

Editorial



Point me in the right direction, please

After receiving numerous positive comments about the subject of one of my recent columns, I have reaffirmed two things: One, that my column is actually read and taken as the positive tool of betterment it is written to be, and two, that you, the readers, can help guide me on my ever-changing journey to being the best me that I can be.

In that column I wrote about making a difference in my life and in each of the lives I have the opportunity to touch. The subject of the column, Today is my tomorrow, was written as a reminder, particularly to myself, that the actions you take in the present have a tremendous impact on the future.

Since becoming an official Seminole County citizen, countless people in this community have made a positive impact on my todays and have tremendously affected the actions I have taken in the process of shaping my tomorrows.

Ever since day one of my arrival in Seminole County I have been the most grateful



Impressions
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recipient of encouraging words, sincere invitations, numerous bags of fresh produce on my door knob and countless, selfless acts of generosity. Just last Friday night I opened my back door to find a doggy bag - filled with a variety of goodies - hanging on my back door

handle. Because of these acts I have become a much better person than the one I was upon my arrival nine short years ago. I'm not saying that I was ever a bad person, but I will admit that before arriving in the land of the green where generosity seems to grow on trees, I was a much more selfish person. But that has changed.

After being subjected to and the witness of more acts of selfless generosity than I can even count, I can proudly say that I am a better person because I moved to Seminole County and had the privilege of being exposed to its citizens' extremely contagious case of community pride and selflessness.

I am a proud and happy Seminole County citizen with a full blown case of What can I do to help you out?

When I was a teacher at Bainbridge College the most rewarding part of the job was when I had the opportunity to make a real difference in my students' lives, either by improving their communication skills for a job interview or helping them help themselves gain confidence and magnify their self esteem. Those moments were priceless, and each and every time, they validated my very presence on this Earth.

I want to give back some of this selflessness. I want to help. I want to encourage. I want to live each and every day of my life with the purpose and the mind-set of helping to make someone's today turn into an even better tomorrow. So from this point on, I want my words to do more than just inform; I want them to reflect the heart of the writer and convey a positive message that helping is a blessing for the giver as well as the receiver.

I want my actions to be judged and perceived as sincere acts. I want to make a positive difference in someone's life because it will make a positive difference in mine, and selfishly speaking, because it will make me a much better person.

Point me in the right direction.

Comments and impressions are welcomed and requested at david@donalsonvillemews.com

What now?



Ponderings
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The paper ballots were drastically different. One was white, large, and full of print. The other was blue, the size of a small note pad, and had just a few options. It was my first election after moving to Southwest Georgia. My new bride was working at the polls, trying to meet people in her new community.

A notable but elderly citizen came in the door of the polling station, signed in for his Democratic ballot and then noticed the small blue papers in a pile on the desk. "Are those for the colored people?", he asked. My wife managed to choke out the response and told the gentleman, "No sir. Those are for the Republicans".

Almost 20 years later, I was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives. It was a special election which meant you did not run as a Democrat or Republican. I was fortunate to win decisively and was sworn in the day after the election. In front of the entire House, I was then asked by the Speaker if I wished to declare as a Republican or Democrat. I had given it almost no thought and certainly did not expect to be asked the question in front of all my new colleagues.

I declared as a Democrat because, well everyone in Southwest Georgia at that point was a Democrat. If I had any hope of making a difference in my newly elected position, I had to align with the powers that controlled everything, namely the Southern Democrats.

Several years later, I switched parties over philosophical differences of the issues at hand. I commissioned a poll the week before my party switch and received a 100% approval rating. The week after I changed from a Democrat to a Republican, my negative rating went to 25%. No changes in my beliefs or my representation of my district. It was my first inkling of the party partisanship that was lurking on the horizon.

Our country has just gone through

yet another impeachment. I struggle with the events that led to the trial, the appropriateness of the impeachment itself, and the outcome. I am not alone.

While I hold some members of the Senate in low regard because of their grandstanding and twisting of facts, I understand the challenges that both parties faced. What I find more pressing is how we, the vast middle of the American public, face our own challenges about the impeachment. What now?

Donald Trump lost the election by seven million votes, but at the end of election day he still had a reasonable chance of winning the Electoral College. That is our system, for better or worse. He absolutely had a right to challenge the outcome, but also an obligation to abide by the verdict. Trump's campaign lost over 60 different court cases regarding the election results, including a significant number of cases overseen by judges that Trump himself appointed.

The behavior of the 45th President after the election will forever taint the legacy of Donald Trump. While the former President desires to retain the power he has enjoyed for the past four

years, it is almost certain to fade. He may cause some that opposed him to lose in their next primary, but the tide of public opinion will steadily erase his influence.

While I never agreed with Trump's manner, tweets, and taunts, I benefited from some of his policies. His tax policy benefited me more than I deserved. His push to ease regulations greatly assisted the growth of our company in the first couple of years of his Presidency.

Nevertheless, we are where we are. Trump has been impeached twice and acquitted twice. In the just concluded trial, he was acquitted but not found innocent. 57% of the Senate found him guilty. Perhaps that is enough.

I am a proud moderate, a proud American, a former Republican and a former Democrat. No party will ever hold sway over my vote in the future. I will vote for those individuals I think have the best vision for the America I love.

As we ponder the question, "What now?", do not look too far for the answer. It does not lie in our political parties, in Washington or at Mar-A-Lago. It resides in your own heart, your independent mind, and your soul.

Search for the answers on your own and vote with a certain conviction that your vote matters more than ever. Just remember that the votes that do not agree with you count just as much as your own vote.

In that election held almost 45 years ago in a small Southwest Georgia county, only four people picked up the small blue ballot. Four Republicans voted in a place of almost complete Democratic Party dominance. Their votes counted then, just as all votes must count now.

So, what now? It is time to move on.

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With friends like these . . .

I love reader feedback, especially when it is glowing. Luann wrote in with a great question. She asked, "How do you keep from correcting other people? My friends think I am obnoxious."

Luann, you're not alone in that your friends think you're obnoxious. My friends couldn't stand me if it weren't for my mom sending them large checks every month. They've actually told me so to my face.

Although my friends can barely stand me, I do not correct their grammar, except for under very specific circumstances. You can have friends or correct people's grammar; you can't have both.

The only reason to publicly correct a friend's grammar is to stop them from getting a misspelled word tattooed on her body. You'd better speak up before your buddy gets "No ragrets" tattooed on his forearm. If you're wondering how prevalent misspelled tattoos are, simply perform a Google Images search for "misspelled tattoos."

The only other acceptable way to correct a friend's grammar is to do so in private. To judge someone out loud in public is an impeachable friend offense. It will make them feel dumb, and it's not a good look for you, either. A private gram-



The Grammar Guy
Curtis Honeycutt

mar correction is akin to pulling someone aside to tell them they have some spinach stuck between their teeth. A friend only corrects another friend's grammar in confidence.

Now I'll stop dancing around answering Luann's question: how do you keep from correcting other people? This is difficult! Believe me, I am constantly correcting other people's grammar in my head, but it stays there. To learn restraint,

you have to ask whether or not you'd like your friend to correct you if your roles were reversed.

Just as nobody's mind has ever been changed through a Facebook political debate, no good will come out of a public grammar correction. Here's an idea for Luann, as well as other self-deputized grammar police officers: when you want to correct someone's grammar, instead send yourself a text message with the grammar gaffe. Later on, if you remember it, you can allow yourself to gently correct your friend in the privacy of a one-on-one conversation.

I strongly believe that possessing and practicing good grammar can make your life roughly 17% better, and I appreciate people who want to help their friends achieve grammar greatness. Just as there is a proper place to put quotation marks in a sentence, there are also proper times and places for correction. However, if your friend is on the tattoo chair, feel free to exercise your spell check skills on the spot.

Curtis Honeycutt is a syndicated humor columnist. He is the author of *Good Grammar is the Life of the Party: Tips for a Wildly Successful Life*. Find more at curtishoneycutt.com

HELP US DISCOVER 100 WAYS TO CELEBRATE OUR Centennial!

Join the planning committee for Seminole County's rescheduled 2021 Centennial celebration. Call the chamber at 229-524-2588 and volunteer.

The Centennial celebration has been rescheduled for the Fall of 2021. The dates of planning and organizational meetings for the scheduled events will be announced in the near future. Watch this space for details!