

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

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 e-mail Editorial Assistant Kelly Boggs at kboggs@thejournalnet.com. Items can also be submitted by fax to 736-2766, by phone to 736-2712 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 in hearts and to not name specific individuals in darts.

Hearts

• Hearts and more hearts to Jimmy Risch, who cleaned our driveways for us. It is so good to have good neighbors who go the extra mile.

Thanks again, Jimmy.

Wanda Long and the Sappenfields
Franklin

• The Greenwood Street Department got the streets cleaned out in good time from the storm Feb. 6. Furthermore, when I called to ask if they could move some of the excess snow so the postal carrier could deliver, they were here within an hour. Thanks, and well done.

Ralph Hill
Greenwood

• Hearts to Alicia Denney and Mariah Picklesheimer for helping the residents of Morning Pointe Assisted Living make Valentine cards. Our world needs more young people like you.

Sally Hood, LPN, and Jean Todd, administrative assistant, Morning Pointe Assisted Living

• Hearts to Wanda Long for her donation of beautiful baby blankets and bibs and to Naoma Hicks for her contribution of lovely baby quilts for door prizes for the "Ready or Not, Here I Come!" prenatal program sponsored by Partnership for a Healthier Johnson County.

Thanks also go to Care Net Pregnancy Center for donating gifts for the prize bag each mother-to-be receives at the program. Johnson County mothers-to-be can register for Thursday's Ready or Not Program by calling 346-3728.

Cathy Bailey
Partnership for a Healthier Johnson County

• Multiple hearts to Elwood Neff for clearing your neighbors' driveways.

It is greatly appreciated.

Your Ramsey Addition neighbors

• Major hearts to the Edinburgh Street Department and its superintendent, Arvis Sneed, for keeping the streets clean and safe from the snow, sleet, and ice that came down Feb. 12 and Feb. 13. Great job, guys!

Gene Redding
Edinburgh

• Hearts to Franklin Community High School pep band, the student musicians and director. You are a great added attraction to a sporting event, making the evening doubly enjoyable. Your spirited music before, during and after basketball games is greatly appreciated.

Pat and Ed Zehr
Franklin

• Big hearts and blessings to the woman who sat with me at the breast cancer center. You have been in my thoughts and prayers. May God bless you.

Kim Mikels
Franklin

• The men and women of the city of Franklin Street Department would like to send a huge thank you to some of our local people whose thoughtfulness during this snow emergency made our jobs a lot easier.

Thank you to Donato's Pizza, Mr. Bobby Cheek and Mr. and Mrs. Joe Ault, all of Franklin. The hot pizzas and sandwiches and drinks made the long hours of plowing a considerable amount easier. It's thoughtful people like you that make the job seem more worth the effort.

Thank you and may God bless.

City of Franklin Street Department

• I'm sending warm hearts to the gentleman with the black Ford F250 Lariat who pulled our blue Thunderbird out of the entry to Chase Bank's parking lot. We appreciated your kindness and willingness to help, even though you didn't know us. We owe you a hot chocolate.

Jackie Tirey and Jose Batista
Greenwood

• Big Valentine's hearts to the staff and waitresses at the White Castle at Sheek Road and Main Street in Greenwood. Your Valentine's Day promotion Sweetheart Dinner was a memorable experience for me and my family. Our waitresses performed first class service from the time we walked through the door.

The Brenda Maulden Family
Morgantown

Dart

• Darts to Franklin Community School Corp. Superintendent William Patterson for being so squeamish about two-hour delays. Why is it that Mr. Patterson is so reluctant to give students a two-hour delay when the temperature is near zero? Sure he's a new superintendent, but he should know the job by now.

Just use common sense and do what the other school districts are doing, for heaven's sake. And why the incessant delays in making the decision? We all know what the temperature is going to be. Parents shouldn't have to wait all night or get up at the crack of dawn to find out whether this man has made a decision. Decide already!

Clarice Ramos
Franklin



YOUR

VIEWS & COMMENTARY

American troops crucial to bringing about peace

To the editor:

I disagree with Dan K. Thomas's column about those dying in the Iraq war (Daily Journal, Feb. 13). The 48-year-old soldier he refers to unfortunately was killed in action while serving in Iraq.

I agree that it is a tremendous loss when any soldier is killed. I take exception with the attitude of that soldier serving in Iraq. Obviously this man, this soldier, felt no less commitment to his country than that of a younger man or a man without children.

I am a 40-year-old man, married with children, college graduate and enlisted man. I re-enlisted in the military, the National Guard to be exact, almost two years ago because I felt a strong sense of duty to my country, stronger than many, including you.

If or when I am called to go overseas, I will not whine about being too old to go or use my family as an excuse to not fulfill my oath.

It is impossible to think we could have a Guard or Reserve that consists only of single men without children. That is why it is considered a sacrifice that these men and women make and just one example of how they demonstrate strength of character that many cannot understand in this age of egocentrism.

The tone you have in your column toward the National Guard I personally take exception to. When I took my oath, it said nothing about just being a "weekend warrior," which I am sure you meant with total respect.

Why shouldn't the Guard and Reserve be counted on to step in when they are needed? The Guard was counted on during World Wars I and II and should not be any less counted on today.

Trust me, the soldiers in the Guard and Reserve are fully aware of what wearing the uniform might entail. These men and women are smarter than you give them credit for and are able to think for themselves.



WRITE A

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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

WHERE TO SEND THE LETTER

Mail Letters to the editor The Daily Journal P. O. Box 699 Franklin, IN 46131	E-mail letters@thejournalnet.com Drop-off 2575 N. Morton St. (U.S. 31) Franklin	Fax 736-2766
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I feel that they are of a different school of thought that you cannot relate with, not quite as high brow. I meet people at Camp Atterbury who are in their late 30s and 40s and have volunteered to join units that are being activated and deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan that have open slots.

Personally, I am moved by their sense of duty, dedication and sense of service to their country, not as victims as you infer.

My grandfather was called to duty during World War II, and he was a married man in his late 30s with two children. I never heard him complain about answering the call to duty, even though he did not volunteer. I think if you looked a little closer you would find that, yes, older married men with children did serve their country and were in harm's way.

Are enlistment rates dropping drastically in the Guard and Reserve because of the casualties in Iraq? Personally, I do not see a dilemma except the folks who are trying to pile on the anti-war bandwagon.

It is a free country and a volunteer military. Where is the wrong being committed that you feel exists? Don't worry; I am sure you won't be asked to serve. Remember, it was Democrats like Charles Rangel of New York who were trying to reinstate the draft, which I am adamantly opposed to.

The real problem in Iraq that you and others are ignoring is that we are not dealing with just Iraqi insurgents, but there is an invisible hand behind the insurgency that probably points to Iran and Syria.

The anti-war and anti-Bush crowd is ignoring this and obscuring it. The bloodshed will continue until the real problem is addressed.

By the way, Audie Murphy, whom you refer to, was rejected by other branches before being accepted by the Guard.

James Preddy
Greenwood

Don't blame cable company for bad product

To the editor:

A letter from Neil Richards (Daily Journal, Jan. 22) described problems with ordering a service from a network.

If you saw an ad for a piano at \$12.95 for one year as a trial — you just pay shipping and \$12.95 for a one-year trial — would you blame the trucking company for charging you \$385 to get it to you from the point of origin, New York?

It appears that is exactly what your letter is attempting to do to the cable company.

It appears, by your letter, that you ordered this service from a network, such as ABC, CBS, NBC, WE, Disney, etc. Why are you blaming the cable carrier? They are not owned by or own the networks and have no control over them.

Your letter also stated you ordered a two-week supply, you went to their Web site for a return policy, and it showed a 25 percent restocking charge. Return what? A digital signal?

It appears to me another case of blame someone else for our own mistakes. Now where is the integrity?

If you truly do have land in South America, you might want to move there. I'm sure you will find less confusion there.

Terry Surface
Franklin

Paying attention key to avoiding accidents

To the editor:

I hope this helps someone. I have lived in Bargersville for 13 years, and I haven't even come close to getting hit by a train. I have noticed that people are not even looking up the tracks to see if a train is coming and just assuming there isn't one.

I am a truck driver and therefore a professional driver who is trained to be alert and safety conscious. Most people are just too distracted when they drive.

I have seen drivers stop their vehicles directly on the tracks with a vehicle in front and behind of them. If a train were to come, they would have nowhere to go.

I don't think we need more lights and signs and arms and gates, which are more distractions.

We need to pay attention to our driving.

Robert Wallace Jr.
Bargersville

Lawmakers ignoring opinions on tollway

To the editor:

I can't believe that our political representatives aren't listening to what their voters want.

To State Sens. Richard Bray and Mike Young, let's see how you fare in the next election. To the others, scream a little louder.

My property will not be affected by the expressway, but it's not fair to the ones it will affect. They have had meeting after meeting, and the only ones for it are companies that stand to profit from it or people who can't figure out how to pay for Interstate 69. Why should property owners in Johnson (and other) counties pay for I-69?

I thought our lawmakers were to be our voice in government.

Who are they speaking for now?
Martha McIntosh
Morgantown

Where is candidate who won't exploit fears?

Last month, while I was conducting interviews for a book project, a monk shared a memory from Sept. 11.

In the days following that tragedy, he had heard that a wealthy Muslim had offered New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani \$10 million to assist the survivors. With the offer, the man advised the United States to re-evaluate the way it treated Third-World countries. Giuliani, according to the monk, refused the money.

Readers will decide for themselves what they think about the mayor's response to the Muslim's offer. I suspect that the story, if accurate, might be helpful in Giuliani's presidential campaign. The story could bolster the view that he's a strong candidate, one not afraid to stand up to America's detractors, one not afraid to remind the first, second and third worlds that there is no more generous nation than the United States.

Sadly, this distorted sense of strength already seems to be a major theme in the 2008 presidential campaign. Not long after the bipartisan Iraq Study Group shared its sobering message and advised the Bush administration to swallow its pride and admit that we need the help of Iraq's neighbors to deal with that chaos, Sen. John McCain flew to Iraq. He returned with a totally different recommendation: more troops, more American muscle. We will solve this problem on our own. We don't need anyone's help.

With that stance, McCain has done his best to guarantee that the next election will be about Iraq and the dream of winning.



David
Carlson

And he seems to have succeeded. As soon as candidates establish their "exploratory committees," they seem to offer a quick "God bless America" and hop a jet for Iraq to assess that mess for themselves.

To temper this theme of strength, some candidates have talked to us from the comfort of living room couches or behind podiums without their ties on, declaring that they intend to have a genuine conversation with the American people in the months ahead.

Of course it's easy to be cynical. We all know that there is an image controller off-camera who cues the candidate as to when to smile and when to look concerned. But I do hope that a true debate lies ahead of us.

I can't imagine any election in my lifetime more important than this one. All across the country, on both the right and the left, there's a deep and growing concern that the stature of the United States in the world has seriously declined. The big question in this election is what to do about this reality.

On the one hand, there are the candidates who will run on a platform of the United States staying in Iraq until victory is

achieved. More troops, more American muscle.

Other candidates, more attuned to the polls, will run on a platform of promising an entirely new strategy for Iraq and the Middle East in general. Some of these have already proposed withdrawal of our troops, but few have explained how Iraq on its own could survive such a move.

I am on the lookout for a different kind of candidate, one who will address the difficult journey that our country has taken in the past six years.

After Sept. 11, we looked out at the world and found ourselves suddenly very frightened, so frightened that we began to talk openly about nations that needed "regime change." Imagine how we'd react if we read that China, Russia or even Venezuela had such a list. No one questioned that the United States had a right to fight terror, but the way we chose to do it has terrified the world, including our neighbors and our friends.

With Iraq, we ignored the advice of close allies and glibly insulted any who warned of the dangers of our approach. Now we're paying for that hubris. In the months ahead, Great Britain, our last great ally in Iraq, will pull out its troops, leaving us to bleed there on our own.

And our problems in the world are not confined to Iraq. In declaring Iran part of some axis of evil, we terrified the Iranian people and guaranteed that moderate forces in that country wouldn't have a chance in the next election. Now we have Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to deal with.

There have been other missteps along the way. Our uncritical support of Israel's relentless bombardment of Lebanon last summer in an attempt to destroy Hezbollah has been appraised as another major blunder.

Official statements by many African nations suggest that they expect China, not the United States, to play the major role in their future.

Looking at the big picture, we have to conclude that history in the past few years has slapped us down.

More isolated in the world than ever, we have only become more fearful as a people. The danger is that we're now even more susceptible to candidates who promise a glorious return of American dominance.

I'm looking for a different kind of candidate, one who won't pander to our fears. I'm looking for a candidate who is willing to admit that we need the counsel of other nations, even critical nations.

I'm looking for a candidate who doesn't simply fly from Washington to Baghdad and back but stops in Amman and even risks going to Tehran, a candidate who travels to Jerusalem but also stays for more than a photo op in Gaza City.

Finally, I'm looking for a candidate who doesn't simply pray for God to bless America, but for God to bless the entire world.

I'm still looking.

David Carlson is a professor of philosophy and religion at Franklin College. Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.