

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

Three county nonprofit organizations have been victims of theft in recent months.

OUR POINT

Groups must take care when handling and tracking money to prevent theft and reduce the temptation to take funds.

Nonprofit groups can take steps to stop theft

The Daily Journal

Nonprofit organizations often rely heavily on volunteers to keep expenses down.

In some cases, there is no professional staff at all. Unpaid personnel handle everything, including operating programs and managing money.

There is a high degree of trust in the way these groups are run.

In the past year in the county, there have been three public instances where that trust apparently was misplaced, and money was taken from the organizations.

At Greenwood United Methodist Church in June, it was discovered that about \$600,000 was stolen or spent inappropriately.

Later in the year, the treasurer for a parent-teacher organization pleaded guilty to taking \$40,000 from the group.

Then in January, officials at Grace United Methodist Church in Franklin determined that about \$100,000 had been stolen over a period of several years.

In each case, the thefts went unnoticed for a significant period because no one beside the person involved in the thefts was tracking income and expenditures. These people apparently were able to exploit the faith placed in them.

When the Rev. Bob Coleman, senior pastor at Grace, addressed a congregational meeting, he told church members that the church was partly at fault for placing a person in a tempting position and not having a rigorous financial tracking system in place.

He said that from now on, two people would oversee each step in the financial process so no one could ever be falsely accused of mishandling money.

At a Center Grove PTO, money goes through a cashier, committee chair, treasurer, vice president and president and then before the whole board during collection and spending.

When money is to be spent, the treasurer writes and signs the check. But before it can be used, the president or vice president must also sign the check. If the amount is more than \$100, the treasurer must go before the organization's board to ask to spend the money.

The final step is that the treasurer must present the bank statements and written checks to the board at monthly meetings for approval.

A comparably rigorous procedure is needed for every nonprofit group.

To help these groups, we suggest there be a workshop on money management for nonprofit organizations. It could be coordinated by the Johnson County Community Foundation, Franklin College or even Leadership Johnson County. The Center on Philanthropy at IUPUI might be able to offer assistance.

Such a workshop would need to be repeated every four or five years as the turnover in many groups can be significant.

While volunteers have a responsibility to an organization, organizations also have a responsibility to those who offer to help.

Focus: Iraq

Bush facing final chance to show war progress

Scrrips Howard News Service

The 16 U.S. intelligence agencies have weighed in with their collective judgment on events in Iraq, and their findings, which should come as no surprise to anyone who keeps up with the news, are: The situation is bad and getting worse.

A declassified version of their National Intelligence Estimate became public last week, and its pessimism seems to have silenced even that dwindling cadre of Bush cheerleaders who insist the war would be going well if only the news media reported it that way.

However, the report did come close to laying out a timetable, saying the Iraqi government would be "hard-pressed" to bring about political reconciliation and have its police and army provide appreciably better security in the next year to 18 months — about the maximum length of time the American public would tolerate.

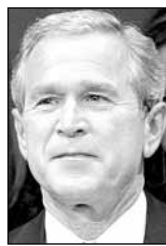
The Bush administration, obviously, would like to see progress much sooner. Indeed, said White House spokesman Tony Snow, "What we have said is that people are going to need to see progress. I won't give you an absolute timetable, but obviously the next six to eight months are going to be times when people expect to see something happening."

To achieve some sort of demonstrable progress in Baghdad, the White House is counting on its 21,500 "surge" in troop numbers combined with new strategies for deployment, engagement and economic development.

Probably most members of Congress agree, publicly or privately, with House Armed Services Committee Chairman Ike Skelton, D-Mo., who called this President Bush's "last roll of the dice."

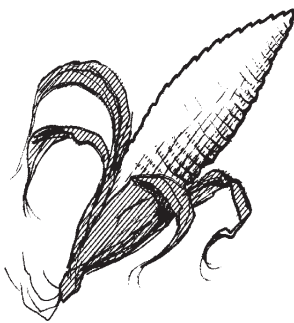
A year from now, the presidential primaries and caucuses will be under way, and by then, Snow was asked, "Is Iraq going to look a lot different than it does today?"

"Sure hope so," he said. So do we all.

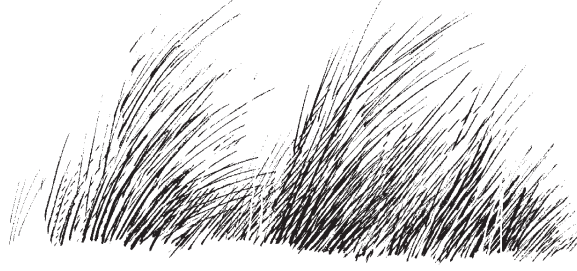


BUSH

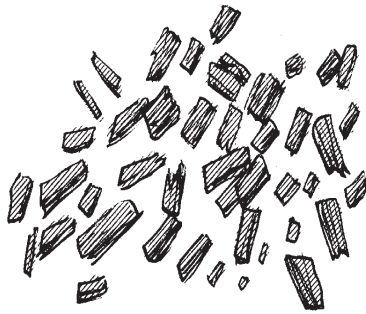
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GLOBAL WARMING REPORTS

Chill out; Indiana's wintry weather is going to stay awhile

Brr. A cold front from Canada has parked itself over central Indiana, put several coins in the meter and made plans to stay awhile.

Cold. Just the very word gives us shivers. It's an old word, "cold," and like many of our most basic words about life and day-to-day living, it comes from the Anglo-Saxon (ceald) spoken in merrie olde England back in the day.

During this recent cold snap, most of us use the word in the meteorological sense of "low temperature; lacking heat."

This time of year we are also aware of it as a noun coupled with the word "common," meaning a medical condition that we try to avoid by washing our hands and sneezing into the pits of our elbows.

If we catch one, we often pronounce it "code" as in, "I have a code in my doze."

"Cold," along with its partner "hot," is a word pair that we use to show opposites.

Like "black and white," or "night and day," we think of "hot and cold" as belonging together and balancing each other. And as the Chinese sage Lao Tzu noted in the Tao Te Ching centuries ago, "We know beauty only because there is ugliness ... front and back follow one another." An opposite, he is saying, doesn't really exist without its other.

Well, I can accept the true oneness of the opposites, but I still get annoyed when I try to use



Norman Knight

a sink and the cold-water tap is on the left instead of the right. Don't you?

Although they are both one-syllable words, "hot" pops quickly out of your mouth, glowing and ready for action. The word "cold," however, takes a while to get up and out of your throat, as if the word itself is sluggish and slow, like oil in an overnight engine.

We have several synonyms for the word — frigid, icy, arctic, and so on — that can be useful at times, but in the end the word "cold" usually gets the point across as well as any.

I suppose because it is such a basic part of our experience, it has figured into our language in many ways.

The word "cold" may have positive connotations. We use cold cream as a beauty aid and cold packs for medicinal purposes, although I'm not sure it would do much good to use one for a cold sore.

But mostly "cold" is connected to something unpleasant and very often with negative personality traits.

A person who acts without emotion or enthusiasm, for example, is behaving in a cold manner. That same person might snub you at a party by giving you the cold shoulder.

We baby boomers were born, grew up and lived through the anxiety-ridden period known as the Cold War.

That was the era of spies and spy novels where an enemy agent might be cold-blooded enough to use cold steel to knock his victim out cold. After a while, if the authorities had trouble solving the crime, it might become a cold case.

Eventually, the secret agent might weary of his double life, give up his assignment and come in from the cold.

Although these past several days I have been wearing extra socks around the house, I don't usually have cold feet when it comes to trying something adventurous.

I drew the line, though, when I was offered cold cuts at a recent party. I became a vegetarian several years ago, going without meat cold turkey.

I didn't want to appear cold-hearted to the host, but I respectfully declined the food. I was afraid she would be upset, but she understood.

"That's cool," she said.

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

Think being a professional football coach is demanding? Try being a dad

While leading the Colts on their thrilling drive to the Super Bowl, a memory about parking at the stadium inspires Coach Tony Dungy to encourage dads to get off the sidelines and into the game with their children.

Dungy had a close relationship with his father. They shared a mutual love for football and looked forward to attending local games together. As he grew older, the son realized that Dad had more in mind than just enjoying a football game.

"He'd take me to ballgames, and we'd park a long ways away from the stadium," the Colts coach recalled. "I thought it was because he didn't want to pay the amount of money to park close. But we'd walk for 20 minutes (to get to the arena), and you'd be surprised how many things you talk about over the course of that time instead of parking next to the stadium and walking right in."

"As I got older, I realized he had enough money to pay for those closer parking spots, but (parking farther away) was a conscious thing that he wanted to do. Now I find myself trying to do things like that so I can spend a little more time with my kids as well."

NFL coaches are known for being hermits, turning their training facilities into bunkers as they prepare for the next opponent, sleeping on cots in their offices, emerging only on game day before the whole secluded process starts again.

But not Dungy. "I try to block out some time (for my children) when I know I can," Dungy said. "During the



Bill Stanczykiewicz
GUEST COLUMNIST

season, it's tough, especially early in the week when we do work late hours. But I drive a couple of my kids to school every day. I made that commitment that I'm not coming in until after school starts in the morning.

"And then Friday afternoons are a time that we always have off during the season. So I block that out and not let anything encroach on that."

Dungy's efforts to balance work and family are exemplary. If an NFL coach can find time to be with his kids, so can the rest of us. And it's important to note that finding flexibility in his NFL schedule has not prevented Dungy from being successful in his profession. While devoting significant time to his children, Dungy has become one of the winningest coaches in all of pro sports over the past decade, capped by this year's run to the Super Bowl.

The coach now has drawn up a specific play to help dads be involved with their families. Based on an activity that started at Cathedral High School, Dungy is encouraging fathers to start "All Pro Dad" days in their local schools. These monthly events bring dads together with their children for breakfast before the

start of the school day.

"It's a time to spend some time with your kids and talk about things on their minds," Dungy said. "Subjects come up that you wouldn't think of broaching with your kids. But all of a sudden you hear about some things that are going on in their life, and you're able to give a little bit better advice."

None of this is meant to suggest that dads are more important than moms. Abundant research supports common sense that children benefit most when they have both parents in their lives. And children who live with just one parent are not doomed to failure. But kids who live in single-parent homes can face greater challenges. When one parent is absent, Dungy has noticed during his 26-year coaching career, the missing parent most often is dad.

"The thing I see more and more is fewer guys coming into the league with that great relationship with their dad," said Dungy, who tries to fill the void. "I try to let every guy know when they come to our team that I'm going to help you be a very good football player, but our whole coaching staff is here to help you with anything that might come up. Not just a football question, but life questions as well."

You can learn more about "All Pro Dad" at www.AllProDad.com. And we can all learn more just by watching Tony Dungy.

Bill Stanczykiewicz is president and chief executive officer of the Indiana Youth Institute and wrote this guest column. Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.

YOUR VIEWS

Lights, gates needed at railroad crossing

To the editor:

It has been said by many that railroad signals and crossing gates would be installed at the Indiana Railroad tracks and Stones Crossing Road only after someone gets killed there.

Well, now that two people were killed there this weekend, it's time to prevent this from happening again by doing what should have been done some time ago.

This being the main road east-bound for Center Grove High School students driving to and from school, it is surprising that some of them have not been killed or injured. I have seen them backed up for nearly a mile there after school.

Let's do what is right and install signals and gates at the railroad crossing, even if it does cost a few bucks.

Forrest Chambers
White River Township

Increasing state's tax on cigarettes will save lives

To the editor:

While we are enthusiastic about many features of the new health plan proposed by Gov. Mitch Daniels, the American Lung Association of Indiana is especially supportive of his efforts to aggressively address tobacco related health issues and access to health care for the uninsured.

Commenting on a proposed increase in the state's tobacco tax, the governor encouraged legislators to set the bar high: "The more you raise the cost of cigarettes, the more Hoosiers can be provided health coverage. I hope you think that big."

Recently, four health-related organizations — the American Lung Association of Indiana, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association and Tobacco Free Kids — conducted an opinion poll among Hoosiers.

Sixty-two percent of the respondents favored increasing the cigarette tax by a dollar per pack. Eighty-two percent said it's important that revenues from a cigarette tax increase be used to fund programs to keep kids from starting to smoke and help smokers to quit.

All around us, our Midwestern peers appear to understand that a stiff cigarette tax can be an effective weapon against smoking. While our current rate in Indiana is a mere 55.5 cents a pack, Michigan's rate is \$2 per pack, Ohio's is at \$1.25, and the Illinois rate is 98 cents. It's really costly to smoke in Chicago, where the state and local cigarette tax combined is a whopping \$3.66 per pack.

Indiana's adult smoking rate is 27.3 percent, the second highest of the 50 states. Sadly, 21.9 percent of Hoosier youth are smokers. It is a tremendous drag on our economy and quality of life, with Indiana health-care expenditures due to tobacco use reaching more than \$2 billion annually.

According to the American Lung Association of Indiana, a 25-cent increase in cigarette taxes, an amount proposed by some, will prevent 22,400 youths from becoming smokers and will result in 13,200 fewer adult smokers. But a \$1 increase in cigarette taxes will prevent 102,900 youngsters from taking up the habit and will result in 48,100 fewer adult smokers.

Those numbers tell us that a \$1 increase will produce far better results than a mere 25-cent increase.

Legislators are right to be cautious in considering tax increases in any form.

But public support for stronger tobacco measures continues to mount. The cigarette tax poll found that voters are much more likely to back a candidate who supports increasing the cigarette tax by a dollar a pack. Support, the polls said, outweighs opposition by nearly a three-to-one margin.

This is a tax increase that is long overdue and pays for itself many times over.

William B. Stephan,
chairman of the board of directors, American Lung Association of Indiana, and senior vice president, Clarian Health Partners

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