

Editorial

Weitzelworld

One of the best parts about college for me was having two roommates, Joe and Brett, who cared as much about paying bills on time as I did. This is how paying the phone bill went at college, I think.

It's Wednesday afternoon and I'm at French class. I'm pulling a notebook from my bag. A phone bill, much like a feather, falls from the notebook and lands on the floor. During class, I accidentally step on it. The girl sitting next to me spills Snapple on it. When class dismisses, somebody stops me and says, "You left something under your seat."

"Oh, right. The phone bill. Thanks."

The phone bill, now badly bent, soaked in Snapple and covered with footprints, was due two months ago. In my mind, it's not an urgent problem, since the phone was still working that morning, when I called mom and



Jason Weitzel

desperately begged for more money to help pay for my "bills." Responsibly, I fold the phone bill in half and put it in my pocket for safe-keeping.

Two weeks later, my roommate, Brett, scribbles down a phone message on the back of the phone bill return envelope, which has been separated from the original document for more than two-and-a-half months. Other phone bill pages have been collecting dust on the coffee table, never looked at, just straightened out over and over again because they

Phone Bill Committee Meeting

appear to be "significant." These documents are also covered in Snapple.

Three weeks since the phone bill resurfaced in my notebook, only then would I say to myself: "Hey! What was it I was supposed to do? Something about ... hmm ... I don't know. Hey, does anyone want to play Playstation?"

A week later, one of us finally remembers the phone bill, only because somebody went over to a friend's apartment and tried to order wings, but couldn't because the phone was disconnected.

So, the three of us finally sit down to have an adult conversation about the phone bill, but what we're really doing is watching X-Files.

Brett leads the conversation because he's the only one with a calculator.

"What we should do is set up a time when we can sit down and discuss a date when we can get together and talk about what we should do about the phone bill."

"How about next week?"

"OK."

You have to understand, not

having phone service would render us useless at school, unable to make timely adjustments to our online fantasy football teams.

So that's why we finally cracked the whip, meeting exactly one week after our first meeting, as promised. Once again, Brett leads the proceedings.

"Thank you all for coming. The issue tonight is the phone bill. It has graced our coffee table for some time now, and it's time we take swift and decisive action on the matter. I am prepared to do whatever it takes to solve this, to head our proverbial ship that IS apartment 668D in the right direction; that's why I've come before you this evening, not as a friend, but as a leader. I am prepared to get down to business. That's why I've brought ... this pen! And ... this legal pad! Thank you all ... and good night!"

"Bravo, man. That was brilliant. It's good to finally get this off our chests."

A week later, it's finally time to get down to business. After all, we were cutting it close to the mythical 90-day "college grace period"

for all bills. Brett leads to discussion again, just as soon as the X-Files is over.

"Alright. Has anyone seen the phone bill?"

"Which one, because there's the old one, the second oldest one, and there's one that came in the mail today, but I left that one in the mailbox," I said.

"I guess we should pay the oldest one first so we don't get confused," said Brett. "Has anyone seen the old bill?"

"I haven't seen it. Don't look at me."

"Are you sure?"

"Positive."

Thanks to quick thinking, motivation and determination from all three of us, the phone bill was taken care of only a week later. On the way to class one day, I found the old phone bill in my back pocket.

So, the moral of the story is: "It's never a good idea to wash your clothes more than once a month."

Thank you, and goodbye!

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Opinion

The revolution started right here

Shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Admiral of the Japanese fleet was congratulated on the complete success of the surprise attack on the "sleeping" American military.

The admiral turned and said he believed the only thing they had accomplished that day, was to awaken a sleeping giant.

Once again, America has been attacked.

And once again, the "sleeping" giant begins to awaken.

But instead of facing enemies who were clearly defined, this time we face enemies who hide behind women and children, the old and the sick.

We face an enemy who truly believes that the end, really does justify the means.

There have been many spokespeople in the last week, telling how the revolutionary peoples of the world demand that America change its ways.

What they fail to understand is that America is, was and will be, the only truly Revolutionary government in the world.

Just because you have a gun in your hands, a hidden knife, or a bomb, it does not make you a revolutionary.

These petty, little people who try to dictate to America are all versions of the same monster. They represent ways of life which should have died out hundreds of years ago.

But they still exist because there will always be some bearded, self-delusional person who thinks he (or she) speaks for God. Who believes that a bomb in a playground, or an airplane in a building, will bring this country to its knees.

They forget that as a people, once the shock has worn off, we will, as Jack Kennedy said, pay any price, to preserve our freedom.

As true revolutionaries, America has been fighting for the rights of the common man or woman for generations.

America has been the one country in the world that every nation can turn to in time of need. Tons of food for the starving, equipment and manpower, medical supplies and doctors and nurses whenever and where ever needed.

America has always been there when people cried for help.

American money, tons of it, have gone to support friendly nations.

Maybe it's time to seek an accounting. Let's add up who supports us, in our time of need, subtract those who don't and see who gets our support in the future?

But that's not the American way, is it?

The terrorist attack last week did one thing, just like in 1941 -- the attacks awoke a sleeping giant. But now, that giant is angry and wants revenge. And right now that anger is aimed at Afghanistan, among other countries.

Later, when it's all over, America will pour millions of dollars of help and aid into that, or any other country to help the people rebuild.

But we will not be liked, and the money won't be appreciated.

It is, after all, the American way.

After the bombs start falling and American troops are injured or killed on some foreign shore, America will question itself.

People who don't understand our revolutionary-style of government will see that as a weakness.

It's not. It's how our revolutionary government was designed to work.

It's a process some despots will never understand. Like those fools with the banner in newspaper pictures. The banner says "Have you ever wondered why the rest of the world hates you?"

That's simple to answer. They want what we have but they want someone to give it to them! They are not willing to work for what they want. All they know is they want what they want now! And at the point of a knife, if necessary.

Americans will work for what they want. We make mistakes, but then we, as a nation, never said we were perfect.

America will continue to feed the world, cloth the naked and want to help anyone who asks for help.

America has stumbled in the past, there is no denying that. But where we stumble, we are at least trying to do something.

It's hard not to want to see the complete destruction of our enemies. It's hard not to want blood for blood.

It's hard to tell a child his, or her, father or mother will not be home anymore because some poor excuse for a human thought he could get our government to change policy by killing and slaughtering defenseless thousands.

It's just plain hard.

But we will recover, we will rebuild. We will find and punish those cowards.

The editorial board of the *Boyertown Area Times* welcomes input from its readers on issues of local interest, but we encourage all letter writers to adhere to certain basic codes of conduct.

Chief among those tenets is the avoidance of personal attacks on non-elected officials. The public decisions of school board members and municipal representatives is open to scrutiny and criticism but private citizens will not be subjected to personal ridicule.

Attacks on private citizens will be omitted from letters to the editor. In the case of a letter composed solely of attacks, the letter will be resubmitted to the writer for changes.

Send letters to: *The Boyertown Area Times*, P.O. Box 565, 124 N. Chestnut St. Boyertown PA 19512-2000.

Letters must include the writer's signature, address and telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published.



Adams' Apples

Ripe old age? Yeah? Ripe for what? Reaping? During my hitch in the Navy in World War Two, I saw many ravaged hulks of severely damaged ships, but fortunately, I was never on one.

Our LST 281 (a beach landing ship) was only damaged. We survived three major invasions. We haven't experienced a shipwrecked life, so why start now in our seasoned years?

It's no disgrace, this ripe old age is darned inconvenient at times.

It's just a case of Father Time catching up with Mother Nature. Despite all of that, as I ripen at age 77, I wouldn't know how to feel any better.

Just the fact that my wife and I enjoy sound health, makes me acutely aware that it is one of the great bounties of our lives. Good health is legal, non taxable, low in calories, and can be enjoyed by either sex, or instead of (even at our age).

If we appear sluggish at times, lacking vigor, it's probably nothing more than a vitamin shortage.

With all its difficulties and dangers, life goes on. Much depends on our disposition and personal behavior. At our age it's time to be more realistic and stop daydreaming.

We try not to take irreversible steps without fully considering all the consequences. Above all, we don't get ourselves upset over things that can go wrong when there is no remedy for it.

We'd be way over the hill, and down the other side, if we couldn't remember what we were upset about.

I think we have learned not to make a big fuss over something of



Charles Adams Jr.

no value. We learn from our mistakes, so we don't repeat them. Leave well enough alone. Avoid spoiling what is running smoothly.

When and if the pressure seems to get too great, we leave it to others that can handle it. When things look hopeless, we can't expect miracles.

Bemoan your fate or live your life. That's a stereotypic, oversimplified expression to be sure, but one that has been expertly carried out by a hale and hearty 92 year old horseplaying friend of mine from Fleetwood. Freddy my boy, I should live so long.

However, it's only human nature to believe that the future will be rosier than the present. Our past was our experience, the future is our hope. Today is just a matter of going from one to the other.

Getting up in years isn't all that bad when you consider your choices.

To live is to stay active, or pay the debt that nature bills us. I like to think the quality of our lives is more important than the quantity.

"Hey Charlie, you're not get-

The ravages of ripening

ting older, you're getting better." That's how my buddy George, up in Hamburg, snow-jobbed me.

Georgie me boy, I have one problem with that bit of bull. The only thing I'm getting better at is getting older.

Whenever I start to feel run-down, I just hope I don't wind-up in a hospital ward. Hospitals are so expensive. They have become so crowded that now-a-days you can't get a semiprivate room anymore. Now they have semiprivate beds.

Figuring it might be a good time to start thinking about the hereafter, I called my insurance man. It seems that he's not just an insurance salesman anymore. Now he's an estate planner, a financial advisor, a mutual fund representative, and a tax preparer. He's got me outnumbered 5 to 1.

He's one guy that knows just exactly how to help you get what's coming to him. He can tell your money where to go instead of where it went.

Instead of additional life insurance, I told him to buy me a fire insurance policy. I know where I'm going. (in a hand basket?) There is something very comforting about a roaring fire.

Giving it second thoughts, the hereafter and the ensuing inheritances can wait awhile. We are ship shape and on a steady course, but keep that lighthouse light burning and sound the foghorn, there'll be no shipwreck for us. We're not ripe enough for picking just yet.

Send your comments to: LST281@aol.com

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