



5 ideas

WHAT PEOPLE SHOULD BE TALKING ABOUT

In this section, we present a few of the major issues that have come up in the public discourse in the past week. We end each subject with a question to encourage you to consider your own opinions about these issues and how they affect our community. Please take a moment and contribute to the dialogue.

[1]

WAR IS HELL

Lance Cpl. John McClellan, 20, of Columbia, was shot in the head by a sniper in Haditha, Iraq, while serving with the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Echo Company. According to his physicians, McClellan, a 2004 graduate of Hickman High School, is recovering surprisingly quickly. As of Thursday, he had regained full consciousness and was breathing on his own. He is now being treated at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., where his family has joined him. The McClellans said their son does not remember being hit.

Meanwhile, since Monday, when eight American soldiers were killed, more than a dozen soldiers were killed around Baghdad — the highest four-day U.S. toll in the Iraqi capital since the 2003 invasion. Top generals have warned that Iraq is on the verge of civil war and that troops must remain until at least next spring.

How does the death or injury of soldiers who are also your neighbors affect your view of the war?

[2]

HOME DRUG TESTS

Parents in Centralia can now gain a little more knowledge about their children's habits, courtesy of free at-home drug-testing kits. The Chamber of Commerce has paired with distributor TestMyTeen.com to give out about 260 free vouchers to doctors offices. The test is designed to detect drugs in urine and checks for the 10 most frequently used illegal drugs, including cocaine, marijuana, ecstasy and opiates.

Chamber Director Ginny Zoellers said she contacted TestMyTeen.com after a rash of arrests for drug-related crimes in August in an attempt to curb drug use. Darin Ford, superintendent of Centralia schools, said he will request more free vouchers from the company.

Some medical professionals question the accuracy of at-home drug tests because they are easy to tamper with and parents are not trained to use them. Pediatrician Sharon Levy said talking with kids is more effective and doesn't pose the same trust issues.

How do you handle the issue of drugs with your children?

[3]

MOURNING IN PENNSYLVANIA

On Monday, Carl Charles Roberts IV entered a one-room Amish school in Nickel Mines, Pa., asked all the boys and four adult women to leave the room, then shot 10 girls and himself. Five girls, ages 7 to 13, died. Police said Roberts, who also died, may have planned to sexually abuse his victims, but he did not carry out the plan.

It was the third school shooting in one week. On Sept. 27, a man took six female students hostage inside a classroom at Platte Canyon High School in Bayley, Colo. He sexually abused some of them, and he killed 16-year-old Emily Keyes and himself. Two days later, a 15-year-old boy shot and killed John Klang, the principal of a rural school near Cazenovia, Wis.

President Bush has called a meeting this week with Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and Education Secretary Margaret Spellings to address school security.

Do you think school shootings are random acts of insanity or symptomatic of something else?

[4]

BRADY'S COMMON BELIEFS

Three MU students are asking that MU removed Thomas Brady's name from the student center that is currently being expanded on Rollins Street.

Brady, who worked at MU from 1926 to 1964, was MU's first Guggenheim Fellow. In 1949, while a high-level administrator, Brady recommended to University President Frederick Middlebush that suspected homosexual students should be investigated by the disciplinary committee and referred to a psychiatrist. If confirmed to be gay, the student had the choice to either agree to be treated or be expelled.

MU officials say it is unlikely the students' demand will be met and that Brady was only following the laws of the time and shouldn't be judged by modern standards. Brady was honored for his involvement in expanding student health services and the College of Education and his advocacy of fair admission standards for all, said Cathy Scroggs, vice chancellor for student affairs.

Do you think the student center should retain Brady's name?

[5]

TROUBLE FOR THE GOP

Rep. Mark Foley, R-Fla., resigned from the House on Sept. 29 after ABC reported that he sent sexually explicit e-mails and instant messages to teenage Congressional pages. The House ethics committee voted to set up a subcommittee to investigate improper conduct between members of Congress and pages.

House speaker J. Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., has drawn criticism for his handling of the crisis. He is suspected of having known about Foley's behavior earlier and failing to report it. Hastert's office said it first heard of concerns about Foley in fall 2005, but a former aide said the office was informed at least two years ago.

Hastert, who is running for re-election in Illinois, accepted responsibility for the scandal but said he would not resign. If re-elected in November, he said he seeks to retain his position in the House leadership. Meanwhile, just five weeks before the November general election, other Republican candidates seem to be distancing themselves from Hastert.

How will this scandal affect your vote in November?

— Isabelle Roughol

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

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