

Letters to the editor

Cancer survivor thankful for care

As 2013 begins, I look back on 2012 with thankfulness. A breast cancer diagnosis in February started me on an unexpected journey.

With a lot of emphasis being placed on hospitals in the news recently, I want to publicly thank all of the Lancaster General Health staff I encountered during the past year.

Special thanks to the Susan H. Arnold Center for Breast Health navigator, the Hematology/Oncology chemotherapy infusion nurses, the LGH outpatient surgery staff and the Cancer Center radiation therapists.

The level of professional, but very caring treatment I received was excellent, and there is no question that my recovery was aided by these individuals and their positive attitudes.

I cannot adequately express my thanks to Dr. Daleela Dodge, Dr. Shanthi Sivendran, and Dr. Jeffrey Esheman for their knowledge, skills and compassion in establishing, performing and monitoring my care. I am so very grateful.

With the blessings from God, prayers, support and help from some very good people, I am a survivor.

Happy New Year !

Patricia White, Columbia

Does Hempfield need a graffiti course?

Well, it had to happen -- a graffiti art project on a rear tower of Hempfield High School.

If my memory is correct, one of the school's freshmen students was caught, at night, spraying graffiti on a garage. His loving parents paid for the damage, and one of the Bright Lights of Hempfield High School thought it'd be just ducky if the school had a course on graffiti.

I went freelance in 1965. Commercial and fine art, air brushing, illustration and so on. In my travels, I met Richard Ressel, the long-time art teacher at Lancaster Catholic High School. Late in each school year, he honored me by inviting me to speak to his class.

Dick is a man of many talents -- gifted teacher and watercolorist among them. The last time Hempfield allowed the graffiti phenom to surface, we had a good laugh and forgot about it.

Well, it had to happen -- and it did. The Hempfield School Board is being snookered into a \$2,500 venture which makes no sense. Even so, "the district is mindful that some residents might not like the appearance of graffiti -- even approved graffiti -- on the school." Well, duh.

If this travesty goes forward, I ask the newspaper to print a two-column color photo of the results.

Ralph Lindsey, Johnstown

Why support a polluting plant?

Why give a penny -- or taxpayer millions -- to anyone who threatens to increase Pennsylvania's Air Quality Action Days?

Claiming to help farmers, chicken-seller Perdue instead plans to pollute farms, air, land, water and food across the Susquehanna Valley with emissions from a taxpayer-subsidized, industrial, soybean-crushing factory.

This newspaper reports the factory "would emit such a large quantity of the air pollutant hexane that the company would have to pay for the reduction of smog-producing gases elsewhere."

Gov. Tom Corbett has already awarded \$8.75 million to Perdue for this factory designed to dump hexane -- a hazardous neurotoxin -- into the air in towns and cities across south-central Pennsylvania -- including Harrisburg.

Why do so many officials keep avoiding the toxic truth about hexane? Must the public boycott Perdue to be heard and save even those politicians responsible for this mess?

A short, new YouTube video explains more. Search for this on Google: "boycott Perdue." Click on the small photo containing the word "Perdue."

Ray Wallace, York

Going off 'milk cliff' isn't so bad

A frequent bugaboo of the "fiscal cliff" debacle was the "milk cliff" -- the threat of milk price doubling, if Congress failed to extend dairy subsidies. Parents were forgoing other necessities, because their children "had to have milk."

Most industries would gladly give up their tax loopholes for that kind of product loyalty. But this one is totally undeserved.

Consumption of dairy products, laden with saturated fats, cholesterol, hormones and drugs elevates the risk of diabetes, heart disease and cancer. This is particularly critical during childhood years, when dietary flaws become lifelong addictions.

A study of 12,829 children by Harvard Medical School found that drinking cow's milk leads to weight gain.

Several proteins in cow's milk can thicken mucus secretions leading to respiratory problems in children.

Most African-Americans and Asian-Americans suffer from cramping and diarrhea because they lack the enzyme to digest lactose in cow's milk.

The good news is that green leafy vegetables and legumes supply all the calcium and proteins touted in cow's milk, without the excess calories and other yucky factors noted. Every supermarket offers a huge line of dairy-free milks, cheeses, and ice creams made from healthy nuts and grains.

This is why USDA's current Dietary Guidelines for Americans shunt dairy (and meat) off the recommended plate of vegetables, fruits, and grains.

Cow's milk is produced for bovine, not human, babies. Let's give our kids a healthy start.

John Hollen, East Lampeter Township