

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 Jim Myrick at Bud and Bloom Florist in Franklin for going the extra mile and personally delivering flowers to my parents for their 50th wedding anniversary. Your attention to details made a special event even more wonderful.

Maureen Hoffman-Wehmeier
Franklin

• Hearts to the Perry Middle School eighth-grade cheer coach who had her cheerleaders pull a mat out when doing higher level stunts. A mat will be a softer place to land than the basketball floor if the bases do not catch the flyer if the stunt goes wrong. It shows you really care about your girls.

Amy Thompson
Greenwood

• Hearts to our wonderful neighbors in Chad Lo for helping us look for our lost miniature dachshund last week. Special hearts to our family for their endless hours of looking. It's comforting to know that we have such caring people in our lives. Nipper is home, and we are very thankful.

Sam, Ryan, Kaylee and Karley Hoagland
Whiteland

• Hearts to the ladies of Trafalgar Christian Church and First Christian Church of Bargersville for their wonderful food service, to the Rev. Paul Palusko for his loving devotion to the congregation throughout the course of the funeral services, to the regional officers of the Disciples of Christ Church, to Flinn & Maguire Funeral Home for accommodating our schedule and needs, to the Revs. Roger Gifford and Dennis Patton for their quick and compassionate notification of the accident.

Also, hearts to Grand Rental Station for the prompt delivery of the necessary equipment for our memorial service.

Thanks to all of you, and many others, who have called, visited and sent prayers to our congregation after the sudden passing of our dear pastor, the Rev. Wayne Markward.

Your service and compassion are testament to the positive impact Pastor Wayne had on his community. Your kindness will not be forgotten.

Union Christian Church
Franklin

• Hearts to Johnson Memorial Hospital and Stat Ambulance Service of Columbus for their help in 2006.

John Tinkey
Columbus

• I'd like to send my thanks to Kevin Harrison and his crew with the Johnson County Highway Department for making prompt drainage improvements at the end of my driveway, which connects to County Road 500E.

The torrential rains had washed much of the driveway away, making it quite dangerous. Within three days of my initial call, the work was completed.

It was also great to see that the highway department had tossed out sand on our local country roads following freezing weather recently.

Thanks for work well done.

Marilyn Trout and families
Franklin

• Hearts and thanks to our Daily Journal carrier, Daniel Trent, for the extra care he gives in delivering our Journal each day.

Bob and Bonnie Smith
Indianapolis

• Hearts to the students, staff and parents of Greenwood Middle School. During the holidays, they collected the equivalent of 22,000 cans of food that was then contributed to the Greenwood Salvation Army/Salvation Services food pantry. Hopefully, their efforts will make 2007 a little easier for the families in our community.

Special recognition also goes to the members of the middle school GI Blues group and their sponsor, Sonda Schmidt, who arranged for holiday greetings and gift packs to be sent to American service men and women stationed abroad.

Vicki Noblitt, principal
Greenwood Middle School

• Hearts to Greenwood Middle School PTO who, once again, provided excellent support of students and staff during the 2006 holidays.

Students and staff of Greenwood Middle School

Darts

• Big darts to the person(s) who removed items my family and I placed on the grave of my grandfather, Richard D. Sanders.

We are his family and have a right to remove and put anything on his grave that we wish. You are not family and do not have that right. I would appreciate it if I could have the angel statue back as it was placed there for his birthday.

On another note, if you are going to place remembrance of him in the paper for his birthday, next time could you please make sure it is on the right date?

Alisha Pickereel
Bargersville



'Library pioneer' would have appreciated facility's growth

On Feb. 6, 1986, the Daily Journal wrote some wonderful information about my mother. She was called "a library pioneer," and her picture was printed with the article.

This is what was written about her:

"Edith (Christian) Betner, the widow of William J. Betner, of Greenwood, had the distinction of being a teenage assistant in Greenwood's first public library that was established in the Cook building, Feb. 6, 1917. Later she was a long-time assistant when the library was in the Polk Community House.

"She became a librarian and was the librarian at Greenwood High School for many years. Additionally, Mrs. Betner, whose husband was recognized as being one of Greenwood's most knowledgeable historians, served on the library's board of trustees."

Obviously, my mother worked very hard for the Greenwood Public Library over so many years. She was a wonderful lady who would encourage many of us to read books.

As an English teacher, too, her students received books to read and share the information with others.

I went to the Greenwood Public Library as a child and checked out as many books as I was allowed to borrow.

When the library was at the Polk Community House, I was able to just have five books at a time, so I would take them home and read them all in one or two days.



Marya Jo Butler

Then I would take them back and get five more.

Several years ago, I was on the Friends of the Library board of directors at the Greenwood Public Library. I did that because of what my mother had done for so many years.

I still read the Friends of the Library newsletter periodically. The most recent issue described a major event coming up.

The item said: "Happy Birthday to us!!! Tuesday, Feb. 6, is Greenwood Public Library's 90th birthday! Come help the library celebrate on that day with cake and punch. At 10:30 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., we will light candles and sing 'Happy Birthday.'

"There will be cake in the lobby from 10:30 a.m. until 7 p.m., and a huge birthday card to sign to show your support. Events are planned for all of 2007 to commemorate 90 years of reading and service to the community."

The library is much larger than when my mother went to the Cook building when she was a teenager. It was a small place on Main Street in Greenwood, but she wanted to work there.

Later, when it moved to the Polk Community House, the space on the north side of the building was much larger.

But it wasn't nearly as big as the current library between Madison Avenue and Meridian Street.

When my mother was a member of the board of trustees, they erected the new building. Since then, it has been expanded. Now many people are able to come there and avail themselves of the many services the Greenwood Public Library provides. It is a wonderful place to go.

In a previous column about the library, I mentioned that research shows that, as we become older, reading keeps our minds healthy. I wrote: "The mind must be given daily workouts to keep it from closing up, and reading is one of the major exercises suggested."

That is why people should go to the libraries and get books to read from time to time.

So, let's celebrate the 90th birthday of the Greenwood Public Library on Feb. 6.

The few of us who have lived in this city all of our lives appreciate that we have had the library for so many years.

My mother would have loved to be here and celebrate the 90th birthday of the Greenwood Public Library.

Let's enjoy the fact that it is still here and doing well.

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

Congress protecting itself from its most dangerous nemesis — voters

The dome of the Capitol will gleam as the sun rises over Washington today. The new Democrat-controlled Congress has completed a historic week, completing legislation in the Senate and the House that will usher in a new era of openness, honesty and fairness in how the nation's business is conducted.

Are you laughing yet? At least grinning? You should be.

Yes, indeed our hard-working legislators have gotten a lot of business done in these early days of the 110th Congress.

The Senate has passed The Legislative Transparency and Accountability Act of 2007. Ethics reform, or so called. And the House, under the leadership of our first woman speaker, has passed the six bills targeted for its first 100 hours.

We should recall the conventional wisdom that when politicians arrive on the scene to save the day, hold on to your wallet.

Consider ethics reform. If there is a defining theme to how the Congress approaches ethics, it would be: "I'm OK; you're the problem." "You" in this case is us, the citizens and taxpayers of this free country whom our members of Congress are sworn to serve.

How is it that a senator or congressman becomes more ethical by passing a law that says that someone else, a private citizen, can't buy them lunch or take them on a trip?

Are we to understand that 535 United States senators and congressmen to whom we give oversight of a \$3 trillion federal budget have told us they cannot be left to their own resources to determine if an offer to lunch or a trip is inappropriate?

Consider the fact that I wield a little power by the fact that I write a newspaper column that, in



Star Parker

a good week, gets in front of millions of readers. This can be considered influence.

It is not unknown that someone with a particular ax to grind might ask me to write about it. They might even offer to buy me lunch in a fancy Washington restaurant to tell me the story. If it is a particularly big deal, they might even offer to fly me somewhere to show me what is going on.

However, for me, my own moral compass aside, my reputation and integrity are my most important assets. Why would I put these on the line for a lunch or a trip?

In fact, when it became clear that one particular columnist had been getting paid by lobbyist Jack Abramoff, whose shenanigans got this current ethics rage in Washington started, he was fired by the firm that syndicated his column and by the think tank with which he was affiliated.

Personal integrity and markets work in journalism. We don't have to have laws that say you can't buy a columnist lunch or take them on a trip. They can figure out for themselves what is useful and what is inappropriate.

If I can take personal responsibility for my professional ethical behavior, and frankly, so can every other professional doing business in this country, why can't our senators and congressmen?

Transparency and openness you say? The supply of information today is prodigious. The Internet, Palm Pilots, blogs, competing

24-hour cable news, satellite news. Sooner or later, everything will come to the light of day. It's how we found out about Abramoff.

But somehow politicians' answer to ethics is not to take more personal responsibility, but to limit the freedom that the rest of us have.

One related and germane part of this picture is campaign finance laws. This is another arena where politicians save us from ourselves and, by doing so, make us all worse off.

How do we fire a bad politician? Elections. But campaign finance laws that limit the amount of money that candidates can raise and protect the incumbent rascals by limiting the amount of money available to challengers that want to expose them.

Can you imagine what we would have if we passed a law limiting the spending allowed on advertising soap? We would protect Procter and Gamble and make it almost impossible for a new little company with a great new soap to get on the market.

As we are currently observing in Iraq, it is impossible to have a free country without people who are prepared to act like responsible and civil adults. Is this too much to ask of our own senators and congressmen?

As I write, the streets of Washington are filled with construction crews working on sparkling new buildings that will house well-financed lobbyists.

Don't expect that this construction will halt as result of The Legislative and Transparency Act of 2007.

Star Parker is president of Coalition on Urban Renewal and Education (www.urban-cure.org) and author of "White Ghetto: How Middle-Class America Reflects Inner City Decay." Send comments to letters@thejournalnet.com.

YOUR VIEWS

Cable company not protecting its customers

To the editor:

Integrity is described as an uncompromising adherence to moral and ethical principles. You will be hard pressed to find someone, or a company, that truly measures up to that description these days.

Recently, I was watching TV when a commercial caught my attention. I called about it and decided to try their two-week supply as a test.

Well, guess what? It didn't work.

It was only \$4.95, I thought, so no big loss. Two weeks later my credit card was billed for \$149.50 for products I never ordered.

When I called this company to see what was going on, I was transferred to a recording. The recording said that I should go to their Web site to straighten out my problem. I called back, and they refused to talk to me, always the recording.

I went to the Web site. It said that if I returned the product there would be a 25 percent restocking charge. I sent the product back, but I doubt that I'll see any cash back.

I decided to call the cable company to bring this to their attention. They informed me that they couldn't do anything. They said that they are not responsible for the content of commercials or what happens, that I should call the network.

Good job of passing the buck, right?

This is the same cable company that advertises that their CEO goes door-to-door to see if their customers are satisfied with their service. If you believe that, I have some land in South America I'll sell you.

My question is: How can a cable company align themselves with a company like that and say they care about their customers?

Be careful, because the people that lead you to believe they have integrity do not.

Neil Richards
Greenwood

Washington failed to help troops win war

To the editor:

In reference to the Iraq war, it was the right and correct decision to go to war.

The cause is noble and necessary, for it has kept terrorism here at bay and it has kept in line our historical heritage of helping the oppressed of the world to seek the freedoms and rights we enjoy as citizens of the United States.

The problem isn't why we went, it's how we went. Sending our troops to war undermanned and under-equipped is the major problem in a flawed strategy like Vietnam that sends our troops into action but will not let them win the war.

If the intent is sending extra troops into action to finally correct the past failures, to get in swiftly and win it as we are capable, then I'm for it. But in saying that, it must be accompanied with all the firepower of all our armed forces at once.

Also, there must be a plan to isolate Iraq's borders to stop the flow of militants from other hostile Islamic countries. Without that, it will be business as now, fighting all of the Middle East's radical Islamic terrorists coming into the arena called Iraq.

Washington, we should've won it. Don't send any more troops or keep any more there if you won't let our boys have all they need to get in and get out and win Iraq quickly and permanently. Our troops deserve Washington's best that they've yet to receive.

Darrell G. Walton
Greenwood

Toll road not wanted in Johnson County

To the editor:

Please tell them to discourage and stop the beltway project. The residents of our community do not want the toll road. We have made a choice to live where we do because it is not like Indianapolis.

As one person stated, just because you build a road does not mean businesses will come there. The area is fairly rural with a lot of farmland. To build the toll road would be an invitation for more crime in the area.

I love my home and where I live and do not want an interstate in my front or back yard.

Stacey Adams
Trafalgar

WRITE A LETTER

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

SEND IT

E-mail
letters@thejournalnet.com

Drop-off

2575 N. Morton St. (U.S. 31), Franklin