

Commentary

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1902-1941

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1941-1983

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THE BRUNSWICK
NEWS

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EDITORIAL

Communication key in real and fake emergencies

Teamwork and communication is paramount in the world of emergency management. We have seen that first hand in the recent years when hurricanes Matthew and Irma reared their ugly heads locally.

We saw another example of why communication and teamwork are so important on Tuesday, when many people in the Golden Isles and all along the East Coast received a tsunami warning through a mobile phone app. It was no doubt frightening for many who read the message. A tsunami is something we have watched play out through news reports in other places around the world, but it seems less than likely one would crash ashore here.

Luckily, our local Emergency Management Agency and police departments jumped on the message and quickly discovered it had been issued in error. The National Weather Service blamed the people at AccuWeather, which manages the app through which the bogus warning was issued. AccuWeather blamed the weather service.

Thankfully the finger pointing

was relegated to those two entities. Locally, officials were able to get the word out quickly that a tsunami was in fact not on its way. We thank them for their action, which likely prevented a lot of potential panic.

But as noted by local EMA director Jay Wiggins in an article in The News, we are not immune from a tsunami. Should a seismic shift occur in the Atlantic Ocean off our shores, a massive wave could crash into Glynn County. This seems less than likely, but it is possible.

We are not suggesting everyone run in fear of a tsunami. Instead, we are pointing out just how unique and also fragile our coastal home is. We have seen that hurricanes really can have an impact here. We know that flooding can devastate neighborhoods. We also know that arctic blasts of cold air can coat everything with ice and cause some damage.

There may be little our emergency management crews can do in the event of a real tsunami, but it is encouraging to know they are ready and willing to do whatever they can to alert local residents and prepare them for the unexpected.

COLUMN / STAR PARKER



Celebrate black history by promoting black ownership

I have long been in favor of reforming Social Security by changing it to a system of personally-owned retirement accounts.

Instead of paying a payroll tax, with the U.S. government telling you what you'll get when you retire, you take ownership of that money — the payroll tax — and invest in your own retirement account.

I am for IRAs not the IRS.

This is a good time to bring this up, following a big drop in the stock market. Such a drop, to many, is exactly the reason to not do this reform.

As of this writing, the stock market dropped around 5 percent. What is officially called a market "correction" is a drop of 10 percent.

However, over the last year, the stock market has increased 26 percent. Since the presidential election in November 2016, it's up 35 to 40 percent.

The point is, stocks are a long-term proposition and so is retirement investing. Although gyrations are part of the day-to-day reality of stocks, over the long haul they provide positive returns. Because they reflect the underlying health of the economy, if stocks aren't healthy in the long run, it means the country is not healthy in the long run. The historical annual average return on stocks is 8 percent.

Stocks are like life. Time, op-

timism and faith smooth out the ups and downs. I'll take the ups and downs of a free life and a free marketplace over turning control of my life over to politicians.

In 2010, William Shipman and Peter Ferrara published an analysis in The Wall Street Journal of what would have happened to a couple who invested their payroll tax in their own retirement account, over 44 years, and then retired in 2009, the year after the huge stock market drop in 2008. In 2008, their account lost 37 percent of its value.

Even this huge one-year drop did not offset the accumulated positive gains. The average return from 1965 to 2009 was 6.75 percent and "would still pay them about 75 percent more than Social Security would have."

But even this is not the main point. Although it makes sense to be invested in stocks over a 40-year plus working life, no one is saying you have to do it. You can buy bonds or put the money in a bank CD.

The main point is that every citizen should be free to have these options.

There are particularly important implications here to black Americans.

Per the Federal Reserve, in 2016 median black family net worth was \$17,600, about 10 percent of median white family net worth.

Thirty-four percent of black

families have retirement accounts, compared with 60 percent of white families, and 31 percent of blacks have some kind of stock ownership compared with 61 percent of whites. And only 8 percent of blacks have received wealth through inheritance compared with 26 percent of whites.

Social Security provides survivor benefits to spouses and unmarried minor children. As of 2012, 36 percent of blacks over 25, compared with 16 percent of whites, had never been married. Because of the sorry state of marriage and family in black America, a large percentage of black Americans will have paid into Social Security over a full working life, and those benefits will just go up in smoke when they pass away.

With all the handwringing about gaps in wealth and income in our country, if we were serious we would have policies that promote, rather than prohibit, ownership.

Let's at least give low-income Americans the option to get out of Social Security and invest in personal retirement accounts to build ownership and wealth that can be bequeathed to others.

This would be a great way to celebrate Black History Month.

Star Parker is an author and president of CURE, Center for Urban Renewal and Education. Contact her at www.urbanecure.org.

OTHER VIEWS / MARSHALL RAMSEY



TOM STIGLICH



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Is sail club proper use of public land?

A small portion of land, down one side of the beach parking area, would be appropriate use of county property, if the county maintained it and received all fees for its use. Any profit belongs to the taxpayers. The county commissioners should inquire about the finances of the sail club. They pay the county \$1,000 a year for the space, they have space for 186 boat slips available for members to rent starting at \$150 up to \$300. Is that much needed for their maintenance? And, yes, giving them a smaller space than they now have is worth 150 parking spaces. Let our commissioners know what you think before it's too late.

Nan Marie O'Hara
St. Simons Island

Sail club helped make land be the county's

Sailboats have been a fixture on St. Simons Island beaches since the 1970's. That's over 40 years. They add to the character and ambiance of our island, which sadly, is deteriorating rapidly.

It is important to also point out that the property in question belongs to Glynn County as a direct result of the St. Simons Surf Sailor's efforts. The club contacted the federal government back in the 70's and requested, no convinced it, to transfer the property title to Glynn County for the specific use of a sailboat park. SSSS then constructed the storage area and helped provide funding to construct the access ramp from the parking area to the beach. This storage area is also utilized by the lifeguards for their emergency rescue equipment. SSSS also have dedicated boat storage space available for tourist use. And, no Glynn County taxpayer money is used to support or maintain this facility.

The Island Historical Society and Visitor's Bureau should consider this in the overall Coast Guard park redesign process. Eliminating this facility for the sake of more parking or another beach overlook would be a mistake.

Speaking of parking, have the redesign planners considered the impact of forcing the sailboat owners to trailer their boats to the very same beach launching area? They will now each occupy two parking spaces and tie up access

to the vehicular turnaround area while loading or unloading. These trailers will also add to the existing traffic congestion St. Simons is experiencing.

Is this what St. Simons needs?
Paul Obirek
St. Simons Island

County leaders must address infrastructure

Aristotle wrote, "For that which is common to the greatest number has the least care bestowed upon it. Every one thinks chiefly of his own, hardly at all of the common interest; and only when he is himself concerned as an individual."

The "tragedy of the commons" occurs when individuals, acting rationally and independently according to their own self-interest, will deplete a shared resource (roads and sewer capacity, for instance), even if it is contrary to the best interest of the group. One of the primary roles of government is to define and manage these shared resources.

A textbook example of this tragedy is the condition of the infrastructure on St. Simons Island. Traffic congestion, storm water flooding, water and sewer problems, and destruction of natural and historic habitats are endemic on the island. A major breakdown in the common good has occurred.

Tourism is the main economic driver for all of Glynn County, and the natural beauty and ambient lifestyle of St. Simons Island is central to this wealth creation. Destroy it and the economic well being of the entire community will be diminished. Ask any tourism official.

It is time, and past time, for the responsible Glynn County officials to manage development and address these severe infrastructure problems now. It is their job. The public should demand it.

The recent denial of an RV park on the mainland was an encouraging sign. May there be more resolve and positive action by our leaders.

Stan Humphries
St. Simons Island

Game machines rigged against children

I will probably get a lot of negative remarks about what I am about to write. These machines inside the restaurants in town that want you to try to get a toy or any stuffed animal for your kids are a joke. If you watch closely, you will notice that when

they have the item in the claws, as soon as it hits the top going back up, it hits so hard that it drops the item. This happens every time. I spent \$5 at one restaurant the other evening with two young girls that wanted the stuffed animal bad. Their parents were watching and we all saw the same thing. These machines are rigged so that you cannot win anything. Very seldom does anyone get anything. I feel that these machines need to be taken out or made right so the kids can win the toy or animal they paid for.

Weston Shephard
Brunswick

Chambliss wrong to criticize release of memo

I note in today's news is a reaction by former Sen. Saxby Chambliss criticizing the Republicans for releasing the Nunez memo regarding the fraudulent charges that the Democrats, in concert with corrupt FBI officials, have manufactured alleging that President Trump colluded with the Russians. Obviously the only money paid to Russians and the only collusion was perpetrated by the Hillary Clinton campaign, again in concert with crooked lawyers in DOJ and LEO's in the FBI.

The buffoon Chambliss, who, for those who have forgotten, conspired with Teddy Kennedy and was a member of the "gang of six" back in 2007, which attempted to craft an amnesty for the illegal aliens in this country. The Georgia Republicans booed Chambliss off the stage at the state convention in Gwinnett County that year as a reward for his betrayal of the American people. Little wonder then, that he chose to retire from the Senate when his term ended. You would think that he would stay out of the bright lights and go away.

But no, Chambliss says "Every organization has a few folks who, from time to time, need to be called on the carpet, and that's what should have been done here." That totally ignores the reality that the deep state would have covered up the FBI illegal acts and the Democrats' attempt to overturn a proper election of President Trump.

We don't need that stupidity in Washington. Thank God for David Perdue.

Jeff Kilgore
Brunswick