

Thankful for an “unenlightened” mom

My mother would have brained us had we acted like the runts at the coffee shop.

My mother entered the world 72 years ago, the oldest of six. My mother and her three sisters not only shared one bedroom, they shared one bed – she learned lots about sharing and humility.

In the late 1950s, when she graduated from high school, there was no money for college or business school. My mother got a job in a bank. She became engaged to my father and awaited his return from the military.

They married when she was only 19. They had their first daughter, Kathleen, within the year -- they'd have five more children by 1972 -- and she was thrust head first into the adult world. She took on her child-rearing responsibilities with great passion and love.

In the late '50s and throughout the '60s, most mothers weren't yet influenced by new-age parenting techniques -- ideas that had still been incubating on college campuses. They didn't know they were supposed to place their child's self-esteem and ego above all things.

And so they raised their kids with the same common-sense parenting techniques that had been used by moms for centuries.

In our home, my mother established a very clear order. She was the adult and she was in charge. Why? Because she said so, that's why.

My parents were not our best friends. We were not there to make them feel good about themselves. They lived in the adult world and we lived in the children's world and there was no blurring of the lines.

When we complained of being bored, my mother said, “You want something to do, I'll give you something to do,” and we were soon mowing the lawn or dusting tables.

My mother knew, instinctively, that children want parents who set clear boundaries -- not parents who are their buddies.

She knew it was her duty to prepare us for life -- to teach us good values, to give us a good education, to make sure we were polite and respectful.

Unlike modern parents, she didn't obsess over our self-esteem. She didn't tell us repeatedly we were handsome or pretty or

smart or talented. She didn't boast about us in public. If she had any obsession, it was that we better not embarrass her in public.

Whenever we visited family or attended an event, she threatened us before we left the house and gave us “the eye” throughout the event. No matter how good we were, she was STILL embarrassed by something we said or did, and gave it to us in the car the whole way home.

Which brings us to the runts at the coffee shop.

I, like many people these days, spend a good bit of time at coffee shops pecking away on my laptop. I try to be quiet and polite and considerate toward my fellow lap-

top companions. Not many new-age parents share my concern.

One coffee house I frequent has a group of such mothers that meets up once a week. While the mothers talk and laugh, they let their little darlings shout and run and take over every inch of the coffee house.

These mothers watched two of their runts run under my table, rattling the table to and fro, causing my coffee to spill, yet said nothing. They weren't embarrassed a whit.

Their children are God's gift to the universe, after all -- God forbid a modern mother would say or do something to hinder her child's creativity, self-expression or

self-esteem.

And so it is that their runts will grow up into self-centered adults, hopelessly trapped in themselves -- hopelessly inept at being considerate, civil and gracious toward their fellow man.

Fortunately, the mothers of my era had not been infected by modern psychobabble. If we'd carried on like the runts in the coffee shop, we would have not survived.

We turned out to be considerate, civil and gracious as a result; our self esteem is just fine, too.

If the world needs anything this Mother's Day it is this: more “unenlightened” moms like mine.



By TOM PURCELL



NEW CAR

The price of safety

By ERIC HOWTON
ehowton@annatexasforum.com

State of Texas guidelines require Independent School Districts to provide bus services to students who legally reside two or more miles from his/her assigned campus of regular attendance.

An exception to this rule is if the students are in a designated hazardous traffic area, which is why Anna ISD chose to bus students from several subdivisions, because there were no sidewalks between two local elementary schools and the neighboring subdivisions.

According to a recent letter sent home to parents, Anna ISD indicated that sidewalks will be laid between the schools and the neighboring subdivisions,

mitigating the requirement for the hazardous designation.

Anna ISD also informed parents that beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, buses will no longer transport students to the two elementary schools. The letter stated that the School District has the safety of the children in mind, they'll be providing safety training, and providing staff at the crosswalks.

This sounds like a solid plan on paper. So why do I still have concerns? Because in reality these are elementary schools, and one of the roads in question has no shoulders. Or curbs. Or, based on casual observation, drivers who obey the speed limit. Also, a fair portion of the walking distance of potential 5 year-olds will be outside the

safety of the School Zone.

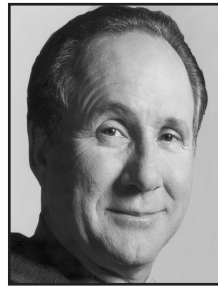
This new bus policy just seems to be a bad idea until those few concerns have been addressed, and to date they have not. Why is Anna ISD making this change? The answer is simple, MONEY. Unsubstantiated figures being tossed around suggest that the new policy will save the District \$140k annually. Not a trivial amount to be sure, but the most important question to be asked, "is not about money but the safety of our children?"

In today's economy it is a challenging task at all levels to project budgets in burgeoning cities which have seen a sudden growth downturn, but surely there are budget items which can be trimmed back to ensure the safety of our children.

Anna ISD, our children are priceless.

Once a Democrat, always a Democrat

Sen. Arlen Specter hasn't really switched parties; he's simply realized he cannot win the Pennsylvania Republican primary election. And he cannot win the Republican



By MICHAEL REAGAN

primary because he has become a tax and spender -- characteristics Republicans have tired of. He started off as a Democrat, switched to the Republican Party, and has now simply confirmed his loyalty to the Democratic Party he never really left.

Despite the hand wringing of some so-called Republican strategists, the Grand Old Party is better off without sheltering this fox in their Senate henhouse.

What the mainstream media overlooked -- they actually cheered Specter when he announced his defection -- was his naked admission that his decision to return to the Democratic Party was based not on principle, but merely because he knew his days in the Senate as a Republican were all but over.

Polls showed that he had no chance of surviving a GOP primary challenge next year. His political calculation is simple -- he figures that a Democrat can win next year in a state

that almost always votes conservative movement. Democratic these days.

The media also failed to recognize the demonstrable fact that Specter has certainly not been a dependable vote during his convenient stint as a Republican senator -- and could never be counted upon to stick with the GOP on issues central to its core.

His decision to support President Barack Obama's shockingly extravagant \$800 billion “monstrosity package,” which will be on the backs of our children far into the future, was the latest proof. It was a prime indication that his views were becoming increasingly aligned with the wild-spending left wing of the Democratic Party.

His convenient and faulty excuse that the GOP had moved so far to the right that he was no longer comfortable in the ranks of the GOP ignored the fact that the Republican Party has not moved at all from its traditional position as a conservative party dedicated to the core values of the men who founded this nation. Only timid presidents and members of Congress moved leftward. The GOP remained what it has always been -- the party of the right, literally and figuratively.

As I told Fox's Neil Cavuto Tuesday, no one in the conservative movement has supported this man for a long period of time because he hasn't really supported anyone in the

His defection is a self-inflicted wound arising out of the abandonment of traditional Republican anti-big government spending policies. Conservatives sat back for too long, watching George Bush and the spending that was going on in Washington. It cost them the House and the Senate in 2006. Still, they didn't learn anything -- and it cost them the White House in 2008.

If conservatives had had taken over the party as Specter asserts, we simply wouldn't be in the spending crunch we have today and we wouldn't have the deficits we have today.

We are always being asked to listen to the voice of the small contingent on the left such as Specter and his tiny band of allies. When are they going to listen to our side of the party? We're always asked to give in to the moderates and the liberals. It's about time the moderates and liberals acknowledged that it's long past time when we conservatives -- the majority in the GOP -- had a voice in this party.

A note of caution to President Obama: Don't let your happiness over picking up a vote in the Senate lull you into forgetting that having Arlen Specter in your ranks is like having Benedict Arnold in your army. He may be with you today but the chances are whenever he finds it's convenient, he'll turn on you. That's the nature of the beast.

Get involved, and vote
May 9th to make a difference

North Texas Media

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Christie Tate – Publisher
publisher@northtexasmedia.com

Contact us:
972.838.9300 – Main Office
972.838.9304 – Fax