

Editorial

Volunteerism

Not a lot of people take time out of their day to hold the door for the next person or stop to help someone who dropped their papers in the middle of a windy day.

That means the effort and the caring that a man like Denis Cormier shows by spending 26 years volunteering with the Boy Scouts of American, the Knights of Columbus and in town government should not be overlooked.

Cormier's son made sure that his father at least had the chance for recognition and the Governor's Points of Lights Committee confirmed it.

The 70-year-old Ashburnham resident has been serving his community in one way or another since his discharge from the military in 1960.

People like Cormier, who don't hesitate before volunteering their time, should make us all think twice about our own time commitments. We rush around to get everything done to make our lives easier and to make things more convenient for ourselves. Then we look for just enough time to take a break and recharge our own batteries.

People like Cormier or those who volunteer to help with the Girl and Boy Scouts and other community organizations, or those who help with national organizations like the American Red Cross or the Relay for Life, should be acknowledged for their time and effort.

Cormier's son said his father's retirement allowed him 40 more hours a week that he could donate to others. It's a remarkable testament to a life of volunteerism.

Everyone should be encourage to start simple — most people can't go from doing nothing to spending hundreds of hours of their time helping out the cause or the group that is closest to their heart. But, we can each turn and help our neighbor, when that fleeting thought crosses our mind that they may just need a helping hand.

Letters to the Editor Policy

All letters should be no more than 500 words in length, and should include the writer's name, address and phone number.

We will not publish street address, e-mail address or phone number.

Please avoid handwritten letters if at all possible.

The editor reserves the right to reject letters or edit for clarity, brevity, good taste and accuracy, and to prevent libel. No poetry, attacks on private individuals, or letter-writing campaigns, please. Due to the volume of mail, writers are asked to limit submissions to one letter every 30 days.

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- Opinions expressed in letters or columns, as well as any other opinion piece are solely the opinion of that author and not necessarily the opinion of the staff or editors of The Community Journal.
- Publication of an opinion does not imply an endorsement by The Community Journal.
- Anonymous Letters to the Editor will be automatically rejected.

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The Community Journal

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Thank you, we look forward to hearing from you.

Letters to the Editor

Student speaks out being silenced, against Homecoming tradition

To the Editor:

I recently wrote an editorial about Homecoming in my journalism class at Oakmont, which I thought would be published in our school newspaper, "The Oakmoniter." Apparently, some members of our student council (who work hard to planning the event) were offended by my editorial and soon word got around that I was anti-school spirit and "targeting" the student council.

Unfortunately, many of the people who were against this editorial being published never actually had a chance to read it. Sadly, the Oakmont administration decided it should not be published in our school newspaper. I am asking that you publish it so that students, school staff and parents can decide for themselves whether or not this was "fit to print."

Picture this: 500 kids jammed into a sweaty cafeteria. Picture the girls in their blindingly sparkly dresses, and the boys looking uncomfortable in their jackets and ties. Envision them packed close together, the noxious fumes from hundreds of hairspray cans choking the masses and screaming of ozone depletion. Now imagine these kids dancing. Twisting, breaking, and booty shaking to blaring rap music, as they listen to the songs about "pimpin'," "ridin' dirty," and "livin' in da hood," and pretend that they can relate.

This is The Homecoming Dance of 2007. The "big night" happens this year on Nov. 4, from 6 to 10 p.m., and oh, how the anticipation is mounting! Dates are already being snagged and stressed over, and dress stores are being emptied of their garish goods. Hair appointments — maybe even arrangements for acrylic claws — are hurriedly being scheduled, because we all want to dish out thirty plus dollars to ensure our absolute beauty, if only for four brief hours in the dark. Even tickets to Homecoming are pricey.

Twenties are being shelled out for what is nearly identical to a regular school dance, with only the addition of "high-class" decorations, a table of snacks, and small plastic key chains printed with cute quotes that are obviously necessary for keeping the memory of your night alive. Just in case the ten million pictures taken beforehand aren't enough.

So, yes, I'm anti-Homecoming. I think it's stupid, a waste of money, and quite frankly, pretty pathetic. Even more pathetic however, is that fact that despite my contempt for Homecoming, I will no doubt be attending. I'll buy the ticket, wear the dress, and even curl my hair. More likely than not, I will end up enjoying myself. After all, as the exceedingly wise Wes Smith once put it, "memories need to be made."

Thank you,

Jill D'Onfro
Westminster

Forbush trustees want to say thank you

To the Editor:

The staff and trustees of Forbush Memorial Library would like to publicly acknowledge the retirement of two long time employees and thank them for their many years of service to the library and its patrons.

Richard Lawrence II joined the staff 14 years ago after a long career in the lumber business. He was a hard working and steadfast employee. Mr. Lawrence will certainly be missed at the post office where he picked up library mail for over a decade. He will perhaps be best remembered for the botanical wonders, interesting news clippings and book reviews he displayed at the library's main desk and the engaging conversations he initiated about them.

He served as our Library's resident naturalist and became the "go to guy" for any and all questions about native flora as well as exotic plants.

JoAnn Helenius was a member of the library staff for 31 years. When she was hired by director Stanley Kendig to work evenings, the library was essentially a one floor operation. She was a "port in the storm" during the effort to renovate the basement to house the children's room and eventually with the complete renovation of the library. In addition, she knew the collection and the interests of readers and was an invaluable resource to so many patrons in search of a good book. Mrs. Helenius held technical services and bookkeeping responsibilities for many years and recently served as interim library director. Mrs. Helenius will be remembered for her distinctive and hearty laugh and her willingness to help others. Many of us will miss her updates on the readiness of the blueberries, in the summer, at her farm in Ashburnham.

Richard and JoAnn, thank you for your service to our library and community. We are sure that all FML patrons join us in wishing you both a happy, healthy and fruitful retirement.

The Forbush Memorial Library
Staff and Board of Trustees
Westminster

Visibility, responsiveness gain voter's support

To the Editor:

This letter is in support of Lew Evangelidis in his bid for re-election to the State House of Representatives on Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Representative Evangelidis has been by far the most visible and responsive member in the House we have had in decades. Because of his hard work and the results he has attained in support of this district he deserved to be re-elected, and we need his type of representation for at least the next two years.

Herschel Jones
Westminster

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