

## COMMENTARY

## Readers sound off

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This edition of Florida-Weekly marks the 25th week of production. Our fiesty little paper is a new venture, or more accurately an **adventure** in storytelling, reporting and advertising — that thick mix of ingredients than can make either a great publication, or a piece of knowing, calculated huxterism.

That's an opinion about the news business, as they call it, and it's my job to write opinions every week. We aim to be the former, not the latter.

So imagine my gratification when some of you write back.

There are other letters, ones that came before, some critical, some sage, and I confess, I let them go, because I hadn't thought of doing a "letters" column.

Write again, and I'll keep your letter. And in all likelihood, we'll put it in ink before long.

Roger Williams

Roger

I enjoyed your column in the latest Florida Weekly (Sept. 6 - "I'm okay, you're okay"). I want you to know that I'm not one of those who ignore our service people when I encounter them. I guess I'm different because I was in the service. I always take the time to talk to the soldiers when I see them in the airports and on leave. I have even bought a few beers for them. We (Americans) speak about the WWII generation as the greatest genera-

tion, and I always counter with the statement that today's people in the service are the next greatest generation!

Unfortunately, today's Americans are not of the same caliber as those of WWII. This greatly bothers me as I am afraid that without the support that they (soldiers) deserve we are eventually going to lose this war. I pray that America wakes up and rallies to the cause, because without the support we are doomed. I look forward to reading your future columns.

— Daniel J. Endrizal, III, Esq., P.A., Ft Myers

Mr. Endrizal,

Thanks much for the note.

*I never know how to judge Americans, or the different generations of them. Each generation seems to get stuck with a different challenge — some more dramatic than others, like World War II. And like everybody else, I always wonder how WE would have stood up to THOSE challenges. I'm inclined to think pretty well, but I might be kidding myself.*

*Historically, maybe the greatest generation is the one that simply got over the Civil War. The people who fought that bloody war were a really tough bunch, but just getting over the damn war — no drama, no glory, all the demoralizing results — that must have been just as rugged, maybe more.*

*The country held, and that says a lot about all of them, both South and North.*

*Of course, we come from softer, easier times — more food, air conditioning, mosquito control, cars, and the kind of comfort that gets scary, because it makes you so dependent.*

*You can tell I'm getting old (mid 50s now);*

*I'm starting to be less optimistic. But I have little kids, and I want to pass some optimism to them, as well as some sense of how to deal with a future that I think will involve a cataclysm or two that we haven't seen the likes of yet (some idiot's going to blow up an entire American city or two sometime in their adult lives, or do something analogous, I figure).*

*I always try to buy somebody a drink or say hello too, and like you, it comes purely from my own several-year service in the Marine Corps, where I was never shot at by anybody trying to hit me.*

*I see these kids, and I see everybody else around them relying on them and not saying thank you, and that bothers me.*

*Well, thanks again for writing.*

Roger

Roger

Just wanted to tell you that I really enjoyed your column this week (Aug. 30, "Who Are You?") — very funny, clever, and well-done!

P.S. I agree with you on #18 — you are, indeed, married to the finest writer in Florida — lucky you!

— Stephanie Davis, Fort Myers

Stephanie,

*You're absolutely right, and I take that as a lovely compliment from someone who can make literate silk out of a sodden social scene, with wit, affection and a whole Oprahload of insight and understanding.*

*Of course, writing's not the only thing Amy's the best at.*

Roger

Mr. Williams

Liked the article dated July 5, 2007 "In Other Words"...only one discrepancy... Dr. Eileen (Schwartz) doesn't really get paid that much... I do her billing and collections and because many faulty billing companies she

trusted to take care of her accounts-receivable did so horribly, there were times she ended with NO salary!!!

— Flagirl, via e-mail

Dear Flagirl,

*That really takes the cake. Dr. Bob Schwartz is ignored and criticized for saving lives at the AIDS Treatment Center, where he takes no salary so he can keep helping patients — and meanwhile the Lee County Health Department won't pay him what the state has set aside for tests the Center had to fund — and Dr. Eileen is struggling, too, because of bad bookkeepers. I wonder if they work for Lee County government.*

Roger

Roger

The python you pictured in the (Aug. 2) article is not a Burmese. It is a Carpet python (*Morelia spilota*).

— Eric Roscoe

Eric,

*Can you eat them, too, or do you just make rugs out of them?*

Roger

Dear Mr. Williams,

You really have to shape up, pal. You're too maudlin, you're prone to preaching, and you're having too good a time. This is serious business, column writing, and you're acting like a truant from school.

Start paying attention. Suffer a little more. Don't be so damn cavalier. Show up when the bell rings with something to say.

— via the conscience.

Dear Conscience,

*You're right, and I'll try. But can I wait until next week?*

Roger ■

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