

News

YOUR TURN

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The West Bay section of The Providence Journal welcomes letters to the editor. Commentary pieces that focus on topics of regionwide interest also will be considered for publication.

Letters can be sent to the Journal's West Bay bureau, 20 Altieri Way, Unit 4, Warwick, RI 02886, or e-mailed to wbnews@projo.com. Letters should be no longer than 300 words and double-spaced. Letters and commentaries accepted for publication might be edited for clarity and length.

CRANSTON

Using flags to promote agency is disgraceful

On this recent Memorial Day weekend, I had the pleasure of opening my front door and seeing an American flag planted on every lawn on my street. I was overwhelmed that someone took the time to remember our fallen servicemen and women in such a meaningful way.

My feeling of pride turned to disgust when I noticed that a business card was attached to each and every flag. In fact, the flag planting was a promotional display for a sales associate for DeWolfe Realty in an effort to boost her sales. Then I thought of the classmates of my father lost on Omaha Beach. I also thought of a gentleman I work with every day who piloted a landing craft on that same beach and transported troops to the beach for the entire day in the midst of blood, death and fire.

Then I thought of this real estate agent who had no sense of history or respect for the dead.

Stephen J. Ryan

Cranston

EAST GREENWICH

Town Meeting a sorry day for residents

Having spent the Memorial Day weekend in Washington, D.C., as an aging veteran, my emotions swung back and forth from pride to sadness. I visited the Vietnam Wall and shed a tear. I visited the Arlington National Cemetery and the Iwo Jima Monument and shed a tear. I was euphoric while in attendance at Rolling Thunder but shed a tear.

From Washington, D.C., I traveled to Virginia Beach for several more days and on my last night there I caught Mel Gibson in The Patriot on HBO.

Arriving home on Friday, June 1, I was not only recharged mentally and physically but my sense of patriotism was at an all-time high! This lasted for about two days, until I had the misfortune to attend our local horse-and-pony show, a.k.a. the East Greenwich Financial Town Meeting.

Talk about divisive! As events transpired at the FTM I suddenly realized that the continuous pulsating sound that was enveloping the gathering was not the collective heartbeat of the Town Council and School Committee, but our illustrious town founding fathers rolling over in their graves.

The FTM was run by the chameleon, Town Moderator John Wolcott, who gives new meaning to the expression going off on a tangent. The FTM was conducted in accordance with Wolcott's Rules of Order. Based on their performance, I graded the various participants as follows:

480 Ready Voters: A-plus

Mike Lenihan: A

Town Council Manager: C

School Committee: C-minus

Town Moderator: D

Teachers' Cabal: F-minus

The latter group could not have embarrassed themselves or our town any more than they did that Sunday. It begs the question,

how does one tell the difference between some of the resident teachers and the juveniles in the East Greenwich school system?

Having just spent time in the shadows of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln, I now found myself in the shadows of weasels, jellyfish, and minions. I had met the enemy and they were us. Forget about the casting call for Patriot Two, guys and girls.

Honorable citizens came to vote. A quorum was established. No vote occurred! I guess some people stand by the strength of their convictions and others have no convictions; like deserters they cut and run. I was there to vote regardless of the outcome and was denied this right, by the likes of some who must still believe in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny based on the Godlike esteem in which they hold the Town Council and School Committee.

Personally, I feel that Sunday was a sorry day for our town and its citizenry. Upon leaving the high school, I shed a tear.

Dave Zartarian

East Greenwich

CRANSTON

Voters should remove Stycos from committee

Cranston School Committeeman Steve Stycos is clearly a disgrace to his community and to the nation. Using his disapproval of America's participation in the Vietnam War as an excuse, he refuses to join his colleagues in the recitation of the pledge of allegiance at the beginning of School Committee meetings. In a blatant display of hypocrisy, he stands silently, not even placing his hand over his heart.

One wonders about this fellow. The Vietnam War is long over. It will take many years for history to come to final conclusions about the conflict. Most of the participants, on all philosophical sides, have seen fit to move on to other issues.

How long does Stycos plan to continue this anachronistic protest?

In any case, a person who treats our national pledge with such disdain, such disrespect, has no business whatever being a member of a committee that is instrumental in setting School Department policies. To merely say that he sets a poor example for the children he has been elected to serve is an understatement.

As a veteran of the Army and a former teacher at Cranston High School East, I must register my disgust with this person. I sincerely and enthusiastically hope and pray that the voters of Cranston will remove this individual from office as soon as possible.

Cranston is a fine community; it does not need- nor does it deserve a person like Steve Stycos in a position of leadership.

Norbert Lachmann

Warwick

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