

The Capital

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Our say

The next round: It's Johnson vs. Callahan

CONGRATULATIONS to Dean Johnson and Dennis Callahan, who yesterday handily won their primary bids for mayor in, respectively, well-fought Republican and Democratic races.

Given the personalities of the two mayoral victors we expect a vigorous race that will be judged on issues instead of personalities. Both Mr. Johnson and Mr. Callahan are articulate, intelligent candidates who should offer voters much more than the character issues that clouded the Republican primary race. We look forward to substantive debate.

For Alderman Terrie DeGraff, it was a stunning blow to lose to a candidate who didn't become a Republican until 12 weeks before the election. It is an even greater blow after her hard work on the campaign trail and her 12 years as an alderman to be undone by two ill-fated moves: Her decision to conduct a negatively bitter campaign and a decision by civic leaders downtown and in Eastport to do anything to defeat her. It was more of a victory for Mr. Johnson's organizers, who delivered a 4-to-1 margin of votes in Ward 1, than it was for him.

For Alderman Carl Snowden, yesterday was his first political defeat and will put an end to 12 years in public office. He was able to muster the city's black support — an important endorsement from his community — but, unfortunately, the black community didn't deliver the number of votes he expected and needed to overcome his opponent.

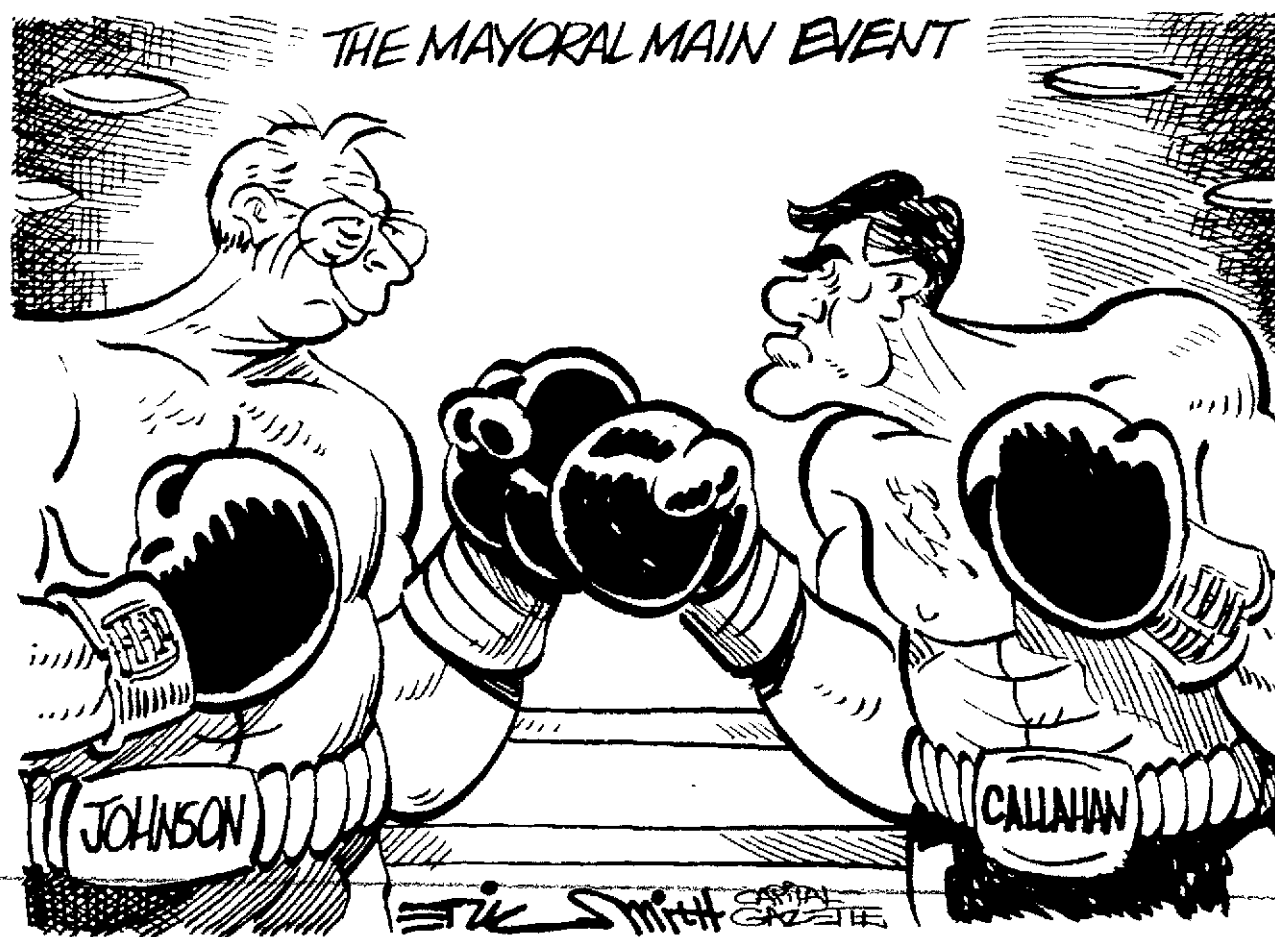
Mr. Snowden's disappointment over voter turnout is ours, too. Voters who recognize the importance of registering should equally recognize the importance of voting. Elections have been won in the city by three votes, so every ballot matters. With only 33 percent of all voters casting ballots yesterday, a lot of people simply didn't care about an election that probably offered the most choices and the most differences of any primary in city history.

While the Republican primary was difficult to predict, Mr. Callahan's victory was not. In retrospect, Democratic voters concluded that all in all he did a good job as mayor, and, not seeing any negativism in the campaign, they were willing to forgive his arrogance in office. But they were not willing to forget Mr. Snowden's civil right activities earlier in his political career. The polls showed that Mr. Snowden was doomed as soon as his longtime ally entered the race.

Although they have both suffered their first loss in a city election, Mr. Snowden and Ms. DeGraff are to be credited with their dedication to public office and their intense campaigns to lead this city into the 21st century. Both served the city well.

In the aldermanic races, we offer particular congratulations to incumbent Samuel Gilmer, who persuaded Ward 3's Democratic voters that it wasn't time for a change. And, in the most bizarre city race, in Ward 6 Wayne Turner got the GOP nomination even though he has resigned as alderman. It's now up to the Republican Central Committee to pick a new candidate.

And, now, on to the general election.



Readers' views

Thanks, people

Sometimes life sends us changes that we've never contemplated, problems we'd just as soon do without, and inconveniences that we'd rather not have to deal with. It can make us feel as if we are wandering in a barren desert.

It's during these desert experiences of our lives that God, in all his faithfulness, opens up his heart.

He quenches our thirsty souls, revives our parched hearts, and leads us to a higher place where peace, joy and love will be forever ours.

Perhaps you sent a card; made a telephone call; cooked a meal; offered words of encouragement; made a visit; gave a hug or kiss, a smile, or a warm handshake; wrote an editorial; sent a book or pamphlet for me to read; and even offered a prayer or sang a hymn. These gestures let me know that I will never walk alone. Your assistance during this difficult period in my life provided me with guidance, aided me physically, emotionally and spiritually. Your expression was a Godsend and so were you.

I will be eternally grateful for the 835 positive and three negative responses I have received so far.

When we become angry, upset or disappointed with someone, we forget the good they have done. The ancient Africans taught us that if a person is good to you, you must forever speak good of them. They believed that good always outlives the not-so-good. In order to keep the good flowing, we must speak of it.

A friendly manner goes a long way in establishing harmonious relationships. So I will continue to live by the Golden Rule and treat others with the same acceptance with which I would like them to treat me.

Thanks again for being a special friend and being there when I needed support, love and concern.

OSCAR WILLIAM KIDD III
Annapolis

Competition

In response to the appalled Anne Parker (Readers' views, Sept. 7):

First of all, you sound like you are an owner, or have a vested interest, in one of those so-called independent dry cleaners. And the other dry cleaners were represented in *The Capital* in the story (Aug. 26). *The Capital* printed a price comparison menu, and the independents lost hands down.

Hello! The bottom line here is competition. Finally, there is a place that people like myself and many others can afford. Let the independents lower their prices, or just deal with it.

The key word here is "competition."

J. BAILEY
Edgewater

10-mile Run

We would like to extend our deepest appreciation for all the tremendous work and assistance provided by our volunteer staff for the 22nd annual Annapolis 10-Mile Run. The Annapolis 10-Mile Run is organized yearly to provide a quality sports event for the running community. We have been voted for the fourth consecutive year "one of the top one hundred races in the country" by *Runner's World* magazine. This could not be possible without the wonderful staff of volunteers who unselfishly give so much to make this race a success.

We had a very tragic experience this year with the loss of a fellow runner. We have all felt a great loss and extend our condolences to the family of Joseph Sokol. It was due to the quick reaction of our medical team that Joe was given the best care possible.

Each year we have a very devoted group of nurses, doctors, physical therapists, ambulances and emergency medical technicians who give of themselves to support the race and the runners. Each year we pray their services go unneeded. This year, unfortunately, they were called to task only to perform in stellar fashion.

We would like to recognize our medical director, Mark Chaput, for coordinating our medical efforts and the medical professional staff that continued to provide the support that makes the Annapolis 10-Mile Run the best running

event on the East Coast

In addition, we would like to recognize the communities the race traverses for their enthusiastic support. We get many comments from the runners expressing the support of the wonderful people of Annapolis. I would also like to thank *The Capital* for its coverage of the events that transpired on Sunday, Aug. 24.

This year's proceeds of the race, approximately \$8,500, will benefit the Anne Arundel Medical Center Cardiac Rehab Unit, and a donation will be made to the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy in Joseph Sokol's name.

SUSAN BRIERS
President
Annapolis Striders

RON BOWMAN
Race Director
Annapolis

Grammar

From a National Digest item in the Sept. 6 edition of *The Capital*: "Mr. Helms, R-N.C., has refused to schedule a hearing for Mr. Weld, whom he maintains isn't the right man."

In the light of how blatantly we fail to use the objective "whom" where it belongs, it seems rather pitiful to find it where it is wrong — in an ostensibly special effort to be correct. It is probably a lost cause, as, for instance, with our refusal to make friends with the verbs "lay" and "lie," but couldn't we expect better from our hometown writers?

BILL BERRY
Annapolis

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Under budget deal, spending will increase

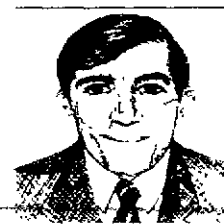
When Congress passed and President Clinton signed the balanced budget bill this summer, it appeared to most Americans that the government had finally begun to control spending. Think again.

The budget bill contained the general, long-term outlines of spending levels over the next five years, with most of its projected savings occurring in the last two years of this period. But buried in the fine print of the agreement was the price that Clinton extracted from the Republicans to buy his approval of their budget plan: much higher domestic discretionary spending for his favored social welfare programs.

Don't get me wrong. The budget contains a lot of good things, which this column has detailed over the past few months. Some modest but important tax cuts for families, businesses, investors and savers, increased choice in health-care programs, and at least the promise of greater control over spending.

But the uncomfortable truth about the compromise budget plan is that annual federal spending will continue to rise substantially through the end of this decade — from \$1.7 trillion to nearly \$2 trillion at the end of the five-year period. In other words, the size and scope of government will continue to grow.

Congress is now occupied with the business of carrying out the details of the budget plan in the 13 appropriations bills it must pass before the new fiscal year begins Oct. 1. And it is in



Donald Lambro

these appropriations bills, which do not get the same news media attention that the big budget bill receives, that the real spending takes place.

A good example of this insatiable rush to spend more money than is necessary can be seen in the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill that is now working its way through Congress. This one bill would increase spending by \$5.2 billion next year, after an even bigger increase this year.

In all, the HHS-Education funding bill has grown by about \$20 billion since 1996 — a whopping 29 percent increase in social welfare spending.

"In the name of 'balancing the budget,' the Congress is instead opening the floodgates to a rush of pork barrel spending," says Matt Kibbe, vice president for public policy for Citizens for a Sound Economy, or CSE. He's right. This bill is loaded with additional spending that is totally unnecessary.

For example, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting alone would get a 20 percent increase in its funding. This for a quasi-public corporation that enjoyed total national funding resources of \$1.46 billion in 1995, according to Public Broadcasting Service officials. Why do they need any more?

Spending for bilingual and immigrant educational programs would rise by 36 percent and Pell Grants for higher education would, at Clinton's insistence, would go up by 25 percent.

There is no end to the number of ways government can think of to spend our money. Something called Education Literacy and Technology would get \$260 million. And the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, a questionable federal aid program that appropriators sought to abolish a few years ago would be enriched with a 30 percent funding increase.

There are, to be sure, instances where certain programs may need some additional funds to compensate for unforeseen needs. But how does this Republican Congress justify a \$20 billion increase in this appropriations bill at a time of low unemployment, falling welfare rolls and a growing economy?

This is not the only appropriations bill that will quietly seek to raise spending in the hope that no one is watching. There are behind-the-scenes efforts under way to obtain huge future spending increases in the transportation bill, a perennial favorite of pork barrel addicts, among other discretionary spending bills.

But the HHS-Education appropriations bill is certainly the worst thus far. "The simple fact is that the so-called 'balanced budget' agreement between Clinton and Congress allows for big increases in discretionary spending, and these priorities are reflected in this appropriations bill," CSE's Kibbe said in an angry letter to every House member.

Earlier this month the Congressional Budget Office released new forecasts about the deficit which show it falling to \$34 billion this year, rising to \$57 billion next year, then declining gradually through 2002, when the budget is projected to have a \$32 billion surplus. There are other more bullish estimates projecting as much as \$140 billion in surplus tax revenue at the end of the next five years.

The deficit's decline and the projected surpluses are largely the result of a wave of higher tax revenues pouring into the Treasury, fueled by a strong, growing economy.

But instead of gently pressing down on the appropriations brake as this new revenue comes flowing in, the Republican Congress is sending disturbing signals that it wants to accelerate spending. All of which means that we had better pay closer attention to what happens to these appropriations bills. They could be spending our future tax cuts.

Ceremony recalls a vanished era of courteous politics

MARSHFIELD, Wis. — It was a day of fascinating but mixed messages, of good humor masking once-simmering feuds, of warm nostalgia cloaking serious warnings about the deteriorating climate of our politics.

The dedication last week of the Melvin R. Laird Center, an addition to the Marshfield Clinic, a world-class medical research facility, brought together notables from both parties and hometown friends of the 75-year-old Laird, who represented this part of central Wisconsin for 16 years in the House before becoming secretary of defense in the first Nixon administration. It was a day filled with laughter but marked unmistakably by a lament for the vanished civility that characterized the Congress where Laird was a leader in the 1950s and 1960s.

The tone was set by former President Gerald R. Ford, himself a product and embodiment of the time when, as he said, "we had adversaries, not enemies," in politics. "How proud your partner John Fogarty would be of you today," he said to Laird.

Fogarty, a Rhode Island liberal Democrat, was chairman of the Appropriations subcommittee for the departments of Labor and (as it was then called) Health, Education and Welfare, and Laird was the senior Republican on that panel. Together, they helped build the National Institutes of Health and channeled support to private research centers like the



David Broder

Marshfield Clinic, financing medical breakthroughs that have extended and improved the lives of millions.

Laird was both a skilled legislator and a great political schemer. He helped engineer successive internal Republican coups that made Ford the House minority leader. After Spiro Agnew's forced resignation, he persuaded President Nixon that Ford should be appointed to the vice presidency and he talked Ford into taking the job that, a few months later, led to the presidency.

But like others of his generation, he did his work with a twinkle in his eye that left plenty of room for fellowship. And so the speakers included not just Ford and two other former Republican leaders of the House — John Rhodes of Arizona and Bob Michel of Illinois — but two Democrats with whom Laird has had profound policy disagreements.

One was former Sen. Gaylord Nelson of

Wisconsin, an early and ardent opponent of the Vietnam War and vigorous critic of the protracted timetable for American disengagement. Laird set at the Pentagon. But, as Nelson recalled, "politics was more user-friendly then," and he and Laird had been drinking buddies since they met in Madison as members of the state Senate in 1949. "Today," Nelson said, in a tone of wonderment and regret, members of Congress are told that "fraternizing with the enemy is frowned upon," but he and Laird never regarded their Washington nights out as "a treasonable offense."

The other Democrat was Laird's successor in the House, Rep. David Obey, a favorite liberal target of the self-styled Republican "revolutionaries" who have come to Congress in recent years. Obey is now the ranking minority member of the same Appropriations subcommittee where Laird made his mark. As Laird formed a partnership with Fogarty, Obey has worked well with Republican subcommittee chairman John Edward Porter of Illinois.

But for weeks now, they have been forced to stand on the House floor fighting off one ideological amendment after another from people who either want to hamstring government or make it the servant of their pet philosophical causes. Those who regard Porter's partnership with Obey as a betrayal of Republican principles would not have laughed as hard

as the audience here did at Obey's admission that "in 1952, as a Young Republican, I delivered Laird's literature at half the homes in Wausau — an act for which I have been doing penance in Gaylord Nelson's confessional ever since."

But the humorless zealots of today's House need to hear what President Ford said: "You have to listen to lead, and it's pretty hard to listen when you are screaming at each other."

Just when the atmosphere was getting a little too chummy, Henry Kissinger stepped up to recall the many power struggles he had, as Nixon's national security adviser, with Secretary of Defense Laird.

"I always sent deputies to deal with him," Kissinger deadpanned, "and I would give them several pieces of advice. First, you must remember Mel Laird is extremely smart. Second, he knows he is extremely smart. Third, he will let you know he is extremely smart. Fourth, it is much less painful to let him do what he wants. Fifth, when he says, 'You know what I mean,' there is no conceivable way you could know what he means. And sixth, when he calls to complain about a newspaper story, you know he has put it out himself."

It was great to be reminded that politics can be a game where you don't try to obliterate people; you just needle them