

OPINION

DAILY JOURNAL

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"The Daily Journal is dedicated to community service, to defense of individual rights and to providing those checks upon government which no constitution can ensure."

SCOTT ALEXANDER
founding editor, 1963

AT ISSUE

A New Whiteland police officer acted heroically when rescuing three people from a burning home.

OUR POINT

This brave act merits praise, but it's typical of the kind of dedication public safety personnel show every day.

Officer's actions reflect well on all who serve

The Daily Journal

When New Whiteland police officer Kenneth Polley arrived at a house a block from the police station, smoke was pouring from the eaves.

A front window was shattered, and he could see flames inside.

He went to a window at the opposite end of the house. It was ajar. He started yelling into the home.

He heard a woman screaming inside.

Polley pulled a boy through the window. The youngster told him other people were still inside.

Next to be pulled to safety was a 2-year-old girl. Then he pulled out the woman, who said she was the children's grandmother.

Another reach into the window, and Polley was pulling out the family dog.

The rescues were made especially difficult by smoke.

"The soot was so thick that you couldn't see your hand in front of you," he said. "You stuck (a hand) in the window, and it was gone."

"It was hair-raising itself to hear screaming," he said. "But then (the boy) said there were more people inside."

Polley, in his sixth year as a police officer, said, "It was only a few minutes, but it felt so much longer than that. It's always been a fear of mine not to be able to help the people inside. I'm so glad I could do my job."

That is a fear shared by all public safety personnel.

One of the joys in a job as a firefighter, police officer or emergency medical technician is knowing that your work directly helps people, often your own neighbors, as it was in Polley's case.

The New Whiteland Town Council planned to recognize Polley at its meeting this week.

He is richly deserving of the praise. Yet we should not forget that all public safety personnel show courage in large ways and small every day. Whether it's fighting a fire, treating an accident victim or handling a traffic stop, these public servants face a variety of problems that at any moment could explode into a major crisis.

So we pause to say thank you to Polley for his bravery and quick action and to say thank you to all the other dedicated public servants who labor their entire careers without a public pat on the back and a hearty well-done.



POLLEY

Focus: Natural gas

Putin too unreliable to control European energy

Scripps Howard News Service

Russian President Vladimir Putin miscalculated badly when he choked off natural-gas supplies to Ukraine, causing supplies to also drop in other European nations.

The swift and angry reaction of Western Europe, that Russia was showing itself as an unreliable and untrustworthy business partner, stunned the Kremlin. Putin seems not only to have inherited the autocratic aspirations of his Soviet predecessors, but their diplomatic ineptitude as well.



PUTIN

It did not help appearances that this blatant attempt to interfere in Ukraine's internal politics came as Putin was assuming chairmanship of the G-8, an organization of the world's largest industrial democracies. Russia doesn't qualify for membership but was included in hopes of promoting economic reforms, democracy and adherence to international norms.

The Kremlin quickly reversed itself but seemed to view its action as more of a public-relations gaffe than the reversion to Soviet-era bullying tactics and disregard of contracts that the rest of the world saw it as.

Curiously, Russia does have a point in trying to get Ukraine to pay more of a market rate for natural gas. Ukraine pays \$50 per 1,000 cubic meters of gas, much less than Gazprom, the Russian state monopoly, could reasonably command.

But that cut-rate price is of the Russians' own making, negotiated to help the Kremlin's openly favored presidential candidate in last year's Ukrainian elections. To Putin's intense embarrassment, a pro-West candidate won in the celebrated "Orange Revolution." The gas contract was to last through 2009, but by abrogating the agreement, it looks as if the Kremlin is having a stab at influencing this spring's Ukrainian parliamentary elections. Old habits die hard.

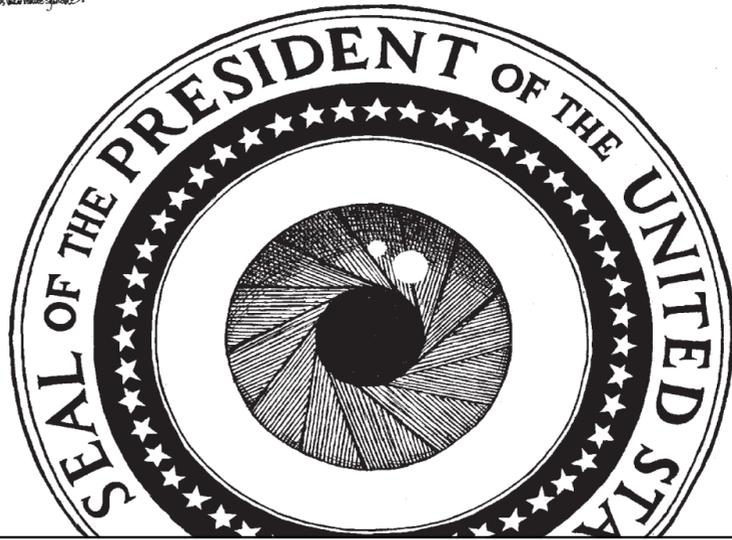
There are some lessons for the rest of the world in this incident.

Western Europe will want to be extra-cautious in negotiating future contracts with Russia, which supplies 25 percent of its natural gas. The European customers cannot allow an unreliable supplier to control their energy lifeline.

The United States should continue to insist that pipelines delivering oil and gas from the central Asian states not pass through Russian territory, where they would be subject to interruption.

As for the G-8, Russia's economy is far too small for membership standards and now it appears that Russia isn't much of a democracy either. The other seven might well wonder if their goodwill gesture isn't being thrown back in their face.

The Commercial Appeal
and the Tennessee Times



Art exhibit prompts viewer to examine life, technology

The International Arts and Crafts exhibit at the Indianapolis Museum of Art was slated to end shortly after New Year's. We had been planning to go since it opened in September; we had some free time, so off we went.

It was the best sort of museum experience. Not only did I enjoy the art, the exhibit made me think. I thought about cell phones, computers and economic development in Johnson County.

First, a bit of history. The Arts and Crafts movement started as a response to the Industrial Revolution. Although the new factories produced relatively inexpensive goods, many thinkers and artists of the 1800s were concerned with modern industry's dehumanizing effects on the factory workers and ultimately on society itself.

The writer John Ruskin along with the artist and architect William Morris felt that the goods mass-produced by machines were shoddy and "soulless" and lacked the human touch that only individual craftsmen could bring to a product. The division of labor that was necessary for efficient factory work turned the worker into a mere cog in the machine while robbing him of his individualism and creativity.

The two Englishmen along with other artists and thinkers felt that something human was being destroyed as English society changed from a rural society to an urban one.

In addition, they believed art should be a part of everyday life and should be reflected in every-



Norman Knight

day objects; objects made as they were in the past, from start to finish by individual craftsmen and women. (Female artists played a significant role in the movement both in England and later in the United States.)

Believers made attempts to put these ideas into practice, even starting their own communities. Unfortunately, items made by individuals are much more expensive than mass-produced items, so it turned out that only the well-to-do could afford to live by this ideal.

Later, American artists such as Frank Lloyd Wright tried to find a balance between mass-production and individual craftsmanship.

The IMA exhibit displays furniture, windows, pottery, kitchen items, weavings and entire building designs, all based on this philosophy of beauty and art in everyday life.

Looking at the objects, I was reminded how we today are still confronted by the conflict between the old ways and the new, as well as the tradeoff between the benefits and perils of technology.

I thought about cell phones and how we can communicate with

anyone at anytime. The downside is, now we are in touch with everyone all the time. We trade solitude for convenience, and yet, as connected as we are, we no longer need to converse with people face to face. We don't have to actually touch to be in touch.

Even talking to real people has become unnecessary. Because of computers, calling a business for information leads us through a labyrinth of choices until we get a digitized answer to our question or concern.

People, kids and adults spend more and more time living in the virtual world we have created. In that world, there is no need to deal with a store clerk or librarian.

There is no need to be in the same room, the same state or the same country with people to play games with them.

The concern those in the Arts and Crafts Movement had for the loss of the rural to the urban reminded me of the explosive growth of Johnson County. Residents want economic development and all that it brings, and at the same time they want the area to keep its quiet, rural feel. Finding the right balance is not easy, as history shows.

The exhibit at the IMA was definitely worth the trip. It runs until Jan. 22. If you want to see some interesting and thought-provoking art, you should check it out.

Norman Knight, a teacher at Clark-Pleasant Middle School, writes this weekly column for the Daily Journal. Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.

Good Cheer Fund's ongoing success due to public's generosity, volunteers

I have the privilege to again report on another successful Good Cheer Fund campaign during the 2005 Christmas season. Through the efforts and generosity of the citizens and organizations of Johnson County, we distributed 700 baskets of food to less fortunate individuals and families.

This year's campaign donations neared \$25,000. While this number is less than what has been provided in recent years, it continues to reflect the generosity of Johnson County businesses, organizations and residents, even in a year in which we have been asked to give so much.

With the assistance of the county's elementary and middle schools, we collected more than 38,000 canned items. The canned goods which could not go into the baskets were donated to the InterChurch Food Pantry of Johnson County in Whiteland.

There are many individuals, businesses and organizations who make all of this possible each year. Here are many of them to be thanked:

Thank you to Kenny Swint and the volunteers of the Johnson County Fraternal Order of Police. They were responsible for the assembly and distribution of 150 baskets in the Greenwood area.

Thank you to Allen Smith and the volunteers of the Edinburgh Fire and Rescue, who were again responsible for assembling and delivering 200 baskets in the Edinburgh area. Each year these volunteers do this in memory of Tom Coleman, who led the charitable efforts in Edinburgh for many years.

Thanks again to the Edinburgh Jay C Food Store, particularly Eric Hilton, Kevin Condra and the store employees for supplying the dry and perishable food items which are purchased to go into each basket. We appreciate your efficient service.

Thanks to Franklin Printing, Indoff and Dave Kahre and Associates P.C. for donating printed items, supplies and tax preparation services. Thanks also to the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service for providing 350 Good Cheer cookbooks.

Thank you to the employees of Davis Electric Inc. for picking up



Bob Heuchan

the food baskets from Center Grove schools; to the employees of Sprint who picked up the food baskets from Franklin schools; and to the many volunteers who assisted in picking up the food baskets from Clark-Pleasant, Nineveh-Hensley-Jackson and Greenwood schools.

Thanks to Juel Carman and the "grumpy" men who assisted him in picking up new baskets and delivering them to REMC.

Thanks to the Johnson County Office of Family and Children, Human Services and to the elementary and middle schools who assist each year in getting the applications into the hands of those who need them.

Each year volunteers from Leadership Johnson County assist the effort by taking food basket applications over the phone and then processing the names into the computer. We thank you for your valuable help. Thanks to Carol Cooney for recruiting the group's volunteers.

Thanks to these organizations who assisted in the assembly of 350 baskets at REMC: Franklin Lions Club, Franklin Community High School cheerleaders, Custer Baker Middle School students, Grace United Methodist Church Youth, Franklin Memorial Christian Church, Garden Church, Cub Scout Pack 226, Girl Scouts Troop 138, Johnson County Chapter of IU Alumni Association and REMC employees. Thanks also to the individuals and families who assisted.

There were several organizations who assisted in the delivery of baskets on Christmas Eve morning from the REMC to thank: Franklin Lions Club, Franklin Masonic Lodge No. 107, Indian Creek High School FFA, Franklin Memorial Christian Church and Johnson

County Young Farmers. Thanks also to all individuals and families who gave up their time to assist again this year.

A special thank you once again goes to Johnson County REMC for providing the use of their facility. It is greatly appreciated each year, especially so this year with the weather conditions we had to contend with. Thanks to REMC employees Steve Smith, Phil Carpenter, Ken Dickey, Gary Mann, Scott Mitchell and Doug Stahl for your help.

Another special thank you is due to the Daily Journal. Each year your support is critical in the success of the Good Cheer Fund.

Thanks to Daily Journal employee Amy Chandler, who processes the donations and keeps me informed of how the donations are coming in.

Yet another special thank you is due to the elementary and middle schools of Johnson County. Each year, the support and encouragement of the staff and students who donate the canned food items is also a critical component of the annual success of the Good Cheer Fund.

Eddy Teets, who chaired the Good Cheer Fund for 37 years, was again right in there with us getting the work done. Thanks, Eddy.

Finally, thank you to all of the individuals, businesses and organizations who donate time and money to the effort. It is not possible to list all of you, but congratulations on another successful effort in 2005. The Good Cheer Fund consists entirely of volunteers who, for the most part, live in Johnson County. As significant as the Good Cheer Fund effort is, it represents a part of a larger outpouring of time and dollars to assist those who are our neighbors and friends.

We see this throughout the year, but when we consider what takes place in Johnson County during the holiday season, we have to be impressed.

We are proud to have an opportunity to be a part of this each year.

Best wishes for a successful 2006!

Bob Heuchan is the Good Cheer Fund Coordinator. Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com

YOUR VIEWS

Missions to Poland seek to eliminate Catholicism

To the editor:

A recent article in the Daily Journal (Dec. 26) told of how a local young lady from Center Grove was home over the holidays on break from a "mission" trip in Poland.

This is not the first time I have read of local evangelicals and evangelical groups sending missionaries to Poland, and this gets my dander up as an American of Polish descent. Such mission trips demonstrate American Protestant arrogance and an ignorance of Polish culture and history.

Catholic missionaries brought the Gospel and Christianity to Poland in about 963 AD.

According to the CIA's Web site, Catholicism is the religion of more than 95 percent of Poles, and more than 75 percent of Poles actively practice their Catholic faith.

This is a much higher figure than most American denominations.

There are few countries more noted for its peoples' devotion to their faith than Polish Catholics. For centuries prior to World War I, Polish Catholics were strong in their faith even when their country was partitioned between Russia and Germany and they were persecuted by Lutherans and Orthodox.

Poles proved to be even stronger when persecuted by the atheistic Nazis and Communists during and after World War II. It was the Poles' indomitable Catholic faith that most historians agree played a primary role in the fall of the Soviet empire.

Sadly, these missionaries do not want to merely engage in a cross-cultural education experience, but to convert Catholic Poles to their brand of Christianity, i.e., evangelical and non-denominational Christianity, implying that Catholicism is an inferior form of Christianity, if not a pagan religion.

These missionaries are doing the Poles no favors by building their church and importing Western ideals and culture into Poland.

Into a community in which the Catholic church that has always been a unifying, stabilizing and moral influence they seek to introduce Protestantism and the factionalism and disunity that has always accompanied it.

They seek to introduce into Polish communities modern American culture that has produced materialism instead of spirituality, decadent lifestyles instead of traditional family values, and a culture of birth control and abortion instead of a culture of life.

These evangelicals have the right to be enthused about their religion and proselytize Hindus, Mormons, Muslims, Lutherans or Catholics.

However, I object to these individuals implying that they are doing something wonderful by building a church in a nation that was converted to Christ centuries ago by Catholic religious and lay persons who did so at risk to life and limb and among people who have maintained their faith through great adversities.

I think that their time and money would be better spent here in the United States trying to make it a more Christian nation.

Marv Wood
Greenwood

WRITE A LETTER

The Daily Journal invites readers to submit letters, opinion columns and e-mail comments for the opinion page.

GUIDELINES

- Letters published in the Daily Journal must contain the writer's name and city or town.
- Letters sent to the Daily Journal must be signed and must include a daytime telephone number for verification to be considered for publication.
- Letters should be kept as brief as possible.
- Make sure the e-mail letter includes the writer's name, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address for verification.
- Opinion columns for the community forum section of the editorial page also will be considered for publication. The article should be kept to a reasonable length and should include the writer's name, address and telephone number for verification.
- Because of space and legal considerations, the Daily Journal reserves the right to edit any letters or articles and to limit comments.

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