

## Standard online reader survey



Q: Do you support arming teachers at school?

YES or NO

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## GUEST EDITORIAL

### Don't use classroom funds to arm teachers

As children have found their reluctant way back into classrooms across America, they likely have little idea Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has given serious consideration to a new recommendation that would allow school districts to use federal funds to help purchase firearms and train school personnel in their use.

The federal government did not simultaneously announce any plans to increase school funding, meaning the move to arm teachers would necessarily come at the expense of apparently less important things, such as computers, books and supplies.

DeVos is weighing whether to allow school districts to tap funds from the federal Student Support and Academic Enrichment grants to pay for firearms. Supporters of the measure note there is no wording within the legislation for the federal grant that prohibits such a move, although we would hazard a guess that there are a lot of things that are not expressly prohibited within the wording of the grant but which rational people would, thanks to common sense, simply understand without having to be told.

Gun rights advocates practically fell over themselves as they rushed to support the measure. This, despite the fact that survey after survey shows public school teachers overwhelming claim they have no interest in brandishing a firearm at their place of

#### Cape Cod Times Massachusetts

work; that they, not surprisingly, have enough to focus on in their classrooms and would prefer not to have to even consider drawing a weapon on an intruder.

Furthermore, a significant majority of educators also argue the only people who should have access to guns in a school setting are law enforcement officers, individuals who are trained not only in how to use a weapon, but also under specific circumstances, as in an active-shooter situation or one where hostages have been taken.

DeVos also has the option to allow the arming of teachers to happen passively. If she takes no definitive stand on the matter, a state or group of states could test the legal waters by using the money to purchase weapons and then wait and see if the DOE steps in to argue against it.

Students, teachers, parents, lawmakers and concerned citizens, regardless of their stance on whether gun laws should be tightened or loosened, must come together to oppose this ludicrous and dangerous initiative before it moves forward.

Our nation's schools already struggle financially, and it should not require a lesson in logic or economics to understand that diverting money from underfunded programs to put guns in the hands of people who do not want them is nonsense.

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### Reflections on Constitution

Constitution Day in the USA comes tomorrow. That's reason enough to share some thoughts on our Constitution with my readers.

We live in challenging times today, but they pale in comparison to the challenges facing our Framing Fathers 231 years ago, as they grappled with crafting and completing this historic and remarkable document.

On May 25, 1787, the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia to "draw up a new form of government," one designed to "correct such defects as may be discovered to exist" in the Articles of Confederation.

Instead of tweaking it, they trashed it, and ultimately created a new and improved Constitution.

Fifty-five delegates were present at the convention at various times during the four months it took to bring the Constitution to fruition. Historian James McGregor Burns called them "the well-bred, well-fed, well-read and well-wed." Clearly, they represented, not the common people, but the elite nucleus of Colonial and Revolutionary society: "The wealthy merchants of the North and the wealthy, slaveholding plantation owners of the South."

Despite their philosophical and regional differences, most of our Founding Fathers were brilliant politicians. As such, they knew that "the art of compromise" is the key to success in politics. Hence, our Constitution has been called a "bundle of compromises," and rightly so.

Through the long, sultry summer of 1787, discussion and debate devolved into deadlock, hinging on two vexing questions. The first was on representation. "Should Congress be based on state population or on

equal state representation?" Predictably, the more populous states preferred "population" and the less populous states preferred "equal state representation."

Roger Sherman's bold Connecticut Compromise proposal finally broke the delegate deadlock. It stipulated equal state representation in the Senate and proportional representation in the House. Thus, we have a bicameral Congress today.

The second question was "Should Congress abolish or retain slavery?" The delegates finally reached a curious compromise. First, Congress

could take no action to control slavery until 1808. Second, slaves would count as "three-fifths of their total population for both taxation and representation." Crass as that

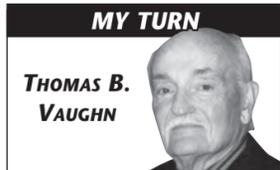
sounds now, it mollified pro-slavery and anti-slavery advocates then, and helped move the convention along.

One of the most ingenious compromises reached at the Convention is enshrined in Article V of our Constitution. It outlines how constitutional amendments may be made, with difficulty that is.

Our Founding Fathers were learned and sophisticated men, but they were not soothsayers. Since they could not predict the future, they left needed changes in our Constitution up to posterity and prudence.

Fortunately, we still have a "Living Constitution," including 27 amendments. It has served us well. Our current political leaders could learn a lot from the visionary work of our Framing Fathers. So could we the People.

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MY TURN  
THOMAS B. VAUGHN

#### JUST A THOUGHT

LISA HOBBS



### Food diary can be helpful tool

Epic fail – that is what I'm calling my effort to alleviate digestive issues by removing most raw fruits and vegetables from my diet. After a month without those foods and completely changing my food intake to where it was unrecognizable and gaining four pounds, I could see no noticeable improvement.

I mentioned in a column a few weeks back I had been having issues and a nurse suggested I cut back a little on the healthy eating. After one very painful episode, I took that into strong consideration and replaced what I was eating with a list of "easier to digest" foods – steel cut oatmeal, eggs, brown rice, bananas, crackers, etc. I also included Dannon Activia yogurt twice daily. It did not help.

After reconsideration, I've decided to keep a food diary and attempt to isolate specific foods that might be triggering my issues. If you've never kept a food diary, it's a real pain. A food diary is a log of what you consume each day. It can be used to understand your eating habits, as well as target any issues.

You be as specific as you can and include:

- Write down the type of food/drink;
- List the amount of the food/drink item;
- Note the time;
- Write down any digestive issues you are having prior to eating;
- Write down any digestive issues you have in the hour or two after eating;
- Write down any vitamins, supplements, or other medication.

If you are trying to understand your eating habits, include your mood and any changes. It's important to write everything down throughout the day. Don't rely on your memory and attempt to make notes at night or a couple days later. Yes, this means carrying a small notepad around with you. It'll be worth it in the end.

Remember, this is for your eyes only. Be accurate and be honest. No one will see it but you. It's OK if you had a piece of chocolate cake when a co-worker brought in leftovers that tempted you during the afternoon hours when you were at your weakest. If that sounded like a personal revelation, it was. I'm human.

Keeping a food diary can be very time consuming, and it might take time to actually narrow down the culprits. However, it can be very effective in the long term. If you ease off and skip a day or two, you can always go right back to doing it – again, we're all just human.

A food diary can also help you lose weight by noting calories. It can be an eye opener to see exactly how many calories you're actually consuming and when. It helps you see where you could make healthier choices or cut a portion size down. I've heard people say they don't eat all that much so they can't understand why they can't lose weight. If you are one of those people, keep a diary. You'll probably be shocked. I was when I did it.

Standard reporter Lisa Hobbs can be reached at 473-2191.

### The lost art of dating

CHESTNUT HILL, MASS. -- Meet the dating czar.

She's Kerry Cronin, the associate director of the Lonergan Institute, a philosophy and theology research center at Boston College, and she's concerned about your social skills.

She doesn't think you know how to ask someone out on a date. She doesn't think you know how to behave on a date. She doesn't think you know the first thing about listening to your date, sharing your own life story and perspectives with your date, showing empathy to your date. She also doesn't think you know who pays for your date.

She's right about all that.

Social awkwardness emerges in many ways – but none so difficult as The Date.

Almost none of the students Cronin encounters at Boston College have dated – dated the way, say, their grandparents dated, which is to say asking someone out, picking someone up, planning a nice outing or evening for someone, paying someone else's way, getting to know someone else. How quaint.

"This is a lost social script," says Cronin. "What's helpful about teaching people how to date is teaching people social courage, teaching people how to ask someone else who he or she is, listening – and being listened to."

This all started when Cronin was teaching a senior capstone class here on this lovely campus just outside Boston. The topic of friendship came up, and then the topic of the hook-up culture came up, and before long the professor was issuing a challenge to

the entire class: Go on a date.

The students were flabbergasted. And then they fussed. They didn't know when to ask someone on a date. (Anytime.) They didn't know where to go. (Anywhere.) They didn't know whom to ask. (Seriously -- was that a problem?)

These were 22-year-olds. In an entire 3.5-month period, only one of the 15 seniors mustered the courage to go on a date. Eventually the barriers fell, and eventually Cronin became a cult figure on campus.

"Dating teaches you how to begin to say things you really mean, which is on the way to being able to make a promise and keep it," she says.

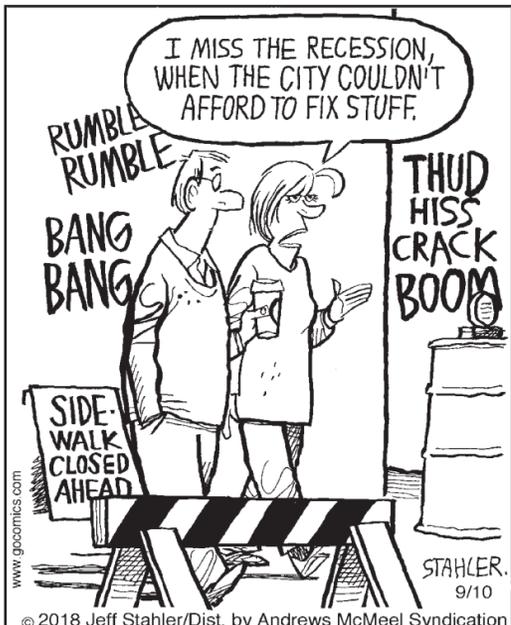
Cronin does not believe in splitting the check. ("You're treating someone, showing generosity and concern for someone else.") She does not think people on a date should look at their iPhones. ("The students are so comfortable behind their screens the very first rule is they have to ask their date out in person, not by email or text.")

The whole point is not so much to acquire a life partner as it is to acquire life skills. "You learn a lot about yourself when you try to let someone get to know you," Cronin says. "You learn a lot about yourself when you try to let someone become a part of your emotional varsity team. It's important to let someone in and to let someone become part of your emotional landscape."

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#### NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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