It's sad we need too many jarring incidents to get us to talk about it.

However, that's how we are as Americans. Nobody complained or cared about the shoddy levees in New Orleans until Hurricane Katrina decimated them.

Though it would be a bit ignorant to lobby for getting rid of guns completely, it would be infinitely more ignorant to do nothing.

This issue was discussed after the Belcher suicide when sportscaster Bob Costas

quoted a column on the halftime show on NBC's Sunday Night Football that called for regulation of firearms.

The nitwits at Fixed, ahem, I mean Fox News essentially called this an attack on our basic freedom as Americans.

Those who worship Faux News agreed vehemently: they can't take our guns away from us.

And while I personally see no real reason for the average Overland Park-dwelling citizen to need a firearm, I get it — you need your precious guns to give you a twisted sense of safety or to slaughter woodland creatures.

To each his own.

But if you think there is nothing that can be done, or regulations would do nothing, then I'm going to break out the "I" word again on you.

Ignorant, idiot, insane — take your choice. I wish I could call you something else, but this is a family paper.

More extensive background checks, stricter regulations and a change of culture would all reduce mass shootings.

Think that the problem is going to solve itself?

According to the "Washington Post," six of the twelve worst shooting sprees in America have happened since 2007. The problem is not going away; it is intensifying as we speak.

The man who slaughtered 26 in Newtown, and the one who killed 12 in Aurora used firearms and ammunition that were all bought legally. Not a single red flag was raised as to why hundreds of automatic rounds were needed.

Honestly, if we're going to do something about guns, shouldn't we start with eliminating the automatic weapons first?

Do you really need a machine gun to kill a deer? If so, do you also identify yourself as the worst hunter on the planet? There's quite literally no reason to ever need a weapon that doesn't require reloading.

You want a rifle to hunt with? Fine, but don't tell me the average citizen should be able to carry an AK-47.

Those who want guns for protection or say mass killings could be stopped if other citizens had guns are also out of touch with logic.

So, you're telling me if an elementary school student or teacher was packing, then this could be stopped? We should fight fire with fire and set up an administrator with a gun for the off chance that the pure

incarnate of evil walks through the schools doors?

You must not be very smart.

If someone is going to carry a gun at a school, it should be those who are trained and legally obligated to carry a firearm — a school resource officer who is there for the sole purpose of protecting students.

If only a citizen had a gun in Aurora.

All they would have to do is ignore the fact that movie theaters are generally dark.

And that there was hysteria and panic on a wide scale after shots were fired.

And that gas canisters were released by the shooter in order to heighten that fear and panic.

And that he was wearing body armor.

Other than that, a random citizen having a gun would work out great.

Seriously, when's the last time you heard of the average, gun-wielding citizen turning into Jason Bourne and fending off a violent shooter?

In the last 30 years, there have been 62 mass shootings in America. Not a single one of them ended with a glock-toting citizen ending the life of the gunman.

Not a single one.

It's just not realistic.

The last time we heard about an average citizen using a gun to "defend" himself, the discussion was revolving around George Zimmerman and Trayvon Martin.

However, if there is one thing we can agree on, it is that we should not let any political discussion overshadow the tragedy of Dec. 14.

We went through the motions: flags were lowered to half mast, President Barack Obama spoke and cried at the eulogy and we all mourned the fact that 20 children will never learn to drive a car, never attend a school dance, never graduate or never wed.

Those who survived the ordeal will likely never be the same. A community has been shattered, and countless families have been irreparably damaged.

There were 20 children who likely had wrapped Christmas presents waiting for them under a tree — presents that were never opened.

We cannot agree on much as a country, but the barrel of a weapon should never be the last thing a child will ever see.

Whatever god you believe in, we all come from the same one — that's who those children are with now.