

perspective

CONGRESS shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

(First Amendment to The U.S. Constitution)



Publisher: Cody Sossamon
(cody@gaffneyledger.com)

Executive Editor: Klonie Jordan

Advertising Director: Robert Martin

Col. Ed H. DeCamp 1865-1952
F.W. Sossamon, Sr. 1887-1979
Louis C. Sossamon 1921-

NEWS STAFF

Joe L. Hughes II: Features
Scott Powell: Education
Tim Gulla: Police/Courts
Larry Hilliard: Sports, Government
Laura Parker: Lifestyles

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

In County: 3 months \$15; 6 months \$28; 1 year \$50.
NC & SC: 3 months \$25; 6 months \$41; 1 year \$75.
Outside The Carolinas: 3 months \$31; 6 months \$47; 1 year \$83.
Law Enforcement: 1 year \$28.
Students: 9 months \$36; Schools: 9 months \$41.

LETTERS POLICY

1. Each letter submitted must be an original — no photocopies. E-mails are also accepted if a name and phone number is included: editor@gaffneyledger.com
2. Letters should include the writer's name, address and day and evening telephone numbers.
3. Letters should be submitted exclusively to this newspaper.
4. Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity.
5. Letters submitted in all-italic or all-capital letters will not be accepted.

We will not print letters:
— That are unsigned;
— That contain questionable or undocumented facts;
— That contain inappropriate attacks on a person or persons;
— Regarding disputes between the writer and other parties;
— Endorsing a business.

Our mailing address is: P.O. Box 670, Gaffney, S.C. 29342.

IF YOU MISS YOUR PAPER

Here at The Gaffney Ledger, since 1894, our newspaper delivery goal has always been the complete satisfaction of our readers.

Despite our taking exhaustive measures to prevent it, a newspaper delivery will occasionally be missed. Papers are sometimes picked up by the wrong person or by a dog, or they are missed due to some other unavoidable occurrence.

With this in mind, we have developed the following standard policy for late delivery of your Gaffney Ledger.

— We guarantee same-day delivery of your Gaffney Ledger if the problem is reported to us by 5 p.m.

— You can call at any time after 5 p.m. to report a missing paper via our answering machine and your paper will be delivered the next day by noon.

— We will deliver your Gaffney Ledger on the following business day by 11 a.m. if the missing paper is reported by 9 a.m. on that day.

After that, you have the choice of:
— Having the paper delivered with the next day's paper, or
— Crediting your account for the cost of the missing paper.

If you have any questions about this policy or if you have any problems with the delivery of your newspaper, please let us know. We are here to serve our readers.

CORRECTIONS

The Gaffney Ledger makes every effort to ensure all information in this publication is accurate and thorough.

However, in the event an error is made, it is this newspaper's policy to correct the error as soon as possible.

If you find a mistake, please notify the editor by calling 864 489-1131. Please be ready to tell us the page number and story in which the error appears.

ATTENTION POSTMASTER

The Gaffney Ledger, established Feb. 16, 1894 (USPS 212-760) is published three times weekly by The Gaffney Ledger, Inc., 1604 Baker Blvd., Gaffney, S.C. Periodicals postage paid at Gaffney, S.C.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Gaffney Ledger, P.O. Box 670, Gaffney, S.C. 29342.

LEDGER READERS ON THE ROAD



Fred, Amanda and Daniel Knowles have been to Hell and back this year, and they took the Ledger with them! Literally! They visited Hell in Grand Cayman on a recent cruise. On your next trip out of town, take a copy of The Ledger along and send a picture of yourself or your group reading the newspaper to: cody@gaffneyledger.com.

LETTERS

Puppies, kittens enjoy Christmas miracle

Dear Editor:

Two of Cherokee County's animal welfare organizations joined forces Dec. 15, to make a Christmas miracle for local unwanted puppies and kittens, taking them to Michigan where they will be adopted.

Judy Wyles, founder of Project Zero, a local limited-entry pet rescue, is a member of www.911petrescue.com, an online message board for people and organizations all over the U.S. and Canada who want to save lives and stop animal cruelty. Judy read a call for Southern puppies and kittens from one of the board's administrators, Shari Wilcox, who volunteers weekly for her local Humane Society of Huron Valley. Shari had been given the go-ahead by shelter management to bring puppies and kittens between 8 and 12 weeks of age which were also healthy and adoptable into their facility.

Judy was able to find nine puppies that the owner didn't want to take to the shelter, but who wasn't going to have much of a choice as they got older and less adoptable. Working with Cherokee County Animal Shelter staff, Judy took all the small kittens there and quarantined them Dec. 7. The receiving shelter could take up to 15 kittens, so the search expanded.

A local woman who was fostering some kittens from the Cherokee County shelter offered to drive to Richmond, KY, to meet Shari halfway. A few other kittens were taken in from folks who were unable to care for them and all the babies were given their first vaccinations, dewormings and received interstate health certificates from a local veterinarian prior to transport.

The Humane Society of Cherokee County recently brought its cargo van back to Gaffney. The board of directors had agreed for the past two years to loan the van to Carolina Poodle Rescue for the primary purpose of bringing dogs rescued from puppy mills to the appropriate breed-specific rescues for their rehabilitation and re-homing. The Humane Society of Cherokee County offered the use of this van for the transport, and will make it available for similar efforts to save local pets in the future.

Project Zero and the Humane Society (with a new seven-member board) have agreed to work together to maximize the life-saving services this county needs for its unwanted pets. This Christmas miracle will hopefully expand into a year-round effort to help save more of the shelter pets from the current 68 percent euthanization rate (Cherokee

County Animal Shelter records for 2006) and to reduce future shelter animal intake by offering extremely low-cost sterilization to local pet owners to prevent unwanted litters.

A combination of cooperative rescue efforts, affordable spay/neuter programs, weekend and offsite adoption hours, a strong foster care program, active and motivated volunteers, with a professional shelter management team has proved to be effective across the nation during the past 10 years as a way to reduce the deaths of adoptable pets to less than 10 percent, and the expense of animal shelters to the taxpayers. Working together, these goals can be realized by the City of Gaffney and Cherokee County during the next fiscal year.

Sarah Shiflett
President
Humane Society of Cherokee County
Judy Wyles
Founder
Project Zero, LLC

Says county councilman has false concerns over substation

Dear Editor:

I am writing in response to the recent article concerning the staffing of the East Gaffney Fire Department Substation, which in my opinion, once again demonstrates the FALSE concerns provided by council members about our public service agencies.

Firefighters at the Gaffney Departments are highly trained and skilled at their profession. In order to maintain those high level certifications, many instances are required to attend continuing education classes at the main station and in their immediate area, or did you stop long enough to think, that they may be out on a call, testing hydrants, conducting public awareness classes, etc.

If the departments are not staffed to the satisfaction of residents, or council members, then appropriate more money to salaries and manpower, instead of planting flowers around the county, or raising council members' salaries.

As I said, Gaffney's firefighters are very highly trained and skilled at their profession. We should feel lucky to have them. They are all dedicated to helping others, as is our EMS, and law enforcement.

Do your homework before you criticize those who do the job that you can't, or won't, do yourself. Or even better, take a moment to thank them for all they do for us.

Respectfully,
James Bolton
Gaffney, S.C.

THEIR VIEW

Why do we even have a state board?

The initial reaction to the State Board of Education's decision to elect a home-schooling mom as its next chairwoman at times has bordered on hysteria.

We admit we have some concerns about the selection of someone who supports vouchers and campaigned so actively against the election of the education superintendent with whom the board should work closely. But while the way Kristin Maguire has chosen to educate her own children does raise questions about her commitment to public education, that alone should not disqualify her from the position.

Ms. Maguire is by all accounts a smart, hardworking member of the board. ...

Still, Ms. Maguire's election reminds us of a question that doesn't get asked nearly as often as it should: Why, exactly, is it that we have a State Board of Education? ...

To the extent that the board serves a purpose, it's to diffuse the accountability of the elected education superintendent — who in turn diffuses the accountability of the elected governor. And those are bad things. Even if we never let the governor appoint the superintendent (and we should), we at least should eliminate the board, and make education policy a bit more accountable to the public.

The (Columbia) State

LEDGER COLUMNIST

Some items that appear to be hot in more ways than one

It goes without saying that stolen merchandise is "hot" property.

But I'm beginning to wonder if stolen merchandise can be "hot" in more ways than one.

For about five years before I joined the staff of The Gaffney Ledger as a police and courts reporter, I earned my living as a business and personal finance writer. That meant telling people how to save a buck, grow a buck and spend a buck more wisely.

Professional and insurance liabilities always precluded me from ever being able to recommend specific investments. I was not part of a big team that could dive into the finances of hundreds or thousands of companies and make really educated guesses on which stocks represented the best bets.

Besides, how could I as a person with an admittedly horrible track record in stock investments ever tell people where they should put their money? Unless you consider them priceless works of art worthy of being hung on a wall, my absolutely worthless stock certificates from USAirways — from before the airline's first of two bankruptcies this decade — were proof enough I had no business telling anyone where to place their cash.

But just like you can't take the thrill of the hunt out of an old hound, I still can't stop thinking about investments and where I can either score big or lose cash once again.

Which leads me back to stolen merchandise and "hot" property.

I'm not talking about stealing to make a quick buck. I, like the vast majority of residents in Cherokee County, work darn hard for my pay and would have it no other way.

No, what I'm really talking about is getting ahead of the curve.

Some of the biggest gains in the stock market occur when investors get in on the ground floor of the next big thing.

Who's the maker of that gotta-have "gizmo" on everyone's Christmas list this year or the maker of those "whatchamacallits" the kids have to have?

What would Paris Hilton describe as "so hot" that young teens would rush to malls?

Why didn't I buy Microsoft back in the 1980s? I'm not really smart enough to get ahead of trends and make a buck on them. My clothes are always a decade behind the times. My pants are baggy because my belly requires a pant size that is disproportionate to the size of my legs, not because of a fashion statement.

Upon my daily tasks of perusing police reports at the Gaffney Police Department and the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office, however, I stumbled upon a completely stupid idea.

If crooks are stealing something, the stolen item must be in demand! And something that is stolen generally has to be replaced, leading to market activity!

Yeah, like I said, it is a stupid idea. Police reports shows just about anything that isn't bolted down, and even some things that are bolted down, can get pilfered in today's society.

1.) Newport cigarettes — I don't know what it is about menthol cancer sticks but Newport cigarettes literally have been flying off the shelves. I can recite the Surgeon General's warnings on cigarettes, but I really can't say if they're a good investment bet or not. I'll leave that one up to you.

2.) Copper — With sky-high scrap metal prices this non-precious metal has been disappearing from homes and HVAC units. That leads to an interesting question. Would you play the investment game with copper in the makers of copper wire or pipes, with the producers of raw copper or copper mines, or with a publicly-traded scrap dealer?

3.) Women's purses — It doesn't matter whether the purse is a Gucci or a faux leather bag of unknown make and dubious fashion sense. If you leave one sitting in your car, you seem to be asking for trouble. Not only will the purse owner have to replace a purse, and likely a car window, they'll also have to get new wallets, new keys, new driver's licenses, new credit cards, new photos, new makeup and whatever else the average woman might store in there.

4.) Christmas decorations — The theft of these items always catches my eye. A newspaper person can see "Grinch" in the headline before the story is written. There are missing decoration reports out there for Santas, both inflatable and hard plastic, as well as for lights and electrical cords. Since you can't extinguish the spirit of Christmas, it's more than likely all of those decorations will be replaced with something bigger, better and more costly by next Christmas.

So what's hot? I really, truthfully, don't know. The last thing stolen from me was a magnetic Penn State Nittany Lion paw print adorning the tailgate of my pickup. It was valuable to me because I'm a fan of "Linebacker U." I was unable to see an upside from an investment



Tim GULLA

LEDGER STAFF WRITER

If crooks are stealing something, the stolen item must be in demand! And something that is stolen generally has to be replaced, leading to market activity!
Yeah, like I said, it is a stupid idea.
Police reports shows just about anything that isn't bolted down, and even some things that are bolted down, can get pilfered in today's society.