

Standard online reader survey



Q: Do you think the county should proceed with jail expansion considering the bid is \$1.8M over budget?

YES or NO

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GUEST EDITORIAL

McCain remembered as a great American

There may never be another such as John S. McCain, 81, who died Saturday after a battle with brain cancer. Which is another way of saying that the nation has too few heroes in its political class. McCain surely filled that niche.

His heroism occurred in two spheres, as a naval aviator who became a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War and as an elected official — a U.S. representative and senator. This makes his achievements all the more remarkable.

His heroism was indelibly linked with the word that came to describe him — maverick. He veered from that trait from time to time, some say opportunistically as the political need arose, but always returned.

He was a maverick when he bucked his Republican Party to co-sponsor landmark campaign finance reform with perhaps the most liberal member of the Senate, Wisconsin Democrat Russ Feingold.

He was a maverick when he returned to Washington from his sickbed in Arizona — after being diagnosed with brain cancer — to cast one of three GOP votes that kept his party from repealing the Affordable Care Act.

He was a maverick as a member of the Gang of Eight to bring comprehensive immigration reform to the Senate floor.

Knowing personally what torture is — a lesson learned as a POW in the "Hanoi Hilton" — he was a

San Antonio Express-News

maverick to forthrightly call out the George W. Bush Administration for its "enhanced interrogation techniques."

But McCain was surely a hero during and after his captivity in North Vietnam. After 5½ years of torture and much of his imprisonment spent in solitary confinement, he was offered an early release obviously because his admiral father was in command of the war in the Pacific. He refused because he knew other POWs had been there longer.

"I knew that my release would add to the suffering of men who were already straining to keep faith with their country," he later wrote.

Ironically, being a maverick cost him in his second presidential run in 2008 (the first run was against George W. Bush in the GOP primary in 2000). He named the little-known governor of Alaska, Sarah Palin, as his running mate and her statements quickly caused many to question her ability to step into the No. 1 spot if tragedy occurred. He lost the 2008 race to Barack Obama.

John S. McCain will be remembered not just for his maverick ways and his true heroism. He will be remembered for the wisdom, compassion, integrity and patriotism that were their foundation.



McCain, Trump weren't fake

There are people in Washington who hate each other but who, for public consumption, pretend not to hate each other. What was almost refreshing about the relationship of Sen. John McCain and President Trump was there was no such pretending.

The notable thing about McCain, who even before he fell ill was approaching the end of his Senate career and whose own runs for the White House were in the past, was he never felt the need to even feign positive feelings for his party's leader. In a way, the two men together, McCain and Trump, struck a blow for genuineness amid the phoniness of official Washington.

Their antipathy played out in a series of escalating attacks on each other in 2015, as Trump began to make waves in the Republican presidential primary.

It started when Trump announced his candidacy on June 16, 2015. He pounded on Mexico, accusing the country of taking American jobs and giving little in return. "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best," Trump said. "They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with them."

That did not sit well with McCain, the longtime comprehensive immigration reform advocate and moving force behind the Senate's Gang of 8 immigration bill. During a June 30 town hall in Arizona, McCain was asked about Trump. "I don't pay much attention," McCain said, according to an account in the *Arizona Republic*. Later, McCain said he didn't think Trump's campaign would last and added, "I just disagree with his comments about the, quote, Mexicans."

Of course, Trump fired back at McCain during a rally in Arizona. "We have incompetent politicians, not only the president," Trump said. "I mean, right here, in your own state, you have John McCain." Trump later told reporters McCain was "very weak on immigration" and could be beaten for re-election "if the right person" ran against him.

Of course, McCain struck back. On July 16, talking to *The New Yorker*, McCain said, "This performance with our friend out in Phoenix is very hurtful to me, because what he did was he fired up the crazies."

In retrospect, all that was just setting the stage for the nuclear explosion that occurred two days later, on July 18. At an event in Iowa, Trump, who never served in the military, disparaged McCain's experience as a prisoner of war in Vietnam.

"He's not a war hero," Trump said. "He was a war hero because he was captured. I like people who weren't captured."

Finally, there was July 27, 2017, the night McCain's thumbs-down vote killed the GOP's long-held hope — and Trump's campaign promise — to repeal Obamacare. The irreparable breach between McCain and the president became even more irreparable. A dying McCain specified the president be excluded from his funeral, and when McCain passed away, the president delayed releasing a routine proclamation in recognition of his life.

The relationship between the two men ended as badly as it began. But always — and rarely for Washington — without pretense.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

COLUMNIST

BYRON YORK



No such thing as a bad day

I just spent two hours in a dentist's chair having a crown replaced. It wasn't all the fun it's cracked up to be.

It seems all the fillings and bridge work done to my teeth only have a shelf life of 30 to 40 years, and now all of it is starting to come loose or deteriorate in some unlovely way and must be replaced. Every time I walk into Dr. Smile's office, the bill is \$1,200 — and that's if he doesn't have to send me to a specialist, where the fee is easily double that.

"I think we're talking implants here," is Dr. Smile's new favorite phrase. Not that he doesn't deserve the money. He is pain-free dentistry at its finest, and I would look like an extra from "Deliverance" if it weren't for his magic. Still, the money has to come from somewhere. Goodbye, fire engine-red sports car; goodbye, customized Harley; goodbye, pontoon party boat.

I was daydreaming of how wonderful my life would be without Dr. Smile when the cranberry juice I was drinking dribbled down my shirtfront — I forgot you can't drink from a glass when you can't feel your Novocained lips — when I got this email from my sister Mary. I have not changed a word.

"Just thought I would share with you some of how my day went. Packed a suitcase to go over to Brooke's to spend the night since Emily is over there. My phone fell out of my pocket straight into the toilet. Good thing it had just been flushed! Took my meds not exactly 12 hours apart, as directed — jumped the gun and took them 15 minutes too soon and promptly threw them up. Was going to call Richard to tell him I

might pass out and where I'd be, but, oh yeah, I had just dropped my phone in the toilet and it wouldn't work.

"Thought I would do a load of laundry, and spilled a whole cup of bleach all over the dryer and floor. Packed the car, did some errands and stopped to get a few chicken nuggets on my way to Brooke's since my stomach was empty — see above. Went out to the car, pulled out my keys and noticed there was half of my car key just gone. I kept wondering where it was and figured it must be in the ignition. 'That's OK,' I thought, 'I'll just call Richard and tell him to bring the spare key.' Duh, my phone was in the locked car, and probably still full of toilet water. I crossed the parking lot to the Goodwill and asked if I could use their phone because I had

dropped mine in the toilet, and anyway it was locked in my car because I only had half a key.

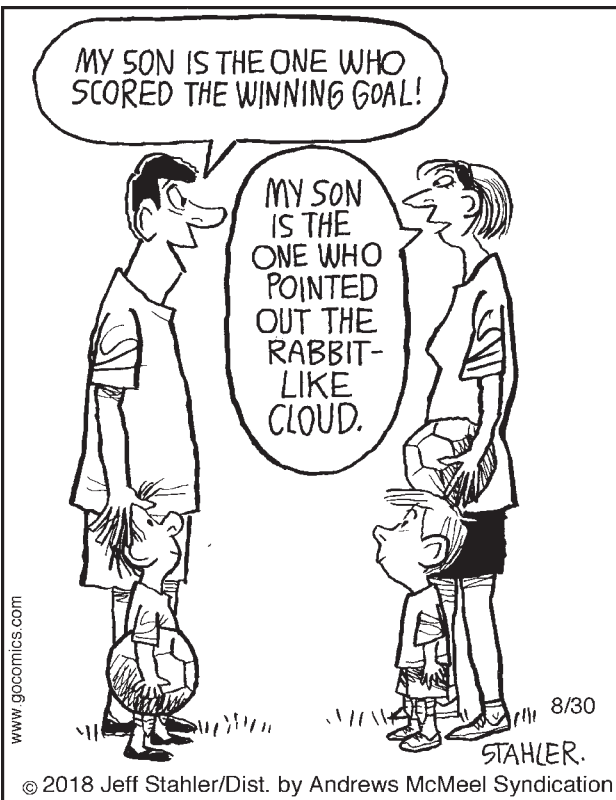
"I called Richard and told him my story and said I was at the Goodwill near the Taco Bell, when in reality, I was at a thrift store near Chick-fil-A. He did eventually find me, and after calling several locksmiths, we found one, but he had four people ahead of us waiting for his help. I will try again to get to Brooke's tomorrow!"

I don't think I could have written about a day like that in such an upbeat way. Just dropping the phone in the toilet would have been my cue to spend half a day binge-watching "Hollywood Squares" while eating a few bags of cheesy potato chips. The rest of the day I just would have wasted. Don't be like me. Be like Mary.

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LIVIN' LA VIDA LACY

LACY GARRISON



Girl power fuels remodeling plans

Shew, more renovations are underway. For those of you keeping up with my first floor remodel, I have a lengthy update to share with you.

My kitchen is officially gutted! Although we had help from Hughy with cabinet and appliance removal, I couldn't resist participating in demo day. I channeled Chip Gaines and went to town removing the floor, which had an old linoleum rug and nails galore. Hugh warned it would be difficult, but that just fueled my girl power on.

With an empty canvas of wood paneling, now I wait for my sheet rocking guys and Scotty Walker to remeasure the space for my dreamy kitchen cabinets. As I stand looking at this hot mess, I envision granite countertops, new lighting and a breakfast nook/ banquette. In the wise words of veteran renovator Nicole Worzek Burch, "It looks worse before it gets better." That's my new mantra.

Speaking of removal, gone is the old crown molding and wallpaper from the dining room. Gone are the black light switch covers, old rope windows and old doors. Gone are the old wall heaters and light fixtures.

My next hands-on project is to sand and paint my front door with Benjamin Moore Hawthorne Yellow. It is the absolute perfect yellow with a slight gray undertone so it will work beautifully. I've already bought a fall wreath from Kirkland's so my front door will be poppin' come October.

Can I just dote on my family for a bit? My grandma and my mother-in-law Lisa are allowing me to utilize their kitchens during this time. It's tough toting everything around, but it's better than eating out every meal. Also, every Tuesday Ross and I get a home cooked meal at Nicole and Dwight's. It's awesome and we're so thankful to be near family.

OK, back to day dreaming about my fully remodeled home. Some days you can equate me to that parent who talks about her kids all the time except my baby is this house. Other days, I'm like the pregnant mom whose lips are sealed every time she gets asked about the name she's chosen for her baby. No, I'm not telling you what color I've chosen. No, I don't want your unsolicited advice about my design choices.

So what's next? We've called in the Alfred Drywall guys to fix our ceilings and put new sheet rock in the dining room and hallways. Unfortunately, the ceiling in the living room had painted wallpaper and the creases are cringe-worthy. Oh yes, you read that correctly. Wallpaper on the ceiling!

As for Hughy, he's going to lay some concrete slabs on the kitchen floor to prep for the tile work. My new French doors just arrived so those are going up as well. He also has to shimmy back into the attic to see if we can install recess can lights. Lucky for him, he's a slender fellow! (He's going to kill me for writing that.)

That's all for now. Stay tuned for more updates!

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