

Bob's Corner

My Christmas Spirit flagged a bit Sunday the 18th at the Medford airport, courtesy of TSA, which supposedly stands for Transportation Security Administration. But I think it also could be short for Terribly Silly Actions, or maybe Troubling Safety Activities.

Am I upset? You bet. Not only as a taxpayer, but as a father and grandfather who had to watch his daughter and two grandchildren undergo a ridiculous search by a TSA employee. Yes, I know that we need to be watchful to screen terrorists or other troublemakers.

But come on -- a 37-year-old woman struggling with her 3-year-old and 6-month-old daughters? With a baby carrier and a stroller. Come on! Now I'm tempted to swear, but I will avoid any undue exclamations.

I have to say that I'm sure TSA employees are "only doing their job," but our baby daughter and grandkids did not deserve the treatment they underwent. For a minimum of 10 minutes, possibly closer to 15, our daughter and her children were minutely examined by a TSA woman employee.



TSA puts suspicious trio through wringer

loved ones off. Vicki had to shift Ella Valentina from one arm to the next five times so her arms and torso could be checked. What would a mom with two kids be packing? Neither Jan nor I could believe what we were seeing. I'm sure that steam was coming off my head to match the sparks from my eyes.

The employee, wearing latex gloves, also carefully checked around Vicki's bra. Twice. Our daughter already had removed her shoes, which is normal. But standing there with Ella, while Natalie sat on a small chair nearby, she also had to undo the front of her jeans so the woman could check there too. Arghh!

Even the baby carrier was examined, and a wand was run over Natalie and the baby, not to mention Vicki. I am still steamed about this excessive examination. Then the woman told Natalie that she was going to get her something. But she never came back.

Plus the guy checking ID at the boarding entrance was about as pleasant as an infected tooth.

So this is not much of a Christmas column, although I wish everyone, including TSA employees, a happy holiday season. I believe that common sense must be used for searches (oops, here I go again).

This is, as usual, a time of emotions and devotions, especially for Christians celebrating the birth of Jesus. I am sort of ready for the Big Day, although finding just the right gifts for spouse and offspring is tricky.

I'm still hopeful that the Christmas Spirit will pervade all of 2006, not just Dec. 25; that the attitude of gratitude will continue; that many will find the Golden Rule their personal jewel; and that there will be a continuing birth of peace on Earth and good will toward men.

Feliz Navidad, you all.

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Letters to the Editor

(Editor's Note: Views and commentary, including statements made as fact, are strictly those of the letter-writers.)

Typed, double-spaced letters written solely to this newspaper are considered for publication. Hand-written letters that are double-spaced and legible also can be considered.

'Thank you' submissions are not accepted as letters.

Negativity of rumors called shameful From Rachael Dudley Cave Junction

Living in a small town has its advantages. I have seen this community rally around sick children, support high school teams, and come to the aid of families in crisis.

In fact, during the holiday season there seems to be a rash of kindness and good cheer. In a town such as ours you can barely get through a day without someone inquiring after your sick mother or asking how your kids are doing in school.

I love the fact that I can go into my bank, and the teller knows my dogs by name and what kind of dog biscuits they like. Things like that just make me smile.

The peace that comes with knowing that if my family were ever in crisis and needed help, the community would probably step up is priceless. I have seen it countless times during the six years I have lived here. It is these qualities that make a community like this so attractive.

On the flip side of this coin is something that makes me heartsick. I am talking about the ugliness of gossip. Gossip tarnishes good reputations, ruins careers, creates suspicions and is a friend to no one.

Gossip can make headlines, cause sleepless nights and generate havoc in a community faster than the fishing story that gets better every time you hear it. This is the oldest trick in the book, the game of telephone. We are all a little guilty of it, and it is our responsibility to tame the beast.

Remember that if you hear it from your teen-age daughter or in the line at a grocery store, it may not be fact. Have you ever tried to track a rumor to its source? Good luck. No one ever claims to be that starting point of half-truths and innuendo.

I appreciate all the kind souls that I have heard say, "You know, that may not be true." They are doing the right thing. And shame on all the people who have nothing better to do with

their time then feed the negativity of gossip.

Deputy, firefighters gain commendation From Thomas and Catharine Ninow Cave Junction

We would like to express appreciation to Deputy Jim Geiger, of Josephine County Sheriff's Office, and the Illinois Valley Fire District volunteers who turned out in response to the 2 a.m. fire call on Caves Avenue Tuesday, Dec. 13.

Geiger held a garden hose on an exposed wall of our mobile home waiting for fire personnel to arrive, pull their hoses and cool down our area, and knock down the blaze.

"Thanks" seems inadequate in view of the complete devastation next door to us. In the aftermath, we can see the damage caused by the extreme heat exposure, and know that we were probably only minutes from combustion.

So many times, it seems all we hear are the complaints, but we would like to publicly commend Deputy Jim Geiger, and the Illinois Valley volunteer firefighters for the jobs they do.

Letters venting hatred will undo civilization From Heather Goodell Cave Junction

Recently deceased is a man who devoted much of his life to the study of religion. As long as I'd known him, he would proclaim the "End of the World" was to come soon. I scoffed at his predictions.

But each time I read our local paper, I realize that my friend was not far off his mark. Only, our end will not come in a ground-shattering and final act, but by a slow demise of human value and morality. And in formalizing insults against others in daily print.

For example, the newspaper publicly crucified our Sheriff Daniel, undermining his professional judgment and worse, allowing town-folk to insult his department via editorials, which they must have seen as a personal vendetta.

Similarly, letters calling women who have abortions "baby killers" and likening them to "Nazis" (letter from John Bazen in "Illinois Valley News" Dec. 14) seems confrontational to me. Those letters should be directed to the court and not the local populations.

It seems as though every time we turn around we are stepping on someone else's toes. It isn't my fault

or yours. I appreciate all of us having the benefit of free speech regardless of who it may offend.

Public forum is the opportunity to share our views with others; it should not be used to vent hatred. That shall be our undoing as a civilized group.

Democrats potentially The House of Quitters From Gregory Anderson Cave Junction

I find it incomprehensible that Democrat leaders Pelosi, Durbin, Kerry, Reid et al. don't realize how much they not only damage the morale of our troops while they denigrate their efforts in Iraq, they encourage our terrorist enemies to keep killing.

Do the liberal elites really believe they can trash their commander-in-chief for their selfish political interests without encouraging the bad guys? Every time these hysterical defeatists call for a pull-out, they are doing the terrorists' bidding.

Do the Democrats want to be known as the cut-and-run party? The party of linguini spines? The House of Quitters?

Frankly, I think the bumper stick that reads, "If you're still voting Democrat, you're stuck on stupid," is a bit indelicate. Ronald Reagan said it much better. He said Democrats are not stupid, it's just that they know so much that isn't true.

The radical leftist extremist super-rich have hijacked the

Democratic party. Loyal American Democrats realize that you can't loath the military and parrot the, "We support our troops" canard.

Now with the economy going gangbusters, if we can get the Republicans to quit spending like Democrats, we will have a shot at getting the country on an even keel.

He's 'still sick and tired' of some aspects From Ryan Wargin Cave Junction

I wrote awhile back about our wonderful town with its bums, tweekers and thieves.

Here's something else I'm sick and tired of: the whole Merry Christmas thing. There is a business here where employees can't say, "Merry Christmas," and it's not a Christmas tree. What kind of crap is that?

It's just like Wal-Mart and other big corporations. Are they afraid of a lawsuit? I can't stand this. Is this the United States of America, the Land of the Free?

I work, pay taxes, play their game and go by their stupid laws. But now I might get looked down on for saying, "Merry Christmas." This is plain nuts.

I guess it's the New World Order, whatever that means.

What's wrong with these people trying to ban this and that? Do they hate Christmas?

As for the business I mentioned earlier, I'm going to take my patronage somewhere else.

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592-3923 for any questions.

Come join us in celebrating Christmas Day.

Why? Jesus loves you!