

from our viewpoint...

## Have we forgotten how to be thankful?

Have Americans forgotten how to be thankful? In a so called land of plenty and mass marketing not much thought is given to how much we have.

Most of us could stand to drop a few pounds in contrast to the rampant starvation in Africa. The people who run the local food bank have noticed more than the rest of us the increased need for help this year.

So what can an individual do? One opportunity is to give to the community food drive for Genesis on Saturday, Dec. 6. They will use what is collected to make up their Christmas baskets. Items to donate are can goods and pasta products.

When most of us are figuring out which bills to pay there are people struggling just to keep warm. So when was the last time we stopped to just be glad to go home to a warm house.

The stock market's antics have made some of us realize that our retirement plans may not be set in stone. Maybe we should be glad just to be able to work. In some places just having a job and not having to beg and rummage through trash would be a cause for celebration.

We have a chance on Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, to pause and remember just how much most of us have. Very few of us will not have the opportunity to overeat.

I also would like to thank the people who protect our country by serving in the military. Firemen and law enforcement also protect us and deserve our thanks.

— Pat Schiefen



## where to write

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## Palin saboteurs want to kill her career now

Attacks on Gov. Sarah Palin by McCain campaign staff at first appear to be a case of making her a convenient scapegoat, but the attacks have a more devious motive. This post-election barrage is the first volley of the campaign to choose the Republican nominee in 2012. The Washington, D.C. based establishment that rules the GOP wants her career over now. She threatens them.

Firefighting 101 teaches it is easier to stomp out a wildfire when it is small. Don't allow the fire to grow, spread and become an inferno. Sarah Palin was the spark of McCain's reform campaign. She ignited the campaign and gave the reform message legitimacy.

Those knifing Palin are the old-guard Republicans who don't want to see her as the nominee in 2012. The old-guard GOP candidates are likely Gov. Haley Barbour or former Gov. Mitt Romney.

Sarah Palin brought a vibrant, fresh face to the Republican Party. The GOP elitists saw how she easily connected with voters. Palin drew huge crowds of up to 30,000 people anxious to see and hear her. The crowds flocking to see Gov. Palin bond with her culturally. She has the potential to garner Obama- or Reagan-like devotion.

The Republican Party needs this grassroots energy and her reform agenda after a decade of broken promises and the disappointing Bush presidency.

Looking back at history, you see resemblances of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in Palin. Both Thatcher and Reagan were dismissed and insulted by their own party stalwarts. "Useful idiot" was a term once leveled at President Reagan.

Palin hails from Wasilla, Alaska; Margaret Thatcher grew up in the apartment over her



### floyd, mary brown

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family's grocery store in a small town in England. Thatcher's father taught her never to do things because other people were doing them. He said, "Do what you think is right and then persuade others to follow you." Like Thatcher, Palin's political philosophy and economic policies emphasize reduced government intervention, free markets and entrepreneurialism.

Margaret Thatcher was willing to take a hard line and earned the nickname "Iron Lady" for her tough-talking rhetoric defiantly opposing the Soviet Union. Likewise, Palin is tough enough to stand up to present-day threats. While Thatcher earned the moniker of "Attila the Hen," Palin calls herself a "Pit-bull with Lipstick" and others dub her "Sarah Barracuda."

Human, likeable, personable and witty like Reagan, with loads of common sense and confidence, Sarah Palin lives what she believes. And the camera loves her as it loved Ronald Reagan.

Grass-roots efforts are sure to encourage Palin to run in for president in 2012. Meanwhile, she trusts a higher power, saying she is, "Putting my life in my creator's hands---that is what I always do." She also said, "I'm like, God, if there is an open door for me somewhere, this is what I always pray, ... don't let me miss the open door... And if there is an open door in '12 or four years later, and if it is something that is going to be good for my family, for my state,

for my nation, an opportunity for me, then I'll plow through that door."

This rising star is now too bright to be extinguished by attempts at sabotage. She has addressed the criticism, setting the record straight concerning the purchase of clothes for herself and her family by the Republican

National Committee, saying, "Those are the RNC's clothes, they are not my clothes. I never forced anybody to buy anything. I never asked for anything more than maybe a Diet Dr Pepper every once in a while." And then there's the ridiculous rumors regarding the debate prep about NAFTA and Africa. Palin summed it up well, calling it "cruel, it's mean-spirited, it's immature, and it's unprofessional," and said, "Those guys are jerks if they came away with it taking thing out of context, then tried to spread something on national news."

Yet Palin realizes criticism is to be expected in politics. "Your life is an open book and you open yourself up to criticism and you'd better be ready to take that criticism," she said. "In other words, don't run for office if you can't handle it."

Those staffers guilty of anonymous attacks are cowards. Their agenda to control the GOP needs to be seen for what it is — an attempt to kill the career of Sarah Palin because it threatens them. Americans can see through the falsehoods and love the real Sarah Palin. Nearly 400 letters arrive daily addressed to Gov. Palin and are now piled high in big bags waiting for her.

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## Service to others

Often, the best way to move out of a feeling of self pity and back into gratitude and peace is to be of service to others. It's a quick way to remind ourselves that the economy and our 401k may be in dire straits but our time and talent is still valued and can help someone else have a better day. We are no longer labeling ourselves as a victim.

An opportunity to help sits very close at hand and lately has been battered beyond recognition. Just across a short stretch of ocean from the Florida coast sits Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the western hemisphere that is in dire need of services.

Recently a church-run school, La Promesse, in Petion-ville, on the outskirts of the capital of Haiti, in Port-au-Prince, collapsed trapping half of the school's 700 children inside, killing 93 and injuring many more of the students who ranged in age from 3 to 20 years old. The school was in the process of adding another floor to the structure, allegedly based on a design drawn up by the school's pastor who is not an engineer or architect. The government is considering legal action.

Several relief agencies, including the Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, and Mercy and Sharing sent in doctors to treat the children because the staff at the nearby state-run hospital was on strike and refused to lend a hand. Small arms and legs were visible pinned underneath the rubble as anxious parents helped dig and waited for news.

The country was still in the process of recovery from hurricane Gustav, the fourth in the season, and resources were already stretched thin. The country continues to absorb one tragedy after another and yet continues to strive for a better day.

That has to be the answer if only because there are so many children growing up in Haiti who deserve a better future than the one that



### martha r. carr

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has been offered up in the past. Fortunately, there is something we can all do to reach out to our neighbors who are a boat ride away from Miami. Mercy & Sharing, www.haitichildren.com, a foundation started by Susie Krabacher on a shoestring budget has grown into one of the most successful relief organizations operating in Haiti with feeding centers, hospitals, day clinics, orphanages and schools.

Every penny from every donation goes directly to the people of Haiti. No funds are used for administrative salaries back in the states. Krabacher and her husband Joe, a Colorado attorney, take money out of their own pockets to meet all other expenses.

Funds, supplies and volunteers are put to use in a country that lacks a lot of the basic infrastructure such as clean water for everyone and where every gesture of kindness has an enormous impact.

While it's true that the problems the U.S. faces as a country are complicated and painful, there are still ways we can find to come

together and create solutions not only for ourselves but for others we may never meet. Today, we can turn our focus away from what we see as lacking and gather up our friends and neighbors to share ideas and resources for the children of Haiti. Include photos and stories with your donations that can be shared with the people of Haiti.

If you're not sure what to do with the talents your group has, offer up the resources and ask how they might be best utilized. Sometimes, we assume that what we have is not enough to matter or we miss our possible contribution through our talents altogether and so we never speak up at all. Here is an opportunity that is ripe for everybody to be able to make a difference with whatever they can do.

Benefits will come back to all of us, including a new habit of working together with our neighbors to build better communities and seeing each of us as necessary components to the solution.

Martha Randolph Carr's column is distributed exclusively by Cagle Cartoons Inc. Email Martha@caglecartoons.com or visit www.martharandolphcarr.com.

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