

ramblings...

by: *perlina anderkin*

Most usually, I'm not a big fan of the Louisville Cardinals -- the men's team, primarily because I have little or no regard for their coach, Rick Pitino. But, the same applies to the Lady Wildcats coach, Matthew Mitchell, since he didn't seem to recruit our very own Ky. Miss Basketball Sara Hammond as hard as he should have.

Ever since Sara chose the Lady Cardinals over UConn, I have been squarely in their corner, even to rooting for them against the Wildcats in their one meeting his year. And, it was very gratifying Sunday night to see the Lady Cardinals take out Brittany Griner and Baylor and advance to the Final Four of the ladies NCAA tourney.

It was especially gratifying because Hammond played a major role in the win, helping to frustrate Griner on offense and then, at a crucial time toward the end of the game, blocking a shot and then taking a charge to get the Lady Cardinals the ball and help them to their one-point win.

Sara is an exceptional young lady, besides being a premier ball player and we sincerely hope she and the Lady Cardinals go all the way.

At least the Lady Cards have given me some reason to be interested in post season play. I even filled out a bracket for the tournament but my picks are laughable at this point -- couldn't even pick one team right for the final four.

After Cardinal Kevin Ware was so badly injured in Louisville's game with Duke Saturday, I even found myself rooting for them -- though that really wasn't a stretch -- don't particularly care for coach Mike K (can't spell his name).

Have been a little amazed at recent letters to the editor, chastising our county for our lack of progress and blaming it on our conservatism. Yes, we vote Republican but, I think, it is primarily because we don't believe in big government because we know that true economic and personal growth comes from personal re-

sponsibility and that government is not the answer to our problems.

I, for one, would like to see a government that still adheres to the constitution which sets out exactly what the federal government is responsible for with the rest left to the states. That is being ignored to the point that I fully expect the constitution to be torn up and thrown away during the next three years.

Ignored in all this is the fact that, in the past, we have not had the resources needed to encourage economic growth. Until a farsighted fiscal court had the courage to fight for a payroll tax, there were no funds available to help industry locate here. That alone has helped Rockcastle County to see unprecedented economic growth in the last year. The tax is a burden but one that has a purpose and is not being used to increase the size of government but to benefit those in our county who want to work instead of living off the government dole.

That is my main complaint with the present trend of government. When you have congressmen standing before TV cameras and saying that unemployment benefits and food stamps are an economic stimulus to our nation, then you have to think that the solution to a slow economy is for everyone to quit their job, go on unemployment and get food stamps. The only problem with that is that someone has to work to pay the bill for these programs. How idiotic!

The aim of the present administration is to get as many people dependent on the government for their existence as possible -- thereby ensuring their vote to keep their check coming.

Granted, there will always be those who are unable to care for themselves and it is incumbent on us to make sure they are provided for.

If we do not come to our senses and realize what is happening to this once great nation, then we will surely pay for it with our freedoms and our leadership in the world.



The Way I See it

By
Doug Ponder

The first part of my column was inadvertently omitted in last week's Signal. This is my column in its entirety.

At the Signal, we receive hundreds of news releases on a weekly basis from organizations and people who want us to write an article about their chosen topic.

The news releases range from political issues, environmental issues, family issues, education issues, transportation issues, etc. A lot of these news releases do not pertain to "Rockcastle County news" on a countywide level and only a few of them consist of material that is newsworthy.

However, there was one particular news release emailed to us on Monday that immediately caught my attention. It was from Rockcastle UNITE Coalition Chairman John Hale about their annual Leadership Rally and Community Celebration Dinner in April.

I attended the event last year, for the first time, and thought it was a great program. So I figured I would write a decent-sized blurb about the event that included information from the news release that Hale had emailed. However, after glancing at the phrase at the bottom of page which stated "hear about an amazing story of forgiveness," I immediately found myself intrigued and wanting to learn more about the guest speaker's story.

The guest speaker for the event is Renee Napier of St. Petersburg, Florida. Napier's daughter Meagan was killed in an automobile accident when her vehicle was struck by drunk driver Eric Smallridge in May, 2002.

Napier would spend the following years traveling around the United States, spreading her message about the dangers of drunk driving and how her daughter was killed by a drunk driver. She also founded a non-profit organization to raise awareness about the dangers of driving under the influence.

Smallridge was sentenced to twenty-two years in prison for two counts of DUI manslaughter. After a few years of imprisonment, Napier asked Smallridge to join her presentations and he was eventually granted permission from the Florida Department of Corrections to share his testimony with Napier at several different high schools and colleges throughout Florida.

After several presentations, Napier surprisingly began to petition the judge to reduce Smallridge's sentence saying that she believed he was truly sorry for what he had done and that she had forgiven him. In November 2012, that permission was granted as

Smallridge was released in front of his family, friends and, of course, an army of news reporters.

In his testimony, Smallridge said there was never a day that went by while he was in prison that he didn't ask God why he wasn't the one to die instead of the two young girls. He said he felt worthless as a person and didn't believe he deserved any type of future in this world after the accident.

But through Napier forgiving Smallridge, he was able to find a purpose in life by touring schools across the United States and informing students not to make the same mistakes he had made in his life.

To many people, Napier's story of forgiving her daughter's killer is a promising story which proves that love and compassion can give a purpose to lost lives.

However, I realize some people are probably like me at first and couldn't understand how someone could forgive their child's killer? A lot of people claim that nothing is more powerful than a mother's love for her children. But if that's the case, then how could a mother forgive the man who took their child away from them?

During interviews, Napier would answer similar questions by saying she can never forget what happened, but that she could still forgive Smallridge for the mistake he made of driving drunk.

"I could be angry, hateful and bitter," Napier said during an ABC news interview. "But I didn't want to live my life that way. There

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Points East

By Ike Adams



I have Parkinson's Disease. I am frequently-balance challenged if I have to walk or wobble more than a few short steps. I am also one of the people who ride those bothersome electric shopping carts and get in your way at the supermarket and department stores.

A year or so ago, I stopped by the courthouse in Lancaster, disability letter in hand, and asked what I needed to do to get a handicapped parking permit. Turns out, I had to do nothing but ask. The nice young lady at the County Clerk's Office whipped it right out. She took my word for the fact that I'm handicapped and didn't even need to see my letter. Anybody willing to lie can get one.

The problem is that, even though I have a fairly serious physical handicap, I am almost never able to find a handicapped parking spot because they are all taken by drivers who, instead of having a physical disability, are morally and ethically handicapped. I'm talking here about perfectly healthy people who will lie, cheat and steal to get a handicapped parking permit and a convenient parking spot and they don't care who knows about their crooked ways.

Last Monday morning I sat in the Kohl's parking lot in Richmond for nearly an hour while Loretta shopped. Kohl's didn't have electric buggies the last time I was in there but at least I can listen to decent music or read if I sit in the car.

But the store does have about a dozen handicapped parking spaces directly in front of the entrance. Every single one of these was

taken when we found a spot nearby. And I'm thinking, at first, that the store must be having one heck of a sale on wheel chairs, crutches, walkers, walking canes and stuff like that.

Then I started noticing the shoppers whose cars occupied these spots, mostly younger women, as they started waltzing out of the store, hopping behind the steering wheel and driving off. Within a couple of minutes the spots would be taken by drivers, some with healthy looking passengers, who ran into the store but who had absolutely no visible sign of a physical handicap.

Almost all of them had handicapped parking permits hanging off their mirrors but a couple or three didn't even have an illegally used permit. They just figured the law wouldn't come around and that they wouldn't get a ticket if it did. I figure they were going inside to shop lift.

Given the size of many of their posteriors and waistlines, the occupants of these cars would have been far better served if they had parked at the back of the lot and jogged off a few calories before entering the store.

So I'm sitting there thinking that here's a situation the self serving corps of clowns that we call The Kentucky General Assembly could address. Pass a law that levies hefty fines, even jail time, for drivers who steal handicapped parking spots unless they actually have a handicapped passenger on board. Then I realized these same drivers

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