

Letters to the editor

APRIL 24, 2007 12:00 AM

Children are not reliable witnesses

Re: the April 18 article "Police suspend three who left explosive at elementary school."

There is a serious lesson that is buried in the story about the explosive found in a child's desk at Blenman Elementary School. We now know that police officers accidentally left it there. At the time, however, police interrogated the 7-year-old in whose desk the explosive was found. The child first blamed his mother's boyfriend, then said he had brought the package from home. This "confession" led to a search of the boy's homes and interrogations of his family.

Luckily, unlike in other cases, no charges were filed. It's time the police, as well as the rest of us, understand that children are not good witnesses. Interrogators can put ideas into their heads. They will say almost anything to please adults. It is imperative that questioning of children be done under very controlled conditions without suggestive statements by interrogators.

Maris Bootzin

Writer and editor, Tucson

A flower for a daring dog rescue

I'd like to give a flower to the individual in a red pickup truck who rescued a small poodle in rush-hour traffic on a recent Tuesday evening. It was at the intersection of Oracle and Ina roads. The poodle, which didn't look much older than a puppy, came running off the curb and weaving around the cars as they were still rolling to a stop. The poor dog was scared and confused and looked like it might run out into the moving traffic.

With the northbound light was about to turn green, this good Samaritan got out of his truck, went over to pick up the puppy and brought it safely back to his truck with him. I drove next to him most of my way home that evening, so I know he lives somewhere up in Oro Valley.

Michael Walsh

Criminal intelligence analyst, Tucson

Tumamoc Hill is too crowded

Re: the April 11 article "NW Side, Tumamoc land eyed."

Since the UA and the city reached their compromise on public access to Tumamoc Hill, which resulted in limited hours for hikers, I have not seen any follow-up on the results. There used to be the possibility of a little solitude when the hill was open more hours. I think it points to the need for more accessible walking trails for all Tucsonans on the West Side, with no restricted

hours.

I don't know if the UA recognized how deeply we citizens love that hill, and wish to share in its preservation. For me, it was always a spiritual exercise. Now it's so busy I was almost run over by a jogger when I stopped to tie my shoe, and I don't see any of the wild animals anymore.

Mary Ann Brazil

Property manager, Tucson

Keep military away from young kids

Re: the April 19 feature photo "A Career Day glimpse at a variety of vocations."

The photo showing an Army National Guard pilot and a 7-year-old at a local elementary school blatantly shows another attempt by the military to recruit our children into the armed forces, no matter how young.

From video games and mobile rock-climbing walls to giant Adventure Vans, the military is the one employer with the funds to bring the biggest, loudest, most extreme toys onto campuses for Career Days. As we work hard to restrict these recruiters at high schools, the military is looking desperately for other ways to recruit our kids at earlier and earlier ages.

In the midst of a war that most of the country is now opposed to, principals, teachers, and parents need to tell the military to keep its toys away from our kids.

Hannah Glasston

Parent, Tucson

Photo summed up surviving cancer

Re: the April 19 letters to the editor package "Cancer survivor photo stirs emotions."

I was amazed to see that some people who wrote letters considered the Shawn Reuss photo in poor taste and "insulting." One letter writer saw only a picture of a topless woman.

I have had a mastectomy, and I saw in Reuss a very tasteful picture of a courageous woman who was willing to share the fact that women can still stand tall and be beautiful, even without breasts. This photograph illustrates the epitome of what it means to be a true cancer survivor; one who can undergo what she has endured and still stand proud. A flower to the Star for sharing it with us.

As I was receiving my last chemo treatment, I heard many people around me expressing similar sentiments. May we all be as courageous and beautiful as Reuss is as we continue our journey.

Marlene McNiece

Retired CPA, Green Valley

Ruling puts fetus before the mother

Re: the April 19 article "Justices uphold ban of partial-birth abortions."

The Supreme Court has decided that a woman has no right to choose a medical procedure that protects her health with the least medical risk. Citing the government's legitimate, substantial interest in preserving and promoting fetal life, the court places an unborn fetus' rights above those of a living citizen. Since a fetus has not been born, it has no legal standing or right to protection of life under the law.

The court's decision is a travesty that plays to political interests while violating one of our most sacred rights under the Constitution. Until the court can prove that the authors of the 14th Amendment clearly intended that "born" means "unborn," they should not deny a woman the right to terminate a pregnancy to protect her health without granting due process of law.

Noelle Everhart

Occupational therapy assistant, Tucson

Front page is for national news

When I subscribed to the Star after moving here from a small town, I was hoping to see a front page with national and international headlines. It disappoints me greatly that the Star's front page is almost exclusively devoted to news that is about, or tied to, Tucson. Much of that news could go in the Tucson & Region section.

With Tucson having grown to a population of a million, its major newspaper would do well to appeal to its increasingly cosmopolitan base.

Lynea Search

Retired editor, Tucson

Let's study effects of power plant

Re: the April 18 article " 'Cleanest' coal-fired power plant proposed near Bowie."

The proposed coal-fired gasification plant in Bowie would be located in an area with close proximity to the Chiricahua Mountains, Cave Creek Canyon and Chiricahua National Monument. These places attract many tourists who love to bird and hike in some of the most beautiful natural areas of Southeast Arizona. Many scientists and researchers have been working in these areas for years, studying their flora and fauna.

Before a decision is made, I hope that we are able to hear from other experts in the field and not just those associated with SouthWestern Power. We cannot afford to make a mistake with so much on the line.

Lynne Taylor

Office manager, Tucson