

Because they take themselves lightly



Arvid Huisman
Country Roads

It's been at least 30 years since the photocopied list of "church bloopers" made the rounds. These lists claimed that all the items were excerpts from actual church bulletins.

- Here are a few reminders -
- Remember in prayer the many who are sick and tired of our church and community.
 - During the absence of our pastor we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when A.B. Doe supplied our pulpit.
 - A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.
 - At the evening service tonight the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.
 - The Rev. Adams spoke briefly, much to the delight of his audience.
 - The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They can be seen in the church basement Saturday.
 - For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
 - Thursday night: Potluck supper. Prayer and medication to follow.

Some folks don't find much humor in religion. I do and I enjoyed a good laugh over these church bloopers.

As a teenager I knew a couple of old guys who didn't appreciate humor in our church. After a Sunday morning service, I recall, I was sharing a joke with my friends in the narthex. (I don't remember the joke but I do remember it was clean. I wasn't a genius but I wasn't stupid either.) As we teenagers enjoyed a hearty laugh, the one of the older gentlemen shook his finger in my face and scolded, "Young man, the way you talk in church!"

There are boundaries, of course. The Dutch and Low German languages have a word for one of those boundaries - "spot." (The "o" is pronounced like a cross between the "o" in hot and the "u" in pudding.) Years ago, in Dutch Reformed Church communities, folks who got a bit too light hearted about spiritual things were warned against committing "spotten," or making a mockery of such matters. "Spot," as I understand it, is one step away

from blasphemy.

Keeping "spot" in view, I think our churches should be filled with smiling faces rather than the dour mugs seen in some pews. A valid faith, after all, should produce much to rejoice about. Besides, many amusing things happen in church.

As a young teenager, my mother sometimes gave me charge of my baby sister during a Sunday evening church service. One night, the tow-headed toddler escaped my grasp and sprinted to the front of the church where she sat down at the piano and began to pound on the keys. Red faced, I retrieved her while the congregation enjoyed a good laugh.

At our church in Sioux City, a children's sermon was a part of the worship service. The pastor called the younger children to the front of the church where they would gather around him as he shared an easy-to-understand lesson.

In one such exercise the pastor encouraged the children to honor their parents by, among other things, helping around the house. "Perhaps you can help your mother do the dishes," he suggested.

"My mother never does the dishes," piped up one small boy. His mother, who maintained an immaculate home, slid down in her pew while the congregation rocked with laughter.

More than a few of us had to stifle a chuckle one Sunday morning when a guest minister apparently failed to remember he was wearing a lavalier microphone. While seated at the back of the chancel during the offering he blew his nose. Leaning forward, he gave a vigorous blow directly into the microphone. The raucous noise was amplified through the church's public address system, rattling the speakers and tickling many ears, including my young children who couldn't control their laughter.

None of these are as humorous, however, as an anecdote shared recently by a friend. During a worship service a few months ago his three-year-old son looked up at him and loudly proclaimed for all to hear, "Daddy, you have a booger in your nose!"

"Angels can fly," G. K. Chesterton wrote, "because they take themselves lightly."

No "spotten" intended.

BLINDSIDE



Ron Slechta
Observations

CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING AT KALONA FALL FESTIVAL

I had a call recently from Steve Reif, the Kalona Historical Society's executive director, expressing the need for more volunteers at Kalona Fall Festival, to be held Sept. 27-28 this year.

"We really need at least 30 more volunteers to staff admission gates and sit in buildings for the Fall Festival," he said.

The Kalona Fall Festival, Kalona's largest community event, depends largely on volunteers from the community to sell admission wristbands and staff various buildings that are open to the public.

Many of you have volunteered in the past, and that is very much appreciated. Consider volunteering again this year and invite a friend or relative to join you.

Again this year, \$1 of the wristband's cost goes to help retire the debt on the Streetscape Project in the new Wahl Museum. This is a great depiction of what Kalona was like in the 1800's.

Proceeds from Fall Festival help fund the operation of the Kalona Historical Village and the Mennonite Museum

Volunteer opportunities and shifts can be viewed online at kalonaiaowa.org/fall-festival/, and you can sign up there as well. You can also call 319-656-3232 to sign up.

We will see you there.

WHAT HAPPENED TO BILL MARKS MEMORIAL?

Before Mid-Prairie East Elementary was remodeled and new parking put in front of the building, there was a sign by the entrance that had the memorial of former principal Bill Marks along with a message board. When the new dual parking lot for parents, teachers, and the bus loop was done this summer, the sign had to be removed.

Many citizens have expressed concern that the memorial has been taken down and not put back up. Be assured that is not the case.

Last week when members of the Kalona Rotary visited the school, Principal Greg Jergens told them that the school has been in contact with Mr. Marks's widow and she was fully aware of and approved the plan. Jergens said the memorial to the former principal has been placed on the west side of the East Elementary building near the entrance. In addition, it will have a spotlight shining on it.

The digital sign was outdated, no longer worked properly, and will not be replaced. But Bill Marks's memorial will be more prominently on display.

Jergens also announced that roll-out signs will be placed in the street before and after school. The old electronic signs will be removed. Old fashioned methods will be replacing modern technology.

Another improvement in addition to new classrooms and bathrooms is a sidewalk which goes completely around East Elementary and the Middle School. In addition, the playground has been fenced in. Gates are locked during the school day but are unlocked after school so that community

members may use the playgrounds when school is not in session.

To further improve safety, the sidewalk area in front of East Elementary is much larger. Kalona's City Council has designated the area along H Avenue as a fire lane, so parents can't park there during school hours. The curbside has been painted red to identify the no-parking zone.

Jergens stated that he is extremely grateful for the community support as East has gone through all these improvements. These things have helped to make pickup and drop-off much safer as well as modernize the building for years to come. Family feedback has been extremely positive.

Jergens also noted that there will be a public open house in the next month or so after all the final construction items are finished. That information will be shared when an exact date/time is set.

FLAGS UP UNTIL PATRIOTS DAY

I have been asked why the American flags are still up so long after Labor Day weekend. Did they forget to take them down? No, that can't be further from the truth.

Since it is such a short time after Labor Day, the Kalona Optimists decided to leave the flags up until after Patriot Day, Sept. 11. It is a big chore, putting up and taking down the flags, so it was decided to leave them up that short time before honoring Sept. 11 or Patriot Day.

The Optimists hope you understand. Flags will come down Sept. 12. and go back up for Veterans Day.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Listening and Learning: Anna Banowsky

I have attended four events at which Anna Banowsky, candidate for Iowa's 92nd House District, has spoken, and I am impressed by her eagerness to listen, learn and respond.

A central theme of her campaign is education, and she invites the electorate to educate her as their concerns. Anna Banowsky is in sharp contrast to current Representative Heather Hora.

At each of Ms. Banowsky's events, I am reminded of an informational event at the Washington County Hospital and Clinics in February where Ms. Hora and Senator Dawn Driscoll were present to provide legislative updates and answer questions.

During the event, one woman stood up and asked a question about warning labels on pesticides. She began with a stark statement, "Farmers are dying," then asked why Representative Hora and Senator Driscoll were supporting a bill in the state legislature backed by the German biotechnology company Bayer, which would protect the company and others like it from lawsuits accusing their products of not adequately warning of potential health issues, including cancer.

Representative Hora replied that the EPA did not require

additional labelling; therefore, Iowa was not obligated to do more.

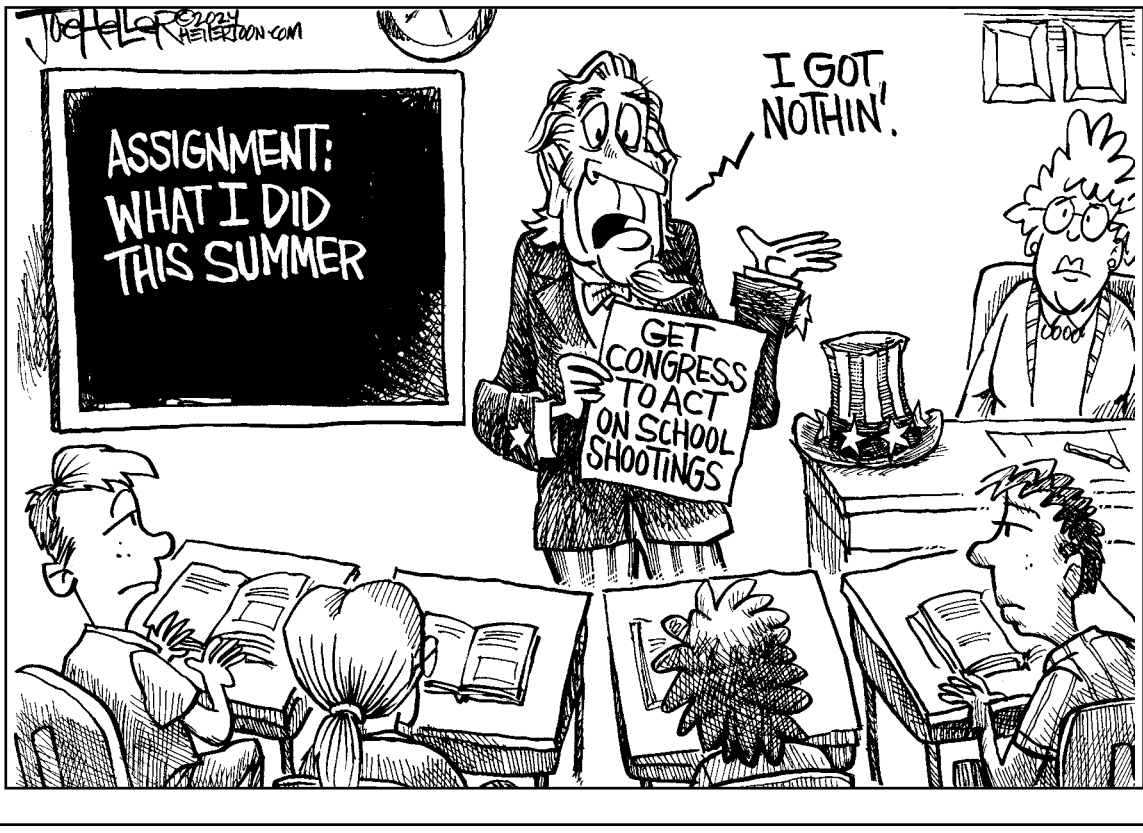
The limited response was all the questioner received. The representatives did not engage her in any further discussion of her concerns. I recalled that at that point in the meeting a former colleague whose husband, a row crop farmer, had died of cancer. His brother, similarly, a row crop farmer, also had died of cancer. Neither was elderly.

Whether pesticides caused their deaths is not known since many sources cause cancer. Nevertheless, the high incidence of cancer in Iowa should have elicited more conversation from our representatives or at the very least, a commitment to meet with the questioner to understand her worries.

I will forever retain that image of the woman at the Washington gathering and her words, "Farmers are dying."

Anna Banowsky has shown her willingness to converse with constituents in District 92 and listen to issues that affect their lives, which is why I will cast my ballot to elect her as our new House Representative and urge other voters to do the same.

Dian Gottlob
Kalona



Our governor is failing our children

"We, the grown-ups, have failed you deplorably..." - UN Secretary-General at the 2002 UN Special Session on Children.

Executive Director: "If we want to overcome poverty and the instability it breeds, we must start investing in our young people. I implore national leaders to seriously examine their records on children. Are you getting all your children into classrooms, are you protecting all your children against disease, are they safe from abuse, exploitation and violence? We know we have work to do."

Nations were charged with providing quality education at no cost regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, citizenship, disability, religion or language; pushed to criminalize the use of child labor; to punish those who abuse children; and to make the needs of children a priority by providing all that is necessary for growth and development. Could someone please inform Iowa's governor?

She and her party have advanced numerous abusive and dangerous laws:

- Allowing underage girls to serve alcoholic drinks.
- Allowing 14-year-olds, who lack experience

and professional training, to drive to work.

- Denying federal statutes written to protect children from working excessive hours and from operating dangerous machines.
- Protecting child labor employers from penalties.
- Denying federal money to help feed Iowa's children.
- Defunding public schools.
- Gutting the AEA whose purpose is to serve children with special needs related to health, behavior and learning.
- Appointed an Iowa Dept of Education director with no teaching or school administrative experience.
- Failing to protect our children at school, instead hiring a "teachers with guns" program director who is paid a larger salary than experienced teachers.

Awareness, directives, and international cooperative efforts are organized to fight the corruption of children. There is no excuse for our state to consider itself exempt from these important actions.

Jeanine Redlinger
Lone Tree

The News encourages its readers to submit photos, news items and letters to the editor for possible publication in our newspaper.

We reserve the right to edit.

News items - Please include all pertinent data - names, city of residence, dates, etc., and a description of the event. Photos may be picked up at The News office unless you include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for their return.

Letters to the editor - Your name and city or community will be published with your letter to the editor. For verification purposes, please include your address and phone number. Letters to the editor will be accepted via email subject to verification.

PRINT ISSN: 2834-9954 | E-RESOURCE ISSN: 2834-9962 | USPS#: 289-560



© Copyright
The News, 2024

All rights reserved.
No reprints granted without permission of the publisher.

"Washington County's Largest Circulation Newspaper"

(USPS 289-560)

Postmaster: Send address changes to The News, P.O. Box 430, Kalona, IA 52247. Official paper for Kalona, Wellman, Riverside and Lone Tree; Mid-Prairie School District. Highland School District and Lone Tree School District; and Washington and Johnson counties. Entered at the post office at Kalona, Wellman, Riverside, Lone Tree, Iowa City, Iowa, for transmission acts of March 3, 1933 and July 2, 1948. Periodical class postage paid at the Kalona, Iowa Post office, through the mail as periodical class matter under the act of Congress of Sept. 14 1912 and as amended by the 302 Fifth St., Kalona, IA 52246. Published weekly. 302 Fifth St., Kalona, IA 52247. Published weekly.

THE NEWS STAFF

Ron Slechta - Publisher@TheNews-IA.com

Cheryl Allen - News@TheNews-IA.com

Giovanni Coronel - Sports@TheNews-IA.com

Paul Bowker - BowkerPaul1@gmail.com

Morgan Dakarian - Design@TheNews-IA.com

Colette Yoder - Classifieds/Legals/Circulation - Admin@TheNews-IA.com



WEBSITE: THENEWS-IA.COM | FACEBOOK: THE NEWS

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

Display Advertising - 10 a.m., Monday, week of publication

Classified Advertising - 4 p.m., Monday, week of publication.

The publisher reserves the right to reject any advertising or news matter or cancel the same at any time.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single copy - \$1.75

\$52 per year in Washington, Keokuk, Johnson and Iowa counties.

\$55 per year elsewhere in Iowa

\$62 Out-of-state, in the continental US

\$88 in Hawaii or Alaska • **\$88** in Canada

Other foreign countries quoted separately. All subscriptions are nonrefundable, but may be transferred at any time to other family members or to a nonprofit group such as a school or hospital.

Online only edition - \$40