



## Has the city covered its bases with the skate park?

— Editor,

I read where a skate park is possibly in the works for the city. I believe there needs to be recreation available for kids but I have one concern that I've not seen addressed to date.

A few years ago the City of Oologah removed a large slide from a park area because of lawsuit concerns if a child happened to get injured on it. It was not long after that, I noticed the big, decades-old slide at Claremore Lake Park was also removed. My son, (now grown) spent many hours on that particular slide, and I felt was never in any danger.

With the inherent dangers that are actually the draw in a skate park and the very litigious society that we find ourselves living in, I'm wondering who gets sued when a youngster tries going down a banister on a skate board, breaks his neck and is paralyzed for life.

A few years ago we chalked it up to one of the "tragedies" in life that we should've known better than to be doing in the first place. Today it is different. Society tends not to take the blame for its own actions, instead blaming others for our risk-taking. To be sure however, a lawsuit will be filed because "someone" didn't do "something" right to protect the public from themselves.

If you think I'm being ridiculous, does anyone remember the woman that spilled hot coffee in her lap while driving out of a McDonalds drive through and then sued McDonalds for selling her hot coffee? She and her lawyers collected millions on something that any sane person would've said, "Well, I should've known better in the first place."

I do not particularly oppose a skate park but I do believe the city had better have all the bases covered when it opens one.

Jack Cumbee, Claremore

The 'black' side of coal mining

Editor,

Although the weather may not cooperate, it would be a eye-opening drive to head out on Highway 88 six miles past Rogers State Univeresity to see what Phoenix Mining does with its pursuit of digging coal that doesn't even warm our homes here in Claremore.

The coal-blackened road caused from the trucks exiting the mining area doesn't quite cover all of the new cracks that are surfacing from the weight and quantity of those same trucks.

When the wind blows, and lately it has been blowing a lot, the black soot can be seen all over everything that is downwind. I'm not sure what the health consequences are, but the cattle across the road are surely getting that dust into their system and forwarding it to whomever eats beef from there.

The land on the East side of 88 where the mine is has been completely denuded of trees and such. Good for digging coal, but bad for global warming. In addition, coal is a big factor in global warming no matter how you try to cleanly burn it.

The dynamite explosions are getting louder and seemingly more frequent for those of us that live in Canyon Oaks or nearby. My cabinets are separating from my wall in my kitchen and my pictures fall down on occasion. As a decorated Vietnam Veteran, the explosions that close are certainly unnerving coming at night and during the day. I never received any notice of any kind that this would happen or be sustained for the period of time they have been mining there.

My tax dollars and yours will have to pay for the roads that will need to be fixed.

My kids and grandkids and yours will pay for the continuation of using coal for energy needs when, as we all know now, wind resources in Oklahoma will outperform fossil fuels as an Energy source in the

very near future. In fact, the only good I can see coming from mining this area is the lining of someone's pocket with someone else's misery.

Why, exactly, is this being done?

TD Miller, Claremore

Let's talk energy security

Editor,

With energy prices rising and instability in the Middle East, national energy policy is on my mind and many people's minds in Oklahoma.

While many discuss energy independence, I am more concerned about energy security. A large part of that is ensuring that we are able to obtain energy from a number of different sources.

Alternative fuels such as ethanol, wind, and solar should certainly be explored and used where practical.

Using our ingenuity we should be able to develop fuels that help us supplement the oil and natural gas we currently use. Traditional fossil fuels will be vital to our nation's energy portfolio for the foreseeable future, but responsible development of advanced alternatives should also be encouraged. This is both good for our environment and good for our energy security.

I am opposed, however, to government mandates that a certain percentage of our energy must come from these sources.

Congressman Boren has always been a leader on these issues and I hope he will continue to do so. A realistic perspective on energy by those in Congress will help to ensure that we will have a secure energy future.

Russell Turner, Stilwell

Liked the education story

Editor,

Two articles by Joy Hampton appeared in the Sunday, Feb. 10, edition of the Progress. One was on juvenile detention facilities in Rogers county, the other on the ongoing talks about merit pay for teachers. I was very impressed with both.

They were well written, appear to have been well researched, and had lots of good information.

The article on merit pay was especially impressive because it was from such a neutral position. That is tough to do with such a politically loaded subject.

Tom Anderson, Claremore

It's NOT time

for a lawsuit

Editor,

I would like to respond to your "Viewpoint – Time for a Lawsuit" as published on February 6, 2008.

The facts are American Dream Coalition President Victor Orta II, the National Coalition of Latino Clergy Inc. , other Leaders in the Tulsa Hispanic community and the media have caused "families to not to get medical care for the children" of illegal immigrants by misleading the facts of HB 1804.

Section 8 of HB 1804 requires every public agency to verify the lawful presence of aliens aged 14 years or older, but exempts

1. Emergency health care treatment or other public health services.
2. For programs, services, or assistance such as soup kitchens, crisis counseling and intervention, and short-term shelter specified by the United States Attorney General
  - a. deliver in-kind services at the community level, including through public or private nonprofit agencies,
  - b. do not condition the provision of assistance, the amount of assistance provided, or the cost of

assistance provided on the income or resources of the individual recipient, and  
c. are necessary for the protection of life or safety.

Again the FACTS do not agree that "the law made potential felons out of church leaders" unless said church leaders plan to transport, conceal, harbor or shelter an alien knowingly and in reckless disregard of the alien's illegal status for the purpose of assisting the alien break state and federal law.

If the Federal Government were doing its job, there would not have been any need for HB 1804.

Have you forgotten that every employer is required to have an "I-9" on each of its employees?

HB 1804 gives federal law meat at a local level. "Hardship on employers"; are you referring to the fact that Oklahoma employers are required to verify the legal status of its employees, actually pay a fair wage or that employers in Oklahoma can no longer exploit illegal immigrants, avoiding paying federal and state taxes for those employees, and have to compete on a level playing field? "E-Verify" is a free and simple to use Web-based system that electronically verifies the employment eligibility of newly hired employees. I refer you to <http://www.uscis.gov>

A citizen as defined in the dictionary is: A person owing loyalty to and entitled by birth or naturalization to the protection of a state or nation. Which citizen rights are you referring to?

My daughter-in-law is going through the naturalization process, should we disregard the expense and time she and others like her must endure to enjoy the rights and privileges you and I enjoy? What a punch in the gut it would be to her and others if this bill were to be over turned.

Commend the Chambers, I don't think so!!!!

Steven Bowman, Claremore

Thanks, Frank

Editor,

Since the Robson PAC was opened, my wife and I have seen many but not all of the productions there. Just to mention a couple, "Smoke on the Mountain" and the recent "Tribute to Woody Guthry". These programs are second to none, well done in a magnificent facility, and a great addition to Claremore's arts and humanities. The people of Claremore, especially young adults, who have not seen any of the productions put on there, are missing a great opportunity and I feel the citizens of Claremore need to wake up to what a wonderful PAC we have, that so many other towns would give their eye-teeth to have. Check out the future presentations, go see one, and you will agree we have a jewel here in Claremore that is as of yet mostly undiscovered. Thanks Frank!

Dale & Carolyn Peterson

Waterboarding is illegal

Editor,

Although I never receive any response from Mr. Jones, the three of you are legislators that represent the area I live in and I expect you to listen to my concerns as your constituent. As the four of us are human beings and, because we choose to, we all adhere to a creed of laws that we deem necessary for the survival of our species and to keep some level of order in our lives and others. Collectively, y'all represent me in making and keeping these laws. How can I be wrong in seeing that the actions the President of the United States has taken to allow us to torture anyone are illegal and immoral?

Can our President violate laws or treaties as he sees fit? Is this not the same as the technique used and authorized by Japanese Officers in WWII that were convicted and sentenced for allowing that form of torture? Are we allowing those that oppose us, as Ghandi would say, "to become our teachers?" How can we promote Democracy and flaunt Human Rights? Who's definition of torture allows waterboarding?

Is not the worst characteristic of an enemy the way he treats his enemies?

I urge all of you to promote, encourage, and support the impeachment of George Bush on this violation of the US Constitution.

When the world looks to us, what positive value can they see in actions from our leaders that allow this and support this?

TD Miller, Claremore

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