

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Editor:

I am a Vietnam veteran and have a sense of how we may better honor and serve our returning post 9-11 veterans. What they don't want (but nevertheless appreciate) are platitudes once or twice a year. What they do want, in the form of our sincere gratitude, are JOBS. It's shamefully disheartening that, while unemployment is 8% to 9% generally, the unemployment rate for these post 9-11 veterans is nearly 10%, and if they're female, it's almost 20%. So, prospective employers, if all things are equal, please help these folks by hiring them.

Some tips for veterans now seeking civilian employment:

(1) Demilitarize your resume. Avoid acronyms that are alien to civilians. Have someone not in the military review it. Find a way to explain how your military experience would apply to a corporate environment.

(2) During interviews, be sure to state that you're a veteran; they'll be more likely to remember you.

(3) Consider working for a franchise. Last year, the International Franchise Association announced a campaign to get veterans jobs and franchisee ownership. CiCi's Pizza, Jiffy Lube and Papa John's are among those waiving franchise fees for vets.

(4) Also, Home Depot, on its online job application form, has a place that allows one to type in one's military occupational specialty (mos) that gives several examples of how that mos could be of use to Home Depot. And perhaps that information would help seeking a job elsewhere as well.

(5) Be the best employee you can. That way, the employer will favorably consider other vets for employment.

Claudos G. Spears

To the Editor:

Senator Dick Durbin got on his "income inequality" soapbox.

Get me to thinking...After 36 years, I retired from public school teaching.

How would it be if Senator Durbin's net worth were combined with Senator Reid's, Congresswoman Pelosi's and mine and were divided by four and distributed "equally"? Mrs. Pelosi claims a net worth of more than \$60M. Senator Reid claims a net worth of \$5M. Senator Durbin's net worth runs to \$7M.

Let's see...combined, that's \$72M. Add my \$150,000 and divide by four.

Hey! Income "equality" just netted me more than \$18M -- and I haven't even included the wealth of the other 49 Democrat Senators or the other House Democrats!

The idea of "sharing" is looking better and better all the time!

George Mitchell

The Middle Path

by Don Perry

A few days ago Barack Obama and Mitt Romney had lunch together at the Whitehouse. A picture was released of the two men cordially shaking hands. The image is food for thought.

My initial reaction to the photo and to the event was to congratulate myself on living in a country which has devised such an enlightened means for the peaceful transfer of political power. With all of its flaws we still have one of the best systems of government ever devised. Every four years we install someone into the most powerful office in the world without bloodshed. Good for us.

My secondary reaction was perhaps less enlightened. It was an echo of a feeling I had when I was 8 years old and went to a wrestling match at the Gainesville Civic Center between Thunderbolt Patterson and Moondog Mayne. The two professional wrestlers, sworn enemies, appeared eager to kill each other in the ring. I don't remember who "won" the match, but I do remember the feeling of disillusionment when I saw the two combatants sitting together and laughing during an intermission.

The campaign for the office of president in 2012 was passionate and divisive. Amongst the "audience," names were called; threats were made; friendships ended over differences of opinion about the candidates and the candidates' political parties. I wonder how all that would have played out had we been able to peek into the future and see a photo of two buddies having a casual visit after the election.

We go through this every four years. Our hopes and fears are played like violin strings as we are once again divided and conquered. Unfortunately for us all, with blogs, tweets, facebook posts and all forms of ubiquitous, instant and incessant media exposure, the campaigns for the next election have already begun.

Campaigns need crisis. Media advertisers need crisis. Unfortunately a few scientists at NASA and some Mayan elders let it slip that the world is actually not going to end later this month, so the crisis mongers are stuck with a single theme at present, the treacherous "fiscal cliff." If we cannot avoid the cliff,

they tell us, we will certainly fall into a dreaded recession. What they don't tell us is that we have actually been in recession for 9 out of the last 10 years.

When a government can print its own money it can easily obscure economic truth from its thralls. Devalue the currency by 25% and magically the economy appears to be 25% bigger. Add to GDP things like cleaning up after a hurricane and paying for cancer therapy and the numbers will seem to tell a story of vibrant economic growth. Stop the balls from spinning and the numbers tell a different story. One of the few accurate ways to measure changes in a nation's economy is to compare it to the rest of the world. According to the World Bank, the United States accounted for 31% of the world's economy in 2001. By the end of 2011 our share was 21.6%. In other words, our slice of the pie is 32% smaller than it was 10 years ago.

Every two to four years faces change in Congress. Every four to eight years faces change in the Executive branch of government. There are a few things that have not changed in a generation. The size of government continues to grow, no matter who goes to Washington. The overall tax burden, when you add up the soup to nuts cost of what comes out of our paychecks and the price we pay for goods and services, continues to grow. The reach of government, the intrusiveness of government and the coercive power of government, now involved in every aspect of our lives from the local to the national level, continues to grow. Vladimir Putin, president of Russia, put it very succinctly. To paraphrase his recent comments, he observed that Americans must not study history or we would know that Soviet style communism does not work.



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

The birth that brought Him

The most glorious and momentous event in human history occurred two thousand years ago. It happened when God became man. Matthew records the events leading up to the birth of Christ (Matt. 1:18-25). The birth of Christ was a human birth. That is, Jesus was born like all of us, through the channels of a woman's body. In that sense, Jesus' birth was a human birth (Philippians 2:5-11). Birth is a natural common experience. However, let me hasten to say that Jesus' birth was a Holy Birth. His birth was natural, but it was also unnatural and supernatural. The Bible reveals four ways to get a body. (1) By creation. God created man (Adam) out of the dust of the earth. (2) Eve's body was fashioned out of a rib taken from Adam's body. (3) By reproduction. All of us came into this world by reproduction. That is out of the union of a man's seed and a woman's egg. (4) By virgin birth. The birth of Jesus was natural - through the channels of a woman's life. His birth was unnatural - He had no human father. His birth was supernatural - His was a Holy birth. God selected a virgin named Mary and what was conceived in her was by the Holy Ghost. Mary was a virgin, having never known a man (Luke 1:34). This was God's way of bringing a sinless man into the world. If the virgin birth is not reality, then

Jesus has the same taint of sin as other men. But, don't you ever believe Satan's lie. Jesus is the sinless Son of God, born of a virgin, the God-Man, mighty to save. The only authorized Savior of humanity (Acts 4:12). Jesus' birth was also a humble birth. The birth process is really a humiliating experience. Aren't you glad that God did not send an angel or a committee to save us? I certainly am. He came as a baby to be born like us, to identify with us in that humiliating experience. To add to that humble birth, he was not born in a spacious palace but in a smelly stable. In birth, Jesus has identified with every human being on the face of this earth. We came into this world naked without anything and that is the way Jesus came (II Cor. 8:9). Lastly, Jesus' birth was a homeless birth. You see, Mary and Joseph had traveled from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is Bethlehem. They had gone to pay their taxes. But while away from home Jesus was born - homeless in a stable. For every homeless person the world over God identifies with you. My dear Christian brother and sister I believe that Jesus wants us to have compassion and love the homeless. There are millions living on our streets, under bridges, in cars, tents, in appliance boxes, under park benches and various places. The birth of our dear Lord Jesus reminds us that life is all about His creation. He came to save. May we, this Christmas, renew our commitment to sacrifice and serve Christ by loving and serving some of His children.

RARE KIDS; WELL DONE
By Don Jacobsen

We've talked before in this column about affirmation, and how it is different from flattery. Flattery is when I compliment someone for what I can get out of them. Maybe like, "You're the best dad in the world; oh, and can I borrow the car keys?"

Affirmation is when I see a trait in you that is truly admirable and I want you to know that I am impressed with what I see. The reason for my comment is: I know that people tend to live up to the reputation we give them.

Let me tell you the amazing story of Bob Danzig. A few simple words of affirmation changed his life. By the time he was 13 Bobby had lived in five foster homes. As he recalls, he spent his childhood looking for someone who would love him and appreciate him.

When he was 9, he was assigned a new social worker. On their first meeting she sat him down, looked directly into his eyes and said, "Bobby, I want you always to remember the words I am going to say to you: You are valuable!"

No one had ever said anything like that to him before, and each time he would meet Mrs. Everett she would say it again. It became an affirmation of worth that echoed

again and again in his mind.

Bobby graduated from high school at the age of sixteen, not because he was smart, but because his name got mixed up in the school's record system. He took a job as copy boy at the Albany, New York, Times; his first boss was a woman named Margaret.

About three months passed and one day Margaret called him into her office. He was sure he was going to be fired. Margaret looked him in the eyes and said, "I have been office manager here for 15 years...I have been observing you...and I believe you are full of promise."

Those simple words planted a dream, a desire to excel, in Bobby's heart. It would give him the courage to be the very best he could be.

Sixteen years later he became Publisher of the Albany, New York, Times, and seven years after that he became President of Hearst Newspapers, one of the largest newspaper companies in the world. Bob Danzig credits the motivation for his success to those simple words of affirmation. Which of your kids needs your affirmation today?

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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