

# 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



## READERS RESPOND

Here are comments from people who responded to the question: Should the Greenwood City Council approve a ban on smoking in restaurants and other public places?

The council could take a final vote on the smoking ban today.

### Exception-free ban needed

I have been reading the articles about banning smoking. What I don't agree with is where Greenwood stated that they might give an exception to a lodge in Greenwood.

Why?  
What is good for one business or restaurant is good for them all. No exceptions should be made on the ban.

Randy Hicks  
Franklin

### It's time Greenwood joined list of smoke-free cities

Columbus just went smoke-free on Feb. 1. It's great! I would love to see Greenwood join us.

Peggy Voelz  
Coordinator of Tobacco  
Prevention Programs for  
Bartholomew County

### Smoking ban good for health of restaurant staff

Second-hand smoke has and continues to cause untold illness and misery for area residents and workers. Often the comment is made that people have the right to work other places if the smoke bothers them. Unfortunately many of the women and men who work in restaurants particularly do not have a choice where they work.

Most are minimum wage jobs, and many of the workers are single mothers who must and do live from week to week trying to support children without other support systems.

If they do have health problems from the smoky environment, many do not have insurance or the resources to deal with their health issues. They cannot give up a job that pays the bills and keeps them and their children off the street until

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and if something else comes along. The constant lament that people can choose where they work is a moot point when they have no other options.

K. Jane Adcock  
Greenwood

### Family-friendly dining nice

I believe when you go to a restaurant you can go one hour without smoking. If you really need to smoke you can excuse yourself and step outside for two minutes.

But I do believe that there is some preconceived knowledge that when you go out to a bar or night club you are going to go home smelling like one. I have a family with children who have allergies to smoke. I would love to family dine without that worry. When my husband and I go out to clubs I expect it, but I am not subjecting my children to that atmosphere.

Kim Montgomery  
Greenwood

### Eateries don't fall into 'public places' category

Please refrain from lumping "restaurants" into "public places." There is a difference.

Restaurants are private businesses and as such have the right to refuse service to anyone at any time, for any or no reason. They also have the right to determine the rules of the establishment.

The current method of misdirection is to term any facility to which a member of the public may have access as a public space. In truth, public spaces are those owned by the public.

The public should vote with their wallets and not frequent those pri-

vate establishments of whose practices they disapprove. Until and unless the public owns a facility, they have no other right of determination.

Legita Wilson  
Franklin

### One vote against ban

No. It's a little ridiculous.

Erin M. Spears  
Franklin

### Second-hand smoking hurts individual citizens

I believe Greenwood should become smoke-free because many people, including local citizens, can get lung cancer and become sick and they don't even smoke.

We, the citizens, are victims of second-hand smoking, and we citizens can't do anything about it. Either the smokers have to limit themselves or our government, which I am glad is acting on this, must stop the smoking.

Chris Elworth  
Greenwood

### Ignorance, apathy great reasons for smoking ban

A little while back, a few days or weeks ago, me and my neighbor went out to eat at Golden Corral. My truck has a camper shell.

On the side windows it reads, "Absolutely no smoking around truck." I had put those words on there because I was carrying my mower on the truck with the gas cans. I have vents on my camper shell to let the gas fumes out from the gas cans.

The truck was empty at the time me and my neighbor went to eat at Golden Corral. When we came back out, I noticed some idiot stuck a whole cigarette inside the driver's door handle. I had the neighbor look at it. He took the cigarette and threw it on the ground on the other side.

For this reason, I think the Greenwood City Council should approve the smoking ban in restaurants and other public places. My vote is "yes" for the smoking ban.

Richard L. Price  
Indianapolis

## Hearts and Darts

The Daily Journal

**EDITOR'S NOTE** — *Hearts and Darts* is published as space is available and each Monday in the *Daily Journal*.

To submit an item, please call Editorial Assistant Kelly Boggs at 736-2712. Items can also be submitted by e-mail to [kboggs@thejournalnet.com](mailto:kboggs@thejournalnet.com), by fax to 736-2766, or by mail to *Hearts and Darts*, P.O. Box 699, Franklin, IN 46131.

Items should include the writer's full name, street address and telephone number and the full names of all people mentioned in the item. Readers are asked to name no more than 10 individuals and/or five businesses per item.

### Hearts

• Special thanks to Franklin Tractor Supply from Humane Society of Johnson County for the use of its building for the weekly pet adoptions from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursdays. Your generosity has helped many deserving pets find loving homes.

Sherri Ellett, volunteer  
Trafalgar

• Hearts to the Board of Trustees at Franklin College for recently voting to name the annual trustees' golf tournament in honor of our father, Dr. Hugh K. Andrews.

This tournament benefits the athletic program at Franklin College, of which Dad has had ties for many years. It also combines two of his greatest passions: Franklin College and the game of golf. To honor him in this way means more to us than you know. Thank you.

The families of Doug Andrews, Thom Andrews and Lynette Andrews

• Hearts to the man in the dark Chevy truck that pulled my silver car out of the ditch on Nineveh Road on the afternoon of Feb. 11. May the Lord bless you for your kindness.

Brent Roberts  
Nineveh

• Hearts to Mr. Phil Brauchla, district manager of the Flying J in Whiteland, and his wife.

Thanks to his wife reading the *Hearts and Darts* a few weeks ago, she told her husband that he had better do something about my unfortunate incident that happened with the credit card machine. He went above and beyond by refunding all the money I lost.

Thank you so much for restoring my faith in humanity.

Amanda Barnhart  
Franklin

• Red, white and blue hearts to the following Needham Elementary School fifth-graders for taking the challenge and memorizing the Gettysburg Address — all 271 words. Way to go Anna Brailow, Nicole Hartman, Bethany Henderson, Joel Park, Alexa Reno, Ariel Russell, Evan Sherar, Morgan Steagall, Paul Taylor, Sam Wolf and Mallory West. Hope you enjoy the Presidential Luncheon. We are proud of you.

Jayne Yount, Joyce Shook and Connie Brinson  
Fifth-grade teachers

• Two big hearts to two local businesses that went way out of their way at a very difficult time for our family: Hearts to Bud & Bloom for the beautiful flowers and for your honesty. You have a customer for life. Hearts to Frechette Eye Associates for being so helpful and caring during our time of loss.

Both of these local businesses went way above the call of duty to help us when we needed it the most, and we thank you from our hearts.

Jeff and Barb Wilson  
Vicky and Tim Horton  
Franklin

### Darts

• Darts to the highway department for the way that they have taken care of the roads this very mild winter. On the afternoon of Feb. 11, Nineveh Road between State Road 252 and Nineveh was nothing but a parking lot. There were at least 20 cars in the ditch at one time. I don't know the reason for the poor road conditions, but we need to get it figured out.

Brent Roberts  
Nineveh

• Darts to those drivers who speed north and south along Graham Street in Franklin. The speed limit is 30 mph, not 40 mph or 50 mph. This is a residential area, not a highway. There are children who live in this neighborhood.

If there are any Franklin city police officers who need to submit more speeding tickets, may I suggest that you target Graham Street.

Jennifer Lovins  
Franklin

• Darts to the Northwood Elementary school parent who drives a red/maroon Trailblazer erratically and irresponsibly each morning to drop her child off for school. Each morning, this parent drives south on Graham Street and turns west onto Oliver Avenue. I have had the unpleasant experience of being both in front of and behind this driver.

When you are in front of this driver, she is at your bumper. When you are behind this driver, she is driving 10 to 15 miles above the speed limit.

On Feb. 16, she was stopped by the red light at the west end of Oliver Street. While the light was still red, she entered the intersection to cross Main Street and continue westbound on Clark Street, which takes you into the school parking lot.

Do you think she slows down in the school zone? Not only is she putting her children in danger with her poor behavior, she is endangering my children, other Northwood students and other drivers.

She continues this poor driving after leaving the school and driving north on Main Street.

Maybe you should leave home 10 minutes early and slow down. Maybe next time I will use my mobile phone to report you and your license plate.

Jennifer Lovins  
Franklin

## Talk about road to ruin: America's infrastructure crumbling quickly

If there is one thing that unites Americans, besides a reluctance to hunt with Dick Cheney, it's frustration over the nation's worsening traffic congestion.

Everywhere you go, people want to know how long it took you to get there.

That is followed by the inevitable sigh, a commiserating nod of the head and, "That's bad, but that's nothing compared with what I went through. Let me tell you ...."

A peek into President Bush's proposed budget will not reassure you that the situation will improve. He wants to cut spending by the Department of Transportation.

The nation's infrastructure is crumbling, but outmoded highways and bridges are not slated for dramatic repairs or rebuilding. Mass transit simply is not on the White House radar screen.

The budget for Amtrak whacks \$394 million out of rail spending and would wipe out a loan program aimed at fixing deteriorating rails.

Yes, yes, powerful legislators always manage to pork up the budget with their own "earmarks" and highway projects, such as the infamous \$450 million "bridges to nowhere" for which Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, lobbied ferociously. (After the uproar, Congress decided the state still gets the money, but now with the option on how to spend it.)

But there is no overall plan to overhaul the nation's transportation system for the future, as other nations are doing. As previous administrations did, the Bush administration often kills or promotes projects willy-nilly, based more on political favors than on whether the project makes sense.

Some economists already predict that without a major investment in transportation and infrastructure needs, the nation's economic growth will be stifled.

Some big truckers are all but



Ann  
McFeatters

screaming for an increase in the gasoline tax in an effort to improve pockmarked highways. Even from such an unlikely source, that plea falls on deaf ears.

We're going to reach the point where we will have to take express toll roads to get anywhere, and they will cost so much that only the rich will be able to afford them.

Many transportation experts are begging for a plan that connects various modes of transportation into a network that is a seamless web of mass transit highways, rail and waterways that would actually reduce the nation's "addiction to oil." But at the White House, there seems to be no interest.

Ditto for improving energy efficiency. Adjusting for inflation, the proposed budget not only doesn't increase spending and research in that field but cuts it by at least \$130 million.

The president has proposed to spend an additional \$7 million to find a better battery for the hybrid car. But environmental groups point out that even this is basically trading one form of fuel for another — the battery still has to be plugged in at night and the electric power plant has to be powered. And it won't reduce congestion. (Do you get an image of a Rube Goldberg network of crisscrossing highways clogged with strange-looking battery-powered cars slowly churning up and down?)

You would think that with all this nation's wasteful plastic

packaging derived from oil (just opening a plastic-wrapped item can be another source of knuckle-whitening frustration) the White House would campaign to reduce it. But, no, the president looks us squarely in the eye and says nothing about plastic. He does say, solemnly: "Hydrogen."

Somewhat, as with ethanol, we're supposed to believe that hydrogen will save us. But not by 2025, when he promises we can be well on our way to ending our addiction to oil.

A new study of the Washington area concluded that congestion is so bad around the nation's capital that drivers on mile-a-minute highways are lucky to make five miles an hour.

The transportation-planning director for the area warned that traffic has outpaced transportation capacity and that quick fixes of five years ago are badly inadequate.

Officials at the Transportation Department, the agency getting shafted in the president's proposed \$2.77 trillion budget, say that complaints of congestion even in non-major-metropolitan areas are rising alarmingly. Lost productivity is becoming a serious concern. Frazzled nerves are taking their toll on health-care costs.

But the president doesn't see it. Everywhere he goes, police clear the roads for his motorcade. He never stops at a red light. No 5-mile-an-hour road trips for him.

Memo to anybody interested in running for president in 2008: Drive yourself around for a few months, feel our pain and then come up with a transportation plan to get this country back on track, headed in the right direction and home in time for dinner.

Ann McFeatters is Washington bureau chief of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and the Toledo Blade. Send comments to [letters@thejournalnet.com](mailto:letters@thejournalnet.com).



Sherri  
Eastburn

## Darkness illuminates truth about husband

Contrary to what some people might say about me, I don't intentionally look for trouble. Frankly, I hate conflict and crisis.

I'm very interested these days in singing my way through life, smelling the roses, hugging my neighbors, kissing babies, that kind of thing.

All those years of fighting my way through obstacles, well, I ended those with a yawn a month ago, when I tied the knot with my very mellow Plowboy.

And so, let me tell you about last night when I innocently became a victim of my worst fear in the world.

I was sitting in my cozy little office, writing my head off as usual when, bam, the lights went out.

By the way, a power outage happens to be much, much darker on a farm than in an apartment. I couldn't even see my hand in front of my face. And Sophie, for some reason, darted off my lap and into the blackness.

Thank goodness Plowboy was in the kitchen.

While he stumbled his way around the utility room to find the giant flashlight, I whined incessantly until he showed up in my office for rescue.

"What happened to the lights?" I asked.

"Don't know," Plowboy said. "But I need to go to the barn and check on the pigs."

Well, there I was, in my sexy pink flannel and pig house shoes, suddenly Velcroed to the farmer's belt loop.

"No way," I said between teeth chatters.

"I need to check on the pigs," Plowboy said again. "You'll be OK in here."

"Are you kidding me?" I hissed. "This is my very worst moment. I'm in the dark, total dark, in a farmhouse. There are no streetlights along the road."

While I trailed along beside him, with his left elbow in my grip, Plowboy rummaged through the closet until he found a dusty kerosene lamp.

He lit it, placed it in the middle of the kitchen table and said again, "You'll be OK."

Maybe he thought the lamp gave the room a romantic glow. For me, however, it was a beacon for demons.

"It's too dark for you to see me, but I've definitely got a facial tic," I said.

"Come on, you can go to the barn with me," Plowboy sighed. Then he barely waited for me to take off my pig house shoes and replace them with old work boots.

In pouring rain, in pitch black dark, we trudged to the hog barn. It was the perfect setting for one of those really scary movies where ghosts and monsters grab people. I shivered and wished I weren't so darn fat. If I was a 90-pound pixie, I would have latched on to Plowboy's back and hid my face in his shirt.

Unfortunately, not only was the hog barn dark, the air was punctuated by pig squeals.

"What's wrong with them?" I whispered.

"Oh, somebody's bein' stepped on, I imagine," Plowboy said.

I covered my ears and hummed, in an effort to drown out the picture in my mind, of little baby pigs being squished in the dark.

A few minutes later, a generator provided faint light in the barn, enough light for me to courageously make my way in the direction of the squeals. I found two little pink buggers, wedged between the stall and their mama's big old butt.

I leaned down, saved them from disaster and returned quickly to where Plowboy stood, calmly thinking about what to do until the power was restored.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "I'm dying to pee," I said. "But don't worry. Just keep thinking about the pigs. Don't let my bladder bother you."

Well, I don't have to tell you, my kidneys were never Plowboy's concern.

While he dialed phone numbers, he did offer me the flashlight. He suggested that I take a quick squat, outside, in the dark, in pelting rain, around all the coyotes and poltergeists. I decided it was impossible to pee, hold a flashlight and hyperventilate at the same time.

When the lights were restored, I realized the farmer's priorities. In fact, Plowboy's sweet young niece explained the situation best. "Hogs before honeys," Gretchen said with a giggle.

Feature writer Sherri Eastburn writes this weekly humor column for the *Daily Journal*. Send comments to [letters@thejournalnet.com](mailto:letters@thejournalnet.com).