

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A call to  
litter-busters

I HAVE NOTICED OVER the last several months numerous cars being stopped crossing the Canadian River Bridge for various traffic violations, but none are apparently being stopped for littering—or so it appears from what I can see.

We personally pay to have Highway 60 cleaned several times a year from town towards Glazier and up FM 1920, yet not a day passes after cleanup that trash is not dumped again on these stretches of road.

Trash ranges from entire sacks of trash, styrofoam lunch containers, beer bottles, tires, feed and mud sacks, and even tops of hinged ice coolers.

You will notice the same type of trash when

traveling south on Highway 83 to Miami and north to Perryton, as well as on Lake Marvin Road.

Several weeks ago, one of our employee/partners spotted a rig hauler from Pampa discarding trash as they were traveling north on Highway 60. With a license plate number, the owner of the rig was contacted by the Sheriff's Department, and the guilty party was called in.

We need more awareness and involvement from both law enforcement and the citizens of Hemphill County. With all that Canadian does to promote tourism, the area needs to be clean of trash and debris along our pathways to the City.

With the promotion that the State of Texas does regarding littering, all citizens and guests of Canadian need to be doing their part to keep our roadways clean.

RANDY BAILEY

To whom it may concern,  
My nana and papa live  
on the new road called  
Hackberry trail. My brother  
and sister and I like to play  
at their house. When we  
were leaving we saw trash  
and beer bottles on the  
road. Sometimes we  
see people speeding on the road.  
Please stop speeding and  
throwing trash on the road,  
and watch out for us  
kids.

Thank  
you

Isabelle  
Krehbiel



IT IS A THURSDAY MORNING, as I begin this column, and I've just been roused from post-publication stupor by back-to-back visits from two of my elders and fellow Democrats. They are talking politics—a subject that stirs all but the dead and fatally indifferent in these early months of 2008.

These are men who fondly remember the old days of the Democratic Party, when decisions were made by men who looked like them, meeting in smoke-filled rooms behind closed doors that barred women like me from entering.

Believing, I suppose, that I am a sympathizer, both men affirm their staunch opposition to presidential candidate Barack Obama—which is fine—in terms that raise haunting images of the Deep South, white sheets and burning crosses—which is not.

I feel shame and rage...but I also feel the stirrings of resolve as my now-unwelcome guests depart.

Their vitriol and animosity infuse this office with a stink I had thought, hoped, and prayed—though never quite dared to believe—long gone from my hometown. My stomach roils in remembrance of similar words spoken to me as a child—words that lay like weights on my conscience, as if I myself had said them.

Quite coincidentally—or perhaps fatefully—a bound file of The Record from the 1930s sits at the corner of my desk. I had dug it out of the stacks and dusted it off days before to fill in some sizeable gaps in my knowledge of Canadian's past.

I know, by now, what I will find buried in those yellowed pages: the report of a baseball game between a local club and a traveling team. The headline that crowns that story, "Canadian Loses to Colored Team," is a sickening reminder of a past we can't escape.

The story is a remarkable piece of date-stamped journalism—bad journalism, mind you, littered with grotesque allusions to the visiting team's skin color and their general inferiority as human beings. Upon first reading, I had thought it a novelty and shown it to others, shaking my head at the ignorance I was certain we had overcome.

Suddenly it's not nearly so quaint, though.

The past has visited me in two old men, their voices cracked with age, their faces creased with time and hints of sorrow, their fear and hatred so long held, so resistant to thought, that it has calcified.

I have a dream.

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is our time.

Our time to make a mark on history.

Our time to write a new chapter in the American story.

Our time to leave our children a country that is freer and kinder, more prosperous and more just than the place we grew up. And then someday, someday, if our kids get the chance to stand where we are and look back at the beginning of the 21st century, they can say that this was the time when America renewed its purpose.

They can say that this was the time when America found its way. They can say that this was the time when America learned to dream again."

Perhaps the Democratic Party will rise again in this country—not to dominance, but to a kind of parity in which we will all be forced to talk, to listen, to negotiate, to compromise, to find common ground and construct real solutions to the daunting problems which await us.

But if it rises, it will not be on the shoulders of men like these, who still hate and fear and long for a time when the white man's supremacy was unchallenged. It will be on my shoulders, and on yours...and on the shoulders of men like Barack Obama, who dare to dream again of a better America—an America that has found its way.

These are so much more than words. They are ideas that light the darkness. They are a call to arms. They have power. Just as those old words of hate and fear held us down, these words have the power to lift us up, to awaken our resolve, to engage us, to make us whole. And now it seems possible to hope that they will also bring us back to the voting booth, to reassert our citizenship and to pledge ourselves to an active role our country's renewal—and our own.

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