

EDITORIAL
LETTERS, FAXES & E-MAIL

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Inmates never pay for calls; someone does

Dear Editor,

After reading your editorial last Sunday, it occurred to me you have missed one important fact - the inmates themselves never pay a phone bill. It is the innocent family member, child, parent, wife, etc. who is burdened with the outrageous charges levied by the phone companies and state. I divorced my ex-husband when my daughter was 1 1/2. She used to spend summers and every other Christmas with him since we lived in different states.

He was incarcerated in 1990 when she was only 6. I do not speak to him personally and have no desire to; however, every month I pay \$20 to \$40 for one or two brief phone calls he places to my daughter. Some people would say "refuse the call, refuse the charges," but they do not have a beautiful little girl crying because you won't let her daddy call. So, ultimately I am the one who pays dearly for what I feel is a simple right of a child to know her parent. They do write each other, but she looks forward to those phone calls every month as a way to know her father.

Jody Grimmitt

Chatham

Angel statue stolen from father's headstone

Dear Editor,

In February of this year, my Dad passed away. He was buried in Bethany Cemetery, which has the distinction of being the first organized burial ground in Christian County, and is now a peaceful country cemetery located on the banks of Sangchris Lake. By Memorial Day, Dad's headstone had been installed, and I placed a kneeling angel statue on his grave. To me it was symbolic that even though I may not visit his grave often, I would be there in spirit, just as he is always with me in my heart and prayers.

On this - my first Father's Day in 52 years without him - I visited his grave. The angel was gone! It took me several minutes to realize it was not behind the headstone, nor accidentally moved to another grave, but it had been stolen! There is a part of our society who will always prey on the most innocent and vulnerable - the young, the mentally and physically challenged, the infirm and elderly, and now I must assume the deceased. I pray God will forgive this very troubled soul for his cowardly act.

In the meantime, I hope this angel brings him the same peace it brought me, but I doubt that it will.

Patricia Baletto Howard

Kincaid

Toddler doesn't belong in lap while driving

Dear Editor,

I want to address this to a lady with a large, red luxury car. I don't know what you were thinking by allowing the toddler with you to sit in your lap and steer the car. You beamed at me proudly as you passed by me. And then when I left, you were going around again. This is not a child's game.

The choice you made to allow this to happen was poor on so many different levels. You put the child in danger through a possible accident. He was not wearing a seat belt. In all probability he would have been killed if the air bag activated. You may have injured others. In addition, you have shown the child how to operate the car, which he may try to do on his own. Do you not remember the children who died after getting into a hot car last summer?

Lastly, you have shown the child that rules do not apply to everyone. You have broken the law and endangered the safety of a child and others, but now the child thinks this type of activity is simply a game. He needs and deserves more from you.

I hope you will think before you act in the future.

Jill Steiner

Springfield

Some strategy to combat high gasoline prices

Dear Editor,

I wonder why we don't hear the cries of 1974 when the price of motor fuel went through the roof. It was buy a more fuel-efficient car, carpool, one-trip shopping to conserve fuel.

I suppose that the reason is that there is no gasoline shortage as is being blamed for at least a portion of the price hike. To confirm that, I have not seen any signs posted at service stations saying "Out of Gas."

My advice to the people of Springfield and the surrounding communities is to curtail your driving as much as possible. If you limit the demand, the supply will grow quickly and the price will come down due to competition among the service station operators.

As an added note, you don't see the price of diesel fuel going up. The reason is that they know the truckers will bury them if they try that again.

Don Ushman

Springfield

More people involved in decision-making is best

Dear Editor,

It's clear Illinois and our local government have room for improvement, so voluntary efficiency should be encouraged. Yet, a recent editorial indicated a democracy should want fewer politicians per capita. It's true we would all prefer to have more leaders, but even politicians bring different viewpoints to the table, which helps keep our society balanced.

Fewer viewpoints and ideas participating at the decision table increase the odds of a bad and/or costly decision. In a democracy, we should strive to find new ways to involve more citizens in decision-making, including decisions about how to make government more efficient.

George Gore

Chatham

Businesses try to help as many people as possible

Dear Editor,

I was stunned to read how something good could be turned into a topic of priorities. A few weeks ago we helped a young boy replace his Pokemon cards, and it was the right thing to do at that time. My staff and I took this personally.

A lot of readers and customers are not aware of all the organizations and events that we support each year in our community. Like other businesses, we cannot reach out to all organizations. But, we must make good business decisions and hope we can help as many people as possible.

We are very proud to have made an agreement to be the sponsor of the State of Illinois 4-H food drive that will kick off around Aug. 1.

We would like all of our customers and your readers to help support this wonderful event. More details will be released soon.

Brian Mateer

Store director

Springfield Toys R Us

It would be nice to see more U.S. flags flown

Dear Editor,

The Fourth of July is a time of the year when we should all take a few minutes out of our busy schedules to reflect on the freedoms that we have in this great nation of ours and the sacrifices that many made to secure those freedoms. Our national flag is a symbol of not only those freedoms, but also a somber reminder of the sacrifices of our forefathers.

While driving around Springfield it seemed like there were fewer American flags flying than there have been in the past. We did however, noticed a lot of other flags flying. We saw everything from strawberries to sunrises on flags flying from people's porches. We would like to express our thanks to those who saw fit to fly Old Glory from their porches and lawns. We would like to also thank Ms. Judy Burgess of Coldwell Banker Realty. Ms. Burgess took the time and expense to ensure that every home in the Harrison Park subdivision had a small American Flag flying in the yard. It was quite a sight to see!

We would also like to thank the anonymous Marine that we saw at the Korean and Viet Nam war memorials. He marched to each memorial, stood at attention, and somberly saluted at each memorial.

Tom and Leanne Blackburn

Springfield

Caption: Clara Frye, the retired postmaster of Lowder, always started the day by raising the American flag at her home.

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