

PEOPLES VOICE

Everyone should grow at least some of their food, even if it's just a couple of container pots on the patio. — Eve Moss, Tulsa

Let the gardens grow

The stance taken by Councilors Jack Henderson and David Patrick in regard to community gardens is absurd. This year like never before gardens of all types should be encouraged not penalized.

The nation has already been warned that due to drought the produce coming out of California will be a mere 25 percent of its normal amount for the coming season. There will be some fruits and vegetables which won't be available at all and the produce available will be priced out of reach for some families. Everyone should grow at least some of their food, even if it's just a couple of container pots on the patio. This is a time for "Victory" gardens.

Up with gardens. Out with Henderson and Patrick.

Eve Moss, Tulsa

Hoping for Obama's failure

I stand with Rush Limbaugh in my hope that President Barack Obama fails. Obama promised "Change we can believe in" and what he is delivering is a giant leap toward socialism, destroying capitalism and the free markets, destroying our health care system, promoting moral decay, and introducing more governmental tyranny, which robs Americans of their freedoms and liberties. That is not change I believe in.

The Democrats for the past eight years bashed President Bush, Republicans and conservatives. They worked tirelessly for them to fail, and they now have the audacity to make a big deal out of Limbaugh's comments? Liberal Democrats, President Obama and his cast of liberal hypocrites and tax cheats are trying to unleash socialism on this country, and they expect we should all shut-up and let them turn our country into a socialist mecca.

This is still America the last time I checked, and until they pry our dead cold fingers off the Constitution we will keep exercising our constitutional rights.

Half of the country tried to warn the Obamamaniacs to get past the rhetoric and listen to what his policies would be, but unfortunately all they heard was "Hope and Change" having no clue as to what that meant. Now we know what Obama's "Hope and Change" means. It means less liberty and freedom for Americans and more power to an ever intrusive government.

So yes, I hope President Obama fails, too.

Mark Giglia, Broken Arrow

Read original intent

Regarding the separation of church and state, I think people are reading more into the First Amendment than what was originally intended. The Constitution simply states "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;..."

C. G. Jezik, Broken Arrow

Shocking article

Your Sunday recent article "Charity's problems revealed" (March 1) was particularly shocking to me as it must be to other donors like me who have contributed believing Feed the Children was one of the most deserving charities.

It is disheartening to say the least to hear Larry Jones, his wife and son are all involved in the mess and what may be criminal actions. Does it sound hypocritical when he says



Swiss chard grows in a vegetable garden. Courtesy



Feed the Children Executive Director Larry Jones. PAUL B. SOUTHERLAND/The Oklahoman file

he and his wife pray several times a day for this ministry.

The fallout from this action may cause an adverse reaction by people donating to other charities. Incidentally, an intensive survey of charities shows the American Red Cross makes the best application of donations to the purpose intended. Almost on a daily basis we read of their aid for food, clothing and lodging for fire victims.

George H. Allen, Tulsa

How to fix Tulsa

Over the past years, as I watch the development of Tulsa, it appears to me that it is being built backwards. Tulsa's "weekend spots" are taking precedence over its infrastructure.

Once you get past the no-sense political garbage that drives the

policies on both sides, America's, Oklahoma's and Tulsa's problems are easily fixable. Any average Joe with any common sense can come up with a first-rate solution to fix these problems. Tulsans know how to fix Tulsa's problems. We need a leader who will look past the fallacies of politics and embrace the people who they promised to serve.

What I propose is a common sense approach to Tulsa's problems. Increase the police force by one-third. That'll get rid of the crime. Expand the narcotics division. This will help raise impoverished areas.

Stop spending our tax dollars on "fun" projects. We don't need a ball-park or an arena until people can go to a show without having to look over their shoulders. Use that money to fix the roads and stop crime. Absolutely no new government money downtown, or on the river for that matter.

The private sector does everything better anyway. If the streets are safe and the roads are fixed, development will inevitably follow. Privatization will always be better than anything that Bing Thom (The Channels architect) could come up with.

Phillip Uzzel, Owasso

Airheaded judges

Will you please tell me the names of the judges on the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals who voted to reverse several convictions of an individual arrested because of an anonymous tip? ("Court limits reach of anonymous tips," Feb. 28) Even if the arrest was illegal, what did that have to do with the individual's guilt or innocence based on the actual evidence?

If I witnessed murder, called Crime Stoppers and remained anonymous, and the murderer was

found guilty based on the evidence, would the Court of Criminal Appeals overturn his conviction?

Tell me the names of the judges who voted to reverse, so that I can vote against them when they are up for retention. With air-headed judges like these, no wonder we have so much crime.

Vince Siren, Jenks

Editor's note: In overturning the conviction of a Washington County man, the court ruled unanimously that an anonymous tip alone is not enough for a law enforcement officer to pull over a driver. The decision was written by Presiding Judge Charles Johnson. Judges Arlene Johnson, Charles Chappel, Gary Lumpkin and David Lewis concurred in the decision.

Debate goes on

Again, the Ten Commandments ("Ten Commandments are legal," March 2)!

There are two previous cases that bear on this issue that have been decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In Texas (Van Orden v. Perry) the monument sits in a large park containing 17 monuments and 21 historical markers, all designed to illustrate the "ideals" of those who settled in Texas and of those who have lived there since that time. That monument was found to be constitutional.

In McCreary County v. ACLU of Kentucky the displays around the Commandments included eight smaller, historical documents containing religious references as their sole common element. The district court found that the display lacked any secular purpose because the Commandments are a distinctly religious document, and that the other foundational documents specifically referred to Christianity. The Supreme Court found that display to be unconstitutional.

And the recent case, decided on Feb. 25, Pleasant Grove v. Summum, was not an "establishment clause" case. Because of the way the suit was worded, it was a "free speech" issue and it was decided on that basis.

So, it still seems clear, that a display of only the Ten Commandments will be challenged, will cost the state a lot of money (your money) to defend in court, and will be found to be unconstitutional.

If you think that it would be good for society to have the Ten Commandments displayed, why not convince all your local churches to put up such monuments on their lawns?

Karl Sniderman, Tulsa

Justice denied

I learned with great disappointment that the Senate Education Committee will not hear Senate Bill 765, the Anti-Discriminatory Indian Mascot bill. The bill would have banned the use of the Indian mascots names of Redskins and Savages in Oklahoma public schools. It affected 24 out of the 165 schools that have Indian mascot names.

Although some doubted the wisdom of approaching a Republican-led Senate, we knew the time for justice is not when it is most comfortable.

Sen. John Ford is the chairman of the Senate Education Committee. People should know the committee is filled with wonderful public servants willing to listen to a new perspective and see the value of treating all Oklahoma citizens equally and respectfully.

But, despite their courage and

compassion they and thoughtful Oklahomans everywhere were denied an opportunity to debate and vote on an important civil rights issue.

Working locally didn't work, and Oklahoma has never changed one public school Indian mascot on its own. We are the only state to have never done so.

The message now is that Native Americans have no right to seek justice in the halls of the state Capitol. How can they defend this? Perhaps we can say someday, like others, that not only all men are created equal but that it finally includes Oklahoma's first citizens.

Louis Gray, Bartlesville

Piety or publicity?

Those advocating for a Ten Commandments monument on the state Capitol grounds would do well to remember Cecil B. DeMille had the original such displays and monuments erected around the country as a publicity stunt to promote his 1956 movie, "The Ten Commandments." I doubt the religious motivation of both Mr. DeMille and Rep. Mike Ritze.

I believe Ritze's proposal should be understood as a political publicity stunt and a use of public funds for personal political gain. Whether the motivation is political (likely) or genuinely religious (unlikely) the proposal is inappropriate.

However, if it is genuinely religious, Rep. Ritze's role should be acknowledged with his own monument to include another biblical passage, Matthew 6:5: "And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward."

Rev. Jack Bryant, Tulsa

Limits of science

In response to John Morgan's letter ("Anti-science pandering" Feb. 25), science is defined as "knowledge of facts, phenomena, laws and proximate causes, gained and verified by exact observation, organized experiment and correct thinking."

How can evolution — or creation for that matter — be classified as a science?

Were any of us there to study the earth on its first day? Morgan claims that evolution is the "very basis of biological science." He shares this opinion with many others and wants to continue to teach it to our children as fact. We are each free to choose our belief system about how and why we are here. This is not a science to be proven or put aside. Faith is required. Some will put their faith in Darwin's principles. The Bible and what it says about creation is the basis of the Christian faith.

Of course it should be a priority to encourage and promote true scientific education; however, Morgan's effective scientific education will not be directly responsible for determining our future standard of living as he contends.

There is so much more to it than that. Passion for the exploration of the world around us must surely be born of a secure belief that there is something greater than ourselves worth studying. How do you instill this into a child? The answer to not only this, but endless other questions, can be found starting in the Book of Genesis and in a personal, eternal relationship with Jesus — the creator.

Rhonda Wallace, Skiatook

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The delicate art of brotherly love

My brother Philip died in Wisconsin on Friday before last, while I was in Rome, and after I got my ticket changed to fly back for the memorial service, I went into a church off the Piazza Navona and lit candles for his aching family and stood in the piazza beside a fine fountain, with lots of splashing and nudity, the Fountain of the Four Rivers, which made me think of the Mississippi, where he and I used to skate in winter and once when the wind was whistling down the valley he opened his jacket and held the corners taut and the wind blew him away beyond the island and he didn't come back until after dark.

He died while skating. He fell backwards and hit his head and died 12 days later. A heroic thing for a man of 71, dying in action at sport, though I believe he would rather have been in Rome, looking at Bernini churches.

He and I almost died together once, canoeing on Lake Superior. We paddled into a deep cave under one of the



Garrison Keillor

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Apostle Islands, possibly Judas, and explored it, ducking our heads under the low ceiling, and emerged a half-minute before the wake of a distant ore boat came crashing into the cave, which would have busted our heads but good, no need for the EMTs.

He was an engineer, having grown up at a time when boys were still romantic about machinery. Our dad and uncles loved cars and knew how to fix them and also do basic plumbing and wiring and carpentry, so he grew up admiring competence.

The incompetent stood and cursed the problem and kicked it and caused more problems. The en-

gineer studied the problem, devised a solution, and when it failed he made intelligent revisions. I never heard my brother curse anything or anybody.

Of all things mechanical, he loved sailboats the most, planing into the wind with a sheet of canvas, a centerboard and a tiller, which he picked up from perusing the Horatio Hornblower novels.

When he was a kid, he rigged one of dad's dropcloths to a toboggan and sailed it at tremendous speed down the ice of the Mississippi, a death-defying feat.

He switched careers from mechanical to coastal engineering so as to get himself out on boats on Lake Superior and Lake Michigan, purportedly to study thermal runoff from nuclear plants and shore erosion, and he owned a swift sailboat named the Dora Powell after our grandmother.

My brother was her first grandchild and so he was well loved and extensively photographed, a

curly-haired boy with dimples and a modest smile, taken against many backdrops since our family moved often in the decade after he was born (1937), renting here and there, squatting with relatives, moving on, which maybe stimulates a keen love of family in a kid, as you keep waving goodbye to your friends, and Philip practiced the delicate art of brotherly love. He always knew what you were doing and he kept his critical opinions to himself.

He called me once to ask how I was doing and I knew without his saying so that he knew about some nonsense I was up to and wanted me to stop it and I did stop it without his ever mentioning it. That's how he worked: no motor, just angles.

His ties to family went back to his ancestor Elder John Crandall, who preached religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence with the Indians in colonial Rhode Island, and it included his hockey-playing granddaughters and fundamentalist cousins and his lawyer brother and his

Chinese granddaughter who was skating with him when he fell.

When your brother dies, your childhood fades, there being one less person to remember it with, and you are left disinherited, unarmed, semi-literate, an exile. It's like losing your computer and there's no backup. (What it's like for the decedent, I can't imagine, though I try to be hopeful.)

If I had died (say, by slipping on an emollient spill and whacking my head on a family heirloom anvil), I believe Philip, after decent mourning, would've gone about locating a replacement. If your brother dies, improvise.

Someone you run into who maybe doesn't fit the friendship profile but his voice is reedy like your brother's, the gait is similar, he takes his coffee black and his laugh is husky, he starts his sentences with "You know," and the first words out of his mouth are about boats. I didn't run into him in Rome but I'm sure he's out there someplace.