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Tradition of Honoring Mothers Reflects Bond With Children

Mother's Day, one of our country's most popular and beloved holidays, will be celebrated by millions of families this Sunday, May 13. This day typically features festive gatherings at homes or restaurants, sentimental cards and gifts, floral bouquets and other tokens of affection, as well as the sharing of favorite memories.

The origins of honoring mothers can be traced back several millennia. Multiple ancient societies devoted festivals to maternal figures, albeit these celebrations revolved around mythological figures rather than human mothers. Among the earliest were the Egyptians, who held an annual festival honoring the goddess Isis, considered to be the mother of the pharaohs. The Greeks likewise offered a spring festival in homage to Rhea, who in their culture's mythology was the mother of multiple deities, among them Zeus, Hera and Poseidon. For their part, the Romans worshipped Cybele, known as the Mother of the Gods and the goddess of nature and fertility.

As Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire and Europe, the celebration of motherhood was incorporated into the liturgical calendar as Laetare Sunday, observed on the fourth Sunday of Lent in honor of Mary, the mother of Jesus. On this day, the faithful traditionally returned home to their "mother church." The day also came to be known as "Mothering Sunday." (wikipedia.org/wiki/Mothering_Sunday).

In the United States, the custom of a day to honor mothers originated during the Civil War era. West Virginia homemaker Ann Reeves Jarvis championed the need for better sanitary conditions in her Appalachian community through the creation of "Mothers' Day Work Clubs" in five communities. During the war, these clubs cared for Union and Confederate soldiers alike in an atmosphere of neutrality. In an effort to help heal the divisiveness caused by the devastating conflict, Mrs. Jarvis suc-

cessfully organized a Mothers' Friendship Day in the summer of 1865 to bring together troops and their families, regardless of their political beliefs. (wvculture.org/history/Jarvis.html).

In tribute to her mother and all other mothers, Mrs. Jarvis' daughter, Anna Jarvis, became a staunch and tireless advocate for the creation of a day to honor these women. Her cause was inspired by her mother's humanitarian efforts as well as Mrs. Jarvis' expressed wish that a day would be established to honor mothers for, as her mother stated, "the matchless service she renders to humanity in every field of life." (mothersdaycelebration.com).

Two years after her mother's death, in 1907, Miss Jarvis initiated her campaign for the establishment of a national Mother's Day commemoration. She and her supporters conducted a letter-writing campaign promoting their cause, appealing to influential individuals such as businessmen and even Presidents William Howard Taft and Theodore Roosevelt. Although it did not garner immediate support, the Mother's Day proposal gained momentum after businessman and philanthropist John Wanamaker lent his support to the idea. By 1911, nearly every state in the nation celebrated Mother's Day. On May 8, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a bill establishing the first national observance of Mother's Day. (mothersdaycelebration.com).

The celebration of Mother's Day, and the long history which led up to the holiday we know today, reflects the bonds that since the earliest eras have existed between mothers and their children. A mother's face is the first a baby sees; her touch the first he or she comes to know. As her children develop and mature, she is their nurturer, teacher, role model, friend and confidante. We always need her, at every stage of our lives, and her influence shapes so much of who we are. We wish all mothers, grandmothers, and all who play a maternal role in our lives, a happy and healthy Mother's Day.

Mayor Malool Objects to Editorial As 'Hearsay And Inaccuracies; Lacks Focus and Ignores Basic Ethics'

I write this letter in response to last week's editorial, which was so full of innuendo and inaccuracy that I fear it might have given readers the mistaken impression that Scotch Plains has been floundering for the past three and a half years under my leadership.

While it is unclear whether the intended point of your editorial was a criticism of my tenure or former Town Manager Chris Marion's work, our hiring practices, or the policies of Scotch Plains, Fanwood, or Westfield, what is clear to me is that your article makes several baseless assumptions, lacks focus and ignores the basic ethical standards so essential to journalistic integrity.

Even a brief review of the facts would have revealed, contrary to your assertions, that I have not yet resigned from my post as Mayor and that there is a state law that determines how the acting Mayor who will eventually take my place is chosen. Further, former Mayor Marty Marks had been running for Congress for almost a year prior to former

Town Manager Tom Atkins' retirement. Mr. Marks's decision not to seek reelection as mayor was not concurrent with Mr. Atkins' retirement, as you suggest, and did not create a sudden lack of "true leadership" in our local government. I did not single-handedly "institute a sewer tax," rather, the majority of the township council voted, on the advice of our consultant, CFO and auditor, to establish the fee in order to avoid massive layoffs. Finally, former Town Manager Chris Marion was not merely passing time in Scotch Plains until a job "closer to home popped up."

Contrary to your implication, I don't view my position as being in competition with neighboring towns' mayors. Nevertheless, I'm confident that my leadership, along with the managerial expertise put into practice by Mr. Marion, not only maintained, but upgraded our standing as a well-run, desirable town. Both individually, with myself as the leader of the governing body, and Mr. Marion as the leader of the executive branch,

and together, we provided guidance and direction to effectively overcome some of the most difficult times and decisions to face our town in recent history.

You suggest that we consider our own employee base when looking for our next town manager. Perhaps if you had even made a simple inquiry, you would have learned that none of our employees applied for the position or expressed any interest. You also would have learned that the township manager position in our Council-Manager form of government, where the manager is the chief executive of the township's day to day operations including hiring, firing and disciplining personnel, budgeting, and contract negotiations, requires a specific skill set.

I certainly respect your right to assess my tenure as mayor as a "bumpy ride," as you call it in the headline, but I object to your making the assessment based on hearsay and inaccuracies instead of specific facts.

Nancy Malool
 Mayor of Scotch Plains

Letters to the Editor

Westfield High School Parking: Why Not Stoneleigh Park?

Last week you received a letter from Mr. Wertheimer who proved beyond doubt that the explanation he received at the hearing on parking at the high school was completely untrue. He wanted to know why Stoneleigh Park was exempted from the parking plan and was told that the councilperson had an "indication" from the fire chief that there was a safety hazard if a fire truck had to negotiate that street with parking on both sides.

Mr. Wertheimer never mentioned parking on both sides of the street and his letter shows how the children could park their cars like everyone else does on that street. The councilperson most probably has no writing from the fire chief supporting her claim and I would strongly suggest that, if asked, the Chief would say his trucks have no problem driving through Stoneleigh Park with parking on one side as it presently exists.

Why do we receive such comments from members of the Council, which, on reflection, seem to be said to get rid of someone with a good criticism? When asked why we don't have enough firemen to man the ladder truck we had, we were told it's use was for scenic views of the fire as if it were a piece of equipment used for tourists.

The respondent completely ignored the real reasons for that truck. When a complaint was made that the lowered manpower of the fire dept. impacted on public safety, the Council responded that the firemen arrived at the fires on time. They do not mention the number of times that the punctual firemen had to watch the building burn until enough men arrived from mutual aid.

When the Council is asked to support its position that a traffic light in the "safest" position, it responds that the light does what it is supposed to do. The claim that the fulfillment of its purpose is being done at the "safest" location is ignored.

The Council seems to dissemble rather than answer directly. We seem to be witnessing diversion from the question asked to an innocuous position that will satisfy the moment without admitting the veracity of the criticism being made. It will be interesting to learn if the fire chief will be asked at the next Council meeting to explain why his trucks can negotiate Stoneleigh Park except during school hours and that is why he "indicated" to the councilperson that Stoneleigh Park should be exempted from student parking during school hours.

A. John Blake
 Westfield

District 22 Officials Show No Concern That We Are Over-Taxed in SP-FW

The following letter was sent to elected officials in District 22: Scotch Plains-Fanwood who they represent.

Dear Senator Nicholas Scutari, Assemblywoman Linda Stender and Assemblyman Jerry Green:

On February 21, Senator Michael Doherty presented his Fair School Funding Bill to our town council and answered many questions from our council. After his discussion in the town council chambers, the Senator spent some time talking to the public.

I understand that each of you was invited by more than one taxpayer, as well as our Mayor, to attend. None of you attended or sent anyone from your offices to hear the presentation and see the support by those that you ask, when you are running for re-election, for their votes. Should you care, this is a link to Senator Doherty's presentation that night: www.scotchplainsnj.com/cm-video-022112.html.

Then to reinforce the fact that each of you have no regard for obtaining an additional \$39 million of school aid, each of you were invited to attend a meeting, sponsored by the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Tea Party, with local taxpayers on April 24, 2012 to discuss the Fair School Funding Bill. Each of you also refused to

attend. I would suspect that when you want our vote to stay in office, you would find time to shake our hands, put signs out, and meet with us.

You're inaction essentially left \$39 million on the table — funds that would amount to approximately 50 percent of our property taxes attributed to our public schools.

Leave it to be said, your lack of attendance was very disturbing and will be remembered when you run for re-election.

However, there is still time for each of you to come out and actively support Senator Michael Doherty's bill. We hear in the news a constant assault by your party (i.e. Democrat Party) on the Governor's 10 percent income tax cut, where it is stated that property taxes is the larger problem. I agree with you — property taxes should be number one. Supporting Senator Doherty's bill would go a long way to provide us the long awaited property tax reform and would mean thousands of dollars to the taxpayers in your district.

Please help us by showing your support.

I share this letter with the media so others can see the concern you show to us overly taxed payers.

Albert Muller
 Scotch Plains

Closed Minds Get Bent Out of Shape When Hearing Differing Opinions

There was once a time in America when we all praised the open mind. That we praised hearing open, honest and thoughtful debate on all sides of an argument; that we looked at all information, data and evidence; that we listened and read openly what people had said and wrote; that we would test our hypothesis over and over again always with the open mind and then come to our own conclusions.

Since the late 1960s and early 70s, most Americans have abandoned all that — considering it all passé. They replaced it with their own prejudices, ideology and their own beliefs. In short, since that time, there has been a deliberate closing of the American mind.

For example, back in the 1960s and 70s, Keynesian economics was literally taken as gospel by many individuals in society and in politics as a whole. Many accepted the premise that government and deficit spending was justified to keep the economy flowing and moving. No one was willing to listen and read opposing points of view. They were not willing to listen and read economists such as Ludwig Von Mises, Milton Freidman, F.A. Hayek, Arthur Laffer, Steven Moore, Henry Hazlitt,

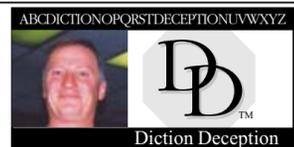
and other schools of thought.

In fact, even now, today, there are some that act with hostility, anger and malice when challenging the notions of Keynesian theory. That same anger also applies on other issues as well such as abortion, affirmative action, climate change, the minimum wage, rent control and so on and so forth. You challenge assumptions and "conventional wisdom," and some people will get bent out of shape. It is then that they will attack your character, degrade you, smear you, shout you down, ridicule you and shame you into silence. This is not what the United States is all about and this is very much akin to having tyranny over the minds, hearts and souls of individuals.

The moment the human mind closes up is the moment that it becomes similar to depriving the body of food and sunlight. If the American mind remains closed, then the future will look bleak and human beings will be thought of as nothing more than soulless and thoughtless robots.

It is time to open the American mind up once again for our sake and for the sake of generations to come.

Alex Pugliese
 Kenilworth



Below are four arcane words, each with four definitions — only one is correct. The others are made up. Are you sharp enough to discern this deception of diction?

If you can guess one correctly — good guess. If you get two — well-read individual. If you get three — word expert. If you get all four — You must have a lot of free time!

All words and correct definitions come from the board game Diction Deception.

Answers to last week's arcane words.

1. Gymnotus — South American freshwater electric eel
2. Amyous — Lacking muscle or muscular strength
3. Siriasis — A sunstroke
4. Polemy — Warfare or opposition

LAAGER
 1. To arrange or form in a defensive enclosure

2. Magic, wizardry
3. Solidified; hardened
4. A recorder or registrar

PRATTI

1. Covered with hair
2. Having wits; sense; understanding
3. Cymbals
4. Resembling a porcupine

ULETIC

1. Rainy; humid
2. Capable of being poured; in a liquid state
3. One given to falsehoods; prevarications
4. Pertaining to the gums

TUSSAH

1. An undomesticated Asiatic silkworm
2. The outside, smooth, horny part of the hoof of a horse
3. Inflammation of the oil glands of the skin
4. A small spike or elongated cluster of flowers in grasses

Letters to the Editor

Next State Budget Must Have Prop. Tax Relief

Recently, in an interview with *The Star-Ledger's* Tom Moran, Governor Christie said, "New Jersey has one of the most progressive income taxes in the country. Forty-one percent is paid by 1 percent of the people." And while the Governor's arithmetic is correct, also accurate is the simple reality that his proposed income tax relief plan provides meager relief, in some cases perhaps only a few dollars, to those middle-income New Jerseyans who need it most.

Now, Gov. Christie has taken some steps to reduce the tax burden for New Jerseyans. He has put a cap limiting property tax increases to 2 percent. However, he also has cut back on rebate programs, leaving the average middle-income family with an even larger overall burden.

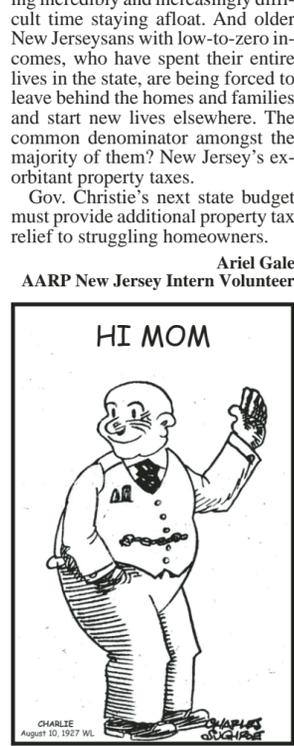
New Jersey continues to have the highest property taxes in the nation, and middle-income families are having increasingly and increasingly difficult time staying afloat. And older New Jerseyans with low-to-zero incomes, who have spent their entire lives in the state, are being forced to leave behind the homes and families and start new lives elsewhere. The common denominator amongst the majority of them? New Jersey's exorbitant property taxes.

Gov. Christie's next state budget must provide additional property tax relief to struggling homeowners.

Ariel Gale

AARP New Jersey Intern Volunteer

HI MOM



CHARLIE August 10, 1927 WL

Your State Legislators

- LD-21---
- Sen. Thomas Kean, Jr. (R)
 425 North Avenue E.
 Westfield, NJ 07090
 (908)-232-3673
- Asm. Jon Bramnick (R)
 251 North Ave. West
 Westfield, NJ 07090
 (908)-232-2073
- Asm. Nancy Munoz (R)
 57 Union Place, Suite 310
 Summit, NJ 07901
 (908)-918-0414

---LD-22---

- Sen. Nicholas Scutari (D)
 1514 E. Saint Georges Ave.
 Linden, NJ 07036
 (908)-587-0404
- Asw. Linda Stender (D)
 1801 East Second St.
 Scotch Plains, NJ 07076
 (908)-668-1900
- Asm. Jerry Green (D)
 17 Watchung Ave.
 Plainfield, NJ 07060
 (908)-561-5757

Does Districting Union County Create Permanent Minority or Fairness?

Freeholder Dan Sullivan's comments (May 3, 2012) on creating districts for Freeholder representation in Union County appear to come short. He fails to mention that the two premier Democrat controlled counties in the state, Hudson and Essex, are self-assured enough to have districts without pondering what the Republicans were doing elsewhere. (Full disclosure: GOP controlled Atlantic County is the third one with districts.)

A few years ago when this topic came up, there were three varying maps floating around divided by municipal borders. The split would have comfortably been a Dem/Rep split of 6 to 3 with an outside margin of 5 to 4. Elizabeth would be two districts because of population.

That Freeholder Sullivan would be quoted as saying he was, "not op-

posed to districting if it were the same for every county in New Jersey." I find surprising. No one has ever asserted that Freeholder Sullivan has ever been a follower. Also, that the number of Freeholders per county and the number of countywide elected positions is not the same, thus dismissing any uniformity to begin with.

Finally, he is quoted, "That (districting) creates in my mind a permanent minority." Is this saying that make-up of Chosen Board having, say, one minority member is less than not having a minority member at all? If that is the case, we may as well abolish the premises for the 8th and 10th Congressional Districts and Affirmative Action.

Roger Stryeski, Chairman
 Roselle Republican Committee

THANKS, MOM, FOR ALWAYS TALKING TO ME ON OUR WALKS WHEN I WAS LITTLE, NOT TO YOUR CELL PHONE. THANKS FOR POINTING OUT THE SQUIRREL IN THE PARK AND NOT POINTING YOUR THUMBS FOR A TEXT MESSAGE. THANKS FOR SINGING ME TO SLEEP YOURSELF, NOT FALLING ASLEEP TO YOUR CELL PHONE RING TONE. THANKS FOR SEEING TO IT I GREW UP LIKE YOU DID.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!!

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