

our opinion

Township should follow its own zoning ordinance

Glen Arbor residents were surprised and a few were shocked to learn that what's good for the goose is exempt for the gander.

Residents have been up in arms over the new Glen Arbor Township sign, which seems out-of-touch with a community that embraces a more natural look for its commercialism. In case you haven't driven through town recently, it's the sign that, as one resident put it, looks like something out of Gatlinburg.

Now no offense to that gateway city to the Smokies, as Leelanau has learned much from its neon lights and gaudy structures. We've learned what we don't want to become.

The sign bought by the Township Board moves decidedly that direction. It's big and loud, with words streaming across. It's too much of a presence during the day and obnoxious at night.

Residents who learn after the fact about township decisions they dislike did what they always do. They turned out to protest.

To the credit of the Glen Arbor Township Board, trustees listened respectfully and turned off the streaming letters, at least for now.

The \$26,000 "investment" remains, but is now dormant.

We've talked to some folks who see nothing wrong with the sign, and many more who are itching to put it on Craig's List.

"An infection has started in Glen Arbor, and we do not want to see it become an epidemic," is how resident Charles Patton put it. He provided a petition with 120 signatures opposing the sign.

We were comforted by the words of trustee Don Lewis, who stepped to the plate.

"I apologize and am motivated to work harder to find a solution."

That's leadership.

Residents wanted to know if the sign met the township Zoning Ordinance, and were told by supervisor Peter VanNort that, indeed, the zoning administrator had ruled it legal.

Turns out there wasn't much to rule on. One portion of the ordinance exempts the township from ... everything.

The question of whether such a get-out-of-jail-free card is legal goes beyond our training. But we do know that the basis for zoning in Michigan relies on the "health, safety and welfare" of the general public.

For that reason and to follow the tenets of good governance, Glen Arbor Township should meet the provisions of its own sign ordinance.

Is justice slow or inept?

In the case of William F. Minore, is justice blind? Is it just slow? Or is it inept?

We are all judges of our justice system. In the case of Mr. Minore, the one thing you can say for sure is that justice is slow.

So when does slow turn to inept?

Mr. Minore was indicted in a state court for robbing Huntington Bank in Empire on Sept. 7, 2016 — roughly two years ago. County Prosecutor Joseph T. Hubbell won authority on appeal to enter evidence of two other bank robberies in Benzie County during the Leelanau trial.

But with a trial date approaching, the U.S. Department of Justice in April intervened, asking Leelanau County to yield to federal authority. That made sense, as the feds planned to seek convictions for all three robberies in one trial rather than holding separate trials in Leelanau and Benzie counties.

The case went astray when a U.S. Magistrate ruled that not enough evidence had been presented to bind Mr. Minore over. He later was convicted of possession of a Taser in Grand Traverse County, but has been free since.

The feds are supposedly ready to pounce with a grand jury indictment. Or not. Who knows?

We do know that it's not fair to Mr. Minore or the residents of Leelanau County to let this case linger.

A question to our federal employees in Grand Rapids: Can you hear us in Leelanau County?

Privilege of Response

Persons whose judgment or conduct are questioned in this newspaper may respond at reasonable length and be assured their response will be published. Persons who believe they have been unfairly treated in this newspaper are always invited to telephone, or to make a written response.

Letters welcomed...

The Leelanau Enterprise welcomes Letters to the Editor. Letters must include the author's name, full address and telephone number. When faxed, mailed or hand delivered, a signature is also required.

Letters to the Editor are accepted in three forms. They are:

- Letters of interest to the public and well-being of Leelanau County. Please limit such letters to 300 words in length to avoid editing.

- Thank you letters, which generally offer praise to individuals, groups and businesses for contributions toward special events, are limited to 100 words in length.

- Candidate letters are limited to 100 words in length, and will be published as space allows.

- And letters for and against ballot issues will be published. Submissions longer than 100 words may be edited as space provides and to avoid duplication.

We may withhold or edit letters whose content is questionable or cannot be substantiated.

The Enterprise also accepts Readers Forum submissions. Forums are limited to 500 words in length. Please include background information explaining the author's involvement or expertise in the subject discussed, along with other information required of letters to the editor.

The names and addresses of letter and forum writers will be published in all but extreme cases.

Mail letters to 7200 E. Duck Lake Road, Lake Leelanau, MI 49653; fax to 231-256-7705, or email to Editor@LeelanauNews.com.

Candidate embodies fairness, justice

To the editor:

On Nov. 6, vote for Marian Kromkowski for Leelanau County Probate Judge.

Several years ago, I attended a public meeting Marian Kromkowski moderated. Those in attendance spoke with conviction. The debate grew heated. Throughout, Marian moved calmly from speaker to speaker, sharing the microphone in her hand. She ensured every voice was heard; every position was articulated; and every speaker was respected.

Marian embodies fairness and justice in action. Her leadership is exemplary. Her legal and court experience span nearly 40 years. She is singularly well-qualified to serve as our Judge of Probate. Vote Marian Kromkowski on the non-partisan ballot.

Joan Hunault
 Deer Path Trail
 Suttons Bay

Prayers work; Stephanie's cancer test is negative

To the editor:

I want to say thank you to Jesus Christ for helping my daughter Stephanie defeat cancer in her life. Her last test showed no cancer anywhere! Will it come back maybe, maybe not, Lazarus didn't live for ever either. The important thing to realize is that all the prayers of all the people that prayed for her, were answered. Praise God and thank you!

Stephen Schlueter
 E. Solem Rd.
 Sutton's Bay

**More Letters,
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World of adoption filled with love

Recent opportunities I've had to talk with folks in Leelanau County who have connected with long-lost birth family members have created a special opportunity for me.



A column by Jen Murphy

These stories have created a space for me to reflect on the experience of someone close to me who never made connection with her birth family, and to my knowledge, never made an attempt to discover who they were. They also led me to ask myself why.

At the age of three, my mom was adopted. To this day, she has never told me this herself. Actually, she hid the fact that she was adopted so well that it wasn't until a few years ago as I was packing up things from her house of many decades that I found the envelope. It was taped shut and simply labeled, "Private." Because I was helping my sisters go through all of her belongings, including paperwork and financials, I opened the envelope. To my surprise, it contained an adoption agreement.

The papers outlined the adoptive parents' names and gave a brief synopsis of the birth mother's situation. This young woman had tried, during the first few months of my mother's life, to keep her daughter, but she couldn't manage the responsibilities of motherhood at that time. And so, at the age of three, my mother left an orphanage to live with her forever family.

Adoption wasn't something people talked about in the 1920s when my mother's unwed mother discovered she was pregnant, or something my mother ever felt comfortable talking about years later. And, based on my conversations with people like Becky Hemmingsen and William Giegerich, it became clear people didn't talk much about these things in the 1950s, 1960s, or 1970s either.

Hemmingsen and Giegerich, unlike my mom's birth family, went to great lengths to find their children who they had parted with so many

years ago. And these reconnections are inspiring, their stories were a pleasure to tell.

As for my mother, she never talked about her adoption. Why? I will never know. But one thing is clear: Her sense of family is fierce.

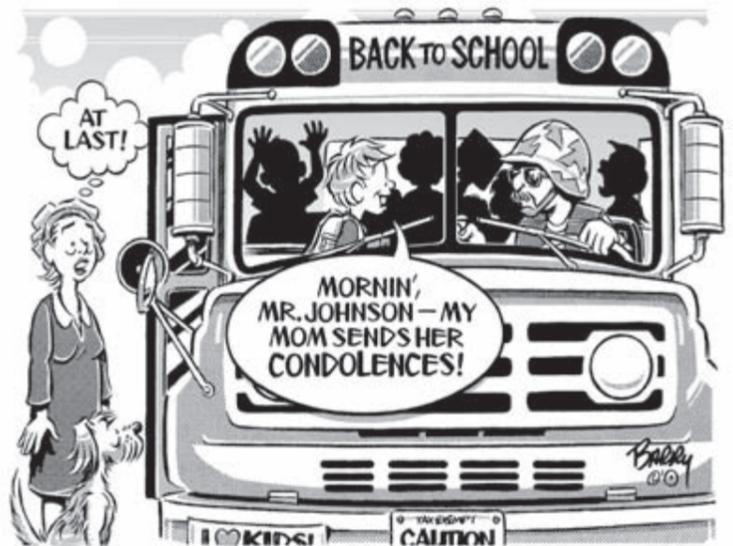
In fact, an often repeated phrase I heard from her while I was growing up was, "blood is thicker than water." This statement typically made its way into conversation in her attempts to solidify family loyalty about some situation. The funny - and ironic - thing is that her definition of "blood" must have been different than everyone else's, because her actions, and her life story, illustrate an inclusive sense of love that runs beyond the stuff that flows through our veins.

She found a loving adoptive family. Raised as an only child, she was so bonded to her cousin that she has frequently said she was closer to him than any brother she could have had. And clearly, there was no "blood" relation there. And coincidentally, that cousin / brother ended up adopting his two sons.

Once my mother married my father, she became a mother of four. And she was also the one who most strongly supported one of my sisters who adopted her daughter - I actually suspect that's her favorite grandchild.

Today, nothing makes her happier than hearing the voices of her daughters or one of her many grandchildren. All because of love.

To me, that's where the stories of the reunited parents and children intersect with my mom's - the driving force of love. A love that's so wide it would love a child who needed a home, a love so wide it would go to any lengths to find and reconnect with someone after decades, a love that has nothing to do with blood. It's a love that's so wide it's unlimited - a love this world needs more.



HEARD around LEELANAU

"It's about being out in nature, going slow, and getting to know what's around you."

— Leelanau County mushroom hunter Eric LaPaugh, in describing mushroom hunting on the peninsula. Coverage can be found in Section Two, including information about a coming seminar on the topic.