

Dear Carol



Dear Carol,

We decided that this year we are going to save time and money by sending out email greetings to family and friends. We'll create a letter with pictures of the family through the year and sent it via email to all of the people we usually send cards. The problem is some of our older family members don't have email or even a computer. We want to send them family greetings and pictures but don't want to go to the trouble of writing and mailing cards. How can we get them to join the 21st Century?

Holiday Hal

Dear Hal,

The first thing you can do is look at your signature. This is a time to celebrate the holidays, to be compassionate, generous and kind. The older members of your family are probably the ones who treasure your communication the most. Will you give the gift of your time by printing the email card you create, making a few copies and putting them in envelopes to those people who love you and see your attention as the greatest gift you can give? Often holiday greetings are the only time far-flung family members

and friends communicate. Please do not let the rush of instant messaging keep you from maintaining relationships with those who have treasured you and yours through the years.

Dear Readers,

One of the column readers, Sandy, saw the letter about the woman with a husband with Alzheimer's and was compassionate enough to write to recommend a place where a loved one could safely visit during the day. She writes, "...we were fortunate enough to find South Bay Adult Care Center at Anderson Park Senior Center, 3007 Vail Ave, Redondo Beach, 310-214-6963. They were open Tuesday through Saturday at a fee of \$6 per hour and they had all kinds of activities for the people and you could drop them off for an hour or for whatever worked for you. It was so neat, caring and I remember mom enjoying the swings, craft activities, walks and the girls and boy scouts who would come and visit with them." Thank you, Sandy, for sharing; readers should evaluate this facility for themselves to decide if it meets their family needs.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours, may your lives be filled with health, happiness, love, peace, joy, abundance and true success. May you find many things to be grateful for and express appreciation clearly and often for all of the good in your lives. We are blessed to live in a country with free public education, the ability to worship as we please, express our opinions without fear of reprisal, vote if we wish for the officials we choose and take advantage of the myriad opportunities that are available to us every day. I am grateful for all of the blessings in my life and I count each one of you as one of them.

Send questions to askcarolnow@gmail.com or mail to Herald Publications.

Carol is a Life Coach available for private consultation in person or on the phone. •

Weeklies Differ Greatly from Dailies

"Research conducted in 2008 for the National Newspaper Association revealed that in towns served by a community newspaper of less than 25,000 circulation, 86% of the population read a community newspaper each week. No other news media has that kind of penetration."

Excerpted from Market Outlook, by Rickenbacher Media

Community Newspapers Better Than Metro Dailies

Suburban Newspapers of America President Nancy Lane explained community papers' continued success, explaining that they "provide much needed hyper-local news and advertising. Advertisers, especially at the community level are reaching an engaged audience that no other medium can effectively serve." Their unique local product stands in contrast to the national and international news delivered by bigger papers--content that's increasingly treated as a commodity because of the Internet.

Excerpted from Media Daily News on Mediapost.com

Community Papers Connect

"Hyperlocal" is a hot topic these days, but as Carl Schindler told the audience: "That's you". It is my impression that community newspapers have done a better job connecting to audiences and advertisers."

Excerpted from journalism20.com

Political Penguin

By Duane Plank

Are you familiar with the Michael Brewer story? Brewer is the 15-year-old Florida kid who was doused with rubbing alcohol and set on fire about seven weeks ago by a group of teenaged monsters. Allegedly. Not the part of the heinous act of lighting another human being on fire. There is no alleged in that act. It happened. And it left Brewer with second and third degree burns over two-thirds of his body. The young man is recovering, best as possible, at the Jackson Memorial Hospital's burn center.

Brewer faces a long and painful road to recovery from the burns perpetrated upon him by the attempted murderers. He could be hospitalized for the foreseeable future and faces more arduous skin graft surgeries and months of painful physical rehabilitation. All, it seems because of a nearly stolen bicycle.

Said Dr. Nicholas Namias, medical director of the burn center, "People are writing horror stories...but people just can't imagine the kind of sickness that we are talking about." Namias was asked about the "survivability" of such a dastardly attack. "Surviving is a miracle of modern medicine and about the technology and the things we do," he said. "This is not like a gunshot, where you come out of the (operating room) and say everything is going to be OK."

So what was the rationale? What possible reason could a group of teenagers have conjured up in their sick minds to make it seem that it would be okay to light someone on fire? Someone with whom they attended middle school?

Seems that the story is that one of the monsters was believed to have attempted to rip off a bicycle belonging to Michael's father. Reports are that the bike larceny was thwarted and that the attempted thievery was reported to the local authorities. One of the group of five was taken into custody, but was soon released.

This kid gathered up his posse of idiots, cuz it takes a real "man" to confront someone five on one, and these losers approached Brewer outside an apartment complex, doused the kid in rubbing alcohol and lit the boy on fire! Apparently the hostilities began because Brewer owed one of the punks \$40 and hadn't anted up. So, one of the kids tried to steal the bicycle in lieu of waiting for his money.

A crummy bicycle, \$40 bucks, whatever. Something went haywire down in Florida on October 12. Of the five kids involved in the attack, three have been charged with attempted murder. One fine young man, the presumed ringleader of the group, Mathew Bent, seems to have been following in a wonderful family tradition.

According to published reports, Mathew's proud dad, one Dennis Bent, was involved in a stabbing incident back in 1993. The senior Bent, said the story, and "two other

men broke into the Boca Raton home of Andrew McCleary. Bent claimed McCleary owed him some money, so they took valuables and threatened to kill him. Police say Bent stabbed him multiple times with a scissors in the stomach, face and legs."

Nice role model, eh? Thanks, Dad. Not talking an Ozzie and Harriet Nelson family sitcom, are we? I guess the apple, or the dirt-bag felon, doesn't fall far from the tree, does it?

The good news, if there can be any good news when a group of derelict kids decide to light another kid on fire, is that good people, and make no mistake about this, most of *you*, most of *us*, are damn good people, have rallied to support the Brewer boy and his family, who have to be facing monumental medical fees as the hospital bills mount.

Recent fundraisers have netted more than \$130,000 to help defray the billowing medical costs. Wonder how the President Obama healthcare plan would aid someone lit on fire by murderous morons. Torched over the non-payment for a \$40 video game.

Speaking of the Prez, Mr. Obama held a state dinner recently, I am told. His first one. Okay, he probably just attended the festivities. Didn't cook the grub or pour the wine, or help with the dishes after the gala. He has "people" to take care of those duties, right? I know this stuff cuz I watched the *West Wing* TV show for many, many years, and I don't remember President Bartlett, played by the diminutive Martin Sheen, serving any souffles to his well-heeled guests.

Back to the real world. Mr. Obama, looking dashing in his tux, played host to the Prime Minister of India and his wife at the state dinner. I am sure that there were some real important issues discussed at the feast, but the deal that seemed to attract the most attention was the fact that the First Lady, Michelle, looked pretty nice at the gala. Attractive dress and all. Sleeveless ensemble. Mr. Blackwell would have been proud.

Good for her. Mrs. Obama isn't Mrs. Bush, and I mean the old one. Bush with the white hair. Who looked like your great-grandmother, bless her Texas-sized heart. And she's not current Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, who while an adept politician, wasn't exactly a Jackie Kennedy clone when she patrolled the White House environs, checking on the whereabouts of her wayward hubby, Slick Willie, who, rumor has it, had an eye for the ladies. As well as Monica Lewinsky.

Anyway, Ms. Obama looked pretty darn good for the cameras while attending her first state dinner. Nothing wrong with a little style, a little panache being espoused by the First Family, right?

And finally, it was nice to see the Governor of the Great Bankrupt State out and about last Sunday afternoon. Mr. Arnold made an appearance in Inglewood, paying homage to a horse. Yup, the Guv, who presides over a state with rampant unemployment and a lot of other problems most would term as "pressing," found time to visit the winner's circle at Hollywood Park and bestow some weird-looking bear award on the owners of the super horse Zenyatta.

Not saying that Mr. Schwarzenegger could have found a better way to spend his Sunday afternoon, but all I can tell ya is that the Chief Executive was booed by some in the assembled crowd.

Said one erudite politico sharpie, and I paraphrase, "What the (heck) is he doing out there, when this state has 12 percent unemployment?" Couldn't have said it better myself. •



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