

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 more hearts

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 to Megan Horsley and Rachel Brown, teachers at Creekside Elementary School, for taking the time out of your busy schedules to attend our son's birthday party.

Your presence and assistance with his special needs helped turn an event that can be stressful for him into a huge success. You are truly educators who go the extra mile for your students. We appreciate it more than mere words can express.

Hearts also to Mrs. Brown's husband, the Rev. Fred Brown, for attending the party and for taking all the wonderful pictures.

Jim and Debbie Riggs
Franklin

• Hearts to retired Franklin United Methodist Community employees Sandy Coates, Virginia Smith, Carol Schuneman, Carolyn Ross and Marilyn Beeler for their help at the 50th birthday party.

More than 225 residents and staff were served birthday cake and ice cream sundaes as part of the community's year-long celebration of "50 Years of Excellence."

Residents and staff of Franklin United Methodist Community

• Hearts to Wal-Mart Superstore 3435 at Emerson Avenue and County Line Road, store manager Ron Hancock and all the employees for their generosity when we, Greenwood Veterans of Foreign Wars Ladies Auxiliary 5864, asked for help to purchase phone cards to send to our troops overseas.

We explained to Wal-Mart that the auxiliary had been having breakfasts, dinners, bake sales, etc., to raise a little more than \$1,000 for the phone cards. Wal-Mart matched our efforts so that we were able to send more than \$2,000 of phone cards to our troops overseas.

Thank you, Wal-Mart, for your wonderful patriotic generosity.

Greenwood Veterans of Foreign Wars Ladies Auxiliary 5864

• Hearts to Stephanie Mathes and the Colts for selecting Custer Baker Middle School as one of four schools in the state to host a pep rally with the Colts. They did an outstanding job organizing this event.

Hearts also to the students at Custer Baker for their great behavior during the pep rally and participation in the Books for Youth book drive put on by the Colts during the rally. What a great collection of books you provided to put into the hands of our foster youth and other young adults. We are proud of your accomplishments.

Karen Funk
Custer Baker Middle School

• Hearts to the staff at the Subway sandwich shop on U.S. 31 in Franklin for all the great sandwiches and service to the Franklin Community High School swimming and diving teams. Thanks for feeding our teams before each meet this season.

Franklin Community High School swimming and diving parents

• Hearts to Tony Dais, my neighbor, for cleaning the snow from around my house and driveway. I really appreciated it.

Betty Stark
Greenwood

• A great big thanks to Mike and Monda Holland for cleaning the snow off our driveway Jan. 21. It was definitely appreciated. May God bless you always.

Versa and Leon Petro
New Whiteland

• Hearts to the police officers at Fairview and Morgantown roads on Sunday mornings, especially around 10:30 a.m. It is a great relief from a lot of congestion.

The officer is usually from the Greenwood Police Department, but the intersection is in White River Township, not Greenwood. But to whomever, a big heart and thanks.

Dr. Dick Huber
Greenwood

• I would like to thank Greenwood police officer Larry Labonte, who was kind enough to change a tire for my mother Jan. 8. She was very upset, and you came to her rescue. We really appreciated your help.

Vicki Goss
Indianapolis

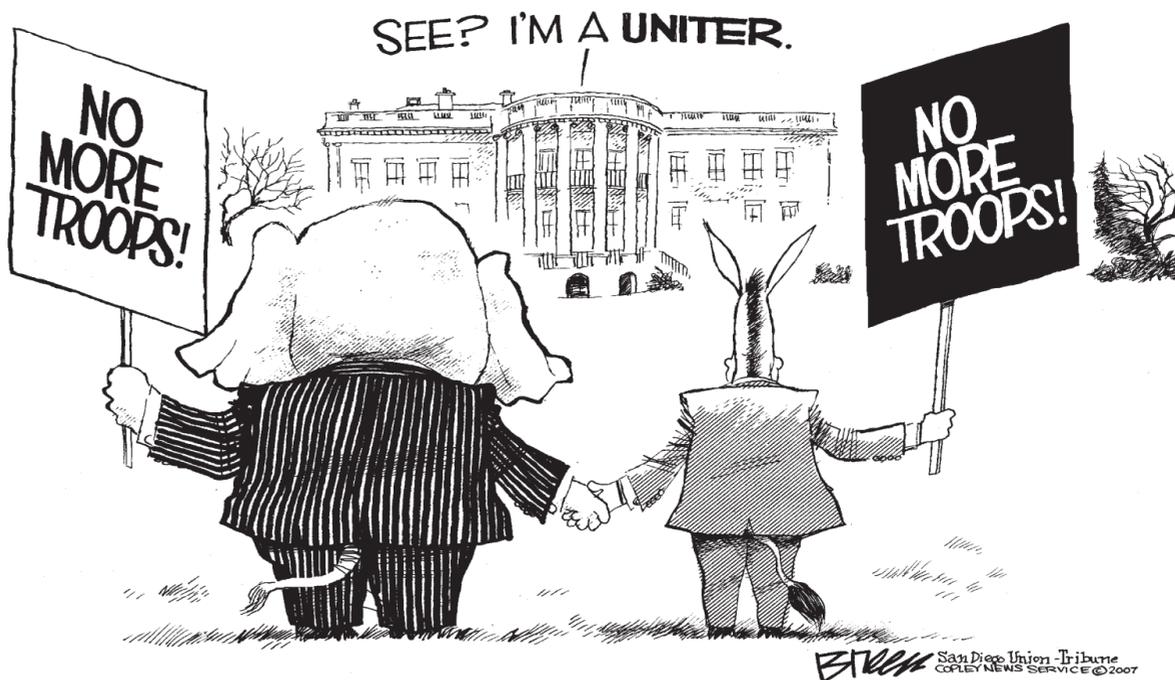
• Hearts to Terri Keefer at The Pink Poodle for her support of the Humane Society of Johnson County. Not only is she doing a great job of trimming toenails and donating all the proceeds to the new pet center, she is also collecting additional money at her business.

It is people like her who will make the Humane Society of Johnson County dream come true.

Christie Killinger
Franklin

• A special thanks to Sheryl Lewis and the mothers and girls in Girl Scout Troop 343 for the donation of Girl Scout cookies they sent to my grandson's unit in Iraq. I know these will be greatly appreciated by all. It's nice to know they are not forgotten. God bless all of you.

Marla Turner
Greenwood



Super Bowl XLI matchup something to sing about

Chicago and Indianapolis are not often compared side by side. They are both great cities but in different leagues.

The situation is a bit different now, however. The cities are not in the same league, but their football teams are.

And those teams are facing each other in the biggest game of the year. It's inevitable, then, for the media to take a close look at both hometowns.

A chart published recently compared the two Super Bowl cities. Believe it or not, Indianapolis is actually larger in area than Chicago, thanks to the fact that the Hoosier capital covers nearly all of Marion County.

Of course, population is a much different matter. More than three times as many people call Chicago home (2.87 million.) In per capita income, the communities are nearly the same: \$21,640 for them and \$20,175 for us. We both have our pricey neighborhoods. It's Geist Reservoir here and the Gold Coast up there.

The skyline along Lake Michigan reaches higher into the blue than that of the city on White River. Chicago has the Sears Tower, of course, which reaches up 1,454 feet.

Our tallest building is the Chase Tower, which is high enough for us at 811 feet.

Both towns have jazzy nicknames. Chicago can claim several monikers, but city fathers seemed to have settled upon Carl Sandburg's "City of Broad Shoulders." Indy, of course, will always be proud to call itself "The Racing Capital of the World."

Domestic state of union masked by president's unpopular Iraq decisions

The annual State of the Union message normally, and in fact traditionally, is the most over-hyped, over-reported, over-analyzed and least memorable of any address delivered by a president.

It is a pundit's dream that is full of sound and fury and of little or no significance, foisted off as important by a host of overpaid television commentators trying to prove the worth of their multimillion-dollar salaries.

The latest from President Bush was no exception, leaving Americans who braved it with the empty feeling that absolutely nothing is going to get done the next two years despite all the lofty rhetoric and long-winded television decoding followed by column after column of analytic nonsense in the following day's newspapers.

The bottom line of this year's version is simple: The only thing that really matters is Iraq, and none of the president's domestic proposals are going anywhere in an atmosphere where there are 20 candidates for his job in both parties. Why should these wannabes allow him to steal their thunder?

Besides, there isn't one member of the new Democratic-controlled Congress who can't read the polls reflecting staggering presidential unpopularity in both foreign and domestic policy. He registers only 35 percent approval. Fewer and fewer of those in his own party think he is on the correct course. A number of Republicans showed it during the address by sitting on their hands.

So if Bush and his minions actually thought they could repair his image and salvage his presidency and his current plan to increase the troop commitment with this appearance on the bully pulpit, they are more naive than imagined. That might have been accomplished if he had called off the so-called "surge" of new troops, acknowledged what



James H. Johnson

Indianapolis seems to hold its own in the matchup with Chicago until it comes to the category of "city song." It's here that our city looks quite "unhip." Chicago's tune is "My Kind of Town." Who can forget Frank Sinatra's swinging rendition of that great standard?

What, you ask, is the "city song" for Indianapolis? The chart lists it as "Little Green Apples" or "It don't rain in Indianapolis in the summertime." I guess we all know the tune. Roger Miller and O.C. Smith each had hit records with it. But it's not much of a song for Indy.

Except for an erroneous weather report, the song has nothing to do with the Hoosier capital.

It's too bad. Other cities have such great songs. Chicago had several to choose from, including "Chicago," another Sinatra classic that sings the praises of "that toddlin' town." The Big Apple has some big tunes, including "New York, New York."

Out west, the city on the bay is honored by one of the biggest standards of all time: "I Left My Heart in San Francisco." South of us, "Chattanooga Choo-Choo" has been luring folks to that Tenn-

essee town for years, and the city hosting this year's Super Bowl has long been basking in their "Moon Over Miami."

One Hoosier community did make it to the Hit Parade. "Gary, Indiana" is the title of a catchy tune in the ever-popular Broadway show and motion picture "The Music Man."

As for Indianapolis, it may come as a surprise to most Indy residents that there is already a fine song about the capital city. It's just that nobody seems to know about it.

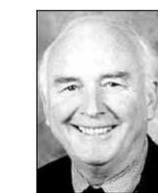
It's "Indianapolis, Indeed," written by Bill and Gloria Gaither in 1988. Sandy Patty recorded the tune. She sings of carriage rides on the Circle, the bells of St. John's Cathedral, Symphony on the Prairie, the 500-Mile Race, and pleasant walks on Lockerbie Street.

It's a beautiful song, but it's due for a rewrite now, since it also includes praise for Starlight Musicals and Market Square Arena, both of which have fallen to the wrecking ball.

Maybe the Gaithers can update their "Indianapolis, Indeed" or another composer will step up to create a song suitable for a city which has proved itself to be world class.

Indianapolis is going to make a strong bid to host the Super Bowl in 2011, and to do that we are going to need more than "Little Green Apples."

Board of contributors columnist James H. Johnson is retired educator who lives in Greenwood. Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.



Dan K. Thomasson

everyone knows already — that America is caught in the middle of an escalating civil war — and announced that U.S. troops would begin immediately to turn the fighting over to the Iraqi government in preparation for withdrawal in six months.

But it is utterly unrealistic to expect this president to take those steps anymore than it would have been for Lyndon Johnson to end the Vietnam War or, for that matter, Harry Truman to end the Korean conflict.

Listening to the president defend his increased forces plan as necessary for victory, I could think of nothing so much as Johnson's light at the end of the tunnel with just a few more troops appeals in the midst of Vietnam.

I recall being among a handful of reporters called unexpectedly into the Oval Office to be lectured by Johnson about speculation the troop level in Vietnam would be increased to half a million. A furious Johnson questioned the legitimacy of our sources, even though one of them was the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, a member of his own party. And Johnson accused us of irresponsibility. Then, only a short time later, he officially verified what we had reported.

The parallels between the two Texans, Bush and Johnson, are obvious. In the end, Johnson was unable to end the conflict that destroyed his presidency and

forced him into early retirement any more than Bush seems to be able to save himself from the immediate historic judgment that he made an enormous blunder in invading Iraq and compounded that error with poor conduct of the war.

In his response to Bush, the newly elected Democratic Sen. James Webb of Virginia praised Republican Dwight Eisenhower for ending the Korean War. There was none of the politeness or courtesy his congressional colleagues had shown Bush earlier, solidifying his reputation for incivility. Webb practically accused the president of malfeasance.

Interestingly, his words also seemed to condemn without saying so one of his own party's icons, Truman, whose actions saved the Korean Peninsula from total communist domination.

There is merit in the domestic hopes outlined somberly by Bush. Providing health care to those without it, solving the growing immigration problems, increasing the vigilance in homeland security, dealing with climate change, all are goals worthy of strong bipartisan attention.

But it may be too late for this president to expect any success with what should have been his agenda before the attacks of Sept. 11 completely warped his perspective. Sadly, his credibility with most Americans and thus with their representatives in Congress has disappeared in the smoke of Iraq.

The president is correct: The state of the union here is good. But, like Johnson, he just isn't going to get the credit he might otherwise.

Dan K. Thomasson, a Hoosier native and Franklin College trustee, is former editor of the Scripps Howard News Service. Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.

YOUR VIEWS

State giving too much money to universities

To the editor:

On Dec. 23, the Daily Journal printed a letter to the editor from the presidents of Indiana's state-funded institutions of higher learning. After reading the headline, I didn't have to read the article because it is obvious that seven college presidents would come up with many reasons to accept more than a billion dollars of taxpayers' money. (That's a lot of bread.)

To expect anything else would be foolish.

In one paragraph, I found both good news and bad news. First, the good news: They stated that during the 1975-77 budget years, our state invested 18.4 percent of the state's budget in the seven universities as compared to 13.2 percent in 2005-07. To me this was a step in the right direction.

The bad news is that the state gives any financial aid to the universities. Multiply 13.2 percent by the budget, and the answer comes out to a lot of dough.

No one has been able to explain to me where in the state constitution it says that we should give even one dime to a university. This state gave a land grant to the universities many years ago.

I wrote a piece years ago in which I compared this action to a cow giving birth to a calf. The mother cow (state) is not obligated to nurse the calf all of its life. There comes a time when weaning takes place.

Our state government should do the same with those seven institutions. Presto! The state budget would be balanced and taxes would be lowered — that is, until politicians found another place to waste money.

I have read much about how good those places of higher learning are. If such is true, they should have to sell their product on the open market as the rest of us must do with our talents.

Frank W. Thompson
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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