

OPINION

THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

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OUR OPINION

Father's Day

Dads are important in the development of their children

The first observance of Father's Day was on July 5, 1908, in Fairmont, West Virginia. Just two months prior, the first modern Mother's Day celebration was held in the West Virginia town of Grafton. Spotty Father's Day observations occurred until the 1920s, when the celebration faded into obscurity for a time before the holiday was promoted again in the 1930s.

At that time, trade groups that would benefit most from the holiday — including manufacturers of ties, tobacco pipes and any traditional gift to fathers — were asked to help promote the holiday in order to raise awareness at a national level. And by 1938, the Father's Day Council, founded by the New York Associated Men's Wear Retailers to help with commercial promotion, got on board, as well.

While Americans initially resisted Father's Day due to its commercialization, by the mid-1980s the holiday had become "a second Christmas for all the men's gift-oriented industries," according to the Father's Day Council.

A bill to approve national recognition of the holiday was introduced in Congress in 1913, but as many of us recall, it wasn't until 1966 that President Lyndon B. Johnson issued the first presidential proclamation designating the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. And it wasn't until six years later, in 1972, that the day was made a permanent national holiday when President Richard Nixon signed it into law. By contrast, Congress passed a law designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day in 1914 — 58 years earlier.

While it might have taken our country a while to finally give dads the due respect we had been paying to moms, no child can deny the influence their father has had in molding them into the people they are today. After all, little boys want to grow up to be "just like Dad." And little girls will always be "Daddy's little girl," no matter how old they are.

Whether busting their tails at jobs that often keep them away for long hours from the families they work so hard to provide for, coaching sports teams for free in what meager off-time

they get, or taking care of business around the house to ensure the roof over your head doesn't leak, your father is always there for you, all the time. And while threats to daughters of "riding in the back seat with a shotgun" on their dates might be idle, don't think that bluff is too far off the mark from what Dad will actually do to anyone who tries to hurt his little girl.

However, not all of us grew up with the benefit of having a father in the house. According to the U.S. Census Bureau there are 19.7 million children — more than 1 in 4 — living without a father in the home. Consequently, there is a "father factor" in nearly all of the societal ills facing America today. Research shows that when a child is raised in a home without a father, the child is:

- 4 times at greater risk of poverty.
- More likely to have behavioral problems.
- 2 times at greater risk of infant mortality.
- More likely to go to prison.
- More likely to commit crime.
- 7 times more likely to become pregnant as a teen.
- More likely to face abuse and neglect.
- 2 times more likely to suffer obesity.
- 2 times more likely to drop out of high school.

So while we've all been guilty of buying that tie, tech gadget, wallet, T-shirt or coffee mug to honor "The World's Greatest Dad" on one Father's Day or another — and don't get us wrong, Dad treasures those gifts — this year let's give Dad the gift he gave us growing up: our time.

Hang out with the old man during today's final round of the U.S. Open or watch UT and A&M square off in the College World Series. And if Dad's not into sports, line up some time to spend with him while fishing, grilling or just shooting the breeze.

If work has your dad on the road or in another town, or if you no longer live in the same area, pick up the phone and call the guy!

And for those of us whose fathers are no longer alive, don't think that means they are no longer with us. Dad will always be there for you, watching over you.

I am listening ... but are you?

Every morning, I walk into the office and begin my process of starting the work day. I check social media for local stories, then I check other news outlets to make sure I didn't miss any breaking news through the night.



JESS HUFF

I open my email and delete the inevitable junk my filter missed. Then I check the junk filter for the potential local stories my junk filter decided weren't relevant. It happens more often than you'd think.

Inevitably, each week I will open an email from one of my colleagues — yet another individual was arrested for some form of sex crime. I file it in my "crime" folder, note it on my to-do list and move on.

I think back to the first week I embarked on upholding my promise to let the community know about each and every sexual assault that ran across my desk. I was so proud of the project the first day, and by day seven my head and heart hurt.

In the last six months, I have been called heartless, a pedophile, a vulture and so much more as I cover these stories.

How dare I put your dad, your brother, your son, your husband on the front page of the newspaper? Did I really have to use that much

Places to go

If you need help, here are some resources for you:
Family Crisis Center of East Texas
 Hotline Number: 1-800-828-SAFE (7233)
 or send confidential text to: (936) 552-9256
Lufkin Police non-emergency line
 (936) 633-0356
Angelina County Sheriff's Office
 (936) 634-3332

detail? I should have left the age of the victim, the city, the environment out of it. Don't I realize I am revictimizing each and every one of these people who were so brave to come forward?

And I ask myself the same questions as each affidavit comes in from the justices of the peace. Pages upon pages of notes about children aged 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 15, 17 who finally told their parents, police and forensic interviewers about the assault they endured.

Should I use this child's age? Is this going to be the detail that tells an entire community who the victim is? Do I tell everyone this grandfather raped his 6-year-old grandson while he was babysitting the child? To protect the child, I should probably ignore the relationship.

The man who woke up a young girl and subjected her to a night of terror — do I tell everyone his

victim was his child? She was asleep in the bed he made for her. I will leave this section ambiguous, maybe he was a stranger who climbed in through an open window.

But at what point am I protecting the accused offender more than I am protecting the victim?

Should I use this child's age? I know many of you have answers to those questions, and you wish I would take your advice. I wish it were that easy.

But while one mom wished I had told the world her father molested her baby, another mom cried because I included her child's age.

It's OK that you don't like me. I would rather you call me names and question my judgment because it means you saw the story. Maybe you read it. And hopefully you are talking to your loved ones about it.

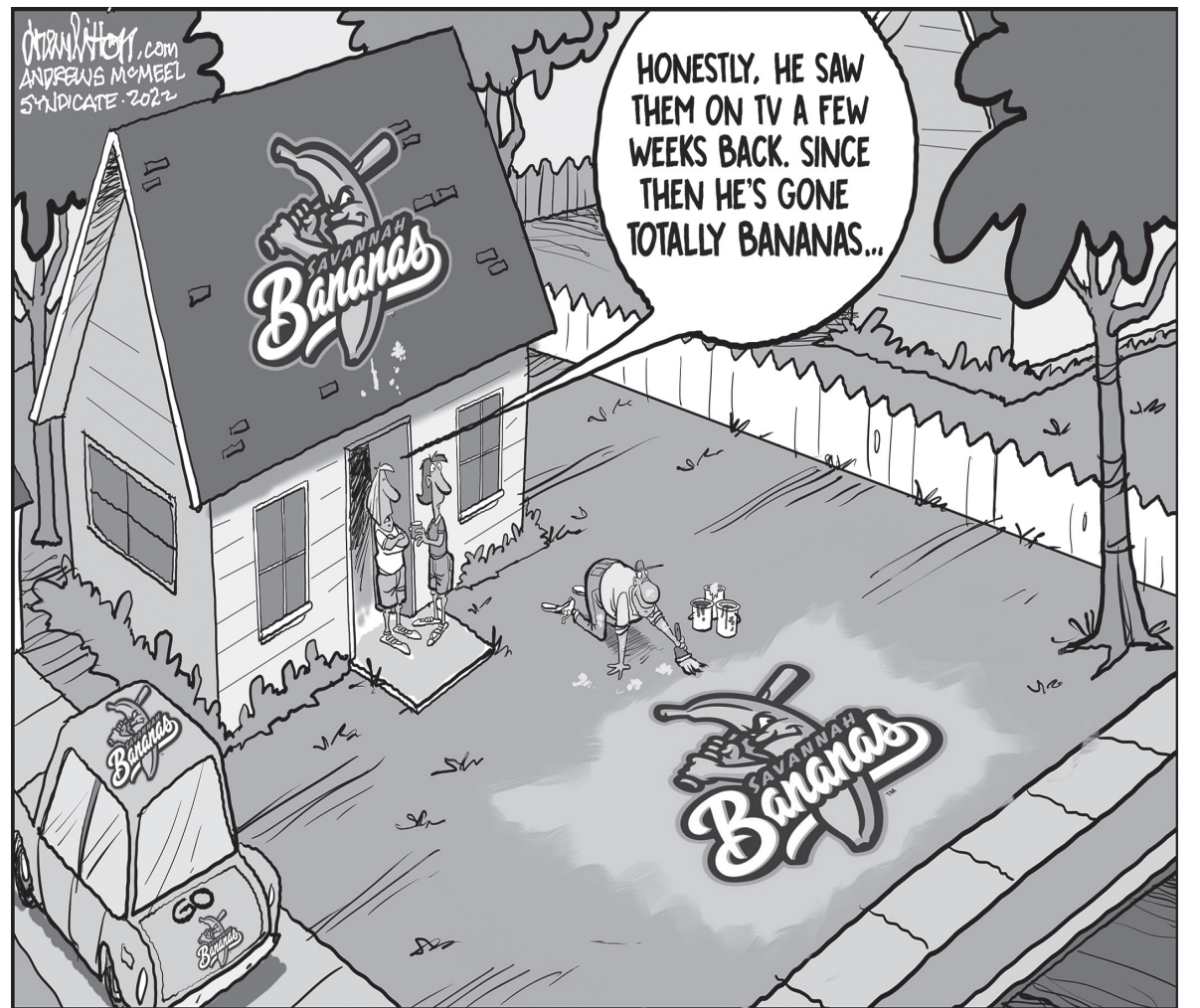
But I am listening to what you say. I do hear you.

More than anything, though, I desperately hope that each time these articles come out, victims realize they don't have to stay silent. They are not alone. This problem here is larger than one person.

Victims can and should tell someone about the abuse they endured. There is help available for you if you just put out a hand.

There is a whole community here to listen to you. We love you. We believe you.

Jess Huff's email address is jess.huff@lufkindailynews.com.



LISD working to combat 'summer slide'

Summertime is enrichment time at Lufkin ISD. Fun camps and activities over the summer keep students engaged and enthusiastic to learn. Our administrative team has done an outstanding job preparing to make this summer one of the best for our students.



LYNN TORRES

The GEAR Up Imaginarium Camp is just one example of our students mentoring younger campers in STEM activities.

Rising sixth-graders were challenged with the world's "unsolvable problems" and put together a showcase to demonstrate their ideas for world problems including poverty and climate change while Lufkin High School rising 11th-graders mentored. The students assembled a showcase to display their ideas to parents and community members.

Dual Language Camp was another opportunity for fun learning this summer for our Dual Language

students. The camp focused on oral language in Spanish. Around 100 students from kindergarten through fifth grade attended.

The students made cultural crafts, recipes and performed traditional Spanish children's songs. Camps like these help students maintain their Spanish vocabulary over the summer.

We are fortunate as a district to be the recipient of the 21st Century Texas ACE grant so we can offer a summer school enrichment program for our students who participated in the afterschool program during the school year.

The students are receiving lots of instruction while enjoying fun enrichment activities like dance, fashion design, technology and basketball, to name a few. The kids benefit from being together and are enjoying this "camp style" summer school program.

Bridge camp is held every summer for our incoming Early College High School cohort of students entering the ninth grade as the Class of 2026. This is a time for them to get to know the new campus, know the expectations of the ECHS, meet

the teachers who will be teaching their dual credit courses, meet their success coaches, and just make connections with other ECHS students.

During this time, these students also will take the TSIA assessment to determine their readiness to take college courses. We are excited for the opportunities that these students will have to springboard their college studies.

This year, as we have stated many times, we graduated our first cohort of ECHS students as the Class of 2022. Collectively, these students amassed more than 4,000 college credit hours while still in high school at no cost to them or their families. What a great opportunity.

It's easy to lose ground in education during the summer, and the "summer slide" is real. Lufkin ISD is serving our students to increase their knowledge as well as their experiences.

Our staff, volunteers and administration are working hard to ensure students learn and are engaged. When our students are successful, "together we rise."

Lynn Torres is the superintendent of Lufkin ISD. Her email address is ltorres@lufkinisd.org.

HEADLINES IN Local HISTORY

JUNE 18-19

Five years ago

■ Ellen Trout Zoo celebrates 50th anniversary.
 ■ Native Lufkinite Cassidy Brown to represent Plano in the 2017 Miss Texas pageant.

Ten years ago

■ Second-grader Brooks Varkadoz collects money and donates time to the Angelina County Humane Society.
 ■ Shoe Carnival and the Boys & Girls Club host Kicks for Kids campaign to pair needy

children with new shoes.

Twenty years ago

■ FBI agents to visit local diving schools to discuss their views on the potential for terror attacks on dams, power plants and other water-based locations.
 ■ Three more rabid skunks found in East Texas, prompting officials to urge caution when outdoors.

From the pages of The Lufkin Daily News, compiled by The History Center, TheHistoryCenterOnline.com.

TODAY IN HISTORY

The Associated Press Today is Saturday, June 18, the 169th day of 2022. There are 196 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On June 18, 1983, astronaut Sally K. Ride became America's first woman in space as she and four colleagues blasted off aboard the space shuttle Challenger on a six-day mission.

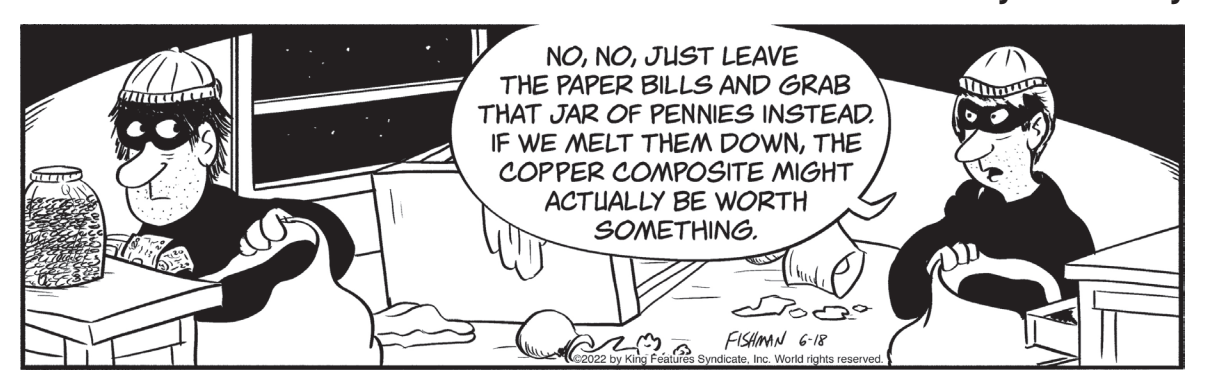
On this date: In 1778, American forces entered Philadelphia as the British with-

drew during the Revolutionary War.

In 1812, the War of 1812 began as the United States Congress approved, and President James Madison signed, a declaration of war against Britain.

In 1940, during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill urged his countrymen to conduct themselves in a manner that would prompt future generations to say, "This was their finest hour."

MALLARD FILLMORE



By Bruce Tinsley