

ISSUES & IDEAS

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HI

IN MY OPINION
Carl Hiaasen

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Muddying the waters far from home

Your tax dollars hard at work:

The state of Florida has joined a lawsuit aimed at blocking a massive cleanup plan for Chesapeake Bay.

The Chesapeake Bay.

And, no, you can't make this stuff up.

Last week, Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi filed a brief — paid for with your taxes — attacking the legality of the Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Blueprint.

The plan was devised by six bay area states, the District of Columbia and the federal government. Its mission is to improve water quality in the rivers, streams and estuaries of the Chesapeake region.

A federal judge upheld the terms of the so-called blueprint, which will limit the amount of pollution being dumped, but the ruling is being appealed.

Why would the state of Florida try to obstruct the cleanup of public waters hundreds of miles away from our own? Because Bondi and Gov. Rick Scott are complete tools.

They aren't suing on behalf of the citizens of Florida; they're suing on behalf of big agricultural and development interests that don't want the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency enforcing clean-water laws anywhere.

Among the lobby groups trying to dismantle the Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Blueprint are the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Home Builders and those

• TURN TO HIAASEN, 4L

IN MY OPINION
Leonard Pitts Jr.

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Sibling feud tarnishes King family

"I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind."

— Martin Luther King, Jr., Feb. 4, 1968

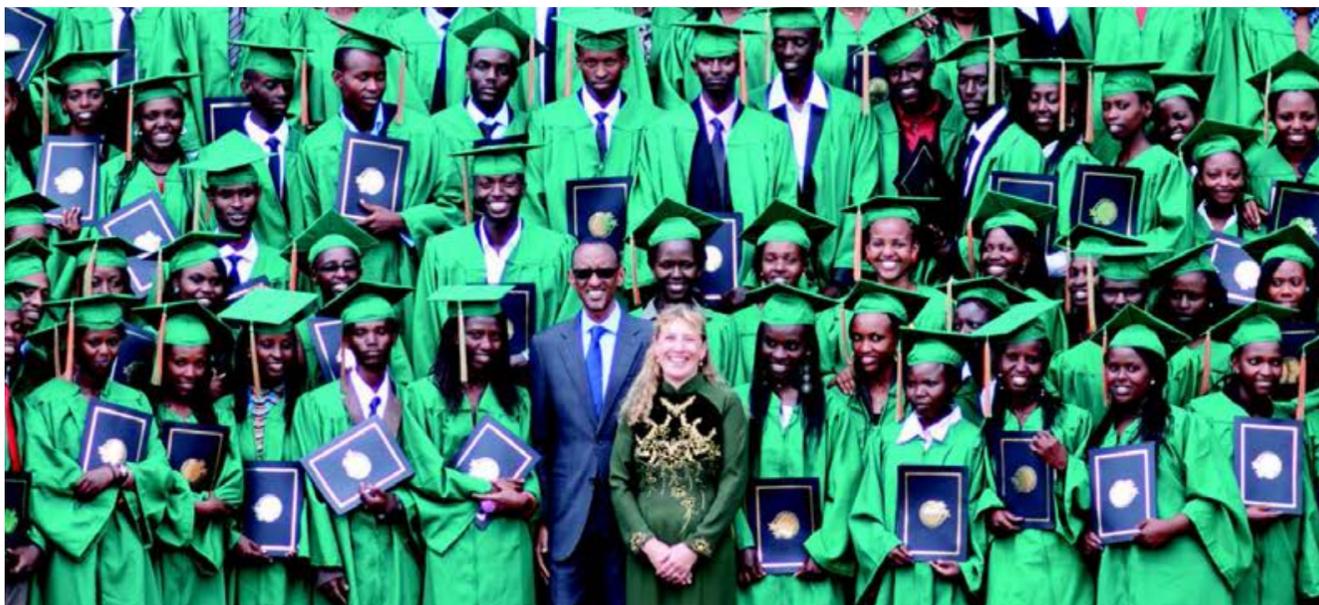
Maybe we should take up an offering. Obviously, the heirs of Martin Luther King, Jr. are hard up for money. That must be why they keep selling off pieces of his legacy.

Have you heard the latest? King's youngest child, Bernice, issued a statement last week after her brothers, Dexter and Martin III, filed suit to force her to turn over their father's Nobel Peace Prize and his traveling Bible. She says they want to sell them to a private owner.

According to the suit, King's heirs agreed in 1995 to turn their inheritance over to a corporate entity, The Estate of Martin Luther King, Jr., Inc., where Martin is chairman of the board. The complaint says Bernice has "repeatedly acknowledged and conceded the validity" of the agreement, but still refuses to surrender the items. The suit makes no mention of a sale. I called the King brothers' lawyer for comment. He didn't return the call.

In her statement, Bernice writes, "While I love my brothers dearly, this latest decision by them is extremely troubling." She says she is "appalled," "ashamed" and "disappointed" by their behavior. "It reveals a desperation be-

• TURN TO PITTS, 4L



JERROD K. POPHAM/SPECIAL TO THE MIAMI HERALD

NEW GRADS: Anne Heyman and Rwandan President Paul Kagame at a recent graduation.

Building on a legacy

Anne Heyman's pioneering work with Rwandan orphans to continue after her death

BY BARBARA MYERS
Special to the Miami Herald

For Anne Heyman, the American philanthropist and former Manhattan assistant district attorney who died Jan. 31 in a horse-riding accident in Palm Beach, the burden of those left behind is heavy. In addition to her own three children, Heyman left 750 Rwandan orphans rescued by the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village (ASYV), which she founded and operated.

Heyman transformed the lives of her charges, children orphaned by the 1994 Rwandan Genocide and left in the care of older siblings, distant relatives or neighbors. Many of the children had reported abuse and conditions of virtual slavery in the homes of guardians. All reported hopelessness. Then came Agahozo-Shalom.

Children lucky enough to be recruited to the village dedicated to drying tears (agahozo) and peace (shalom) joined families of sixteen children headed by a house mother who likely had lost her own children in the genocide. For the first time, the teens revelled in having someone to call "mom."

The children hung on the shoulders of new-found brothers and sisters. They built commun-

ity, healed their hearts (the primary goal of their first year), then turned to healing the world through community service. And they went to school. The first graduating class of 2012 sent four students to universities in Canada as Mastercard Scholars and nearly all the rest to universities in Rwanda.

I had the good fortune to visit ASYV three times, seeing the village in its infancy and then as it realized Anne Heyman's extraordinary vision. I saw young people transformed from victims to actors, children newly enabled with a strength born of community and a shared mission to practice tikkun olam, Hebrew meaning "to heal the world."

Inspired by Heyman's work, I stepped in as a volunteer college counselor and worked closely with new graduates. Over and over, I read in the students' essays about how the village had transformed their lives and how they planned to carry on the mission Heyman had started.

At the beginning, it sounded too good to be true. On my first visit in 2009, students and staff repeatedly referenced Heyman, who seemed to have attained godlike stature at Agahozo. I was skeptical, but I hadn't yet met her. Still, I left the village smitten with its work. Something new and daring was occurring there.

But it wasn't entirely new.

Learning in 2005 of the desperate state of Rwanda's orphans (95,000, according to the United Nations), Heyman thought that Israeli expertise as practiced at Yemin Orde, a youth village for Holocaust survivors, could be adapted to Rwandan conditions. Heyman took this germ of an idea and ran with it, fusing Jewish thought and practice with Rwandan tradition, and turning vision into stunning reality.

She brought in Israeli advisers from Yemin Orde and American partners in the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to bring the concept to fruition on a mountaintop plot that would allow the children to "see far so that they could go far."

In 2009, I saw Israelis breaking ground on the mountaintop with the first class of Rwandan students, establishing the farm that would only a few years later provide half of the village's food needs. I met an Israeli whose sole job was to promote the village philosophy and a Rwandan who had traversed the countryside on foot, regardless of the difficulty his club foot must have presented. They were searching not for the academic stars, but for the most vulnerable children in each district.

I saw the young Rwandan teens sing a cappella and break bread at Sabbath, greeting vis-

• TURN TO LEGACY, 4L

Why Rwanda

In 1994, Rwanda suffered a devastating genocide, leaving a high number of orphaned children and vulnerable youth. Modeled after Yemin Orde, an Israeli youth village established in 1953, which originally cared for orphans from the Holocaust, ASYV is a place where "tears are dried" (signified by the Kinyarwanda word, agahozo) and where vulnerable youth can "live in peace" (from the Hebrew word, shalom).

ASYV's model combines three essential elements to encourage the youths' intellectual and emotional growth:

- Loving support of a family
- A structured education
- Enriching extracurricular programs

The family structure is key to healing. The village places each youth, by gender, into residential families of 16. The family environment fosters a "brother" and "sister" dynamic. In each home, the youth is guided by a Rwandan mother through their healing and the mother holds the primary responsibility for each child's physical and emotional well-being.



PHOTO COURTESY AGAHOZO-SHALOM YOUTH VILLAGE

BAD NEWS: Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village students read about Heyman's death.

Q&A: LUIS C. VILLEGAS

From peace talks with guerrillas to growing trade, Colombia is changing

■ Colombia's new ambassador to the U.S. discusses what he hopes will become the new, post-conflict Colombia.

BY MIMI WHITEFIELD
mwhitefield@MiamiHerald.com

For his first trip outside the Washington Beltway, Luis Carlos Villegas — Colombia's new ambassador to the United States — chose Florida.

Not only is Colombia South Florida's second largest trading partner but it is also home to many Colombians.

Villegas presented his credentials to President Barack Obama on Dec. 3 — the same day that Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos met with the president at the White House.

Despite Colombia's struggles with drug traffickers, criticism over the South American country's defense of labor unionists and a civil conflict that has gripped the country for decades and claimed more than 220,000 lives, Obama said Colombia's success in dealing with security issues has helped put other top-

ics on the U.S.-Colombia agenda.

With the agenda shifting toward economic, political and social issues, Santos said U.S.-Colombia relations are "at their best moment ever."

Before becoming ambassador, Villegas was president of the National Business Association of Colombia for 17 years and was a member of the Colombian government negotiating team during the ongoing peace talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, in Havana.

Since you were talking to a group of business executives during your visit to Miami, what can you tell me about foreign investment in Colombia?

Provisional figures from the Central Bank show that total direct foreign investment in Colombia last year was almost \$17 billion, again breaking records. It comes mostly from the United States and Europe. But the news is we're having growth in Brazilian, Chinese, Korean, Peruvian and Mexican investment. So for-

eign investment in Colombia is coming not only from the developed world but also the region — and that's very interesting.

At the time the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement went into effect, there was the feeling that international companies might set up manufacturing operations in Colombia to take advantage of duty-free access to the U.S. market. Has that happened?

We're starting to see this. It's happening in the electronics industry, in the textiles and apparel industry and some in the food industry. What I foresee is with the recovery of the U.S. economy this year, 2014 will be a star year for that kind of investment.

In addition to that, we have the Pacific Alliance that is also attracting many investments. It's an even larger market with common rules and like-minded economic policies.

Related to the FTA, we also have some new items of trade in

• TURN TO COLOMBIA, 4L



PEDRO PORTAL/EL NUEVO HERALD

FIRST VISIT: Luis C. Villegas, Colombia's ambassador to U.S., promotes trade on Miami visit.

"I have been coming to this country for nearly 40 years. This is the first time that I have found a generalized change in perception of our image."

OPINION

JOHN S. KNIGHT (1894-1981)

DAVID LANDSBERG, PUBLISHER | AMINDA MARQUES GONZALEZ, EXECUTIVE EDITOR | NANCY ANCRUM, EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR

JAMES L. KNIGHT (1909-1999)

MIAMI HERALD | EDITORIAL

Thwarted again

OUR OPINION: Boehner blocks immigration reform at the GOP's peril

Just a few days after raising the hopes of immigration reform advocates who believed Republicans in the House of Representatives were finally ready to act, Speaker John Boehner dashed those expectations on Thursday by declaring his party is unwilling to take action this year.

That may be smart short-term politics, but it spells long-term disaster for a Republican Party with a serious demographic problem.

Earlier, Congressional Republicans made a significant, if belated, policy change on immigration reform at the start of the new legislative year, moving all the way from "Hell, No!" to "Maybe so." The party issued a statement of principles that signaled it was at long last ready to negotiate a deal.

Granted, Republicans' version of reform had a fatal flaw — a failure to include a path to citizenship — but it signaled a willingness to move forward, albeit slowly and cautiously. The party has rejected the comprehensive reform bill passed by the Senate last year, but the newly issued principles at least offered a piecemeal approach, which is better than outright rejection.

Suddenly, a deal of some kind, even in an election year, seemed possible — until Mr. Boehner slammed on the brakes, offering the weakest of excuses.

The Republican leader said it would be difficult to convince his caucus that President Obama would enforce any immigration bill that could win the approval of

a majority of Republicans because . . . well, because they just don't trust the president.

That excuse doesn't pass the credibility test. Why pass any law at all, if that's the case? Why not just pack up and go home? Moreover, Mr. Obama has been more aggressive than any previous president when it comes to deportation, sending some 1.9 million immigrants back home.

Republicans may not be impressed with this tough stance, but it has earned him a high level of criticism in the Latino community. The only reason he continues to maintain some measure of support from Latinos on this issue is because they blame Republicans for obstructing anything that resembles reform.

For Republicans bent on keeping control of the House and capturing the Senate in this year's elections, avoiding the immigration issue may be a shrewd move. It keeps the party focused on Obamacare and the sluggish economy, which they see as winning issues, and ignores an issue that clearly divides their caucus.

One Republican, Rep. Raul Labrador of Idaho, even suggested Mr. Boehner could lose his job as Speaker if he insisted on pursuing immigration reform this year.

But the long-term consequences for the party could be grim. Latinos are an increasingly important segment of the electorate.

Hispanics played a significant role in the 2012 presidential election, when a record 11.2 million of

them voted. They supported the president over challenger Mitt Romney by 71 percent to 27 percent.

By failing to move forward, Mr. Boehner is losing sight of the long-term stakes for his party.

He emerged from the government shutdown imbroglio with strong support from his right-wing caucus because he went along with the shutdown even though he said it was wrong. But what's the use of having stronger support if he refuses to lead?

Sooner or later, comprehensive reform will be enacted. If not this year, later. If not by this Congress, then by another. The more that Republicans block reform, the worse it will be for the party's long-term future.



DAILY Q

Would county-owned land at the port of Miami be a good place for David Beckham's MLS soccer team?

Vote at MiamiHerald.com/opinion

FRIDAY'S RESULTS

Will Jimmy Fallon be as successful hosting The Tonight Show as Jay Leno and Johnny Carson were?

Yes	47%
No	53%
Total	165

The Daily Question is an unscientific measure of our community's pulse. Published results are tallied at 5 p.m.

Flashpoint

CVS Caremark announced last week that, as of Oct. 1, its stores will stop selling cigarettes and other tobacco products. Herald readers weigh in on Facebook:

The only thing that matters is how the shareholders and customers will respond. I don't see the sense in a company giving up \$2 billion in revenue. Let's see if the CEO survives this decision.

— George Melendez

Will they also pull the candy and sodas that cause obesity and diabetes from the shelves?

— Liana Abreu-Perez

Kudos to CVS! They are proving that your health is more important than \$2 billion!

— Waleska Rivera

The market will determine whether it was a good decision or not. I don't smoke, so it doesn't affect me — also I prefer Walgreens.

— Michael Murawski

I'm a funeral director and have seen death firsthand. But as a smoker, it's my decision to quit, not CVS'.

— Suzie Chang

This can only help curb smoking addiction. CVS is showing some corporate courage here.

— Connie Goodman-Milone

Bad from a business standpoint. All vices are great business.

— Jorge Mirabent

Excellent decision! I hope other stores will follow in its footsteps. I will shop at CVS even more now but, unfortunately, smokers will just go elsewhere.

— Tracy Towle-Humphrey

Jabs

"Yesterday, Red Hot Chili Peppers bassist Flea admitted the band faked playing during the Super Bowl. In his defense, so did the Broncos."

— Conan O'Brien

MiamiHerald.com/opinion
From our inbox:

MARGARET CARLSON: Christie finds relief dissing high school nerd

NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF: At 90, this doctor is still calling
DOYLE McMANUS: Red vs. blue: The battle lines of 2014

THE READERS' FORUM

'Smart cities' the smart approach

Major cities like Miami are facing unprecedented challenges that come with tens of thousands of residents migrating to cities every day. Tight resources, aging infrastructure, declining services, crime and pollution are taking a toll on many urban centers. About 50 percent of the world's population lives in urban areas. By the year 2050 that figure is expected to rise to 70 percent.

The good news is that we are on the cusp of a technological revolution that is enabling dramatic improvements in the quality of urban life. The term "smart cities" doesn't do justice to where urban centers are headed. We are ready — today — to connect sensors, machines, devices, social networks and people via the "Internet of Things" to provide services and safeguard citizens in ways

that could not be imagined until now.

The recent announcement of an alliance between technology leader Cisco and AGT International, a leader in advanced analytics and software, is proof. They are leveraging the Internet of Things to help cities deliver services better, improve operations, even anticipate natural and man-made threats and respond to them before they occur.

Imagine driving to the big game. Smart systems tell you the best route to the stadium, then automatically re-route you to avoid a traffic jam. You are guided to an open parking space and payment is processed effortlessly through your smart phone. After the game a crowd spills out to the street and you fear it may become unruly. But visual and acoustic sensors

alert safety officials and calm is maintained. You are routed home safely and swiftly. Now imagine similar solutions for natural disasters, pollution control, power systems, even an unusual snowfall in Atlanta.

Of course, the principal challenge to adopting these new technologies, as always, is funding. By leveraging technology it is now possible to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure, diminishing the need to add capacity in the form of new roads or other facilities. The reduction in capital outlays will help relieve one of the most pressing problems faced by mayors today: debt.

The Internet of Things will also liberate massive amounts of new information that will empower citizens and help them engage more productively within their com-

munities. Residents can have real-time access to what is going on their neighborhood, from the location of Suzie's school bus to the time of the next trash pickup. And they can interact seamlessly with local officials, providing timely, informed feedback and surfacing issues that otherwise might simmer for months.

Recent history has seen several redefining moments in the urban experience: mass immigration, electrification, transportation and urban flight. We are now on the brink of the next transformational moment. The Internet of Things will connect cities and the people in them to improve quality of life and make our cities truly sustainable.

There's no time, or money, to waste.

— Manny Diaz, former mayor, Miami

one-and-a-half, we were able to adopt him. His birth mom made some bad decisions, but I am glad she loved him enough to give him life. He now is two-and-a-half, healthy and thriving. There is always hope for women in difficult situations. They should seek counsel and examine the many alternatives.

— Sutton Thompson, Coral Springs

NOT BUYING IT

Though the folks at Florida Power & Light might be correct in thinking that some of the voters in South Miami were born at night, the fact that the voting age is 21 precludes the chance they were born last night.

We're not falling for the patently absurd denials of FPL's spokesman and its lobbyist claiming to have no involvement in trying to influence the outcome of the upcoming South Miami election.

Homestead-Miami Speedway — yeah, right!

— Christopher Cooke-Yarborough, South Miami

THE GREATEST HARM

Carl Hiaasen's Feb. 2 column, *Dr. Cheech called — your prescription is ready!*, was a refreshing change of pace. It's certainly true that anyone in California who wants a medical-marijuana recommendation can get one. The medical recommendation allows consumers to purchase locally grown marijuana of known quality and safety from dispensaries that generate tax revenue.

Does Gov. Rick Scott prefer that Florida consumers purchase untaxed, unregulated and potentially unsafe marijuana from criminals? Marijuana prohibition keeps violent drug cartels in business. When cartels control marijuana distribution, consumers are exposed to illegal cocaine, meth and heroin. This gateway is a direct result of marijuana's illegal status. Marijuana may be relatively harmless, but marijuana prohibition is deadly.

— Robert Sharpe, policy analyst, Common Sense for Drug Policy, Washington, D.C.

PRESERVE HISTORY

At the Acropolis in Athens, there's a new museum that demonstrates how ancient sites can be kept alive. As you walk into the museum, you find yourself walking over an excavated ancient underground site covered by glass.

The other marvel of Athens is the subway system. At almost every other stop, you can see the excavated ancient sites — illuminated and behind glass — as you descend to the platform.

Should the prehistoric Tequesta village uncovered in downtown Miami be preserved? Yes. Look to the Greeks for ways to do it and still maintain commercial development.

— Elaine A. Lailas, Miami

CVS SAVING LIVES

When I read that CVS will stop selling tobacco products in October, I thought of all those who are ill or have passed away from the awful habit of smoking — including my uncle.

CVS recognized the contradiction of expanding its in-store Minute Clinics and healthcare offerings, while selling products that have been proven to cause addiction, disease and death. I hope other large drugstore chains and retailers follow CVS' lead and stop selling tobacco products.

— Jacqueline Stone, Miami

CHERISH LIFE

Abortion is not the only answer. Before I was born, my mother was pregnant with my sister, who had a high risk of Down syndrome. Many doctors advised her to abort my now-loving and caring sister, whom I cherish. Against the odds, my sister turned out to be a perfectly healthy baby. Without her, I would not be the person I am today.

There is no turning back after a pregnancy is terminated. When I was 10, my family began fostering and eventually was asked to care for a premature baby. He suffered withdrawals, because he was drug-exposed. When he turned

OTHER VIEWS

ISRAEL

Just in case the thinkable happens

BY FRIDA GHITIS
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Few countries stage more frequent, more realistic and more wide-ranging emergency-preparedness drills than Israel, a place where yet another war or more terrorist attacks are all but certain.

In previous years, I have seen heart-pounding sim-



GHITIS

ulations of a nationwide emergency response to a smallpox attack and a radiological bomb. Last month, authorities staged a dramatic preparedness exercise where the scenario flowed from a fictional airplane crashing into a residential area, causing hundreds of casualties — all simulated. This so-called Mega Mass Casualty Incident, the type of disaster that occurs without warning, exceeding the capabilities of a single municipality or region, tests the limits of medical, security and other emergency systems.

Some would call the drills alarmist, but disasters of this scale have occurred

many times, in the United States on 9/11, in the London bombings of 2005 and the Madrid attacks of 2004 among them.

As Dr. Amir Blumenfeld, who spent past eight months preparing this exercise said, "You need to be prepared in advance. You cannot just wait to react when the event happens."

Emergency officials from dozens of countries, who were in Israel to attend the emergency preparedness conference, IPRED, observed the exercise with rapt attention. The simulation was strikingly realistic. It started in a repurposed former military base in central Israel, not far from Ben Gurion, the country's main airport.

Initially, the lot where the plane "crashed" in the simulation stood behind a screen showing a picture of modern apartment buildings. Suddenly, a loud explosion shook the ground, the screen fell away revealing collapsed buildings, real airplane engines still smoldering atop the rubble and actors displaying all manner of wounds, crying out for help. Some were walking in a daze, others helping nearby casualties



An actor portrays a wounded victim in an Israeli disaster drill.

FRIDA GHITIS/

move away from the smoldering ruins.

Secondary explosions struck repeatedly, adding to the cacophony of the disaster, with the constant wailing of ambulances and other emergency vehicles arriving in an endless stream.

Before long, workers from the Magen David Adom, Israel's version of the Red Cross, started rushing in, removing the wounded and the dead. Police, firefighters, even journalists started appearing. It was a scene of seeming chaos, but behind it personnel from a host of agencies followed protocols developed over years of planning, drills and real-

life disasters. Hundreds of casualties received attention, with medics performing triage and providing basic medical care before evacuations.

Israel's Home Front Command, the civil defense authority from the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), took charge. The IDF's Medical Corps took its positions, and command posts were set up to coordinate the operations, keeping track of emergency vehicles, available hospital beds, road closures and other logistical elements.

Officials updated the media and hospitals in the area received word they should prepare for large numbers of casualties.

At the disaster scene, helicopters arrived to help evacuations and nearby key roads were closed, open only to emergency vehicles. Not far from the simulated crash, Israel's Tel Hashomer Hospital, the largest in the country, activated its emergency protocols, as well. Elective surgeries would have to be canceled and some existing patients evacuated to other hospitals.

Stretchers lined up at the emergency entrance to the hospital, and each ambulance was met by a team trained to make a quick assessment of the patients' condition, raising a flag of a different color indicating the urgency of the case and tagging patients with the triage color indicating the urgency — red, yellow, green — or black when patients died en route or were beyond help.

Information services for relatives looking for missing loved ones also went into action, staffed by social workers trained to provide psychosocial support for people experiencing enormous stress, even if they were not at the site of the disaster.

The exercise itself is just one part of the drill. After-

ward, a painstaking evaluation of the performance of each element will be assessed and graded and the plans adjusted to reflect the lessons learned.

Major drills occur regularly in Israel, often involving large sections of the civilian population. A few months ago, the Home Front Command staged a nationwide five-day drill to prepare the population for a massive missile attack, including non-conventional rockets such as chemical, biological and nuclear-tipped missiles.

Observers frequently remark on the seriousness with which everyone participates. That is hardly surprising. In 2006, thousands of rockets were fired at Israel by Hezbollah from Lebanon. Arsenals are now restocked. In Syria, radicals both sides of the civil war vow to attack Israel after they finish fighting one another. And rockets from Hamas-controlled Gaza were launched at Israel as recently as this week.

Organizers hope the lessons will never have to be put into practice, but everyone knows why drills are necessary.

See more photos at miamiherald.com/opinion.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Who cares what they think?

BY DAVID BROOKS
New York Times

Let's say you're turning 40 and you realize you want to leave accounting and become a hip-hop artist. People will say you're having a pathetic midlife crisis, but should you do it anyway?

Let's say you're on the phone in a crowded place and you want to tell your buddy a dirty joke, which may offend the people around you. Should you tell it?

Let's say you have religious or political beliefs that make you unpopular. Should you hide or change them?

Let's say you are deeply in love with a person your friends dislike. Should you dump that person?

I ask these questions because I think that we, as a society, are extremely confused about this issue: When should you care about what

other people think and when should you not?

Officially, we tell each other we don't care. We are heirs to a 19th-century rugged individualism that says the individual should stand strong and self-reliant, not conform to the crowd. We are also heirs to a 20th-century ethic of authenticity that holds that each of us is called to be true to our sincere inner self, and that if we bend to please others we are failing in some fundamental way.

But, of course, in reality we do care what other people think. We are wired to connect, to seek the admiration of others. We want to be part of communities, which means obeying community norms.

Moreover, we live at a time of intense social insecurity. The Internet creates instant feedback, letting you know when people approve of you and when they don't. We are also living during an epidemic of conditional love. Many parents bestow or withdraw affection depending on how well their children are achieving, producing millions of young people without secure emotional foundations, who pine for any kind of approval.

I admit I'm confused myself about when you should pay attention to or ignore outside opinion. But I'll throw out four different ways of thinking about the question, corresponding to the four questions at the top of this column.

First, the hip-hop artist question. Here it might be best to defer to public opinion. People

tend to make poor decisions at moments of life transition, so at these moments, lean in the direction of respecting to the wisdom of the crowd. Have a midlife crisis, but in less stereotypical form.

Then, the question of the dirty joke. This is a question of manners. Here, too, it's probably a good idea to give priority to other people's views. The manners and mores of a community are a shared possession. When you violate social norms, you are not only being rude to people around you, but you are making it more likely that others will violate the norms in the future. You are tearing the social fabric.

In most circumstances, therefore, we owe it to our group to usually follow the rules that help people behave considerately. Put social niceties above individual desire. Don't tell the joke.

Then the question of the unpopular belief. In this case, it is clearly wrong to sacrifice some of your conviction for immediate popularity. Basically you are trading in something deep for something shallow.

Most of our core beliefs originated with some great figure

from the distant past. These ideas, creeds or faiths were then nurtured by generations of other people, who are also now mostly dead. They created a transcendent tradition, which we embrace and hope in turn to pass along to generations as yet unborn. No sensible person would ever be happy betraying the approval of the admired dead just to win some passing approval in the here and now.

Finally, the question of the unpopular fiancé. This is tricky because it depends on what kind of feedback other people are offering. If they are talking about your boyfriend's status (he's too ugly; he's got a bad job) then outside opinion doesn't matter.

But they may be observing something about the internal nature of your relationship that you are too blinded by passion to see. Maybe they can discern that he hurts you in this way or that. In this case, outside advice is not about approval; it's about wisdom at a time when your emotions are clouding your judgment.

To sum up, I can't find any universal rules about when to defer to outside approval. It depends on the circumstances. It does seem that people should defer less to public approval as they age. At 15, it's normal to be socially insecure. By 45, unless you're in a crisis, you should have distilled enough ancient wisdom to have inner criteria.

Plus, sometimes it's smart to attract ridicule for its own sake. You'll learn that it really does no harm if you don't let it. Your friends will laugh at you. And accept you in the end.

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EDUCATION

School choice has improved performance of students

BY HELEN AGUIRRE FERRÉ
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No one wants to celebrate the end of the year with bad news, so it is not surprising that most of us missed the results of an international study that shows we have expensive but underperforming schools where our students do not learn math.

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) of

which the United States is a member, 500,000 15-year-olds took the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)

exam and found that American students placed 21st in science and 26th in math out of 34 nations that participated. It is not an issue of money, the United States ranks fifth in spending per pupil. The problem lies deeper than that.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has been sounding the alarm that, despite our recent efforts at educational reform, most American schools are still falling behind. Duncan rightly argues that if our children are not learning we have to change the way we do things.

As obvious as that sounds it requires the political will and courage to challenge the status quo that in many school districts nationwide still favors bureaucracies and teachers unions over the needs of the children they should be serving.

Some states have started to make a difference in the right direction, and Florida is one of them.

When he led the state, former Gov. Jeb Bush was not afraid to tackle big issues, and education was one of them. It was likely more difficult than he ever anticipated. Working in tandem with the Legislature, Bush pushed for dramatic education reform that included a strong emphasis in early literacy, which has been particularly helpful to children who come from impoverished homes or are not proficient in English. They receive more attention to become proficient readers. Back in the day nearly one third of third-grade students were promoted to the fourth grade despite the fact that they were unable to read.

Today, "social promotion" has been eliminated, and the number of children who are unable to read at grade level has been cut in half in the early years.

The importance of teaching as a profession received a long-overdue recognition that included additional funding for increased teacher pay and performance. Since students were graded, schools were graded, too, which made many school systems howl with horror. But parents wanted to be smart consumers for the benefit of their children and relied on the grading system as a measure of accountability of the school systems performance as well. Families as well as schools were held accountable for the educational success or failure of our children.

Finally, Jeb Bush pushed school choice so that all parents regardless of economic background have access to schools that best fit the needs of the child. School choice today means students can participate in various education programs found in, but are not limited to, charter schools.

Virtual schools, home schools, private and public schools have accepted the challenge to change curriculum and the concept of teaching. The use of technology in the classroom has been an important component in revolutionizing the way we teach and the way children learn, which is substantially different from the way we were raised. The world is infinitely different as well.

Still, other countries are gaining on and surpassing our students, which is unacceptable. Education is national security and needs to be a national priority.

School choice has measurably improved student outcomes in Florida and other states. The results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress show that Florida fourth-graders place 6 out of 50 in the national report card. Hispanics outperform their counterparts in states such as California.

Parents know that a good education is critical in helping their child succeed in life. Learning to make smart, safe choices, as well as rigorously mastering the fundamentals of science, math and language, is more important today in a more competitive global economy that requires employees and entrepreneurs alike to have more sophisticated skill sets to advance.

In his State of the Union address, President Obama spoke of income inequality. Much of that would be narrowed through increased educational dynamics driven by school choice. We have come a long way in education reform. We still have a long way to go.



MCT



BROOKS

CHESAPEAKE BAY

Florida muddying the waters far from home

• HIAASEN, FROM 1L

famously civic-minded folks at the Fertilizer Institute. They want us to trust them to regulate their own pollution, and to hell with the EPA.

Quietly these industries recruited Florida and 20 other states — most led by Republican governors, of course — to join the lawsuit attacking the Chesapeake Bay plan. Among the other shameless meddlers are Kansas, Alaska and Indiana.

“To say we are outraged is a vast understatement,” said Will Baker, president of the nonprofit Chesapeake Bay Foundation. “We find it almost beyond belief for any state outside of the Chesapeake Bay watershed to try to sue to stop us from cleaning up our waters. What are they afraid of if we have clean water in the Chesapeake Bay?”

Here in Florida, Bondi and Scott didn't hold a press conference to announce they were joining the Chesapeake litigation. In fact, they'd be much happier if nobody knew about it except the special interests for whom they're pimping.

Imagine the widespread anger down here if the state of Maryland or Pennsylvania sued to halt Everglades restoration. That's how people up there feel about what we're doing to them.

There's a perverse irony in the fact that the Scott administration is spending public dollars to defend polluters up North while our own most precious waterways are being poisoned.

Fertilizer runoff from lawns and other pollution has killed thousands of acres of sea grass in the Indian River Lagoon, and it's the prime suspect in a steep rise in deaths of manatees and bottle-nosed dolphins.

The rapid decline in water quality poses a serious threat to the marine-based economy of the Treasure Coast, affecting

everything from boat sales to riverfront real estate. Residents have protested, organized and begged for help from Scott and the Legislature.

Meanwhile, whenever it gets rainy, the Army Corps of Engineers continues to pump fertilizer-laden water from Lake Okeechobee eastward down the St. Lucie River toward the Atlantic Ocean, and westward down the Caloosahatchee to the Gulf of Mexico.

The people living around Stuart dread the dense algae blooms that suffocate the oysters and drive away sea life whenever that scummy green-black torrent from Lake O arrives. It's a catastrophic violation of the federal Clean Water Act, committed by a federal agency on a seasonal basis.

Instead of suing the Corps to halt the dumping, Scott and Bondi are wasting Florida's legal budget fighting faraway projects like the Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Blueprint, which is actually a model of sensible cooperation between the states and the feds.

Scott and Bondi don't care. Both are up for reelection this year, and are banking on hefty donations from developers and Big Agriculture. That's the only reason they stuck their noses into this lawsuit.

A vote for either one of them is basically a vote for the Fertilizer Institute. Remember that in November.

In the meantime, speaking for all other Floridians, I'd like to apologize to the concerned citizens of Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware and Washington, D.C.

We had nothing to do with this ridiculous lawsuit. We know first-hand the terrible impact of water pollution, and we truly want your Chesapeake Bay to be clean.

Pay no attention to our clueless governor and attorney general. We try not to.

MARTIN LUTHER KING

Sibling rivalry tarnishes MLK's family, legacy

• PITTS, FROM 1L

yond comprehension.” Their father, she adds, “MUST be turning in his grave.”

Turning? Martin Luther King must be spinning like a record album.

Not just because of this, but because over the years his family has missed no opportunity to pimp his legacy. That verb is used advisedly. I am mindful of its racial freight, but frankly, no other word adequately describes the behavior of this family with regard to its most celebrated member. Every year, they remind us to respect his legacy, but it seems increasingly apparent they don't respect — or even fully understand it — themselves.

If they did, they could not have licensed his image for a commercial with Homer Simpson. Or put his personal papers on sale for \$20 million. Or demanded money to allow his likeness to grace a memorial on the Washington Mall.

What would King think of them fighting Harry Belafonte for the return of papers King gave him as a gift — especially since Belafonte helped finance King's movement and the upbringing of these self-same kids?

What would King think of the fact that these bickering, tiresome children of his are forever in litigation and public squabbles with one another and that money always seems to be at the root? Especially since

he famously disdained “shallow things” like personal gain?

So yes, let's pass the hat. How much do you think it would take to induce these people to grow up, shut up and stop using their daddy like an ATM?

I admit to being selective in my vexation. If Woodrow Wilson's heirs sold his Nobel Prize, or Booker T. Washington's his Bible, I doubt I would even notice.

The difference, I think, is that King is nearer to us in time and of a magnitude of greatness those men, great though they were, do not approach. He resides in a pantheon of American heroes occupied by the Founders, Abraham Lincoln and no one else. Moreover with him there is, especially for African Americans but really for all believers in human dignity, a sense of communal ownership and collective investment — a sense that he is *ours* and his memory, sacred.

His children are the caretakers of that memory on behalf of us all. To trade on it for the love of money is starkly appalling and profoundly offensive.

The fact that they either don't understand this or don't care speaks volumes. King's kids may be legally entitled to sell his legacy to the highest bidder. But the fact that a thing is legal to do does not make it right to do.

Considering who their father was, you'd think that's something they'd know.

PHILANTHROPY

Heyman leaves legacy in Rwandan

• LEGACY, FROM 1L
itors with “Shabbat Shalom.” I saw a girl who had never celebrated a birthday receive her first birthday cake. And I heard “a big brother,” as the school's Rwandan counselors were called, expound on the mission to practice tikkun alev (healing hearts) and tikkun olam (repairing the world).

What set ASYV apart from any philanthropic mission I knew is its philosophical core and the uncanny way it helped students internalize those ideas. One example is what the village calls DNA — dialogue, negotiation and agreement. Instead of meeting student transgressions with reprisals or “consequences,” the school dean talked with students, followed by negotiation and agreement to adjust their behavior. Students used to much more aggressive discipline embraced the method and made it their own, with



JERROD K. TOPHAM/SPECIAL TO THE MIAMI HERALD

HAPPY SMILES: Students at the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village founded by Anne Heyman.

student representatives taking on responsibility for disciplining their peers. One can only imagine the future promise inherent in this approach to problem solving.

By my third visit to ASYV, the full cohort of 500 students were installed, with the first senior class preparing to graduate. This time, I saw Heyman in her element, at home with her children, and quickly understood why she was so revered.

She worked tirelessly and moved with a graciousness of spirit that recognized each individual she met, firmly grounded first and foremost by her work and her all-consuming drive to nurture her many charges.

Heyman was a visionary, a creator, with an unparalleled dedication to the children of Rwanda and with the grit and determination to make her vision reality. As she changed the lives of so

many young Rwandans, she impacted the future of the country, building a cadre of young educated activists intent on sharing the promise they discovered at Agahozo.

As village mother, Heyman never stopped worrying about her charges. Like so many mothers everywhere, her central worry was money — how to sustain a village that served 500 youths a year and that would remain the home of all who graduated.

The world has lost a leading light in Anne Heyman. May the Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village live on in her memory.

Myers is a freelance journalist who has written previously for the Miami Herald and edited world and national news for the San Francisco Chronicle. She spent most of the last year as a volunteer college counselor for Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village graduates.

COLOMBIA

Villegas: Changes ahead for Colombia



LUIS ACOSTA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

CLEAR VIEW: General view of San Pedro Claver cathedral in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia. Luis C. Villegas, Colombia's ambassador to the U.S., says the view of Colombia in the U.S. is now positive.

• COLOMBIA, FROM 1L

Colombia — fruit and frozen concentrates — that have grown very fast. We also have new varieties of flowers, beyond traditional roses and carnations, that have grown very quickly.

If you look at the trade figures after the first year of the FTA, it appears U.S. exporters benefited more than Colombian exporters. Is that what you expected to happen?

No, there's a very specific phenomenon. Wheat sales had moved from U.S. sources to Argentina. With the FTA, the U.S. recovered its competitiveness in wheat. So the U.S. competed against Argentina and won because we are buying wheat from the cheapest source. Just that one item counts for more than \$500 million.

But in general, exports from the U.S. to Colombia are growing, and that's what FTA is for. We're getting more machinery, more capital goods at cheaper prices. We are modernizing our industry and infrastructure and we need these capital goods massively.

Many in the Colombian agricultural sector don't appear satisfied with the FTA and have complained about U.S. agricultural subsidies. Is this something that you will be addressing?

No, I don't think so. Because when you see the figures of what has been imported and the sectors that have protested, they don't match.

I don't think U.S. potatoes are a threat to Colombian potatoes. For those products like wheat that we don't produce because we are a tropical country, everybody is benefiting from low prices.

What I think is going on is that Colombia has progressed to the moment of income that brings the need to debate what to do about agriculture, do you want to subsidize it or not?

That's a question that has been raised all over the world in the moment when countries become middle income. and that is now happening in Colombia.

The United States is now trying to negotiate a TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership). Is this something that Colombia would like to belong to at some point?

I think the answer is yes, but the question is when. Colombia belonged to the initial group of four TPP countries. The U.S. was not there. But then the U.S. entered the group and said, “You don't have an FTA.” So we got out. When we had the FTA with the U.S., someone said you are not members of APEC [Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, a forum of 21 Pacific Rim nations]. We responded there is a moratorium on APEC membership. Maybe that will be resolved this year and we will be accepted.

I think in a couple of years Colombia will be invited to join the TPP.

Does Colombia's image still suffer in the United States and for some people, is Colombia still all about guerrillas and the drug years?

Thank you for asking that. I have been coming to this country for nearly 40 years. This is the first time that I have found a generalized change in perception of our image from the federal government, in Congress, in the media, in the NGOs. They all feel the change in Colombia has been so dramatic that no one can deny it. There are people with issues over one thing or the other. But in general, the diagnosis of what has happened in Colombia is very positive.

Now we are cooperating in security with third countries. We have trained 20,000 public servants in Central America in the past two years. It shows the amount of trust the U.S. government has in Colombian institutions. This year

we are going to triple the level of cooperation.

President Obama has talked about the need for global drug reform and said that Colombia isn't in this alone. How can Washington help on the drug issue?

President Santos has said that any debate on drug issues, we have to be part of; there should be no debate on what to do about the war on drugs or organized crime or illicit drugs without Colombia. We suffered the brunt of the problem. But having said that, we have moved from 200,000 hectares (494,211 acres) of illicit drugs in 1999-2000 to 40,000 hectares (98,842 acres). The problem is where those hectares that we have eradicated moved to.

You were a part of the Colombian negotiating team for the peace talks in Havana. How are the talks proceeding?

I'm more optimistic today than I was 14 months ago. Why? I think many things have coincided to move the negotiation forward. First, the military balance is in favor of the Colombian state and FARC knows this. Second, the international community is supporting the process. And third, we are in a better state than we were in the 2000 negotiations. Why? We have more muscle to make change happen. I always give the figure of the public budget. In 2000, the public budget was \$25 billion; this year's budget is \$120 billion. We can face problems — infrastructure, health coverage, quality of education, security — with a different capacity to solve them.

We're currently discussing illicit crops and hope to have an agreement in the next weeks, and then we will move to the core of the negotiation: victims, disarmament, reparations and reintegration into society and the ratification and implementation of the agreements we have reached.

Many, if not all, FARC members are wanted in the United States on criminal charges. Do you think it would be helpful if the U.S. would drop those charges in the interest of peace?

It's not that simple. In both countries there is an independent judiciary and it's not only what the government says. The U.S. position, I've been told, is that the justice system will keep all the processes that are open before it, and that if crimes have been committed, they will keep asking for extradition. The Colombian position is that extradition is a tool that can be used with discretion by the president.

Human Rights Watch has repeatedly accused the Colombia government of sacrificing justice in its effort to make peace with FARC. How do you hope to convince Washington that this isn't the case?

Human Rights Watch isn't Washington. It is a very prestigious NGO... but theirs is not the only opinion around. The problem is that the peace process in Colombia is the first one around to be happening under the Statute of Rome [a treaty that established the International Criminal Court].

It is seen by international interested parties and some NGOs that have world coverage like Mr. Vivanco's [José Miguel Vivanco is director of Human Rights Watch's Americas division] as the precedent for other transitional justice applications in the future, so everyone wants to be very careful that the first application isn't a mistake.

So what we have to find, as President Santos has said, is a good peace package with room for justice, no room for impunity, where there's room for fighting illicit drugs but where there's room for pardons, reparations for victims, where there's space for disarmament.