

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Dear Editor:
Points made last week about the difficulty of sharing country roads with some types of traffic were well taken. I often find myself trying to share the road with what appear to be vacationing joggers from the nearby resort. Some of their behavior is very dangerous. A mother and daughter, running side by side in the middle of my lane with their backs to me, made no move to yield me any room as I slowed behind them. Mom motioned me around impatiently, seeming completely unaware that I had no visibility in the curve where we were. She became clearly resentful when I pointed out that her unsafe running style was endangering all our lives.
Another pair ran side by side toward me, completely blocking my lane. I wondered if they meant to run me down. My car isn't that small!
Perhaps these people could be cautioned about the dangers of country roads, curves, and dotty old drivers.
In Texas we observed a custom which could be adopted here. When we approached slow moving vehicles on rural roads from behind, they would quickly take the first safe opportunity to pull over and let us by. More safety; less frustration.

Barbara Brewton

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

Since we last gathered here on this page the "non-essential" employees of the federal government have gone back to work after their two week paid vacation. Someone asked me why, if these jobs were non-essential, that they exist at all. I can't answer that question. I don't know the government's criterion is for making that determination. The people at the CDC who protect us from outbreaks of deadly diseases were out of work, but the people who eavesdrop on our phone conversations, emails, texts and posts were not. The Amber Alert website and NOAA were shutdown. Michelle Obama's website for encouraging kids to lose weight was still open.

As a matter of fact, during the shutdown, it cost more money to disable government websites, many of which operate automatically, than it would have to let them run. Similarly, it cost more money and manpower to attempt to prevent veterans from visiting monuments that are mostly funded by private donations than it would have to keep them open. The government, though hobbled by the lack of so many non-essential employees, was still able to conjure 113 new regulations, making the last week of the shutdown the most prolific ever in the quest for regulating the American people and their business.

According to many pundits, the real crisis so narrowly avoided was the first ever default on United States debt. Markets were shaken as the crisis in confidence escalated. China and Japan, never the best of friends and rarely on the same side of an argument, both advised us to protect their two trillion dollar investment in our debt.

Default on the debt? Not likely. The Treasury Department brings in about \$200 billion a month and interest payments are "only" \$20 billion. The October 17th deadline was a date arbitrarily set by Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew. Smart money knew that there was little likelihood Congress would allow anything to threaten the business of the investment banks that finance their re-election campaigns. The smart money was not worried. Investors who bought stocks on dips made out like bandits when the market came roaring back with every appearance of good news.

As for the pundits and the president who claimed that the United States has never defaulted on its debt, well that just wasn't true. As recently as 1979, the US defaulted on

about \$122 million of treasury bills. In 1934 the Roosevelt Administration engineered a default on Liberty Bonds in an effort to gain more flexibility in issuing new bonds without being restricted by the price of gold. The government defaulted on its debt in 1862, 1814, 1790, 1782 and 1779. So while a government default on debt is certainly unusual, it would not have been unprecedented.

For many of our creditors and also for many of our citizens who have begun to notice that, although our wages have not increased, the price of just about everything else has, the idea that there are other ways for a government to default on its debt obligations has begun to take hold. Since Nixon took the country off the gold standard in 1972, the dollar has lost more than 90% of its value, and with every fresh infusion of dollars from the Federal Reserve, the dollar loses more ground.

In a system of money creation designed to stimulate the economy - the entire economy - one would expect to see an increase in wealth across the board. Prices would rise, but then so, eventually, would wages as new wealth was created. It hasn't worked out like that. Here in 2013, one percent of Americans now own over 40 percent of American wealth. Eighty percent of Americans own 7 percent.

The road to Congress is paved with good intentions, but no matter what those intentions have been, the results over the last twenty years have been the same for the average citizen and consumer. "Middle class" is now an almost meaningless term. Government now intrudes into every aspect of life, and if you don't believe that we are becoming a police state, then you have not flown recently and heard the computer generated voice of the TSA warning travelers that inappropriate comments can result in arrest. We are governed by fear and crisis in an unending struggle against enemies that you and I did not create, and while we waste our time distracted by partisan politics and ideological battles, the coercive power of government grows unabated.

It has been a long time since I have found anything good to say about the permanent class of politicians who occupy Congress. While there is plenty of blame to be shared by the other branches of government; the politicized judicial system and the imperial presidency both carry some of the burden of responsibility for our ills; it is the Congress that makes every law and approves every budget - a Congress bought and paid for by the same elements that continue to extract the lion's share of the wealth of the nation.

The remedy for this problem is not easy, but it is as simple as it is radical: Fire them. Fire them all. If your representative is an incumbent, vote for the challenger. Granted, there will be some well-intentioned individuals who are not re-elected and there will be some who are as corrupt and incompetent as any now in office who will win, but the message will be clear. The message we need to send is that the American people are no longer satisfied by intention or ideology, only by results. It is a beginning step on the long road to reclaiming ownership of our country.

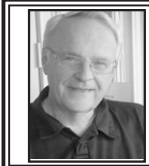


"IT'S ON MY MIND.."
Danny H. Parris

What book do you love?

It is tragic but a lot of people have never read nor studied God's book, The Holy Bible. I suppose it is even more tragic that a number of people read books about the Bible, attend seminars related to the Bible, they buy Bibles but neglect to read the Bible. Some people's opinion of the Bible is that it is an outdated, obsolete book that has no other purpose but to serve as a place to press flowers, store documents or add a decorative touch to a room. John penned these words on the Isle of Patmos: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: For the time is at hand" (Revelation 1:3). The Bible gives us knowledge of our past, instruction for the present and our hope for the future. It is impossible to explain today's news, or to evaluate tomorrow's events without the light of God's revelation found within the Bible. One minister visited a home and was speaking to a mother about her spiritual condition. "Oh", she said, "I am very religious." Then she instructed her little daughter to bring her the book that mommy loves so dearly. The little girl returned carrying the Sears catalogue. A little boy was

helping his mom clean out a closet when he noticed a big black book on the back of a shelf. He asked his mom, "Whose book is that?" She said, "Oh", "That's God's book!" the little boy responded, "Shouldn't we give it back to him, we never read it." Some unknown individual wrote the following tribute to the Bible which I believe to be true: "This book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, the happiness of believers. Its doctrine is holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Christ is its grand subject; our good is its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given in life, will be open at the judgment, and will be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labor, and condemns all who trifle with its holy contents." Do you love God's book? Do you read God's book? Do you seek to obey God's book? We all need to love, read and obey this Book of the Ages!



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE

By Don Jacobsen

It seems to me that we are determined to raise a generation of wimps. I mean, hardly a week goes by that we don't read of some youngster being suspended from school for doing something that was considered normal in my generation. True, we had to get permission to go the bathroom, but today's kids have to get permission to turn a cartwheel. True story.

You may have read about the most recent radical restraint. In New Hampshire and in New York, two school systems have decided that it's too dangerous for kids to play tag. Tag! Yup. No more tag on the school grounds! Oh, and no more soccer balls or softballs and bats, only foam nerf balls. Good grief, if they keep up this kind of stuff they'll soon want to pad the insides of the school buses with mattresses and dig tunnels at all guard crossings so the kids don't have to walk across the streets.

I'm sure some kids have been hurt playing tag. Just as some have been hurt when they slipped on a wet spot on the bathroom floor. What are we going to prohibit in there? We have some friends whose youngster nearly died when he choked on a bite of peanut butter sandwich. So should

we monitor lunches? Kids get hurt when they fall down stairs. Then maybe we should retrofit all schools with elevators?

Dr. Don, now you're being rash. No, I'm just describing where this nonsense may lead if we don't get off the present kick we're on. What will the next generation look like if we try to create an environment where there is no risk and no possibility of harm? Kids can't learn responsibility if we take away all chance of misstep. Childhood is a time for running into trees, getting up, brushing yourself off, getting your stitches at the doctor's office, and deciding you're not going to run into trees anymore. We don't accomplish that learning environment by cutting down all the trees in sight.

I saw a classic example on TV recently of how far we have strayed from common sense on this issue - trying to make everything easier for everybody. This commercial was selling a new kind of cat litter, which they assured us, was 25% lighter, so "it's less work for your cat." So we can also anticipate a generation of wimpy cats.

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net.



GUEST COLUMNS

From time to time, people in the community have a grand slant on an issue that would make a great guest editorial. Those who feel they have an issue of great importance should call our editor and talk with him about the idea. Others have a strong opinion after reading one of the many columns that appear throughout the paper. If so, please write. Please remember that publication of submitted editorials is not guaranteed.

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