

Standard online reader survey



Q: Do you like the decision by the Boy Scouts to change the organization's name to Scouts BSA and allow girls?

YES 9 percent
NO 91 percent

EDITORIAL

Sen. John McCain has earned respect

Suddenly, America has lost respect for our war heroes.

U.S. Sen. John McCain has been the topic of recent slams, not for his politic views, but for his valiant efforts serving our country and for his ongoing battle with brain cancer.

Said White House aide Kelly Sadler about McCain's opposition to President Trump's pick for CIA director, "He's dying anyway."

Those comments were made around the same time retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Thomas McInerney slammed McCain on Fox Business Network for McCain's opposition to torture.

Said McInerney, "The fact is, is John McCain, it worked on John. That's why they call him 'Songbird John.'"

It's a very sad day for the United States when we treat our military veterans and decorated war heroes this way. We glorify politicians who dodge the draft because of heel spurs, yet vilify those who served our nation and were willing to give their life for America.

Regardless of what anyone thinks of Sen. McCain from a political perspective, he put his life on the line for our country during the Vietnam War. As a naval aviator, his plane was shot down in 1967 and he was a prisoner of war by the

North Vietnamese for over five years.

McCain was seriously injured when his plane was shot down and he ejected from the aircraft. The North Vietnamese reportedly compounded his injuries when they beat him. He survived in solitary confinement for two years and lost 50 pounds during captivity.

His fortunes seemed to take a turn for the better when his captors learned he was the son of a high-ranking military official and offered him the preferential treatment of early release.

However, McCain refused unless every prisoner captured before him was released first.

For his military bravery, McCain was honored with the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, and Legion of Merit, among other distinguished accolades.

To state it concisely, Sen. McCain is a man who should command our respect. He doesn't need to ask for it. He has earned it.

Yet instead of respect for a great man who risked his life to guard our freedoms, McCain has been mocked, and his name has been unjustly smeared.

This should not be allowed to happen. If we as proud Americans sit back and say nothing, we are passively endorsing this crude behavior. McCain, and all our military veterans, deserve better.



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Reflections on motherhood

As we pause to celebrate Mother's Day again this year, we follow a tradition that began in the USA well over 100 years ago. Mother's Day tributes have grown considerably through the years and rightly so.

However, motherhood itself has changed dramatically in the past few decades. In 1970, 40 percent of children had stay-at-home moms. By 2012, only 20 percent had them. Why? Because more and more women were working moms. Some by choice, others by necessity.

That trend continues today.

The "breast is best" message has brought about another change in motherhood. In 1971, only 25 percent of women breast-fed their children. However, by 2013, 77 percent of babies in the USA were being breast-fed. That trend also continues today.

When I was growing up in the late 1940s and early 1950s, "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was still a rule to live by, not only in the homes of most Americans, but in the schools as well.

Even as late as 1986, 82 percent of American women agreed that sometimes children need a "good, hard spanking." By 2012, only 65 percent still held that view. Based on what I've read recently, the propensity to paddle children continues to decline, in the home and

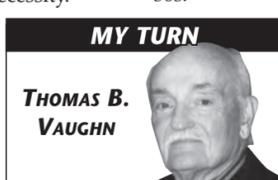
even more so in the school.

Mothers with infant children in America are also more educated than ever, according to Pew Social Trends. In 1960, roughly 80 percent of women in this category had only a high school diploma or less, and just 17 percent had "some college." By 2011, those figures had changed to 41 percent and 59 percent, respectively. Now, with even more women going to and completing college, some are delaying having babies until their late 20s and early 30s.

The number of single moms in America has grown considerably as well in recent decades. And this trend transcends "every income level, every education level, among whites, blacks, and Hispanics," according to the *New York Times*. There are many reasons for this social and cultural change in American motherhood, too many to cover here.

Although motherhood in America has changed a lot from "the good old days," whenever that was, our annual tribute to mothers, married or single, past and present, on Mother's Day is still a tradition to honor and preserve. That's exactly what we're doing today in Pleasant Cove.

Retired Army Col. Thomas B. Vaughn can be reached at tbovwm1@blomand.net.



MY TURN
THOMAS B. VAUGHN

A president like none other

For decades American presidents have carefully planned their public utterances. Donald J. Trump's improvisational, even impulsive, style has changed that paradigm. For decades American presidents have embraced a combination of international engagement and free trade. Trump has upended that.

Both innovator and disrupter, Trump in his 16 months in the White House has challenged presidential customs, overhauled presidential expectations and reshaped popular notions of presidential style. And he has done one thing more: He has obliterated the decades-old taboo of demonizing his predecessors.

In all of the modern party transitions in the White House, new presidents generally have refrained from attacking their predecessors.

But Trump has made a habit of criticizing his predecessor, Barack Obama, who only this month struck back, defending the Iran nuclear treaty that Trump described as "this disastrous deal" and "a great embarrassment to me as a citizen and to all citizens of the United States."

Trump has even suggested he could have forestalled the Civil War, a task one of his Republican predecessors, Abraham Lincoln, was unable to perform. Some historians call the Civil War an irrepressible conflict.

Trump's critiques are a departure from presidential form, perhaps welcome to his supporters, surely jarring to others. Indeed, Trump is a president without precedent.

"Presidents often cite other leaders for a model, and he never does that," says Pierre Martin, an expert in American politics who teaches at the University of Montreal. "His main opposition to the Iran agreement is that someone else made the deal. His major objection is that he wasn't involved in it."

Though presidents generally have

avoided criticizing their predecessors, former presidents often have been fiercely critical of their successors.

In a new biography of the 31st president, Kenneth Whyte spoke of Hoover's "hatred of the new president," explaining that he believed "the New Deal's scale, reach and coercive nature were so far beyond anything America had known as to represent a new and dangerous doctrine in national political life."

While the Eisenhower-Kennedy relationship was respectful, the general criticized the "careless spending" of the Kennedy team and was wary of the administration's military buildup. But, as George W. Bush liked to say, we can only have one president at a time.

Well, maybe more than one, if a riff by Reagan is to be believed. Listen in for just a moment to Reagan's account of the White House when the tourists and aides have gone home:

"Nothing is ever lost in that great house; some music plays on. I have been told that late at night when the clouds are still and the moon is high, you can just about hear the sound of certain memories brushing by. You can almost hear, if you listen close, the whir of a wheelchair rolling by. ... Turn down a hall and you can hear the brisk strut of a fellow saying, 'Bully! Absolutely ripping!' Walk softly now and you're drawn to the soft notes of a piano and a brilliant gathering in the East Room, where a crowd surrounds a bright young president who is full of hope and laughter. I don't know if this is true ... but it's a story I've been told."

Maybe Trump should listen for that story, too. His predecessors may be out of office, but they retain enormous power -- the power, Trump may discover, to inspire, or to comfort.

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NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE
DAVID M. SHRIBMAN

JUST A THOUGHT



Candidates eager to be photographed

It never fails that I ruffle a few political feathers every election year. This year has been no exception. Given the extensive field of candidates, it was completely unavoidable.

During election months, I walk a fine line here at the newspaper. I take that line, albeit an invisible one, very seriously. I strive not to show favoritism to any political candidate. While that sounds easy enough, it is not.

Some candidates become very active during election months. They are everywhere and doing everything. So am I. If they aren't there, their signs are. People are wearing their shirts, pins, and stickers. I am trying to cover local events and I have to be highly aware of my surroundings just to make sure I do not accidentally get candidate-related propaganda in the picture.

During Kevin Dunlap's push for state office, I was covering Midway's Fourth of July activities. His signs were everywhere. People were wearing "Vote for Kevin Dunlap" stickers. There was this cute little girl and she had one on. I politically asked mom if she would remove it. She did, but after I went into my spiel about election years and not showing favoritism.

To be completely honest, I veto everything I can. I won't allow political candidates in my pictures during community events. If any try, I will ask them to step aside. I'm not shy about that. I'm very vocal.

While I might name them in my article, if absolutely necessary, I will avoid quoting them. Those words, or a combination of them, will be used by me more times than I can count during election months. Some will understand and accept it, but others will not.

If covering community events during election years isn't tough enough, I'm the city and county government reporter. Here is my guideline: If you currently hold office and what you are doing is part of that responsibility, I might use it. No promises. Everything else is subject to veto and that includes their association with community groups.

The *Southern Standard* has gotten complaint calls from at candidates who feel like I'm being too strict with my veto policy. Specifically, I refused to use pictures from their organizational affiliations. I named them in the article, when necessary, but they prefer I run the pictures. I will not.

As I explained to my bosses, while quite a few of our current candidates are in organizations, others join them in anticipation of hopefully securing those votes. Sad, but true.

I do understand that some political candidates have held long-term membership in their organizations and some of them hold offices in those organization, but naming them in the article should be enough. Pictures of them aren't necessary.

To all the candidates: I am not trying to be fair to anyone. I am trying to be fair to everyone. I wish all of you the best, but it is not my intention to help or hurt in that effort.

My veto policy remains intact. Standard reporter Lisa Hobbs can be reached at 473-2191.



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