

CONFESSIONS  
OF A CONFUSED DAD:

Back to School Daze

BY JEFF MARTINDALE

Back to school.  
Mention those three words to anyone under the age of 18 and I bet that most of them will regard you the way a junkyard dog regards an unwanted visitor.  
Case in point: During a recent family dinner, I casually mentioned that only a few days remained before school starts.  
“Noooooooooooo!” howled Jack, and by the look on his face I swear that if he could’ve turned the pretzel in his hand into a samurai sword he would’ve reached across the table and sliced my lips off.  
“I can remember the last day of school,” he whimpered, lower lip protruding, voice cracking in mock anguish. “It seems like it was just yesterday.”  
No kidding, I thought. So does my last day of elementary school. In 1980.  
Speaking of elementary school, maybe I paid little attention to these details back then but I don’t remember having to buy so many school supplies.  
“Well, of course you don’t!” I envision my mother’s reply. “I bought everything and all you paid attention to was that noisy electric football game.”  
True, but my point is that kids today require a small SUV to haul their class supplies on the first day of school. There’s no guesswork when it comes to school supplies, either. Schools publish detailed, grade-specific supply lists that get progressively longer by grade level. Scanning this year’s list, I found timeless items that have occupied student storage boxes probably since Roosevelt – first one with the bushy mustache and big stick – was president: Elmer’s Glue, No. 2 pencils, pink bevel erasers and 24-count Crayola crayons, to name a few.  
But I can’t for the life of me figure out why some items merit inclusion. For example, why do kindergartners need computer head phones? In the corporate world, we use them for important things like inserting cool sounds in PowerPoint presentations and discretely listening to our favorite Internet radio station. But what in the elementary curriculum requires computer head phones for five-year-olds? Practicing their ABCs on Webkinz.com?  
What are “blunt 5” Fiskar scissors” and why do first-graders need two of them? When I was a kid, everyone had one pair of sharp-edged, pointed metal department store scissors that suited our needs just fine. Hairlines occasionally got altered, but no blood was ever shed.  
And how come every student in every grade must bring two boxes of “120 ct” Kleenex tissues? Isn’t the teacher’s box good enough? Is it for fear that every person in the school will catch a cold at the same time?  
Frankly, I don’t think the kids even know why they need this stuff.  
I asked Will why he needed two boxes of sandwich-size baggies.  
“Well, sometimes ...” he mumbled, his voice trailing off. After a long pause, he finally responded, “Sometimes we use them for putting stuff in.”  
I rolled my eyes. “Like what?”  
Sprawled across the couch after exiting the shower, Will rested his head on my shoulder, the dampness of his hair seeping through my T-shirt.  
“I know we make art bags with the gallon-size bags, but I don’t know what you can put in the sandwich-size ones.”  
How about mystery-meat leftovers from the cafeteria, I thought, or, better yet, it could easily hold what little money remains in my wallet after spending three figures on water-less hand sanitizer and black fine-tip Sharpies, among other things. Don’t teachers know that we’re in a recession?  
Seriously though, I’m the husband and son of teachers and have tremendous respect for the difficult job they have, particularly in today’s society. I understand why the lists are necessary – they are challenged to do more with less.  
In the meantime, I will walk with my chin up while the tightwad in me tries not to notice the warehouse quantity of school supplies covering most of my antique dining room table. One look makes my face scrunch up and my stomach gurgle like I just ate something warm and slimy, and I hope not to get sick to my stomach.  
But if I do, it’s okay. One of the “80 ct” of baby wipes should handle it.

Jeff Martindale is a Collierville resident, FedEx employee and proud father of two boys. You can learn more about his writings at [jeffmartindalebooks.com](http://jeffmartindalebooks.com).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR  
Sunset Series Best Yet

Main Street Collierville would like to thank everyone who made the 17th annual Sunset on the Square Summer Concert series our best season yet! It was great to see the park full of families enjoying the wonderful music as well as enjoying our Historic Town Square.  
The Town Square is the heart and soul of our Collierville community.  
Main Street is proud to be able to provide these concerts every Thursday evening in June and July. This signature event has brought Main Street Collierville recognition for the Top 20 event award by the Southeast Tourism Society.  
Thanks to the Board of Directors, committee members and volunteers who assisted with the planning and logistics of this event. We appreciate the continued support of our title sponsor, First Tennessee Collierville. This event would not be possible without the support of all our sponsors and we hope to continue this for many years to come.

Tamara Swain, Main Street Collierville Board President  
First Tennessee Bank

Laura Todd, Main Street Collierville  
Executive Director

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Letters  
to the Editor

The Collierville Herald welcomes and encourages letters to the editor on subjects of interest to residents of the Collierville area. All letters must have the writer’s name, address, a daytime phone number or e-mail address. Addresses and phone numbers will not be published but are required in case a need arises to confirm authorship or to clarify content. Anonymous letters will not be considered. All letters are subject to editing for length and legal considerations. E-mail at [editor@thecolliervilleherald.com](mailto:editor@thecolliervilleherald.com) is preferred, but mailed and faxed letters will be accepted. Deadline for letter submission is Monday by noon.



As The Crowe Flies...  
Change is good ... usually

BY JOAN P. CROWE  
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In writing this first column as editor of The Collierville Herald, many thoughts about why change is good are swirling. But as the benefits of change bubble up – such as, in my case, having a new slate, while at the same time having one rich in history and newspaper tradition, and working with a proven group of journalism professionals – the downsides also pop to mind.  
Acknowledgment that there’s always a flipside surfaces because my wise 86-year-old father reminds me regularly that “where there’s a plus, there’s a minus,” along with “never make a decision when you’re too low or too high.”  
Applying this wisdom to the opportunity to edit the Herald, the only minus that comes to mind – and this after many long hours of consideration – is learning a new computer system.  
For all of you computer jocks who are laughing at this, you need to understand that I need to learn to maneuver on an Apple after years of being bonded to my PC, which I’m truly one with (until it malfunctions, and that’s never because of anything I’ve done, despite what my husband says).  
If you’re still chuckling at this fraidy-cat-itis, you need to consider that all of this learning has to happen under time pressure, between daily copy deadlines that lead to weekly press deadlines, and – the most disconcerting aspect – that all this learning has to be accomplished by what I believe – and others might too, though it’s best they not say so out loud – to be one, semi-functioning brain cell (the rest having been snuffed out during parenting years).  
But with a deep breath and sufficient coffee, a zest for all the new horizons this newspaper offers overcomes any lingering fear and all the plusses this change affords again rush forward:  
The Collierville Herald has served this area for 130 years, and the former publisher, Van Pritchard, led the paper during 19 of those years. When, after his death, his wife and daughter chose to sell the Herald to American Hometown Publishing Inc. (AHP) in December, they ensured the paper would remain Collierville-grounded, community-focused.  
AHP owns 12 community newspapers, with seven of those in Tennessee, including The Covington Leader. The “Hometown” in this company’s name is no empty descriptive, and that cinched the decision.  
My hubby of 34 years and I and our two sons have lived, worked and played in Collierville for nearly 20 years. We built our home here in 1989, and both sons attended public schools in Collierville from elementary grades through graduation from Collierville High School. My parents also lived here for 10 years after moving from Memphis, where my husband and I grew up.  
The Collierville Herald is core to the rich history of Collierville. It is an honor to work at the newspaper that has served for so long the “hometown” beloved by my family, and, no doubt, the majority of the roughly 45,000 others who now call Collierville home.

CPD cancels annual  
car and bike show

For eight years, automotive enthusiasts have supported Collierville Police Department’s Classic Car and Bike Show fundraiser for Tennessee Special Olympics in attendance and participation.  
This year, the show has been canceled due to the possible sale of sponsor Bill Heard Chevrolet.  
“The uncertainty of whether Bill Heard would be sold or not kind of left us in a quandary,” said Police Chief Larry Goodwin.  
Last year’s show, held on the grounds of Central Church in Collierville, hit a record with 428 registered vehicles and more than 8,000 people attending. Since 2000, the event has kept Collierville’s police department at the top of the list of law enforcement agencies raising money for Tennessee Special Olympics. Last year’s show brought in roughly \$30,000 for the organization.  
Goodwin said the uncertainty of the sponsor’s status prevented the department from marketing or planning the late-September event properly.  
“If we’re going to give them a show, we want to give them a first-class event,” he said.  
The police department is finalizing details with a new, local sponsor and is looking forward to resuming the car show next year, which Goodwin promises “will be bigger and better than ever.”  
The event will continue to be held at Central Church.  
“We have thoroughly enjoyed our relationship with Bill Heard as our sponsor,” Goodwin said.  
For more information, visit [colliervillepolice.org](http://colliervillepolice.org) or contact Lt. David Townsend at 457.2560.

– Michael Ward/The Collierville Herald

Future unclear for Civil War  
battle reenactment

A proposed motion for the Town of Collierville to cosponsor a reenactment of the Battle of Collierville was deferred by the applicant during Monday night’s Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting.  
Some board members voiced concerns with the project.  
Board members originally heard from Lee Millar, president of the Battle of Collierville Association, at a board work session July 28. Millar noted that October will mark the 145th anniversary of the Battle of Collierville and asked the town to cosponsor a reenactment at Schilling Farms Oct. 24-26.  
Millar came before the board Monday night requesting a grant in the amount of \$19,919.20 for the town to cosponsor the event and \$11,929.89 for the town to provide services during the event.  
During July’s work session, Alderman Tom Allen was supportive of the reenactment. “I think it’s a wonderful idea,” he said. He later added, “History, to me is of great value. Especially to our children.”  
Mayor Linda Kerley said during Monday’s meeting that she had too hastily given her support in July. Following the meeting, she said that even though she believes the reenactment would bring in tourist dollars for the town and would be educational, taxpayers’ money would be involved and some of those taxpayers could be offended.  
Alderman Buddy Rowe’s views on the idea stayed the same between the July work session and Monday night’s meeting.  
Rowe said his concern is the tight budget the town has for the year.  
Millar asked that the issue be deferred to address any concerns before coming back before the board.

– Michael Ward/The Collierville Herald