

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)



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LETTERS POLICY

- Each letter submitted must be an original — no photocopies. E-mails are also accepted if a name and phone number is included: editor@gaffneyletter.com
- Letters should include the writer's name, address and day and evening telephone numbers.
- Letters should be submitted exclusively to this newspaper.
- Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity.
- 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

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HAVE YOU CONSIDERED ...

Not ashamed to show emotions

It was dusk and I noticed the outside lights begin to turn on. I reached into my briefcase and took out a book. Reading would help pass the hour I had between flights at the airport in Louisville, Kent. It would be a nice quiet time to read for there were only two others in the gate waiting room.

I had read only several pages when a group of about 25 people entered. They congregated in one end of the room, some seated, some standing talking in small groups and others milling from one to another.

This group captivated my attention. It required little imagination to figure out this scenario. They were all one family with several generations represented from the elderly to a babe in arms. They had all come to see someone off, but it was not until later that I knew who was leaving. The hum of conversation was occasionally interrupted by loud weeping as everyone went over to hug and kiss a woman, appearing to be around 30 years old, and two children, probably 7 and 9. Again they would mingle talking with each other, but soon the weeping, hugging and kissing would begin anew as they spontaneously moved toward the woman and two children. This continued for the entire hour.

I was deeply moved but also puzzled. To what far off place could this mother and children be going? Africa? Europe? Some distant place in the Far East? And how long would they be gone? With such a farewell as this, surely they were facing years of separation.

I was so absorbed in observing and empathizing with this family only the voice on the loud speaker made me realize my flight was loading.

Picking up my briefcase, I put my coat



Dr. French O'Shields

over my arm and started toward the door. My curiosity was still soaring. On the way to the door I walked through part of the family, approached a teenage girl and asked, "Where are your relatives going?"

"All the way to North Carolina, and for three whole months!" she answered brokenly through her sobs.

Her answer shocked me. On the inside I was smiling from relief, but on the outside I dared not. The answer made me more impressed. To this family, separation was

not a matter of distance or time, it was a matter of the heart.

I remember another airport scene as a young soldier said goodbye to his wife as he left for overseas. Grown men who watched brushed a tear from their eyes.

There is also the joy of airport reunions. In Mexico City I entered the lobby from the arrival gates and will not forget what I saw. The crowded area was high with excitement as Mexicans were reunited with loved ones with uninhibited expressions of emotion, so typical of the Latin Americans. In Florida I saw tears of joy flow down the faces of grandparents as grandchildren ran into their outstretched arms.

Some people don't like to wait in airports. I don't mind at all. It is one of the few places left where people aren't ashamed to show their emotions.

In a world where any display of emotion is looked upon as a sign of weakness, to be human is seen as a sign of ignorance, to be genuine is considered a lack of sophistication, and warmth a lack of nobility — the display of emotions is indeed refreshing.

(Dr. French O'Shields is a Gaffney native and a retired Presbyterian minister.)

INSIDE REPORT

ATTORNEY GENERAL EDWARDS?

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Illinois Democrats close to Sen. Barack Obama are quietly passing the word that John Edwards will be named attorney general in an Obama administration.

Installation at the Justice Department of multimillionaire trial lawyer Edwards would please not only the union leaders supporting him for president but organized labor in general. The unions relish the prospect of an unequivocal labor partisan as the nation's top legal officer.

In public debates, Obama and Edwards often seem to bond together in alliance against front-running Sen. Hillary Clinton. While running a poor third, Edwards could collect a substantial bag of delegates under the Democratic Party's proportional representation. Edwards then could try to turn his delegates over to Obama in the still unlikely event of a deadlocked Democratic National Convention.

HELPING MCCAIN

Private overnight polls after Fred Thompson's withdrawal from the presidential race Tuesday showed a bump for Sen. John McCain in Florida's Republican primary Jan. 29.

Thompson did not endorse McCain, even though the former Senate colleagues are on close terms with each other. Nevertheless, McCain appears to have picked up much of Thompson's Florida voter support and now leads Mitt Romney and Rudy Giuliani in the last primary before Mega Tuesday Feb. 5.

The withdrawal of Tennessee Thompson leaves Mike Huckabee, the former governor of Arkansas, as the last remaining Southerner in the Florida primary. However, Huckabee sacrificed hope of picking up Thompson's voters when he announced his cash-starved campaign was abandoning Florida and concentrating on Feb. 5, especially the Georgia primary.



ROBERT NOVAK

NO EARMARK TALK

Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell completely shut down any negative talk about earmarks during the closed-door Senate GOP retreat Wednesday at the Library of Congress, rejecting demands by anti-earmark reformers.

Sen. Ted Stevens, the senior Republican senator and former Appropriations Committee chairman who is under federal criminal investigation, delivered a pro-earmark lecture. He was seconded by two other appropriators, Robert Bennett and Kit Bond.

A footnote: The House Republican retreat at the Greenbrier resort, starting Thursday, scheduled a full-scale debate on earmarks. There was little chance, however, for the GOP congressmen to pass a quarantine on Republican members requesting earmarks this year.

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LEDGER COLUMNIST

Shut up and eat your green beans

If you'll pardon the dangling preposition, I've always believed that you get what you pay for.

That's not to say that I'm opposed to buying items on sale. I'm as likely as the next person to scoop up a marked-down item, providing it isn't damaged or has otherwise been presented to shoppers in a mendacious manner.

Why, if they were to, say, mark down Callaway golf balls, for example, to half-price, I would stockpile as many as logistically and financially practical.

But the trouble with sales, at least from the way I see it, is they very seldom have discounts on things that I routinely buy or WOULD BUY if I found one or more in my price range. There are a lot of things on sale, but not many that appeal to me.

I often poke fun at my wife and her mother for having, shall we say, an obsessively frugal outlook on the great American art of consumerism. They aren't buying anything unless it's on sale.

Momma Fizer can sniff out a bargain like a thoroughbred hound (and I mean that in the most glowing terms of endearment). Her daughter has a similar inclination to locate things in ye olde bargain bins but pursues them via a different strategy, something I like to call the dart-here-and-yonder method. She will, I tell folks, drive 100 miles to get 4 cents off a can of green beans. This is, of course, an exaggeration. On the other hand, it realistically demonstrates her sincerity about paying less than retail.

I don't care for driving around looking for bargains. I could go into any grocery store and buy the same items in 30 minutes that it takes her four hours to find. The catch is this — I would pay 20 to 40 percent more. But — SAY IT WITH ME MEN — it ain't about the price, it's about the convenience. We don't care how much things cost as long as we can get them quickly and efficiently and get back home in time to watch the basketball highlights on the noon SportsCenter that we saw on the other eleventhundred SportsCenters earlier in the day and the night before.

"Money is just dirty paper," I tell the missus. "They're going to make more."

She hates that. She scoffs at my fiduciary perspective whilst snatching my paycheck from my hand. "Just sign this," she demands. "Now shut up and eat your discount green beans."

Some day I'm going to have them just forward my paycheck to her and cut out the middle man.

One must understand that the things we really want seldom go on sale and often they are very expensive. For instance, I've wanted a BMW R1200 motorcycle for the longest time and while they've probably had an occasion or two when there was some sort of promotion, I haven't really seen them put that particular bike on sale. And if they did ever put it on sale — it would have to be A REALLY GOOD SALE, if you know what I mean.

Oh, I could just go buy one and pay the full price. After all, like I said at the outset of this column, you get what you pay for. If I bought that bike and got it like I wanted it with a few (pricey) extras, I would have to write the good folks at the Bavarian Motor Works a check somewhere in the neighborhood of \$20,000. The only problem is that my wife told me to stay out of that neighborhood. She doesn't even want me visiting in that neighborhood.

If I ever went and bought that bike, I would do it as a divorced man because I'm purt near positive the missus would frown mightily on such a development. She just doesn't want me to be happy, I reckon. She'd say something like, "You know what BMW stands for? It stands for 'Beating Men Wildly.' That's what it stands for. You want to ride a bike? Get your fat butt in there and sit it down on that exercise bike. That's the bike you SHOULD be riding."

Oh, I could ignore her, but I'd have to give her half my stuff in the settlement. And I've got some nice stuff. So, let's see — a new BMW motorcycle or all my stuff? I think you know the wise choice there.

And then sometimes things ought to be free. I know they say there's no such thing as a free lunch. Well, I don't want a free lunch. You know what I do want?

Free air. The other day I stopped at a gas station to gauge the tires on my car and inflate them to the proper pressure and they charged me 75 cents for air.

FOR AIR!
THEY CHARGED ME FOR AIR!
This is an outrage. They expect me to pay around \$3 a gallon for gas and then stick me with a fee for air on top of that?

What's happening in this country?
The next thing you know, they'll be putting water in bottles and charging us for that and ...

... Oh yeah.
Never mind.

Klonie Jordan (editor@gaffneyletter.com) is executive editor of The Gaffney Ledger.