

# EDITORIAL

## Start the day with a good breakfast

A friend and I were talking the other day about how much breakfast has changed in our lives. Breakfast used to be simple. My mother would break out the Rice Krispies or the Frosted Flakes and put them on the table.

I would fill my bowl with the cereal of my choice, add some milk and eat, because that's the way things worked back in the days when children still respected their parents and the boys didn't get tattoos and earrings and run with the wrong crowd.

I pretty much stopped eating breakfast once I went off to college. Frankly, I like to sleep as long as possible before getting up in the morning, and showering, shaving and getting dressed, usually ate up all the available time before I had to be out the door.

If I did eat breakfast, it usually was in the form of a Pop-Tart that I ate as I drove to work.

I also used to drink a Coca-Cola first thing in the morning. I was following the lead of my grandmother, who drank a Cola-Cola out of a six-and-a-half-ounce bottle first thing every morning.

When I hired Chelsea the Trainer last year, the first thing she told me was that a good nutrition plan started with a good breakfast

### Other Voices

Mitch Clarke



every day. Deep in my heart, I probably knew that was true. But I don't like anyone to get between me and a good Pop-Tart.

She told me oatmeal was an easy, fast breakfast that was also healthy. So I start almost every morning now with a cup of instant oatmeal.

But I also eat a lot of eggs, which she recommended because they are high in protein. I often try to make an omelet with ham, cheese and green peppers. Unfortunately, I haven't mastered making an omelet, so I usually end up with scrambled eggs with ham, cheese and green peppers.

Recently, I wanted to vary my breakfast. Chelsea said cereal was fine, just if I found a brand high in fiber, high in protein and low in carbs.

I quickly eliminated Rice Krispies as an option. Same old "snap, crackle and pop." That ceased to be amusing after I turned five. Frankly, I don't want my breakfast talking to me.

I also eliminated Cap'n Crunch, which I

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## What I'm afraid of ...

Fear, I often tell my bossier friends, is a powerful motivator. While that might be true when it comes to dealing with folks, fear of things not human can do quite the opposite. Scary things can downright paralyze us. What scares us varies.

I am not afraid of much. The things that give me pause are things I cannot understand or cannot control. The things that make me change direction are all too common.

Pressure cookers — I am sure these will blow up my house. While I might get one going, I'd be afraid to go back in the kitchen once it got going. All that hissing and spitting and the rattling little knob on top seem a little too much like a bomb gone bad to me. My mama loved cranking up a pressure cooker. I wonder now if it had more to do with getting children out from underfoot than whatever it is a pressure cooker is supposed to do.

I think now they call them instant pots maybe to make them less scary. Business renamed girdles and now these are called

### All That's Fit to Print



Brenda Wall

shapewear. I can breathe just typing this paragraph.

Wasps and hornets — they are just straight mean. I cannot figure them out. A person can be walking along, minding their own business and out of nowhere comes a mad, attacking little flying thing that feels like a tomahawk missile hitting dead on target. I really hope it is true wasps die after they sting. It is only fitting.

There are people brave enough and not scared of little buzzing things. They pull out a tissue and gently grab the buzzing stinging thing and take it outside and let it fly away.

I-75 on Easter weekend — retired Yankees and other snowbirds are heading back north. They all drive big cars or motor homes. They spread out across all three lanes of traffic and mosey along bobbing

their heads to the tunes of Lawrence Welk. This makes the truck drivers angry. It is not pretty.

Malls — I'm not really afraid of malls but I have a hard time breathing around all those people talking and walking and buying things they don't need. I get anxious because people do not walk in an orderly manner. All the people on the right should go one direction and all the people on the left the other. Instead, they walk like the retired Yankees drive.

Little babies — I am not so much afraid of the babies. It is my effect on them. New mamas offer me the baby to hold and I know if I so much as touch the infant, a screaming fit will commence. Newborn babies may not know much, but they can spot incompetence a mile away. I am much better with puppies.

Yesterday was Sept. 11. I was trying not to speak of the horrors and fear of Sept. 11, 2001. That was fear, real fear. And then, there was Benghazi on Sept. 12, 2012.

Remember and never forget.

## Chicago, Georgia coming!

### Mumbles

Billy Fleming



Does the Lord have a provision in His prayer instruction manual for a redo?

After all those years we prayed for and badgered the Georgia DOT and state officials to fourlane U.S. 27 we got what we asked for.

Thirty something years ago I wrote a Mumbles in which I stated... *As bright a star the City of Atlanta was for Georgia and the South in years past, if the powers that be in Atlanta don't figure out how to divert some of their unrestrained growth to South Georgia, instead of trying to divert South Georgia's resources to north Georgia, Atlanta will become a blackhole which will suck Georgia and the south down with it!*

The "water war" was not yet official, but those of us paying attention already knew Atlanta was eying our water!

Headlines coming out of Atlanta the past week have diverted my fears... **Atlanta Mayor Bottoms tells city jail to refuse new ICE detainees...** and **Atlanta calls for ICE to move its detainees out of the city jail.**

As it turns out, a fourlane highway between Southwest Georgia and Atlanta may not be the blessing we had in mind over the years. As the swell of illegal alien criminals grows, Atlanta will soon be looking for someplace to dump them.

Guess it's too late to thank the Lord for that "unanswered prayer!"

### LETTERS

#### What's going on in Arlington?

In our first letter we, the "Citizens for Better Government," began to "Shine a Light" on Arlington City Hall.

We listed ways we think our mayor is being mistreated.

These issues beg the question: WHY?

Why do they treat their mayor with such transparent scorn and disrespect? There may be issues we are unaware of, but the obvious one occurred several years ago when an ethical issue arose. It was highly publicized and caused a rift in our community. Those who participated and their supporters maintain their innocence.

Mayor Williams, who was on the city council at the time, contended improper actions had occurred and reparations should be made. The city employees and their supporters, some of whom are now council members, cannot or will

not forgive him for what they think was a betrayal.

Resentment and ill will is hard to disguise, and their disdain for the mayor is often displayed in public city council meetings. The mayor has expressed a desire to put past issues aside and concentrate on what is best for our city.

Their resistance is obvious and palpable, apparently to everyone but themselves and their supporters.

Our biggest concern at present is our financial state, the city charter mandates the mayor prepare a budget.

Mayor Williams enlisted the help of our city auditor and two citizens who have been in business all of their working lives. They spent many hours preparing a fair and reasonable budget with conscientious efforts to save taxpayer's money.

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## Take me back to school

I'd like to go back to school again. Briefly.

Repeating the entire K-12 experience isn't an option, but it looks like the first day of class is now a blast.

It wasn't that way when I crossed the threshold of Edward J. Hynes Elementary in New Orleans for the first time.

As my pals and I piled off the bus a pair of principals silently pointed us to the school doors to be greeted by teachers who were as cheerful as drill sergeants at Army boot camp.

They were in charge and that message was delivered loud and clear. We entered our assigned classrooms, took our assigned seats and went silent.

By the end of the first month, all was well. We knew the teachers, they knew us and school was as normal as school gets for a bunch of rowdy first graders.

We did fine. We got by. But we might have morphed into superstars if we'd been treated to the kind of back-to-school welcome some kids get today.

My niece recently emailed photos of her two daughters' first day

### Alex McRae

Alex McRae



at Royle Elementary School in Darien, Connecticut. The Royle students don't just get a warm "hello." They actually strut down the street in the school's annual "Parade of Learners." It was like Mardi Gras for munchkins as students wandered by, waving gleefully as parents and well-wishers clapped and cheered.

I know I would have enjoyed opening day ceremonies at Park View Elementary in Portsmouth, Virginia, where arriving students were greeted and treated to smiles and candy by Mayor Elizabeth Primas and Chief of Police Tonya Chapman.

To make sure students of "other faiths" don't feel left out, there's even a website dedicated to "pagan school traditions." The site reminds pagan parents that "it's customary to consecrate your magical tools before beginning a new proj-

ect." Parents are encouraged to "consecrate" school supplies before sending kids off to class.

My Southern Baptist mother never consecrated my yellow pencils and Blue Horse notebooks, but I knew she'd consecrate my rear end if I misbehaved and I didn't.

But while American back-to-school activities are swell, recent news reports indicate that a Chinese school tops the charts for putting kids in the mood for classroom success.

Kindergarten students in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen showed up days ago expecting to study math and Mandarin. Instead, they found a scantily-clad pole dancer gyrating half naked in front of the class. A parent posted video of the woman slithering around a pole topped by the Chinese flag.

That would have been enough to kindle my fire for education, but some parents weren't happy.

British journalist Michael Standaert, whose children attend the school, tweeted, "Who would think this

is a good idea? We're trying to pull the kids out of the school and get our tuition back."

Other parents agreed with Standaert and — faced with endangered tuition payments — school administrators apologized for the dirty dancing and fired the person in charge of kindergarten.

Classroom strip shows aren't my cup of tea, either, but another Chinese educational practice mentioned in the news report caused me far greater concern.

At the end of the last school year, students were required to participate in ten days of exercises orchestrated by the Chinese military. The fun included displays of mortars and machine guns in front of the school. The kids literally sang the Chinese national anthem at gunpoint.

Maybe I'm a cultural snob, but I'd rather my kids be exposed to pole dancers in the classroom than machine guns at the school door.

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