

FROM THE EDITOR

Sidelines no place to bash military service

Working for a newspaper, I read a lot of opinion columns. I agree with a few. I disagree with as many. But even when I don't see eye-to-eye with a columnist, I rarely take the words they write personally.

That changed earlier this week when I felt like I was punched in the gut by one of my co-workers, Times Leader columnist Casey Jones.

I'm not going to re-write Casey's column. Basically - after saying a few nice words about First Lt. Michael J. Cleary, a Dallas native who was recently killed in action near Samarra, Iraq - Casey went on to demean military service. At least that's the way I read it. And I'm not alone.

Because I had written several stories about Mike after his death, several people called me to vent their anger - and their disgust. Some left messages. I spoke to several others. Some threatened to cancel their subscriptions. Almost everyone wanted my opinion.

Here it is.

Using Mike Cleary's story - while the family is still grieving - in a column to advance anti-military, anti-Bush, anti-war feelings is despicable. No matter how many nice things you write about him before you unleash your attack.

The four-hour public viewing and memorial service wasn't a place for curiosity seekers. It was a place for family members and friends to pay their respects to Mike and his family - not an opportunity for a columnist to get some color or atmosphere for a newspaper column.

The people who waited more than two hours in line at the Anderson Center at College Misericordia were mourning a family member. A friend. A teammate. A student. And a soldier.

Casey wrote that serving in a volunteer army made Mike's death more tragic. But being killed while voluntarily serving his country doesn't make his death more tragic - it makes it more heroic.

Mike didn't fit into the stereotype that some people love to put forth about the men and women in uniform. They want you to think the military is comprised of low-income, can't-get-into-college people who can be lured into the military with bonuses and a steady paycheck.

But Mike came from an upper middle-class family with a nice home and a successful family business. He graduated with honors from a private college. He had plenty of options. He chose the military.

And he's not alone. The military has lots of Mike Clearys.

Casey says most of his "bad decisions" took place when he was a person in his late teens and early 20s. There's no doubt he feels that joining the military is a bad decision. In my opinion, Casey despises most of the things Mike Cleary stood for. The reasons why Mike proudly wore a military uniform. The reasons why he carried on a long, proud family tradition of serving in the military.

Near the end of his column, Casey wrote: "Kids need to know that there are other ways, better ways, to become a man, make a living, pay for college or earn a trade."

What a slap in the face to every man and woman who has ever worn a military uniform. And it's a slap in the face to their parents and loved ones. The column shamed and demeaned Mike's service to our country.

It's true, there are many honorable ways other than military service to serve your country.

But there are few things more noble than fighting for a cause you believe in, risking your life for your country or paying the ultimate sacrifice.

Casey finished his column with words of advice for young people. In short, he encourages them not to join the military.

Here's my advice to those same young people.

You can sit on the sidelines, filled with hate because you despise the person who occupies the Oval Office. You can try to hide the hate with a few nice words while you write anti-military columns. You can slap the face of every soldier, sailor, Marine and Coast Guard member who has ever worn a military uniform.

Or you can be a man like Mike Cleary.

You can be a hero.

You can join the military.

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MOMENTS IN TIME

The History Channel

- Harlan Sanders, founder of the restaurant chain Kentucky Fried Chicken, wasn't always involved in culinary pursuits; at various times he worked as a streetcar conductor, a soldier, a railroad fireman, an insurance salesman and a service-station operator. In 1929, when Sanders was about 40 years old, he opened Sanders' Cafe in the back of a service station in Corbin, Ky. - a rather humble beginning for today's KFC empire.

- Are you a crytoscophilic? If you are, I hope you don't live in my neighborhood. That's a term used to describe a person who feels an overwhelming urge to look into other people's windows.

- Comedian Groucho Marx got into show business when he was a young boy - as a soprano singer.

- It's still not known who made the following sage observation: "Computers come in two varieties: the prototype and the obsolete."

- Cotton is a ubiquitous substance. Everyone wears cotton clothes, but rarely does anyone give much thought to the raw material. Consider this: Each cotton fiber is actually made up of a single cell - it's just 3,000 times longer than it is wide.

- The Eiffel Tower may look a bit flimsy, but it's actually remarkably strong. In 1999 a violent storm struck Paris - so violent, in fact, that it knocked down more than 100,000 trees. Instruments at the top of the tower recorded a wind speed of 133 mph, the strongest ever observed there. The tower itself was fine, though; despite the record-breaking winds, it swayed less than 4 inches.

- When King Louis XVI of France was led to the guillotine in 1793 amid a mob of revolutionaries, he reportedly said to the crowd, "May my blood cement your happiness."

Thought for the Day: "Woman begins by resisting a man's advances and ends by blocking his retreat." - Oscar Wilde
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We all lose our way sometimes. Many times, it's our own fault. Other times, we have no control over the hand we're dealt. Regardless - no matter how out of place we may feel - it always helps to make the best out of a bad situation.

LIBRARY NEWS

Fiction, mystery books added to library shelves

The following new books and books on CD have been added to the collection at the Back Mountain Memorial Library, 96 Huntsville Road, Dallas. For more information, call the library at 675-1182.

EXPRESS (1 WEEK LOAN)

"Light from Heaven" by Jan Karon
"Christ the Lord: out of Egypt" by Anne Rice
"Turning Angel" by Greg Iles
"On the Run" by Iris Johansen

FICTION

"Cold Hit" by Stephen J. Cannell
"Red Lily" by Nora Roberts
"Long Time Coming" by Sandra Brown
"On the Run" by Iris Johansen
"Turning Angel" by Greg Iles

"Creepers" by David Morrell
"The Protégé" by Stephen W. Frey
"Final Scream" by Lisa Jackson
"Night Tales" by Nora Roberts
"Dancing in the Dark" by Mary Jane Clark
"Panic" by Jeff Abbott
"Candy Apple Red" by Nancy Bush
"Sudden Death" by David Rosenfelt

NONFICTION

"Healthy Aging" by Andrew Weil
"The Mom Factor" by Nora Lee
"Autodata Technical Data: domestic & imported motorcycles, dirt bikes and ATVs"
"Two Happy Homes" by Shirley Thomas
"God Created the Integers"

edited with commentary by Stephen Hawking

MYSTERY

"The Cradle Robbers" by Ayelet Waldman
"The Killing Club" by Marcie Walsh
"Sentenced to Die" by J.A. Jance
"The Goodbye Body" by Joan Hess
"Sympathy Between Humans" by Jodi Compton

BIOGRAPHY

"The Year of Magical Thinking" by Joan Didion

REFERENCE

"The Gale Encyclopedia of Cancer"
"Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006"

LARGE PRINT FICTION

"Perfect Nightmare" by John Saul
"The House in Amalfi" by Elizabeth Adler
"The Circle" by Peter Lovesey
"A Christmas Visitor" by Anne Perry
"Zipporah, Wife of Moses" by Marek Halter
"S is for Silence" by Sue Granton

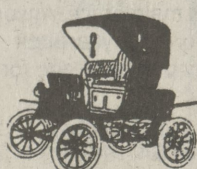
BOOKS ON CD

"Red Lily" by Nora Roberts
"Toxic Bachelors" by Danielle Steel
"Speedbumps" by Teri Garr
"Dark Watch" by Clive Cussler
"Ordinary Heroes" by Scott Turow
"Teacher Man" by Frank McCourt

70 YEARS AGO
Jan. 10, 1936

FIGHT IMMINENT OVER UTILITY RATE INCREASE

Prospects of a long battle over the increased rates filed by Dallas Water Company with the Public Service Commission loomed this week as consumers - with business men in the vanguard - prepared to launch a protest.



ONLY YESTERDAY

The Dallas Taxpayers Association has called consumers to a meeting next Monday night in the Dallas Borough High School to plan method of protest.

It pays basketball players to elect basketball experts to school boards. At least the presence of Jack Roberts, longtime basketball manager on Dallas Borough School Board, has saved some high school players from possible embarrassment this season.

Players who spend long hours practicing free throws would have been mystified by their inaccuracy had not Mr. Roberts discovered the other night that one basket in the high school gymnasium is 18 inches too far from the foul line. The board ordered that the basket be moved to its correct position.

60 YEARS AGO
Jan. 11, 1946

PORK PRODUCTS CANNED IN A JIFFY

A break in the usually frigid January temperature has created a stir of activity at Lehman Community Canning Center where the big kettles have been busy for several days taking care of pork and pork products for farm households and others who have butchered pigs.

One of the steam jacketed kettles holds forty gallons of fat and produces the purest whitest lard in less than an hour without fuss, mess or bother. Many persons have brought their own casings and stuffed sausages on the Canning Center sausage press.

A Trucksville young man, serving in the American military government, has been placed in charge of the finance department of Kuwang, a southern Korean city with a population of 90,000. He is First Lieutenant Willard Woolbert, son of Mr. and Mrs. Archie Woolbert, Holly Street.

Lt. Woolbert, a graduate of Kingston Township, joined the Army at Philadelphia in the spring of 1941. He was commissioned the following year at Camp Lee, Virginia and was later stationed the University of Virginia Charlottesville and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor where he studied the principles of AMG and the Japanese language.

40 YEARS AGO
Jan. 13, 1956

LITTLE GIRL FINDS \$10 BILL IN PUDDLE

Emily Botsford, 7, on her way home from Dallas Elementary School, found a \$10 bill in a puddle on Lehman Avenue. She picked it up and put it back in an access of honesty. Arrived at home, she told her mother about the find and Mrs. R.B. Botsford told her to run right back out and get it, quick. Then Mrs. Botsford, drying out the bill on a radiator, followed established custom by calling the Dallas Post. The Dallas Post said it would inquire. Turns out the bill had been frozen ever since Christmas time, the Wednesday

thaw finally releasing it. Earl McCarthy, Dallas post linotype operator, who had stuffed the bill into his pocket loose, and had bemoaning its loss for weeks was pretty glad to hear about it.

The 1956 Senior Grand Champion Bull of the Milking Short-horn Breed at Pennsylvania Farm Show this week is Barrington King Nuggett, owned and show by Hillside Farms Inc. Trucksville. Hillside Farms has been showing Milking Short-horns at the Farm Show since 1949.

40 YEARS AGO
Jan. 6, 1966

BOMB HOAX KEEPS POLICE BUSY

A bomb hoax perpetrated by a phone from Harveys Lake had law enforcement officers combing through the Back Mountain schools on Sunday, but the coast was clear when school convened the following day. No bomb was found in the Dallas and Lake-Lehman school districts, although police and helpers, both civilian and firemen, checked every school in the district. They even checked some pay phones.

According to police, a youthful male voice threatened a school at the lake. He said it was an elementary school, but police thought it could be an elementary school in the area. The call was made from a pay phone in Harveys Lake (there are eight in the area).

Daniel C. Roberts Fire Company of Harveys Lake is still operating an ambulance following a collision of the old one in Luzerne last week. Practically identical to the old one, a new ambulance has been lent by Wolfington Body Company of Philadelphia. A member of the emergency squad says the 1965 Cadillac now in use in Lake

Township happened to be received at the Philadelphia company on the day following the crash.

30 YEARS AGO
Jan. 8, 1976

STRIKING WORKERS VOTE DOWN PROPOSAL

Members of the local Communications Workers of America on strike against the Commonwealth Telephone Company since December 13 voted overwhelmingly on Monday night to reject the company's offer of a 9.4 percent across-the-board raise and a 1.25 percent increase in fringe benefits.

Robert Mack, president of the Dallas local Commonwealth's corporate headquarters, said company-wide voting results were 393-21 opposed to the offer. He said the vote was pretty much what union leaders expected.

Four re-elected Dallas Borough councilmen were sworn in to office on Monday night at the borough building. Oaths of office were administered by District Magistrate Earl Gregory to William Carroll, Kenneth Young, Harold Brobst and Peter Arnaud.

Jerry Machell was re-elected as president of the council and William Berti was elected vice president. Ralph Garris was reappointed as secretary and also as superintendent of roads. William Baker was reappointed as council treasurer.

St. John's basketball team pulled off a mild upset by defeating head coach Joe O'Donnell's Mountaineers, 67-65, in a close contest at the Johnnie's home court in Pittston. High scorer for Dallas was Mike Carey with 24 points. Other Mounts hitting double figures were Bruce Rosenstahl (15 points) and Jeff Supulski (11).

THE POST

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