

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 to Stanley Brown, who has kept my driveway clean during the past two snows. I really appreciate it. Thanks, Stan, for a job well done.

I would also like to thank Allen Gentry and Stan for the professional job they have done for me in the remodeling of my house. Their expertise and advice have helped me make some wise decisions concerning this remodeling. Thanks, guys, and the guys who work for you at Handyman Services.

Barbara Goodman
Franklin

• Hearts to our neighbor, Mark Myers, for clearing the snow out of the driveway. Thanks a lot, Mark. We do appreciate your kindness.

Paulette and Frank Downton and Pauline Dixon
Franklin

• A big heartfelt thanks to our neighbor, Don Seagraves (Seagraves Landscaping), who has faithfully cleared our driveway after every snow storm for several years.

Loren and Viola Stewart
Nineveh

• A big thank you to Lowell Burks and friend for clearing our drives after both of the past two big snows. We neighbors do deeply appreciate the help in being able to get in and out of our drives. Thank you, Lowell, from your grateful neighbors.

Ray Rodgers
New Whiteland

• Hearts to our Daily Journal delivery person who got our paper to us on Feb. 14, even though we had well over 8 inches of snow. Later that morning a police officer got stuck on our street and had to call for a plow to get him out. Just one of the many reasons we love the service that we get from the Daily Journal.

Peter and Lisa Goerner
Greenwood

• A big heart goes to Olivia Stamcombe for being chosen as one of the county 4-H ambassadors. Olivia is a member of the Nineveh Clover Rovers 4-H club and the leaders and members of the club are very proud of you. Keep up the wonderful work. We are so proud of you.

Sandy A. Adams
Nineveh Clover Rovers 4-H leader

• Hearts to the Daily Journal circulation department and to our carrier, Donald Sanders. Our Daily Journal was in our paper box every morning during the storm, unlike our other paper, which missed two days of delivery.

Patience and Walt Vanderbush
Franklin

• Many hearts to the editor and her staff for successfully writing two totally different major articles.

First, the joy of our Colts' big win, and then the tragic deaths of two young brothers killed in a car/train wreck. All of these articles were handled with such tremendous and delicate balance; great journalism!

Marguerite M. Fidler
Franklin

• The evening of Feb. 18, I was driving back to my house on East King Street in Franklin, but I missed my driveway because of the snow. I got stuck in snow and couldn't get out.

As I was sitting in my car, I heard a knock on my window. Two really nice young ladies offered to help me. They called for help, and finally a wrecker and police came and pulled me out. I wanted to thank those two nice young ladies who helped me.

Martha Kitchen
Franklin

• A special heart to Gary Willey for plowing the alley on Feb. 14, after I had been stuck for two days, so that I could get my car out.

Also hearts to the two young boys who came on Feb. 13 and 14 and were offering to shovel our walks and driveways. They were very polite and did a great job in such cold weather. Special hearts to all of you, and thank you for all your help.

Judy Lucas
Franklin

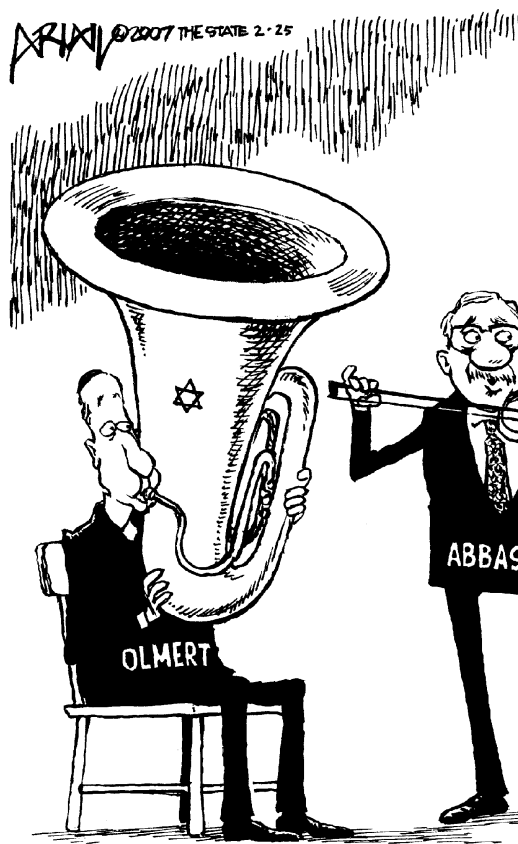
• Big hearts and a very big thank you to our Daily Journal newspaper carrier for delivering our paper every day through the past storms. It was the only newspaper we received for a few days. We really appreciate what you did for us.

Nancy and Bob LaTour
Franklin

Dart

• Darts to William Patterson, superintendent of Franklin schools. It would make things easier if you would decide on one set of criteria in making your decision to delay or close the schools. All of the schools in Johnson County were on at least a two-hour delay Friday, except Franklin. Is our children's safety not your first priority? It sure does not seem like it is.

Joan Arcand
Franklin



YOUR

VIEWS & COMMENTARY

Office seems unconcerned with being courteous

To the editor:

Why is privatization so popular with our governor? I'm venting because I know when we complain about poor government customer service it falls on deaf ears. We are told they will look into it and yet nothing is done.

As the May elections approach and I am getting closer to middle age, I'm realizing the need for us to start paying attention and stand up for what we vote for.

Let me share my experience with Johnson County Clerk Jill Jackson's office.

Today is Feb. 12. I tried to phone your office today, the child support division, to find out the status of my support check that was mailed to your office two weeks ago. My first attempt was dialing the 736-3790 number listed in the phone book and also on the Web site. When I dialed that number, the reply was "the number you have dialed, 883-3790, has been disconnected. No further information is available for 883-3790."

I double-check my dialing, and also attempt using my cell phone. Your Web site lists another number, 736-3915. I received an answer this time, but it's not the child support division: "I'll transfer you." It rang until voice mail came on. Sorry, I personally will not leave a voice mail to any government agency. Past experience is they are in no hurry or don't return the calls.

I wait a few minutes and again dial 736-3915. I'm told I'll be transferred, but wait, I ask for the direct number. After a stern huff and the phone being dropped, I'm given 346-4479. As I'm apologizing, I'm hung up on. I dial the new number. Guess what? The 883-4479 number has the same disconnect message.

So, in aggravation I must call back. I apologize for calling again and try to explain the messages that I'm getting with both numbers. Again I'm greeted with that deep, long huff. Once transferred, you guessed it: voice mail.

I've personally visited this office and have observed that three people are staffed in the child support division. After three calls within 30 minutes, one should expect to finally get an answer. I just want to know where my daughter's check is.

I have never written a letter to the editor before, but today did me in. When I sat back clenching the phone in my hand (you know what I'm talking about when you've had exceptionally bad customer service, and are at your wit's end and want to throw your phone at the wall) it hit me that I apologized twice for bad service.

Shouldn't it have been the person answering the phone who apologized for my inconvenience or offered an explanation as to why the phones are not working? I realize it's not this person's



WRITE A

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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

GUIDELINES

- Letters published 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.

WHERE TO SEND THE LETTER

Mail	E-mail	Fax
Letters to the editor The Daily Journal P.O. Box 699 Franklin, IN 46131	letters@thejournalnet.com Drop-off 2575 N. Morton St. (U.S. 31) Franklin	736-2766

fault I'm a divorced parent and in need of help. But it is my daughter's money and the person answering the phone wouldn't have this job if the courts hadn't created this system for tracking and paying child support.

Ms. Jackson, you are an elected official for the residents of Johnson County. My household pays income and property taxes to fund your office. My daughter's father also pays a yearly mandated fee of \$70 for this service. The keyword here is service: you and your staff are employed to serve our county. You are the elected official and you campaign to earn your wages and supervise your office and its employees.

Do you not oversee the hiring/firing and staffing of your offices? Immediate attention needs to be directed at your phone problem and the unprofessionalism of your employees.

My vote will definitely go elsewhere, and I believe fellow Johnson County residents should make not only this office, but all others we elect, held accountable. It will unfortunately soon be time to start reading and listening to campaign promises. (What a waste, the money spent on these could greatly benefit the funding of our schools.)

When people hold or run for an elected office, I believe they greatly overlook customer service.

My final thought: people in private-sector jobs have no protection or guarantee. They face performance reviews and disciplinary action.

People who are self-employed seem to truly understand customer service; without their customers they would have no income. Those with government jobs seem to be protected and only change with elections. Government employees take note,

you are working for the "private sector."

Go, Mitch Daniels. I love your innovative ideas.

Some people don't like change, but some of us are sick of being treated unprofessionally.

Shelley McCurdy
Greenwood

When filing your taxes, don't forget about credit

To the editor:

With income taxes for 2006 due within two months, I would like to remind all Hoosiers about the one-time credit for federal taxes on long-distance telephone service. The Internal Revenue Service is offering the credit, but only this year.

For residential phone service, individual taxpayers can either claim a standard deduction of \$30 to \$60 (depending on number of exemptions) or itemize and claim the actual amount of federal telephone excise taxes paid after Feb. 28, 2003, and before Aug. 1, 2006.

Businesses and nonprofit organizations can also itemize and claim refunds for actual federal telephone taxes they have paid.

If a consumer itemizes for the tax credit, it is important to only itemize the 3 percent federal telephone excise tax, and not state taxes or entire phone bills.

Line items for the federal telephone excise tax credit can be found on IRS Forms 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ, 1040NR and 1040 NR-EZ.

Also, the OUCC Web site (www.IN.gov/OUCC) offers links to additional IRS information, including frequently asked questions for individuals and businesses.

Susan L. Macey
Indiana Utility Consumer
Counselor
Indianapolis

Charges making it difficult for some to afford heat

To the editor:

I am writing about Vectren Gas Co.

So many people are struggling to pay their gas bills. No wonder they're high. My son's bill was \$113.68, and distribution and services charges were \$46.21, which made his bill \$169.49 including taxes.

And if they are late paying a couple of times, then they add a disconnect charge like it's been turned off and turned back on.

People on fixed incomes can't afford to pay these distribution and service charges. I thought the gas company paid their workers hourly. Why do we have to pay them, too?

My bill was \$139 for gas actually used, add distribution and service charges with taxes and the total bill was \$203. We, like so many, are on fixed incomes. Why can't we just pay for the gas we use?

And the gas doesn't burn as hot as it used to. Someone told me they mix more air with the gas now. We have to turn our heat up to get warm, then the bill goes higher.

Virginia Ross
Franklin

Former director thankful for time at Boys, Girls Club

To the editor:

As I leave the Boys and Girls Club of Franklin to pursue a new challenge in my life, I would like to thank everyone who has supported me and the club during the past 16½ years: staff, board members, the city of Franklin, United Way of Johnson County, Franklin schools, local businesses, service organizations, my family and friends.

The support of the Franklin community has been overwhelming, and I am truly grateful for that.

A special thanks goes to the past and present club members and their parents for letting me be a part of your lives. You are the reason I love the club so much. I will cherish the memories forever.

This is not "good-bye" but "see you around." Take care, and may God bless you all.

Chris Johnston
past executive director,
Boys and Girls Club of Franklin

People opposing tollroad afraid of progress

To the editor:

I hate to say it, but it's the same old thing: "Not in my back yard."

But people who say that are not at all hesitant to drive on roads that once were someone else's back yard so that they can get someplace quickly, to a store that used to be someone's farm or back yard.

We need to get our heads out of the sand.

Jess Shively
Franklin

Community center has a lot to offer for kids, adults

The list of things the Greenwood Community Center does for children and adults is long.

The center is a valuable part of the Greenwood Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Community Center offers activities throughout the entire year.

Twice a year, the department publishes a brochure. It is filled with contacts; general information; preschool programs; youth programs; youth sports; Greenwood trails; Greenwood parks and facilities; Four Paws Dog Park; adult recreation and community interest; adult sports; fitness and wellness; community events and a calendar of what goes on throughout the year.

Then there are several sheets of activity registration in



Marya Jo
Butler

addition to the information about registration.

There are beautiful pictures in the brochure, too. It helps people to see what goes on throughout the year.

At the bottom of the first page, it says: "Commit To Be Fit ... make a simple lifestyle change today!" How true.

I work out at the community center three times a week. I do it because it is important for a long list of physical needs. Many

people start exercising on the first of January to lose weight, and, hopefully, they will continue through each year. Sometimes, we can't believe how much that helps us.

The Greenwood Community Center has much to offer for workouts.

For example, on the second floor, the fitness area has 13 treadmills, eight elliptical cross trainers, 10 spinning bikes, five recumbent bikes, eight air-dyne bikes, two upright resistance bikes, two rowing machines, two stair machines, a dumbbell rack, weight machines and a cable crossover weight machine.

Of course, there are many other activities and equipment places in the center. It is fun to play basketball, volleyball and even Ping-Pong, and there are many other enjoyable things to do.

The Greenwood Community Center is so nice. The many people who work there are kind and helpful.

Because I am a member of the Greenwood Park Board, I've experienced much that is going on throughout the center and all of the parks. I even liked it before I became a board member six years ago.

Each year, we increase the number of activities for city residents. I appreciate the encouragement that we draw from knowing that residents are enjoying the Greenwood Community Center, the trails and the parks.

Daily Journal Board of Contributors columnist Marya Jo Butler is a former teacher and counselor. She is a member of the Greenwood Park Board. Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.