

# Opinion

Gulf Breeze NEWS

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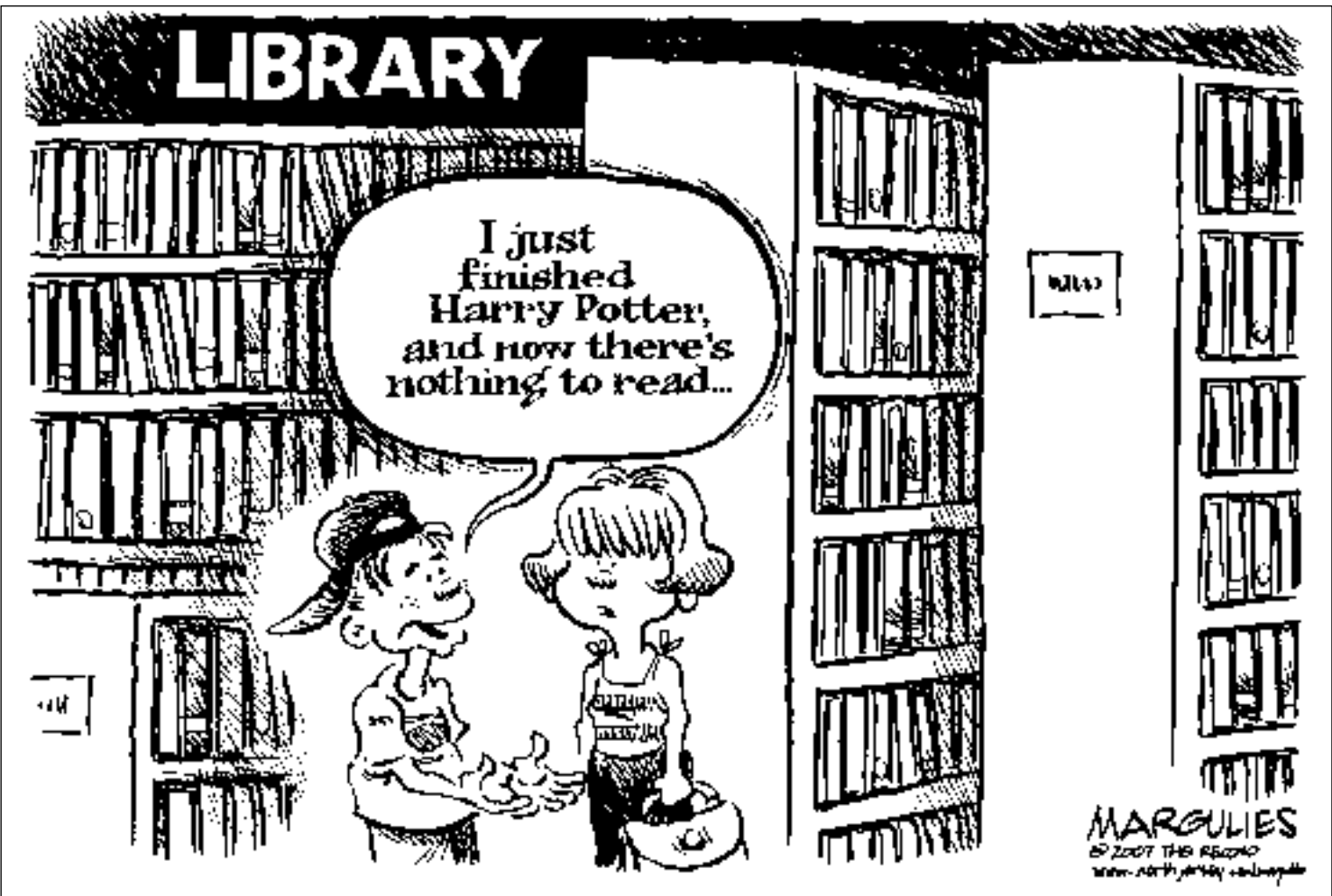
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## On the Spot:

WHERE WE PUT PEOPLE "ON THE SPOT" TO ANSWER A QUESTION "ON THE SPOT."

By Vici Papajohn

Do you feel safe traveling on area bridges?

## Foreign workers are not maltreated

### • Many request to work double shifts and multiple jobs

I'm the sinister, horn blower driving the van with dark tinted windows. I'm the one with the whip in hand herding the enslaved foreigners into the van and overtly sneaking them out of commercially operated boarding houses located in peaceful neighborhoods of Gulf Breeze and depositing them at sweatshops operated by conglomerate hospitality enterprises.

First, let me apologize for disturbing that neighbor from his nap by tooting my horn in his neighborhood. I think local residents are more worried about my foreign friends invading their neighborhood than they are about the kids' welfare. The city manager seems overanxious to start an investigation of any codes violated -- codes more likely aimed at keeping out these foreigners.

Therein lays one of the problems pointed out in your article: rent charged each foreigner. Because of codes, there are no rental properties close by the foreign students' workplace; therefore, the corporations who rent the houses must look in expensive locations; the beach, which is grossly overpriced, and on the other side of Pensacola, which means expensive transportation costs. Gulf Breeze proper loses this rental revenue, but their city proper is almost free of foreigners.

Now, let me address the issue of the unidentified woman. First, she isn't sure? I can see why she



wants to remain anonymous. Peeking through an open door and determining assessing the condition of a house? I get a picture of an old busybody snooping in people's windows and open doors, and then gossiping about what she didn't see. She must be a lonely widow.

The workers are recruited, but they are recruited from within their country not from the U.S. If they are lured, it comes from the companies in their country. The workers pay \$3,000 or more to companies in their country so they can come here.

These companies contract to employee service companies in the U.S. to find employment for these students. I refer to them as students, because the majority are; highly independent, hard working students who come to this country to earn money to finish their educations, and of course to pay for their way here.

They come here to work, and that is what they do. They aren't forced nor expected to work long shifts. In fact, they request and even demand to work double shifts. I know many students who not only work double shifts in the beach hotels, but in their

form of exercise. Do you realize how unintelligent that statement about bosses watching their employees talking to locals is?

Monitoring 60 or 80 people 24 hours a day, on who they talk to, and what they talk about, come on sweetie, you have more smarts than that. The company I work for has no "enforcers" nor do they have any "overseers."

They have me, who only threatens to leave anyone behind if they aren't at the curb when it's time to be picked up, but once they get to know me they know it's just an idle threat. If I ever laid a hand of one of these youths, there would be 15 hellcats on me in a split second, and if I ever observed something like that, the offender would have me to contend with.

Okay, I'm finished ranting. I was really upset, shocked and frustrated this morning when I read your article, and I thought I was going to have to take my boss to the hospital. I feel better now, but my boss doesn't.

I do realize there are companies out there that do these things. I hope you realize that too. It is frustrating though. It only takes one bad apple to foul the taste of one apple pie while 99 others taste so sweet. But, because they are also apple pies people consider them foul as well.

I treasure my young foreign friends from all over the world. After years, some still keep in contact and many return a second and third time. I just wanted you to know there are some of us out here that do it right.



"Yes, because our bridges are more of a concrete structure, unlike the one that collapsed (in Minneapolis)."

-Kristi Basel  
 Gulf Breeze



"I feel pretty safe about our bridges. I know safety is involved... I'm pretty confident in the construction of our bridges. [Public Safety officials] are not going to let you pass when the weather's unsafe.."

-Julie Patrick  
 Gulf Breeze

## Thanks for the positive coverage of The Zoo

Thank you so much for Franklin Hayes' positive article and kind words about the zoo. It was absolutely wonderful.

I was very disappointed to see the slant that the PNJ took. They found one or two disgruntled employees and spent paragraphs giving merit to their unsubstantiated allegations, with only a line or two of positive facts from the Zoo's Veterinarian and the Federal wildlife officials, and zero input from the hundreds of families with annual memberships, parents who send their kids to zoo camp and zoo snooze, or the teachers who use the zoo as a teaching tool year after year.

Your publication supports and encourages a climate of cooperation and compassion which is so rare in a newspaper.

Thanks again for your attitude!

Kim Aldridge  
 Gulf Breeze

## Letters to the Editor

### Some wars never end

Wars are easy to start, but some have no end. The Iraq War will never be won. They have been fighting there for hundreds of years. Since World War II, the United States is batting zero winning major wars. The Korean War was a Mexican standoff, and we lost the Vietnam War after 10 years of fighting and more than 58,000 Americans killed.

The present's Iraq War was not our fight. George W. Bush, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld started planning the invasion of Iraq within hours after the 9/11 disaster. Most of the world was aware that Saddam Hussein and Iraq had no connection with Osama bin Laden, who was the mastermind of this cowardly criminal act.

In the search for bin Laden, Bush ordered American troops to invade Afghanistan on Oct. 7, 2001. This was a correct plan because it was his known stronghold. However, not much effort was made finding his cave. On the advice of Cheney and Rumsfeld, Bush invaded Iraq on March 20, 2003. That was a total mistake.

The weapons of mass destruction that Bush said were in Iraq were never found. At the time of the invasion, the Al-Qaida terrorists were not there. After more than four years and after about 3,700 Americans killed and about 27,000 American casualties, its time to exit Iraq.

Bush's approval rating is in the 20's, and he is steadfast with his saying, "Bring them on." The Democrats in Congress

have only two options; stop financing the war or impeach both Bush and Cheney. They have done neither because Republicans in Congress refused to give support even though the majority of Americans have said, bring the troops home.

Bush is quoted in Newsweek, Sept. 24, 2001: "When I take action, I'm not going to fire a \$2 million missile at a \$10 empty tent and hit a camel in the butt. Its going to be decisive."

This is a person that found a way to avoid the Vietnam War as a member of the Texas Air National Guard.

Bush claims he was told by God to invade Iraq. I wonder what language God used while talking to him. This makes me wonder why God has never talked to me. Its a shame that God failed to remind Bush about the ninth commandment: Thou shall not bear false witness (lie).

Noah Belew  
 Gulf Breeze



"I am not necessarily afraid of driving over the bridge. But I may invest in the safety tool that breaks auto glass -- for peace of mind!"

-Teresa Shows  
 Gulf Breeze

If you would like to suggest a topic for On the Spot, email news@gulfbreezenews.com