

# Viewpoint

## The Jasper Newsboy

Established in 1865

Texas Oldest Weekly Newspaper, Continuously Published Under the Same Name

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### Our Viewpoint Editorials

## Join the fight Friday with Relay for Life

In May of 1985, a Tacoma, Washington doctor did something that changed the face on the ongoing fight against cancer.

He walked.

Dr. Gordy Klatt wanted to raise money for a local cancer office and spent 24 hours circling a football stadium track as he ran and walked more than 83 miles.

When the night was over, Klatt had raised \$27,000 to fight cancer. While he was circling the track, he envisioned an event in which teams would take part in the event.

The next year, 19 teams took part in the event and \$33,000 was raised for the cancer society.

This Friday night, Jasper County residents will show their support for cancer patients in the area as they participate in the annual Relay for Life event around the courthouse square.

Teams have signed up to walk around the square, starting at 7 p.m. until 7 a.m. Saturday morning.

Tents will surround the courthouse grounds and booths will be open as everyone is encouraged to attend the annual, fund-raising event.

But this is far more than just a weekend activity.

For many, this event is a celebration of their fight against cancer, a celebration of their success story in their battle with cancer.

We all can share in their celebration by participating this Friday evening on the courthouse square. This is one battle that we have to win.

**Roses go to....**

▼ The Jasper Bulldog baseball squad for a strong season on the diamond this year. The Dawgs defeated Silsbee 5-3 last Friday to move into a first place tie with Bridge City.

▼ Jasper ISD Board of Trustees for selecting Bill "Butch" Dean as their sole finalist for the Superintendent of Schools post.

▼ JISD honor roll students for another job well done.

**Thorns go to....**

▼ Seven of 15 stores in the Kirbyville and Buna area that sold tobacco products to a minor during an undercover sting operation last Wednesday. Cigarettes are a gateway drug and these stores need to shape up.

### Guest Commentary One person's viewpoint

## This week will be better

Much of the news this last week was terrible indeed — Alec Baldwin, for instance, was still on American soil.

However, there is some good news to report:

The Rutgers women's basketball team declined to meet with H.R.H. Princess Hillary, politely citing a need to study. Hooray for students who show some class, and who refuse to be used by politicians!

And along much the same line, the student government of Virginia Tech asked all the reporters to go away.

The Supreme Court, by a vote of 5-4, disapproved of sucking the brains out of babies.

Fidel Castro is still alive, and so are our hopes that this mass-murderer might someday face justice.

We're still alive too. The first Earth Day in April of 1970 warned of the coming New Ice Age which would destroy us all. Whew! Thank goodness we all started using those squiggly light bulbs.

The seal hunt off Newfoundland has gone well, despite many boats being trapped in pack ice caused, no doubt, by



**Mack Hall**

global warming. With a good seal season, families who make a traditional living from the sea will continue to enjoy such frivolities as food, clothing, and shelter.

Senator Edwards, one of The People, looks very nice with his new \$400 haircut.

In Kentucky a former Miss America, Venus Ramey, 82, shot out a thief's tires and held the wretch at gunpoint until the

police arrived. She's a red-head, of course.

In my little town a number of school athletes — known to the national news and to Hollywood as bullying jocks — used their strength and their hearts to take special-needs children on the mechanical rides at the annual Magnolia Festival. That's the sort of thing Real Men and Real Women do.

Still not convinced it was a good week? Just remember this: your kid did not hide out in his room fondling guns and feeling sorry for himself.

Life is good.

Mack Hall is a resident of Kirbyville

### Your Viewpoint Letters to the Editor

## Racism — big deal out of small issue

By ANDREW KIER  
Jasper

After reading an article in last week's edition of the Newsboy about Lani Silver being on a mission, I began to think how I could reduce racism in my life and in society in general. I honestly think that racism does not exist unless the Reverend Al Sharpton or Jesse Jackson says so.

With anything that involves somebody with color these two gentlemen stir up trouble some how and some way.

Ms. Silver brought up the James Byrd dragging incident from 1998 saying that the criminal mischief performed that night were acts of racism, when indeed it was not racism it was Byrd being at the wrong place at the wrong time.

If there was a Caucasian, Hispanic, or a Native American person I believe that the same actions would have been performed. Let's say that this action against Mr. Byrd was an act of racism, would we hear about it if a black male were on the other side of the story and he killed a white man?

My point is racism wouldn't be such a big issue unless these black officials didn't make such a big deal out of such a small thing. We never hear of any other ethnicity claiming anything being racist against them because they dust the dirt off of their shoulders and move on! Racism is indeed a bad thing, but it does not exist in every situation like people try to portray.

## Through all, we are on God's side

By BRENDA JOB  
Jasper

Bad things happen, sometimes very bad things. Then we wonder 'Where was God?' when the Virginia Tech student started shooting; when a loved one dies; when a dream dies.

Americans like to believe that we are the most powerful nation, with enough power even to plan our lives.

We raise our children to believe that if they will be thoroughly prepared educationally, emotionally and financially that they will be able to be safe, secure and able to live well.

But that is not always true, and life is not always "fair."

Shortly after my son died, I read an article about Arthur Ashe, who asked himself, "If I were to say, "God, why me?" about the bad things, then I should

have said, "God, why me?" about the good things that happened in my life." Those things in our lives that have the greatest capacity for sorrow also have the greatest capacity for joy. I would not trade the joy to avoid the sorrow.

Disappointment and rejection are facts of life.

Some of us lost our innocence in wars, some when John F. Kennedy was shot, some on 9/11, me, on the day my son died. A 911 firefighter said, "I will be OK, but I will never be the same." Our job is to teach our children the lesson of a skinned knee. Wipe it off, look up and go on again.

Love and support are powerful things and people need them. Rabbi Harold Kushner in The Lord is my Shepherd says this: "The key to surviving misfortune is to realize that, when bad things happen, God is on our side...When we choose to affirm life in the face of loss, to affirm goodness in the face of evil, we are on God's side. His is with us and we are with Him, and the future does not frighten us."

We at Friends of Job, a grief support group for those who have lost children, grandchildren or siblings desire to help you deal with the grief that these life events creates. Join us on the first and third Tuesday of each month from 6.30-8 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Jasper.

## Letters to editor criteria outlined

The Jasper Newsboy would like to publish your thoughts and concerns about issues that are important to you. All Letters to the Editor should be accompanied with the writer's name and daytime telephone number for verification purposes.

Phone numbers will not be published, but the author's name will be.

Under no circumstances will the author's name be withheld.

All letters are subject to editing for newspaper style and clarity, without changing the meaning of the content.

Letters should be limited to 300 words.

Letters endorsing or opposing political candidates are considered political advertising and will be forwarded to the advertising department.

Deadline for letters is 10 a.m. Monday to be published in the following Wednesday's publication.

Mail letters to:

The Jasper Newsboy  
P.O. Box 1419  
Jasper, Texas 75951-1419  
or e-mail to:  
jgalvan@jaspernewsboy.com

**"If men were angels, no government would be necessary."**

**— James Madison (1751-1836)**

### Capital Highlights A summary of the week's significant events in Austin

## Budget bill goes to conference committee

AUSTIN - The Texas House of Representatives on April 17 refused to accept Senate amendments to House Bill 1, the proposed state budget for 2008-2009.

Differences in the House and Senate versions of the \$150 billion budget will have to be worked out in a 10-member conference committee. Speaker Tom Craddick, R-Midland, named the five House appointees to the conference committee: Reps. Warren Chisum R-Pampa; Ryan Guillen, D-San Diego; Sylvester Turner, D-Houston; Dan Gattis, R-Georgetown; and Lois Kolkhorst, R-Brenham.

Four floor motions to instruct conferees to go into the negotiations with certain non-negotiable points were voted down by the full House.

Chisum thanked members for voting down the motions, saying he thought it better to proceed "without tipping your hand."

Senate members had not been named to the conference panel as of press time for this column.

The Legislative Budget Board's pie chart of the Senate version shows education getting 36.6 percent of the budget, health and human services getting 31.6 percent, and the remaining one-third of the budget going to all other functions, including, for example, business and economic development, property tax relief and public safety and criminal justice.

**House approves handgun bill**

The House passed HB 991 by Patrick Rose, D-Dripping Springs, legislation that would make the names of concealed handgun license holders confidential.

Current law allows a requestor to give the Department of Public Safety another person's name and find out if that person holds a Texas concealed handgun license.

Advocates of the legislation say it's nobody's business who has a license. Opponents say it's a matter of personal safety to be able to



**Ed Sterling**  
Texas Press Association

The Senate on April 18 passed legislation amending the forgiveness part of the Texas B-On-Time Loan Program.

SB 1496 by Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo, would allow students who graduate within five years from an eligible four-year institution with at least a 2.5 grade point average to have 50 percent of their education loan forgiven.

In 2003, Zaffirini's SB 4 created

find out who might be carrying a concealed handgun. The measure now moves to the Senate for consideration.

If HB 991 becomes law, concealed handgun licenses will be the only confidential state-issued licenses.

**Senate amends loan program**

The Senate passed SB 1068 by

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Legislation by Sen. Jeff Wentworth, R-San Antonio, would require congressional redistricting to be determined by a bipartisan panel appointed by the House, Senate and governor's office.

Until the recent, mid-decade redistricting, lines were redrawn every 10 years.

Supporters of the bill say if the redistricting task is in the hands of a special commission, it would free up the Legislature to work on other important law-making.

Opponents say moving district

boundaries is a job the full House and full Senate should keep.

**House passes record votes bill**

The House approved House Joint Resolution 19, authored by Rep. Dan Branch, R-Dallas, requiring each legislator's final votes on legislation to be recorded and available for public view on the Internet.

The measure has moved to the Senate for consideration. If it passes, Texans will have the opportunity on Nov. 7 to cast a yes or no vote on HJR 19, along with other proposed amendments to the state constitution.

**Flags fly at half staff for V-Tech**

Gov. Rick Perry directed that flags be flown at half-staff to honor the lives of the victims of the April 16 shootings at Virginia Tech.

The governor's directive was effective April 17 through sunset on April 22.

Ed Sterling is director of member services for the Texas Press Association in Austin.