

Protect your catharsis

Dear Annie: I recently read the letter from A Better Man Today, who was concerned about people reading his personal diary, particularly about his “dark times.”

I agree with your answer but would like to add one more idea. Create a “burn box” and entrust it to someone who will not open it or divulge its contents but will see that it is destroyed upon your death or at your request. I read about this once upon a time and apologize for not recalling the origin. I suspect it was from the military.

I shared this idea with a very dear friend of mine years ago because she also journaled and was concerned about how her children might react to her words and deepest feelings. She created her burn box, sealed it and left instructions that it was to be given to me. I understood that once I received it, I was to burn it.

She may have cleaned it out and destroyed the contents already. I don’t know and don’t need to know at this point. But this may be another way for A Better Man Today to have some peace of mind about his most personal, deepest thoughts. — *Burn Box*

Dear Burn Box: What a clever idea. Thank you

for your suggestion.

Dear Annie: I resisted responding to the first letter you received in regard to eliminating mice, but after reading another on that subject this morning, I decided to add my experience.

When I lived in my previous house, I would get a mouse visitor every so often, so I set out a cage trap. I was delighted to discover that each one I caught had a facial expression and personality all its own. For example, one looked at me with great irritation, and I could almost hear it thinking, “You’ve got some nerve. Just wait till I get out of here”; another was quite afraid and huddled as far away from me as possible; another had a sweet expression and looked at me as if to say it would like to know more about me. I would drive each one to a wooded area away from houses and let them free.

— *Missing My Mice*

Dear Missing My Mice: Your sweet story makes me imagine them like little cartoon characters. Maybe you could write a children’s story about them. All people and animals have unique personalities and characteristics that make them special. It is beautiful you noticed that in little mice.

DEAR ANNIE



ANNIE LANE
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Mississippi to retire flag with Confederate symbol

By EMILY WAGSTER
PETTUS
Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. — Mississippi will retire the last state flag in the U.S. with the Confederate battle emblem, more than a century after white supremacist legislators adopted the design a generation after the South lost the Civil War.

A broad coalition of lawmakers — Black and white, Democrat and Republican — voted Sunday for change as the state faced increasing pressure amid nationwide protests against racial injustice.

Mississippi has a 38% Black population, and critics have said for generations that it’s wrong to have a flag that prominently features an emblem many condemn as racist.

Democratic Sen. David Jordan told his colleagues just before the vote that Mississippi needs a flag that unifies rather than divides.

“Let’s do this because it’s the right thing to do,” Jordan said.

The Senate voted 37-14 to retire the flag, hours after the House voted 91-23.

Cheers rang out in the state Capitol after the Senate vote. Some spectators wept. Legislators embraced each other, many hugging colleagues who were on the opposing side of an issue that has long divided the tradition-bound state.

Republican Gov. Tate Reeves is expected to sign the bill into law in the next few days.

Democratic Rep. Robert Johnson of Natchez choked back tears as he told reporters that he has seen white col-



Rogelio V. Solis/AP Photo
Rep. John Faulkner, D-Holly Springs, right, congratulates Sen. Briggs Hopson, R-Vicksburg, after the Senate voted to change the Mississippi state flag on Sunday.

leagues develop more empathy about how the Confederate symbol is painful to him and other African Americans.

“They began to understand and feel the same thing that I’ve been feeling for 61 years of my life,” Johnson said.

A commission will design a new flag that cannot include the Confederate symbol and that must have the words “In God We Trust.” Voters will be asked to approve the new design in the Nov. 3 election. If they reject it, the commission will set a different design using the same guidelines, and that would be sent to voters later.

Republican House Speaker Philip Gunn, who is white, has pushed for five years to change the flag, saying the Confederate symbol is offensive.

“How sweet it is to celebrate this on the Lord’s day,” Gunn said.

Legislators put the Confederate emblem on the upper

left corner of Mississippi flag in 1894, as white people were squelching political power that African Americans had gained after the Civil War.

In a 2001 statewide election, voters chose to keep the flag. An increasing number of cities and all Mississippi’s public universities have taken down the state flag in recent years. But until now, efforts to redesign the flag sputtered in the Republican-dominated Legislature.

That dynamic shifted as an extraordinary and diverse coalition of political, business, religious groups and sports leaders pushed for change.

At a Black Lives Matter protest outside the Mississippi Governor’s Mansion in early June, thousands cheered as an organizer said the state needs to divorce itself from all Confederate symbols.

Religious groups said erasing the rebel emblem from the state flag is a moral imperative. Notable among them

was the state’s largest church group, the 500,000-member Mississippi Baptist Convention, which called for change last week after not pushing for it before the 2001 election.

Business groups said the banner hinders economic development in one of the poorest states in the nation.

In a sports-crazy culture, the biggest blow might have happened when college sports leagues said Mississippi could lose postseason events if it continued flying the Confederate-themed flag. Nearly four dozen of Mississippi’s university athletic directors and coaches came to the Capitol to lobby for change.

Many people who wanted to keep the emblem on the Mississippi flag said they see it as a symbol of heritage.

The battle emblem is a red field topped by a blue X with 13 white stars. The Ku Klux Klan and other hate groups have waved the rebel flag for decades.

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