

COMMENTARY

THE LITITZ RECORD EXPRESS

Established 1877

Published every Thursday
at 1 East Main Street
Ephrata, PA 17522

-by-

Lancaster County Weeklies

A member of LNP MEDIA GROUP, Inc.
A Steinman Communications Company

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| William J. Burgess | President and Publisher |
| Andrew Fasnacht | Editor |
| Patrick Burns | News Editor |
| Melissa Hunnifield | Features Editor |
| Bruce Morgan | Sports Editor |

Letters to the Editor

It's 'Month of the Military Child'

Editor, Record Express

April is Month of the Military Child

This month is a time to honor the sacrifices made by military families, especially those experienced by the dependent children of military members serving at home and overseas. Through the eyes of a child, the effects of war on a family can be devastating. The emotional wounds, the financial stress, and the hopelessness of a fractured family are confusing and scary, and they can affect a child for a lifetime.

The U.S. Army observes the Month of the Military Child in April to recognize and honor the commitment, contributions and sacrifices children and youth make to the nation through the strength they provide the Soldiers and Families.

This year marks the 33rd anniversary of the Department of Defense designating April as Month of the Military Child.

The Army recognizes Month of the Military Child as an opportunity to recognize and respect the unique challenges the military children face and overcome.

The Army remains fully committed to helping Families become and stay strong by offering a variety of programs and services through U.S. Army Installation Management Command. There are more than 215,779 children and youth registered in Child and Youth Services programs. The Army remains committed to these military family members to honor the service and sacrifices of those who serve the nation.

This year's theme, "Brave Hearts, Resilient Souls," will help the nation understand how important the military children are, no matter where they are stationed. Leadership, garrisons and any appropriate Guard/Reserve locations execute communications efforts and events with communities to show appreciation to Families and inspire future generations.

As the nation prepares for the future, the Army recognizes that children will continue to experience and work through the challenges of relocations, deployments, and reintegration and, if needed, care for their wounded soldier parent.

Through specialized programs and trained staff, the Army will continue to anticipate and address the evolving needs of soldiers and families to ensure they are healthy, ready and self-reliant.

Month of the Military Child allows the Army to recognize, applaud, and celebrate the resilience of military children and youth and their role in ensuring a ready force now and into the future.

Military children are the epitome of strength and resilience who contribute to enabling the soldiers to focus on defending the nation. Strengthening children and families makes the all-volunteer Army stronger as a whole. Strong and resilient Army children contribute to the success of the Army's mission.

*Sandra Styer, Patriotic Instructor
Lititz VFW Auxiliary to Post 1463*

A letter to Warwick School Board

Editor, Record Express

I voice my concern for spending \$7 million on an athletic field house at the high school complex. I see no educational benefit in this extravagant expense of valuable education dollars. How will this expense better student learning in the classroom? Will our sport teams perform better with these professional level facilities? Will this benefit our students? The justification of spending educational tax dollars on such a project seems very weak to me.

Many studies of early child education show that the first four years of a young person's formal education are the most critical for their success in later education years. Spend our tax monies on lower class sizes and programs in early elementary years, rather than on elaborate athletic facilities. We do not have to keep up with districts who may have such "Taj Mahal" facilities.

If the administration and the school board feel this is a nice thing to have, do it with community fundraisers rather than using tax dollars taken from our educational needs within the district.

*David Pusey
Lititz*

Amending an Amendment

Editor, Record Express

When our forefathers conceived the 2nd Amendment to the Constitution, "The Right to Bear Arms," a completely different set of circumstances were in play. We must keep in mind, during the time period leading up to the revolution, the colonists were being closely watched by the British occupation forces. They were understandably wary of men with guns.

There were myriad reasons for owning a weapon. Protection from the displaced natives, wild beasts, adding protein to the household diet, and more importantly, being in the position to join a militia to protect the common good. Also, firearms of that period were not simple to operate. It started with pouring liquid metal, usually lead, into a mold to fabricate the projectile. Most weaponry of the period were notoriously inaccurate and very dangerous. These guns only had one shot before you pulled the trigger. You had to be very specific to your target.

Advance this scenario 243 years and you have automatic weapons, an unlimited supply of ammunition and supermarkets full of meat products. Basically, the only valid reason for owning one of these weapons is to kill something, or preferably someone. The NRA has effectively legalized murder. They insist that at anytime an enraged grizzly bear will burst from your garden shed and devour your entire family. According to the NRA, enemies are always at the gate just waiting to pillage and kill someone. The only militia these days to speak of are dubious individuals acting like boy scouts on steroids, sporting black clunky combat boots and shouting slogans written by German zealot 80 years ago who caused the greatest loss of life this civilization has ever seen. A modern automatic weapon is simply an instrument of death in the hands of a psychotic layperson. The need to limit access to certain guns is long overdue. The daily quota of murdered innocents must be stopped. The 2nd Amendment to our Constitution has to be rewritten, it needs to reflect our modern society and clarify the usage of automatic weapons and under what circumstances? But more importantly, an 8-year-old should not be allowed to buy guns. What I mean is an 8-year-old in mentality.

America is currently the most deadliest country in the world. A war rages within that our elected officials refuse to extinguish because they benefit financially from the death toll. Our congressmen are compensated for every young person that is gunned down in school. Their "base" demands that they maintain the status quo even though bloodshed runs rampant in our streets. They refuse to accept the fact that certain freedoms have limitations.

Do not delude yourself, guns kill people.

*Jason Goodman
Lititz*

Protect pets and yourself from ticks

Recent warnings about Lyme disease and a "five-year tick watch" have raised concern among hikers parents, and pet owners. Sherry Dawson, owner and director of operations at Mosquito Joe of Southcentral PA took the time recently to answer questions about what this means to local residents and animals.

Q: What is a five-year tick watch and what does it mean for all of us, and our pets?

A: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection acquired funding to initiate a tickborne disease surveillance program as part of the Pennsylvania Lyme Disease Task Force recommendations in 2015. Pennsylvania has the highest reported cases of Lyme disease throughout the country and scientist and researchers from the CDC, EPA and NIH are concerned and is a major public health threat. The survey began in July 2018 and they have collected 3,663 adult black legged ticks also known as the deer tick for testing.

The purpose of the survey is to provide data to better understand the tick's habitat, life stage and peak activity levels and to test for human pathogenic diseases.

We all need to be aware and take precautions in areas that ticks are prevalent. It is not always in wooded areas. They can be found in your backyard, while walking your dog, or at a local park. The eggs and nymph stages are in leaf debris and shaded areas. The adults prefer to hang out or "quest" on tall grass and bushes. Our pets are particularly vulnerable as they often go directly into those areas.

Q: How long is the watch in effect?

A: It will be for at least the five-year period that was announced. There needs to be enough data collected in a variety of environmental conditions.

Q: What statistics/occurrences cause a tick watch to be issued?

A: The reported cases of Lyme disease have quintupled from 2000 to 2016 from 2,271 to 11,443. The CDC believes the actual cases are in excess of 800,000. A tick watch is issued at the discretion of the state. Pennsylvania had over 10,000 Lyme Disease cases last year, one of the highest in the country.

The warmer temperatures each year have not provided a knock down of the white footed mouse and other small animals that carry diseases. Additionally, oak trees produced an extremely large crop of acorns in 2010, which led to a large population of the white footed mouse last year.

Q: What can we do to prevent attracting ticks?

A: Here are some precautions and tips:

- Ticks are active when temperatures are above 45 degrees, so they are prevalent in the spring and summer months and looking for a host to attach themselves.

- Make sure lawns are maintained grass is cut, leaf debris is removed, bushes trimmed. Clear tall grass and brush at edge of your lawn.

- Create a 3-foot gravel barrier between the yard and any forested area near the home in order to restrict tick migration.

- Move wood piles away from the home.

- Minimize kids and pets playing in wooded areas, as they can carry ticks back with them. Move swings and playsets away from wooded areas; do not place them at your yard edge.



Submitted photo

Bella and LuLu are owned by Sherry Dawson, and are the mascots of Mosquito Joe.

- When spending extended periods of time outside, wear long pants tucked into boots and long-sleeved shirts.

- Inspect kids and pets for ticks and remove them promptly. Be sure to check areas under arms, around ears, in the hairline, back of knees, between legs, and around the waist.

- Remove a tick by pulling upwards with tweezers; don't use petroleum or heat to agitate a tick.

- Utilize barrier treatments as an added layer of defense, since we treat areas where ticks breed.

Q: What are some of the worst things that can happen when a pet or person doesn't get a tick bite/attachment taken care of?

A: Ticks often go unnoticed and can cause itchy, uncomfortable bites.

Tick bites can transmit a variety of diseases. Lyme Disease is transmitted by tick bites (deer ticks and black legged ticks). Initial symptoms can be similar to the flu- fever, headache, fatigue and sometimes have a bulls eye rash. If untreated, can develop into more long-term debilitating health issues such as joint swelling, chronic pain, nerve pain, and numbness and tingling in hands and feet, and irregular heart beat.

Sherry Dawson is the owner and director of operations of Mosquito Joe of Southcentral PA. A pet owner, she also works as a physical therapist. To learn more, visit facebook.com/mosquitojoeofsouthcentralPA.

Smucker introduces net neutrality bill

On Monday, April 8, Lancaster County Congressman Lloyd Smucker introduced a bill outlawing blocking and throttling of internet content to ensure the internet is a free and open space for consumers.

The Open Internet Preservation Act would amend Title I of the Communications Act to prohibit blocking and throttling of the internet. The legislation would codify the new transparency requirements adopted by the FCC's 2017 Internet Freedom Rule to promote internet openness and growth. These FCC requirements are the same ones that have guided the growth of the internet from 1996 until 2015.

"The internet should be a free space," Smucker said. "Commonsense regulation can be helpful and protect consumers, but oppressive federal strong-arming benefits no one, especially not the internet."

The Open Internet Preservation Act would also:

- Define reasonable network management practices to reduce or mitigate the effects of network congestion or quality

- Grants the FCC the authority to manage transparency and consumer protection rules

- Preempts state law to ensure a uniform standard nationwide

Ensuring freedom for the internet and to broadband providers leads to faster internet speeds and improved access to the internet. Internet speeds rose nearly 36 percent in 2018 following the elimination of the 2015 Title II regulations, which restored the Federal Trade Commission's ability to protect broadband subscribers from unfair and deceptive practices.

The lack of rural broadband access is also a major issue in many communities across the country, especially in Pennsylvania. Rural

communities like Lancaster and York Counties feel the impact of burdensome regulations the strongest since they are the most underserved in terms of high-speed broadband access. Lack of broadband access impacts the economy and limits access to health care as well as educational opportunities.

The Open Internet Preservation Act would encourage expanding access to high-speed internet for smaller companies who may find it more difficult to expand and innovate when facing significant regulatory burdens.

"When we encourage competition through the free market, we encourage business and individual growth as well as affordable, accessible internet for all Americans," said Smucker.

Submitted by the offices of U.S. Rep. Lloyd Smucker (R-PA)

Alzheimer's report encourages brief cognitive assessments for seniors

Findings from the Alzheimer's Association 2019 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures report released March 5 show that — despite a strong belief among seniors and primary care physicians that brief cognitive assessments are important — only half of seniors are being assessed for thinking and memory issues, and much fewer receive routine assessments.

In addition to providing an in-depth look at the latest statistics on Alzheimer's prevalence, incidence, mortality, costs of care, and impact on caregivers nationally and in Pennsylvania, the new Facts and Figures report examines awareness, attitudes, and utilization of brief cognitive assessments among seniors age 65 and older and primary care physicians. A brief cognitive assessment is a short evaluation for cognitive impairment performed by a health care provider that can take several forms - including asking a patient about cognitive concerns, directly observing a patient's interactions, seeking input from family and friends or using short verbal or written tests that can be administered easily in the clinical setting. An evaluation of cognitive function is required component of the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit, but findings from the report show that only 1 in 3 seniors are aware these visits should include this assessment.

The report found that just one in seven seniors (16 percent) say they receive regular cognitive assessments for memory or thinking issues during routine health checkups, compared with blood pressure (91 percent), cholesterol (83 percent), vaccinations (80 percent), hearing or vision (73 percent), diabetes (66 percent) and cancer (61 percent).

The Facts and Figures report also reveals a troubling disconnect between seniors and primary care physicians regarding who they believe is responsible for initiating these assessments and reticence from seniors in discussing their concerns.

The survey found that while half of all seniors (51 percent) are aware of changes in their cognitive abilities - including changes in their ability to think, understand or remember - only four in 10 (40 percent) have ever discussed these concerns with a health care provider, and fewer than one in seven seniors (15 percent) report having

ever brought up cognitive concerns on their own.

Instead, most seniors (93 percent) say they trust their doctor to recommend testing for thinking or memory problems if needed. Yet fewer than half of primary care physicians (47 percent) say it is their standard protocol to assess all patients age 65 and older for cognitive impairment. Only one in four seniors (26 percent) report having a physician ever ask them if they have any concerns about their cognitive function without seniors bringing it up first.

"The findings indicate there are missed opportunities for seniors to discuss cognitive concerns and problems in the exam room," said Jacobs. "We hope the report will encourage seniors and physicians both to be more proactive in discussing cognitive health during the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit and other routine exams."

Nearly all physicians said the decision to assess patients for cognitive impairment is driven, in part, by reports of symptoms or requests from patients, family members and caregivers. Physicians who choose not to assess cognition cite lack of symptoms or complaints from a patient (68 percent), lack of time during a patient visit (58 percent) and patient resistance (57 percent) as primary factors.

In addition, most physicians

say they welcome more information about assessments, including which tools to use (96 percent), guidance on next steps when cognitive problems are indicated (94 percent) and steps for implementing assessments efficiently into practice (91 percent).

The Alzheimer's Association is working to help educate physicians on best practices for conducting brief cognitive assessments and to ensure that all seniors understand what to expect from an assessment, as well as how to navigate an Alzheimer's diagnosis and care planning when needed," said Jacobs. "As the number of individuals living with Alzheimer's continues to increase, we need to detect the disease early and give individuals the best opportunity to plan for the future."

By the Numbers

- 94 percent of primary care physicians consider it important to assess all patients age 65 and older for cognitive impairment.

- 82 percent of seniors believe it is important to have their thinking and memory checked.

- 50 percent - average number of senior patients that primary care physicians say they assess.

See more updated Alzheimer's Statistics at lititzrecord.com and for more information visit alz.org or call 800.272.3900.

Letters Policy

Readers are encouraged to submit letters to the editor. Letters should pertain to public issues or events. All letters are subject to editing, and should be typed or printed legibly. To be considered for publication, letters must be signed and include complete address and daytime telephone number for verification. Letters that do not follow these guidelines may not be published.

Letters must be received by 5 p.m. on Monday for publication the following Thursday. Send letters to:

Letters to the Editor
Lititz Record Express
1 E. Main St., P.O. Box 527
Ephrata, PA 17522