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Letters to the editor

Struggling older moms deserve better times

Thinking of moms as Mothers' Day approaches, it weighs heavily knowing that so many mothers are having a tough go this year. It isn't like when my mama was alive, working in the fields, milking cows, canning, whatever it took to feed us. Hopefully, times that severe and depressing will never return.

Today, older women who are left alone, living on meager Social Security or small "pensions" left by their deceased husbands, are desperately trying to survive on \$10,000 to \$12,000 a year. I've observed older women working in laundries, bagging groceries. I saw one lady who had to squint to see the cash register numbers. More are caregivers or companions, clean houses, prepare meals, walk dogs - anything to pay the bills. Often food is sacrificed to buy their medications. And no, not all medications are free or affordable.

I appreciate and compliment those business owners and individuals who give our moms a chance for independence. The moms I know are too proud to give up or to take your money for nothing. Maybe next year will be better for those of us who are still around.

*Dottie Favorite
Palmetto*

TE info release wrong

I'm certain that all of you are now aware of the "Sunshine Laws" that have become such an issue in Trailer Estates. Please know I firmly agree with the concept of the law. Open government is crucial to a democracy. However, when the spirit of the law is abused for a purely personal agenda I am concerned.

Recently, on the "adamant, you must do it" advice of our attorneys, our office manager was required to print out over 60 pages about our 1,200-plus homes, the resident names, addresses, and northern addresses, without their permission, for one of our dissident residents. By law we may not ask the reasons nor the persons name requesting the information. All this pertinent information is now out on the street, potentially available for every scam artist, trash mailer, or criminal to utilize.

I'm certain it has a reasonable market price since it provides a road map for those wishing to know whether or not a home is occupied during the summer months. I can't have my full name even called out in a dentist office because of privacy laws. Will the next request be for all the ages of our residents so the crooks will know what 90-year old is living alone? I bet it will be.

To cover this lapse of security another member is requesting that we put barbed wire on the tops of our few fences to prevent the bad guys from climbing over. We are an open community with county streets and the major threat of fence climbers probably would come from a church on U.S. 41. I can see the necessity in preventing the hordes of Sunday worshipers from storming over our fences to do whatever it is that they do after church on Sundays. However, that really does stretch the concept of separation of church and state.

I now understand how those poor people of Prince Rupert Sound felt when the Exxon Valdez came in and dumped all its ooze and pollution into their community. This is really an ongoing not-so-funny comedy or else we have a major outbreak of "mad cow" disease among a few of our residents.

*Janet VanderMolen
Bradenton*

TE board in violation

RE: Trailer Estates. I just read the May 1 letter to the editor. I find it interesting that the author does not cite any specifics. I have to ask the question: What were the statements that I made to the newspaper reporter that were not true? I did not speak of unpopular decisions by this board. I speak of unlawful actions.

A current example is sending out the audit and budget in the same mailing. I would hope that someone would read the charter, bylaws and Sunshine Laws and explain how that happened without a public discussion. I would like to know how it works with the language of the charter. I am a firm believer in this charter. I have never advocated changing the charter. That suggestion was made by a trustee. I advocate that at least the trustees read the charter. I think for others in the park, it would give them a lot of information before they blindly follow it. It is very sad that our residents simply parrot the views of others without taking the time to find out the facts.

I certainly believe in this person's right to their opinion. I do not agree that an opinion based on hearsay and innuendos is the best basis for an opinion.

The author speaks of the people that do not agree and states that they should run for the board. I think this paper has experienced first hand what happens if you say anything that this board does not approve of. We receive the same treatment. It is fortunate that you do not have to live with them.

I am fully aware of the stories that are spread around this park with no basis in fact. A good example is the statements made regarding damage to private property. If, in fact, anyone has material evidence in an open police investigation, that person has an obligation to report it to the police. Why don't you ask those spreading that rumor if they have provided their proof to the police? If not, why not?

The vicious rumors will destroy everyone. The rumors harm the ones spreading just as they do the ones that they are smearing.

It would be wonderful to see a fair and honest election here at Trailer Estates. It would be great if residents could address concerns and debate issues.

*Sharon Denson
Alto, Mich. and Bradenton*

Salute means little

I just have to utter a big "amen" to the letter written by Patricia Morgan which appeared in the April 26 Bradenton Herald. The author of the letter to which she was responding apparently puts much more emphasis on form than on substance. The performance of the current administration has been abysmal, but one must admit that President Bush has a snappy salute! So, that shows that he did learn something during his time in the Air National Guard while escaping service in Vietnam.

*Richard Hayworth
Sarasota*

Changing political direction

I just had a thought.

In watching the various candidates for president over the past few years and particularly this year, I have an idea that may be worth considering.

In lieu of vetting the candidate through a political process that is abominable and comes up with less than best qualified, why don't we - as a country and not as a political party - hire a search firm and have anyone who wanted to be considered for president submit their resume for review with the explicit instructions that the search firm should select the top three persons who are deemed to be best qualified by virtue of their background, experience, education and maturity to become the president. Let them select one each for each major party and as an independent and then let the people choose from qualified people.

Our country's future is in our hands. The politicians are not competent to hold that future in their hands. If we keep going in the same direction, in not too many years our country will not be our country as we have grown up to know, love, and value its many virtues, despite its many flaws (caused by those incompetents we elect.)

*George W. Conrad
Bradenton*

Slow down, save gas

After reading Bill O'Reilly's column in April 28 Bradenton Herald, I thought of one way to conserve gasoline: *slow down!*

Driving fast uses more gasoline than driving the speed limit. A jack rabbit take-off wastes gas, and anyway . . . you have to stop for the next red light. When I see this happen, I say to myself when coming up beside such a driver . . . "here comes the turtle."

For people who are of an age to remember war times, we were required to drive at a slower speed to conserve gasoline. Maybe this should be considered now. Remember, we are in a war again.

*Marge Hix
Parrish*